

Call for papers:

Language, Inequality and Global Care Work  
International Journal of the Sociology of Language Special Issue

Special Issue Editors: Kellie Gonçalves and Anne Schluter

Studies on care work have often been theorized from a feminist perspective that analyzes the intersection between gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and citizenship. Such studies find women's subordination in this work context to be a by-product of both capitalist and patriarchic structures, which, as part of the global economy, act to reinforce exploitive and asymmetrical relations (Rollins 1985; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1990; Parreñas Salazar 2000; Anderson 2001; Romero 2002; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004; Lan 2006; Lutz 2011; Romero et al. 2014). Many of these studies have focused on the nanny trade (Yeates 2005) and tend to be one-sided in their consideration of care workers' or employers' experiences only. These studies are valuable for raising awareness of the different forms of inequality surrounding care work; however, their scope needs to be expanded to include analysis of workers' acquisition of communicative skills and the communicative practices between care workers and their employers (Gonçalves 2015). To date, very few studies have considered the linguistic dimensions that are connected to race, ethnicity, gender, and class that affect the asymmetrical relations between transnational care workers and their employers or the social discrimination experienced by care workers based on their language proficiency.

This special issue of the International Journal of the Sociology of Language brings together empirical work by a diverse group of scholars from various settings to address issues of asymmetrical power relations within different care work contexts, including private home and institutionalized workplace settings. Moreover, we seek to explore the connections between the access to various symbolic resources and the power relations that ultimately influence and are influenced by language. Deconstructing the complex issues of these types of language use and language resources enhances our comprehension of the mechanisms through which employers maintain power over their workers and, in some cases, employees hold over fellow employees.

The investigation of discourse produced by employers and employees as well as the discourses surrounding the *Global Care Chain* at specific worksites allows us to reveal the complex structural dynamics at play on a micro-level. These dynamics are often reflected and constrained by macro social structures. A secondary goal of this issue, therefore, entails the interpretation of micro-level findings with respect to the

macro-level setting. As this special issue will include contributions from authors across different regional and national contexts, it aims to provide a comparative perspective on care work, language and inequality at both micro and macro levels. It will bring together research on care work that uses language and communication as a tool for evaluating the links between social categories (like class, race, ethnicity, citizenship and gender) and inequality experienced by care workers worldwide. Topics include:

- Analysis of the ways in which language and other semiotic resources influence social inequality across various transnational and minority language-speaking care work contexts.
- Examination of the pivotal role of language with respect to the links between labor markets and the socio-political factors that contribute to the current global flow of care workers.
- The construction and deconstruction of language-related inequality through employers' and employees' use of language to meet their communicative needs.
- Investigation into employers' legitimated domination (Grillo 1989) over care workers, especially migrant women and/or minority language speakers, and its influence over care workers' access to the language(s) of the host society.
- Evaluation of the effect of place: a comparison of the ways in which care workers and employers achieve communication in different workplace contexts. Such comparisons may include institutionalized settings, like hospitals or day care centers, versus private homes.

All papers will undergo full peer review. Authors interested in contributing should submit a title and abstract (up to 300 words) to the guest editors of the special thematic issue, Kellie Gonçalves ([goncalves@ens.unibe.ch](mailto:goncalves@ens.unibe.ch)) and Anne Schluter ([schluteranne@gmail.com](mailto:schluteranne@gmail.com)), by February 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. Subsequent to an initial abstract selection process, authors will be informed and invited to submit full papers for double-blind peer review by October 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. Publication of this special issue is anticipated in late 2017. For information about the journal and author guidelines, see: <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/ijsl>