Keynote Speech 7 (09:30 to 10:15 HKT, 11th July 2024/D1-LP-02)

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Bridging Divides in a Polarized World: Trauma-Informed Cross-Cultural Communication

Abstract

In a world where digital echo chambers and diverse ideologies sharpen divisions, my keynote address, "Bridging Divides in a Polarized World," will point out the importance of trauma-informed cross-cultural communication. I will emphasize the critical need for understanding trauma and its far-reaching impact on our affective well-being and capacity to empathize. This understanding is foundational for engaging in dialogue across the myriad borders that define our geopolitical, social, cultural, linguistic, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnic landscapes.

I will delve into the nature of trauma, shedding light on its pervasive effects on both individuals and communities. I will argue that being cognizant of the often invisible impact of trauma is key for anyone seeking to navigate the complexities of intercultural communication with compassion and effectiveness. By centering a trauma-informed perspective, we can become more attuned to the various forms of human suffering and appreciate how these experiences influence viewpoints, social interactions and affective reactions.

I will also explore how we can identify and reinforce common human values and extend our consideration to more-than-human values, despite a backdrop of conflicting ideologies and diverse upbringings. I will present strategies for achieving this perspective, demonstrating how education and transdisciplinary research can help us strive to overcome and connect across the fractures of an increasingly segmented world.

Hopefully, participants will come away with a clearer vision of how to coexist and uphold our civilization respectfully and responsibly, amidst our ideological differences. My goal is to inspire a dedication to developing a global citizenship that is rooted in empathy, respect, and a shared commitment to the common good, through the practice of trauma-informed cross-cultural communication.

Biography

Dr. Angel M. Y. Lin is Chair Professor of Language, Literacy and Social Semiotics in Education at the Education University of Hong Kong. Dr. Lin has been at the forefront of English language education and critical literacies since the late 1990s when she started working on classroom research projects in schools in Hong Kong. She has published widely on second language education, discourse analysis, trans/languaging (TL), trans-semiotizing (TS), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and critical media literacies. She is the current Chair of the American Educational Research Association's Special Interest Group (SIG), *Semiotics in Education*, and has been a part of the SIG's executive board since 2020. She also started the TL-TS Research Channel on Youtube and has organized over 40 research seminars featuring both seasoned and emergent scholars in applied linguistics and education from all over the world. Dr. Lin's leadership and mentoring has profoundly shaped the professional lives of doctoral students and emergent scholars both in Asia and Canada.