

From:	Frances Giampapa ( <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> )
Date:	Fri 27/04/2012 13:37
<p>Welcome to all new UKLEF members!</p> <p>I am re-circulating the chapter, the e-seminar announcement for the upcoming e-seminar which will run on this list from April 30 – May 18.(see the UKLEF webpage/announcement attached. See also below a link to the introduction on Amazon.</p> <p>Chapter 10 - Intercultural Communication in a Multilingual World - is from Ingrid Piller's 2011 book titled: Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.</p> <p>This will provide the basis for an email based discussion on this list, starting April 30th with a response by Aneta Pavlenko. The floor will then be open to all UKLEF members.</p> <p>I am also sending the following link to the introduction on Amazon :</p> <p><a href="http://www.amazon.co.uk/Intercultural-Communication-Introduction-Ingrid-Piller/dp/0748632840">http://www.amazon.co.uk/Intercultural-Communication-Introduction-Ingrid-Piller/dp/0748632840</a></p> <p>Many thanks again to Ingrid and Aneta. Please wait until Aneta's response is posted on April 30th. This will open the discussion for all LEF members.</p> <p>Best wishes</p> <p>Frances Giampapa UKLEF Meetings Secretary</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Dr. Frances Giampapa Lecturer in Education (TESOL/Applied Linguistics) Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Globalisation, Education and Societies (Migration, Language and Identities) Joint Co-ordinator of EthicNet <a href="http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet">http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet</a></p> <p>Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol 35 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1JA</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> Telephone: 44(0)117 331 4499 (internal): 14499</p>	

From:	Frances Giampapa ( <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> )
Date:	Mon 30/04/2012 11:09
<p>Dear UKLEF members,</p> <p>Please find attached Aneta Pavlenko's response to Ingrid Piller's book chapter - Intercultural Communication in a Multilingual World - from Ingrid Piller's 2011 book titled: Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.</p> <p>This officially opens the e-seminar starting today and ending May 18th. I look forward to engaging in this discussion.</p> <p>I am also recirculating the following link to the introduction on Amazon : <a href="http://www.amazon.co.uk/Intercultural-Communication-Introduction-Ingrid-Piller/dp/0748632840">http://www.amazon.co.uk/Intercultural-Communication-Introduction-Ingrid-Piller/dp/0748632840</a> and attached chapter for new members.</p> <p>Warmest thanks to Aneta for getting the ball rolling and to both Ingrid and Aneta for pushing us to think more critically.....</p> <p>Best wishes</p> <p>Frances Giampapa UKLEF Meetings Secretary</p> <p>----- Dr. Frances Giampapa Lecturer in Education (TESOL/Applied Linguistics) Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Globalisation, Education and Societies (Migration, Language and Identities) Joint Co-ordinator of EthicNet <a href="http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet">http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet</a></p> <p>Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol 35 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1JA</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> Telephone: 44(0)117 331 4499 (internal): 14499</p>	

From:	Ingrid Piller ( <a href="mailto:ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU">ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU</a> )
Date:	Mon 30/04/2012 20:42

Hi all,

Thank you for participating in this e-seminar! Special thanks to Frances for organizing it and to Aneta for kicking it off! I'd thought I'd add a few remarks to Aneta's.

#### WHAT IS A LANGUAGE?

As Aneta points out, the discursive construction of language and culture is fundamental to contemporary sociolinguistics and that presents us with the challenge that academic views are in conflict with widely-held ideologies about languages and cultures as bounded objects. A problem with reading a book chapter that was never meant to be a stand-alone piece is that the other chapters are missing, and much of my discussion of the contextual and interested construction of language can be found in Chapter 4 ('Language and culture'), where I basically elaborate on Weinreich's dictum 'a language is a dialect with an army and a navy' with examples from Medieval Europe and Colonial Africa.

Aneta is right in considering talk about language itself a fundamental dilemma in the field - not only as we try and communicate our research outside academia but also as a fundamental constraint on the way research projects are designed. Still too often research problems that are fundamentally nothing but variants of 'how do X-ians communicate with Y-ians' get designed, carried out and published without ever questioning who gets to define who the legitimate/natural/obvious X-ians and Y-ians are, in the manner Bourdieu has faulted linguists many years ago:

To speak of the language, without further specification, as linguists do, is tacitly to accept the official definition of the official

language of a political unit. (Language and Symbolic Power, 1991, p. 45)

One way in which I have been pushing at those tacit acceptances and communicating them as questionable beliefs to a wider audience has recently been in a video exhibition of the life stories of transnational migrants with ties to Australia and Japan, which I curated together with my colleague Kimie Takahashi at <http://www.languageonthemove.com/japanese-on-the-move>.

Particularly relevant for the discussion here is the story of a non-Asian Japanese-speaking family, who speak about how often their use of Japanese is disbelieved ('Did you really just speak Japanese?' ...) or questioned ('Why don't you speak English? ...') Watch here <http://www.languageonthemove.com/hossain-azimi> and here <http://www.languageonthemove.com/angela-turzynski-azimi>. These videos demonstrate nicely that making our choices understood is not only an academic but a real-life problem - and one where I would love to see more research!

#### THE LANGUAGE-CULTURE INTERFACE

As Aneta points out, the language-culture interface continues to be a vexing problem, not least because there is an assumption that the language-culture interface is some sort of universal relationship. However, like language, culture and communication, the language-culture interface, too, plays out differently in different contexts. One of my specific interests has been how 'culture' becomes such an easy pretext for judging people and denying them access to all kinds of privileges (I have been particularly interested in migrant access to employment in my research). Again, to my mind, the key question is how we can design research projects that do not make these facile assumptions, engage with the political economy of such assumptions, and are also 'activist' in the sense that they push those assumptions.

#### COMMUNICATIVE RELATIVITY

While not mentioned by Aneta, I would also be interested in a discussion of communicative relativity. Much of the chapter you have read is about the question of whose voices get heard and whose remain unheard and invisible, about whose voices are legitimate and illegitimate. The theoretical basis for this discussion is mostly in Chapter 4, where I draw on Dell Hymes' work and his writing about two kinds of linguistic relativity. Chapter 10 is about contexts where communicative relativity presents a real-world problem.

You can also find another example (and a refresher definition) in a recent blog post at <http://www.languageonthemove.com/language-migration-social-justice/yiman-doe-s-not-have-a-word-for-massacre>.

Again, I would appreciate a discussion of how you design research projects that take communicative relativity seriously? How you see the relationship between sociolinguistic research and activism?

So much for now. Thank you for taking the time to read this longish e-mail and for participating in this e-seminar and I'm very much looking forward to your responses (or questions ...) over the next few weeks.

Best regards,  
Ingrid

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From:	Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@KCL.AC.UK)
Date:	Wed 02/05/2012 09:12

Dear all

These exchanges certainly do raise important questions about how to talk about the relationship between language and culture with non-specialists. This is obviously very difficult, and it's not something I'm especially expert in. But here are a few thoughts on:

- some basic points of orientation that it's worth continually returning to, matching our accounts against
- some integrative concepts that are tuned to this
- the relevance of linguistic ethnography, and
- a pedagogic strategy

I haven't yet been able to read the whole of Ingrid's book, and it's quite possible that in that larger context, my comments really aren't at all relevant. Still, we had a really interesting discussion of the circulated texts at our PhD research seminar yesterday, and I hope my own remarks have got something to contribute within the discussion as it's currently framed.

#### 1. Basic orientation

Quite a long time ago, Gumperz said that "we need... a closer understanding of how linguistic signs **interact** with social knowledge in discourse" (Gumperz 1982:29 [my emphasis]), and just a little later, Silverstein came up with 'the Total Linguistic Fact' (TLF):

"The total linguistic fact, the datum for a science of language, is irreducibly dialectic in nature. It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms, contextualised to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology" (Silverstein 1985:220)

Signs, practice and ideology are all quite easy for us to deal with separately or in pairs, but I'm not sure that we're so good at handling the dialectic, the 'unstable mutual interaction'. The issue is pointed out rather clearly by Blommaert. In sociolinguistics, he says, there is

"a very long tradition in which language, along with other social and cultural features of people, was primarily imagined relatively fixed in time and space... Gumperz & Hymes (1972:15), however, quickly destabilized these assumptions, and they did so with one apparently simple theoretical intervention: they defined social and linguistic features not as separate-but-connected, but as *dialectic*, i.e. co-constructive and, hence, *dynamic*.... The importance of this simple but fundamental change in perspective is massive, for it introduced a dimension of contingency and complexity into sociolinguistics that defied the static correlational orthodoxies. Deviations from norms, for instance, can now be the effect of a whole range of factors, and it is impossible to make an a priori choice for any of them... So, simple correlations do not work anymore, they need to be established by means of ethnographic examination." (Blommaert 2012:11-12)

Reading Ingrid's chapter, I got quite a strong sense of 'separate-but-related' (language, culture, practice, ideology), and the pressure of talking to a non-specialist audience is a major contributing factor here. Which of course raises the question: well, what terms can we use to capture the dialectic and avoid 'separate-but-related'?

## 2. Concepts tuned to the TLF

### 2.1 NOT named-languages

Here's another bit of Blommaert, this time focusing on the notion of 'a language':

"Language names such as English, French, Swahili or Chinese belong to the realm of folk ideologies of language and popularized or institutionalized discourses anchored therein.... When looked upon from the actual ways in which people use language in their lives, what counts are... repertoires, registers, styles, genres, modes of usage (Hymes 1996; Silverstein 1998). It is our job as sociolinguists to focus on language varieties – emergent constructs reflecting ideologically regimented language use - instead of on language names, and it is our challenge to make this view acceptable and understandable to outside audiences too. Yet, too often sociolinguists have done precisely the opposite: they have developed sophisticated discourses in which language names were metonymically used for the totality of language appearances: 'English' was used as shorthand for every variety, linguistic, generic, stylistic, channel-related variety" (2003:2)

Blommaert is downgrading the significance of named languages here, suggesting that we should situate them much more fully in an understanding of the exigencies of practice, and of course this has a knock-on effect on the notion of language choice, as well as on our sense of the complexity of multilingual interaction. So when Ingrid discusses discourse in a tourist centre (p.154-5), the language aspect loses its salience if we shift to more of a practice perspective, and once again, Gumperz is relevant:

"[w]hat we're talking about really is an area of conventionality which is partly linguistic and partly cultural. This area of conventionality is automatic; it's something that we do without thinking and without reflection. We don't think about how we're going to say things. We think about what we're going to say and then we automatically select our style of speaking. What is involved is this automatic process by which we select our style of speaking, and whether you call it cultural or whether you call it linguistic isn't really that important." (Gumperz 1979 (2003:272))

Obviously, this is no news for Ingrid, who is explicit about 'language choices becom[ing] normalised' (p158), but it does raise the question of what terms we prioritise in non-specialist discussions of communication. In terms of the issues covered in Ingrid's chapter, I can think of two that seem potentially very relevant, both of them very well tuned to the Total Linguistic Fact.

### 2.2 Genre

The first is 'genre', as conceptualised by Hanks (1987), and Bauman (2001), following Bakhtin (1986). In the account they offer, a genre can be seen as a set of conventionalised expectations that members of a social group use to shape and construe the communicative activity that they are engaged in, and these expectations include a sense of the likely tasks on hand, the roles and relationships typically involved, the ways the activity can be organised, and the kinds of resources suited to carrying it out. At the same time, generic expectations and actual activity seldom form a perfect match, and the relationship between them is an important focus in ideological struggle, with some parties trying to hold them together and others seeking to prize them apart.

So genre is rather a useful heuristic concept, sensitising us to the dynamic dialectical relationship between signs, practice and ideology. We can think of the encounter with named languages as almost always 'genred' (cf Blommaert above), and again this has implications for the kinds of claim we'd want to make about

interculturality. So for example, Ingrid is quite right about the significance of proficiency in intercultural communication, but if we insist on keeping 'genre' (or related concepts like 'activity type' or even 'frame') at the forefront of our thinking, then it's not so obvious, for example, that "[w]ho we are in intercultural communication is to a large extent a function of our linguistic proficiency: you cannot 'be' an educational expert or a competent shopper if you do not sound like one" (p 146). This is surely going to depend on the genre and the situation – judgements of proficiency are themselves relational and socio-ideological positioned, and analyses of proficiency need to address the situated expectations associated with particular interlocutors, genres, footings etc. Similarly, if you think of language generally being situated in genres (or activity types), it's harder to claim that "[b]eing placed in a situation where one cannot communicate is a form of abuse and a human rights violation" (p.151) – what about assemblies at school, or watching a play in the theatre?

