

***Call for Papers for Panel at Sociolinguistics Symposium 24** (13-16 July 2022, Ghent, <https://ss24ghent.be/>)*

Deconstructing 'Scientific' Agendas: Context, Power and Strategies in Research

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This panel critically analyses how scientific projects have mirrored and/or co-constructed ideologies of their times.

In *Ce que parler veut dire* (1982), Bourdieu stressed linguistics' sovereign position within social sciences as resulting from Saussure's 'inaugural coup' (p. 8) vesting structural linguistics with scientific guises. This superiority, he argued, mainly derived from the construction of language as a natural object, i.e. deprived of any subjective or social dimensions. This dominance of 'social-free' theories within Western linguistics was also dissected in the light of their historical context of expansion (notably the Cold War), as well as concomitant funding bodies' strategies requiring research products and methodologies sustaining the ideological battle (Heller & McElhinny 2017). In this regard, Saussure's construction of language as a 'treasure' uniformly engraved in all human brains together with Chomskyan competence also erased the question as to the unequal access to the acquisition of legitimate language(s) (Bourdieu 1982). This 'illusion of linguistic communism' (Bourdieu 1982: 24) has had long-lasting effects in (applied) linguistics, which often continues to focus on standard learners. Regarding language planning, Blommaert (1996) demonstrated how by depoliticizing language, it led to the reproduction of linguistic hierarchies in decolonized countries. Last but not least, the similarities between translanguaging theories and authorities' discourses have recently been unveiled, notably as regards the construction of language as the instrument *par excellence* for success in purportedly meritocratic societies (Jaspers 2018).

In line with this critical research, the panel welcomes proposals analysing i.a.

- how research agendas and objects are determined and by whom;
- how research agendas and objects are embedded in their historical context of production;
- how power issues linked to research are legitimized or denied;
- how researchers navigate the moral imperatives traditionally linked to science (e.g. ideological and axiological neutrality) with their professional strategies and field constraints imposed on them (Bourdieu 1984);
- how contextual factors may translate into methodologies used for disciplinary differentiation and competition (Gal & Irvine 1995).

The panel involves a series of 20 minute presentations + 10 minutes of Q&A. If you would like to participate, please send me (caroline.staquet@ugent.be) an **abstract** of no more than 300 words, indicating the title of your paper, its central focus, the type of data to be analysed, as well as your name, contact details, position and institution.

Deadline: no later than 13 September, 2021.

References

Blommaert, J. (1996). Language Planning as a Discourse on Language and Society: The Linguistic Ideology of a Scholarly Tradition'. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 20(3), 199-222.
Bourdieu, P. (1982). *Ce que parler veut dire: L'économie des échanges linguistiques*. Paris: Fayard.

- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Homo academicus*. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit.
- Gal, S. & Irvine, J. (1995). Disciplinary Boundaries and Language Ideology: The Semiotics of Differentiation; *Social Research*; Winter 1995; 62, 4; Periodicals Archive Online. 967.
- Heller, M. & McElhinny, B. (2017). *Language, Capitalism, Colonialism: Toward a Critical History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Jaspers, J. (2018). The transformative limits of translanguaging. *Language & Communication* 58. 1–10.