Introduction to The Journal of Black Language and Culture (JBLAC)

Please ask questions using the chat and we welcome interaction in the chat!

We will post the video and the slides on the LSA & CUP sites

SIG of Black Language and Culture (SOBLAC)

https://www.lsadc.org/AF_MemberCommittee.asp?committeeid=41

- Increase the participation of scholars of Black language and culture at the LSA Annual Meeting.
- Develop and promote strategies to better incorporate the transdisciplinary study of Black language into the LSA community. This includes sharing these strategies with LSA leaders and assisting them with implementation.
- Create a space for scholars of Black language and culture to network and gain insight into relevant issues concerning the Black Diaspora and its languages.
- Recognize outstanding scholarship about Black language and culture by managing the nominations and selection process for The SOBLAC Award/Grant that is in development.
- Work in collaboration with the Committee for Ethnic Diversity in Linguistics (CEDL) to advance the participation of minoritized scholars in linguistics, particularly with respect to the professionalization and scholarship of linguists from across the Black Diaspora.

Any member of the LSA is welcome to join SOBLAC. To join this SIG, please click on the button below or login to the website and in the left side menu on the Member Portal click on "My Committees and SIGs."

Introduction to JBLAC

01. What is JBLAC?

04. **JBLAC** submissions

02. Why JBLAC?

05. JBLAC editorial team

03. JBLAC aims & scope

06. Looking ahead

What is JBLAC?

The Journal of Black Language and Culture (JBLAC) will be the fourth major journal established by the Linguistic Society of America (LSA).

This is a journal by, for, and about Black life, language, and culture.

We are committed to maintaining this dual focus — language and culture —not as parallel tracks, but as intertwined and mutually constitutive aspects of Black intellectual and expressive conditions.

Why is JBLAC needed?

Among other reasons, scholars of Black language and culture often face significant challenges in publishing their work, due in part to rigid disciplinary boundaries and the enduring legacy of racism within both linguistics and the academy more broadly

JBLAC will...

Fill a critical gap in scholarship by explicitly bridging the study of Black language practices with the cultural contexts from which they emerge—an intersection often overlooked by its cousin journals

Bring linguistics into step with peer disciplines that already have Black-centered and or race/culture-centered journals, such as

Transforming Anthropology
Journal of Black Studies
Journal of Black Psychology
The Journal of the National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing
Communication and Race
Sociology of Race and Ethnicity

JBLAC will also...

Provide an inclusive platform where researchers can explore the intersections of Black language and culture through a global, diasporic lens

Address the need for expanding the traditionally narrow definitions of linguistics to be more inclusive of critical interdisciplinary perspectives

Be a vital space for scholarship that might otherwise lack a fitting publication outlet within the broader linguistic discipline

Foster dialogue not only within linguistics but also between diverse fields that contribute to the study of Black language and culture

JBLAC Aims & Scope

What make JBLAC different from related journals?

What disciplines and what type of scholarship are relevant to JBLAC?

JBLAC's understanding of Blackness

Blackness is global, diasporic, multilingual, and multi-varietal

Concepts of Blackness are continually being explored by scholars of language and culture worldwide and members of the editorial board have both research and lived experience across the Black Diaspora

We intend to engage a diverse range of international audiences regarding Black language and culture, including contributing authors and an international readership

Journal Scope Statement

The Journal of Black Language and Culture (JBLAC), published by the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), fosters a transdisciplinary conversation on Black language and culture through a global, diasporic lens. Building on the momentum of previous LSA discussions, JBLAC provides an inclusive scholarly venue dedicated to centering Blackness as a framework of inquiry. The journal publishes original, high-quality research that explicitly engages Blackness as a social, cultural, and theoretical construct—examining the intersections of language, identity, and cultural practices across Black communities worldwide. Submissions that do not take Blackness as an explicit analytic framework fall outside the scope of the journal.

JBLAC welcomes contributions from a wide range of disciplines, including Black/Africana studies, African-American Studies, Linguistics, English, Modern Languages, Rhetoric and Composition, Education, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Feminist and Gender Studies, Spanish, Disability Studies, Latinx Studies, World Languages, Communication Studies, and American Studies. We particularly encourage scholarship that challenges traditional boundaries within linguistics and related fields while advancing new understandings of Black language and culture across the African diaspora.

