



Panel Session II: Experiences on Multilingual Education in Southeast Asia

- Kimmo Kosonen: Key concepts & definitions, background, and *Southeast Asia in general*
- Maria Mercedes “Ched” E. Arzadon: *Philippines*
- Kirk Person: *Thailand*
- Jessica Ball: *Cambodia*

Non-dominant languages and multilingual education in Southeast Asia: An overview

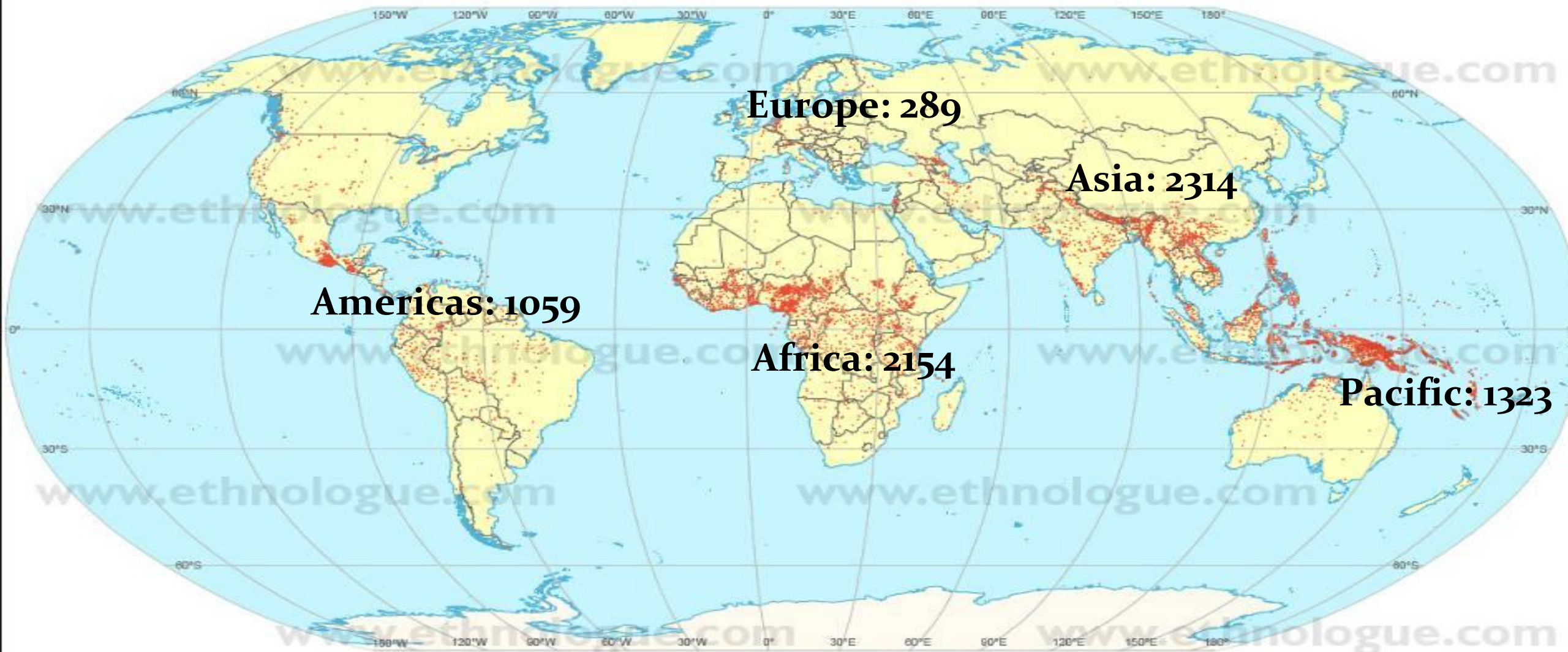
November 2021



LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD

Each dot represents the geographic center of a language.

7139 languages



84% using Asian and European languages

(Ethnologue, 2021)

ASIA :

Each dot represents the
geographic center of
a language.

