

Introduction

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The Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference brought together 2 signature conferences in the field of language, development and multilingual education; the 13th Language and Development Conference and the 6th Multilingual Education Conference, led by the British Council and UNESCO Bangkok on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group and the Language and Development Conference Trustees. It was organised around three themes: 1) language and inclusion, 2) language and mobility, and 3) multilingual education. The conference aimed to provide space for practitioners, researchers, NGO staff, subject experts and government representatives in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond to explore and exchange knowledge and perspectives on the importance of multilingual education and the role of languages in creating inclusivity and strengthening marginalised and displaced people.

Acknowledging the central role played by those who are early in their academic or practitioner career to the development of the field, British Council introduced an innovative programme of support for early career researchers (ECR Programme) that ran alongside the Conference. It recognised that those early in their research careers sometimes struggle to get the most out of academic conferences due to limited international experience, networks and opportunities to publish. The ECR Programme sought to address this by providing full funding to attend the Conference, as well as offering mentoring and support to 18 ECRs from the ASEAN region. The Programme was facilitated by me (Dr Helen Hanna) in my role as consultant and had two aims: to help early career researcher and practitioners in the ASEAN region benefit fully from the IMMLE Conference in terms of presenting, networking and following up opportunities; and to help early career researchers and practitioners in the ASEAN region learn about the process of writing for publication in English language journals in the field of education and get feedback on work-in-progress. It provided pre-conference support in terms of a webinar on preparing for conferences (presentation skills and content, networking), one-to-one feedback on presentation content, in-conference support (workshops on writing for academic publication and one-to-one feedback on presentation skills) and post-conference support (reviewing of draft articles and advice as to where to publish). Participants appreciated being made to feel part of a supportive group where they could share experiences and gain advice on academic life in a safe environment. They also valued the opportunity to learn (or refresh their knowledge) about publishing their research, and gain motivation to share their work internationally.

Such was the enthusiasm and willingness to engage from participants, that British Council responded to this commitment and extended the ECR Programme into 2020, offering a formal opportunity for participants to publish an article based on the research they shared at the conference in an online publication. It is therefore my great pleasure to introduce the 'finished product' of this writing programme, the result of the hard work of six selected contributors from the ECR Programme. As well as developing confidence and capacity to publish among ECRs in the ASEAN region, this publication aims to give an ECR perspective on the issues raised

at the conference, showcasing research and best practice in (multilingual) education and development, and to inspire ongoing discussion on how languages might include and strengthening marginalised and displaced people in societies. When starting out as an academic or practitioner, it can be enormously challenging to get your first publication. However, having high quality publications in reputable outlets is becoming increasingly essential to higher education career progression and promotion in the ASEAN region, mirroring a global trend. Therefore, the Programme's commitment to developing capacity for publication met a concrete and ongoing need. It is hoped that it will inspire other conference organisers to include similar mentoring and publishing opportunities in their programmes

Authors engaged with several rounds of vigorous reviewing, editing and refining, to a tight deadline. While this is a very normal part of academic life, it can be daunting when it is your first time to share your work with others in written form. I commend the authors for engaging with me in an open and professional way, as well as being willing to challenge me and offer their own solutions! In this way, I feel confident that their own voices emerge from their work, rather than mine.

The six distinct articles span a wide range of research and practice on topics relating to language, development and education. The authors come from a range of countries, educational contexts and walks of life. This has resulted in an eclectic publication, reflecting the very best that diversity in the field has to offer.

It was my pleasure to guide and mentor these talented authors at a key juncture in their academic and practitioner careers. I hope you will enjoy reading their work as much as I have.

About the editor

Helen Hanna, PhD.

Helen Hanna has over 15 years' experience in the field of educational. She has worked at and with universities in the UK, South Africa, Thailand, Shanghai, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. She is passionate about supporting early career researchers to write for wider audiences and enabling them to find a place to thrive in academia and educational practice. Her research interests and publications relate to educational diversity and inclusion, particularly of ethnic, racial and national minorities and migrant learners, citizenship education, and creative research methods. Helen is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, The Education University of Hong Kong. See her website for more details on her work: www.drhelenhanna.com

