

UNESCO RILA: The sounds of integration
Episode 23: The Invention of Multilingualism with David Gramling pt 1
(12/07/2021)

[JINGLE]

Dr Gameli Tordzro

welcome to the podcast series of the UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts. We bring you sounds to engage with you and invite you to think with us.

[JINGLE]

Prof Alison Phipps

Welcome everybody to this UNESCO RILA podcast and we are absolutely delighted to have our friend and colleague Professor David Gramling from the University of British Columbia with us on the UNESCO RILA podcast today. It's eight o'clock in the morning where he is and I know you can't see this but I can see that the sun is rising where he is just as it's starting to fade where we are. I am Alison Phipps, I'm coming to you from the city of Glasgow which is currently hosting COP26. I'm about 500 meters away from the Blue Zone, the Exclusion Zone, the designated UN territories, but also coming to you from what has also been declared to be the Free State of Govan within the city. So there's extraordinary energy here and an extraordinary multilingual landscape with indigenous peoples from all over the world having arrived in the city to share their stories in their languages and to be very much a living example of much of what David has spoken about in his book, published this year: *The Invention of Multilingualism* with Cambridge University Press. This book has been long awaited not least as it's a successor or a sister to his prize-winning book, *The Invention of Monolingualism*. It's an absolute delight that we have him with us, but also with two other guests on the podcast. From our own team here in Glasgow, Tawona Sitholé, our artist-in-residence with the UNESCO RILA team, and then our critical friend and accomplice in a great deal of academic mischief over the years, but also the James Barrow Professor at the University of Liverpool and also former Theme Fellow for the Arts and Humanities Research Council for Translating Cultures, Professor Charles Forsdick. Both Charles and Tawona know David well and have worked with him for a long time, so I'm expecting this to be a lively conversation and one that will focus on many themes within his book. But before I turn to Charles for the first question, I'd like to read out just some words that I penned when I was invited to write a few lines about David's book as part of the endorsement of this for its publication.

The invention of multilingualism. Once again, the superlative capacious scholarship of David Gramling affects multilingual justice against epistemicide, excavates the historical conceits of faux celebrations of too many colonial languages, and enacts a humble steady community of care for words wherever they may be spoken in the service of humanity and in the service of the more than human world. He radically demonstrates that the kneejerk critical ease of mere representational scholarship is a conceit whilst ensuring judicious and vital breadth

and depth. Order this book for your library, make it part of your commons or uncommons of reading, hearken to the words, they are soft, the footprints of a guest in language worlds.

David you're really welcome and we're absolutely delighted to have you here. And I'm going to turn straight away to Charles to ask him if he'd just like to kick off with his own thoughts about the book and some things he'd like to ask you about.

