

Constrained multilingualism

Call for contributions

Special issue of *Language and Intercultural Communication*

Guest Editor:

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Scholars have started to highlight that contemporary research on fluid language practices lacks attention to constraints (Dovchin 2022; May 2022; Prinsloo 2024) and more recently that developing linguistically does not necessarily mean breaking free from the undesired (Canagarajah 2022; 2023). For multilinguals, this might well include making meaning without working toward changing one's condition. On the contrary, current conditions can be places where much linguistic work takes shape or even where multilingualism grows. More broadly, doing something new linguistically can happen without leaving behind a situation where one is not entirely able to do everything they wish to, which resonates with the insight Michel de Certeau (1990) arrived at when realising that in their everyday life many people act creatively within something given (Santello 2022).

This proposed special issue aims to uncover what happens when multilingualism is constrained and how constrained multilingualism works for meaning-making. In other words, it gives room to research exploring **multilingualism that remains constrained because multilinguals do not have full control of circumstances and doing**. It is intended to do justice to what occurs at the empirical level so that what has been brought up theoretically can be validated, improved, amended, honed and thought out. Altogether, the articles in this issue could help 'revisit the assumption around transcendence of boundaries as the touchstone of multilingualism' (Santello 2024), precisely giving an enhanced consideration of what it means to operate linguistically within something given. It is therefore in line with scholars such as Gramling (2021), who urge to rethink multilingualism as a praxis under pressure, beyond the consideration of macro-level dynamics that are assumed to hamper it.

Topics may include the following aspects:

- What do constraints entail for multilingual migrants, and what does it mean concretely for them to inhabit what is given?
- In what way can language practices show that multilingualism and constraints are not necessarily in opposition with one another?
- What is the value of looking at multilingual practices as they operate within constraints rather than going beyond them?
- How do multilinguals recount the constraints they encounter and how do these intertwine with language practices in productive ways?

The special issue has received preliminary approval for publication in the SCI-rated journal *Language and Intercultural Communication* for probable publication in mid-2026. Researchers who are interested in contributing to this special issue are invited to submit a 200-word abstract to the guest editor using the following email address: marco.santello@unito.it. In the same file they should also include a 50-word biographical profile, as well as their affiliation (if any) and email address. Accepted abstracts will be included in the special issue plan to be sent for approval and, subsequently, upon submission acceptance notification, authors may be invited to submit a 7000-word article for double-blind peer review, in accordance with the journal's editorial requirements.

Final contributions should not exceed 8000 words, including bibliography and all additional material.

Timeline:

- Proposed abstract submission: November 21st, 2024
- Abstract acceptance notification subsequent to LAIC review: February 2025
- Deadline for manuscripts submission: September 16th, 2025