

# GLAD!

REVUE SUR LE LANGAGE, LE GENRE, LES SEXUALITÉS

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## Call for papers

**Feminist Linguistics Today  
Politics, Ideologies, Materialism, Queer**

**GLAD!** will publish in December 2023 a multilingual issue dedicated to feminist linguistics worldwide. We accept contributions in English, Romanian, Spanish, Italian, German, Turkish, Portuguese, and French. If you are interested in contributing to this issue, please send a proposal (3,000 to 6,000 characters) by May 15 to [revue.glad@gmail.com](mailto:revue.glad@gmail.com). More information about submissions is provided at the end of this document.

Established in 2016, *GLAD!* is a francophone journal dedicated to works that articulate gender, sexualities, and language. At a time when the journal is paying increasing attention to feminist issues of translation and circulation of knowledge, we would like, in this issue, to work across languages and spaces, and to publish texts written in various languages - in translation or not - in order to provoke intellectual encounters in an internationalist approach.

This issue aims at examining the relationship between linguistics and feminism, from the reflections of the pioneers who have invested the field to its current reconfigurations. This project proposes several axes of reflection:

- the place of politics (for researchers and speakers as well as in the discourses, objects of study, and theories),
- the epistemological dimension of a feminist approach to language and linguistics as well as a linguistic approach to gender and sexuality issues,
- and, finally, the new perspectives opened in linguistics by the contemporary reconfiguration of feminist questions, notably between materialism and queer.

Beyond the questions of inclusive writing, which are not at the heart of this issue, the first dimension that interests us is the political aspect of the relationship between feminism and linguistics. In France, in the 1980s, when the pioneers brought feminist issues into linguistic research, the status of politics within research in the humanities and social sciences was different from what it is today, and was more clearly affirmed. However, since the 1960s, the encounter between Marxism and structuralism had produced a linguistic turn for a certain number of disciplines in the humanities. In linguistics, it was not about embracing structuralism, which was already there, but about combining to it Marxism as "a philosophy of

language" (Bakhtine/Voloshinov [1929] 1977). Reading texts written in the 1970s and 1980s is striking in this respect: there is no doubt that language is political, as the works of the French school of discourse analysis show.

However, when reading the pioneers of feminist linguistics, one can feel the resistance that the field opposes to gender issues, and thus to feminist issues. In other words, feminism meets the same oppositions in linguistics as in other political spaces: priority is given to class struggle. In the last three decades, linguistics as a whole has discarded assumed political approaches (with the exception of certain critical approaches in sociolinguistics or discourse analysis). If sociolinguistics is interested in politics, it is only as an object and rarely as an epistemic "anchor". Interestingly, in this context, feminist research has resurfaced in linguistics, reinjecting the political issue into the linguistic agenda.

With this issue, we would like to propose a transnational reflection and discussion on the links between research and feminism. What are they like today in various countries and languages?

What can we do today with this political dimension in research? Does it allow us to see things differently? Does it uncover new objects and new relationships? What does the political aspect allow us to think that we could not think about otherwise? Moreover, do feminism and queer theories bring a specific approach to the political, compared to critical approaches as a whole? What are the current epistemic stakes in articulating a feminist thought, which is necessarily political, to research in linguistics, in which the political question seems to have been largely ignored in the face of the increasingly hegemonic claims of the principles of "neutrality"? Is it possible to tell a political history of linguistics, especially in its relationship to feminism? Is there a feminist linguistics today? What is the place of interdisciplinarity in current feminist linguistic research, in the sense of putting into relation knowledge built according to different procedures and different relationships to the construction of truth?

Moreover, how can we interpret the current hostile reactions to feminism that some linguists have? What is the political agenda (or agendas) of linguistics? Is linguistics capable of assuming a political agenda? Isn't this the battle that is currently being fought?

This leads to a broader question about the gender ideologies of linguists. Can we analyze the discourses of reactionary/conservative linguistics? How? And what position can we adopt? Are these discourses an object of study that needs to be museumized, or are they an emerging phenomenon that is epistemologically urgent to counteract?

The latest debates around inclusive writing, which have taken place perhaps more in the media than in scientific editorial spaces, show that theoretical positions in linguistics can sometimes be considered as hiding behind political readings of the contemporary world. Indeed, these debates are dictated by a media agenda and are willingly linked to issues that no one, apart from a few sociolinguists, has been concerned with in linguistics for the past 30 years: equality, citizenship, the fight against discrimination, secularism, etc. It is therefore difficult not to read in these reactions, whether reactionary or progressive, a political struggle for a vision of the world, but also a struggle about what linguistics should be.

