



Bringing the outside in: multilingual realities and education

Bringing the Outside In & BAAL Language in Africa SIG Conference

15th-16th July 2022

University of Essex

The ways in which we have come to understand multilingualism have changed significantly over the last 50 years. However, we are yet to reach a consensus about how to best harness multilingualism as a resource for individuals, communities and society more broadly. There is increasing evidence of the benefits of mother tongue and multilingual education (Cummins 2000, Ball 2011, UN 2015, UNESCO 2015a, UNESCO 2015b). However, the use of English as a medium of instruction in education continues to grow globally (Dearden 2014). Some 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand (UNESCO 2016:1). This has important implications, since monolingual policies which do not accurately reflect the linguistic reality of people's lived experiences can inhibit access to health, education, political and economic systems (Bamgbose 2000, Djite 2008, Williams 2011, Negash 2011).

We are interested in particular in the links between language policy and multilingual practices – both in formal education and outside of these spaces. There is a monolingualising (Heller 1995, 2007) of education systems in many contexts across the globe. This raises a range of questions: do the practices used inside classrooms mirror or reflect those outside the classroom; is multilingualism itself encouraged or permitted in global classrooms; and, moving beyond the idea that one language is more 'fit for purpose' than another language, can policy in fact support multilingual language practices?

In this conference, we seek to explore these issues and invite discussions around key questions such as:

- 1) How do individuals experience multilingualism inside and outside of the classroom?
- 2) In what ways does language policy enable or inhibit multilingual education?
- 3) How are boundaries enforced or disrupted between the home and the classroom?
- 4) How do political issues affect multilingual education?
- 5) How do we effectively research multilingualism?
- 6) What evidence of best practice already exists and how can we learn from this across different contexts?

We invite abstract submissions of 300 words by the **31st May 2022**. We will be accepting abstracts for 20-minute presentations. **We encourage submissions which discuss multilingualism and education in any context globally.** We welcome submissions from colleagues who may be unable to attend the in-person conference, and will arrange hybrid sessions where necessary.

This conference is hosted by the British Academy, Global Challenge Research Fund project *Bringing the outside in* in partnership with the British Association for Applied Linguistics Language in Africa Special Interest Group.

Conference fees are £15. Registration will open in June.

Please email abstracts to colin.reilly@essex.ac.uk