2314
living
languages

Southeast

Asia:

1250
living
languages

ethnologue.com

Source: Ethnologue (2021)



The Philippines

Maria Mercedes “Ched”
E. Arzadon



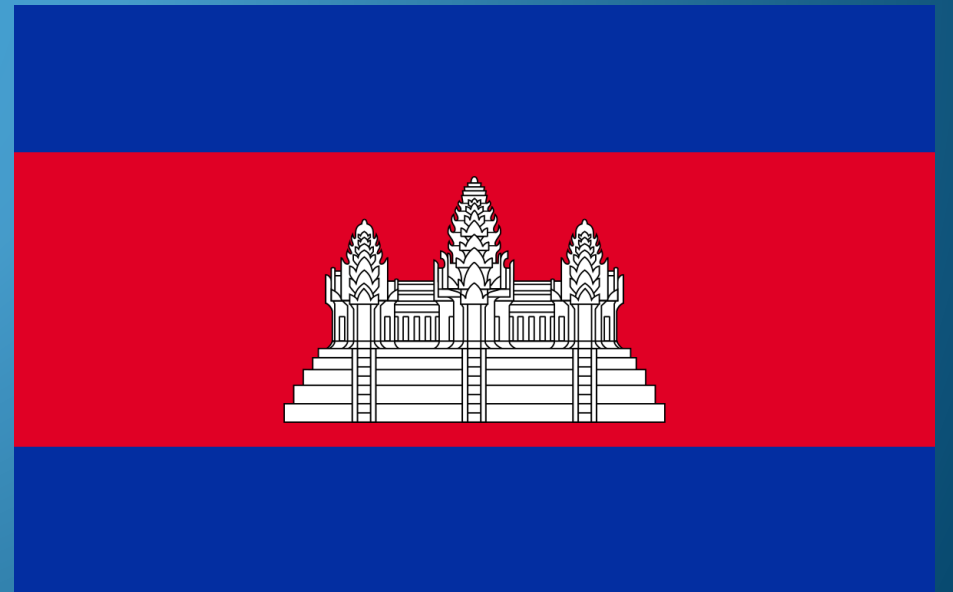
Thailand

Kirk Person



Cambodia

Jessica Ball



Background paper prepared for the 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring Report

Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments

Language of instruction in Southeast Asia

This paper was commissioned by the Global Education Monitoring Report as background information to assist in drafting the 2017/8 GEM Report, Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments. It has not been edited by the team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the Global Education Monitoring Report or to UNESCO. The papers can be cited with the following reference: "Paper commissioned for the 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring Report, Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments". For further information, please contact gemreport@unesco.org.

Kimmo Kosonen

2017



Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the Philippines

This blogsite was created to create awareness and share resources on Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). It also provides updates and relevant information about the state of MTB-MLE in the Philippines.

7.27.2021

Current Issues and Concerns in MTB-MLE (Philippines)

On July 21, 2021, I was invited by the PhD English Language Studies of the University of Santo Tomas, Manila through Dr. Andrew Bernardo to give a lecture (originally exclusively for his class but was opened to the graduate students and faculty) on the "Current Issues & Trends in MTB-MLE." Though I was given only a few days to prepare, I appreciate the chance to consolidate and organize my notes from my recent study and readings on MTB-MLE.

Thanks to UST for giving me a copy of the video recording. I am sharing it here hoping that researchers would see the broader terrain of MTB-MLE. I noticed that most MTB-MLE research topics were perception studies. I hope that through this lecture, there will be deeper and productive engagements.

Here is the broad outline of my presentation:

- What is MTB-MLE?

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-TRANSLATE CONTENT-

Pilih Bahasa ▼

Pageviews (11/18/2021)
521,259

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1

MTBMLE Articles / Related Literature





BRIDGE TO A BRIGHTER TOMORROW:

The Patani Malay-Thai Multilingual
Education Programme



Mahidol University
Research Institute for Languages
and Cultures of Asia

unicef
for every child



INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION NATIONAL ACTION PLAN IN CAMBODIA

FINAL REPORT – VOLUME I

July 2018 – February 2019

Cambodia

unicef
for every child

EVALUATION REPORT
MAY 2019



Non-dominant language (NDL)

Language or language variety not considered the most prominent in terms of

- number (of speakers),
- prestige or
- official use by the government and/or the education system in a given state