JBLAC's interdisciplinary scope

Submissions will be accepted from a range of disciplines, including:

Linguistics, English, Modern & World Languages, Rhetoric and Composition, Communication Studies, Black Studies, Latinx Studies, American Studies, Education, Disability Studies, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Feminist and Gender Studies

What will differentiate and align JBLAC with its 'cousin journals' is that it interrogates and reimagines traditional frameworks of linguistic inquiry and cultural critique, offering new conceptual and methodological tools for understanding Black language.

Key journal rubrics

- 1. Are the ideas focused on a scholarly area concerning both Black language and culture?
- 2. Are they of interest to a transdisciplinary readership?
- 3. How well does the article's literature review situate the article in a broader Black language and culture context?
- 4. How comprehensively does the author consider the implications of the work for the lived experiences of Black people?
- 5. Does the article directly address ethical concerns regarding research practices and researcher positionality, such as how information was collected and analyzed, and how methodological choices were made?
- 6. How innovative and interdisciplinary are the ideas presented?

JBLAC Submissions

General publication process

20-24 articles annually, all open-access*

Articles published as they are accepted and processed (via a "continuous publication" workflow)

The majority of articles are expected to be between 8,000 and 10,000 words

What types of articles are accepted?



Article types

Review articles

Empirical articles

Interdisciplinary works

Pedagogical tools

"How Did You Do That?"

Student "FUBU" (For You By You)

Squibs

Article types

Review articles

Theoretical in nature

These articles survey key literature, theoretical frameworks, or major works to clarify or advance conceptual understandings. The work often takes the form of essays, field reviews, or book reviews, such as the introductory essay in the JBLAC issue.

Empirical articles

Qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, or rooted in humanistic inquiry

They should clearly state the study's population, methodology, and limitations, and may include deep interpretive or philosophical analysis aligned with the journal's themes.

Article types (cont)

Interdisciplinary works

Fuse research with poetry, nonfiction, lyrics, drama, or another medium to explore complex topics from multiple angles

Submissions may use empirical data or sources and appear as standalone works with author reflections or fully integrated formats within the word limit.

Pedagogical tools

Designed to be used in a teaching and learning environment

Submissions should clearly define the pedagogical issue, reflect on positionality and context, engage with relevant literature, and address justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) throughout.

Article types (cont)

"How Did You Do That?"

Articles that share practical, behind-the-scenes insights into conducting Black language and culture research, blending methodology with professional development

They highlight tools, strategies, and reflections often missing from traditional academic articles.

Student "FUBU" (For You By You)

Student-authored pieces, in any accepted genre, are crafted specifically for a student audience and classroom use.

They aim to be accessible, engaging, and directly usable in both P-12 and higher education settings.

Article types (cont)

Squibs

Concise articles (2,000–4,000 words) across any accepted category, offering sharp insights in a shorter format.

They are especially encouraged from faculty with heavy teaching responsibilities.

JBLAC Editorial Team Journal editors

Journal boards

Journal Editors



Anne Charity Hudley
Lead Editor



Aris ClemonsAssociate Editor



Mia Harris Managing Editor



Kendra Calhoun Assistant Editor



Kahdeidra Martin Assistant Editor



Lionnell 'Badu' SmithAssistant Editor



Ramon Stephens
Assistant Editor

Anne Charity Hudley, Ph.D

Lead Editor Stanford University

Dr. Anne H. Charity Hudley is the Bonnie Katz Tenenbaum Professor of Education at Stanford Graduate School of Education and Professor, by courtesy, of African and African American Studies and Linguistics. She is affiliated with the Stanford Center for Comparative Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) and the Symbolic Systems Program. Her work addresses the relationship between language variation and educational practices and policies, from preschool through graduate school, with a particular focus on creating high-impact practices for underrepresented students in higher education.

Charity Hudley is the author of five books with an emphasis on Black Language and culture, published with Teachers College Press, in addition to over fifty articles and book chapters. Charity Hudley has served on the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society of America. She has also served on the Standing Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English and as a consultant to the National Research Council Committee on Language and Education and to the National Science Foundation's Committee on Broadening Participation in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Sciences. She has served as an associate editor of Language and co-founded the Teaching Linguistics section of Language. She is a fellow of the Linguistics Society of America and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Aris Clemons, Ph.D

Associate Editor
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dr. Aris Clemons is an Assistant Professor of Spanish Linguistics in the World Languages department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She serves as an advisory board member of the Africana Studies Department, a steering committee member for the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program, and a faculty affiliate of the Interdepartmental Linguistics program. Applying Black feminist frames, her work spans the fields of linguistics, education, anthropology, and Black and Latinx studies to interrogate the intersections of language, race, and identity. Clemons is the founder and director of Clem Consulting LLC, where she offers creative solutions for non-profits.

