

## Keynote Speech 6 (11:15 to 12:00 HKT, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024/D1-LP-02)

Professor Stephen MAY

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### The multilingual turn, language policy, and English as a 'world language'

#### Abstract

This keynote presentation begins by critically examining the ongoing influence of structural linguistics, its abstract understanding of language, and the implications for both language policies and related conceptions of language teaching and learning. This includes critique of language policies that unproblematically valorize national languages, as well as international languages such as English, while dismissing the significance of 'local' languages. It also includes critique of the 'monolingual bias' that still underpins traditional approaches to Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and related teaching and learning approaches. This critique of the continuing monolingual bias in SLA is most clearly outlined in and by the 'multilingual turn' (May, 2014) in language teaching and learning over the last decade. The presentation concludes with a critical examination of the presumed link between the acquisition of English as the current world language – most clearly seen in the rapid expansion of English-medium-instruction programs worldwide – and related social, economic, and educational mobility.

#### Biography

Dr. Stephen May is Professor in Te Puna Wānanga (School of Māori and Indigenous Education) at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. He is an international authority on language rights, language policy, bilingual education, the multilingual turn in language teaching, and critical multicultural approaches to education. Stephen has published over 100 articles and book chapters in these areas, along with 27 books, including the award-winning *Language and minority rights* (2nd ed., 2012) and *The multilingual turn* (2014). His most recent book is *Critical ethnography, language, race/ism and education* (2023). Stephen is Editor-in-Chief of the 10-volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2017), and founding co-editor of the journal *Ethnicities*. He is an AERA Fellow and a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand (FRSNZ).



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