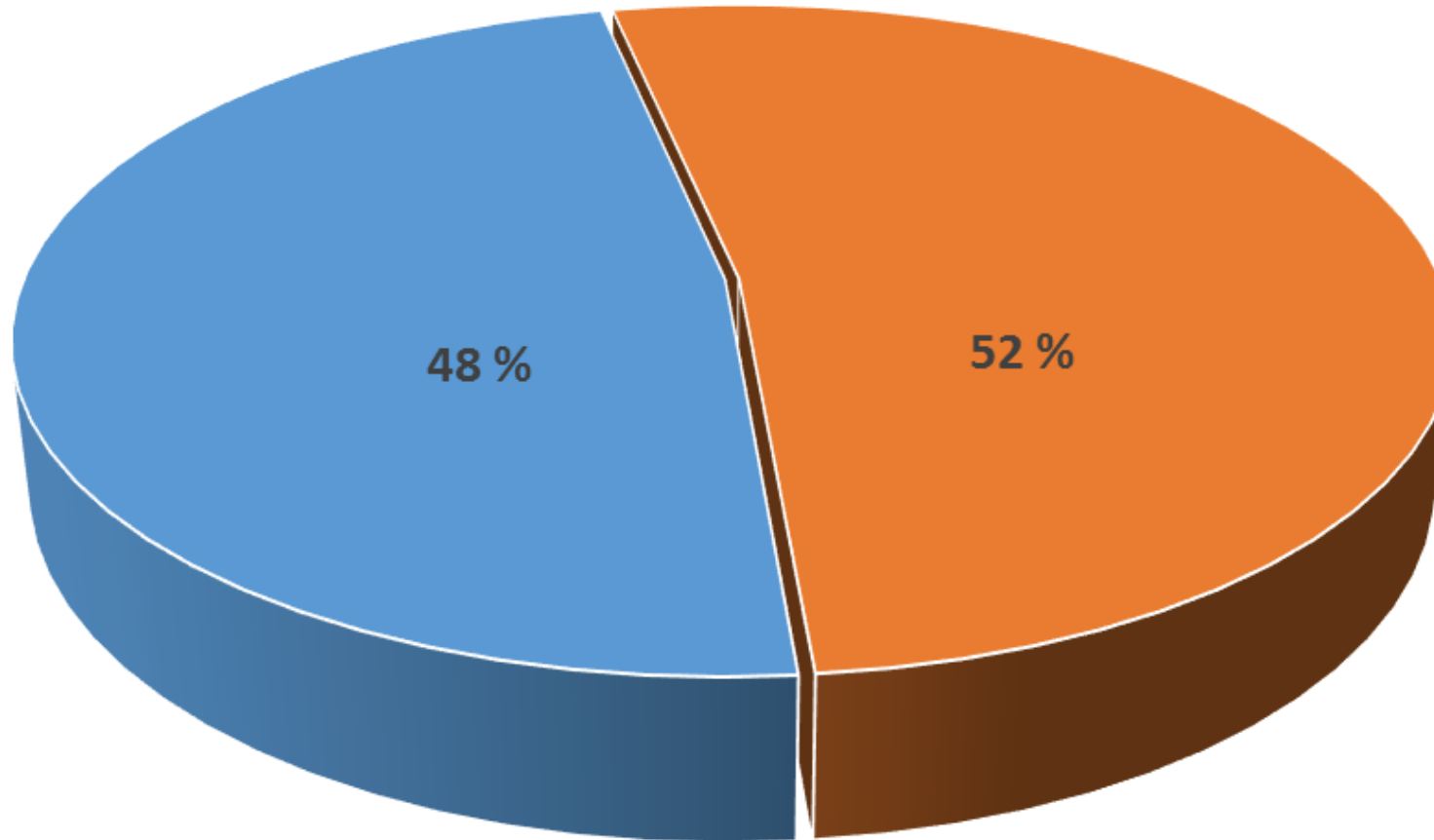
Major languages generally not used in education

Language	Population
• Wu Chinese:	85 million
• Yue Chinese:	82 million
• Egyptian Arabic:	70 million
• Javanese:	68 million
• Western Punjabi:	65 million
• Jinyu Chinese:	47 million
• Sudanese Arabic:	39 million
• Hakka Chinese:	37 million
• Xiang Chinese:	37 million
• Sundanese:	32 million
• Algerian Arabic:	31 million
• Min Nan Chinese:	28 million
• Arabic, Moroccan:	28 million

Case study: Pakistan

(73 languages total)

L1 speakers of "Punjabi, Western" in Pakistan



■ Punjabi, Western

■ All other languages

Benson, Carol & Kosonen, Kimmo (Eds.), 2013, 2021

COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: A DIVERSITY OF VOICES

Language Issues in Comparative Education II Policy and Practice in Multilingual Education Based on Non-Dominant Languages

Carol Benson and Kimmo Kosonen (Eds.)

