

## EDITORIAL

### **Multilingualism in education in cosmopolitan cities: Insights into LUCIDE network research**

In the current climate of increased influx of migrants into European countries, understanding how to engage with diversity in order to utilize it as a resource is becoming essential for supporting inclusion in education and society. Schools are often first sites of intercultural experiences for children and young people recently arrived to a host country. Educators and other professionals in public services facilitating equality of opportunity and equality of access for diverse school communities often lack opportunities to develop skills and insights relevant to new everyday challenges.

The LUCIDE (Languages in Urban Settings for Inclusion and Diversity in Europe) network of research partners was established with the aim to provide insights and develop guidance that would support institutions (schools, councils, universities, hospitals) and local and national economies to gain better understanding of complexities involved in providing services in highly diverse contexts. LUCIDE consisted of 16 partners based in 13 European cities (two in London) and two cities outside of Europe. All partners had pre-existing activities focused on researching and promoting multilingualism within urban contexts of different types. Some cities in the LUCIDE network have had multilingualism as an integral part of their functioning over a long period throughout centuries of their history, while others started experiencing it as a recent impact of new patterns of migration. The European city partners were Athens, Dublin, Hamburg, Limassol, London, Madrid, Osijek, Oslo, Rome, Sofia, Strasbourg, Utrecht, and Varna. The two out-of-Europe partners were Ottawa and Melbourne.

This feature in the *London Review of Education* brings to its readers papers from four LUCIDE partner cities: Limassol, Rome, Strasbourg, and Ottawa (with the latter's research here comparing the services in Montreal and Vancouver). These papers have been selected to provide insights into new explorations of multilingualism in cosmopolitan cities. The term 'cosmopolitan cities' is used to place the emphasis on a positive approach to diversity stemming from the premise that diversity is a resource for individuals and societies.

The LUCIDE network directly built upon the LETPP (Languages in Europe: Theory, Policy and Practice) project, funded in 2010 by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme. The LETPP vision was that multilingual cities would be trailblazing new ways to approach and utilize diversity. The LUCIDE network proposal aimed to extend the aims and delivery of this project, and was developed and funded by the European Commission Lifelong Learning Programme from December 2011 to November 2014. Its main activities were to carry out research as the basis for developing guidelines for multilingual cities relating to the following five spheres:

- **education** – multilingualism in schools as a resource for developing intercultural skills, including language support for acquiring the host country's language and learning other languages
- **the public sphere** – democratic engagement of and public service provision for diverse service users

- **economic life** – the benefits of multilingualism and the ways in which it can be utilized for enhancing industries and business
- **the private sphere** – maintenance of heritage languages, including the activities of community organizations and voluntary sector
- **the urban space** – the linguistic landscape of cosmopolitan cities.

Several toolkits offering guidance and examples have been developed for professionals covering different domains of practice across the five spheres listed above, and are available in ten languages on the LUCIDE website ([www.urbanlanguages.eu](http://www.urbanlanguages.eu)). The toolkits are:

- Language and work
- Multilingualism in the health and social care sector
- Learning new languages
- Multilingualism in education: Bilingual/multilingual learners
- Languages and public services multilingualism in urban spaces.

In addition to the toolkits, the LUCIDE website also contains individual reports for each partner city based on the primary and secondary research that was carried out.

The four papers selected for this special feature cover a range of settings, from early years to adult education and a range of cities, from Rome as a capital, to Strasbourg as a city on the border between France and Germany, to Limassol as an emerging island centre in an area close to the current political conflict zones, to the distant out-of-Europe cities of Montreal and Vancouver.

**Eloise Caporal-Ebersold and Andrea Young's** paper from Strasbourg is based on a case study of a landmark and newly established early years centre: the first bilingual, French–English, early years centre in Strasbourg. The case study is used to explore the national, regional, and departmental policies that practitioners need to engage with and negotiate when embarking on the lengthy administrative process to obtain everything required by law. This paper engages with the conflicting messages at the level of language ideology that, in France, is heavily influenced by the traditional republican values of one nation, one language, one state, and by the contemporary discourse of European policies based on values of plurilingualism.

Insights into language provision for young people in Rome and national policies in Italy are provided by **Michela Menghini**. Language hierarchies at play in Rome place Italian and English as the two languages at the centre of language provision for migrants. In this context, migrants surveyed in the research by this LUCIDE partner revealed that the language skills they bring through speaking their home languages and other world languages were marginalized. These experiences of young migrants in Rome contradict the discourse embracing and promoting multilingualism in national policies that, in practice, are focused on developing and funding large-scale Italian courses.

The contribution from **Anna Nicolaou and her colleagues** aims to present the current situation across the education sector in Cyprus's second largest city, Limassol, which has experienced a significant increase in the migrant population due to Cyprus joining the European Union in 2004 and the recent waves of refugees escaping conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. Their exploration of language policies in Cyprus starts with the legal acts that recognize Greek and Turkish as the official languages of Cyprus, while all minority groups have a right to use their languages in public and private spheres. Nicolaou and her colleagues call for improvements in education provision aimed at approaching diversity as a resource in order to make further steps on the path to social inclusion.

**Catherine Ellyson and her colleagues** explore two models of language-learning provision for adult migrants in Montreal as the capital of Quebec and Vancouver as the capital of the state of British Columbia. Their paper presents differences and similarities in policies and

practice that are directly linked to Francophone–Anglophone dynamics as the core of Canada’s approach to multilingualism.

I hope this selection of papers that reaches over vast and complex geographical and linguistic landscapes will serve to enhance interest in multilingualism in urban spaces as key to prosperous and democratic Europe and globalized world.

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