



# Language Teacher Identity and Language Teacher Education for Anti-Oppressive Education



**Dr Manka Varghese**

College of Education, The University of Washington, USA

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**March 5, 2018 (Monday)**

**12:45 - 14:00**

**Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU**

*Chair: Dr Margaret Lo*

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**Abstract:**

Language teachers all over the world are often regarded solely as 'neutral' technicians whose main role is to improve children's language skills in an additional language and sometimes also in their home language. In this presentation, I propose why and how an anti-oppressive agenda which includes combating racism, linguicism, sexism, and homophobia is intrinsic to language teacher education and language education, especially in English language teaching. Through real life examples and research studies, I show how such a focus can be incorporated in a language teacher education program and in language teaching classrooms. In doing this, I convey the centrality of investigating and working on language teacher identity in language teacher education. In this presentation I will present some definitions of language teacher identity and provide arguments about its importance as a conceptual and methodological tool to investigate both the complexity and the promise of how teachers negotiate their professional selves in the flow of daily practice and in the particular contexts within which they teach. My purpose is to show the usefulness of the concept and of the investigation of language teacher identity in relation to anti-oppressive language teacher education and language teaching in the neoliberal enterprise. Finally, I suggest some questions and possible frameworks for language teacher educators and language teachers to make language teacher identity central to their work. Time will be provided at the end of the session for participants to engage with the ideas of the session and to conceptualize the feasibility and the usefulness of incorporating such ideas into their research and their classrooms.

**About the speaker:**



Manka M. Varghese is associate professor of Language, Literacy, and Culture in the College of Education at the University of Washington, Seattle. Her academic specialization is linguistic minority education, focusing on teacher education and access to higher education for linguistic minorities in the U.S. as well as linguistic minority education in Italy. She has published extensively in journals such as TESOL Quarterly, Journal of Teacher Education, International Multilingual Research Journal, Journal of Language, Identity and Education, International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, and Race Ethnicity and Education, as well as authoring chapters, edited volumes, and special issues.

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