

Forensic Linguistics Seminar

hosted by the *International Linguistic Association*

Saturday, April 6, 2024

2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time (US and Canada)

on Zoom

Lecture/Workshop with

Dr. Christine Jacknick, *Professor, BMCC, CUNY*



Obstetric Violence: Using the tools of forensic linguistics to examine assault in medical spaces

Obstetric violence (Borges, 2018; Castañeda, Hill, & Searcy, 2022; Kukura, 2018) is a legal concept introduced in Latin America describing violence against pregnant persons that encompasses verbal and physical abuse, including “medical sexual assault” (Tillman, 2023). There is currently no legal framework to adjudicate reports of obstetric violence in the U.S. However, the constant news reports of medical mistreatment related to the rollback of reproductive rights post-Roe paired with recent developments in international human rights law (*Britez Arce v. Argentina*) suggests that statutory reform in the U.S. is forthcoming. This workshop aims to draw lessons from forensic linguistic analyses of sexual assault investigations to consider how they can inform our understanding of the victims, perpetrators, and prosecution of obstetric violence.

In this workshop, participants learn and use the tools of stance and prototype analysis to examine their use against victims of sexual assault cases. We will also explore data in obstetric violence cases, highlighting marked deviations from standard sexual assault-oriented prototypes. The workshop concludes with recommendations for everyday citizens, for law enforcement officers, and for health care providers.

Dr. Christine M. Jacknick, a graduate of Teachers College, Columbia University, is an applied linguist utilizing discourse analysis to examine communication in institutional settings, highlighting the collaborative and multimodal nature of social interaction. Her research emphasizes the pairing of rigorous, line-by-line discourse analysis with larger social and cultural theories, underscoring the relevance of interactional practices to the realities of participants. Dr. Jacknick has published in *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Classroom Discourse*, and *Language and Sociocultural Theory*, among other journals, and her book *Multimodal Participation and Engagement: Social Interaction in the Classroom* was published by Edinburgh University Press in 2021. Her current research focuses on communication as obstetric violence in visits between pregnant/post-natal patients and their care providers. She teaches Forensic Linguistics and Intro to Gender & Women’s Studies at BMCC, among other courses. Website: <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/faculty/christine-jacknick/>