### 2.3 Register

Agha's notion of register is another integrative concept that's potentially useful. Whereas 'genre' sensitises us to the communicative demands of the situation, 'register' (itself very close to Eckert's notion of 'style') focuses on distinctive forms of language, speech and non-linguistic semiosis that users associate with different typifications of person, situation, relationship, behaviour etc. In terms of the TLF, these typifications are themselves ideological, and Agha insists that we can only speak of a register if there is reflexive ideological awareness among producers and receivers. In addition, there are also links to interactional practice - registers "establish forms of footing and alignment with... the types of persons, real or imagined" "indexed by [the] speech" (Agha 2005:38)

The notion of 'register' refers to a whole range of styles, dialects and languages – in that regard it's quite like the traditional sociolinguistic notion 'variety', except that it's fully tuned to the TLF. And once again, if we return to the scenes of interculturality that Ingrid describes, things start to look a bit different.

Ingrid offers a fascinating discussion of learning English in Japan. Among other things, she talks about advertising "continually stress[ing] the power of English to bring about self-transformation" (165), and suggests that "once the audiences have accepted... the idea that consuming language training is the avenue to romance or success, they are in for an unreachable goal" (p.166). In this context, English the named language is rather closely associated with images of the 'native speaker', but if we follow Agha on register, then we can start to see that the typifications indexed by English in Japan might be more differentiated, more local and more closely associated with types of stance, footing and social relationship than with types of person. Once that happens, the trajectory of language learning starts to fill up with lots of little pleasures and small-scale satisfactions; 'fun with friends' becomes as significant an indexical association of English as 'dating Tom Cruise'; getting together with your mates to write fan letters and to play at English greetings becomes a self-sustaining activity in itself (more than just the first step down a slippery slope to disillusion and suicide); and an ethnographic account of the experience of language learning starts to emerge, keeping the significance of particular 'language targets' and 'learning goals' in perspective by situating them amidst all the everyday practices in which the foreign language features.

### 2.4 Why and how these concepts?

Maybe the selection of these two terms from the whole of the sociolinguistic tool-chest looks a bit arbitrary – it'd be interesting to hear what others think are crucial. But the first key point is that these concepts insist that analysis attends to the interrelation of all three elements of the TLF – signs, practice and ideology together – and I think it generates the following view of communicative encounters, capable of embracing the situations that Ingrid describes and a lot more:

“For much of the time, most of the resources materialised in any communicative action are unnoticed and taken for granted, but it only takes a slight deviation from habitual and expected practice to send recipients into interpretive over-drive, wondering what’s going on when a sound, a word, a grammatical pattern, a discourse move or bodily movement doesn’t quite fit. There is considerable scope for variation in the norms that individuals orient to, which affects the kinds of thing they notice as discrepant, and there can also be huge variety in the situated indexical interpretations that they bring to bear (‘good’ or ‘bad’, ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, ‘art’ or ‘error’, ‘call it out’ or ‘let it pass’, ‘indicative or typical of this or that’). These normative expectations and explanatory accounts circulate through social networks that range very considerably in scale, from intimate relationships and friendship groups to national education systems and global media, and of course there are major differences in how far they are committed to policing or receptive to change. .... (p.14)

....Among other effects produced by this [perspective], a distinctive view of ideology emerges. Rather than being treated only as sets of explicitly articulated statements (as in much policy and interview discourse analysis), ideologies are viewed as complexes that operate in different shapes and with different modes of articulation at a variety of levels on a range of objects. Explicit statements are of course included, but so too are implicit behavioural reflexes operating in discourse practices (turning these into ideologically saturated praxis). Intense scrutiny of textual and discursive detail discloses the ways in which widely distributed societal ideologies penetrate the microscopic world of talk and text, how ideologies have palpable mundane reality. Indeed, this layered, multi-scalar and empirically grounded understanding of ideology is perhaps one of the most sophisticated ones in current social science.” (Blommaert & Rampton 2012 p.14,12)

The second point is that although genre and register might look like rather ‘baggy’ and encompassing concepts, they gain their force and precision in the the kinds of detailed descriptions associated with linguistic ethnography.

### 3. Linguistic ethnography

Ingrid’s paper refers to ethnography (p.159), and there are fundamental characteristics of ethnography which draw us to an appreciation of the dialectical interaction of signs, practice and ideology, and away from a separate-but-related view of language, culture, interaction etc. Ethnography focuses on a number of different levels/dimensions of socio-cultural organisation/process at the same time, and assumes that the meaning and significance of a form or practice involves an interaction between these (and other) levels/dimensions. And although it certainly looks for patterns and systematicity in situated everyday practice, there’s a very general recognition that hasty comparison across cases can blind one to the contingent moments and the complex cultural and semiotic ecologies that give any phenomenon its meaning. I think that this commitment to understanding the dialectic is fairly clear in the tenets that we’ve articulated for linguistic ethnography from time to time, which of course also hold for linguistic anthropology:

- a) the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed. Meaning takes shape within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and construed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically; and
- b) analysis of the internal organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic) data is essential to understanding its significance and position in the world. Meaning is far more than just the ‘expression of ideas’, and biography, identifications, stance and nuance are extensively signalled in the linguistic and textual fine-grain

Which leads into the final question – how should we teach all this, avoiding the readily communicable but misleading simplifications of ‘separate-but-connected’?



#### 4. Teaching tuned the TLF dialectic

Getting people to work analytically on the technical details of communication (phonetics, grammatical structure etc) obviously takes time, but it seems to me that if Hymes is right, then ethnography puts us in quite a strong starting point for teaching about the “irreducibly dialectic” nature of the relationship between signs, practice and ideology, between language and culture:

“of all forms of scientific knowledge, ethnography is the most open, the most compatible with a democratic way of life, the least likely to produce a world in which experts control knowledge at the expense of those who are studied. The skills of ethnography consist of the enhancement of skills all normal persons employ in everyday life; its discoveries can usually be conveyed in forms of language that non-specialists can read” (Hymes 1980:105)

Pedagogically, one strategy would be the reading of carefully worked case-studies (nowadays readily supported by internet access to data). Projects are another. But in my experience, one of the most accessible, absorbing and effective ways of teaching people at any level about the total linguistic fact is the micro-analytic data session.

This normally involves asking one of the session participants to bring along a couple of minutes of audio and video interaction that they think could be particularly significant for whatever it is that they’re interested in, and then collectively immersing ourselves in the recording and transcript for a couple of hours, running with people’s interests and interpretations, while at the same time pushing them to make their claims accountable to evidence, assessing their plausibility etc. In some respects, the traditional data-session in conversation analysis is an important model here, with its orientation to slowness, smallness, ‘why this now’, ‘what next’. But instead of prioritising a drilling down into the sequential machinery of interaction, we also work outwards to larger scale processes, reflecting for example on the data’s implications for the next steps in ethnographic fieldwork (cf Scollon & Scollon 2007:615,619). It’s extraordinary how often this process of slow, intensive micro-analysis hits newcomers as a revelation, vividly disclosing intricate details in the processes of social construction that they’d never imagined. And overall, as a way of sitting down with a group to try to get them to understand the contingent but forceful ways in which everything hangs together in the TLF, I think data-sessions are very hard to surpass.

So those are my thoughts on the issues that Ingrid and Aneta have raised - sorry to go on so long!

Best wishes

Ben

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From:	Esmat Babaii (ebabaii@GMAIL.COM)
Date:	Sat 05/05/2012 07:59

Dear All,

As Ingrid Piller rightly mentions and skillfully demonstrates throughout her book, 'language matters', especially as a 'mother'

tongue. Here, I would like to emphasize the emotional aspect of mother tongue; what it means to its speakers and what happens when through the process of intercultural communication it is presented and felt as inferior, insufficient, and 'not-good-enough'. I think having a positive feeling and respect towards one's First language –to the extent that it does not lead to ethnocentrism—is essential to one's mental health. First language is said to be 'the language of the

soul': the deepest and the most intense feelings are more eloquently expressed through the mother tongue. To me, comments revealing one's ambivalence towards his/her native language should be alarming to educators and sociolinguists.

In her study on the language identity of the speakers of African-American Vernacular English (AAVA), Evans Davies (2007) quotes an African American speaker who "has APPARENTLY internalized a form of acceptance of AAVE" (p. 78, emphasis mine):

I'm not ashamed that I speak vernacular when I'm not in the classroom, because I know when to speak correct English. I believe that vernacular English is necessary in my life because it allows me communicate with other African-Americans who haven't had as much formal language education.

As Evans Davies reminds, this acceptance of AAVA is quite superficial:

the speaker says she is 'not ashamed' rather than 'proud', and she compares AAVA with 'correct' English! Unfortunately, such negative feelings are not restricted to the so-called sub-standard varieties.

Attending my first sessions of Linguistics course in 1990s, I got fascinated by statements like these: for linguists, no language is structurally more systematic or complex than others; no language is primitive, etc. But later on I heard many scholars talking about the 'inherent capacity' of English to be the language of science, trade, and almost all other prestigious communicative uses you can imagine. I was later prompted to find which of Kaplan's (1966) 'non-linear' lines can better describe my non-English, incoherent writing. I was starting to wonder how I could have possibly understood (and even used) the digressive style of Persian writing for years! It took me some time to come to my senses and understand that contrastive rhetoric and intercultural communication are not just for non-English speakers.

English speakers are also better off if they know about communicative rules of other cultures. Therefore, for the sake of better life in this multicultural world, we need more serious works on intercultural communication, and learn to respect our own as well as others' cultural norms.

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Best wishes

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From:	Kimie Takahashi (takahashi.kimie@GMAIL.COM)
Date:	Sun 06/05/2012 12:14
<p>Yoroshiku onegai shimasu!</p> <p>Arigato to the UKLEF for organising this e-forum, an accessible means of engaging with scholars around the globe. I begin my comment on Ingrid Piller's Chapter 10 by discussing my own exposure to the discourse of intercultural communication and the global spread of English.</p> <p>Back in the mid 1990s I dreaded reading intercultural communication textbooks as an international undergraduate psychology student in Australia. These textbooks <i>taught</i> me that "Asians/Japanese" were incapable of getting to the point, or of communicating in a linear or logical fashion as Westerners do (Dr Babaii mentioned Kaplan's work and the countless recounts of his work). So, I began, for the first time in my life, seeing myself as "Asian" and feeling ashamed of the way I (and other fellow Asians) talked in English as a second language.</p> <p>When I went on to write an MA thesis, I was introduced to literature on variationist SLA. These quantitative studies on Asian learners of English often concluded that they were deficient learners/speakers of English because of their cultural/national traits; Asian learners, including Japanese, are inherently too shy to speak/practice English, or are two-faced in that they never really tell the truth (e.g., the good old uchi/soto concept – see Nakane's (2007) study as discussed in Chapter 1 of Piller's book). I began to believe that with such cultural burdens, Japanese would never reach a native like fluency or proficiency or accent. Having internalised this imperialist way of seeing, I endeavoured to write my thesis with an almost religious mission to cure the shyness of Japanese learners of English.</p> <p>This was all in the 1990s. Well into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century I've moved on from that self-orientalism and reverse racism as a way of seeing the world (my PhD as the best piece of evidence:-). Today we celebrate our wonderful multicultural world, claiming that such essentialist, colonialist and imperialist ways of speaking of and of researching intercultural communication and second language learning are a thing of the past. But are they really? As Piller's book in general and Chapter 10 in particular demonstrate, the answer is clearly no.</p> <p>In the field of Intercultural Communication and the fields that examine second language proficiency that is so crucial to intercultural encounters, the discourse which essentialises culture as nation (Chapter 5), and which speaks of Westerns vs. Asians or Native speakers vs. Non-native, the former as exemplary models of communication and the latter as incompetent communicators/deficient learners of English, continue to flourish in publications and on commercial websites. Businesses such as the multi-billion dollar English language education industry or tourism, continue to capitalise on the pseudo science of intercultural communication, valorisation of the West and Western native speakers of English and the discourse of Asians as deficient speakers of English and the exotic <i>Other</i> (Chapter 10, Section 6 Commercial Language Regimes, pp. 163 – 167). We continue to live in a multilingual world where millions of individuals from Asian and/or non-English speaking backgrounds are forever apologetic about their accent and their supposed inability to communicate, with Western native speakers of English. The much celebrated global spread of English indeed constitutes the dark side of intercultural communication.</p> <p>It is in this multilingual world where social inequality is maintained and experienced on the basis of orientalist and colonialist assumptions about language, identity and culture that Piller's attempt to write social justice into the agenda for intercultural communication research emerges as an urgent call for academics to take an 'activist' approach that questions such assumptions.</p>	

When I began teaching *Intercultural Issues* in the Master in English Language Teaching Program at the Graduate School of English at Assumption University of Thailand in Bangkok in May 2011, I adopted Piller's book as a textbook. The majority of my students are either from Thailand or other Asian countries and they of course speak English as an additional language. Many of them seem to walk into their first few classes with a view of English and Asia that is similar to the one I had as a student. As far as Chapter 10 is concerned, it invites them to critically explore their own assumptions about the role of language proficiency in intercultural communication through classroom activities (pp. 168 – 169). As they are encouraged to share their own experiences of being rendered speechless (pp. 147 – 151) and to question the hegemonic discourse of English and the commodification of English in Thailand as a site of financial exploitation and of class distinction (pp. 163 – 167), they are able to understand these issues through their own lived experiences, the first step towards becoming a critical researcher.

