



Circum-Atlantic Linguistic Flows

Special Issue of *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents*

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Language has for millenia traversed imagined political boundaries, leaving behind sediments of cultural practice while adopting new forms in its movements through time and across space. In this sense, language is inherently transnational, transcultural, and translingual. Yet, over time and space, language is remembered not for what it was, but how it is currently used. This historical disconnect empowers language to demarcate geopolitical boundaries, almost invariably stratified, through division and difference. What is often forgotten is that languages can never be “pure” entities, sequestered from cross-cultural or cross-linguistic contact and influence. This is especially in the case of the English language, which, in spite of various nationalistic or ethnocentric crusades in the UK or across the Atlantic in the US to monolingualize public and at times private language practice (Lippi-Green, 2004; Cameron, 2012), is itself a hybridized creole that has merely come to be sedimented as a discrete “language” over time (Canagarajah, 2013). Meanwhile, such efforts of linguistic homogenization in the UK, the US, or other parts of the world are a reminder of the sedimentation of Eurocentric epistemology, for in regions of the global South such as Africa and South Asia, the very notion of “language” is the result of colonially imposed linguistic taxonomies (Makoni, 2002; Makoni & Pennycook, 2005). Yet a view across the Atlantic can serve as a reminder of the instability of, and at times analogousness of, political and ideological commitments across discrete continental spaces. However, there is much to be gained by further inquiry into the geopolitical particularities of the circum-Atlantic space, and it is with this in mind that we initiate this exploration around the topic of linguistic flows.

This special issue of *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* aims to gather scholars from the field of sociolinguistics and related disciplines to examine the conceptual, historical, and cultural aspects of linguistic flows in the circum-Atlantic world and beyond. The aim is to contribute to sustained interest in circum-Atlantic perspectives and phenomena among scholars of Atlantic studies while also providing a space to explore various sociolinguistic considerations, which are not frequently the focal point of inquiries in the field. Indeed, while part of the purpose is to complement ongoing developments in the sociolinguistics of globalization with a focus on the transatlantic and the circum-Atlantic as a frame of reference, this special issue simultaneously represents an attempt to foreground questions of “language,” particularly transatlantic questions of language, within the interdisciplinary field of Atlantic studies.

We therefore invite scholars from sociolinguistics and related disciplines to submit proposals addressing a broad range of topics including, but not limited to, the following:

- contemporary iterations of translingual, transcultural language practice in transatlantic and circum-Atlantic contexts
- sociolinguistic histories and/or legacies of the transatlantic slave trade
- transatlantic-transhemispheric linguistic flows from the global South to the global North
- sites of transatlantic linguistic flows involving underrepresented regions, such as Africa and Latin America
- the influence of transatlantic linguistic flows beyond the Atlantic region

TIMELINE:

31 January 2021:

Proposals Due (500 words max)

15 February 2021:

Notification of Acceptance/Rejection of Proposal

30 June 2021:

First Drafts of Articles Due (circa 8,000 words)

31 August 2021:

Reviewer Feedback Sent

30 September 2021:

Final Drafts of Articles Due (circa 8,000 words)

2022:

Special Issue Published

Submit proposals and/or questions to cjje@hum.aau.dk and jwl@uci.edu.

Early career scholars with no prior record of publication are welcome (but not required) to submit supplemental materials such as a CV, draft of the full manuscript, or writing sample of a different project to provide the special issue editors broader context to facilitate the selection process.