**ESRC seminar series: Diverse Teachers for Diverse Learners**

**Bilingualism and Teacher Diversity in Schooling**

**The MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism, School of Education, University of Birmingham**

**June 11th 2012**

**Speaker Abstracts**

**Diversity, superdiversity, and beyond**

Adrian Blackledge, MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism, University of Birmingham

The term ‘superdiversity’ has been coined to refer to the meshing and interweaving of diversities, in which not only ‘ethnicity’, but other variables intersect and influence the highly differential composition, social location and trajectories of various immigrant groups in the twenty-first century. New demographic patterns of migration and post-migration are characterised by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple origin, transnationally connected, socio-eco­nomically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants (Vertovec 2007). Recently a number of terms have emerged, as scholars have sought to describe and analyse linguistic practices in which meaning is made using signs flexibly in superdiverse settings. These include, but are not limited to: Codemeshing (Canagarajah, 2011); Polylingual languaging (Jørgensen 2010; Madsen 2011); Contemporary urban vernaculars (Rampton 2011); Metrolingualism (Otsuji and Pennycook 2011); and Translanguaging (García, 2009; Creese and Blackledge 2010). The shared perspective represented in the use of these terms considers that meaning-making is not confined to the use of ‘languages’ as discrete, enumerable, bounded sets of linguistic resources. Rather, signs are available for meaning-making in communicative repertoires (Rymes 2010) which extend across ‘languages’ and varieties which have hitherto been associated with particular national, territorial, and social groups. With reference to data collected in and around a complementary school in Birmingham, I argue that in responding to (super)diversity in education we might leave aside the monolingual/multilingual divide, and adopt a heteroglossic perspective on the signs and forms in use and action as meanings are made. A *heteroglossic* orientation to language teaching incorporates multilingualism and goes beyond it, to ensure that imperatives towards standardization, centralization and correctness are held in balance with the acceptance and incorporation into learning environments of linguistic signs and voices which index students’ localities, social histories, circumstances, and identities (Bailey 2012).

**Adrian Blackledge** is Professor of Bilingualism in the School of Education, and Director of the MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism, University of Birmingham. His research interests include the politics of multilingualism, linguistic ethnography, education of linguistic minority students, negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts, and language testing, citizenship, and immigration. His publications include *Multilingualism, A Critical Perspective* (with Angela Creese, 2010, Continuum), *Discourse and Power in a Multilingual World* (2005, John Benjamins), *Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts* (with Aneta Pavlenko, 2004, Multilingual Matters), *Multilingualism, Second Language Learning and Gender* (2001, Mouton de Gruyter, with Aneta Pavlenko, Ingrid Piller, and Marya Teutsch-Dwyer) and *Literacy, Power, and Social Justice* (2001, Trentham Books).

**Co-researching with diverse teachers: professional empowerment, theoretical exploration, implications for policy**

Jean Conteh, School of Education, University of Leeds

In my talk, I will discuss the co-researching processes involved in a range of small-scale research projects that I have carried out with diverse teachers in multilingual primary contexts over the past ten years. In presenting some of the outcomes of this work, I will argue for the vital importance of research of this nature for three key issues in education in Britain today:

* Promoting the professional identities and expertise of diverse teachers
* Understanding the factors which promote success for diverse pupils
* Challenging the prevailing monolingual ethos in policy, research and practice in education in the UK

To conclude the talk, I will elicit some key themes and issues, and suggest implications for policy, future research and teacher education and development, both for diverse teachers and the teaching workforce generally.

**Jean Conteh** is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education at the University of Leeds. She has worked for many years as a primary teacher and teacher educator in multilingual contexts. She has published widely on the intersections of research, policy and practice in the ways that diversity and equality are constructed in the education system in Britain, and in promoting equity for pupils defined as ‘EAL learners’. She is chair of a charity, which has been working for the past ten years with bilingual primary teachers in Bradford to develop links across mainstream and community learning contexts to benefit diverse teachers, pupils and families.

**Teacher education for language minority teachers: Current issues in preparing teachers in the United States**

Manka M. Varghese, Associate Professor, College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle

In this presentation, I discuss some of the most salient issues in the research and practice in preparing language minority teachers in the United States. For each of these issues, I will bring in my perspectives as a researcher and teacher educator, and often these will be presented as dilemmas and discussion points. The first issue I discuss is the debate around what we mean by linguistically responsive teaching, and the quest for framing this in a way that is simultaneously not reductive and not impractical. Next, I outline the complexity of preparing language minority teachers to become socially just teachers. I then present some of the various models and frameworks to prepare language minority teachers used in various teacher education programs across the country. Last, I highlight some of the current national and state language and immigrant policies that have implications for the professional roles and identities of language minority teachers. I anticipate that each of these topics and their interrelationship will generate productive conversations with the work in language minority teacher education that has been underway in the U.K.

**Manka M. Varghese** is an associate professor in Language, Literacy and Culture in the College of Education at the University of Washington in Seattle. Her research and teaching focus on language minority teacher education, language minority teacher identity, as well as pathways and access to higher education for language minority students.