Some of the students who have used Piller's book are now conducting MA projects that take the intersection of social inclusion and the political economy of English seriously. Based on classroom exercises on *Linguistic ideologies in the linguistic landscape* and *Advertising languages* (both suggested on page 169), one student has recently proposed a project that explores the commodification of English by examining commercial advertisements of the Wall Street Institute; another is conducting an ethnography of Asian gay men in Bangkok and their desire for English and Western men; yet another will begin her fieldwork with foreign teachers of English from non-native and Asian backgrounds in Bangkok and their experience of social inclusion/exclusion.

Having attended the Thai TESOL conference recently, I'm aware that ethnographic studies of the role of English in the ASEAN community with a critical approach, such as the above, are still a rarity. In a country where extreme poverty and economic prosperity co-exist side by side, and where English is increasingly sold to poor and rich alike as a magical means to access global engagement and thus economic development, their studies are a significant contribution to the Thai society and academia. One of the most significant achievements of Piller's book is thus to inspire the next generation of researchers from linguistically diverse and less privileged backgrounds to take on the hegemony of English head-on.

Kimie Takahashi

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*Japanese on the Move: Life Stories of Transmigration*

[www.languageonthemove.com/japanese-on-the-move](http://www.languageonthemove.com/japanese-on-the-move)

From: Ingrid Piller ([ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU](mailto:ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU))

Date: Tue 08/05/2012 02:08

Kimie-san, thank you so much for your insightful response! Thank you in particular for sharing your experiences with using my book with your students in Bangkok and the interesting research projects that have developed as a result of that engagement! To date one of the highlights in the journey of this book since its publication has been the video link Sydney-Bangkok with one of your classes where the students had prepared questions they wanted to ask the author. One of the lessons I took away from that event – as from most occasions where I have spoken about ‘intercultural communication’ in university teaching and professional development contexts in Australia, continental Europe and the Middle East – is that concepts such as those we have debated here so far – the discursive construction of culture, language, and the language-culture interface, communicative relativity, register, dialectics etc. – only make sense to most people if they are linked to personal experience.

The link between theory and personal experience (and thus our ability to disseminate critical research and make an impact) brings me back to one of the initial questions of this e-seminar, “What is a language?”

I trust everyone on this forum – and certainly the contributors to date – agree that it is a discursive construction. However, this recognition does not mean we are free to dismiss ‘language with a name’ as nothing more than fairy tales or folk etymologies (and I know that neither Ben nor Jan, to whose post/quote I’m obviously alluding, do). While ‘English’ (or ‘Thai’ or ‘Persian’ or whatever) are obviously ‘folk etymologies’ they are very powerful constructs. Not to engage with them as ‘member categories,’ with their hegemonic power and with the fact that they are an important means of social stratification strikes me as an academic cop-out in the same way that other disciplinary articles of faith (‘prescriptivism is meaningless and misguided;’ ‘all languages are equal/equally good at expressing everything’) need to be engaged with rather than simply asserted.

There are many research agendas tied to this recognition such as the intersection between legitimacy of knowledge and legitimate language that Esmat and Kimie have spoken about. One that strikes me as particularly urgent is the commodification of ‘language with a name’ (the topic of last year’s e-seminar with Monica Heller) and the way in which ‘language with a name’ (specifically ‘English’ but also other ideologically laden constructs such as ‘bilingualism’ or ‘native speaker’) has become inextricably linked to the neoliberal global order. Joseph Park and Adrienne Lo have just guest-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* devoted to the sociolinguistics of transnational and neo-liberal South Korea, which I’d warmly like to recommend along with an exploration of neoliberalism as language policy in global higher education, co-authored by Jean Cho and myself, which will appear in *Language in Society* early next year. [A preprint is available on \*Language-on-the-Move\*.](#)

Best regards,  
Ingrid

From:	Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@KCL.AC.UK)
Date:	Tue 08/05/2012 06:58
<p>Lots of good points here – first hand experience is certainly one of the defining features of ethnography as a mode of enquiry, as is the engagement with member categories. Still, there’s a difference between treating named-languages-with-all-their-associations-&amp;-material-effects as a focus of analysis, and incorporating them into our own analytical vocabulary - if we want to think about named languages as discursive constructs, then we obviously need some alternative terms that help us to analyse their construction and material effects. Agha’s register is one obvious candidate for this, and no doubt there are others. But more generally, there is a question about teaching and public communication, to do with the balance between (a) getting students’ and non-specialists seriously motivated and (b) providing them with descriptive tools that help them to unpick the way things work. So far in our discussion, we’ve talked more about [a] than [b] – is the implication that if we want to engage with the big issues of power and inequality, we need to embrace the folk-terminologies and leave our more refined analytical vocabularies to the side? Maybe, though if that’s true, it’s worth asking when and how we do actually introduce the concepts that we think have real analytic purchase.</p> <p>Best wishes Ben</p>	



From:	Kimie Takahashi (takahashi.kimie@GMAIL.COM)
Date:	Tue 08/05/2012 07:17
<p>Thanks, Ben!</p> <p>When and how do you introduce concepts with real analytic purchase?</p> <p>Thanks for sharing!</p> <p>Kimie</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p> <p>Kimie Takahashi, PhD 高橋 君江 教育学博士 [w] <a href="http://www.languageonthemove.org">www.languageonthemove.org</a></p>	

From:	Vahid Parvaresh (vparvaresh@GMAIL.COM)
Date:	Tue 08/05/2012 15:12
<p>Dear Ingrid,</p> <p>Good to know that "<i>Neoliberalism as language policy</i>" is now available from <i>language-on-the-move</i>. You talked about the article in one of your lectures here at the <i>University of Isfahan</i> and as far as I know it resulted in interesting questions and answers. The points you mentioned, which can now be found in that article, seriously motivated our students in their own research.</p> <p>Many thanks again, vahid parvaresh</p>	

From:	Christie DeBlasio (christie.deblasio@GMAIL.COM)
Date:	Tue 08/05/2012 17:36
<p>Hello all,</p> <p>As a student and fairly new addition to the world of linguistic academia, I would like to share my thoughts regarding some of the comments made in this seminar thus far. As I stated in my personal introduction, I have the wonderful experience of being a part of one of the first classes to use Ingrid's book and am familiar with the dilemma that Kimie brings up, that essentialist, colonialist and imperialist ways are still running rampant around the globe .</p> <p>I believe, as Ingrid and Aneta concur, discursive construction of language and culture is the key to breaking through the barriers of long held assumptions about language and culture that are present today. Along with this, Esmat's notion that " ... for the sake of better life in this multicultural world, we need more serious works on intercultural communication, and learn to respect our own as well as others' cultural norms" points to the significance to knowledge of intercultural communications and its direct connection to our wellbeing as a global society. Through my own research of Linguistic Landscape in Bangkok (inspired by chapter 10) I have found that not only is power inequality of language present in society, it can be used to manipulate its members significantly. Specifically, drawing on the prowess of English in Thai society, a simple advertisement can poke at the very core of consumers self worth. In terms of the wellbeing of society, this reinforcement of bias ideologies goes beyond advertising and can only hinder the growth of a balanced multicultural and multilingual global society.</p> <p>This being said, I would like to ask if members of this seminar have examples of ways in which our kinds of research are communicated to the public/wider audience so that practical measures can be taken to combat debilitating linguistic ideologies that Piller takes pain to illuminate in her book.</p> <p>Best, Christie DeBlasio</p>	

From:	Britta Schneider (Schneider@EM.UNI-FRANKFURT.DE)
Date:	Tue 08/05/2012 19:56
<p>Dear all,</p> <p>I am very happy to take part in the e-seminar – thanks so much to the organisers and thanks for sharing thoughts! I also want to share another thought that came to my mind when reading Ingrid’s chapter.</p> <p>It concerns again more the ‘a’ aspect (see Ben’s comment), and it is that I also keep asking myself how to actually get rid of ideological misconceptions of particular ways of speaking as inferior. And here I want to include the ‘self-orientalism’ of ‘minority’ (non-English?) speakers and the orientalism of ‘majority’ speakers alike.</p> <p>One thing that I perceive as central is the ability of language ideologies to foster strong emotions with regards to certain ‘languages’ or ‘dialects’.</p> <p>I have always been amazed how much different ‘accents’ (‘languages’, ‘dialects’ – or, to be more precise, it seems to be concerned with pronunciation in particular) can touch me emotionally. To be honest, although I am sociolinguist, and although one of the main motivations for me to become one has been the realisation how much language is an instrument of reproducing social order (which I obviously want to question), I still have particular emotions when I hear certain language varieties. Of course, these emotions are much stronger with regard to my native language, German. For example, although I feel ashamed to say so, and although I am able to give a socio-historical account of the reasons, some accents evoke feelings of, I am not sure how to put this, maybe: discomfort. Although I know that such feelings are unjust and an outcome of historical accidents and hegemonic suppression of diversity, I still feel it to be very difficult to have a neutral access to all kinds of varieties, be they dominant and celebrated or stigmatised (and I doubt that this only a idiosyncratic failure of my personality).</p> <p>And although I know about the colonialist history and problematic status of English in the world, I not only try to use an English variety close to a native-like proficiency for instrumentalist purposes but also because I want to index an intelligent and probably also likeable identity with this also in private spheres. And, as I said, on a rational level, I am very aware of the problematic nature of such attitudes and nevertheless, the emotional level is not completely converted by this knowledge.</p> <p>It is obvious that these feelings are not ‘natural’ but the result of historical development. Norbert Elias’ text on the “civilizing process”, which investigates how social norms of conduct (e.g. of table manners) have become so internalised that we feel them to be our very own personal emotions, comes to mind here. One point of departure might be a historical investigation into the development of language norms. Another question is then how to ‘un-teach’ these emotions, as it seems that a merely rational education in the form of “I know that this is only the outcome of socio-historical development and not a deficiency of the speaker” is not enough. And I think that this is particularly difficult for speakers (like myself) who have been raised believing that their way of speaking is ‘right’ and for whom such an education would be particularly important.</p> <p>So all in all, I think that ethnographic research that analyses how social language norms become personal feelings might be interesting and, secondly, research on socialisation behaviour of the linguistic hegemony could give interesting insights. Finally, I would be very grateful for suggestions of how to un-teach myself and others emotions that are based on internalised hegemonic language ideologies – Ingrid’s book is a great inspiration and I am happy to collect more ideas...</p>	

thanks and best regards

Britta

Reference:

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From:	Muhammad Ali Khan ( <a href="mailto:khan.ali110@GOOGLEMAIL.COM">khan.ali110@GOOGLEMAIL.COM</a> )
Date:	Wed 09/05/2012 06:19

Dear Colleagues

*Sarsari tum jahan sey guzray  
Warno har ja jahan-e- Degar tha  
( Mir Taqi Mir, 1723-1810)*

My translation: 'You passed this world looking at mere appearances  
Else you would have found every place a unique one'

I see relevance of the import of this couplet with the central argument of the chapter: i.e while linguistic relativity is a fact, it is important to see the phenomenon in the light of colonial relations: 'Ways of communicating are not only relative but also have unequal chances of making impact' (Piller, 2011: 53)

I often get engaged with the question of communicative inequality and come to find substance in looking at this crucial question in the larger socio-economic and political relations among different groups whom we call 'nations'. One thing is empirically documented that the communicative inequalities are not communicative inequalities only but rather political economic inequalities (Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001) stemming largely from the history of colonization. In this context, I see the current chapter pushing the boundary of intercultural communication beyond the conventions of genre, register etc and bringing forth the fundamental questions of differential powers of the communicative practices in the context of intercultural communication.

Living in a post-colonial Pakistan, I find it extremely difficult to forget the history of British Raj which plundered and disintegrated the indigenous economic system of India by injecting a different kind of capitalism. Alavi (2003) calls it 'Peripheral Capitalism' in which the surplus of the economy does not become the input for the same system. As a result, asymmetrical social and political relations were established by the presence and control of a capitalist commercial group and in the post colonial Pakistan, I see the extension of this discourse in the form of World Bank and IMF forcing massive structural changes in the economy in the name of poverty alleviation.

