

MINOLI WIJETUNGA

EDUCATION

MSc Education (Comparative and International Education)

University of Oxford – 2021

MA Teaching Literature in Second Language Classroom

The Postgraduate Institute of English (pending thesis submission)

BA English and English Language Teaching (Hons)

The Open University of Sri Lanka – 2016

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

- Chevening Scholar (Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, UK) – 20/21
- Teacher Trainer, Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka
- Mentor, Omprakash.org (for undergraduates in the USA volunteering in the Global South)
- Mentor, teachers from underprivileged backgrounds, Sri Lanka
- Researcher affiliated to Digital Humanities Laboratory, University of Colombo

Diversity and inclusion pertaining to gender and race are areas of personal interest. I have been working with the Department of Education, University of Oxford on these matters and have led a workshop for the faculty members on justice, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND PROCEEDINGS

Publications – Academic journals

- *Exchanging ginger for chilli?* The Social Ecology of a World Bank-funded Higher Education Project in Sri Lanka. (in preparation. Invited to submit Chapter to a peer-reviewed international journal on education research)

- Who made the yardstick? An Oppressed critique of the comparative and the international. (2021). Current Issues in Comparative and International Education (Special Issue). <https://doi.org/10.52214/cice.v23i2.8539>
- “Baduwa in the Sheets? Ambuwa in the Streets? Representation of the Aryan Woman in Sinhala Lyrics. (Co-authored.) 2020. *Bound by Culture: Essays on Cultural Production signifying Gender*. Edited by Thiruchelvan, S. Women Unlimited, India.
- Dominant patriarchal ideologies in a hegemonic framework: Pedagogical practices of a Sinhala Department – A Case Study. 2018. *Nivedini Journal of Gender Studies*. Women’s Education and Research Centre Sri Lanka.
- Sexism in ESL textbooks in Sri Lanka: A case study of the G.C.E. O/L textbooks. 2017. *OUSL Journal*. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.4038/ouslj.v12i1.7373>

Publications – Reviewed blogs

- Freirean dialogue in a digitalised learning environment. (Co-authored with Godfrey-Faussett, T.) (2021). Post-pandemic University. Special issue on the centenary of Paulo Freire. <https://postpandemicuniversity.net/2021/11/08/freirean-dialogue-in-a-digitalised-learning-environment/>
- “I have read and agreed to the terms and conditions”: Informed consent in the age of social media. 2019. *GenderIT.org*. <https://www.genderit.org/articles/i-have-read-andagree-terms-and-conditions-informed-consent-age-social-media>

Presentations and Proceedings

- *Choosing voices: platforming narratives in redesigning curricula*. Paper presented at Roundtable discussion of CIES 2022, April 2022.
- *Grounding EdTech: A Global South approach to Digital Technology in Education*. Paper presented at Chevening Scholar Conference, June 2021.
- *Exploring 'everyday wars' of position: Studying the 'political' in aid to education via a World Bank-funded programme in the majority world*. Paper presented at “STORIES 2021: Resilience, Resistance, and Reflexivity” conference, Department of Education, University of Oxford, March 2021.

- *When “inclusivity” is just a word: A reflection on the gap between policy and practice in the tertiary level examinations in Sri Lanka.* Paper presented at “STORIES 2019 Inclusivity: Mental health, Access, and Accountability” conference, Department of Education, University of Oxford, March 2019.
- *Sexy and they know it: Sri Lankan women on TikTok.* (Co-authored). Point of View/Internet Democracy Project. Paper presented at “Imagine a Feminist Internet: Research, Practice and Policy in South Asia” Conference. February 2019.
- *Problematising dominant patriarchal ideologies in a hegemonic framework: Analysing practices of a Sinhala Department through Critical Pedagogy: a case study.* Paper presented at the National Symposium on Gender in Higher Education, Colombo. August, 2018.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- **Project Manager: WatchDog (Ongoing)**
WatchDog is an investigative journalism organization in Sri Lanka, that aims to bring truth, nuance, and conceptual clarity on affairs of public interest. As the Project Manager, I operationalize project plans and monitor progress, troubleshooting as needed. I also work on generating project ideas that reflect the current contexts and needs.
- **Consultant: Social media and critical thinking module development – Hashtag Generation Sri Lanka**
Hashtag Generation is being funded by UNICEF to conduct workshops to increase social media literacy among the youth in Sri Lanka. I am developing the module for this project, alongside delivery guidelines for youth activists, Government officers, and religious leaders.
- **Research Assistant, Department of Education, University of Oxford (Ongoing)**