Mia Harris, M.Sc.

Managing Editor
Stanford University

Mia Harris, M.Sc., is a Social Science Research Professional in the GSE Faculty Labs & Research department and Education Research Coordinator for the Stanford Black Academic Development Lab. Her research focuses on Black language, literacy, and creative expression, particularly as acts of resistance against misogynoir, capitalism, and racism. She is especially interested in how these forms relate to Black feminism, gender, love, joy, and resilience. Mia's current position provides her with predoctoral training in preparation for advanced graduate study. She plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Higher Education, focusing on curriculum and policy, and a master's degree in English, American Studies, or African American Studies. She aims to create culturally responsive writing, literacy, and literature programs for first-year college students.

Kendra Calhoun, Ph.D

Assistant Editor
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Dr. Kendra Calhoun is an Assistant Professor of Linguistic Anthropology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her research spans linguistics, anthropology, Black studies, and media studies, examining the intersections of language, identity, power, and technology. She analyzes African American language and culture in digital spaces and higher education to explore how ideologies of race and language shape the lived experiences of Black Americans.

Kahdeidra Martin, Ph.D

Assistant Editor Vassar College

Manbo Kahdeidra Monét Martin, Ph.D., is a Black American scholar-priestess of Haitian Vodou and scholar of language, education, and Africana religions. She is an Assistant Professor of Education at Vassar College, where she serves on the Accessibility Committee and advises the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life and Contemplative Practices. She uses the lens of translanguaging and community participatory methods to illuminate notions of linguistic and spiritual citizenship among Black Diasporic people, religious racism in schools, and liberatory religious literacy curricula.

Lionnell "Badu" Smith, Ph.D

Assistant Editor
San Francisco State University

Lionnell "Badu" Smith (Ph.D, University of Memphis) is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies at San Francisco State University. He is an Africana communication scholar whose research centers on Black pedagogical rhetorics, Black language rhetorics, and Black religious rhetorics. Using critical rhetorical and qualitative methods, he examines how Black speech practitioners, in both historical and contemporary contexts, use language and discourse to teach, transform, and transgress the world.

Ramon Stephens, Ph.D

Assistant Editor
San Jose State University

Dr. Ramon Stephens is a Professor at San Jose State University. Prior to this he was a Prism-Baker Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University. He is also co-founder and Executive Director of The Conscious Kid, an education nonprofit dedicated to supporting families, educators, and organizations in fostering healthy identity development through culturally responsive media and critical multicultural education across the lifespan.

Dr Stephens received his PhD in Education Studies at the University of California, San Diego. His expertise lies in culturally responsive curriculum and culturally nuanced forms of Belonging for Black students. At UC San Diego he was a UC President's Fellow, S.E.E.D Fellow, and a recipient of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) teaching award. At Stanford Dr. Stephens received the Justice, Equity, Diversity and inclusion (JEDI) award and the excellence in service award for research and unparalleled service supporting African Diasporic communities from the Black Services Center on campus.

Dr. Stephens has trained and consulted non-profits, corporations, and schools such as Google, Nickelodeon, Disney Junior, Marvel, the NFL Players Association, MLB players association, UC San Diego, the White House, and the Obama Foundation in belonging and cultural responsive programming. Dr. Stephens has presented his research at conferences including Stanford's Race, Inequality, Language and Education (RILE), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) and the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME).

