



Second International Conference on Language Development, Language Revitalization and Multilingual Education in Ethnolinguistic Communities

1–3 July 2008
Twin Towers Hotel
Bangkok, Thailand

Conference sponsors: SIL International, UNESCO, UNICEF, SEAMEO,
Mahidol University, Care International and Save the Children UK

Purpose

Over the past decade, ethnolinguistic communities, supported by governments and NGOs in several countries of Asia and the Pacific, have begun implementing mother tongue-based multilingual education programs. Also during that time, a number of NGOs and universities have begun supporting ethnolinguistic communities in their efforts to develop, revitalize and maintain their heritage languages.

In spite of these efforts, the purposes and benefits of language development, language revitalization and multilingual education are still not widely understood or accepted. Many efforts remain weak and do not build on what has been learned through research and experiences elsewhere. More information is needed about what is involved in planning, implementing and sustaining strong language development and multilingual education programs.

This conference is meant to address those information needs. Its purposes are to:

- 1) Raise awareness about the purposes and benefits of mother tongue-based multilingual education (MT-Based MLE) programs,
- 2) Share information about good practices in language development, language revitalization and MT-Based MLE in ethnolinguistic communities, especially from the people who are actively engaged in such programs,
- 3) Develop and expand networks of individuals and organizations engaged in these efforts.

Tracks

The conference will include the following tracks (all focusing on languages in multilingual settings):

1. Language development and language revitalization of non-dominant languages

Topics include indigenous people's efforts to revitalize and sustain their heritage languages and cultures; linguistic and sociolinguistic research; orthography development and orthography testing; preservation of oral literature and development of written literature in previously unwritten languages.

2. Language policy, language-in-education policy and policy implementation

Topics include the role of ethnic or indigenous (non-dominant) languages in society and education; language policy and language-in-education policy and their implementation in multilingual contexts; comparisons of policies across nations; the ways that languages are promoted by written and unwritten policies and practices and the factors (including economics) that support or hinder the use of local languages in society and in education systems.

3. Mother tongue-based multilingual education (MT-based MLE)

Topics include planning, implementing and sustaining MT-based MLE for children and adults in formal and non-formal education systems, including schools with multiple mother tongues; good practices in conducting preliminary research, advocacy and mobilization at local, district, national and international levels; developing teaching and learning materials and recruiting and training teachers and other staff.

4. Community-centered efforts to preserve intangible cultural heritage

Topics include community-centered efforts to analyze and maintain oral literature, traditional dance and music and traditional medicines. Theoretical links between folk and traditional arts revitalization and language development are especially relevant. This topic also will include ethnographic studies of informal music education practices, as well as case studies demonstrating the integration of traditional music and arts into formal and non-formal education programs.

5. Information and communication technology that supports language development and MT-based MLE

Topics include using appropriate ICT tools to develop, produce and communicate information and relevant materials in non-dominant languages.

6. Research and evaluation studies of language revitalization and MT-based MLE programs

Topics include principles and practices in planning, conducting and disseminating research and evaluation studies of language revitalization and MT-based MLE programs; case study research for small language projects; longitudinal research studies; community-centered / community-owned research and evaluation.

Plenary Speakers of the Conference

Keynote address

Dr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

Language development and language revitalization of non-dominant languages

Dr. Ana Taufeungaki, Ministry of Education, Tonga

Language and language-in-education policy and policy implementation

Dr. Edilberto C de Jesus, The Former Director of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Secretariat, Philippines

Dr. Andrew Ikupu, Department of Education, Papua New Guinea

Mr. Dhir Jhingran, Asia Regional Director - Room to Read, India

Dr. Bernard Spolsky, Professor emeritus, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Dr. Tariq Rahman, Distinguished National Professor, Quaid-I-Azam University, Pakistan

Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual education (MT-Based MLE)

Dr. Carol Benson, International Consultant in Multilingual Education, Sweden

Community efforts to preserve intangible cultural heritage

Mr. Ik Pahon Joyik, Bidayuh Language Community, Sarawak Malaysia

Attorney Liezeil Zabanal, Agutaynen Language Community, Philippines

Dr. Richard Littlebear, Northern Cheyenne Language Community, USA

Mr. Muhammad Shafiq Khalil, Punjabi Language Community, Pakistan

Research and evaluation relating to MT-Based MLE programs

Dr. Dennis Malone, International Consultant in Multilingual Education, SIL International

Conference date: 1-3 July 2008

Venue: Twin Towers Hotel, 88 Rong Muang, Patumwan, Bangkok 10330 Thailand

For information about conference program, please contact: langdevelbkk_info@sil.org

Deadline for receipt of abstracts: Tuesday, 15 April 2008

Registration deadline: Friday, 13 June 2008

For registration fees, registration form, and information about hotel accommodations, please refer to the conference web-site: <http://www.seameo.org/ld2008>
