



4th International Conference on Language and Education:

Multilingual Education for ALL in Asia and the Pacific – Policies, Practices and Processes

6-8 November, 2013

Imperial Queen's Park Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

1st Announcement & Call for Papers

BACKGROUND

Language is key to inclusive development. For all ethnolinguistic communities, access to education in their first language is crucial to overcoming a vicious cycle of marginalization and discrimination.

Expansion of access to mother tongue-based multilingual education (MLE) has increasingly been recognized as part of the Education for All (EFA) process, particularly in Asia and the Pacific. Several countries in the region are institutionalizing multilingual education in their education systems through early childhood, primary, and adult education and learning. However, despite the growing trend of providing multilingual education, many countries are experiencing challenges in implementing and expanding MLE programmes. In order to build national and local capacity in designing, implementing and monitoring MLE programmes in the region, the Asia Multilingual Education Working Group has organized a series of international conferences with focus on MLE.

The Asia Multilingual Education Working Group (MLE WG) is convening the Fourth International Conference on Language and Education - *Multilingual Education for ALL in Asia Pacific: Policies, practices and processes*. The conference brings together MLE partners to

increase understanding of the importance of expanding access to effective MLE and strengthen momentum for MLE in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference will facilitate the exchange of effective practices and experiences, link MLE theory to practice and foster policy dialogue. The conference will serve as a platform for forward-looking debate and the shaping of effective education policies and programmes for the post-2015 agenda.

OBJECTIVES

- To showcase promising practices so as to increase understanding of the importance of expanding access to effective MLE and strengthen the momentum for MLE in the Asia-Pacific region.
- To adopt a common definition of MLE and enhance understanding of its characteristics in the Asian context;
- To support the mainstreaming of MLE by showcasing recent policy developments in the Asia-Pacific region;
- To determine the factors that enable effective, efficient and sustainable MLE by sharing challenges and lessons learned from current MLE practice;
- To identify promising practices in monitoring and evaluating MLE;
- To expand the role of the Asia-Pacific Regional MLE Network and increase synergies among actors around the region and the world to promote MLE.

TRACKS

The conference features four thematic tracks. Conference organizers welcome proposals (papers, panels and workshops) that address these and other related questions.

1. Multilingual education: what and why

Objective: *To increase general understanding of MLE, and adopt a common definition of MLE that is relevant in the Asian context (based on thorough discussion and revision of a background paper provided by the Asia MLE WG).*

Some questions to be addressed:

- How can the theories on bilingual/multilingual education, mother tongue instruction, and language acquisition inform teaching and learning practice in Asian contexts?
- How is MLE conceptualized and understood in different contexts?
- What do first language, home language and mother tongue mean in different contexts?
- How are MLE principles applied at different levels of education: 1) early childhood education; 2) primary education; and 3) adult education and learning?
- What are the differences and similarities of MLE in various systems of education?
- What are the roles of language and literacy in MLE?

- What are the similarities and differences of bilingual and multilingual education in general as well as mother tongue-based MLE?
- What are the key issues and challenges involved in the concept of MLE?

2. Towards Sound MLE Policy: Language and Language-in-Education Policy and Planning in Asia and the Pacific

Objective: To discuss recent policy developments related to MLE, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, and to learn from and build on these developments so language and language-in-education policies can be strengthened throughout the region

Some questions to be addressed:

- What are the essential components of sound MLE policies in different contexts?
- What kinds of positive policy developments (towards increased latitude for MLE) have taken place over the past decade in the Asia-Pacific region?
- What are the critical and analytical perspectives on the socio-political landscapes affecting language-in-education policies?
- Who are the key institutions and decision-makers affecting language-in-education policies?
- How do the issues of rights, equity and diversity inform the standards and legislative mandates on language in education policies?
- What are the key issues and challenges in developing and implementing pro-MLE language-in-education policies?

3. Delivering Quality and Inclusive MLE: Teachers, Pedagogy and Innovations

Objective: To discuss lessons learned and challenges of multilingual education initiatives in early childhood education, primary education, and adult learning, and to determine the factors that influence quality education delivery in multilingual contexts.

Some questions to be addressed:

- How do we ensure the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of quality MLE programmes, from early childhood to lifelong learning?
- How can teacher training programmes, materials, and school management in general promote quality MLE teaching practices?
- How should MLE programs be designed to respond to best practices described in language acquisition theories?
- What is the role of emerging technologies in expanding MLE with equity?
- What means are used to attract governments and communities to develop and retain quality teaching forces for minority languages?
- What are the roles of community and local organizations?
- How can MLE be institutionalized in culturally appropriate ways?
- What are the challenges involved in improving overall teaching and learning practices for MLE in the classrooms? How can we overcome these challenges?

4. Measuring Impact

Objective: To identify good practices in monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of MLE-related interventions in schools and communities, as well as to take stock of emerging evidence on the impact of MLE on learning and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Some questions to be addressed:

- What tools and methodologies can be utilized to monitor and measure the effectiveness of MLE?
- What are some of the promising practices in analyzing the cost and benefits of MLE?
- What do we know about the effects of MLE on learning, in terms of competencies in language(s), academic and non-academic outcomes?
- How can MLE promote positive socio-cultural outcomes in schools, communities and beyond?
- What roles can the various stakeholders (governments, schools, communities, and other organizations) play in partnering together to define, monitor and measure MLE?
- What has been the impact of MLE on the attainment of international development goals such as MDGs, and on well-being?

ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS:

Abstracts of proposed papers will be accepted until **30 April 2013**. We welcome the submission of papers and perspectives that highlight relevant local, national, international, or comparative research and practice in the four thematic areas of the conference.

- **Choosing a Track Category**
 - Proposals should indicate which track is best suited for the paper. The conference steering committee reserves the right to include a paper for consideration in a track other than the one you may identify, if deemed appropriate.
- **Word Limits**
 - Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words in English and should clearly identify the paper's topic and its relevance to the conference. For details, please visit the conference website.
- **Font**
 - A standard font, such as 12pt, Times New Roman - should be used when formatting the text.
- The first page of the submission should only contain the abstract. It should not bear any marks identifiable to the author or authors.
- The second page should contain the name of the author/authors, title, affiliations, e-mail address and the designated track of the parallel sessions.

- Please submit your abstract as an Microsoft Word file to the following address: abstracts.mleconf2013@gmail.com
- Abstracts will be reviewed by three independent reviewers per track.

REGISTRATION FEE

Registration fee will cover: conference kit, access to all sessions, morning and afternoon refreshments and buffet lunches for the three days of the conference. Registration will be open in **February 2013**.

- **Thai Participants:** THB 5,000
- **International (Non-Thai) Participants:** US\$260/person

SCHOLARSHIPS

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

For more information on the conference programme, please contact the following:

Website: <http://www.lc.mahidol.ac.th/mleconf2013/about.htm>

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