As a student of sociolinguistics, I find it as my responsibility to grapple with the origin and sustenance communicative inequality and their differential power and engage with the tacit causes of language issues. In this respect, I enjoyed the work thoroughly and the discussion followed it. I congratulate the forum on the success of the seminar

Khan  
Lancaster University

Reference:

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From:	Jean-Jacques WEBER (jean-jacques.weber@UNI.LU)
Date:	Wed 09/05/2012 07:59

Dear all,

In reply to both Kimie and Ben, I would just like to point out that there are different imperatives for us as researchers and teachers. We recently had a very similar experience when responding to reviews of our new textbook 'Introducing Multilingualism: A Social Approach' (J.-J. Weber & K. Horner, Routledge, 2012). One reviewer praised us for problematizing the notion of 'language', and suggested that we follow this problematization of the concept of 'language' through to its logical end and that we also question the ontological status of varieties such as AAE (African-American English). However, while we agreed with the reviewer from a purely theoretical perspective, from a more pedagogical perspective we thought it was preferable not to go too far with this. The textbook is aimed at beginning students, for whom it is already difficult enough to accept that the naming of varieties as either 'languages' or 'dialects' is a political matter. Going further than this in an introductory textbook and questioning the ontological status of all varieties might confuse students and thus have a counter-productive effect. Throughout our discussion, we have prioritized the pedagogical imperative: hence, we describe varieties such as AAE as 'systematic' and 'rule-governed', because we need to counter many students' (and teachers') assumption that such varieties are full of errors, lack grammatical rules or are just 'slang'! In our textbook, we thus prioritize pedagogical imperatives over absolute theoretical consistency. We feel convinced that in an introductory textbook the most important thing is to get beginning students to think critically about the concept of language (because we all have preconceptions about what a language is – as Britta's recent contribution also shows).

All best wishes,

Jean-Jacques

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From:	Donna Butorac (donnabee@IINET.NET.AU)
Date:	Wed 09/05/2012 14:02
<p>Hello everyone,</p> <p>I have enjoyed reading all the comments so far, and also Ingrid's book chapter. Although always engaged by the ideas expressed, at times, when the debate has dealt with the question of how we approach the key constructs of language and culture, I have become aware of the teacher's voice in my mind, reminding me of the dynamic of teaching and learning that nevertheless continues in language classrooms. While we wait for the revolution, or at least a better use of terms, how can we intervene in positive ways in this dynamic, in the interests of social justice?</p> <p>Globalisation, and the social and economic failings of late-modern capitalism, have highlighted the power dynamics of intercultural communication and the domestic imperialism inherent in multilingual societies where only one language is recognised as having primary symbolic capital. In turn, such a language becomes, like everything under capitalism, commodified as an object of socioeconomic necessity and desire.</p> <p>As a language teacher, I become part of that questionable exchange, where the subject under study is assumed to be a bounded lexicogrammatical system, and its learners language deficient. In such a context, I appreciate the ways that <i>Intercultural Communication</i> can usefully inform my role. A good intervention in the language classroom would thus be to include this text, and its discussion, in language teacher education programs.</p> <p>Regards, Donna Butorac</p>	



From:	Phaisit Boriboon ( <a href="mailto:p.boriboon@GMAIL.COM">p.boriboon@GMAIL.COM</a> )
Date:	Thu 10/05/2012 05:32

Dear All,

It has been four lonely years since I came back from the UK to be where I am now at a small university in Sakon Nakhon, a remote province in Thailand. I was based in Edinburgh while in UK, so unfortunately never had any chance to participate in any 'live' linguistic ethnography discussions held at the BAAL conferences. Neither had I enough courage and linguistic confidence to join the previous E-seminars. I have been very interested in linguistic ethnography, but the academic life here in Sakon Nakhon is so dry, let alone sociolinguistic research. It has thus been hard to maintain my enthusiasm in doing research, so thanks a great deal to Prof. Piller and all the organizers who have made this happen. I am so happy to also learn that Dr. Kimie Takahashi is based here at a Thai university, ABAC. Sorry for being so off topic. It's just that I am elated to meet you all here, including those internationally renowned like Prof. Rampton and others, whom I have always looked up to. You guys' thought sharing so far is intellectually provoking and deeply appreciated. For someone who is in restricted circumstances like me, this E-seminar means so much. I wish to meet you all in person some day. Now back to the issue at hand.

@Prof. Rampton -- You seem to have suggested that the use of 'register' is probably one possible option as a term to be used for a conclusive expression regarding the destructive effects of native speaker ideology in Japan such as "a slippery slope to disillusion and suicide". English learning situations and activities do not mean the same for different learners at a local ecumene. I feel you are saying here that while we are trying to avoid stereotyping, equalling a category to one meaning or set of meanings in intercultural communication, we may end up overlooking nuances of meanings ourselves. For instance, language learning activity is fun in itself and there is no such thing as identity affiliation or romantic aspiration whatsoever, or something like that, for every learner as discussed by Prof. Piller. Am I right? Thanks for your reply in advance.

@all members -- I know that our discussion so far is mainly geared towards intercultural communication in multilingual contexts and how to teach it basically, so my concern with an 'imagined' intercultural communication in the EFL context is not directly relevant. But because the EFL-related points raised above by Prof. Rampton, I would like to hear what others might think about the way I have been employing the concept of intercultural communication. I hope that some of you guys who are EFL teachers like me are probably sharing the same goal of making our EFL classrooms more intercultural. We all want to make intercultural communication to take place in light of globalization. My approach to "intercultural communication" is from a pedagogical angle, so it is quite contrast to Prof. Piller's. While Prof. Piller is concerned with real interactions between interlocutors from different ethnic backgrounds in her Chapter 10, I have been focusing on creating an intercultural space in the EFL classroom so as to enrich communicative potentiality among Thai low-proficiency, demotivated learners. My position is that all human communication through language is intercultural regardless of interactants' seemingly similar backgrounds as is the case with EFL learners in general. Reading Prof. Rampton's discussion of the TLF, I have an impression that 'the "intra(inter)cultural" communication I coined in my PhD thesis (Boriboon, 2008: 155) is to a large extent overlapping with what the TLF was proposed to capture. Nevertheless I am not so sure if I have completely comprehended the true essence of the TLF.

@Prof. Rampton -- Am I right in saying that this notion addresses the fact that linguistic phenomena cannot be completely understood if separated from their sociocultural contexts where they are produced. In order to thoroughly grasp the meaning embedded in people's use of language, it is necessary to glean out the linguistic totality embedded with layers of context-contingent meanings influenced by different sociocultural factors. If this is the case, what if we try to reverse this process of intercultural communication for pedagogical purposes? I mean,

how can we exploit context-contingent meanings, i.e. identity resources, for the sake of EFL pedagogy? Does anyone think the totality of intercultural communication such as the one we are discussing can be viewed reversely and be constructed for the benefit of linguistic practices in the EFL classroom?

Drawing upon Bakhtinian and Vygotskian thoughts for my PhD research, learners' attempting to make utterances during communicative practices can be perceived as intra(inter)cultural communication. It is when cultural scripts from the inside and immediate cultures of learners or their inner voices interact with those from the outside or cultural otherness. But the challenge is how we can create a communicative space based on this interaction of semiotic stimuli which closely taps into most, if not all, learners' cognitive, linguistic and cultural beings all at the same time. The main obstacle is an ever greater myriad of meanings are competing in globalization to claim their identities. Do you think that what I said above is even possible for foreign language learning? In my thesis, when discursive practices revolve around carefully selected themes, ideological tensions associated with language and culture can probably come into play, resulting in learners' more enthusiastic engagement with linguistic practices because those tensions may lead to language play through self-mockery, self-affiliation with real and imagined representation, momentary self-transformation, and so on.

Back then, I came to a conclusion that we need to look at EFL learners' engagement with communicative activities as a process of discursive construction and thus could probably exploit learners' identity repertoires in the process. That is, we need to create an interface between learners' voices or embodiments internalized through learners' cultures and cultural otherness in the global sphere using texts and other signs in EFL materials as mediating discourse. Dr. Takahashi's study on Japanese female English learners' romantic aspiration to Hollywood male stars, which had motivated them to produce the target language (Takahashi, 2006 as cited in Piller, 2011: 163) is similar to what some scholars have suggested as a possibility of addressing the dialectic between language and culture, making a dialogic communication between cultural self and other to occur during communicative practices among EFL learners (Lin & Luk, 2005).

So I would be extremely happy if anyone among our members here could give me some comments on any of the points raised above. I am sure there may be something in my discussion that needs clarification, and I will be more than happy to make it clearer, although it seems to take me ages to write in English nowadays LOL. This piece took me one full day to write. After all many past years writing in English, I am still struggling to convey all of these ideas.

Another point in Prof. Piller's Chapter 10 which I can mostly relate to is linguistic ideologies. I am writing up my research in which I look at Thai EFL teachers' ideologies in relation to accents in light of English as an international language. Besides, I have discussed the issue of hegemonic linguistic ideologies in Thailand in an article written in Thai last year because I wanted Thai language educators to start thinking about ELT-related problems viewed from sociolinguistic thoughts such as linguistic ideologies. In case any of you have Thai students who might be interested in this issue and would like to share further opinion, it can be accessed here:

<http://kaekae.oas.psu.ac.th/ojs/psuhsej/viewarticle.php?id=934&layout=abstract>

Maybe I have gone too long. Thanks everyone for reading and hope to hear your comments. Loads of thanks in advance.

Best regards,  
Phaisit Boriboon, PhD

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From:	Hanna Torsh (htorsh@YAHOO.COM)
Date:	Fri 11/05/2012 03:45
<p>Dear all</p> <p>I have very much enjoyed the discussion so far and would like to add something of my own. Aneta asked right at the beginning how we talk about language in relevant ways, and my response to that is to ask who is doing the talking, why and who is listening to them? My background is in TESOL, and if I want to do more than perpetuate the discourse of deficit and make learners insecure about their accents I need to give learners the tools to dismantle those destructive language ideologies and create new ones which cast their language repertoire as positive. This may mean at times using a lay definition of language and at times calling it into question, depending on what learners need. I think it's worth remembering that lay definitions of language can have vital real-life benefits as well as the well-known disadvantages, languages without a name are hard to notice and ever harder to defend.</p> <p>Like other contributors to the discussion I am interested in how to apply some of the insights of Ingrid's book to a language teaching context, particularly the notions of linguistic and communicative relativity. Understanding the ways in which their message is being received could empower learners to distinguish how their linguistic competence is being read by others to their disadvantage.</p> <p>How do we make these concepts accessible to language learners? In my context in Sydney, Australia, I think that the example that Ingrid gives in the book of Japanese people being read as passive because of their literal translation of the phrase "please take care of me" when meeting someone is a great example of the kind of anecdote I could use with language learners to discuss issues of linguistic racism and proficiency. Ben suggested that data sessions were a good way to engage linguistics students with a paradigm of languages as truncated registers rather than bound systems, and I would argue that a similar attention to the details of real interactions might be a good way to start with language students.</p> <p>Some of the textbooks which came out of the migrant teaching context in Australia in the 1990s which were grounded in System Functional Linguistics had this sort of approach, they advocated a teaching approach which was based on real-life texts collected by the teacher and adapted for classroom use. This kind of approach has the advantage of giving language learners the chance to critically engage with how to create a voice for themselves in real domains, and to engage with questions of language and culture which are relevant to them.</p> <p>On another note, I have just started a PhD and am interested in how the global domination of English and the associated language ideologies in both ELT classrooms and the media are played out in intimate relationships, namely between English language background partners and English language learner partners. I hope through this project to work through the prejudices I might have about both English language learners and speakers of non-standard Australian English. I say this in response to Britta's question about how to 'unlearn' linguistic prejudice and to suggest that this would be a great area for you to research!</p> <p>Thanks again for this great discussion.</p> <p>All the best, Hanna Torsh</p>	

