

JALDA's Interview with Professor Nigel Love

Interview by Dr. Bahram Behin

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Nigel Love



Nigel Lowther Love is associate professor of linguistics at University of Cape Town. He was born in 1950 in the U.K. He received his B.A. (1973), M.A. (1976) and D. Phil. (1976) from Oxford University. His Ph.D. thesis title was: *The generative phonological analysis of non-vocalic alternations in Modern French*. Nigel Love has been the invited lecturer or conference speaker at universities in: Athens, Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Cambridge, Cape Town, Chicago, Copenhagen, Durban, Edinburgh, Grahamstown, Hong Kong, Johannesburg, Jyväskylä, Kirksville, Montpellier, Mumbai, New Orleans, Nottingham, Odense, Oxford, Paris, Pittsburgh, Quebec, Seville, Stellenbosch, Tambov, Warsaw and Williamsburg. He was the head of Linguistics Department at University of Cape Town (1995-1998). He has been the editorial board member (since 1992) and associate editor (since 2019) of journal of *Language and Communication*. He was the editor of the journal of *Language Sciences* (1997-2014). Among his authored and coauthored publications are *Generative Phonology: A Case-Study from French* (1981), *The Foundations of Linguistic Theory: Selected Writings of Roy Harris* (1990), *Linguistics Inside Out: Roy Harris and His Critics* (1997), and *Language and History: Integrationist Perspectives* (2006). JALDA's editor-in-chief, Dr. Bahram Behin had the following short communication with Nigel Love.

BB: ---- *Thank you dear doctor for accepting our invitation to have this communication.*

NL: ---- You're welcome.

BB: ---- *What is Integrationist Linguistics and what makes it different from other schools of linguistics?*

NL: ---- I guess Roy Harris himself has answered this question as well as anyone. I recommend your readers to consult his website at www.royharrisonline.com.

BB: ---- *Does a specific philosophy give rise to Integrationist Linguistics?*

NL: ---- If you mean a specifically-named school of philosophical thought, the answer is No. However, the philosopher with most background influence is probably Wittgenstein.

BB: ---- *If the late Prof. Roy Harris was the founder of IL, as some say, can it be claimed that there is a sense of “Britishness” to the School? And what might that be?*

NL: ---- I suppose it bears the mark of ‘British empiricism’ (that is, Locke, Berkeley and Hume), in holding that the only ultimately valid source of knowledge about language is reflection on our own experience of it.

BB: ---- *Some say that IL carries non-Western elements and views in it. What might they be?*

NL: ---- In ‘Implicit and explicit language teaching’, his chapter in the collection *Language Teaching: Integrational Linguistic Approaches* (ed. Michael Toolan, Routledge, 2009), Harris speaks approvingly of the Indian philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, and says of him (p. 24) that “he might in some respects be considered as a forerunner of integrationist thinking”. Scattered among integrationist writings, there are other references to non-Western thinkers. But Integrationism is not explicitly indebted to any particular non-Western views.

BB: ---- *What contributions can Integrationist Linguistics make to language teaching in general and foreign language teaching in particular?*

NL: ---- In my view, the integrationist doctrine that a language name (Arabic, Swahili, French, etc.) is no more than a label for an amorphous, indeterminate range of related linguistic practices is an obstacle to its contributing to language teaching as we know it. But you should read Toolan’s book I just mentioned above.

BB: ---- *Thank you for your time.*

NL: ---- My Pleasure.