Editorial Board

Marlyse Baptista, University of Pennsylvania John Baugh, Rice University Jennifer Bloomquist, Gettysburg College David Green, Howard University Shelome Gooden, University of Pittsburgh Yolanda Holt, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Alice Lee, University of California-Riverside Sonja Lanehart, University of Arizona Christine Mallinson, University of Maryland, Baltimore County Jamaal Muwwakkil, University of Washington L.J. Randolph Jr., University of Wisconsin-Madison Quentin Sedlacek, Southern Methodist University Quentin Williams, University of the Western Cape Walt Wolfram, North Carolina State University Tracey Weldon, University of South Carolina`

We will have a call for new board members
Join us at our next webinar for more information

Friday, December 12 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Looking ahead

Introductory special issue

Potential special issues

Ideas for what could come next

JBLAC's Inaugural Issue

This invited issue will set the scene for the journal

12 commissioned articles representing the range of submission types the journal will accept

Publication and Liberation: An Introduction to The Journal of Black Language and Culture

Anne Charity Hudley, Lead Editor, Stanford University

Mia Harris Managing Editor, Stanford University

Ramon Stephens Assistant Editor, San Jose State University

Lionnell Smith Assistant Editor, San Francisco State University

Kevin Anderson JBLAC Graduate Fellow, Stanford University

Ericka Canon JBLAC Graduate Fellow, Stanford University

Jaylen Pittman
JBLAC Graduate Fellow, Stanford University

Culture vs. Curse: How can Black linguistic and cultural practices inspire Black health practices?

Keith Cross, Independent Scholar

To the White House and Beyond

Sharese King, University of Chicago

Black for the First Time: Black Community Identification through Racial Socialization at a Historically White Institution

Jamaal Muwwakkil, University of Washington

Talkin That "Kitchen Table" Talk: Black Scholars' Reflections on Teaching Liberatory Linguistics at the Doctoral Level

Shenika Hankerson, University of Maryland
L.J. Randolph, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Negotiating Blackness: Phonological Variation and Identity Among Haitian Americans in Boston

Monica Nesbitt, Indiana University

Guadalupe Ortega, UC Santa Barbara

How Did You Do That? Black Creolists on Fieldwork in Creole Language Communities

Joy Peltier, Ohio State University

African American Language in STEM: A secondary analysis of teacher survey data

Quentin Sedlacek, Southern Methodist University

Liv T. Dávila, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Jill Hallett, University of Illinois, Chicago

Kahdeidra Monét Martin, Vassar College

Michael A. Shepherd, CSU, Fresno

My Race is Dominican: Negotiating Ethno-racial Realities in Differing Host Contexts

Aris Clemons, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

African American English Prosody and Implications for Education

Hazel Lowy, Stanford University (student author)

Languaging Gender in Zora Neale Hurston's "Now You Cookin' With Gas"

deandre miles-hercules, University of California -Santa Barbara

The Case for Case Studies in African American Language

Walt Wolfram, North Carolina A&T University

Conclusion

Shelome Gooden, University of Pittsburgh

Timeline

Website is up by January 2026

First articles up early 2026

Open for submissions mid-2026

Future Webinars

To celebrate our launch, we're hosting a series of webinars on how to submit to the journal, join the editorial board, and explore our first special themes.

Interested in continuing the conversation? Sign up for an upcoming session through the LSA website—you'll find the schedule on the next slides.

Call for Editorial Board: Members and

Reviewers Friday, December 12 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Learn about the roles and responsibilities of the Editorial, Reviewer, and Senior Advisory Boards.

History of Publishing on Black Language and Culture

Friday, February 6 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Hear about the legacies of Black scholars in publishing and reflect on how these histories inform JBLAC's present mission.

What and How to Submit to JBLAC

Friday, April 17 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Practical guidance for preparing and submitting manuscripts to the journal.

FUBU Student Submissions

Friday, June 26 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Explicitly designed for students, this session will focus on empowering emerging scholars to contribute their voices to JBLAC

A Look at JBLAC's Special Themes

Friday, August 21 at 3 pm PST/6 pm EST

Understand the focus and goals of JBLAC's upcoming themes.

Questions?

You can email us at jblac@lsadc.org or drop into one of our JBLAC Editor Office Hours during the times listed below:

- Thursday, Nov 20th at 9 am PT
- Thursday, Jan 22nd at 2 pm PT
- Friday, Feb 20th at 9 am PT
- March: We will have open slots for meetings at the Georgetown Roundtable on Linguistics Conference, more information to follow!
- April: We will have open slots for meetings at the American Education Research Association Conference, more information to follow!

Let's Stay Connected!

Instagram: @jblacjournal

LinkedIn: Journal of Black Language and

Culture

Facebook: Journal of Black Language and

Culture

Make sure to follow us on socials so you are up to date with journal updates!

