

Remediating Postcolonialism: the need for aural criticism

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Audiobooks have grown in popularity over the past few decades, but this popularity is limited to recreational listenership with little interest from academic scholarship. This gap is especially noticeable in the study of African audiobooks. This paper recognises the exciting possibilities that audiobooks present as a site of critical interrogation and a medium of representing identity through the spoken word. In this paper I argue that the study of audiobooks demands a radical methodological shift from the traditional mode of written scholarship to an intermedial based approach, which I term aural critical theory (ACT). ACT borrows from media, translation, and post colonial studies to argue for a combination of strategies of writing and sound recording technology in the formulation and presentation of critical arguments. This approach is, in the first instance, a means to address the question of accessibility to literary and English studies, and second, to advance the decolonial project. ACT aspires to enable both literate and non-literate consumers of literature to engage in critical discourse and contribute effectively to the field. This paper hopes to begin a long overdue conversation, nested in advancing the decolonial agenda, through the exploration of the audiobook medium as a site of articulating identity.

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Sitzung Einordnung: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Audiobooks