From:	Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@KCL.AC.UK)
Date:	Sat 12/05/2012 12:45
<p>Dear all</p> <p>Very interesting contributions, which seem to me to look in two directions – one towards the pedagogic-&amp;-motivational, and the other towards the interrogative-&amp;-descriptive. I'd place Phaisit's and Britta's contributions in the latter category – Phaisit's Bakhtinian angle on speech recognises the importance of symbolic/indexical associations generated in local practice, and the interaction between these locally generated associations and ideological connotations that circulate more widely is actually rather unpredictable – to see what happens, we have to look closely, approaching with a fairly open mind, very much as I think Phaisit (and Silverstein) suggests. Similarly, Britta ends by asking how social language norms become personal feelings, and people get socialised into linguistic hegemony – vital questions, which I think we really can start to address by looking slowly, closely and ethnographically at how speech forms develop indexical associations for individuals in the course of situated activity (bearing in mind, of course, that indexicality covers affect). Or at least, I think you can get quite a good view of language, affect and hegemonic adaptation in the Ochs and Schieffelin tradition of language socialisation research, as well as in work on speech stylisation (something I've worked on quite a lot).</p> <p>Moving on from this, I wonder how much we've really done justice to ethnography in our discussion of the impact and influence that Ingrid's chapter has had. The business and communication studies literature on intercultural communication certainly needs to be pulled out of its 'never-never land' (p. 152), but I wonder how hard it is to challenge, and how hard we have to work at developing new ways of looking if we're going to get past it? Yes, business studies IC work is certainly very influential in a lot of circles, but its erasure of issues of inequality is so conspicuous that I'm not sure we really need ethnography to unmask it. One of my favourite quotes is Clifford Geertz saying that cultural theory seeks to achieve generality through the "delicacy of its distinctions, not the sweep of its abstractions" (1973 'Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture' in <i>The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays</i> London: Hutchinson. pp 20 &amp; 25). I think that applies to ethnography, and overall, I didn't see this being called in to play in Ingrid's critique, which struck me as fairly broad brush sociolinguistics, and not specifically ethnographic in perspective. In fact, pushing this a bit further, it occurred to me that <u>methodologically</u>, the broad-brush political analysis offered in the chapter maybe wasn't so very different from the broad-brush generalisations about nationality and culture that it criticises?</p> <p>That's not to say that I disagree with the politics itself, or that I think that there is no place for politics in research – far from it (I see my own work as v much inspired by Hymes, and Hymes' commitment to the politics of knowledge is very powerful). But there is a question about exactly when and how we bring it in, and I very much liked what Monica Heller said when discussing the relationship between ethics and research: "My own preference has been to first try to understand what is going on, and then to ask myself how I feel about it, and what, if anything I want to do about it" (<i>International Journal of Applied Linguistics</i>, 7/1:84, 1997). That seems to me a very ethnographic position, and maybe it is very difficult to take that line in a textbook. But I personally didn't feel that there was much of this in Chapter 10. Instead, I'd see Ch. 10 as a piece of hard-hitting applied sociolinguistics which cross-refers to broadly ethnographic studies but isn't actually very ethnographic itself. Of course there's no reason why it should – there's loads of marvellous work that's not remotely ethnographic. Still, given the LEF context, it's an issue that maybe merits discussion.</p> <p>Best wishes Ben</p>	

From:	Muhammad Ali Khan (khan.ali110@GOOGLEMAIL.COM)
Date:	Sun 13/05/2012 11:53
<p>Dear Colleagues,</p> <p>As the discussion is progressing, I am getting wonderful opportunity to benefit from the knowledge, views and interpretations of you all. I am thankful to Linguistic Ethnography forum for providing such an opportunity.</p> <p>Ben has raised some very important issues in his last response and I am most grateful to him for moving discussion on more fundamental and significant issue. In fact his observations: ‘not specifically ethnographic in perspective..... isn’t actually very ethnographic itself’ invites one to reflect on ethnographic perspective. As we all know that ethnographic perspective largely stems from humanist and functionalist anthropological traditions in which it is not only about ‘technical, methodical aspects’ but also ‘cultural relativism and behaviorist-functionalist theoretical underpinnings’ ( Bloammaet, 2006: 3). While writing my doctoral thesis I surveyed the literature published on ethnography and linguistic ethnography, I found there was much too stress on creating the methodological identity of ethnography than the efforts to theorize and discover new knowledge. I also found a kind of dogmatism prevailing in the existing literature on the definition of ethnographic perspective without attending to the very basic underlying conceptions of ethnography. For instance, Hymes notes ‘Ethnography cannot be assumed to be something already complete, ready to be inserted as a packaged unit in practices’ (1996: 4) which not only illustrates its dynamic and context-orientated epistemology but also shows the broadmindedness and inclusive temperament of the approach. I think the problem does not lie in the definition of ethnographic perspective and what exactly ethnographic perspective constitute and what not but with fulfilling the rigorous demands of doing good ethnography particularly at a time when people do not have time. I also think the problem of what ethnography perspective is and what it is not may perhaps be greatly resolved by looking at its intellectual roots, its desire to discover new knowledge and its inclusive temperament. Let me quote perhaps a less cited line but very important line hinting at the intellectual demands of ethnography:</p> <p>it is also a matter of providing systematic knowledge of <b>what is known so far about the subject</b>. The more adequate this knowledge, the more likely ethnographer will be able to avoid blind alley and pursue fruitful directions’ ( Hymes, 1996:7)</p> <p>Few ethnographic work that I am familiar with give importance to documenting what is exactly known on the subject so far and the engagement with the ‘why aspect of the phenomenon’. While I agree with Ben that it is important to understand what is going on and then to ask how one feels about it and that what one can do anything about it, it is also important to get engaged with the <i>why question</i> which seems to me the major engagement of Ingrid work. In my view such an engagement has more potential of creating new knowledge and it also brings in the interpretive tenor of ethnography. In the words of Heller (2011:12) Ethnography ‘needs to attend to the conditions that allow us to understand where those resources come from and <i>why</i> they have value’</p> <p>Khan, PhD Student, Lancaster University</p> <p>References</p> <p>Bloammaert, J. (2001) Ethnography as counter-hegemony: remarks on epistemology and method. <i>International literacy conference</i>, panel on Linguistic Ethnography. Cape Town, November 2001.</p> <p>Heller, M. (2011) Paths to Post-Nationalism. Oxford Scholarship Online: Jan-11</p> <p>Hymes, D. (1996) Ethnography, linguistic, narrative inequality: <i>toward an understanding of voice</i>. Taylor &amp; Francis e-library, 2004.</p>	

From:	Ingrid Piller ( <a href="mailto:ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU">ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU</a> )
Date:	Sun 13/05/2012 15:55
<p>Thanks to all the contributors this week! Apologies I have been slow to keep up but we've been busy launching <i>Japanese on the Move</i>, a video exhibition of transnational life stories, which some of you might find relevant, too.</p> <p>@Britta: I thought your admission that you like certain ways of speaking and dislike others was quite gutsy. Good on you! I think most researchers (even of the ethnographic persuasion) sidestep the issue of their own emotional reactions to different ways of speaking ...</p> <p>As you know, much of my own and my students' research has been around the ways in which so-called 'non-native speakers' are made to feel ashamed of the ways they speak English. Ridicule is obviously very powerful in inculcating shame, as is being ignored, or set up as deficient against an imaginary ideal in the media, etc.</p> <p>Of particular pertinence to the discussion here are the kinds of research designs you need to actually be able to understand how language ideologies become inculcated as personal feelings: Aneta Pavlenko has analysed autobiographies; Kimie Takahashi and myself have conducted a discourse analysis of women's magazines that research participants said they used; Yasir Suleiman uses auto-ethnography; Donna Butorac a longitudinal interview study; <u>I hope someone will soon do a study of the differential use of subtitles and what differential subtitling means to speakers of those varieties</u> ... Lots of possibilities, obviously, but what I'm saying is that I agree that (a) we need to take the question of how language ideologies translate into emotions more seriously and (b) to do so we need to expand our methodological imagination.</p> <p>In terms of the question with which you end your post ('how to un-teach myself and others emotions that are based on internalised hegemonic language ideologies'), I suspect you are asking the wrong crowd and I would turn to feminist and post-colonial writers.</p> <p>@Khan: Your post, too, is a reminder of a facet of intercultural communication that is often rendered invisible: history. Again, as with emotions, one could ask how to translate 'taking history seriously' into actual research designs. It's also worth reflecting that the erasure of history is actually an important form of intercultural communication: tourism literature, for instance, provides a contemporary, ubiquitous and very powerful discourse about the timelessness of the cultural Other.</p> <p>@Jean-Jacques: Congratulations on your new book! I've ordered it and will be looking forward to reading it. I think more multilingualism texts from outside the English-dominant world are sorely needed and I'm a bit bored with AAVE as the perennial example of a non-standard variety. Going back to Britta's questions of 'un-teaching': the German magazine <i>Spiegel</i> recently had a feature attempting to mainstream 'Kiezdeutsch' (a form of contemporary urban multiethnic youth language) – including an interactive language test etc. I thought that was pretty cool and demonstrates the power of actually according a name to a language ('Kiezdeutsch' instead of just 'slang' or 'dialect' or similar) and then associating practices with it that are typically associated with 'proper' languages (such as being tested ... ;-)</p> <p>@Donna and @Hanna: Thanks for reminding us of English language teaching! Those of us who self-describe as 'academic linguists' easily forget that the privilege to deal in 'more refined analytical vocabularies' (Ben) is underwritten either by teacher training or the English juggernaut or, most usually, both.</p> <p>@Phaisit: I was quite touched by your joke that it took you a full day to write your post. It's a useful reminder of the differential cost of engagement even in seemingly democratic and accessible forums such as this listserv. I hope that at least you'll get many responses in return for your efforts! ☺</p> <p>You are right, of course: an argument can be made that all communication is intercultural. However, I don't actually</p>	

think it's a particularly useful terminological shift to make because 'intercultural' comes with so much historical baggage (and that would be Chapter 3 of my book ;-). I wonder whether your students might find the videos on [Japanese-on-the-Move](#) an interesting way to start conversations about the intersection between language learning and identity. I'd particularly recommend the profile of [Ratchawit and Kyoko](#), who reflect on their English-Japanese-Thai trilingualism in different contexts.

Looking forward to the final week of the e-seminar!

Best wishes,  
Ingrid

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From:	Lisa Fairbrother (l-fairbr@HOFFMAN.CC.SOPHIA.AC.JP)
Date:	Mon 14/05/2012 06:52

Dear all,

In response to Ingrid's May 13th call for us to "expand our methodological imagination", and Ben's May 8th comment, one other possible way to get around what Ben calls the "treating named-languages- with-all-their-associations-&-material-effects as a focus of analysis"

is to treat all interaction (used here to refer to the dynamic dialectic intertwining of linguistic, sociolinguistic, non-verbal, sociocultural and ideological elements) as a PROCESS rather than a set of pre-defined entities and to use that process as our starting point.

For those of us working with Language Management Theory (Jernudd & Neustupný 1987, Nekvapil & Sherman 2009, but NOT Spolsky 2009) our starting point is not based on pre-defined categories of language and culture but on the process of noting deviations from norms (and again as Ben pointed out on May 2nd there's a huge variety of normative expectations that even each individual will have depending on contextual factors) and subsequently managing those deviations. In other words, we look at the discursive and also the personal-internal construction of interaction as it takes place, starting from the perspective of those actually engaged in interaction.

For those unfamiliar with this processual approach, Language Management Theory is a theory that focuses on the construction and management of language and interactional problems both at the macro and micro level, and has thus been used by both those working in macro level language planning and those interested in micro-level individual language planning (such as myself). Researchers using this theory analyse mainly ethnographic interviews, and/or video recordings of naturally occurring interaction supplemented with retrospective follow-up interviews to examine what deviations people note from which norms, how they subsequently evaluate those deviations, what plans they make to deal with those deviations and finally how they actually implement those adjustment plans. Interestingly (for me at least) Ben's explanation (May 2nd) of "deviation from habitual and extended practice" and subsequent "situated indexical interpretations" is a clear example of the noting and evaluation stages of Language Management Theory. Because the evaluation of deviations is one of its central stages, this theory is also well-suited to tackle Britta's question of "how social language norms become personal feelings".

Unfortunately, as Language Management Theory's main focus is interactional problems and how participants construct and manage those problems themselves, it doesn't really provide much help in dealing with non-problematic aspects of interaction such as the generative production of talk. It's also not very good at dealing with aspects of language management that participants aren't aware of, such as the power hidden behind language, so it's often up to the researcher to bring such issues to the forefront. However, I feel that some kind of processual approach may be the only way forward for us to deal with the full range of complexity within interaction, whether it be constructed by its participants as intercultural or not. Language Management Theory can at least start us off in the right direction.

Conceptualizing interaction as a process then also fits in nicely with a point that Ingrid makes in Chapter One of her book where she talks about "culture as something people do" (p.15). I think though that rather than speaking of "doing language" and "doing culture", using a term such as "interaction", when it is used to encompass the dynamic and dialectic interplay of linguistic, sociolinguistic (in the sense of Hymes' (1972) SPEAKING model), sociocultural, sociopolitical, socioeconomic and ideological elements, may be more accurate and at the same time easier for a

wider lay audience to grasp than the preconception-loaded terms of “language” and “culture”.

Best wishes

Lisa Fairbrother, Ph.D.

