



Friday Seminar

Navigating Belonging: Exploring settlement for South Asians in Hong Kong through narratives and participatory photography

APR 21

| 1:00 – 2:30 PM

NAH213

What does it mean to belong, for people from South Asian backgrounds in Hong Kong? Belonging is a person's experience of identity in relation to affinity with a place, a space or a group. We introduce a new project aiming to understand how people in South Asian communities in Hong Kong define, find and negotiate their belonging. The project draws upon oral narratives and participatory photography, and lies at the intersection of linguistic ethnography and creative practice.

South Asians in Hong Kong experience discrimination, unequal access to education, employment, and public services, and barriers to participation in civic activities. The minoritisation they face has been brought into relief by the pandemic and by recent political upheaval. This renders established ideas of belonging in terms of cultural and linguistic homogeneity in need of challenge. Our research asks: (1) How does belonging emerge in and through narrative and photography? (2) How can we develop innovative approaches to researching belonging? and (3) How can our understandings of belonging be used to inform policies, practices and debate on social integration?

In the session we outline the process of stakeholder engagement that informs the aims of the project, describe the methodology, and discuss early data.



James Simpson is Associate Professor in the Division of Humanities at Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, where he leads the MA programme in International Language Education. His research interests mainly lie in the sociolinguistics of mobility. His current research addresses questions of belonging for people on the move. He is the instigator of Nexus: The Belonging Research Network. <https://nexusbrn.hkust.edu.hk/>



Christine Vicera (she/hers/siya) is a Filipino-raised writer, researcher, and filmmaker from Hong Kong. Participatory storytelling and community building are integral to her praxis. She is Co-founder of be/longing, a community arts-for-education lab that harnesses the transformative power of storytelling to cultivate and co-create cultures of inclusion in Hong Kong. <https://christinevicera.wordpress.com/>

