

Foreword

The end of a major academic project comes with the energising effect of the submission, the fulfilling and gratifying effect of the completeness, the hindsight of what could have been done better or differently, and the impact of the physical effort. The strong emotions are difficult to describe but, I believe, are shared in the lived experience of our academic community. The completion of this Handbook is particularly bittersweet. It involves the work of over 55 colleagues and it is the outcome of our collective effort to reflect and provide a repository of experience on theory and method. This with a view to empower those coming new to the field to use our tools and bring news ideas and insights.

At the same time, it will always have a special place in our collective memory and remind us of the legacy of Judith Baxter, an influential scholar, wonderful educator, and close friend to many of us. Judith's career path is reflective of her continuous self-development, exploration, and substantial contribution to the study of gender and language and her deep commitment to education. Starting as an English and History graduate in the late 1970s, Judith turned to education immediately after and completed a PGCE and an MSc in Educational Studies. Her thesis in 1999 brought together a number of areas Judith continued unpacking in her career. Her thesis' short title 'Teaching girls to speak out' is indicative of her commitment to empowering women, her being a true applied linguist applying theory to practice through education, and her interest in leadership in institutional and public life. She continued publishing extensively in those areas and her 2014 and 2017 books (*Double-voicing: Power, Gender and Linguistic Expertise; Women Leaders and Gender Stereotyping in the UK Press: A Poststructuralist Approach*) will, without doubt, continue influencing future scholars.

Judith and I started discussing the Handbook in 2015; we shared an anti-orthodoxy stance which was solid common ground to design what, we hoped, will complement the rich scholarship already existing in the field. We also wanted to react to the feedback of the many students over the years asking why there is so little focus on methodology in academic writing. It is indeed true; despite putting so much emphasis on the training of students on research methods and heavily assessing dissertations and theses on methodology, our own writing is far less detailed and transparent. Judith and I also shared the belief that the existing divide between 'education' and 'research' is artificial and damaging for the future of academia in general and our field is not an exception. We therefore wanted to provide the tools to our students to design their own projects and find their voice from day one.

Judith passing in 2018 was a shock and left a hole. We had just completed the first cycle of reviews and the Handbook had started taking shape. Knowing how excited Judith was

about the overall quality and breadth of the work, I am absolutely certain that our collective effort is the best tribute to her memory and a lasting memorial for new scholars in the field.

For me our Handbook has been one of the most difficult and fulfilling projects in my academic life so far. It is also a project I will always be most proud of and which will remind me of Judith's true commitment to a polyphonic approach to discourse analysis and the question she has been addressing throughout her work: 'how can we best represent the successes, contradictions and diversity of female experiences whilst still working to transform the appalling inequities that so many girls and women continue to face?' (2003: 198).

In closing, I am reproducing here a piece that has been published in *BAAL News* (Issue 113: 6) as a memorial to Judith. It is co-authored by myself and Helen Sauntson. It is included here with BAAL's permission.

Looking Back, Looking Forward: In Memory of Judith Baxter by Jo Angouri (University of Warwick) and Helen Sauntson (York St John University)

It was with great sadness that we lost our dear colleague and friend, Professor Judith Baxter, in February. Judith was Professor of Applied Linguistics and Head of English at Aston University and, although retired since 2015, remained an active author and key contributor to the field of language, gender and sexuality, and to applied linguistics more broadly, right up until her untimely death. She has been an inspiration to many students and colleagues, and her work leaves a valuable legacy for current and future scholars.

Judith was known internationally for her work in the field of language and gender and particularly for her research into the language of business and language and gender in different professional settings. She has addressed the issue of the lack of women in senior leadership and specifically the role of language in negotiating power at work. She is also known for developing the analytical framework of Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA). In this piece, we provide brief reflections on Judith's key contributions in these areas and evaluate their continued future relevance for applied linguistics.

Judith described FPDA as a 'supplementary' approach, following a Derridean line of enquiry. FPDA values multiple perspectives and is conceived to be used in conjunction with other methods. In her own words, Judith defined FPDA as:

an approach to analysing intertextualised discourses in spoken interaction and other types of text. It draws upon the poststructuralist principles of complexity, plurality, ambiguity, connection, recognition, diversity, textual playfulness, functionality and transformation.