This second volume of *Language Issues in Comparative Education*, following the tradition of the first, introduces the state of the field, re-establishes core terminology and concepts, and situates the chapters in terms of their contributions to multilingual education based on non-dominant languages. The first group of chapters examines language-in-education policy change, applying an innovative framework to analyze diverse contexts including Mozambique, Estonia and the Philippines. The next group of chapters describes activities designed to implement multilingual education. Using examples from Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya and Nepal, they explore progress in teacher professional development and elaboration of materials for literacy and learning through non-dominant languages. Some highlight new areas of the field, attending to speakers of non-dominant languages other than the ones chosen for instruction, and to the urgent multilingual needs of refugee learners. The final group of chapters presents strategies for research and advocacy, illustrated with examples from DR Congo, Uganda and India. Taken together, these contributions form a cohesive body of work that takes stock of advances in multilingual education and moves the field forward.

The authors and editors share a common commitment to comparativism in their methods and analysis, and aim to contribute to a more inclusive and multilingual education for all.

Carol Benson, PhD (1994), is Associate Professor of International and Comparative Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. She researches policy development and innovation in multilingual education for speakers of non-dominant languages, with ongoing collaborative projects in Cambodia and Senegal.

Kimmo Kosonen, PhD (1998), is a Senior Consultant in multilingual education with SIL International and Specialist in language development at Payap University in Thailand. He has published on non-dominant languages, multilingual education, and language-in-education policy in Asia.

Cover illustration: **Talking Tree** by Jessica Ball

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Language Issues in Comparative Education II

Carol Benson and
Kimmo Kosonen (Eds.)

BRILL

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Language Issues in Comparative Education

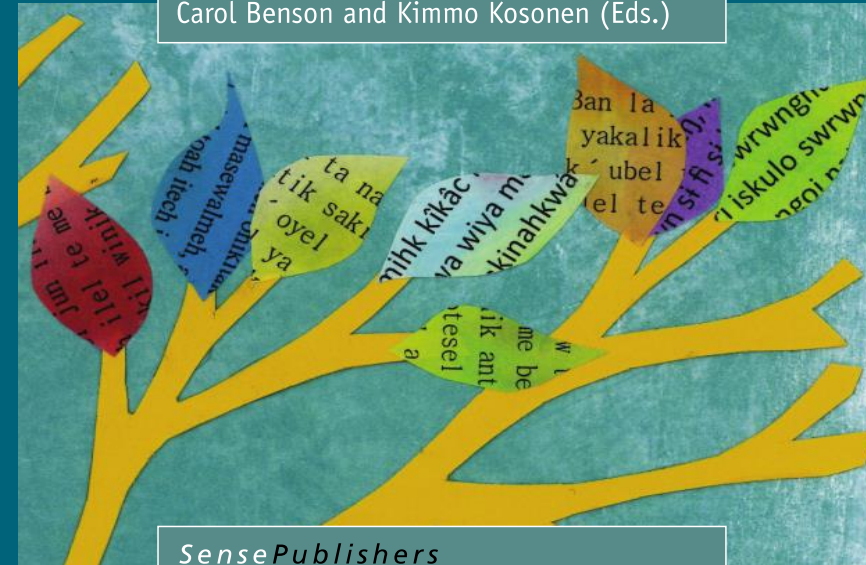
Carol Benson and Kimmo Kosonen (Eds.)

COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: A DIVERSITY OF VOICES

Language Issues in Comparative Education

Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Non-Dominant Languages and Cultures

Carol Benson and Kimmo Kosonen (Eds.)



SensePublishers

First language (L1)

“Mother Tongue” / Home language

Language:

- that one has learnt first;
- one identifies with or is identified as a native speaker of by others;
- one knows best; and/or
- one uses most

Multilingual education (MLE)

Using several languages as:

- Language of instruction (LoI)
- Language of literacy (initial and on-going)
- Subjects of study

ASIA :

Each dot represents the
geographic center of
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2314
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Southeast

Asia:

1250
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ethnologue.com

Source: Ethnologue (2021)