It is good news that, willy-nilly, linguistics is back in the social arena. However, the recourse to arguments of objectivity and neutrality to claim greater scientificity prevents linguists from assuming political positions. Should we then, with Haraway (2007), defend the idea that clear

political positions allow for the production of better science? Or should we assume that linguists produce, or perhaps must sometimes produce, something other than science, namely taking part publicly and in their own right in debates and decisions on what society should be?

On the other hand, we can wonder about the links between linguistics and the different feminist currents. Feminist linguistics - at least in France - has historically been rooted in materialist feminism (Michard 1999, Violi 1987). So, can we speak of materialist linguistics? If so, is it a linguistics that is concerned with meaning in relation to the material conditions of existence? Is it a linguistics that considers the matter of language as a vector of ideologies (of gender)? Queer linguistics has grown in the United States and in Germany (Motschenbacher 2010, Motschenbacher & Stegu 2013, Hornscheidt 2007, Leap [2011] 2018, Milani 2018, etc.), but this perspective is still rare in France. What could be its principles? There is also a recent attempt to articulate materialist and queer currents within feminist theories. How can linguistics seize these new relationships and what can they bring? Finally, how can we respond to the new materialist feminism, which is based on an opposition to the consideration of linguistic questions?

From a theoretical and disciplinary standpoint, we can also ask what is the place of linguistics within feminist thought. Indeed, feminist humanities and social sciences have taken up language a lot. This has allowed for major conceptual contributions (performativity as redefined by Butler 2004, 2005, for example), but it has sometimes been at the cost of a lack of precision in the analyses and use of theories (see Ahmed 2019, for example). Is linguistics just a tool that serves feminist social science? Or can we think of a strong contribution of a feminist linguistics that would illuminate issues of gender and sexuality in a discipline-specific way?

Finally, we can question the contributions of feminist perspectives on the theories and methods of linguistics. Feminist theories would then be a "contributory epistemology" (Paveau 2018) to linguistics, which would move away from the consideration of gender as a mere object of research. While linguistics has so far kept feminist theory on the margins, it can be seen, conversely, as allowing for a fresh revisiting of some central questions in linguistics, like the opposition between language and discourse, or the tension between structuralism and post-structuralism. While structuralism is no longer claimed, nor even discussed, in the majority of contemporary works worldwide, is linguistics - including its new paradigms - still part of structuralism? How can different structuralisms, in their different declinations (materialism, Saussurean structuralism, Prague structuralism, anthropological structuralism, psychoanalysis, etc.), on the one hand, be articulated, and on the other hand, help us to think together the relations of domination and the resistances / dynamics of emancipation? What other paradigms would allow us to think these relations in their linguistic dimension?

In other words, are the various contributions of feminism to the articulation between the singular and the category able to inform linguistic theorizations? While feminist linguistics has shown how deeply gender and sexualities are shaped by languages and discourses, it has also shown how issues of gender and sexualities impact discourse and language, or at least theories of discourse and language (see the first issue of the journal GLAD!: [Abbou & al. 2016](#)) While social approaches to language have often stuck to a Bourdieusian reading of the social, feminist theories have proposed a multitude of ways to think about domination and power.

What theoretical and epistemological contributions of feminism are transferable to social approaches to language? How does it allow us to revisit classical notions of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis?

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## Submission details

If you are interested in contributing to the issue, please send a proposal (3,000 to 6,000 characters) to [revue.glad@gmail.com](mailto:revue.glad@gmail.com) by May 15, 2023.

The file will contain:

- the proposed title
- the name of the author(s)
- their possible institutional affiliation
- the e-mail address of the author responsible for the correspondence
- the abstract
- up to 6 bibliographic references
- the type of article envisaged: research note or critical review (25 000 characters), standard article (50 000 characters)

The accepted formats are: .doc ; .docx ; .rtf ; .odt

Abstracts may be submitted in the following languages: English, Romanian, Spanish, Italian, German, Turkish, Portuguese, French

The contributors will be informed by e-mail of the acceptance or refusal of their abstract by the editorial committee in charge of the selection. The acceptance of the abstract is not a commitment to publication but is an encouragement. The answer may be accompanied by remarks.

Authors whose proposals have been accepted will be invited to send their complete article, which will follow the editorial norms of the journal, available at the following address: <https://journals.openedition.org/glad/5325> (an English translation will be provided to authors).

### **Important dates**

- Deadline for proposals: May 15, 2023
- Notification of acceptance: June 15, 2023
- Full papers deadline: September 1, 2023
- Anonymous reviews sent by: October 30, 2023
- Estimated publication date: December 15