Potential Special Themed Papers

Speaking Our Salvation: The Language of Black Love

Black Queerness and Sexualities

Health Is Wealth: Black Language and the Practice of Care

Black Womanhood and Feminisms

Spoken Soul: The Language and Literacies of Africana Spirituality

Blackness and Digital Technology

Joy Is a Language Too: Exploring Black Joy

Hip Hop Literacies/Multimedia

Black Media

Curriculum, Teacher Talks, Education

Higher Education

Language Arts, Literature, and Literacies

Academic Freedom

Collective Liberation

Cross-racial/ethnic solidarity/intersectionality (US and International)

Tribute to Dr. Geneva Smitherman

The Next 10 Years

Black World Languages

Blackness and Digital Technology

Digital technologies – from digital devices, to apps and social media platforms, to artificial intelligence – permeate contemporary societies. For better or worse, they shape the ways we understand ourselves, interact with others, document experiences, and learn information. They likewise influence the institutions that structure our everyday lives, from education to healthcare to government.

This themed issue centers on the following questions:

- How are Blackness, language, and digital technologies interconnected?
- How do digital technologies influence our behaviors, including language and interaction?
- How do we use digital technologies to produce, circulate, and represent Black language and culture?
- How do digital technologies (fai to) "understand" Black language and culture?
- How do digital technologies marginalize Black language and culture?
- How are digital technologies used to resist marginalization?

Blackness and Digital Technology

Articles in this issue explore topics such as (but not limited to):

- Racial and/or linguistic biases in digital technology's design, production, regulation, and/or use
- Ideologies about digital technology
- Digital cultures (e.g., fandoms)
- Digitally-mediated communication (e.g., texting, social media, dating apps, podcasts)
- Assistive language technologies (e.g., text-to-speech, speech recognition)
- "Artificial intelligence" / Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, algorithms, deepfakes)
- Surveillance technologies (e.g., facial recognition, police cameras)
- Specific digital devices (e.g., mobile phones) and their contextualized use

The Next 10 Years of JBLAC

This approach is greatly inspired by the Needed Research in American Dialects (https://read.dukeupress.edu/pads/issue/108/1) series and in memory of the recent passing of Bob Bayley, the editor of the latest edition. My chapter in that volume with Aris Clemons and Daniel Villareal is attached.

Anne H. Charity Hudley, Dan Villarreal, Aris Moreno Clemons; 14. (Socio)linguistics—What Is It Good For? A Case for Liberatory Linguistics. *Publication of the American Dialect Society* 1 December 2023; 108 (1): 268–288. doi: https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-11036968

The Next 10 Years of JBLAC

We're also inspired here by our open-access decolonizing chapter, but we want this article to focus on our scholarly research work. Now that we have been working on our collectivity and humanization, we gotta set our agenda out in print.

Charity Hudley, Anne H., and others, 'Solidarity and Collectivity in Decolonizing Linguistics: A Black Diasporic Perspective,' in Anne H. Charity Hudley, Christine Mallinson, and Mary Bucholtz (eds), *Decolonizing Linguistics* (New York, 2024; online edn, Oxford Academic, 30 Apr. 2024), https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197755259.003.0016, accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

The Next 10 Years of JBLAC article: Building a Bigger Blacker **Linguistics Towards our Collective Liberation**

Black Language and Culture: The next 10 years

Anne Charity Hudley and Mia Harris

Paper draft: https://docs.google.com/document/d/10g018j6DyH0k_B_sE4V2FGBDJjrKKLeE3E1YNwlhtJA/edit?tab=t.jlp52btqv92z

Abstract

Over the past ten years, the study of Black language and culture has undergone an expansive transformation, ushered in by a new generation of scholars building upon — and moving beyond – the work of the field's foundational predecessors. This article presents a critical remuneration and contextualization of work from important emerging scholars published in the last 10 years. Since the publication of the Oxford Handbook of African American Language, edited by Sonja Lanehart, a new cohort of both linguists and interdisciplinary researchers has emerged, reinvigorating the field with fresh empirical, theoretical, and digital methodologies. This article presents a critical remuneration and contextualization of work from important emerging scholars published in the last 10 years. These scholars are now gaining visibility not only within linguistics departments but also in affiliated fields. Still, they are also expanding the scope of black language study to include digital platforms, legal analysis, and community-centered models of knowledge production. These developments mark a pivotal moment in the field of black language research, as the field redefines itself in the midst of evolving academic, social, and technological contexts.

