

This second UKLEF e-seminar is a collaboration between UKLEF and our ESRC project on *Researching multilingualism, multilingualism in research practice*, which is funded as part of Round 4 of the ESRC's Researcher Development Initiative (RDI) (2010-2013) and based in the MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism at the University of Birmingham. On behalf of the project team, we have invited Professor Monica Heller to lead the discussion in this e-seminar and we are very pleased indeed to have this opportunity to introduce her as a virtual guest of UKLEF.

Monica Heller is a Professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto and she is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Her critical ethnographic research in French Canada has been at the cutting edge of the field of multilingualism for three decades. Her sustained focus on the lived, multilingual realities of French speakers in Canada (in educational settings, at work, in state agencies and in local community centres) has enabled her to chart with remarkable insight the broad sweep of political and economic changes over time and the ways in which these changes have contributed to the shaping and the reshaping of relations of power, the politics of identity, the discourses about francophone language rights and nationalism and the role of French language minority schools (e.g. in Ontario) as sites of linguistic and cultural reproduction. In recent years, she has opened up significant new lines of enquiry into the commodification of language and identity in the globalised new economy, providing detailed ethnographic insights into the ways in which this process is manifested in different sites in French Canada (e.g. tourism, call centres).

As many UKLEF members are already aware, Monica Heller's work has powerful resonances for those of us who work with linguistic minority groups in other historical contexts. It also speaks to all who are concerned with building an understanding of the discursive processes bound up with the far-reaching political, economic, social and demographic changes ushered in by globalisation. Her research has been widely read, in English and in French. Some of her landmark volumes in English include: *Crosswords: language, education and ethnicity in French Ontario* (1994, Mouton de Gruyter); *Linguistic minorities and modernity: a sociolinguistic ethnography* (1999, Longman; second edition, 2006, Continuum); *Éléments d'une sociolinguistique critique* (2002, Didier) and her most recent book, *Paths to post-nationalism: a critical ethnography of language and identity* (2011, Oxford University Press). Chapter 6 of this volume provides the main focus for this e-seminar.

We look forward to the discussion of her work in this May 2011 e-seminar and we welcome the opportunity that this seminar provides for collaboration with UKLEF.

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