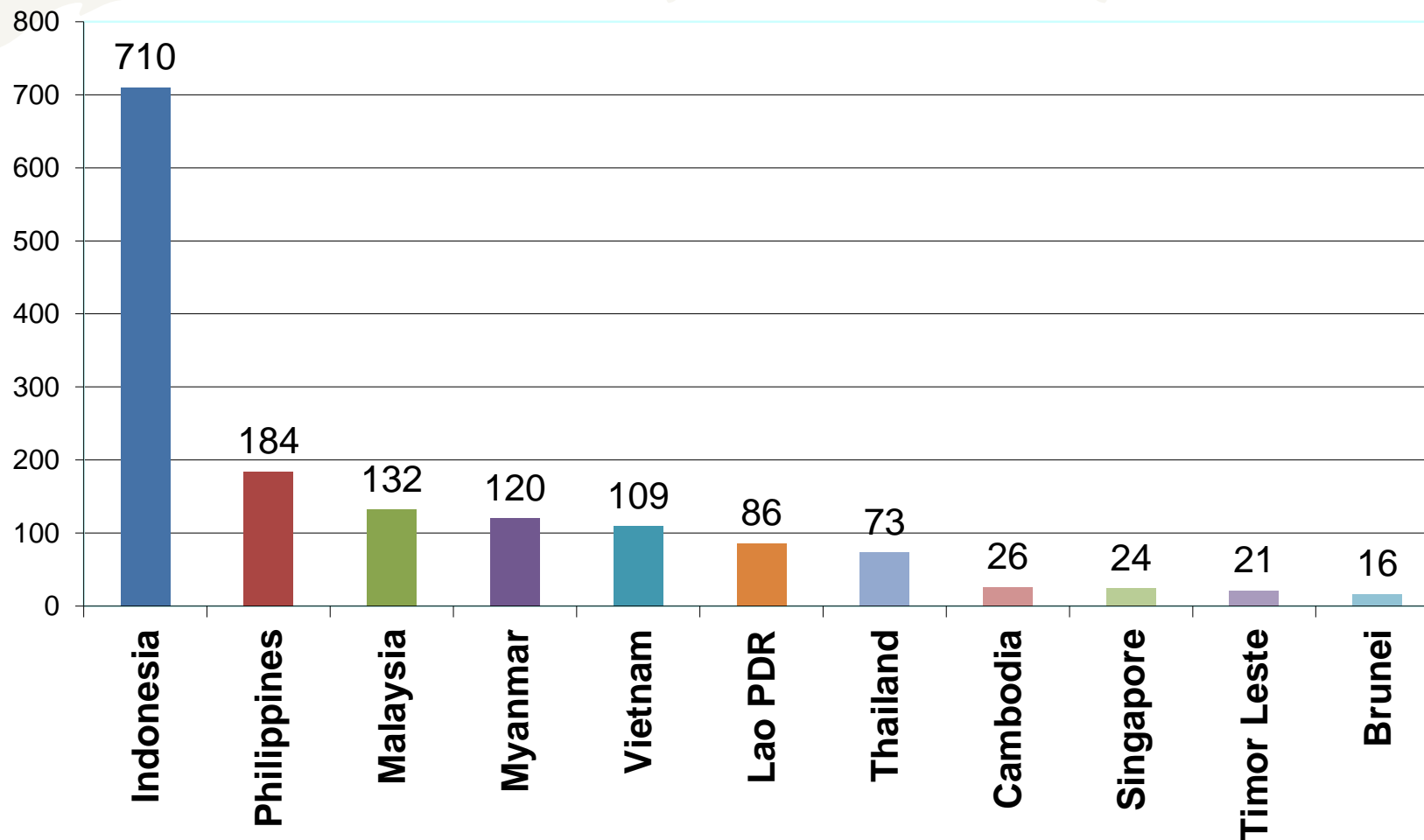


Southeast Asia (SEA)

- **11 independent nations** Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR (Laos), Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste & Vietnam
- **Population:** 660 million
- **1250 languages** spoken
- **Language policies** (traditionally): emphasis on official & national languages
- Movement towards **multilingual education** (MLE)
- Support for **non-dominant languages** (NDL) in education in some countries
- Most widely taught foreign language: **English**