Prof Charles Forsdick

Thank you Alison and David it's a real pleasure to be in conversation with you about the new book. I want to start where Alison began there. This book has really been eagerly awaited by a number of us as a sequel to the invention of monolingualism, which was instrumental certainly in my thinking in relation to the translating cultures theme that Alison has mentioned. And as you can imagine, I have not been disappointed here by the breadth and the depth of the book. It is, as I was expecting, a bracing read. Yet again, it challenged many of my assumptions, and reading *The Invention of Multilingualism* was on occasion, and Alison's alluded to this, an uncomfortable experience. And for me, that's a real positive. I wanted to talk in the first instance, though, about the real tensions and paradoxes which emerged for me from the book. These tensions and paradoxes around the multilingual, which, as you make very clear, are central to this concept of its invention. Because I think for a lot of readers, this book is going to be quite counterintuitive. You make it clear that multilingualism has emerged perhaps over the last two decades as something which is seen in certain quarters as universally positive. What's crucial though with your work is that term invention. And you did this with monolingualism as well, you got us away from the thinking that this is a natural phenomenon and forced us to reflect on the way in which, in this case, multilingualism is socially constructed and is ideologically instrumentalized. And for me, that leads to some of the paradoxes at the centre of the book, because in a number of the contexts where I have seen engagement with multilingualism, particularly in relation to modern language which is my field, the phenomenon is seen as affirming, it's seen as a site of resistance in the face of the monolingual. And sure enough, you make a really good case for multiple multilingualisms and the way in which the multilingual plays itself out differently in different contexts with different power dynamics. But what I suppose drew me into the book from the outset was the way in which you talk about a dark side of multilingualism. And the book echoed in many ways for me with an edited collection that came out with Routledge a couple of years ago, I think, on the dark side of translation. And I think that that celebratory understanding of multilingualism echoes in many ways with a celebratory, falsely celebratory understanding of translation as well. And I got that sense from your book. And these are debates we had in post-colonialism, I suppose back in the 90s, to talk about the post-monolingual is prematurely celebratory. And I know you've engaged with Yasmin Yildiz's work there around post-monolingualism. And for me, there are a lot of echoes between the post-monolingual and the post-colonial and that sense that we're not talking about leaving a situation behind, but about grappling with legacies in the present. Although I suppose what's clear, and this takes us back to your previous book, the monolingual is a phenomenon that continues to reassert itself, might be fragile, as you say, but which has the capacity to reinvent itself, to re-consolidate itself, and crucially in that process to recuperate the multilingual. That was one of the key tensions that I'd be interested to hear more about because it plays itself out as well in what I think on your part is this healthy suspicion of creativity. Much of the celebration we see of multilingualism is around the championing of

its creative potential. But as you say in a number of contexts, not least in the context of the academy in which I operate, maybe creativity has eclipsed credibility. And that's become a real problem for the way in which we defend and reimagine modern languages for the 21st century. So I suppose, David, what you've got there is my reaction to the book. And that question around the way in which you have managed those tensions and paradoxes which are really embedded in this notion of the invention of multilingualism that you explore in such detail and depth here.

Prof David Gramling

Thank you so much, Charles. And the first thing I'd like to say is behind me is Ayyulshun, which is also called English Bay. I'm coming from the unceded, stolen land of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəṁ speaking Musqueam people, where the University of British Columbia is situated currently. And so this is one of the contexts that was really important from my writing of this book. And I remember when I was writing it, we were going back with Cambridge University Press about styles, and was it going to be in Canadian English, or was it going to be in British English, or was it going to be in American English? It ended up being a manuscript that has bits and pieces of each of those styles in it, but in some ways, you know, what was missing was the Indigenous situation of the book, and that's something that I'll be working toward for my entire career. Thank you so much for this prompt and for the way that you've set out so beautifully the problem of what I call a discourse under pressure, and I get a lot of that from Alison Phipps' writing about what it means for a discourse to be under pressure, and I think that multilingualism is one of those discourses that has been under a great deal of pressure to do a lot of things for a lot of different institutional interests. There's been a real focus on the promotional aspect of it, so promoting multilingualism, its celebratory, its urgent, it's in some ways, I think, also coercive. And so I wanted to look at that history of how it rose to such powerful potent prominence, how it became a promotional discourse, how that promotional discourse of multilingualism really differed from the promotional discourse of bilingualism in the 70s, for example, where it really, really was heritage language driven, it was really driven by communities, Latinx communities in the United States, for example. And in some ways, that whole discourse has been de-ethnicized and then repurposed for interests that no longer belong to heritage communities. And I think that's something that we really need to look at. For anybody listening, this is a group of people that I dearly love and admire, and I've travelled around the world with, and I miss terribly. And one of the last times I got to see them was, I think in London in 2016 in December at the Italian Cultural Centre, and some of us were on Skype. I remember sitting in a hallway, Skyping with y'all up in Glasgow, I think. My last book had just come out. It was about the invention of monolingualism. I thought I'd kind of put this to bed, but then Trump got elected. Then Brexit, this was December 2016, and I realized that I really had another thing coming about monolingualism and that this is not a phenomenon in the past. It's just getting going. The technological finessing of monolingualism and its power, I think, is actually one of the biggest struggles that we have in front of us in the next 20 years. And the technological consolidation of what monolingualism is, is really a future problem, not a past one. And so I'm trying to suit up as best as I can for that struggle. I think that issue of credibility is so, so important. If we attribute creativity to multilingual people, are we equally attributing credibility to them? And I think that's something that I learned so much from refugee status determination procedures with the home office is the ways in which it doesn't matter how much creativity you see in someone. If you're not deeming them credible in

