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Representing the multilingual self: multimodal practices for linguistic autobiography in migration contexts

"Travellers between languages can, like the tricksters of folk tales, play with double meanings in the interstices between words and codes. They can imagine possible scenarios based on cross-linguistic connotations; they can draw on the sounds and forms of different languages to evoke imaginary worlds inaccessible to the monolingual traveller." (Kramsch 2006) Linguistic Autobiography (LA) has seen comparatively fewer experimental applications in migration contexts, despite the heterogeneous and complex linguistic backgrounds of individuals who have grown up in multilingual settings. In such contexts, rich semiotic repertoires, intercomprehension, and communicative creativity are used productively or receptively to navigate everyday interactions, while schooling often takes place within colonial languages and educational systems. Migration itself may constitute an experience that enriches individuals' linguistic repertoires (D'Agostino 2022). The "éveil aux langues" approach (CARAP 2012) promotes activities that are directed not only at languages of schooling but also at the varieties spoken in everyday environments, within families, and in the wider world. Within a pedagogical and didactic perspective oriented toward a complex and composite competence – plurilingual, pluricultural, and communicative – requiring a positive cognitive and metacognitive disposition toward diversity as a paradigm (Cognigni 2020), LA emerges as a particularly valuable tool for:

- Bringing to light students' plurilingual, communicative, and semiotic repertoires;
- Expanding plurilingual and pluricultural competence as it emerges from students'narratives of multiple belongings;
- Uncovering social representations of languages as they are internalized and emotionally experienced (Busch 2020);
- Fostering the development of metalinguistic awareness.

The aim is to support students as bearers of meanings and stories, endowed with a repertoire of linguistic, cultural, and social experiences. This perspective contributes to improved educational outcomes (Cummins 2019) and initiates as well as sustains plurilingual processes such as intercomprehension (Bonvino 2016), mediation (Piccardo 2020), and spontaneous translation (García & Wei 2014). This approach brings the language learning context closer to that of spontaneous acquisition in use, where language is not an objective in itself, but a means to achieve another non-linguistic goal (at least superficially) and returns to being a tool for social interaction in which "learning can maintain that implicit character typical of spontaneous acquisition, which guarantees a deeper internalization of the linguistic structures practiced than occurs in an explicit instruction context" (Mocciaro 2019: 270). A multimodal and plurilingual approach has proven particularly fertile and inclusive, especially with illiterate or low-literacy students, who can participate without being restricted to writing, or using multilingual writing. Images support narrative expression and serve as a tool for developing oral discourse, mediation processes, and the search for synthesis in writing, starting with significant keywords whose meanings may be interesting for the class to discuss through mediation and translation. In this workshop, we will experiment with an activity on linguistic autobiography through the construction of an image and interactive activities. We will share the narrative of our linguistic repertoires through the metaphorization offered by the work. We will examine materials (transcriptions, images of works, and audiovisuals) on the collection of linguistic autobiography using the same method in a course on Italian as an additional language for refugees and asylum seekers at the Asinitas association in Rome. We will reflect on the construction of a plurilingual and multimodal educational setting, on the use of images to represent the plurilingual self, and on the narrative of the linguistic repertoire as a "lived" experience.

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Rethinking linguistic research in the context of contemporary migration