FPDA looks into 'what is happening right now, on the ground, in this very conversation' and connects this with societal power structures particularly in relation to gender. However, rather than focusing upon issues around power alone and explicitly advocating an emancipatory agenda, FPDA does not presume that women as a social group category are necessarily going to emerge as powerless. Instead, it views female subject positions as complex, shifting and multiply located. There are competing discourses of gender in any given context and the interplay between discourses means that speakers can continually fluctuate between subject positions on a matrix of powerfulness and powerlessness. Having a degree of *agency*, individuals can recognise how and through

which discourses they are being ‘positioned’, and can then take up or resist particular subject positions.

FPDA is influenced by the social constructionist agenda and it seeks to bring together the micro and macro levels of analysis. It shares with CDA a focus on power and the ways in which it is negotiated in different contexts. FPDA is eclectic in nature and it looks into syntax, lexis, prosody, metaphor, topic, framing, visual semiotics, and more, at micro level. This provides the basis for a wider perspective, looking into a group or a community of practice and how, for instance, male-dominated or female-friendly they are. FPDA aims to provide tools for analysing what is going on in core events, particularly in business contexts like for instance the well-studied ‘meeting’, and to address wider questions such as whether women have a steeper road than men to do leadership effectively. FPDA is interested in revealing power imbalances but also aims to challenge theoretical and methodological ‘orthodoxies’ associated with CA and CDA.

FPDA aims to ‘release the words of marginalised or minority speakers’ and entails giving space to marginalised or silenced voices in localised interactions. Judith’s own analyses have focused, for example, upon certain girls who say little in classroom settings. Her work has also shown that women leaders are often perceived to use leadership language ‘effectively’ but this perception varies depending on whether and the extent to which a senior team is ‘female-friendly’.

This ultimately allows for a greater richness and variety of debate, discussion and freedom to speak from all social groups, not just those who are heard more often. And this is important in the field of language, gender and sexuality. This means that FPDA is ultimately concerned with equality but this concern arises from an epistemological perspective rather than an ideological one. Judith’s work has shown that female speakers cannot be categorised homogeneously as “powerless, disadvantaged or as victims”. To the contrary, female speakers (in positions of leadership or not) have agency to resist practices that position them as powerless and occasionally, though unfortunately not always, they succeed.

As well as Judith’s applications of the framework, other studies which have made use of it include: Budach’s (2005) study of language, gender and community in French Ontario; Castenada’s (2007) insightful analysis of competing gender discourses in pre-school EFL lessons in Brazil; Kamada’s (2010) work on hybrid identities in teenage girls’ conversations; Baker’s (2013) investigations into media representations of gender; Sauntson’s (2012; 2018) studies of the experiences of marginalised LGBT+ classroom participants.

FPDA is not simply concerned with identifying discourses, but focuses more on how discourses interact, how they variously position speakers in relation to other discourses and how speakers shift between subject positions. Judith, for example, examined how competing gender discourses are sometimes produced in the context of public speaking in the classroom. Looking forward, FPDA will continue to be used to release the voices of the marginalised across a variety of settings – a key aim of critical applied linguistics.

FPDA and Judith’s work more broadly played a pioneering role in making linguistic research relevant and applied for professionals outside the academy. Well before impact agendas became defined and part of the HE institutional discourse, Judith was concerned with crossing boundaries and contributing to the wellbeing of men and women particularly by addressing inequality and underrepresentation. This agenda is as timely and relevant as it has ever been; we are certain many of us will continue following Judith’s path.

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As well as being a key contributor to the field of language and gender, Judith was a founding member of the BAAL Language, Gender and Sexuality special interest group, and was the SIG's convenor until 2015.

Judith was a fantastic colleague and was always very generous with her time. She offered invaluable support and advice, provided feedback on drafts of work and was always available for chats. She was working tirelessly and until the last days she had that drive and enthusiasm that anybody who has worked with her would recognise. Judith was a good friend to us and her wonderful sense of humour meant laughing a lot and enjoying companionship and warmth apart from the stimulating conversations and exciting debates. These are times we treasure and will miss very much.