

The Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference

Exploring the role of languages for education and development

24-26 September 2019

Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Bangkok, Thailand

Second Announcement and Call for Proposals

Background

We are all currently witnessing unprecedented levels of human mobility. Alongside an increasingly mobile workforce and increased mobility for higher education, we are also seeing the highest levels ever of involuntary displacement, with over 68.5 million people forced from their homes, including 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under 18.

In the Asia–Pacific region, huge populations are moving for work and higher education, with internal displacement and cross-border migration due to conflict, poverty, climate change and social injustice creating increasingly complex ethnolinguistic landscapes. Challenges of inclusion, social cohesion and peace-building are raised for mobile populations but also for stable but linguistically marginalised populations, including issues of access to civic participation, justice, health and information.

At a time when many more children are in school, but many are still not learning, and in particular in the context of the declared United Nations Year of indigenous languages, fundamental questions remain about the balance of local, national and global languages in education.

We are pleased to announce that this year the 13th Language and Development Conference and the 6th Multilingual Education Conference will address the important issues of language, human mobility, multilingual education and development in a single event to be held in Bangkok over three days in September 2019.

Language and Development conferences have been held every two years since the early 1990s. The conference series provides an opportunity for policymakers, researchers, development personnel, teachers and linguists to come together to share views and explore issues concerning language use in development contexts. Details of previous Language and Development conferences can be found [here](#).

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Since 2003, the Asia–Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group has been organising international conferences on language and education every two to three years, sometimes referred to as the multilingual education or MLE conferences. These conferences bring together policymakers, researchers, practitioners and development actors to promote multilingual education with a focus on mother tongue-based learning and broader language issues in sustainable development. Details of the previous MLE conferences can be found [here](#).

Bringing the two conferences together represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the shared mission between the Language and Development Conference and the Language and Education Conference and to raise the profile of the language issues affecting achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals globally in the context of global mobility.

Objectives

The overall aim of the conference is to provide a space for practitioners, NGO staff, researchers and government representatives to explore and exchange on issues of language, inclusion and mobility in education and development.

The conference aims to:

1. explore how an open and inclusive multilingual approach, especially in the context of education and wider society, can maximise outcomes and well-being for different groups and for an increasingly mobile population
2. create links between policy, practice and research on how multilingual approaches can be used to advance (civic) participation, access and learning for children and adults from marginalised and mobile communities
3. investigate the role of, and balance between, different languages – local, national, and international – in the context of diverse and mobile populations, and social and educational practice
4. identify policy priorities for advancing multilingual approaches to social and educational policymaking, learning and development
5. raise awareness among participants in key thematic areas.

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Conference themes

The conference will be organised around three key themes.

Theme 1. Language and inclusion

Objectives

This theme aims to explore the relationship between language, social cohesion, inclusion and peace-building. This includes exploring issues of language learning but also access to civic participation, justice, health and information for those from minority ethnic and language backgrounds and with different abilities and also exploring issues of gender understanding.

Some questions to be addressed

- What are the links between language, social cohesion, mobility and the Sustainable Development Goals?
- How can we best understand the relationships between existing language policies and practices and voluntarily and involuntarily mobile populations?
- How can language policies and practices support different linguistic groups in access to justice, health and information, and in civic participation?
- What roles does language play in enabling reconciliation and social cohesion?
- How do language, disability and learning interact in school environments?
- What are the barriers, and successful policy and school-level practices, for including children from diverse ethnolinguistic groups in pedagogy and learning?
- What are successful practices for including children with disabilities, including less visible disabilities, in multilingual educational systems?

How can national language policies, and transformational approaches to the inclusion of minority language speakers, be developed in a way that creates economic prosperity for all?

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Theme 2. Language and mobility

Objectives

This theme aims to explore the role of language for refugees and displaced populations in economic migration and urbanisation and in higher education and employability, including the potential economic gains from indigenous knowledge and language use, resilience and prosperity, and language revitalisation.