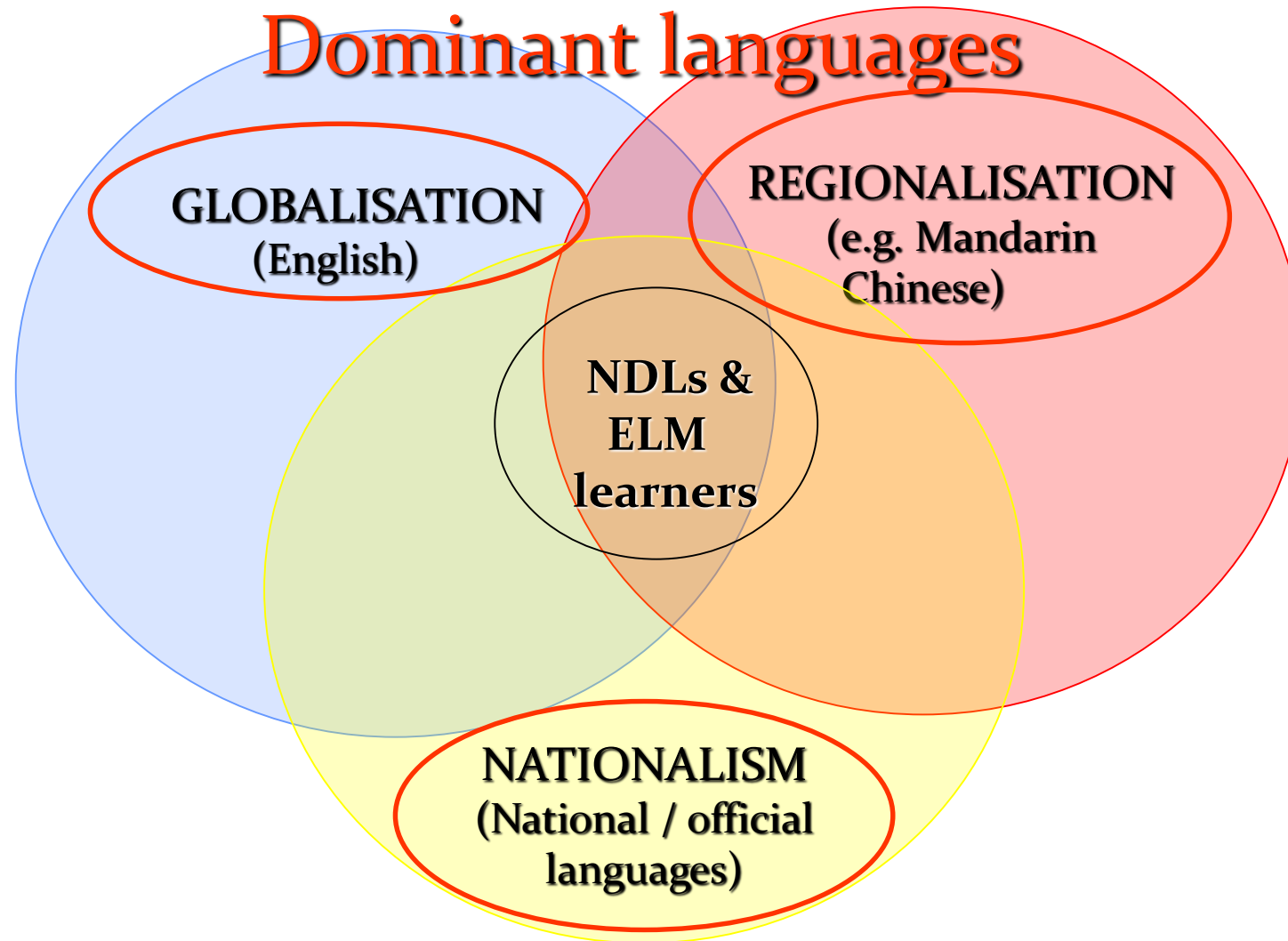
Languages in Southeast Asia

Total: 1250



(Source: Ethnologue, 2021)

Pressure on non-dominant languages (NDL) & ethnolinguistic minority (ELM) learners



Mainland Southeast Asia

	Total population (millions)	Official/national languages	Languages (Ethnologue 2021)	Official Support to NDLs
Cambodia	16	Khmer	26	Yes
Laos	7	Lao	86	No
Myanmar	54	Myanmar (Burmese)	120	Yes (??)
Thailand	70	Standard Thai	73	Yes
Vietnam	97	Vietnamese	109	Yes/No (?)

