



# DEI in Practice

## Creating socially just, inclusive, & equitable classrooms

Moderated by Dr. Michi Saki,  
Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts

**May 23, 2026**

**11:40am**

**Room 8-810**



Noriko Ishihara  
Hosei University

Yuzuko Nagashima  
Yokohama National University

Chhayankdhar Singh Rathore  
Konan Women's University

Davey Young  
Institute of Science Tokyo

**This DEI-sponsored panel explores intersecting dimensions of justice, identity, and inclusion in English language teaching (ELT), highlighting pedagogical approaches that challenge inequitable structures within education that impact classroom communities. Moderator, Michi Saki, invites us to engage in four interrelated presentations: Noriko Ishihara (Hosei University) introduces the concept of linguistic justice, urging teachers to value all languages and varieties equally by integrating multilingual translanguaging and sociopragmatic practices that resist linguistic hierarchies. Yuzuko Nagashima (Yokohama National University) examines native-speakerism through an intersectional framework, revealing how race, gender, and sexuality shape the lived experiences of ELT professionals and calls for equity-oriented pedagogies that dismantle systemic privilege. From a look into classroom-based inquiries, Chhayankdhar Singh Rathore (Konan Women's University) shares an exploratory journey with female university students that redefines feminism as an evolving, student-centered dialogue, using media and performance to engage gender awareness in meaningful ways. Finally, Davey Young (Institute of Science Tokyo) focuses on inclusive education by advocating for communities of practice (CoPs) that support teachers in addressing the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Join us in these important topics related to DEI for the cultivation of equitable, diverse, and inclusive learning communities.**

### **Noriko Ishihara (Hosei University)**

#### **Linguistic Justice: Basic Tenets and Classroom Applications**

Although the term linguistic justice is defined differently across disciplines, in language teaching, the concept of linguistic justice highlights equal rights to languages in educational settings and in all contexts of language use. Language rights constitute part of human rights (UNESCO, 2003); everyone is entitled to use the language(s) of their own choice. All languages and language varieties are equally valuable, although standard varieties are often given greater power and prestige in practice (Piller, 2016). For English as a global language, inner-circle Englishes, especially their "standard" varieties, often dominate in linguistic hierarchies. However, it is important to disrupt such hierarchies and ensure linguistic justice in education, so that students can learn and socialize in their own languages and so that no language varieties or their users are discriminated against.

After discussing the basic tenets of linguistic justice, I will demonstrate how these can translate into our day-to-day language teaching practice. My examples include: 1) pragmatics-focused instruction capitalizing on multilingual translanguaging (Ishihara, 2024), and 2) sociopragmatic instruction on microaggressions as a form of language alienation. Participants are invited to contribute their ideas to further support students' multilingualism and linguistic diversity as well as their own.

### **Yuzuko Nagashima (Yokohama National University)**

#### **Toward an Intersectional Approach to Native-Speakerism in ELT**

Native-speakerism refers to an ideological construct privileging idealized "native" English speakers as culturally and pedagogically superior, while marginalizing "non-native" English speakers and their Englishes. This ideology permeates varied aspects of ELT including employment practices, curriculum design, and pedagogy. Many researchers and educators have sought to deconstruct and dismantle it and to advocate for more critical approaches that valorize learners' and teachers' multilingual and translingual identities.

Building upon this body of research, this presentation argues native-speakerism needs to be examined, especially regarding language teachers' identities, not only from a linguistic perspective but also from intersectional lenses in relation to other structural categories including race, gender, sexuality, and other axes of power. Drawing on studies which employ intersectionality as a conceptual and analytical framework, this presentation demonstrates how a single-axis approach solely focusing on native-speakerism risk obscuring the experiences of multiply oppressed and marginalized language teachers in ELT. An intersectional approach, instead, enables a more nuanced understanding of how language teachers enact and negotiate their situated and multifaceted identities within the interconnected power structures. Intersectional understanding of native-speakerism can also further challenge the interrelated systemic power structures within which native-speakerism is enmeshed and promote more socially just and equitable practices in ELT.

## **Chhayankdhar Singh Rathore (Konan Women's University)** **Unpacking Feminism: An Exploratory Journey with Female University Students**

In this mini-presentation, the presenter will share how the challenges of his first semester with a group of advanced-level, third-year women students led him to let the students' voices shape the contents of the second semester. Their demands for more challenging, engaging, and relevant content led him to explore gender studies and gender awareness in language-learning classrooms.

Being at a women's university presented a unique opportunity to use a gender lens, placing students' lived experiences and voices center stage in the classroom. However, as a male, the teacher realized his approach to this course had to be student-centered because he, as the only male in the class, did not have the same lived experiences as his female students. At the same time, the students seemed wary of the term feminism. They expressed hesitation or refusal when it came to identifying as a feminist or discussing the relevance of feminism in their lives.

This situation led him to design a course that used TED Talks, group discussions, drama activities, film reviews, and biographies of famous women to help students discuss gender in various contexts, ranging from fiction to real life, from global to local, and from the past to the present.

## **Davey Young (Institute of Science Tokyo)** **Creating Inclusive Communities of Practice to Support Students with Disabilities**

Research shows that communities of practice (CoPs) are instrumental in supporting English language teachers' (ELTs') views of and ability to implement inclusive education for students with disabilities (Young, 2024). However, many ELTs lack both training and support to teach such students (Ali, 2018; Fernández-Portero, 2022; Francisco et al., 2023; Sowell & Sugisaki, 2020; Young, 2024). Many teachers are therefore left to fend for themselves when bridging training gaps and implementing inclusive practices effectively. This presentation will provide relevant research into barriers to implementing inclusive education in EFL settings before providing recommendations to help teachers create their own inclusive CoPs and better serve students with disabilities. Examples include resource identification, reflective practice for inclusion, and the creation of multidisciplinary teams. Attendees will leave with greater confidence and concrete tools for improving accessibility in their own teaching through collaboration with peers and other professionals.

