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The University Grapevine

For University English Language Teachers

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From the Editor

Happy September to all of my teacher friends across the globe! I hope that your courses have been going well and that you are getting the support you need to reach all of your personal goals so far this year. And please remember to take some breaks as well.

If you are new to *The Grapevine*, please feel free to follow what is happening on [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) to be a closer part of what we are doing together.

And good luck to you all with starting your classes this semester/term. Please remember how important your hard work and creative ideas are for your students!

Robert Stroud (TUG Editor)

Feel free to [e-mail me](#). You can also find me on [LinkedIn](#), [ResearchGate](#) and [Academia](#).



*Words Of Wisdom:**Advice about Multilingual Practices from Alison Phipps*

Alison Phipps UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts at the University of Glasgow and Professor of Languages and Intercultural Studies. She was De Carle Distinguished Visiting Professor at Otago University, Aotearoa New Zealand 2019-2020, Thinker in Residence at the EU Hawke Centre, University of South Australia in 2016, Visiting Professor at Auckland University of Technology, and Principal Investigator for AHRC Large Grant ‘Researching Multilingually at the Borders of Language, the body, law

and the state’; for Cultures of Sustainable Peace, and is now co-Director of the Global Challenge Research Fund South South Migration Hub. She is Ambassador for the Scottish Refugee Council. She received an OBE in 2012 and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Edinburgh in 2023. She is an academic, activist, educator and published poet and a member of the Iona Community.

In what ways have you tried to bring multilingual practices into your work?

“For as long as I can remember I’ve been straining to bring **multilingual practices** into my work of learning and of teaching, of researching and of art making. The way languages other than my mother language of English could make the world appear in glorious colours, scents and sensations that English would not conjure has been a source of endless fascination. The way languages could also be a refuge – for me from the violences of my schooling growing up in a communities falling apart in Britain as the mines and steelworks were closed and suicide rates for the children of workers rocketed in my school. Over there - en français, auf Deutsch – were other worlds where people did things differently. It was fascinating and it opened my young mind to the potency and potentiality and poetry of language as repertoire, refuge and source.

My PhD was undertaken in Swabian dialect and in German. My accent when I spoke German became inflected with the hues and shades of the south. The work was also with families of refugees, both internally displaced and from Balkans war. I learned of how language was home and hinderance, hope and hospitality. I learned that there could be not simple answer to the question: "why are you learning x?" and yet that an economic answer was expected, one of function and pragmatism.

Later I researched languages learned for tourist purposes for my 2006 book *Learning the Arts of Linguistic Survival - Languaging, Tourism, Life*. I'd wanted to test the hypothesis that tourism was bad for linguistic diversity, but in damp classrooms of 'night schools' as adult education was known then, I found people with a passion for life and language and for being able to deploy the resources of courtesy - meeting, greeting and eating - that allow us to live well together despite obvious misunderstandings."

In what ways do you think this has failed?

"This all sounds grand on the face of it and I continued in my multilingual career, becoming a Professor of Languages and Intercultural Studies, so was clearly now a credible linguist. This (self) perception was, however, rapidly undone, by two key events in my life. After founding and convening IALIC - the International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication in 2000, I stepped down from the role in 2005 and decided it was time to return to grassroots volunteering by way of a change. I volunteered to become a 'Scottish Detainee Visitor' after hearing an appeal on the radio for linguists to visit those incarcerated in Immigration Removal Centres. I was proud of my languages and the learning in true 'white saviour' mode, more than ready to deploy them. My first visit rightly humbled me. Not a single one of my painstakingly learned languages were in any way useful. And in front of my was the endless pain and separation of another human being. I remember seeing a husband and father crying helplessly at the locked, razor-wired gates screaming after his wife and child after the last visit before his deportation, and not having a word of comfort for him, or of practical help, in any language in common. The scene is seered into my memory, and the decolonizing of my many learning colonial languages, products of colonial systems of education, had begun in earnest, and with a jolt."

Why do you believe these failures occurred?

“The failures came from forms of education and structures of socialization into a society ill at ease with diversity and tending to silo cultures into their own zones, inner city ghettos, schools and also as part of the entente cordiale which saw learning the languages of Europe as a peace-building activity. Learning the languages spoken in my own secondary school – urdu, arabic, Punjabi, Bangla – this was utterly out of the question. The most that might be hoped for was Russian, given the Cold War, but that was reserved for the ‘posh’ schools, where people might be selected for ‘Oxbridge’, and not for the likes of me. Class and coloniality played together in the 1980s to create a context of dominant language monolingualisms and one where a multilingual, decolonial research practice required researching ways in which research might be undertaken, ultimately, multilingually.”

What did you then do as a result of this?

“To this end I built a number of different research projects and PhD scholarships to consider the role of languaging practice, of multilingual researching and working, intentional, considered and deliberative, that would open out new ways of making multilingual worlds. I was no longer interested in the many critical multilingual approaches which bemoaned the state of languages in the UK, important as such advocacy is, but rather wanted to improvise and try out ways of living multilingually under decoloniality. The result has been ten years of multilingual adventure, with so many new languages, found, played through, performed in and experienced by audiences and students and researchers worldwide. It’s led to much sharper and sharpening focus on why language must be understood as both a social category and a social construct and a key underpinning in intersectional research.”



Do you have any final advice for students or teachers?

“The upshot of this is that I now advise all my students to work and teach and learn multilingually, to reflect on the multilingual content of classes, interviews, actions and their days; to keep multilingual journals and consider how it is that some languages have come to matter institutionally and others have not, and what they might, with integrity, do to change this?”

How to Publish a Teaching Article

Please follow the [guidelines](#) to submit an article to the newsletter:

Content:

Ideas that help ESL/EFL university teachers around the world improve their craft are warmly welcome. Some topic suggestions are: online teaching, student motivation, classroom management and teaching material design.

Language of Submission:

All articles will need to be submitted in English.

Length of Submission:

Ideally, articles should be longer than 500 words and no more than 1500 words.

Editing:

Please check your spelling/grammar carefully as it cannot be corrected for you (and the article may not be published).

Citations:

Citations/research data are not necessary. If you do want to include some, please keep them to a minimum.

How to Submit:

Submit your article by completing the boxes in the [template](#) and sending this file directly to robertstroud@hosei.ac.jp.