Globalisation has helped the world-wide spread and further entrenchment of Standard English in many obvious ways. What is noted less often is the fact that globalisation has also promoted the spread of a number of non-standard varieties of English and English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. The present paper traces the transnational impact of Nigerian Pidgin (henceforth NP), a vernacular which has experienced considerable geographical dispersion in the wake of global currents of migration and additional diffusion through the media and the participatory Web. This has resulted in (1) non-traditional modes of contact between NP and other vernaculars, (2) massive language-ideological loading or "enregisterment" (Agha 2003) of NP in the diaspora situation, and (3) commodification (Heller 2003, Cameron 2012) of non-standard language practices involving NP resources in the global media and entertainment industries.

To support these claims, I will analyse a large corpus of posts to a Nigerian diasporic web forum (244,048 posts produced between 2005 and 2008 by 11,718 members, amounting to a total of ca. 17.3 million words). Quantitative methods will be used to visualise location of contributors in geographical space. A qualitative ethnographic approach will serve to compare resident Nigerians’ and US-based Nigerian immigrants’ use of and attitude towards NP and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) linguistic resources.


Keywords: Diaspora, Nigerian Pidgin, Computer-Mediated Communication.