

Open Centre for Languages and Culture - Distinguished Speaker Series 13/07/2023

- ***Equitable Multilingualism* - Beverley Costa, Birkbeck, Univ. London**
- ***Beginners Tamil* short course - Suresh Nesaratnam and Sas Amoah, OU**

[Edited transcript]

Mirjam Hauck

Welcome everybody to the last event in our *Distinguished Speaker Series* for this academic year.

This is our agenda for today: we have an hour to get through everything. My name is Mirjam Hauck, I'm the Director of the Open Centre for Languages and Cultures in the School of Languages and Applied Linguistics at the Open University. Our speaker today is Dr. Beverley Costa from the Centre for Multilingual and Multicultural research at Birkbeck. And we have two other speakers, who will also introduce our taster course in Tamil, Dr. Suresh Nesaratnam and Sas Amoah.

Let me say a little bit about the Open Centre for Languages and Cultures because this *Distinguished Speaker Series* is part of what the open Centre at the OU does; we provide access to high quality opportunities to study languages, cultures and communication, including AI based communication, for learners from all walks of life. We want to increase awareness of the strategic importance of meaningful and effective communication between individuals and groups and to that effect, we offer short courses designed to foster people's creative curiosity and, as we hope, transformative understanding between people, both locally and globally. We offer paid for and free short courses. The free short courses are mostly tasters that sit on the Open University's *Open Learn* platform, including the Tamil taster that you will hear more about a little later. We cater for different audiences for different purposes, mainly for leisure learners, for continuous professional development learners, and for learners who are interested in our social justice and inclusion agenda.

As I said, the *Distinguished Speaker Series* is part of what the open Centre for Languages and Cultures does, and we invite colleagues like Beverly who are experts in the topics that are covered in the short courses. And with this, I think I will stop sharing my screen and I hand over to you, Beverly, because you said you wanted to introduce yourself, and then take it away with your talk on how to put multilingualism, equitable multilingualism into practice. Over to you!

Beverley Costa

Fabulous, thank you so much Mirjam. So, I'm just going to load my slides now remembering to enable my sound.

Mirjam

Yes, please!

Beverley

And I am assuming unless you tell me otherwise that you can see the slide okay.

Mirjam

All fine, you're ready. You're ready to roll!

Beverley

Well, not only am I ready, I'm delighted to be here with you today. And I'm really honoured to be invited to speak anyway, but especially it seems like I'm the final speaker in the *Distinguished Speaker Series*.

I'm going to speak before handing over to colleagues who have created the new Tamil taster course and I hope that my talk will provide a bridge to that course in a community language, as much of my work has been at the community level, working amongst community languages, providing equitable services.

So, I'm Beverly Costa, and I'm a psychotherapist, a clinical supervisor, trainer and a Senior Practitioner Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, and a Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Reading, and I'll say a bit more about my background in a minute.

So, this talk is called 'Equitable Multilingualism' and it's less about the theory of multilingualism and more about a way of putting equitable multilingualism into practice in a specific context and that context is the mental health context.

So, let's start with an introduction, because as an introduction, I'll say that equitable multilingualism and multilingualism as a social justice issue, have been guiding principles throughout my personal and professional life. The quotation I've put up here from Lourdes Ortega, [*All people have the right and the need to feel confident in their linguistic abilities and their ways of speaking. And yet, **linguistic insecurity** is pervasive among multilinguals.*] the two words about 'linguistic insecurity' seem to me incredibly important to think about when we're thinking about psychological therapy with people who are from a multilingual background, because if we're in psychological therapy, encouraging people to speak about their distress, to speak about traumatic incidents, to speak about loss, to speak about all of these things, and they are feeling insecure in their ability to use their language, and to be understood, and to be respected, and to be heard in a language, then clearly, this is something that needs addressing at a very fundamental level.