Over the first decades of the twenty-first century, linguistic research has increasingly turned its attention to new learner profiles, new contexts of language use, and multilingual repertoires that differ substantially from those on which much of our theorizing has traditionally been based. At the same time, there is growing awareness that monolingual ideologies have profoundly shaped our field, often obscuring language practices and linguistic knowledge that have long existed in other parts of the world. These developments have given new momentum to what has been described as the multilingual turn. Yet this shift is still far from complete, especially in language education, where monolingual assumptions continue to shape teaching practices and curricula. At the same time, large-scale transnational migration has opened up new perspectives for observing the emergence of multilingual and multicultural communities. These are contexts in which individual language repertoires expand rapidly and communication routinely relies on mediation, translation—including digital translation—heterolingual repetition, and receptive multilingualism. My presentation draws on almost twenty years of research with a population that remains underrepresented in applied linguistics: newly arrived young migrants who have reached Italy through the Central Mediterranean route. Since 2012, the Italian Language School for Foreigners (ItaStra) at the University of Palermo has welcomed several hundred migrant learners each year, most of them unaccompanied young men between the ages of 17 and 24. Working alongside these learners has gradually led us to recognize a learner profile that challenges many of the assumptions underlying second language acquisition research and language education. These are young multilingual speakers who have grown up in fluid multilingual environments, where linguistic resources are not organized according to clear hierarchies and where language socialization takes place across complex family and community networks. Although many have had little or no access to formal schooling, they often possess extensive experience of digital communication and digital literacy, and they demonstrate a remarkable capacity to expand and reshape their linguistic repertoires throughout their lives. Drawing on the experience developed within the ItaStra "laboratory", I will argue that these learner trajectories invite us to reconsider not only our pedagogical practices but also the theoretical frameworks through which we understand multilingualism, language learning, and linguistic repertoires. Rethinking learner profiles requires us to rethink our models, our teaching materials, our curricula, and, ultimately, the assumptions that continue to shape research in applied linguistics. Such a shift, I suggest, can only emerge through sustained dialogue across disciplinary traditions and educational contexts.

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Research-based practice, practice-based research; bridging the gap

Research and practice in adult second language and literacy education are often described as operating in separate worlds. Researchers and practitioners typically work in different institutional settings, on different locations, and within their own professional networks. Yet, both groups share the common goal of improving teaching and learning (Sato & Loewen, 2022). In the LESLLA field, where learners are often vulnerable and educational resources can be limited, effective collaboration between research and practice is particularly important. LESLLA explicitly promotes research-based practice (www.leslla.org). However, not all research leads to immediate or visible benefits for learners. This may raise ethical questions when LESLLA learners are involved as participants in research projects (e.g. Fox et al., 2020; Michaud et al., 2022; Shepperd & Dalderop, 2026). How do we balance the need for rigorous research with the responsibility to protect and support learners? How can research projects be shaped in ways that are both scientifically relevant and meaningful for classroom practice? At the same time, practitioners regularly encounter challenges and questions in their daily teaching practice that could inform meaningful research, but these questions do not always reach the research community (Sato & Loewen, 2022). This highlights the need for better communication, clearer roles, and more accessible channels between research and practice. This workshop focuses on how research and practice in the LESLLA field can strengthen one another by improving the way information is shared and collaboration is organized. Central questions include: Who is responsible for translating research into practice? How can practitioners' questions be incorporated into research agendas? And which intermediaries can help bridge these two domains? The workshop will start with two short presentations. The first presentation will discuss the research-practice information landscape in the Netherlands, focusing on how research findings are currently disseminated to practitioners in adult language and literacy education, which will be illustrated by some recent examples. The second presentation will present a concrete example of collaborative research within a European LESLLA-related project, highlighting practical lessons learned about researcher–practitioner collaboration. Following the presentations, participants will take part in a guided discussion. They will reflect on their own roles as researchers, practitioners, or both, and identify concrete needs, barriers, and opportunities for collaboration in the LESLLA field as well as topics LESLLA research needs to address.

Practical outcomes of the workshop include: a shared overview of key challenges in communication between research and practice in LESLLA; a set of concrete strategies for improving collaboration, such as roles, formats, or channels for knowledge exchange; input for LESLLA's research agenda, explicitly grounded in practitioners' needs.

The workshop aims to support more sustainable and ethically informed collaboration between research and practice, ultimately contributing to more effective teaching for LESLLA learners.

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Lifelong learning: practitioners celebrate the work of Heide Wrigley in the best way we know how

Since its inception, Heide Spruck Wrigley has been instrumental in advocating for policy and practice that acknowledge the unique strengths and needs of LESLLA learners. Over the years, her writing, materials development, guidance and hands-on support to practitioners around the world have been critical in furthering understanding of and approaches to design and implementation of learner-centered strategies enabling practitioners to develop and utilize classroom practices specifically suited to LESLLA learners. Facilitated by colleagues of Dr. Wrigley, this workshop will focus on strategies and materials that carry her work and scholarship forward by centering learners' strengths, cultivating learner authority and agency, and grounding instruction in evidence-based research and practices. Sharing materials and processes that have worked in classrooms situated in various contexts, presenters will demonstrate classroom activities and approaches informed by our knowledge of language and literacy development, including elements of translanguaging, development of literacy in first and additional languages. Participants are invited to share their own strategies in this interactive session.

