



University
of Glasgow



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Arts & Humanities
Research Council

RESEARCHING MULTILINGUALLY
AT THE BORDERS OF LANGUAGE, THE BODY, LAW AND THE STATE

Call for Papers

Two-day Workshop

Language Learning and Ethnographic Fieldwork

University of Glasgow, Scotland

11-12 April 2016

For many researchers, learning a new language or working in a second or additional language is a crucial aspect of carrying out ethnographic fieldwork. Language learning and 'competence' affect all aspects of our lives 'in the field', as well as the analysis and 'writing up' of the fieldwork data, but we often do not document these influences in detail in our fieldnotes or include an analysis of their effects in our published work. Whilst we might have completed some language learning prior to fieldwork, the likelihood is that we were not taught in doctoral or other forms of research training how to reflect on the process of language learning or on issues relate to working in one or more other languages. These matters are also rarely addressed in the scholarly literature on ethnographic research. Similarly, the scholarly literature on ethnographic research contains very few detailed accounts of language learning or reflections on issues relating to 'competence' in a second or additional language.

This two-day workshop aims to provide an opportunity for researchers at all career stages to discuss a wide range of issues relating to language learning and ethnographic fieldwork. We welcome submissions on any aspect of the topic, but we would be particularly interested in papers addressing one or more of the following questions:

- How can we reflect in an in-depth, systematic way on issues relating to language learning and ‘competence’ in ethnographic fieldwork?
- What kinds of issues (epistemological, methodological, conceptual, theoretical) arise when researchers conduct ethnographic research in a language that is not their ‘first’ language, and what are the implications of these at different stages of the research process?
- What ‘strategies’ have we used at different stages of our language learning? Have these led to different stages of understanding ‘in the field’ that differ from the levels commonly talked about in theories of additional language acquisition?
- How do our experiences of learning and using additional languages in fieldwork contexts relate to our position as researchers and to wider issues of power, inequality and privilege?

Please email an abstract of no more than 300 words by 30 November 2015 to all three organisers at the addresses below.

There is no fee to participate in the workshop. Financial support is available to cover the travel and accommodation costs of a limited number of ‘early career’ participants or participants without alternative sources of funding. Further information on this and any other aspect of the workshop is available from the organisers on request.

The organisers gratefully acknowledge the support of the [AHRC Translating Cultures](#) theme and the AHRC-funded project ‘[Researching Multilingually at the Borders of Language, the Body, Law and the State](#)’ for the workshop.

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