P.S. @ Phaisit If it's any consolation, I (a “native speaker” of English to some extent) have been writing and re-writing this post for the past ten days or so! I'm also often struggling to get what I want to say down in any of my languages.

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From:	Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@KCL.AC.UK)
Date:	Mon 14/05/2012 10:13

Dear all

A response to a couple of contributions -

@Lisa: Thanks, Lisa, for the references to Language Management Theory – sounds good, and also very interesting to hear your sense of its limitations. Your reference to the processual interplay of linguistic, sociolinguistic, socio-cultural, socio-political, socioeconomic and ideological interplay sounds right, and this doesn't rule out the stabilisation of some of these relationships for quite a long period, as well as the fact that we may also experience a lot of these as obdurately static and unmoving (especially, slower and higher scale process?). What you say reminds me of the Scollons' nexus analysis, and also dovetails with a rather good introductory book I read recently that was recommended at a session by Rick Iedema - *'Unsimple truths: Science, Complexity and policy'* by Sandra Mitchell (University of Chicago, 2009).

@Khan: Goodness, hope my intervention about ethnography wasn't read as purist disapproval! Whenever there's a discussion of whether a piece of work is an example of X or not, I always think of Hymes again, hoping that I'm not lapsing into his second category:

“[p]roductive scholars know that problems lead where they will and that relevance commonly leads across disciplinary boundaries. Yet many an insecure academic compensates for his[or her] own lack or loss of intellectual [potency] by making it difficult or impossible for students and junior colleagues to benefit from theirs. There are sure tests for this, tests for what may be considered ideological and institutional, as against intellectual criteria of relevance. [Worthwhile i]ntellectual criteria involve questions such as ‘Can you prove it?’, ‘What does it show?’, ‘If you want to do that, you’ll have to learn X (a genuine prerequisite)’, [Fatuous i]deological and institutional criteria involve statements such as: ‘That’s not anthropology’, ‘That’s all very well, but first you should study X’ (an unrelated subject, a tradition in the field, favored by the person in question, or both), ‘You’re not an anthropologist if you haven’t done/studied X’” (p. 44-45 in Hymes, D. 1969. *The use of anthropology: Critical, political, personal*. In D. Hymes (ed) *Reinventing Anthropology*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 3-82)

Still, that obviously doesn't mean that we should use the term 'ethnography' to cover everything.

“... too much stress on creating the methodological identity of ethnography” – you may be right, though there are periods where reflection and discussion about the (inter-)disciplinary positioning of a body of work becomes important/necessary, and I think we've felt quite a bit of that within the Linguistic Ethnography Forum over the last 10 years or so in the UK. Maybe the attempts to spell out what linguistic ethnography amounts to do come across as 'dogmatism', but that wasn't our original intention setting up the LEF. Indeed, one of the key drivers was recognition that although we felt (a) that an ethnographic perspective was vital in order to understand the complexity of contemporary sociolinguistic dynamics, and that (b) linguistic anthropology offered a marvellous set of analytic tools, most of us weren't card-carrying anthropologists ourselves, so we actually needed to build a rationale that explicitly reckoned with the fact that a lot of us had backgrounds in education and English language teaching (even those of us who Ingrid characterises as “self-describe[d].. ‘academic linguists’”)(cf Rampton 2007). Again, you may be right that this has involved some shortcuts, not “attending to the very basic underlying conceptions of ethnography” – Jan B has also raised that question (2007:685), so you're in good company. Even so, the experience we've had on the linguistic ethnography training programme that we've been running for 5 years or so is that researchers working in

health, education, management etc find linguistic ethnographic frameworks and procedures very enlightening, even though our teaching necessarily involves distillations of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and ethnographic method that might sound dogmatic in other contexts, especially if they're communicated away from the empirical data-sessions which I mentioned in my first message.

Re documenting "what is exactly known on the subject so far" – yes, that's another great quote from Hymes, and although there are obviously complications around the definition of 'what is exactly known', it's vital to make a really good attempt at this at PhD level. But when linguistic ethnography moves closer to interventionist action research, carried out by non-specialists or specialists in other disciplines, I'm not sure so how practical this is. Beyond that, I don't agree that we need to extricate ourselves from careful ethnographic analysis of empirical processes to engage with the why aspect (and don't forget that Bourdieu himself did lots of ethnography – see JB's terrific paper 'Bourdieu the ethnographer'). Yes of course, you're not going to have any ideas about e.g. neo-liberalism if you haven't read quite a bit of non-ethnographic literature, but that doesn't mean to say (a) that you won't be able to pick up on its effects on local dynamics, or (b) that these effects are going to work out entirely as predicted in the literature/textbooks. There are always multiple causes in play, and the challenge is to work out how the many processes at different levels that come together in any activity or scene interact together.

So thanks for these two interventions – really stimulating.

Bw

Ben

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From:	Jan Blommaert ( <a href="mailto:jmeblommaert@gmail.com">jmeblommaert@gmail.com</a> )
Date:	14 May 2012 10:39
<p>Hi all,</p> <p>If I can put in my two cents' worth here, endorsing the second point raised by Ben, on 'dogmatism'. It is good to distinguish between 'dogmatism' and 'methodological firmness'. The latter is a commitment towards a perpetual improvement of theory and methodology, casting robust foundations and working from that basis up to specific techniques and methods of analysis. The first is the refusal, so to speak, to change and adjust, replacing the dynamics of scientific dialogue by a 'catechismic' attitude in which everything should fit the theory. If it doesn't fit, the data are dropped, simplified or disqualified as unreliable. I guess all of us are familiar with that phenomenon.</p> <p>The spirit of ethnography is precisely its openness. It is inscribed in the whole architecture of ethnography - a science working from its data and respecting, inevitably, the complexities of data and the perpetual empirical challenges to theory and methodology they raise. That is why it is an uncomfortable science, something that demands tremendous intellectual flexibility and resilience, because every new project has at least the potential to destabilize the generalizations that emerged from the previous one.</p> <p>It's also tremendously productive of course. One of the outcomes of this manic attention to data, accompanied by the open attitude towards theory and methodology, has led to immensely refined and sophisticated views on some key social-theoretical phenomena: identity and ideology instantly come to mind, but even the dialectic of structure and agency has been addressed ethnographically in unparalleled ways, defying the broad (and often deductive, i.e. there-by-assumption) characteristics of these notions in other forms of science. Ethnographers are typically slow and cautious when it comes to generalizations. But when they generalize, they do it in often extraordinarily reliable ways - theoretical generalization in ethnography is not something that derives from theory itself; it emerges out of a series of meticulously analyzed data.</p> <p>The key thing about ethnography is what I have called elsewhere "the ethnographic invitation": the constant openness to critically check what we believe against the available evidence; to keep exploring things even when - or especially when - they appear to be well-known. It's, as we can see, a fundamentally anti-dogmatic stance in science. I hope that distinction, between dogmatism and firmness, is clear now.</p> <p>Yours with thanks for an excellent discussion,</p> <p>Jan Blommaert</p>	

From:	Ingrid Piller ( <a href="mailto:ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU">ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU</a> )
Date:	Wed 16/05/2012 02:11

Thanks, Ben, Khan and Jan, for reminding us what ethnography is all about, and also what it is not. I was also interested in one other point raised by Ben, which we haven't really discussed so far: research and activism.

#### RESEARCH AND ACTIVISM

Ben cites Monica as writing: "My own preference has been to first try to understand what is going on, and then to ask myself how I feel about it, and what, if anything I want to do about it" – I haven't had the chance to look up the actual paper but as a statement without a context, I think this is completely uncontroversial and I imagine that most researchers and, indeed, most activists would endorse this position. I certainly do and have often said stuff to similar effect.

However, the problem arises once you actually try to live by general words of wisdom such as these, and it does so in a number of ways:

First, there is the choice of research question or problem, which in itself is a political act. I don't need to remind anyone on this list that the development of the field is closely connected to researchers intervening in social problems: for instance, concern with the exclusion of indigenous peoples (Sapir, Whorf, Hymes in the US; Elkin, Strehlow in Australia) or of migrants (Gumperz, Fishman, Haugen in the US; Clyne in Australia). Exemplary contemporary work in the field is similarly based on inherently political decisions about which research problems are important as social issues and are worth investigating in the first place. So, it would seem to me that the relationship between research and activism is a dialectic one from the word 'go' and that it's impossible to isolate the two from each other and put them into a neat sequential order. To me the key question is: how do you identify a research problem that matters?

Secondly, there is the issue that any fieldworker is called upon to act in situ long before they have acquired 'perfect' knowledge (leaving aside for now the philosophical question that it's impossible to ever understand fully what is going on). The researcher is always only one actor among many: for instance, institutions have their own reasons for granting access and usually pursue an agenda that is somewhat different from the researcher's (many workplaces in which my team and I have worked saw us as some sort of 'quality assurance' as in "we're so good we've even had researchers here" ;-). Furthermore, access is always likely to be partial and many aspects of the workings of an institution will remain hidden.

Thirdly, institutional stakeholders often want immediate 'feedback', i.e. results and don't think it's reasonable to have to wait for 3-5 years till research findings are published and 'certified' through the peer-review process. This pressure in particular – to speak to ongoing research, i.e. before you have 'all the facts' – is likely to increase ever more in the current media environment and its imperative for immediacy. On [www.languageonthemove.org](http://www.languageonthemove.org), for instance, we've made the choice to blog about our research as we go along.

A further twist to all this comes from the accountability requirements of funding bodies, which in my experience usually need reporting completed before academic publications become available. Again, one way we have tackled this problem in a recent project, *Japanese on the Move* (sorry for mentioning it again ...), is by publishing data excerpts in the form of video profiles as we went along often within a week of data collection.

In sum, it is easy to malign researchers as putting their politics before their research because this charge goes to the heart of our professional identities. However, as I've tried to show here all research means making inherently political

choices, and the kind of social research we do brings questions of politics to the fore even more. Being open and explicit about our choices is a key way to ensure the quality of qualitative research and I always find it instructive which choices others have had to face and how and why they made them. So, would love to hear from others who grapple with the tensions between research and activism ☺

Finally, for those interested in exploring a historical case study of the matters I have raised here (and who might have an interest in Australian anthropology), I'd warmly recommend Rosalind Kidd's book *The Way We Civilise* (particularly the chapter on "The New 'Experts'").

Best,  
Ingrid

PS: @Britta, re 'language ideologies and emotions': you might enjoy our most recent blog post on *Language on the Move*: ["Is bilingualism impolite?"](#)

From:	Theresa Lillis (t.m.lillis@OPEN.AC.UK)
Date:	Wed 16/05/2012 07:36
<p>Thanks to everyone for all the comments and discussion...</p> <p>I've been reading/listening with great interest and I guess like many, not responding via email but having ongoing conversations with myself in response to the many issues raised Ben's neat distinction prompted a similar response in me to that expressed by Ingrid- so thanks Ingrid for taking the time to articulate tensions around the relationship between reserach and activism (and I'm interpreting your use of activism here in a very broad way to signal research as a political act encomapssing commitment, emotional engagement always alongside rational inquiry etc..). I also agree that in some research you have to engage pretty quickly with institutions and users- often before or ourside of any presumed research cycle of 'findings' leading to 'interventions' or action..</p> <p>this is something Lucy Rai and I are finding for example in a project on writing in social work - and I find Srikant Sarangi's notion of 'hot feedback' a useful way of capturing this (The conditions and consequences of professional discourse studies, Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2005)</p> <p>Thanks to all again..</p> <p>Theresa Lillis</p>	



From:	Miguel Pérez Milans (miguel_milans@HOTMAIL.COM)
Date:	Wed 16/05/2012 07:45

Dear all,

Thank you so much for such an interesting discussion. It always occurs to me that I find spaces like this particularly illuminating when there is someone who says “well, hold on, hold on, I am not sure I agree with you on X” as this is what Academia is all about; discontinuity is not only a relevant sociolinguistic phenomena but also an excellent boost for intellectual framing/reframing!

I would like to step in at this stage of the dialogue in order to engage with these issues having to do with ethnography and activism that Ingrid has raised in response to the previous comments by Ben and Jan. I don't want to get trapped in the abstract semantics of the word to follow and observe the classes taught by a teacher (I will call him Mr. C) who has “activism” so I will draw on my (localized) latest ethnographic experience to make my point on how un-confident I feel when thinking of research and political activism as intimately linked. I hope this helps to continue the dialogue.

I have recently been conducting ethnographic research in a low prestigious school in Hong Kong (HK, hereafter) which is now offering a new educational programme for Ethnic Minority (EM, hereafter) students, in what seems to be an institutional strategy to commodify itself and avoid closure in a context of increasing educational neoliberalisation (these students bring many resources from state and private agencies, but also represent a door for the school to introduce English as a medium of instruction, with all the related implications in the contemporary HK education context). In this setting, I decided spent most part of his young life engaged in long-term and continuous projects oriented to empower EM students in the educational contexts of USA and HK. What he does is basically to take a group of students and accompany them as their teacher all the way from secondary to tertiary education.