So, a bit more about my personal and professional background and the relevance to this topic. I grew up in a family of multiple languages, two different cultures, two different religions. When I trained as a psychotherapist, it became quickly clear to me that the kind of service I was trained to provide, would just not have been accessible to members of my family, who may well have wanted to have used the services of a psychological therapist. It just wouldn't have worked in any way, culturally, and certainly not linguistically. And so, in 2000, when I finished my training as a psychotherapist, I set up an organisation charity called *Mother Tongue Multi-ethnic Counselling Service*, to try to address a very small part of that gap. And I'll tell you a bit more about that service, also in a minute. Now, we also knew that if I was working in this area of multilingualism, and psychotherapy, very little had been done in this area at all, especially at the research level and I thought that if I was going to have a stable base, to be able to work and speak about what I was doing, I needed to be

able to work in an interdisciplinary way. I'm incredibly grateful to my colleague Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele from the Applied Linguistics department that he has been my research colleague for over a decade now. My context is just one example of equitable multilingualism in practice, and I really hope that you feel you can extrapolate from what I'm going to say to other contexts that interest you, but I can only really talk about what I know and what my experience has taught me.

So, multilingualism is particularly relevant for psychological therapists because we know from practice, we know from research evidence, that at the heart of therapeutic change at the heart of positive outcomes, is the therapeutic relationship, and the relationship is predicated on language. Language is at the heart of all relationships. And yet - this may come as a surprise to you, if you don't know - it is completely ignored in almost all therapy training. (Quite frankly, it's all therapy training, but just in case, one suddenly decided to adopt something, I say 'almost all' psychological therapy training.)

Now, as a kind of spine running through this talk, I'm going to use a continuum of 'research and implementation'. What I mean by that is the integration of research and practice, and research underpins practice, and practice informs research. And I, my belief, is that constantly walking backwards and forwards along that continuum is how we really can truly make a difference and ensure that social justice is not just a concept, but is a lived practice. Now, I'm more at the implementation end of the continuum than the research. But let me give you a little bit of a flavour of the underpinning research.

So, as I said, I've been in partnership with Jean-Marc Dewaele for quite a while now and these are just two examples of the papers that we produced [Costa and Dewaele, 2012; Dewaele & Costa, 2013]. We have done research on attitudes and beliefs and behaviours of monolingual and multilingual therapists to see where the differences are. We have also written research on multilingual clients who have previously been therapy clients. Some of the findings indicate that what's really important is the empathic engagement with multilingualism and empathic engagement with people's identities that are different in their different multilingual personas. That people feel very different in the different languages they speak and that sometimes switching language in therapy can really help them to get closer to emotion, or to move further away. And here are two quotations that are taken from our research participants. So, in the first one, one of the participants is actually saying, 'look, I have got different personas with each of the languages that I speak. So, if I'm only speaking English, it just isn't helpful'. And another research participant who talks about the fact that in English he doesn't seem to be expressing emotions at all. But when he speaks Spanish, his therapist noticed that he does. And when they both speak Spanish, they notice that they're not using expressions like in English, 'Oh, I'm not at my best', which is really kind of quite mild. He's using an expression in Spanish, 'Me siento como un perro mordido', which is, 'I feel like a bitten dog' in translation, so you can see the difference in intensity.

So, what are the implications of all of this for psychotherapy? Well, one of the principal findings that came out of our research was that multilingual therapists and monolingual therapists are different from each other. And perhaps even more importantly, multilingual clients, and monolingual clients are different from each other. So how are they being worked with differently in the room? Are they at all? Are therapists able to tolerate and work with and invite patients' multiple languages into the room so they can work with them? And are their assumptions that it's always going to be the L1, the first language, that is the most emotionally engaged, because the research shows us that that's not always the

case. It might be in the majority of cases, but depending on the context, in which the second language is learned, or second, or third, or fourth languages are learned and used, they can be equally or more emotionally - the language can be more emotionally important than the first language. So, all of these things moved us towards thinking about how we were working with clients in the room, and not making assumptions about their language and their language preferences and their language use, and the meaning of their language use.

