# Speaking English, speaking French: how to (re)think the linguistic interaction in the "global English" era?

In the era of global English, the question of the interaction between French and English is increasingly topical, and occurs in many contexts. If it can be heard on a daily basis through the use of "franglais" (*frenglish*), some gallicisms in English, or the absence of translation of certain technical terms, it is appropriate to question this relationship, which can sometimes be problematic.

The passing of certain laws, intended to regulate this cohabitation considered dangerous, such as the Toubon law in France or Bill 101 in Quebec, leads us to take a closer look at the nature of these interactions. Indeed, how is this relationship between French and English formally illustrated? How do linguistic phenomena such as interference, borrowing, code-switching, and code-mixing manifest themselves?

Indeed, some differences between these two languages are not translatable and do not have the same effect on the audience. For example, the fact that the French language is gendered while English is not can lead to certain misunderstandings. There are several methods to approach a linguistic analysis of these differences: we will particularly take into account the semantic analyses, which question differences in the expression of modality and the speaker's commitment. We will also consider the question of the relation to the world and the speech act theory developed by Austin and Searle; is there a gap, beyond words, in the way speakers refer to the world depending on the language they use? This question echoes the idea of "Thinking for speaking" developed by Slobin. Indeed, this hypothesis states that speakers formulate their sentences based both on their understanding of a situation and what their language allows them to express (grammatically, in terms of vocabulary, etc.). Questioning the interaction between French and English is therefore both understanding the formal differences between these two languages and determining how these differences can have an impact on communication.

This ambivalent relationship is also illustrated in the literature. Some authors, such as Jacques Prévert with "Chant song" (1949), emphasize the playful potential of this interaction, while others, such as Michèle Lalonde with "Speak white" (1968), denounces linguistic imperialism. To what extent do these two antagonistic perceptions depend on the context (geographical, social, cultural, etc.) in which they

take place? In what way can the use of these languages reflect ideological power relations? Can the formal differences between English and French explain a gap in their artistic use, or does their joint use, on the contrary, develop new meaning, both linguistic and literary?

This first meeting between the Canada and Washington centers of the *Institut des Amériques* intends to ask these questions during a "study day" on **Monday, May 30, 2022**. Open exclusively to young researchers who wish to present their work, this online day-long conference seeks to bring together masters and doctoral students from different disciplines. Indeed, the question of the linguistic interaction between French and English concerns several fields in the humanities and social sciences, even outside of linguistics and literary studies: history or sociology, for example, can account for these varied interactions. The goal of this day is to understand the interests of young researchers on issues concerning the interaction between the two languages and to bring new reflections on this topic. It will be an opportunity for participants to converse as specialists, of course, but also as speakers of their respective languages, in anticipation of an international colloquium to be held in 2023.

The study-day will feature 20-minute individual presentations in French and English. These presentations will be followed by 10 minutes of questions and exchanges with the audience and other presenters. Proposals (250-word description and a short biographical note) should be submitted in the language of your choice to **je.canada.washington@gmail.com** before midnight on **Friday, April 15 2022**.

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