And it happened that after my first day of observation in that school I took the Underground with this teacher back to the city center, something he took advantage of to shift identity roles: from then on in that train he became the one who made the questions, the one who scrutinized everything I did or said, my listener, etc., while I was expected to reply his questions, to justify my positioning, to make sense of my actions and words, etc. During that conversation I sensed that he had been waiting the whole day for having such an opportunity; I sensed that he wanted to make clear how suspicious he was about those scholars (like me) representing themselves as “critical” or “politically engaged” even when their work has not a direct impact on the specific participants they observe (as he put it: “real impact, concrete”; the here-and-now you were talking about, Ingrid, which may not be something bad but rather index the different intellectual positions of scholars and political activists/general public).

Mr. C has a PhD. and works as part-time lecturer in University as a mean to build up the capital he needs to go on with his clearly defined project as a secondary school teacher (he knows the kind of capital he needs in today's HK so as to make the connections and networks he needs in order to bring University to his students' life); that is, he uses his academic career for his empowering projects in schools and not in the other way around (he is still and will be a secondary school teacher working in low prestigious schools in the periphery of HK even though he could be a University scholar). It is from this perspective (from this life trajectory) that he feels very suspicious about those scholars who, according to him, often enter the fieldwork to upgrade their academic careers (school as a scholar commodity).

Let me now to do a bit of abstract modeling on the basis of this small ethnographic story to get to my main argument. At that point in our train conversation I felt I did not have much to say because it is true that we as scholars most of the times talk to different audiences as those people who have political activism as their first priority. We make

research questions, as Ingrid said, but I wonder if Mr. C would talk in those terms when making sense of what he does in his everyday life: would he say that he makes research questions to justify what he does in his school? Research questions can be socially sensitive, but not necessarily political activist. Of course I was researching EM students in HK and not the influence of gamma ray on a set of micro-chemical particles (maybe I would be now researching on this micro-chemical particles I had got better grades in the Spanish University entrance examinations...), but we have to be clear about other issues influencing our decisions on the kind of research topics we cover (funding, fashionable topics and concepts which have currency in the logic of the academia under certain space/times, etc.). We should distinguish understanding research as a social practice from understanding research as political activism: who are our audiences? where do we publish our books?

I think we as researchers make research questions and want to engage in theoretical discussions; of course we may find that we feel in a particular way about what we are describing and that we want to do something else apart from talking to other scholars and to theory (which brings me back to the Monica Heller's point you have been citing), BUT a) we may not necessarily be allowed to do something under certain conditions in our fieldwork or b) we may not have something interesting to contribute from our participants' perspective. We cannot take for granted that we always have something relevant to offer (read relevant in a 'universalistic' way, that is, taking for granted that something is relevant for all participants, all the time, through all spaces in the field). We can also discover painfully this in our research process, as we are not going to be necessarily seen as the super-heroes or savers of our participants (we represent a small segment in our participants' timeline, and taking for granted that we can 'save' or 'help' them can be perceived as highly arrogant by them). In my case, I decided to make fieldwork in that school in HK because, following Heller, I wanted to study the discursive shifts through which that particular community was (re)constituting itself as so, in connection to wider socio-economic changes. Then I found Mr.C and got interested in my participants as located people (not as teachers of EM students, but as people with concrete names), and progressively engaged in activities I was allowed and required (while I built trust, and not before). But, in the local context I have described, I still would not call this political activism because I would not be fair to my participants.

Thanks again for making this forum and these e-seminars possible.

Best regards,

Miguel

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Miguel Pérez-Milans

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From:	Shiva Motaghi Tabari (shiva.motaghi-tabari@STUDENTS.MQ.EDU.AU)
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 08:39
<p>Dear all,</p> <p>It's a wonderful opportunity to be a part of this productive e-seminar. Thanks to the UKLEF for providing this opportunity and thanks to Ingrid Piller for sharing her insightful observations. As a new PhD student in the field of sociolinguistics and new to many concepts raised in this e-seminar –which I truly enjoyed–I would like to plainly share my own experience.</p> <p>The stories of the two American women living in Germany (an educational counsellor from New York City and C. Heller, 2009) in Chapter 10 of Ingrid's book (pp.145-146) well exemplify language power in intercultural communication and that how the source of communication breakdown could be judged as linguistic rather than cultural in that context; and as she maintains, how such misunderstandings can be attributed to cultural problems as soon as it comes to English. Indeed she well clarified a monolingual mindset where 'cultural stereotypes' show off in any failure in 'intercultural communication'. Back in 2008 on the first days of my settlement in Australia, while sitting in the waiting room of a storage company for my paperwork to be done, a young man –a staff member- offered me to "help myself with a 'cap' or something"! Feeling embarrassed and guilty for not understanding him, I asked "pardon me!" He repeated the same, changing not even a word or speed! Wasn't long trying to find an equivalent for 'cap' in my mind, when he asked me to follow him to the other side of the room where showed me a coffee machine. While he was explaining 'technically' how the machine was working and what were the differences between 'cappuccino' and other types of coffee, I was thinking "oh, they say 'cap' to cappuccino!" A little confess here that while being so offended of his judgement and his attempt to define 'cappuccino', at that time I took all the blame to myself for not having adequate English knowledge for smooth communication – well, after years of academic and non-academic study of English since childhood. Having settled in the new society, I came to understand that not all the English speakers use –or are willing to use- the shortened form "cap" for "cappuccino"!</p> <p>Having seen how some people struggle with learning and using English, I used to think about the unfairness of such struggles –with deficiencies after all and the subsequent sense of degradation among "natives"–while some others were simply happened to have it effortlessly. Getting to know Ingrid, her approaches to language and multilingualism, and her works specifically her most recent <i>Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction</i>, opened a new window to my views and inspired me to find ways to resolve my uncertainties; and to this effect, I believe her work has fulfilled its mission –as the title "A Critical Introduction" is expressive enough.</p> <p>As Kimie Takahashi highlighted here in this e-seminar, "Today we celebrate our wonderful multicultural world, claiming that such essentialist, colonialist and imperialist ways of speaking of and of researching intercultural communication and second language learning are a thing of the past. But are they really? As Piller's book in general and Chapter 10 in particular demonstrate, the answer is clearly no". We researchers are given a sight beyond the face so as to get involved and make effort to contribute to finding ways to action.</p> <p>I am looking forward to getting more insights from further works like those of Piller.</p> <p>Best wishes,</p> <p>Shiva</p>	



From:	Luisa Martin Rojo <luisa.rojo@UAM.ES>
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 11:41
<p>Dear all,</p> <p>I am very happy to take part in the e-seminar.</p> <p>I believe the point raised by Piller and the two questions she poses are of great interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you see the relationship between sociolinguistic research and activism?</li><li>• How we deal with the tensions between research and activism?</li></ul> <p>I agree with Rampton that the path suggested by Heller (“My own preference has been to first try to understand what is going on, and then to ask myself how I feel about it, and what, if anything I want to do about it”), and illustrated by Pérez-Milans’s ethnography in HK, is an accurate and reflexive way to bring together research &amp; politics. Considering, as Piller says, that all research means making inherently political choices.</p> <p>Politics can be put before our research, and that won’t necessarily give rise to a broad-brush approach, which generalises or essentialises or distorts our views on linguistic practices. This is why I believe that the path signalled by Heller can be travelled in the other direction. Let me give an example: when the <i>Indignados</i>, or Occupy, movement arose in Madrid – involving tens of thousands people coming together in the main city square, I joined them in the square not to do ethnography in order to understand what was going on, but to participate. However, straight away, I realised that the introduction of new political practices, together with some of the features of the site (urban and virtual spaces), and the legal and organisational constraints experienced, seemed to require correlative changes in communicative practices. Accordingly, I continued to participate, but at the same time, attempted to understand.</p> <p>As my degree of involvement increased, partly at the request of some of our students who had organised working groups on communication and “analysis”, I made my analytical experience available to the movement. And, simultaneously, I carried on trying to grasp the linguistic practices, initiating a debate on them that will be continued at SS19 in Berlin.</p> <p>I realise that some methodological questions can be raised here in relation to the kind of ethnography, but the point now is that I see this is activism, particularly in comparison with my previous work (delinquents’ jargon, ethnicising and essentialising discursive representations, linguistic resource management in schools), in which there were differences in relation to the degree of involvement and participation. In this case, both targets – on the one hand, to intervene and to take part as a group member, not as a researcher, and on the other, the wish to understand, and investigate – are for me equally strong.</p> <p>So, it seems to me that what actively shapes the research/activism balance is a question of methodology (Ben, Monica), of the research questions chosen and researchers’ reflexivity (Ingrid), of challenging the expert/non-expert asymmetry (Miguel), and of problematisation and production of knowledge vs. dogmatisation (Jan, Luisa). But it is, above all, a question of synergy between research and commitment, and of jointly producing a result that would otherwise not be readily achieved. In my case, I observed aspects of communicative practices that I hadn’t noticed before, and certain assumptions about linguistic markets seem now controversial; I was made aware of new questions and debates, and I now better understand how participants intervene and reflect about the production and circulation of discourses. From the activist point of view, as an anonymous analyst, I contribute to monitoring media and to prepare speakers and moderators for assemblies and media interviews.</p>	

Thanks and best regard

Luisa

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From:	Julie Byrd Clark (jbyrdcla@UWO.CA)
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 14:22
<p>Ditto to what Luisa has said here.</p> <p>I've enjoyed reading through the discussions and the many comments made during this e-seminar. I've been thinking for a while (too) about what I could add to this discussion.</p> <p>Certainly, all research has political aims and is situated, just as our responses are in this discussion. We write to convey our thoughts, to engage in discussion and academic debate, but we are also mindful of how we wish to be represented or seen as well by our colleagues and peers.</p> <p>Thanks to Ingrid for sharing her work with us, and really, from my understanding, taking a stance to include or make space for critical engagement with "language(s)" in the "intercultural" which for a long time has continued to have gone under-researched, assumed, relying heavily on contrastive analyses that tend to homogenize linguistic and social practices. Ethnographic or not, Ingrid has produced an important work. I don't think it's easy to produce a textbook for students and non-lay persons and address all of the many complexities of social processes at play.</p> <p>From my own experiences, it appears that often as students, we begin from a critical, yet broad-brush what's wrong with the world stance before we move to the more reflexive, who am I and in what ways am I contributing to reproducing hegemonic discourses, the construction of difference, or transforming/challenging such processes? Am I aware of my different ways of speaking, relating, and interacting with others, and if so, when? However, I do want to underscore that I think this move to the reflexive dimension is important and needs to be given as much attention.</p> <p>In a similar vein to Ingrid's work, Fred Dervin and I have a new book coming out on this very topic: <i>Reflexivity and Multimodality: Rethinking multilingualism and interculturality in accelerating, complex, and transnational spaces</i>. This is an edited collection of works that try to get at the complexities and nuances, going beyond binary relationships, and at the same time, deeply engages with the notion of reflexivity vis-à-vis the multifaceted constructions of multilingualism and interculturality.</p> <p>Heller's quote is a great point of departure for doing ethnographic research, but is it enough to say "I want to understand what's going on, then ask myself how I feel about it, and what if anything I want to do about it?" Who am I?</p> <p>In the spirit of "the ethnographic invitation" (proposed by Jan) I would add to Monica's questions: What is the impact of my position and interpretations of what's going on, or how do my own investments/experiences impact my understanding of what's going on (or what's not going on)? And (if I do something about "it" or "not") how are my interpretations/representations going to be interpreted/used/taken up? I think this adds to what Ben remarked about the complications of "what is exactly known" and "how do we know". We need to take into account the ways in which we make and index meaning, how and why we invest in certain social meanings and representations over others, and certainly, the ways in which we perform them. Surely, I'm aware at the same time that it's difficult when we cite one another, as this citation becomes a representation.</p> <p>Researcher reflexivity is very important, particularly in ethnographic work as Ben has referenced with the LEF forum, it's a means to keep us open. However, I don't think it's always addressed and is often given little attention (although Pennycook, Canagarajah, and Lin have produced some interesting work pertaining to reflexivity as relates to critical applied linguistics). Miguel Milans makes some insightful comments and addresses some of the complexity surrounding researcher reflexivity. I agree that we are not always afforded the conditions and are often under some kind of</p>	

constraints when we conduct research. Our ethnographic research is not always emancipatory for our participants, but it has the potential to be, for the field, at large.