their multilingual declarations and identity and existence, then the creativity doesn't go very far. And I think creativity, and this is the last thing I'll say on this point, creativity is something that is actually rather easy to admire and highlight because it's very depoliticized. And so a lot of the European framework approaches that celebrate creativity have no downside to them. And in some ways, credibility is really where the rubber hits the road about whether we believe in multilingual civic subjects standing in society. Those are some of my initial thoughts. I'm so grateful for your summary there.

Prof Alison Phipps

I'm wondering if you want to come back just with some more of the thoughts that you've had around this credibility creativity nexus that David's just addressing there.

Prof Charles Forsdick

Yeah, I do. I think a lot of those debates around credibility are linked to the specific ideological niche that you've referred to, David, because what struck me in the book is you describe the phenomenon of late monolingualism, which you say sort of emerges in the mid-80s, probably around the time of the supposed end of history, which wasn't quite the end of history, we'd imagined, you see extending through to 2040s, we might come back to those dates later. But as you said, the context of your actual production of this work is a more concentrated moment to do with the Brexit vote, to do with the election of Trump, to do with the emergence of a whole nexus of populisms. And this links into the idea of credibility, because I think what we've seen in this period, and you talk about it on a couple of occasions in the book, is the translation of various forms of xenophobia into linguaphobia. And one thing the book made me think about was how we need to unpick that link between linguaphobia and monolingualism. You make it very clear that actually there are multiple multilingual contexts where the power dynamics at play and the hierarchization of languages and the linguistic epistemicide even that exists shows that linguaphobia can be a multilingual phenomenon as well. And that's maybe taking us away from Alison's initial point about credibility. But again, thank you for that, David, because this book is very much about challenging lazy thinking around language. And again, I think that for me, that sort of demonization of the monolingual and celebration of the multilingual is a trap into which we've fallen, possibly in the UK. I think what we saw immediately following the vote on our exit from the European Union was where marked cases of linguistic attacks began with the Polish Cultural Centre in London. I'm just wondering if within that frame of late monolingualism, which you're sketching out as several decades, whether we've seen something particularly concentrated over the past decade and the extent to which you were responding to that.

Prof David Gramling

Oh, so much to respond to. I believe that multilingualism, or what Robert Moore calls reactionary multilingualism, has really been put in the service of linguaphobia. So if for some reason an institution or a community or a jurisprudence fears meanings that are unknown or that are ambiguous, one of the great ways to do that, to handle that, is to demand that they be transparent. So in some ways, some of the ideologies around transparency between languages that have really, really run the show, I think, in European framework discussions, are really the underlying desire. The underlying desire or drive is to render all languages as transparent as possible. There could be nothing more linguaphobic than that, is to lay bare