A quick definition of counselling and psychotherapy comes from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. And it is 'a safe, confidential place to talk about your life and anything that is confusing, painful or uncomfortable'. Now, the emphasis here is you've got to be able to talk about things, and it's things that are confusing, things that are painful, that are uncomfortable. If, as we saw with this quotation at the beginning, that people don't feel confident in their abilities and their ways of speaking in their own language, how are they going to be able to talk about confusing and painful and uncomfortable things with any sense of confidence that they will be really, really respected and understood? So it seems fundamental that we attend to counselling, to language and counselling and psychotherapy, especially when you think - and this data is old, it's 13 years old - that one in five adults has consulted a counsellor or a therapist at some time. I think the numbers will have increased since 2010. So, this is an issue that concerns us to a great extent, because how many people are we talking about who may be in this kind of situation? Well, the 2021 census, told us that just over 1 million people cannot speak English well enough to access psychological therapy in English. So, this is just identifying the people who are going to probably need to access therapy through an interpreter, and therapists have very seldom been trained in how to work effectively with an interpreter. Now, added to that 1 million are the millions of people in the UK who speak more than one language, they may not need an interpreter, but how are they being treated in psychotherapy? Are they treated in any way differently? But as I've already said, it's seldom, multilingualism is seldom covered, approached, mentioned in psychological therapy training. And yet training to work with this, training to work with multilingualism, learning to work with spoken language interpreters, is an active component of something that we are being exhorted to be, which is anti-oppressive, anti-racist clinicians and racial allies. And this should be fundamentally included in the curriculum that addresses and prepares us to work in that way.

I said I would say a little bit about the *Mother Tongue Multi-ethnic Counselling Service*. This is the service that I set up in 2000. We were based in Reading, we were an NGO. And we provided free, culturally, and linguistically sensitive counselling to people from the black and minority ethnic communities in their preferred languages. And their main languages include South Asian languages, including Tamil, and other languages as well. In 2009, we created our own dedicated *Mental Health Interpreting Service*. And in 2018, we handed over the model of mother tongue and the interpreting service to our local NHS service. We stopped being a frontline service because we've worked for 18 years, we've worked with over 3000 clients and we wanted to now focus on disseminating the knowledge and the learning in continuing our research with Jean-Marc, developing training and supervision programmes, and working, as I say, with *Pásalo*, the new organisation.

Pásalo means 'pass it on' in Spanish, to pass on the knowledge and the experience from those 3000 clients. Much of that passing on has been done through training. We have trained over 4772 therapists and psychological practitioners since 2013. And they've been practitioners are working in IAPT [Improving Access to Psychological Therapies] and other

NHS services and other NGOs. We've also trained a number of supervisors in working therapeutically across languages. A lot of that work has been done just by me and that's not going to get us very far because I'm hoping to last a bit longer, but I won't go on forever! And so, it's really important to find other ways to expand the reach. We've tried to create products from the collaborative research into therapy and multilingualism. With Jean-Marc, we have created films with funding from the *Wellcome Foundation*, we've delivered training with funding from the *National Lottery*. We have commissioned and produced a play about a couple in a multilingual relationship, which was funded by the *Arts Council England* and which we performed at the *Soho Theatre* London. We've extended the training into speech and language therapy training in Essex, the University of Essex, the University of Reading. In 2020, I published a book called *Other Tongues: psychological therapies in a multilingual world*. In 2021, the *Paul Hamlyn Foundation* funded us to produce an eLearning resource, which is completely free, and I will show you a little bit of it in a minute called *Multilingualism and Mental Health*. From our research into therapy with interpreters, in collaboration with Professor Teresa Murjas University of Reading, we created a performance group of interpreters called *Around the Well*, and we have performed readings, play readings of the play that we created with the interpreters, that we devised with them, and that we performed about their experiences interpreting in mental health. One of the places we performed in was at the Open University in 2019.

So, this is a picture of the book I mentioned, called *Other Tongues* [<https://tinyurl.com/Other-Tongues>] . And you can see that the publishers have written about the fact that not addressing multilingualism and psychological therapy is in fact perpetuating health inequalities in access to mental health services.