I really appreciated what Britta shared about the personal significance and how languages (accents) become socially significant and the ways in which we become emotionally attached--the affective dimension is very important (the ways in which we feel or how different representations evoke certain emotions) when we look at how and why "things" (social interactions, discourses, classroom behaviours, emotions) come about in the ways that they do. Certainly, Aneta Pavlenko's work would be relevant, as well as Bonny Norton's work (Bonny Norton Pierce). I would also recommend Chapters 4 & 5 in my book (Byrd Clark, J. (2009). *Multilingualism, citizenship, and identity: Voices of youth and symbolic investments in an urban, globalized world*, London: Continuum for further reading on this topic.

Reflexivity as a large part of ethnography is significant as it gets at more than our relationships with research participants and constructions of knowledge. It challenges and engages us to look at the ways in which we reproduce knowledge (e.g. citing the same authors' works), how we represent "knowledge" and the ways in which we can possibly bring about social transformation (e.g. the inclusion of new voices in our research realms). It demands that we ask ourselves the "tough questions"(e.g. how am I as a researcher contributing to different social processes, what are my assumptions and feelings, who is this research for and for what purpose, and in what ways might my research become commodified by my own positionings)? I think the LEF has been very successful in bringing about the latter (transformation), and I hope to see this continue.

Lastly, I agree with Ingrid's questioning of asking how do you see your relationship between sociolinguistic research and activism--I see this as ethnographic and as a means to begin to develop reflexivity, and concur with Luisa's last statements made about the balance of the research/activism being a "question of synergybetween research and commitment, and of jointly producing a result that would otherwise not be readily achieved". I think many of us would agree that this is why we do what we do.

As for the folk terminologies, and naming/categorising of languages and linguistic varieties, I have found Pennycook's work very interesting, particularly the notions of translanguaging and metrolingualism. Ben Rampton and Jan Blommaert have also used the term "super diversity". What do you think about these terms/concepts--are they able to capture some of the complexities and fluidity of linguistic and identity-constructing practices, and what might be their implications for pedagogy? Going back to Ben's original questions, how do we teach such concepts and do so in a way that avoids the simplistic separate-but-related? Can we? Do students' need to have an understanding of how and why the simplistic separate-but-related came about before they can appreciate these concepts? What say ye?

Thank you to Ingrid, and to everyone for this interesting and stimulating discussion. I appreciated being able to participate in this discussion.

Yours sincerely,  
Julie

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<http://www.continuumbooks.com/books/detail.aspx?BookId=134218&SntUrl=152136&SubjectId=989&Subject2Id=1563>

From:	Ben Rampton (ben.rampton@KCL.AC.UK)
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 14:42
<p>A couple of points maybe worth adding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in Britain and a lot of places elsewhere, the cultural status of traditional research/scientific values (being careful, logical, accountable/explicit, skeptical, well-informed, comparative, original/interesting) is increasingly called into question. Funding bodies lay increasing emphasis on impact beyond the academy, and there is a case for saying that activism is becoming the new research orthodoxy, very much something to report on in research applications and audit exercises;</li><li>• it's important not to forget the significance of the undergraduates on our doorsteps as a vital audience for what we do. First of all, there are lots of them, and most of them are going on to doing something outside university, so they're a significant public, a public that is also willing to give us more than 5 minutes over breakfast on Sunday morning. Second, we've actually got quite a significant cultural fight on our hands, persuading them that they're students, not consumers, and that it takes time to understand and develop the ways of seeing that our work offers.</li></ul> <p>Which is not to say that Luisa's case isn't very interesting, worthwhile and potentially productive. Just that academic/scientific enquiry is itself a value/perspective that now needs quite an energetic defense, and if our activism is all directed outside the walls of the academy, there might be nothing left inside when we get back!</p> <p>Bw Ben</p>	

From:	Celia Roberts (celiaroberts@LINEONE.NET)
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 16:34
<p>Am enjoying the debate and go along with Ben's and Jan's recent postings. As someone who spends a fair bit of time both with my head down in data and in communicating with those outside the social science academy, I believe a lot of the working with those 'outside' actually helps us to be careful, logical, accountable etc and also to ensure clarity and robustness. Sometimes, when we are talking only to each other, we can be too easily impressed by a glorious rhetoric that says exactly what we want to say (but perhaps better), but does not travel beyond ourselves to the sceptical groups outside. I find the scepticism that I meet from other professionals both refreshing and hard, hard work to counter. I come home chastened. So its good to look janus like both ways, provided we dont break our necks in the attempt.</p> <p>Best wishes Celia</p>	

From:	Mabelle Victoria (mabelle.victoria@BLUEWIN.CH)
Date:	Thu 17/05/2012 17:01
<p>I'd like to jump in here and add my two cents worth before the end of this very interesting e-seminar. Just a quick comment from Shiva's earlier post this morning regarding the two American women in Ingrid's examples (pp. 145-146), I just wondered if the German-speaking 'others' (the parents on the parents' council, the store clerk) were just as frustrated as the Americans in the situations mentioned. I wondered too if the store clerk felt as 'small and insignificant' and as 'tiny and stupid' as Corey Heller did (pp.146). My point here is that those who seemingly hold the positions of power from an analyst perspective may not necessarily feel that way or hold the same view.</p> <p>In Ingrid's chapter 10 we get reminded of the dark side of intercultural communication as 'cruelty' (p. 148), as a form of encounter where those who are unable to communicate or silenced are subjected to violence and abuse (pp. 150-151). I think perhaps this mostly applies to situations where intercultural communication is inextricably linked with power (English of course as the language of power). As we have seen in Ingrid's airport transit example, (passenger's first language is French and the agent's first language is Swiss German) the dynamics changed when the interlocutors used English as a lingua franca. Without the interference of linguistic power (who is a native English speaker and who's not), her analysis was '[t]he problem in this conversation is due to the fact that the passenger wants something that the status of her ticket and thus the airline's policy does not follow' (p. 157). For me, the airport transit extract is a reminder that conflict talk in intercultural contexts is not necessarily about linguistic proficiency or cultural differences.</p> <p>In an earlier post, Ben mentioned 'genre' as a useful heuristic concept – just to quote from his email, 'if you think of language generally being situated in genres (or activity types), it's harder to claim that "[b]eing placed in a situation where one cannot communicate is a form of abuse and a human rights violation" (p.151). As a very-early career researcher, I do find genre an indispensable part of the analytic tool kit. Deriving analytic insights from my knowledge of frames and activity types, I was able to make claims in my thesis that misunderstanding episodes in my data were not due to lack of linguistic proficiency, cultural differences or unequal power relations but to the interlocutors' differing notions of the activity going on (are we playing, joking, arguing?).</p> <p>On the subject of research and activism, I am rather ambivalent. My PhD research started out as a somewhat angry reaction to researchers who decided to take up the cudgel for non-native speakers and immigrants like me. I resisted the identity of being seen as someone needing help or empowerment just because I am not a native speaker of the dominant language. I resisted the focus on the oppression while ignoring the resources and affordances that the oppressed have. And yet when I finished my research (at which point I had developed strong relations with my immigrant participants), I felt the need to advocate for my participants and do more research that could inform government policy. I find this quote from Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) worth reflecting on:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">'Most of the time, [...] the temptation to abandon the researcher role should be resisted. Certainly, we have little sympathy with attempts to redefine that role to make the researcher into a political activist. Like absolutist conceptions of research ethics, this often seems to be based on a conception of the researcher as in some sense above the world being studied, and thereby able to partake of <i>god-like knowledge and powers</i>' (p. 229, my emphasis).</p> <p>While noting that ethnography might not be an effective means to bring about socio-political changes, Hammersley and Atkinson also emphasise that</p>	

'the value of the knowledge that ethnography can provide must not be underestimated; and there is a genuine danger of this in a world where the primary emphasis is on doing rather than knowing, and therefore on the rhetorical power of words rather than on their representational capacity' (p.236).

Reference:

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2007) *Ethnography: principles in practice*, (3<sup>rd</sup> Edn), Routledge, London.

Best wishes

Mabelle

From:	Muhammad Ali Khan *(khan.ali110@GOOGLEMAIL.COM)
Date:	Fri 18/05/2012 01:12

Dear Colleagues

Although the seminar has come full circle, I just want to present a specific case as a way to share my understanding of research, ethics and ethnography as these have emerged as major topics of discussion.

The British council Pakistan hired a consultant, a known figure in the area of language and development to conduct research on Language-in-education Policy of Pakistan. The consultant flew in to Pakistan five times for short visits, conducted interviews with stakeholders, held workshops in different cities of Pakistan and came up with the following report. Apart from these research steps, the consultant made ethnolouge and Population census data as the basis for his inferences about language in Pakistani society particularly in its school without going to schools. As you will note in the report that the researcher has tried his best to present language-in-education as apolitical thing and have presented languages as bounded entities without any regional and social variations in them.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/pakistan-ette-english-language-report.pdf>

But the report has earned the status of a valid research in Pakistan as I see publications referring to it as an authentic piece of research because it has been carried out by a British Consultant and Council name of course is brand in Pakistan as well.

The things which are not clear to me are: Why BC is interested in Pakistan's language-in-education policy? How can someone have the integrity to talk about such complex issues of a very different setting without going to its institutions and without having the feel of life there? How has the researcher understood socio-economic and political issues of Pakistan and their intersection with languages?

The case shows to me what Piller rightly said that all research choices are primarily political. The decisions to intervene, selection of participants, obscuring the subjectivities, making a false appearance of empiricism without attending to basic issues of translation and transcription are some of the less important issues that the researcher has not addressed. I also see the ethical dilemma in the study at different levels: country wise, institutional wise and at the level of researcher.

My response to such study is doing ethnography. I know it takes time and more energy but it empowers me to respond in scientific manner to such powerful institutions and their seemingly apolitical researches.

Khan  
PhD student  
Lancaster University

From:	Ingrid Piller ( <a href="mailto:ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU">ingrid.piller@MQ.EDU.AU</a> )
Date:	Fri 18/05/2012 08:06
<p>Hi all,</p> <p>I know that most you have a few more hours of this e-seminar left but here in Eastern Australia May 18 is drawing to a close and so I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for this engaging e-seminar. Thanks to everyone who contributed and I'm sorry I ran out of time and could not respond to everyone. Particular thanks to Ben for taking on the role of discussant. Additionally, I would also like to acknowledge all those who couldn't quite work up the courage to contribute but who have been thinking along or sending private responses.</p> <p>I'm sure I'll continue to think about the questions raised here for a while longer and will continue the conversation on the <a href="http://www.languageonthemove.org">www.languageonthemove.org</a> research blog. Please free to join us there, too – we always welcome new visitors, contributors and guest bloggers. Those interested in the British Council report about language-in-education in Pakistan raised by Khan earlier today might also want to read his earlier blog post when the report was first released more than a year ago at <a href="http://www.languageonthemove.com/language-migration-social-justice/language-education-and-poverty">http://www.languageonthemove.com/language-migration-social-justice/language-education-and-poverty</a></p> <p>May we meet again!</p> <p>With thanks and best wishes, Ingrid</p> <p>Ingrid Piller, PhD Professor of Applied Linguistics Department of Linguistics, C5A MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109 Australia</p> <p><a href="http://www.languageonthemove.org">www.languageonthemove.org</a> Book review editor, <i>Discourse and Society</i> New textbook: <i>Intercultural Communication</i></p>	

From:	Frances Giampapa ( <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> )
Date:	Fri 18/05/2012 12:42
<p>Dear Members,</p> <p>Thank you to everyone, far and wide, for making this e-seminar engaging, critical and lively! Many thanks again to Ingrid for not only allowing us all to engage with her work but also being an active participant in the seminar. We are grateful to Aneta, who has been travelling for most of this time, for starting off the discussion through her keenly focused remarks to Ingrid's chapter.</p> <p>Many of the themes have taken us in a number of directions that bring us back to what we do as researchers, ethnographers, why we research what we do and the political positions that we take in relation to the issues we engage in. Within a funding climate that continues to be challenging and not always open to the work that we do it is crucial for us to keep pushing the envelope both intellectually and politically.</p> <p>We hope to be making available a transcript of this e-seminar. Please watch this space for future e-seminars and if you have any suggestions for e-seminars please get in touch.</p> <p>Please check the LEF website for updates of new events.</p> <p>With very best wishes, Frances</p> <p>----- Dr. Frances Giampapa Lecturer in Education (TESOL/Applied Linguistics) Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Globalisation, Education and Societies (Migration, Language and Identities) Joint Co-ordinator of EthicNet <a href="http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet">http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/networks/ethicnet</a></p> <p>Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol 35 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1JA</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk">Frances.Giampapa@bristol.ac.uk</a> Telephone: 44(0)117 331 4499 (internal): 14499</p>	