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Observing competence and performance in talk-in-interaction: notes from an Italian LA course with newly arrived plurilingual learners

This paper aims to revisit the relationship between competence and performance in Italian LA learning and use among newly arrived migrants, treating both as situated and co-constructed in and through talk-in-interaction and learners' participation in classroom discursive practices (Young, 2009). It draws on a micro-corpus of audio-recorded classroom oral interactions—spontaneous and teacher-guided—from an Italian LA course with recently arrived plurilingual minors with limited experience of formal schooling and emergent literacy. For these learners, oral interaction is not one among several channels of acquisition but its primary site, a condition that makes the analysis of classroom talk particularly consequential (Tarone et Al., 2009).In particular, a comparative analysis of participation frameworks (teacher–student; peer–peer) and language regimes (monolingual/multilingual) is used to explore how target-language output—and thus what becomes recognisable as "performance" and inferable as "competence"—may vary across interactional contexts (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992). The paper takes as its starting point an observed discontinuity between the growing pedagogical legitimacy of multilingual approaches and translanguaging in SLA and LA teaching practice, and the persistence of largely monolingual orientations in the assessment of oral skills. In assessment, rating scales are often organised around criteria such as grammatical accuracy, lexical range, and degree of control. Taken together, these criteria implicitly frame oral output in target/non-target-like terms and can encourage a view of competence as an objectively observable property that a learner either possesses or lacks — a stance that New Literacies Studies and LESLLA research have shown to be particularly inadequate for learners whose language acquisition is primarily oral and interactionally grounded (Tarone, Bigelow & Hansen, 2009). Drawing on this body of research, the classroom evidence presented here takes Young's interactional perspective and work on participation frameworks (2009) as its analytical point of departure, suggesting that what learners can do is contingent on the social relations that organise participation and shape classroom talk (Seedhouse, 2009; Schegloff, 1991). In Italian LA classrooms with newly arrived youths, shared sociolinguistic experiences (i.e. undocumented mobility, fluid multilingualism, age proximity, shared religious affiliations, and co-residence in hosting centres) can be recontextualised in interaction. The relationships that develop, then, may shape the classroom as a community of practice and foster distinctive ways of participating in classroom talk. As noted by other scholars (D'Agostino, 2021; Mocciaro, 2022), prevailing assessment metrics are therefore descriptively and epistemologically inadequate for this learner profile, primarily because they under-represent the (multilingual) discursive practices that often constitute the interactional infrastructure of Italian LA learning among LESLLA learners (cf. D'Agostino, 2023; D'Agostino, Mocciaro & Ba, 2026). Ignoring this interplay of variables and dimensions risks isolating the learner and their performance, while overlooking the dense web of social relations that makes language learning possible. While the scope of this study remains necessarily modest, it is hoped that close attention to interaction data of this kind may offer a contribution to the understanding of how additional language learning unfolds for plurilingual LESLLA learners.

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AI-Mediated Arabic Learning for Low-Literate Adult Migrants in Makkah, Saudi Arabia: A Mixed-Methods Study

Makkah represents a multilingual environment in which spoken Arabic is essential for everyday communication, employment, and social interaction. Migrant workers frequently need functional oral Arabic despite limited opportunities for formal instruction. A particularly underrepresented group is LESLLA learners — adult second-language learners with limited or no home-language literacy — who follow different developmental trajectories and are underserved by approaches that assume prior print literacy (Young-Scholten & Peyton, 2018; Dalderop et al., 2023).

Oral development may be further constrained by foreign language speaking anxiety, which reduces willingness to communicate and limits oral interaction. Recent research suggests AI-powered conversation tools can support second-language speaking through repeated, low-pressure practice (Al-Khasawneh, 2023; Ding & Yusof, 2025; He et al., 2025). However, this evidence has focused largely on literate learners studying English, leaving the potential of voice-based generative AI for low-literate learners and non-English languages largely unexplored.

