

Preface

The Twenty First Annual Conference of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia (MERGA) was held on the Gold Coast, Australia, 5 - 8 July, 1998. The conference attracted papers from researchers in Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, the United States of America and Europe. Contributions from a large number of established researchers - many with substantial international reputations - as well as a significant number of beginning researchers were included in the program. Research studies reported at the conference encompassed a variety of mathematics education related topics and made use of a wide range of research methodologies and theoretical perspectives. Published presentations were organised into Keynote Addresses, Published Papers (including two symposiums), and abstracts of Short Communications.

In accepting presentations for the conference, every effort was made to be as inclusive as possible of the research needs and interests of members of the mathematics research community.

Refereeing processes for the conference were overseen by an Editorial Committee membership of which included Clive Kanos (Convener, Griffith University), Merrilyn Goos (University of Queensland) and Elizabeth Warren (Australian Catholic University).

Procedures adopted by this committee to select papers for presentation were as follows.

Refereeing procedure for Published Papers

In this category, each paper was reviewed by at least two referees. If both made the same recommendation, then this decision was upheld. If the decision was split, the paper went to another referee. The majority decision was then upheld. Where referees made their acceptance of a paper conditional on certain revision of the paper, the Editorial Committee used its discretion to ensure that these tasks were appropriately completed. Referees were asked to heed guidelines for published papers consistent with those set out in the call for papers and provide their written comments in a standard format under the following suggested headings:

1. Statement of problem/issues and discussion of its significance
2. Literature review and theoretical framework
3. Methodology and data analysis (where applicable)
4. Discussion
5. Conclusions and implications
6. General comments on paper

As far as was possible the research interests of referees were taken into account when papers were allocated for review.

Refereeing procedures for Short Communications

Abstracts for Short Communications were reviewed by the Editorial Committee. The aim of these reviews was to ensure the relevance of the proposed communication for the conference.

The aims of the Editorial Committee in adopting the methods indicated above were to facilitate high quality feedback to authors and achieve best possible assurance that the conference proceedings conformed to MERGA research guidelines. It was especially hoped that beginning researchers would benefit from the feedback received.

The Committee wishes to thank those who generously agreed to act as referees for the conference proceedings - without the dedication abundantly evident in many of the

reviews both the conference, and the mathematics education research community, would have been the poorer.

All effort has been made to present authors' work as it was intended - apologies are made where this has not been successful.

Lastly, on a personal note, I wish to thank my colleagues, especially Merrilyn Goos and Elizabeth Warren, for the help and assistance they provided in the production of this work.

Clive Kanes
Editorial Committee, Convener
Brisbane, Australia
June, 1998