This is the free online course, that I mentioned [<https://www.pasaloproject.org/multilingualism-mental-health-and-psychological-therapy--course-content.html>] and the course can be used by trainers to train people in class. I already have said that training for psychological therapists is just not happening in terms of multilingualism, but this course can be used by trainers so trainers who don't feel confident to work in this way can just access this course. And it's completely free. It's available at our website, the personal website. It's also available on the Open University OpenLearn platform. The course follows the journey of a trainee psychotherapist called Frankie, and his encounter with a series of clients where multiple languages play a significant part. At the core of the resource is a film of his journey, and the films called *Language Of The Heart*. I'm going to just show you a trailer of that film just so you get a sense of it. This is the front page of the course if you go to it: *Multilingualism Mental Health and Psychological Therapy* and this is what is included in the course. I just put them up for you to read for yourselves before I show you the trailer. And we also received another grant to be able to also incorporate the Welsh language, specifically the Welsh language context into that course. But that Welsh language extension I would really recommend to everybody because it's applicable to all multilingual work.

So here's a trailer of the film *Language Of The Heart* which runs through - this is the basic core of the whole online course.

[The following text is from the trailer involving four speakers, one in Arabic – not transcribed]

I just want to say one thing before we get started, everything that everybody says in the room will be interpreted so we can all understand is that okay?

I wish I could speak English like you like a native

My client started shouting at me. She was swearing at me.

Come on, it couldn't have been that bad. Maybe just sounded worse because it was in Polish.

Anyway, anywhere where do you expect me to speak it on the bus? Apparently, it makes some people very nervous to hear other people speaking a language that isn't English. So actually, I'm doing them a favour.

Okay, so that was just a trailer to hopefully whet your appetites so you'll go and have a look at the course.

So far over 200 people have completed evaluations of the course and here are a couple of comments: 'As a therapist using English as a second language, this training has validated my own experiences personal and professional. As a trainer, it has given me confidence to bring these issues to the attention of trainee counsellors and supervisors more competently'. And the second quotation is about how empathy and linguistic empathy is at the heart of this work, being empathic towards people's linguistic, multilingual profile and multilingual repertoire, and how important that is.

I am going to start to finish up looking at some other things that we have done, we have also wanted to work with groups, because groups are really important. It's very lonely trying to raise awareness for something that seems invisible, and for some reason, multilingualism just seems to be invisible to many people in the psychological therapy world. Groups together can give us some solidarity, and then we can make more of our assets together. Here are some examples of some of the groups that we set up. *The Bilingual Therapist and Mental Health Interpreter Forum* has been going for 13 years, and we meet regularly online, everybody is welcome. Just send me an email if you want to be on the mailing list. Some examples of topics that we've recently explored with people, who are really leading experts in their field, are 'multilingualism and family therapy', 'language and trauma', and 'interpreting in stressful situations'.

Another set of groups is the *Reflective Practice Groups*, which are online groups for therapists and allied professionals interested in psychological therapies across languages. We set those up in 2020, they all meet online and there are currently three of those groups that meet regularly monthly. And again, if you're interested in those, just let me know.

In 2013 - so it's our 10th anniversary this year - we set up *Colleagues Across Borders*, which connects psychological therapists from the UK, and people who are themselves refugees and who are practising and have trained as psychosocial workers. They're practising and working in refugee camps, or local support organisations - we work principally with an organisation in the Middle East. Our 10 year anniversary is coming up and we have two events to celebrate it, if you want to know more about what we do, and they are both online, and please click on [here](#) and find out about those events, they're both free.

We've also run a number of creative projects and that includes our latest anthology of creative writing called *Tuning in*, an anthology of unheard experience of multilingual experiences in psychological therapies. And that was created by members of the bilingual

forum, and members of the reflective groups, who were facilitated by a creative writing facilitator. We have collected them together and edited them and put them together in a book, which I'll show you a picture of. Here it is, *Tuning In*, and we are extremely proud of it, and it is free. So again, it was a project that was funded by the Lottery and it's completely free. If you want a copy I need to post it to you, I do need to charge us for the postage. And again, please let me know if you would like a copy.