and to rid the world of the opacities of meaning. of those things that poets, that families, that communities really prize is some of the specificity of their meaning. And so if you want to take a real national security approach to multilingualism, which is what the United States started doing after 9/11, I think the UK really started cooking with that in 2004, 2005, then applying a security mentality to multilingualism is an expression of linguaphobia. And in some ways, it's not so much that that is lazy thinking about languages so much as deeply industrious thinking, as in getting really, really invested in multilingualism. And I would, you know, frankly, I would prefer that states not be invested in multilingualism if that's the way they're going to do it. I feel like for decades and decades prior, we really in some ways benefited from some of the salutary neglect that happened when they were not themselves as invested, interested in multilingualism because once Germany found multilingualism as something to really dig its teeth into, the legislation that came out of that was pretty devastating. And also the image of the citizen that the German government then decided was the virtuous one. And so in some ways, this is a pretty Foucauldian kind of thing, you know, once the multilingual subject is exposed for scrutiny by states, then you get all sorts of very strident interventions. And for me, that's really part of the fortification of monolingualism. It's really building a bigger, better monolingualism that oftentimes works through translation, works through translatability and transparency. And really, the goal of it is to render a world in which all meanings are at the fingertips of whatever power broker wants them. That's the commercial and industrial and governmental interest that's going to be driving a lot of the pressure in the coming decades. And I started to really notice it in around 2016 when I was visiting with you in London. And this is why I prefer to talk of post-multilingualism rather than post-monolingualism. Loving Yasmin Yildiz's work in the way that I do, I actually believe that we're in a historical moment that is really trying technologically to solve multilingualism and to replace it with something more serviceable. States are really, really involved in this at every level of intelligence and surveillance and legislation. And if we have been doing any lazy thinking, it's that we may not have been paying close enough attention to those ideological developments. I think Debbie Cameron wrote a really nice piece in 2013 about multilingual verbal hygiene in the UK. There was a guy named Eric Pickles, I think, one of my favorite names ever, who was really in charge of kind of developing a multilingual verbal hygiene program for the UK. I don't know what Eric Pickles is doing these days.

Prof Alison Phipps

Thanks, David. I'm actually going to bring Tawona in in a moment, but off the back of this focus on the phenomenal amount of energy and state attention that has been paid to language and to languages in very different ways and in ways which absolutely bear the marks of classic hegemonic process. So the attention paid by the UK state is very different to the attention paid, for example, by the Welsh or the Northern Irish or the Scottish devolved administrations and the attention on Welsh or on Ulster Scots or on Irish or on Scots Gaelic or on British Sign Language, particularly in Scotland with the passing of the BSL Act. All of those I think are really interesting parts of the same hegemonic process but of, absolutely as you say, largely rich Western nations paying attention to language in order to render them as transparent as possible. But I really want to bring Tawona in at this point because as you know we've been part of many a glorious conversation about multilingualism as a mother tongue, as a mother language in Africa as it's been described. First of all perhaps, Tawona,

some of your thoughts on this part of the conversation but then also on the reading that you've done of David's book.

Tawona Sitholé

Thanks, Alison. And Hekani, David, just to acknowledge what you've done here. As you know, my love and care for language, you've not neglected that here, the way you've organized this book. And for me as well, you know, not being a linguist, worrying about readability of this book, but you have managed to really put care and attention to the language of this book, it has really flowed for me. You've laid it out that I feel the chapters are not sort of something stops and then something else starts. I feel the chapters are tributaries feeding into the flow and we stay within the main course. Within that also I want to prompt you to say more about... I feel you've honoured so many other voices in this, which is great. Which is great. And I want you to maybe comment a little bit about your position in this enterprise, shall I call it? You're a language scholar and someone who teaches others languages, so that dissonance in you participating in this. What I really took from the book deeply is the, I would like to use a phrase we have in Zimbabwe, we talk about kukwenya. Kukwenya is scratching, but scratching not to put force but to rouse someone who is sleeping. So the hand gesture is soft but the nails are sharp. And I think this is what you're doing in this book here. You are really urging us gently as it may be but the nails are sharp because it's what Charles and Alison are talking about. Really the book it stirs us to kind of go "oh okay". And for me as well, just thinking, okay, these are all the things that are going on with languages. And I noticed that the way you're kind of alerting us to the industry around language. So the poets, there's this bit of a scramble for this multilingualism. The poets want to enjoy the power of language, the beauty of it and the caretaking of it, as you are doing. and then you've got the others who want to be able to designate multilingualism onto others. I really like the way you put that, to be able to confer this designation and the ones who want to sell it, want to market and sell it, and you've got the technocrats who want to use it to build their structures of ordering things and people. So I've really enjoyed that, the way you've laid it out. And I think at the centre of all this, for me, I've experienced multilingualism as a natural thing, receiving different tongues from my father's family and from my mother's family. And then having English as something that came to me through the formal structures. So these are the multilingualisms that Charles was referring, the multiple ones. But at the heart of it, I think you say at one point, you know, you talk about multilingualism as a domain of experience and exploration where these profound and powerful truths dwell. I just wanted to maybe comment on that. So, but your complicit role in this I don't quite know.

