

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas Obituary
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It is with deep sadness that we received news, at the end of May 2023, that our friend and *LPLP* Board member Tove Skutnabb-Kangas had just passed away. Tove was known to a great many people, whether in the international scholarly community or in activist circles committed to the protection of linguistic diversity—particularly when small languages were involved—and she has made a profound impression on thousands of people around the world. Over the past few months, many tributes to Tove’s life and work have been published, highlighting her influence on research and advocacy in the areas of minority language education and linguistic human rights. Therefore, rather than repeating what many colleagues have already said, I’d like to devote this short obituary to more personal memories of Tove.

Tove and I went back almost thirty-five years. I first heard her speak at one of the erstwhile ICMLs (International Conference on Minority Languages), organized that year by the Fryske Akademy in Leeuwarden. I distinctly remember that as she approached the pulpit from where she was about to deliver her plenary, Tove asked the members of the audience to give her their full attention, because she had “a very dense paper”. The warning was apposite: her lecture covered a lot of ground, announcing many of the structuring themes that gained even more visibility three years later in 1992, with the publication of the first book on *Linguistic Human Rights* (co-edited with her husband Robert Phillipson and a young Estonian scholar, Mart Rannut). Another memorable meeting took place in late 1991, when Mart invited a small group of six people to a closed workshop in Estonia. All of them, including Tove, were seasoned scholars, with the exception of the undersigned (at that time an almost complete rookie who couldn’t believe his luck to be in such illustrious company). So, six foreign guests gathered for a very stimulating meeting in Tallinn – an exciting time, since Estonia had only just regained its independence, and its recently adopted language legislation (the *Keeleseadus*) had been a key strategic issue in the country’s struggle to shake off Soviet rule. This workshop, in which matters of politics, language and policy were so directly intertwined, was precisely the sort of context in which Tove’s exceptionally sharp awareness of the political in the linguistic came into its own.

In the following years, whether at conferences in various venues or when visiting Tove and Robert in their home in the Danish countryside, I had many opportunities to learn from her and appreciate her unique way of combining scholarship with political engagement. And just like many other people, I was constantly confounded by Tove’s boundless energy, which poured into a steady stream of publications, numerous lectures, constant international travel, a strong involvement with her extensive family, all in addition to taking care of animals and plants around the house. Tove brought an unstinting passion to all these pursuits, and I believe that a very important part of her legacy resides in the living example she gave us all, that of a life lived to the full.

The members of the editorial team as well as the entire *LPLP* community take this opportunity to express their deepest sympathy to Robert Phillipson, who continues to serve on the journal’s editorial Board.

François Grin