So, I hope this has given an example of the way in which the research implementation continuum can be applied to the issues of equitable multilingualism in social justice practice. I forgot to show you a review of the book, but you can see that for yourselves later.

I also wanted to say one other thing as well, before I close and just give you some references. The research-implementation continuum, does it work? Does it actually get you anywhere? Well, slowly there are some offerings of access to mental health support in people's preferred languages, they're growing. Also, surprisingly, even though it's taken a very long time, there are policy-level changes. The new *British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy* 'Supervision Competence Framework' has been produced, and they consulted with us, and as a result, here are some of their recommendations: that supervisors should have the ability to enable their supervisees to explore unconscious linguistic bias, assumptions and privilege when working in multilingual contexts, in that they should have the ability to offer linguistically sensitive supervision which acknowledges the role of language and identity development, processing of trauma, memory recall, and emotional expression. This is radical. It may not seem radical to you, but for those of us who've been working in the field, this just hasn't been acknowledged at all. So it's very exciting to see that it can happen.

If you are interested in any more information about the free resources, about the bilingual forum, about the anthology, then please, please do get in touch. If you just want to tell me anything or ask anything, please, please get in touch [beverley@pasaloproject.org]. Those are my details. And there are some references on the slides as well. That's it from me.

Mirjam

Wow. Fantastic. Thank you, Beverley, thank you so much. Let's give you a round of applause. Let's use our reactions on Zoom. Thank you so much.

Beverley

That's okay.

Mirjam

Incredibly humbling, your journey, and how hard you and Jean-Marc and others have worked to make this happen.

Now we have a bit of time for questions. May I ask a question? We are also looking into how we're going to cope with the responsibilities that are coming our way. We should have engaged with them for a long time already. But now that British Sign Language is an official

language in the regions and nations, can you say about something about that, about the impact of that, the potential impact of that on your work and what you are doing?

Beverley

Yeah, so whenever I ... because I trained a lot of clinicians to work with interpreters, I always make it very clear that my experience is with spoken language interpreters, not with sign language interpreters. And so I don't really feel it's my place to talk about sign language interpreters, because that's not where the bulk of my experience lies. So, I'm afraid very unhelpfully, I'm going to say, I'm not going to, because there will be other people who will be able to give you much more informed answers than I can.

Mirjam

Because my guess is that the people who are signing are facing exactly the same issues. I mean, they're in the same boat, you know, like, any other minority languages speaker, and shouldn't - it isn't a minority language anymore, it's an official language in the country - you know?

Beverley

Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. There will be lots of overlaps. But it ... yeah, I'm not going to say any more Mirjam, if you don't mind, because it doesn't feel like I should be, you know, making claims on the basis of other people who know much better than I do.

Mirjam

No, I understand very, very well.

Lucy Moss

I'll read out the next one: 'Is there a broader application of this work internationally? And would the project clash with repressive language policies abroad, such as for Kurds in Turkey, or English in Italy?'

Beverley

the work we're doing in the UK - I mean, people are doing this kind of work in in the States as well, principally with Hispanic populations, so bilingual therapists who are Spanish and English speaking, working with Hispanic clients, but with other language groups, as well. In terms of repressive regimes ... I'm speaking as a psychotherapist and I think that psychotherapy should engage with the social and political context. So if, for example, a Kurdish client was accessing therapy in, let's say, Turkey, for the sake of argument, then I think that in the consulting room, that it should be a safe space for them to be able to speak in Kurdish, in the language in which they lived their lives, their domestic, their personal lives, their embodied lives, will be in Kurdish, and not to be able to do that, it just means that you're kind of working at a level that misses out a whole other chunk of the person. It's like

the research participant in our research, who said, 'I've got all these different personas, and if I don't bring them into the room, I'm incomplete'. So, yes, I guess we're working at the personal but the personal is also political.