Prof David Gramling

All right. "Kukwenya" is, if I ever live up to "kukuanya", I will consider my life somehow worth living. Thank you so much, Tawona, your influence and the influence of everyone in this room, Bella and Alison and Charles, is all over this book. I think I couldn't have written any of my books in the way I did without you all. For me, a book, whether I'm successful at it or not, needs to be hospitable. There's got to be lots of places to kind of sit down and eat something and to have a quiet nook or to have a place to be frustrated or have a place to chat with other people. There's got to be lots of rooms in it. You have to figure out how to be able to get out and get in. It has to be a dwelling place. And I feel like a lot of books that I've read, even very, very accessible ones, for example, are inhospitable. There's like little

place to be in it. And being is, of course, a very complex endeavour. And when I write books, and I love writing books, the idea or the goal of having them be a place where people can dwell and experience *kukwenya*. Oftentimes at their own hand, not at mine, but having a place to experience *kukwenya* from their fellows, from their peers, from their ancestors, from this or that word, it comes from the words themselves oftentimes. That's what I really aspire to. So thank you for sharing that with me. Okay, so in terms of my own complicity in the endeavour, wow, that's a big one. I mean, I'm a department head of a settler colonial university in something called British Columbia, you know? But you took me aside a while back Tawona, and encouraged me to figure out where I'm really from. I think it's very, very important for me to acknowledge where it is that I'm from. And that's not something that US Americans are particularly good at. We're very often blasé about, well, we move around all the time, kind of not from anywhere. Well, it's just not true. I mean, there's a very specific story about how I got to be the writer or the friend that I am. Having talked with you a couple of years ago about this, you know, I went on a bunch of journeys. I went to Germany to find out where, you know, my ancestors there came from. I went to West Ireland to find out where my ancestors there came from. I did that because you and I talked about it. The writing of this book happened after it did those things. And this story is definitely, and it is a story, I'm much more of a writer than a researcher in a lot of ways. I mean, a lot of people look at a book like this and say, where's the method section? There's never gonna be a method section in a book that I write. But what there is, is I think an undercurrent of, hopefully of... I do come from a particular experience. It's the experience of a queer kid in central Massachusetts with a visual disability who had to figure out some way to imagine the world differently than what the hegemonies of that small town were offering. I remember the first time as an 11-year-old when I was practicing French sentences, *j'ai onze ans*, things like this, and just feeling like a key was unlocking a door to a different world. And that was gonna keep me alive. Those things were gonna sustain me into an uncertain future and a future that I was not being encouraged to imagine in any other way. I also was practicing those things because they were easy for me to read as a person with a visual disability. Everybody else in school was, the teachers were telling me to read 30, 40 pages of Dickens every night and I couldn't do it. I physically could not read that much. So I found refuge in languages. And so for me, currently in the surprising institutional positions that I find myself very, very surprising 20, 30 years later, that story of that 11 year old kid is always central and present for me. And it motivates every single thing that I say in the book. That connection is deeply emotional to me. It's deeply spiritual, it's deeply political. And so, I hope to live up to that in these leadership positions that people keep entrusting me with. I'm slated to retire in 2042. So we'll see if I make good on some of these things that I say in the book between now and then 22, 21 years. I'll give it a shot.

Prof Alison Phipps

Tawona, I'm wondering if you want to come back just with some more thoughts around that, particularly around this question of the complicity of creativity that David's also working on there. So, you know, he's just spoken a lot about these institutional positions that we are beginning to practice acknowledging our responsibility and our complicity in as engaged scholars in the West in particular. But, you know, this question about the complicity of poets and creativity, and it's making me remember an article I did, oh gosh, back in the day, on when there was a kind of beginning of a wave of interest in creativity. And I remember doing a keynote at NUI Galway on, we're all creatives now. And actually the dangers in creativity,

the dangers of the use of propaganda, which is a very creative art, and the fact that the majority of people in power in our government have studied the arts and humanities and then it's the arts and humanities that are being closed down often in higher education. So these paradoxes and these complicities there. Tawona, I just wonder, did you feel complicit when you were reading David's book?