This exploratory mixed-methods study investigates whether voice-based generative AI can support oral Arabic development and facilitate transfer to real human communication among LESLLA migrants in Makkah. Approximately 8–12 adults will engage in task-based spoken interactions with voice-enabled AI. Data include oral communication tasks, measures of speaking confidence and anxiety, semi-structured interviews, and post-interview questions examining whether skills practised with the AI were subsequently used in real-life interactions.

By shifting from text-dependent AI applications to accessible, voice-mediated interaction, the study explores whether generative AI can serve as a rehearsal space that prepares low-literate adult migrants for everyday spoken Arabic encounters, contributing to discussions at the intersection of LESLLA, L2 speaking, and inclusive AI in language learning.

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Exploring teaching approaches to support the development of literacy among LESLLA learners through a living library project

Research in LESLLA contexts has received increased attention in the past years, yet more classroom-based research is needed to identify practices that best support the development of emerging literacy skills with these particular learners (Young-Scholten, 2021). Empirical evidence available to date suggests that instructional practices with LESLLA learners are largely code-based, focusing on the development of mechanical and technical skills mainly through decontextualized and teacher-centered activities (Choi & Ziegler, 2015; Moore, 1999; North, 2017; Ollerhead, 2012). However, little is known about how to implement a more balanced approach to literacy development, one that also includes meaning-based practices, essential to literacy development (Vinogradov, 2010; Piccinin & Dal Maso, 2021). In response to this need, we conducted an action research study taking the form of a living library project (BAnQ, 2017), in which the students had to produce multilingual identity texts (Cummins and Early, 2011) and to share them during the public event. The project took place in two adult education centres in the province of Québec, Canada. In this presentation, we will report on the teaching practices adopted by three focal teachers while carrying the project with their own learners. We collected data through video recordings of classroom activities over four to six lessons, each lasting between one and three hours. They were then analysed thematically (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2021) to identify the different teacher's practices along a continuum from code-based to meaning-based. Our results showed that the balance between code-based and meaning-based practices varied among teachers, whose interventions during the project tended to be anchored more strongly in one orientation than the other. The study therefore reveals different teacher profiles and degrees of uptake of the balanced literacy approach, while nevertheless resulting in comparable final products.

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What characterises research on L2 learners with limited prior schooling?

This presentation introduces a scoping review (cf. Arksey & O'Malley, 2005) designed to map the research base on lesseducated or lowliterate adult L2 learners (LESLLA learners). Earlier overviews of this population exist (Nordanger et al, 2024; YoungScholten, 2018), but they primarily synthesise studies appearing in the LESLLA symposium proceedings. While those reviews have provided valuable, fieldspecific insight into themes, methods, and practitioner concerns circulating within the LESLLA community, their venuebounded scope means that relevant, peerreviewed work published elsewhere remains underrepresented. Our review addresses this limitation by expanding the search across multiple scholarly databases. The main objective is to answer the following research question: What are the research priorities in studies of loweducated adult L2 learners? In collaboration with a specialist librarian, we developed targeted search strings and ran systematic searches in six databases, restricting results to publications available up to 2025. The searches yielded a large initial pool that we reduced through stepwise screening. Stage 1 coding recorded basic bibliographic details, the presence of linguistic measures, and whether the study explicitly focused on loweducated or lowliterate adults. On that basis, we identified a set of studies with a clear, explicit focus on the target group. Step 2 examined these studies in greater depth. We distinguished between empirical and nonempirical contributions and grouped research purposes under several broad headings: (a) instructional practice; (b) the impact of schooling/literacy on L2 acquisition; (c) methodological and ethical issues; and (d) linguistic development. For empirical work, we additionally documented participant types, recruitment and selection information, research contexts, methodological approaches, and data types. This mapping illuminates both the thematic emphasis and the methodological breadth that characterise current research on LESLLA learners. Our analyses indicate substantial growth in research on this population, with a marked rise in publications from 2019 onwards. Notably, a large proportion of recent studies explicitly targets loweducated adult learners, suggesting that the broader SLA field is increasingly incorporating more inclusive learner profiles and learning contexts. The result is a more representative evidence base—one that responds to longstanding calls to broaden SLA research beyond Englishdominant and WEIRD populations. In the presentation, we will synthesise what characterises research conducted up to 2025 and identify key gaps that remain in the field.