Mirjam

Okay, we have time for - thank you, Beverley - we have time for one quick question, Darren, please. And then we move on to Sas and Suresh.

Darren Gray

Sure, thank you very much. It was just really thinking about building an identity, I love the way that you've presented it about language is part of the personality persona, and so forth. Just thinking about the examples of code-switching and how exhausting that can be, and how we can build inclusion into our work at the University and build that sense of belonging. It's probably more of a ramble than a question. But I was just fascinated on the hearing how that is represented.

Beverley

Yeah. Oh, thank you so much. Darren. I want to just comment on one thing that you ... I could comment on it all, Darren ... but I'm just going to comment on one thing you said, which is about how exhausting code-switching is. One of the things I encourage therapists to do in training is to acknowledge the efforts that a client is making to be there speaking a language which may not be their first language, it may be your first language, it's not theirs, and they come to you for help. There's something about the acknowledgement of the effort that I think is really, really important in the relationship. But I'll stop there because I can see that my colleagues are keen to get going.

Mirjam

Okay. Thank you, Beverly.

Thank you, Darren. And with this, I hand over to Sas, who is a producer in *OpenLearn*, and is the co-chair of the *Black and Minority Ethnic Network* at the Open University. Over to you.

Sas Amoah

Thank you very much Mirjam. Can you hear me?

Mirjam

Yes. All good.

Sas

Wonderful. So I'm delighted to be here with Suresh and before we share our slides, I thought, I'll just give you a bit of an introduction while you've got us on the big screen. So

Suresh is a retired lecturer in Environmental Engineering here at the Open University. He's also a trustee of the Milton Keynes Murugan temple, and the Vice-president of the *Milton Keynes Community Foundation*, and was also a founding member of the Black and Minority Ethnic steering group network here at the Open University. So it's great that he's here with us now. So just a bit of context a few years ago, we were interested in putting together a course for *South Asian Heritage Month*, and so with the support of yourself, Mirjam and the *OpenLearn* team, we did a bit of research and we learned that in Milton Keynes Tamil is the most widely-spoken South Indian language in the city. So, we thought what a fantastic place to start to make a course on this language. So, Suresh, a native Tamil speaker kindly put us in touch with *Milton Keynes Tamil Academy*, and we worked with Headteacher Sena on developing the course. So, Suresh is going to tell us a bit about the course and give us a bit of a taster.

Suresh Nesaratnam

Okay, thank you very much. So, can we get the slides up please?

Sas

Okay, we'll get the slides up.

Suresh

Sas this is the IT expert

Sas

I'll be driving today. So, share screen sound, everything's there. Okay, bear with us one second.

Suresh

Okay, great. Thanks Sas. Good afternoon, everybody.

So, I'm going to say a little bit about this course that we developed for OpenLearn, *Beginners Tamil - a taster course*. Next slide, please Sas. Right before this, it was produced largely by Sena, a qualified accountant. He has several businesses, he's also a mortgage and insurance advisor, but most importantly, he's the Headteacher of a Tamil school, which runs on Saturday mornings at St. Paul's, which incidentally is where young Sas studied. So, this is a supplementary school for Tamil children. There are about 400 children, they start from kindergarten up to 'A' Level Tamil. They can learn Tamil, plus Tamil music, and dance as well. And why is it important? Tamil is a very, very old language, very rich in philosophy, literature and music. It's spoken by over 85 million people worldwide. The bulk of these people would be in Tamil Nadu in India and Sri Lanka. But there's a vast diaspora of Tamils all over the world, largely due to Brits having taken them to their colonies to take part in the administration. You'll find out that Tamils place a lot of emphasis on education, so when the Brits used to rule India, Sri Lanka, they had a lot of missionary schools where they taught

English, so these were English-speaking Tamils who went out to work in the outer world. There are about 250 000 Tamils in the UK, and about 4 000 in Milton Keynes. Most of the Tamils here are Sri Lankan Tamils who, who fled the Civil War, they went to Europe, they lived in France, Germany, Holland. They often have the nationalities of those countries; their children were born there, and then they move to the UK. So, you'll find German Tamils, Dutch Tamils, living in this city. Also, we have a lot of Tamils from South India, who have come here as IT experts. So that's why we've got about 4 000 Tamils in Milton Keynes.

