

## Call for papers

### Bringing the Outside In Conference 2023

#### *Language and inequality: exploring access to services in multilingual contexts*

21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023, University of Essex

#### Keynote speakers

Professor Kristinn Hermannsson, University of Glasgow

Dr Matumo Ramafikeng, University of Essex

Dr Tracey Costley, University of Essex

The majority of the world is multilingual. However, monolingual language policies continue to cause challenges for multilingual individuals and communities when accessing resources and services. Globally, colonial and imperialist histories continue to exert significant impact on individuals' access to resources and opportunities. We see this across a range of domains.

The 'monolingualising' of education systems (Heller 1995, 2007) means that 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they understand (UNESCO 2016:1). In some legal contexts, verbal evidence and court proceedings can be conducted in a local language but written evidence and proceedings in higher courts of appeal must be conducted in a single language. While ethnic background is often referenced and cited as the motivation for the outbreak of conflict, there is no consideration of the role that the multilingual practices of communities can have in conflict resolution. In health, language plays an important role in access to information and services, as well as participation as was acutely demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Service user-health practitioner conversations in many contexts occur in a dominant language which can be exclusionary and detrimental to treatment and wellbeing. Similarly, in many multilingual contexts the labour market is made up of staff trained and educated monolingually producing a workforce that fails to serve a multilingual society. This conference examines ways in which language practices in 'outside' spaces – such as the home and the community – can be harnessed to ensure more equitable access to resources and information across a range of domains. We ask:

- What impact do current language policies have on formal spaces (i.e. schools, courtrooms, health care institutions)?
- Do the practices that are permitted/encouraged/allowed 'inside' these spaces reflect those found 'outside'?
- How can the multilingual practices of the 'outside' be supported and strengthened to allow more equitable access?

We invite abstract submissions of 300 words by the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023. We will consider abstracts for 20-minute presentations as well as 5-minute Work-in-Progress presentations. We also invite all participants in the conference to share data for a collaborative data analysis session. We encourage submissions which discuss multilingualism 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.

## **Key dates**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – 300 word abstract due (for 20-minute talk or 5-minute work-in-progress flash talk) (to be sent to [colin.reilly@essex.ac.uk](mailto:colin.reilly@essex.ac.uk))

31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – Notification of acceptance

1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – Registration opens

30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Registration closes

21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023 – Conference

## **Registration fees**

### *Online attendance*

Free

### *In-person attendance*

Standard rate - £50

Concession rate (Individuals who are students, unwaged, in fixed-term contracts) - £15