

Being and Becoming an Applied Linguist



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概要

In this talk I will review the autobiographical accounts of a number of established applied linguists. These accounts tell how they came to be applied linguists and how they carried out their lives as applied linguists. I begin by sketching the nature of the trajectory of the lives of the applied linguists pointing to both commonalities and differences.

Many (e.g. Ellis, Hyland) began their lives as language teachers and only later became researchers. Some (e.g. Kirkpatrick; Ferris; Lightbown) developed an interest in language and in language learning through their early experiences of trying to learn another language. Interestingly, for most of them their undergraduate studies played no significant role in their subsequent lives. Rather it was their early experiences as language teachers that led them into postgraduate study as a way of developing their careers as language teachers or of obtaining a university position. Their postgraduate studies were highly formative directing them into the areas of specialization that later they became well known for (e.g. Borg's on teacher cognitions; Dornyei on motivation). Another notable theme was the role played by key individuals (both language teachers and academics) that they came into contact with at formative stages in their careers. Nation, for example, attributes his early interest in language teaching and linguistics to H. V. George. Collaboration with other researchers and networking through conferences figure strongly as their careers developed. Once established these applied linguists began to take on a variety of professional roles – for example, presidents of their national applied linguistics associations as in the case of Gass or editors of journals in the case of Chappelle and Ellis.

What this talk will illustrate is how becoming and being an applied linguist involved developing a range of identities and the ability to switch from one to another.

This talk is based on R. Ellis (Eds). (2016). *Becoming and Being an Applied Linguist: The Life Histories of Some Applied Linguists*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

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