Black Language and Culture: The next 10 years

Christine Mallinson and Chloe Evered

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m8EW7iZF41dOnATMTvJcO7JxNLawQDAC/edit

- One research thread for JBLAC to highlight is how Black scholars and faculty navigate their professional
 experiences in institutions of higher education. Understanding how intersecting structural, cultural, and
 symbolic factors related to language affect academic participation and career mobility for Black faculty is a
 critical yet surprisingly underexplored and understudied area.
- JBLAC can provide a venue for Black faculty to write and publish work on their experiences in academia across disciplines and institutions, as well as a home for scholarship on approaches to building infrastructure and community within and across institutions to support Black faculty.
- Writing about and disseminating work on the methodology of collaborative infrastructure-building projects, like the research project that Christine Mallinson and Anne Charity Hudley co-led for three years, funded by the National Science Foundation's Build and Broaden program, has provided replicable models for racial justice-oriented, decolonial work, resulting in far-reaching and long-lasting impacts.
- The B2 project provides a model that leverages key insights from linguistics, as well as disciplinary commitments to studying Black language practices, to explore how linguistic and cultural factors lead to academic barriers and pathways for Black scholars.

Questions for our discussion

What has been the most impactful work on Black Language And Culture in the past 10 years (from 2015-2025)?

What should scholars focus on in the study of Black Language and Culture in the next 10 years (from 2025-2035)?

What are some of the things we should focus on in the study of Black language and culture that will really help Black people?

What is some of the nerdy stuff we should focus on in the next 10 years? We welcome answers from any disciplinary or transdisciplinary approach.

What would you like to see JBLAC be in 10 years? How will 10 years of JBLAC have the potential to change the study of Black Language and culture in both the academy and in communities?

What has been the most impactful work on Black Language And Culture in the past 10 years (from 2015-2025)?

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z4JmUXxycev4w9npjAmeH9M7TCQf_yqdptRQsFUmKL0/edit?tab=t.0

What should scholars focus on in the study of Black Language and Culture in the next 10 years (from 2025-2035)?

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z4JmUXxycev4w9npjAmeH9M7TCQf_yqdptRQsFUmKL0/edit?tab=t.0

What are some of the things we should focus on in the study of Black language and culture that will really help Black people?

What is some of the nerdy stuff we should focus on in the next 10 years? We welcome answers from any disciplinary or transdisciplinary approach.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z4JmUXxycev4w9npjAmeH9M7TCQf_yqdptRQsFUmKL0/edit?tab=t.0

What would you like to see JBLAC be in 10 years? How will 10 years of JBLAC have the potential to change the study of Black Language and culture in both the academy and in communities?

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z4JmUXxycev4w9npjAmeH9M7TCQf_yqdptRQsFUmKL0/edit?tab=t.0

To the White House and Beyond

Sharese King, University of Chicago In this paper, I reflect on the experience of presenting at the White House, walking the reader through the initial invitation to speak to the actual presentation itself. Through this recounting, I discuss the topics and research I highlight in the talk, while revealing lessons I have learned about expanding this work to wider audiences. Foregrounding what it means to carry out such research as a first-generation, African American woman employed by an R1 institution, I lay out suggestions for both doing publicly-engaged research or research with a social purpose, while also demonstrating academic rigor and excellence favorable to promotion. Such goals include: 1) Asking research questions that are socially-informed at the outset of forming research agendas, 2) Collaborating with students, faculty, and practitioners who have similar research interests, even if such work extends beyond sociolinguistics and/or the field of linguistics itself, and 3) expanding the range of audiences we engage by publishing in both linguistics and non-linguistics journals, as well as helping to produce materials beyond the academy that can be used for public education.

Culture vs. Curse: How can Black linguistic and cultural practices inspire Black health practices?