Some questions to be addressed

- What are the positive and negative impacts of migration, both voluntary and involuntary, on education and learning?
- How relevant is the multilingual approach or translanguaging in learning at secondary or higher education levels? What are some advantages (positive experiences) and challenges?
- How can multilingual policy and practice facilitate access to higher education?
- What qualification and regulatory frameworks and adaptations to formal education systems at basic and tertiary levels are required to ensure that children of migrant workers realise their right to education?
- How do national language policies impact economic prosperity, equity and development?
- What specific multilingual education approaches are needed to include refugee and stateless children in education?
- What are the impacts on the education of migrant children left at home?

Theme 3. Multilingual education (MLE)

Objectives

This theme discusses the use of spoken, written and signed languages in educational settings. The main objectives are to explore different aspects of multilingual education, including policies, policy implementation, pedagogies, teacher effectiveness, curriculum/materials development and learning assessment. MLE practice and translanguaging are seen broadly across different levels of education, from early childhood to higher education.

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Some questions to be addressed

- What are the issues and challenges of developing and implementing policies which support non-dominant languages, including sign languages?
- How do issues of rights, equity and diversity inform the standards and legislative mandates of language policies?
- What are the current practices (and positive experiences) in the use of translanguaging and other similar approaches to education in contexts where full-scale MLE is not possible?
- What are the current practices, and what represents best practice, in terms of transitioning from home-language-based instruction to instruction in dominant languages?
- What are the current practices, and what represents best practice, in inclusive MLE catering for students with special needs, learning difficulties and addressing other barriers to learning?
- What are the implications of MLE for teacher training pathways and learning assessment within national education systems?
- What innovations can enhance the development and transfer of literacy skills in contexts where different scripts are used?
- How is the sustainability of MLE programmes being ensured in terms of quality maintenance, monitoring and evaluation approaches, as well as project handover and expansion?

Proposal submission

The conference calls for two kinds of proposals: 1) individual presentations, and 2) panels.

Individual presentations

- Presentation proposals are submitted by one or more individuals.
- After the review, the accepted presentations will be grouped into thematic panels by the conference organisers. In such 90-minute panel sessions, three presenters discuss their research or project/programme practice, followed by general discussion and Q&A. Each presenter (or presentation team in case of co-authored presentations) will have 15–20 minutes to present their research/work.

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- The organisers will assign a chair to the panel, and in some cases a discussant.

Panels

- The conference also accepts proposals for panel sessions.
- Proposals for these 90-minute sessions are submitted by a group of panellists (three to four presentations) discussing a related or common theme.
- Such pre-planned panels provide an opportunity to present on larger themes/projects/programmes in a co-ordinated and coherent manner.
- The panellists may also propose their own moderator and discussant (who will also attend the conference).

Proposals for individual presentations and panels must be received by **3 March 2019**. All proposals should be in **English**.

- **Presentation proposals** should be no longer than **250 words**.
- **Panel proposals** should be no longer than **500 words**.

Both kinds of proposals should clearly identify the topic of the presentation or panel and its relevance to the conference. If appropriate, please include in the proposal title the name of the region, country or countries that the proposal is discussing.

Choose a theme category: proposals should indicate which of the three themes outlined above the presentation best fits. The conference steering committee reserves the right to include a presentation for consideration in a theme other than the one you may identify, if deemed appropriate.

To submit your proposal, please click [proposal submission](#).

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Registration fee

The registration fee will cover: conference kit, access to all sessions, morning and afternoon refreshments and buffet lunches for the three days of the conference. Online registration will be open from **1 May to 31 August 2019**.

- Local participants: \$160/person
- International participants: \$300/person

* Please note that there will be no refund for cancellation or absence.

** The registration fee ONLY includes attendance at the conference, the conference documents, lunch and tea breaks and the evening reception. Accommodation is NOT included in the registration fee.

Scholarships

A limited number of scholarships are available for participants who are able to demonstrate their financial need as well as their ability to bring relevant expertise and diverse perspectives to the conference. Scholarship applications will be available on the conference website in April 2019.

Conference contact details

Website: <http://www.asiapacificmle.net/conference/2019>

(watch the website for updates in the programme)

For general inquiries, please contact the [conference secretariat](#).

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