Tawona Sitholé

Thanks, Alison. And thanks so much, David. It's good to hear it first. You know, I'm just thinking about how poetry is so present around us, especially in marketing and advertising, because it's tapping into this idea that creativity and poetry in particular with language creates something that has an emotional connection with us and something memorable. These are qualities that I noticed are present in poetry. And so you can see it being used everywhere around us. You just look at adverts campaigns, you've got sloganisms and all this. So I think what is really interesting to see you doing, David, is telling stories in this book and that is a real way into engaging with what you're saying because you tell so many great stories. I remember even in the first book talking about, you know, the piano, the well-tempered piano, you know, that image you used and the different stories you tell bring us close to what you're arguing for but you're not neglecting your place within your discipline. I think this is a very difficult thing that you have managed to do with storytelling. And again, in this book, you've brought in so many stories. I'm reading this as a flow of poetic stories.

Prof David Gramling

You have no idea how much of a compliment that is for me. I mean, truly, truly. I mean, by the end of my life, I want to be a stylist and a poet. That's basically the goal. Or I would like to be Joan Didion. That would be really nice too. But one thing that I forgot to respond to, Tawona, was I believe that multilingualism is a poet's birth right. Absolutely. Poets have throughout history been multilingual. I'm not quite sure if there is any complicity among poets in the current commercialization and industrialization of multilingualism. I think that there's a threat. I mean, Anjali Pandey has written a really great book on linguistic exhibitionism and the way international scouts from major trade publishers will go out, you know, really kind of hunting for people who do multilingualism in their fiction and poetry in ways that are palatable for international readers. And so there's definitely a hunt going on for certain types of multilingual production, but that is for me, not the ethical responsibility of poets in some ways. And I'm trying to study this from my next book on literature in late monolingualism is, how are poets and fiction writers dealing with this onslaught of scouts from trade publishers coming at them and saying, give us multilingualism, give us that thing that we hunger for? And so in some ways it's much more of a predicament for poets and for fiction writers to figure out how to deal with that, that new and very, very urgent attention that is coming at them from trade publishers. So I will never... the poetic creativity of multilingualism is always untainted for me and is always true. But it does find itself, I think, these days in a new predicament. And there's lots of kind of default models available for people to just kind of like pick up and go with. Whereas I think that the older structure of multilingual poetics was more of an ancestral, oh, I know this 16th century French poet who did this, I'm gonna do something like that. So there were much more role models that were historical to look to. These days, there's more commercial kind of talking points that are really tempting to look at or look towards or scouts saying that they want a certain thing. So

I think it's just more of a predicament than complicity when it comes to poets. but I'd love to hear, I'd prefer to hear your thoughts on that too.

Tawona Sitholé

Yeah, I will give you another word. We speak of the gandanga. The gandanga is the one who we fear because they spend a lot of time in the forest, the sango, where most people don't want to tread. And then they get this unkempt appearance, they act in certain ways that are unsociable to the homestead. And yet they are part of us, and yet they aren't part of us. They seem to be one with the forest, with the sango. So there's something about this quality that you are doing in this book. You are being that poet, the gandanga, because the poet is able to bring this expression or find things that are, the fruits that are in the sango, not the ones that we are domesticating in our fields and homes. So these little, the phrases, the expressions, the insights that the gandanga brings, as much as we may sort of look in many guys' contempt, disgusts, and yet the gandanga is still part of us one way or the other. I think this is the role that maybe deals with the complicity to some extent. Alison.