Insular Southeast Asia

	Total population (millions)	Official/national languages	Languages (Ethnologue 2021)	Official Support to NDLs
Brunei	0.46	English, Standard Malay	16	No
Indonesia	273	Bahasa Indonesia	710	No (??)
Malaysia	33	Standard Malay (English, Mandarin Chinese)	132	Yes
Philippines	110	English, Filipino	184	Yes
Singapore	5.7	English, Mandarin Chinese, Standard Malay, Tamil	24	Yes (minimal)
Timor-Leste	1.4	Portuguese, Tetun Dili	21	Yes (some)

Estimated percentage of Southeast Asian pupils whose L1 is the Language of instruction (in primary education)

Access	Country
High range	Cambodia (~90%) Vietnam (~90%)
Medium range	The Philippines (~65-75%) 90%? Malaysia (~60--%) Myanmar (~60--%) Thailand (~50--%) Laos (~50--%)
Low range	Singapore (~35-50%) Timor-Leste (~30-50%) Indonesia (~10-25%) Brunei (~5-20%)

(in 2021)



(Source: Kosonen, 2017a)

The percentage of Tetun Prasa (Dili) and Portuguese speaking children in Timor-Leste

Reported L1	Percent of total			
	Age group			
	All	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14
Tetun Prasa	30.60 %	33.87 %	29.91 %	29.58 %
Portuguese	0.12 %	0.05 %	0.08 %	0.12 %
Total		33.92 %	29.98 %	29.70 %

(Source: Timor-Leste 2015)

Challenges in assessing the extent of L1-based instruction

- Who speaks which language and to what extent?
- Language proficiency (in L1, “L2”, and Lx)
- Actual functional L1s versus “heritage L1” / “common language of the ethnic group”
- Ethnicity vs. language (ethnolinguistic classification)
- Macrolanguages (such as Arabic, Chinese, Malay, Chin)
- How to help surveyors/language mappers understand language issues?
- Language populations in general – where are the accurate data?

Country	Languages of instruction (LoI)
Brunei Darussalam	Standard Malay, English
Cambodia	Khmer, 6 NDLs, new pilots in new languages?
Indonesia	Indonesian, NDLs in Papua province
Lao PDR	Lao
Malaysia	Standard Malay, English, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, NDLs (pilots)
Myanmar	Myanmar, 60+ NDLs in NFE and ECE
Philippines	Filipino, English, NDLs (now 19 + 1 + 46)
Singapore	English (main), other official languages (some subjects)
Thailand	Thai, some NDLs (pilots) (8)
Timor-Leste	Portuguese, Tetun Dili, 3 NDLs (pilots)
Vietnam	Vietnamese, some NDLs as subjects

Vietnam



Vietnam

- Soviet-influenced **political ideology** dominates language and minority issues (policies focus on ideologies and principles rather than pragmatic policy implementation)
- some policy documents support the use of NDLs in education, other documents appear non-supportive
- Education Law 2005: **Vietnamese** the official **language of education**
- few MLE pilot programs implemented, but have been discontinued
- many NDLs taught as school subjects (seen as “bilingual education”)
- focus on using Vietnamese to strengthen the national identity
- pushing for more English
- education issues in ethnolinguistic minority communities largely ignored

Laos



Laos

- Constitution 2015: **Lao** is the **official language** and the Lao script the official script
- Education Law 2007: Lao is the **language of education**
- no official references to the **use of NDLs** in society or education
- “*language issues seem to be mostly ignored in this country*” (Djité 2011: 38)
- focus on teaching spoken and written Lao to children from NDL backgrounds as quickly as possible
- advocacy efforts by nongovernmental, multilateral, and donor agencies: government reluctant to move forward on MLE
- educational *enrolment, retention, and achievement* rates of ethnolinguistic minority children lower than the national average