Keith Cross, Independent Scholar I created the song, Diabetes vs Discipline to inform and inspire diabetes-impacted communities, and to shift the prevailing discourse regarding diabetes into a narrative of empowerment. Motivated by the premature deaths of my father and two of my younger brothers to diabetic complications, and while battling my own prediabetes, I composed Diabetes vs Discipline to address the psycho-social factors impacting diabetic patients and their families, and to provide specific examples of health management through diet and exercise. But what does a music video about overcoming diabetes have to do with a Journal of Black Language And Culture? Well, besides my use of a Black American-originating cultural and linguistic practice (i.e., MCing / Hip Hop music) to get the message across, or even the fact that Black Americans are disproportionately represented among the diabetes-impacted communities in my intended audience, I created Diabetes vs Discipline with the most basic unit of Black cultural dissemination and reproduction in mind—-the Black family. For me, unfortunately, diabetes is: a family affair.

Black for the First Time: Black Community Identification through Racial Socialization at a Historically White Institution

Jamaal Muwwakkil, University of Washington This article is informed by previous research on Black students' experiences at HWIs like UCSB, we introduce the idea of "hubs of Black community socialization" to shed light on this process of socialization into Black community and discuss Black student activism in relation to this process. We then analyze data from my interviews with Black undergraduates and a Black faculty member to show how some of the students in my study came to identify with Black community during their college years and others did not. Naming the institutional resources (i.e., hubs of Black community socialization) students engage on campus serves to 1) validate and underexplored benefit of resourcing these entities, and 2) highlights recourse to address the social, emotional, and psychological needs Black students exhibit within the HWI context.

Talkin That "Kitchen Table" Talk: Black Scholars' Reflections on Teaching Liberatory Linguistics at the Doctoral Level

Shenika Hankerson, University of Maryland

L.J. Randolph, University of Wisconsin

This article offers a collaborative reflection by two Black scholars on their experiences toward cultivating liberatory linguistics in two doctoral courses rooted in Black Language (BL). Drawing inspiration from the shared storytelling and intellectual richness of kitchen table talk in qualitative research, the authors candidly explore their teaching positionalities and practices, reflecting on the successes, challenges, and personal growth they encountered throughout their instructional journeys. They engage deeply with critical topics such as decolonizing linguistics, abolitionist teaching, and navigating institutional barriers while teaching knowledge about BL and Black people alike. This work emphasizes the value of storytelling and knowledge sharing among Black scholars while offering practical, actionable recommendations for centering BL in academic spaces. Moreover, it makes a valuable contribution to current discussions about creating Black liberatory educational experiences that challenge colonial narratives, promote critical consciousness, and empower Black students to engage with their racial and linguistic identities in authentic and meaningful ways.

African American Language in STEM: A secondary analysis of teacher survey data

Quentin Sedlacek Southern Methodist University

Liv T. Dávila, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

> Jill Hallett University of Illinois, Chicago

Kahdeidra Monét Martin Vassar College

Michael A. Shepherd CSU, Fresno African American Language is widely used in the United States, and extensive research and community organizing efforts have sought to combat the stigmatization of African American Language in language arts education. However, little research has examined African American Language in the context of STEM education. In this study, we share novel quantitative analyses of pooled data from previously published surveys of in-service science teachers and pre-service teachers of varied subjects, as well as previously unpublished data from an additional population of pre-service teachers. We explore patterns in the written feedback and inferences teachers generate in response to student science writing (including writing samples with AAL features) and their associations with attitudes toward AAL and conceptualizations of race and racism. Implications for linguistics, teacher education, and STEM education are discussed.

Negotiating Blackness: Phonological Variation and Identity Among Haitian Americans in Boston

Guadalupe Ortega UC Santa Barbara

Monica Nesbitt Indiana University

Despite increasing research on African American Language, little is known about how sociopolitical factors shape phonological variation and change in immigrant Black communities (though see Blake and Shousterman 2010; Lacoste 2021; Sims 2023 for a few examples). Our study fills this gap by offering insights into how racial and ethnic identity shape sound change in the Black community in Boston, Massachusetts. Using data from the Eastern Massachusetts Life and Language Project (Nesbitt & Watts 2022), we analyze r-lessness and the African American Vowel Shift in 32 hour-long sociolinguistic interviews with 16 Haitian- and 16 African-American women born between 1982 and 2002. This study is among the first to examine Caribbean American participation in the African American Vowel Shift, adding nuance to existing research by highlighting how second-generation Haitian Americans position themselves within the broader Black linguistic landscape.

