



7MLE046

The Language Friendly School in Canada, Suriname, the Caribbean and China: a Path to a More Inclusive and Sustainable Pedagogy

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Moderator: Carol Benson

The goal of this panel is to address the lack of access to available and innovative, inclusive and equitable practices meant to ensure linguistic and cultural inclusivity in schools, an emergency highlighted by the recent pandemic and its consequences in education. By providing access to research-based instructional practices that have already been implemented at linguistically diverse schools worldwide, knowledge and experiences of implementing Language Friendly practices will be shared, and also how doing so allows educators to bridge the gap between curriculum goals and their pedagogy (Le Pichon and Kambel, 2022, Auger and Le Pichon, 2021).

The Language Friendly School (<https://languagefriendlyschool.org/>) is a global network of schools that celebrate language and cultural diversity. In this panel, the presenters highlight the implementation of a language-friendly pedagogy in Canada, indigenous contexts, the Caribbean and China, in terms of strategies and resistance. The discussion will focus on the possibility of opening the principles that follow to other contexts around the world.

1. The first presentation will look at the contribution of the Language Friendly School to two public schools in Canada. Both schools welcome a large percentage of incoming students each year. The motivations of these schools to join the network will be discussed, and also to what extent the network meets their expectations. The goals they have set for themselves will be presented, particularly with regard to the involvement of families in the school community.
2. Indigenous peoples are grappling with an education system that ignores their histories, languages and knowledge while blocking their knowledge transfer to the next generations. The presenter will share how the education transformation efforts of a small indigenous community in Suriname, South America, formed the basis of two global networks: the Language Friendly School and the Indigenous-Led Education Network.
3. In the Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Tobago, children are often discouraged from using Creoles – their home languages – in the classroom, where the language of instruction is the English lexifier. Adding another layer of complexity to the linguistic identity of the twin-island republic is the migration and settlement of Venezuelan migrant children since 2015. As of February 2023, these children continue to be systematically denied access to national public education in Trinidad and Tobago. More information will be

3. Teachers' recruitment and professional development in MLE environments, 9. Inclusion in MLE, 6. MLE Developments



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shared about two early years classrooms in Trinidad, where educators adopt a language-friendly approach to instruction within the Creole and migrant language context.

4. The dominance of English and the association of English proficiency with the idea of 'being international' in many international schools create challenges for the implementation of language-friendly practices in these educational spaces. The presenter will explore the ways in which international schools can leverage the linguistic and cultural diversity of their communities to expand their vision of what it means to be 'international' and create more inclusive and equitable multilingual learning communities. Details will be shared about a British international school in China as a case study of how a school can collaboratively engage with its multilingual context, redesigning policies and practices to become more language friendly.

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