But talking about philosophy, I wanted to say something one of the most famous Tamil philosophers, somebody called Thiruvalluvar. He lived about 400 BC. He put together a lot of couplets covering ethics, love, politics, economics. One of the most famous ones is, 'It is compassion, the most gracious of virtues, which moves the world'. It is compassion, the most gracious of virtues which moves the world. When I read this, I always think of Jeremy Corbyn because, you remember the last election, he said that we need compassionate politics. The very sad part is the press, and even Keir Starmer, weren't very compassionate towards Jeremy, and now he's in the wilderness.

Okay, next slide.

The Tamil script consists of 12 vowels, 18 consonants and one special character, and what we call four Grantha letters. These are special letters which they use when they want to write Sanskrit words. They have a special pronunciation which is not in Tamil so they have to put these letters when they are talking in Sanskrit or writing Sanskrit.

Okay, next one, Sas.

These are some Sri Lankan/Indian fruits, I'm not sure if everybody's familiar but I'm putting this up because the next part is a video where you see these fruits featured. So if you ever have a Tamil shop or if you go to the open market and there is a Tamil store, you'll see some of these exotic fruits. On the top left, we have the jackfruit, and then on the top right we have the rambutan. Now ;rambu' in Malaysia is 'hair', so you can see it's a hairy fruit, so, rambutan. Then going clockwise, you've got mangosteen. Have you seen one of these Sas? You have? Right. It's a very lovely-looking, purple colour fruit, and when you open it, it's like a star shape in there - very nice to eat. And then of course, the mango, which everybody's familiar with.

Okay, we'll go to the next.

This is a transcript of the conversation that you're about to hear. We'll go to the next slide. Right, this young man is Jaci and he's in the video going to meet Sena, who produced this course, and they're going to talk about fruits. Basically, you can see Jaci is dressed in the sort of traditional Tamil outfit. Now we wear this outfit called a 'verttee' when we go to a temple, a wedding, or any religious event, so it's a little bit traditional. So, Jaci's coming to buy some fruits, you'll see Sena, and basically Sena asking him, 'Where are you coming from?' And he says, 'I'm coming from the temple', all in Tamil, and 'What brings you to this side of town?', and he says, 'I've come to this Tamil shop, because here you can get all the Tamil fruits and all the products from Sri Lanka'. Then he's going to talk about the fruits that they're going to buy. So let's listen to this, Sas.

[Video; dialogue in Tamil, not transcribed]

Okay, so you heard 'nandri' many, many times. Nandri means 'thank you. Something about Tamil shops: you go to a Tamil shop, you'll find it's a bit like Sri Lanka, you'll get all sorts of stuff from Sri Lanka in the shop. And this is one of Sena's shops by the way, and Jaci is the manager. And in this shop, twice a week they go to Heathrow airport to meet a plane that brings fish, crabs, prawns, squid, from Sri Lanka; they pick it up from the airport, bring it straight to the shop and sell to people in Milton Keynes. So always worth a visit.

Okay, next slide Sas, please.

In the course we also talk about instruments. Now, in India, there's two schools of music: Hindustani music, which is the Hindustani school of music, which is the north, and the Carnatic school of music which is in the South. Now a lot of these instruments will be familiar to you like the cymbals, the *nadaswaram*, which is like a flute, violin, and here we have a *veena* which is a bit like a sitar; it's a southern version of the sitar. This is a frame drum, a *khanjira* - it's part of the tambourine family. What else? Then we've got the *sruthi*, which produces a drone, you know, for the background noise. This is an interesting one a *ghatam*, ghatam is like a pot, a clay pot, very, very narrow neck, and when they bake it they put brass or copper filings within the clay so when you when you hit it, it's got a sort of metallic ring, so it's very, very unique. And then I want to say something about the morsing. This is a jaw-harp, which you play. And next we will show you a video with a little bit about how they play it. I think that comes next.

