



The professional knowledge base for supporting bilingual children on the move in schools and communities

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12:45 – 14:00

Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU

Chair: Dr Man-Kit Lee

Abstract:

Modern society is becoming increasingly complex and is often characterised by diversity, uncertainty and division. Compared with monolingual children in the host society, 'bilingual children on the move' can find it even harder to fit in the wider community and often feel confused, unsure and frustrated about their languages, heritages and identities. A strong professional knowledge base in schools and communities is thus needed to support these children across the lifespan. In this talk, I aim to contribute to our understanding of this professional knowledge base, drawing on insights derived from four interlocking strands of work that I have been involved in the past few years, including 'English as an additional language', 'heritage language maintenance', 'foreign language learning' and 'medium of instruction in refugee/emergency contexts'. A common thread that runs through all four strands seems to point to the need to unlock the potential of language heritage to support bilingual children on the move. The talk concludes with a discussion of the notion of 'heritage' and its implications for policy and practice.

About the speaker:

Yongcan Liu is a Senior Lecturer in Second Language Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge and Convener of Cambridge Research in Community Language Education Network, a university-school-community partnership specialising in community language education. His research interests lie in school multilingualism, heritage language education and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind. He recently completed a series of linked projects on the schooling experience of EAL children in the East of England and is co-investigator of an interdisciplinary project on multilingualism funded by AHRC under the Open World Research Initiative. He is co-author of *The EAL Assessment Framework for Schools*, an award-winning tool for assessing the English proficiency and progress of bilingual children with EAL in primary and secondary schools in England.

~ All are welcome ~

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