

**Title:** Linguistic Discrimination: A Conflict Theoretical Analysis of the Effects of English-Only Sentiment on Minority Communities

**Presenter:** Isabella Antonelli, Fullerton College

**Mentor:** Kelly Nelson-Wright

In the United States today, there is substantial discourse on whether or not English should be the exclusive language used and spoken throughout the country. As a melting pot of various cultures and languages, many individuals are marginalized by such English-only ideology. This marginalization can be a hindrance to non-English speakers' achievement of traditional socioeconomic success. In a country where everyone is supposedly given equal freedom to live the 'American Dream,' non-English speakers are often left out of this promise of equal freedom. Many young first generation Americans and immigrant children suffer from linguistic discrimination in the classroom. Sometimes, even when bilingual education is promised, non-English speaking children are placed in classrooms with English-only speaking instructors (Hinton). This lack of adequate bilingual education places many children at a disadvantage from an early age. This paper argues from a Social Conflict theoretical analysis that if English-only sentiment becomes culturally normative, minorities will not likely achieve success. A review of the existing literature shows that individuals who do not speak English face many challenges in education and political and civil rights access (Lawton). Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Social Conflict theory demonstrates that uneven distribution of resources and opposing interests among groups will often result in social conflict (Crossman). Due to inequities in opportunities and support, individuals who do not speak English in the United States are less likely to reach traditional socioeconomic success than those who do speak English.

## Works Cited

Crossman, Ashley. "Understanding Conflict Theory." ThoughtCo, Sep. 9, 2019,

[thoughtco.com/conflict-theory-3026622](https://www.thoughtco.com/conflict-theory-3026622).

Hinton, Kip Austin. "We Only Teach in English: An Examination of Bilingual-in-Name-Only Classrooms."

Lawton, Rachele. "Language Policy and Ideology in the United States: A Critical Analysis of 'English Only' Discourse."