Prof Alison Phipps

I'm just reflecting there as you're speaking about the gandanga role and David and I, we met through our mutual work in German studies and I'm just thinking about the word "fogelfrei" in German, it's often now used to mean a kind of romantic freedom, but actually came from a really dark side. If somebody was "fogelfrei", they'd often had their eyes put out as a punishment, and then they were cast out into the forest, and they would walk with that unkempt look about them with long, matted hair, and they would begin to resemble the forests and the trees, and they were "fogelfrei" because they were free for the birds to land upon and they wouldn't know what it was 'cause they wouldn't be able to see. And I'm just again reflecting there as we're beginning to draw the strands together of what will be the first in clearly a series of podcasts with David about the invention of multilingualism. Just thinking about the theme that's really been exposed by Charles and Tawona in the careful reading of your book, David, which is this, the dark side, the difficulty, the danger in romanticizing, the danger that there is in thinking we've solved it with creativity, whatever it is, and the parallels in what you're discussing here about multilingualism that I see in migration politics and refugee politics too. The issue of the refugee suggests that there is an issue to be solved rather than that actually refuge is something that is offered by the earth, that is part and parcel of human experience, just as languages and part and parcel of human experience. And these different ways in which states and legal systems will attempt to render them either creative or credible for their own purposes. That is where I think you have shown us, just in the start of this conversation today, we really, really need to pay deep, deep attention. So I'm going to draw this part of our conversation to a close today. Thank you greatly, David, for getting up, making yourself something to drink, joining us online, and to thank Charles and Tawona, particularly for beginning to scratch the surface, scratch the skin, as Tawona was describing, of the invention of multilingualism. I was sure that when we started this conversation that we would absolutely need longer for the kukwenya that Tawona has spoken of. And I'm really glad that there is a country in the world or a family in the world that uses kukwenya, 'cause in my upbringing, my father would come into my bedroom, throw back the curtains so the light streamed in, pull back the bed covers so that the freezing cold bedroom would wake me up with shock. And possibly the tradition in my family was a cold sponge to really make sure that we were woken up. So I kind of like the

kukwenya, and I think we'll go with that tradition in working with this. But just wondering, David, if you've any last thoughts that you want to share with us before we finish this particular part of the first of the podcast that we'll do with you.

Prof David Gramling

Thank you, Alison. We were going to talk a little bit about the theology of multilingualism at the end. And I think part of me, as far as this darkness is concerned, the dark side of multilingualism, for me, it reminds me of Rebecca Solnit's Hope in the Dark and the need for, I mean, if monolingualism is fortifying itself, then we as subjects, we as teachers and elders and friends, we have to do something better than fortification and come up with ways of talking about languages that are open to the experience of vulnerability in a volatile world. This is gonna be a wild next couple of decades. And if our discussions about language are not up for that real world experience rather than the kind of social imaginary of neoliberal commercialism, well, we're just not gonna be able to do it. So for me, this is just a moment of regrouping with my friends, with you all. I'm so, so grateful for this time and I look forward to the next one.

Thanks David. And I think you've just given us a really nice trailer for our next conversation, which I think will be very much looking at this. How can we absolutely be part of a wider, in the broadest sense of that word, part of a theological conversation about hope? And what is it that language and languages can bring to that enterprise? And when you speak about defences, particularly, I'm thinking of the preamble that we work with a lot within UNESCO, which is to say that if wars are made in the minds of people, then it's in the minds of people that the defences of peace must be constructed. And we're clearly at a time where we need the defences of peace, but also that we need to be able to build the other world, to be part of the other world, to understand what that other world is at the same time as building those defences of peace. Because if all we ever do is defend, then there will be no life to live out beyond that defensive militaristic understanding. So David, Charles, Tawona, and Bella, who is there in the background as always on tech and organising and enabling us as well. Just want to say thank you to you all for this first part of our podcast with David on the invention of multilingualism.

[JINGLE]

Dr Gameli Tordzro

Thank you for listening to the podcast of the UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and Arts, a podcast series to make you think. More information about our work can be found on the website of the University of Glasgow www.gla.ac.uk.

Thank you very much.

[JINGLE]