

## Roots and routes to belonging and participation – Translanguaging as pedagogy with youth from refugee backgrounds

**Dr Saskia Van Viegen (York University)**

Abstract:

Children and youth who have experienced forced displacement and migration face formidable challenges of social and educational integration in host countries. Resettling in and entering local school systems requires rapid development of new language and literacy skills to stay abreast of same-age peers in school, particularly for those who have had limited or interrupted access to formal schooling prior to their arrival. At the same time, their cultural and linguistic identities and funds of knowledge are critical resources for learning.

Sharing insights from case study research conducted in a Canadian secondary school with youth from refugee backgrounds, I present how students and their teachers actively engaged a multitude of semiotic resources – a fluid mixing across languages and modes of communication and meaning making – in an open and porous process of navigating borders and boundaries of language and linguistic identity. Debates concerning theorization of language and bi/multilingualism trouble the edges of these boundaries, recognizing the material dimensions of language which sit uncomfortably against perspectives on language as a social construction. I explore how these controversies materialize in approaches to educational integration and resettlement; wherein teachers work both to valorize linguistic competence and to accelerate new language learning – both roots and routes to belonging, civic engagement and full participation in a new social and educational context.

Speaker Bio: Saskia Van Viegen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics at York University. Her research focuses on language in education, bi/multilingualism and biliteracy. Her current projects explore multilingual assessment, youth language and literacy practices, and multilingual university contexts. Recently, she co-edited (with Sunny Lau) the book *Plurilingual Pedagogies: Critical and Creative Undertakings for Equitable Language (in) Education*, to be published for Springer Educational Linguistics series.



Date: 18 June, 2020 (Thursday)

Time: 11:00 - 12:00

Format: Online (via ZOOM)

Registration Link:

<https://anonmachg2.eduhk.hk/machform/view.php?id=29692818>

The Zoom Link will be sent to audience via Email on 17 June, 2020