

# Center for Language Science

## Distinguished Language Science Colloquium



**Dr. Stanley Dubinsky**

*Professor of Linguistics at the University of South Carolina*

### **The Language Conflict Project: Analyzing politicized ethnolinguistic conflict in the 21st century**

**Friday, April 16th  
9:00–10:30 a.m. EDT  
via Zoom**

Language and ethnolinguistic identity play an important role in contemporary conflicts in a post-colonial and post-Cold War world. Decolonization, the unraveling of the Soviet Union, the post-Vietnam War withdrawal from Southeast Asia, and the weakening or dissolution of autocracies in North Africa and the Middle East have seen the emergence, re-emergence, or creation of ethnolinguistic conflicts. I will first review interdisciplinary perspectives on ethnic conflict, and look at how resurgent, re-created, and newly created language conflicts are instrumentalized to advance political agendas. Following this, I will introduce the Language Conflict Project (LCP), an interdisciplinary collaborative, intended to advance our understanding of language-related intrastate conflict. Our project features: (i) a Language Conflict Typology, designed to distill generalizations across individual conflicts, (ii) Linguistic Distance Measures (phonological, lexical, syntactic, orthographic), shown to play distinct roles in particular ethnolinguistic conflicts, and (iii) a Linguistic Freedom Index, applied to measure linguistic rights and accommodations with respect to educational policy, laws, media access, economic freedom, and wealth disparity. Finally, I will preview our website, through which the LCP reaches an audience that includes policy makers, diplomats, journalists, and leaders of international businesses and nongovernment organizations.

For additional information, please contact Karen Miller ([kxm80@psu.edu](mailto:kxm80@psu.edu)) or Frances Blanchette ([fkb1@psu.edu](mailto:fkb1@psu.edu)).

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