How Did You Do That? Black Creolists on Fieldwork in Creole Language Communities

Joy Peltier, Ohio State University

This article draws from semi-structured interviews with two preeminent creolists about carrying out linguistic fieldwork with Creole language communities. The talk is based on their accounts, in addition to the presenter's own experiences, and offers insight into what Creole language fieldwork can be like, particularly for Black linguists with personal connections to the communities that make our research possible. First, the presenter discusses all three creolists' positionalities, as well as the communities they partnered with and their research aims. Next, the presenter delves into key topics, such as relationships with individuals and organizations at the field site; navigating variation in language practices and attitudes; designing approaches to data collection/usage and compensation that are responsive to local norms and interests; budgeting and IRB proposal writing; and arranging on-the-ground necessities. The talk concludes with recommendations to those interested in doing fieldwork of their own, particularly with users of contact languages

Languaging Gender in Zora Neale Hurston's "Now You Cookin' With Gas"

deandre miles-hercules, University of California, Santa Barbara In this paper, miles-hercules analyzes lesser-studied aspects of Zora Neale Hurston's contributions to the documentation of Black American language and culture, specifically what they describe as the "cool brotha" register and its presence in "Now You Cookin With Gas," (1942), one of her rarely discussed short stories. The register is principally of language, gestures, and clothing that together index a type of urban, working-class, Black masculinity, now most closely associated with the 1970s. They examine how Hurston's portrayal of the cool brotha through her story's two protagonists provides functions as both documentation of social relations in late Depression-era Harlem as well as a critique of how the register can be used as a tool of misogynoir

African American English Prosody and Implications for Education

Hazel Lowy, Stanford University This article reviews current research on the prosody of African American English (AAE), and of African American (and Black Diasporic) speakers more broadly. Prosody provides substantial perceptual information for listeners in identifying speakers, as well as important social information relating to affect. It thus plays a crucial role in everyday language interaction and in education, where educator perception of students is crucial in determining student success and learning. Prosody encompasses a range of features that can exhibit variation across varieties and within speakers of the same variety. This overview of prosodic research aims to understand the production and perception of prosody by African American speakers with implications for countering harmful and discriminatory practices in education.

The Case for Case Studies in African American Language

Walt Wolfram,

North Carolina State University

Though African American Language (AAL) has been the most studied language variety within sociolinguistics for more than half century, most studies have used a quantitative paradigm and aggregate groups for analysis while ignoring and minimizing case studies of individuals and families. This study demonstrates the utility of case studies to complement aggregate-group studies given the diversity of circumstances in which African Americans have lived as individuals and families. The case of a single African American family that lived on the Island of Ocracoke for 150 years demonstrates how individual circumstance and interethnic interaction have affected dialect in the family in a unique way. During their lifetime residency on Ocracoke, the family retained prominent features of AAL—despite the dominance of the unique Anglo dialect on the island for centuries (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1997; Reaser, Wolfram, and Gaskill 2025). We show how school segregation and community circumstance led to the persistence of AAL structures based on an ethnic-based community of practice. We further uncover a strong gender effect that allows men more open community participation in same-sex activities like fishing, playing poker and pool, resulting in the acquisition of some iconic island dialect features while preserving AAL. The ethnographic perspective in case studies provides an explanation that emerges from understanding the context of the community as well as individual interactional circumstances. Case studies buoyed by ethnographic observation assist the researcher to understand why and how linguistic accommodation works within the community in general and within the African American community in particular, and why different individuals make their choices about accommodation. Finally, we argue that case study is the approach that is most likely to reveal the effects of speaker agency as different speakers form their sociolinguistic personae within the community context.

Conclusion

Shelome Gooden, University of Pittsburgh

This article summarizes the entries in this inaugural issue of the Journal of Black Language and Culture (JBLAC) while offering a perspective as a black academic, diasporic scholar/linguist, and co-Editor of Language, the flagship journal of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA). I summarize the editors' overview of the journal's aims and objectives as the first of its kind in the LSA's arsenal of scholarly journals, its fourth main publication. Since JBLAC intends to widen the scope of traditional linguistics journals by including varied disciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives on Black language and culture, JBLAC is in effect broadening the scope and reach of the LSA. This is a step (which the editors noted) that has already been taken by peer-reviewed learned societies and their associated journals, e.g., Psychology, Anthropology, and Speech and Hearing Sciences.