Okay. Right. This is about the *morsing* it's about ...

[Video of man playing thee morsing]

Man in video discussing the morsing:

The instrument I have here is the morsing. The one I have is particularly from the south of India, which is used in the Carnatic tradition. In the south of India, it is a classical percussion instrument, whereas in the North of India, especially in the region of Rajasthan it is more of a folk instrument. I have many here because they're all tuned to different pitches. Because in Indian classical music, you usually tune your instrument or you sing to the root note or the tonic of the performer or the music that's been performed. The morsing itself has an iron frame and a steel rod. It's a very simple instrument which is kind of held between your teeth: some people hold it against the teeth, some people hold it between the teeth, and the cavity of your mouth is basically the resonator. So it sounds like this. [Plays a note]

Suresh

Okay, in the interests of time, I'm stopping this but when you take the course you'll see the full video, very interesting, very interesting.

Okay, next.

Okay, now, we're going to play a piece of music with three performers. One of them plays the morsing, another person plays the *mridangam*, a drum, and then the third person, who's the key here, he plays an electric violin, and they're going to play a devotional piece of music. You'll see that there's a sort of rapport between the musicians, you know, there's eye contact, they play to each other, and then towards the end, you'll see the morsing player make a very interesting note and this even shocks the violin player, so it's a nice piece of music, I hope you'll enjoy:

[Video of musicians playing]

I was telling you about the surprising note, Sas can you go to 47.0608, the time stamp. You'll see the doc [?] giving a nice smile when he hears the morsing make a very pleasant note.

[Video of musicians playing]

And the next one, Sas.

So thanks very much for listening. 'Nandhri is 'thank you'. And 'vanakkam is like, for 'hello', and also 'goodbye'. So thanks very much. Any questions now Mirjam?

Mirjam

Nandhri vannakkam! I've learned something!, Nandhri vanakkam. Any questions from the audience? Thank you so much. I have learned a lot in the last 20 minutes, in the last 50 minutes, but in terms of Tamil, in particular in the last 20 minutes. Thank you so much. Yeah, let's use our reactions to give a round of applause to all our speakers. Do we have anything anybody wants to ask at this point? 'How do I eat a mangosteen?'

Suresh

Oh, you cut towards the middle and you take out the top part. But you must be careful not to let the sap from the fruit part touch your clothes because it's very hard to get off. But you've bought him, Sas?

Sas

Yeah.

Suresh

It's a seasonal fruit and then you take off the white bit in the middle that looks like a star and then just eat it. And there's a very small seed in some of the carpels. But I don't know if the person asking the question lives in Milton Keynes, but you can buy it in the Tamil store in town, in most Tamil shops, I'm sure.

Mirjam

Okay.

Suresh

Nice fruit the mangosteen, yeah,

Mirjam

Okay. Great. Thank you so much. I'm inspired to look for a shop now where I can buy these fruits and try them. Thank you.

Suresh

Thank you, Mirjam.

Mirjam

Okay. Thank you everybody for coming. Beverly, Sas, Suresh. Lucy, thank you for helping.

The next talk, the first one in the new academic year, will take place on September the 27th at 1pm, and it is our very own Professor John Domingue from the Open University's *Knowledge Media Institute*, who will speak to us about how large language models such as ChatGPT and AI will transform adult education - a very hot topic at the moment. And this talk will be followed by a brief introduction to our latest short course in the Open Centre for Languages and Cultures, *AI: language technology in the workplace*, and that course will launch at the end of this month.

So, I think that's it, it's a wrap. And thanks again, to all our speakers. Very inspiring, Beverly, thank you, Sas, Suresh, and everybody who has come to join us today.

Be well have a lovely summer. Bye.

[End of transcript]