Multilingual Education in SEA: Issues 1

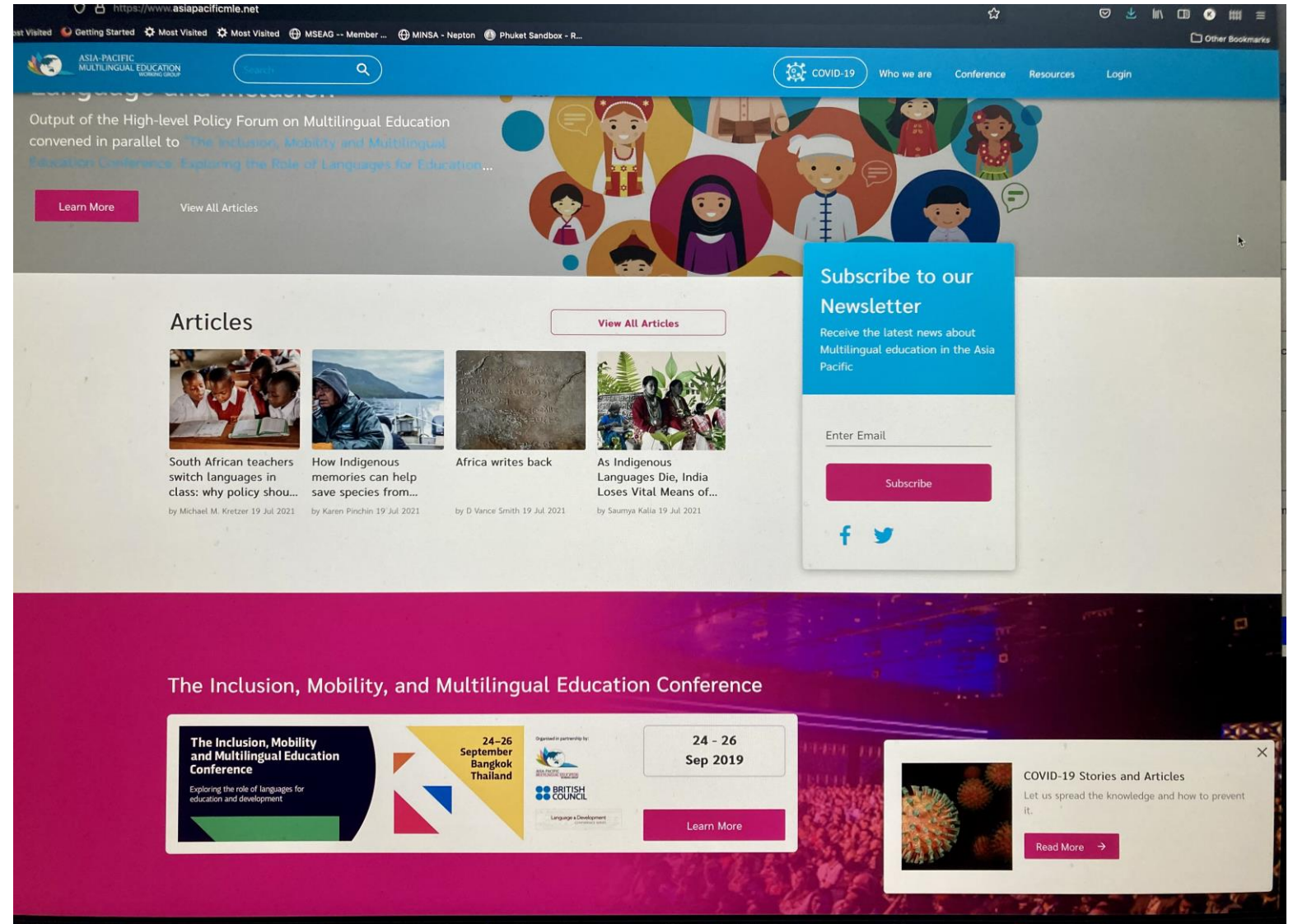
- **Political sensitivities** regarding many NDL communities due to increasing nationalism (by the dominant ethnolinguistic groups), which hinder language development and MLE delivery
- **Assimilationist policies** — including boarding schools that repeat the mistakes of other countries
- Governments **prioritize** national and international languages over NDLs
- **Lack of political will** and technical resources which would enable MLE to be implemented in all NDL communities
- Governments' **ethnolinguistic classification** often do not match linguistic reality (→ challenge for data collection, advocacy & project planning and implementation)

Multilingual Education in SEA: Issues 2

- Government officials' **limited understanding** of L1-based education, resulting in slow expansion of MLE
- Parents', teachers', and officials' **mistaken beliefs** about language acquisition (of L1, L2 and Lx) and whether oral use of NDL at school is sufficient
- **Implementation gaps:** policy vs. practice; rhetoric vs. reality
- Policy **implementation only in some** — not all — non-dominant languages
- **Rapid expansion** of MLE without proper planning, preparation, training or sufficient financial and human resources

Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group

<https://www.asiapacificmle.net/>



A vibrant sunset scene with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a warm orange and yellow glow across a sky filled with soft, wispy clouds. Below the horizon, the silhouettes of rolling mountains are visible against the darker sky.

Kiitos!

Terima kasih 謝謝你 நன்றி

ขอบคุณครับ

Thank you!

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Panel Session II: Experiences on Multilingual Education in Southeast Asia

- *Questions and answers — general discussion*