I work with the Department's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion project to better understand the nature of research practice at the Department of Education. This includes conducting desk reviews as well as collecting primary data.

- **Research Assistant, REES Centre, University of Oxford (Ongoing)**

As a Research Assistant, I am part of a team that is redesigning one of the MSc courses to make it in line with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion guidelines. I primarily work in designing events and panels that incorporate diverse world views, philosophies, and ideologies in a way that is globally representative.

- **Consultant: Curriculum development for Media Literacy – IREX (USAID) (2019)**

Team Lead

IREX is creating a learning tool to enable citizens to critically evaluate information and content received through electronic, print, and digital media.

As the Team Lead, I managed a team of experts and took the lead in creating the curriculum to be used in Sri Lanka, liaised with creative agencies to create audio-visual learning material, and conducted Train-the-Trainer workshop for selected individuals across Sri Lanka. The role included working with subject experts in the USA and collaborating with individuals from across the world.

- **Consultant: Curriculum development for the Sri Lanka Judges Institute – Chemonics (USAID) (2019)**

Education expert

Chemonics promotes the rule of law in Sri Lanka by addressing gaps in frameworks, capacities, and resources that inhibit a better functioning and more modern justice system via creating a new judicial training program for the Sri Lankan legal practitioners.

As the Education expert, I worked under a Team Lead from Australia, collaborating with a Legal Expert in Sri Lanka. The role included conducting a Needs Analysis, analyzing the results, and creating teaching/learning material that are in line with best pedagogical practices.

- **Research Assistant, Digital Humanities Laboratory, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka (2018 – 2019)**

The Digital Humanities Laboratory is at the Department of English, established under a loan from the World Bank for Accelerating Higher Education and Development. The Lab is the first of its kind in Sri Lanka.

As the first Research Assistant at the Lab, I set up systems for the smoothing running of the project including for procurement. I developed a set of ethics for the functioning of the Lab, while planning and executing projects to be done by the Lab. I collaborated with senior academics at the Department of English on their various projects, primarily through desk reviews and data collection. I also initiated the first inter-University, inter-Departmental panel on Natural Language Processing to further collaborations between linguistics departments and computer science departments. I also organized conferences and events, which helped me establish a wide network of academics, both in Sri Lanka and at the international level.

- **Assistant Lecturer, Department of English, University of Colombo (2016 – 2018)**

As an Assistant Lecturer, I taught introductory courses to first-year undergraduates such as Reading, Writing, Rhetoric. Other courses taught were Structure of the English Language, History of the English Language, South Asian Literature, and other linguistics subjects. I also represented the Department at the Information Technology Committee and the Blended Learning Project funded by UNICEF. I was involved in producing reports on the Department to the Ministry of Higher Education as well.

- **Curriculum development, Extension Courses, University of Colombo (2018)**

Creating material including teacher guides for one of the Diplomas offered by the Extension Courses of the University of Colombo for external employees.

The task included creating material for the students and writing a supplementary guide for teachers on pedagogical practices.

- **Teacher – Secondary, Gateway International School, Colombo (2016)**

As a secondary school teacher, I taught English Language, English Literature and Drama to grades 6 through 11. I was also a class teacher and one of the teachers in-charge of the Drama club.