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Exploring teacher candidates' attitudes toward multilingualism in the Turkish context

Multilingualism, linguistic diversity, and cultural diversity have received significant attention in recent years, particularly in educational contexts due to increased mobility and the growing numbers of migrant students with diverse needs in classrooms worldwide (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Dockrell et al, 2022; Phipps, 2019). While much recent empirical work has addressed teachers' beliefs regarding multilingualism and multiculturalism (Abacioglu et al., 2022; Knudsen et al., 2021), critics often emphasize the challenges teachers are face with, particularly with regard to their preparedness to meet the needs of students (Dotzel et al., 2021). Due to large migration flows to and from the country, the linguistic make-up of Turkey has been changing over last 15 years. Following the open door policy which took effect in the early 2010s, Turkey has become a host country for millions of refugees and migrants from various countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine. The aim of this study is to explore teacher candidates' attitudes towards multilingualism in a context where they lack systematic training to meet the needs of migrant and multilingual/multicultural learners. A questionnaire study based on an adapted version of the Multilingual Classroom Questionnaire devised by the European Literacy Network (Dockrell et al., 2022) was conducted to identify how attitudes of teacher candidates developed towards multilingualism and teaching bi/multilingual migrant learners. The questionnaire was responded by 90 teacher candidates attending a state university in Istanbul, majoring in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Computer Technologies, and Language Teaching during spring term of 2025. Adopting a quantitative approach, our study utilized questionnaire data to explore the teacher candidates' attitude towards the use of first and/or second language in classrooms, their views on multilingualism and literacy instruction based on their practicum teaching experiences at various levels. The teacher candidates most frequently reported four to six months of observation and micro teaching experience in their practicum schools. The preliminary findings reveal that the participants express highly positive opinions about multilingual policies in education and beneficial effect of bilingualism in literacy instruction. However, this positive stance was clearly reduced about the use of first language in classroom although they still agreed that the first language can support teaching a second language through awareness of similarities and differences between languages. The results highlight that the participants more clearly value representing multilingualism as a supporting quality in education and literacy, and they are more positive about using the first language in second language teaching to enhance linguistic awareness. However, they demonstrate greater hesitation regarding the recognition and visibility of the first language in classroom instruction involving migrant learners, an issue that warrants in-depth examination given the increasingly diverse nature of contemporary classrooms.

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*Views in *2 literacies – a multimodal text collection on a participatory web-platform*

Adults learning to read and write (in a new language) often deplore the lack of interesting reading resources related to their lifeworld. Reading resources for adult literacy learners that are created by learners themselves are significantly underrepresented. This contribution presents an interactive web-platform with easily accessible reading resources for adults. The platform was originally created in the participatory research project "Views in*2 Literacies" that encouraged participants to share their stories and experiences about literacy and language acquisition and to create multimodal texts and small stories about reading, writing and language learning in any form, context or media. The talk will present the major ideas of the project and the website and will provide an overview over the key topics in the corpus that show how literacy is practiced, developed and experienced in everyday life. Major objectives of the project were to compile a corpus of easily accessible small stories about literacy and successful learning processes and to encourage individuals to express their experiences, thoughts, attitudes and ideas about literacy and learning. Participants of any age (child, teenager, adult, or senior), any level of language proficiency, with diverse educational backgrounds, occupational or legal status, could contribute to the collection of Digital Literacy Narratives. These digital stories are combinations of text and visuals, of language(s) in oral or written form combined with images, video, music, or other modes. They tell us about writing and reading, about children and adults, about current learning processes or experiences in the past, about learning and teaching, success and failure, about finding oneself in a new cultural context, about sharing, being supported or excluded, about memories of the past or dreams for the future. The format of these small stories is quite simple and therefore specifically suitable for LESLLA learners: An image and a few words or lines of text about experiences with reading, writing and learning can be uploaded by everyone who wishes to contribute. Over the years, more than 400 digital stories were created. They are freely accessible to registered users and are an interesting alternative to typical reading texts for reading beginners. All registered persons can become content creators and can submit a contribution under their nickname (pseudonym) to make their experience visible to a wider public. Published contributions can be commented and discussed by other users. Each contribution may help to improve and diversify the ways literacy and languages are learned or taught or thought about.

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LESLLA learners' plurilingual development: a funds of knowledge approach to uncover their perspectives

While it has been argued that LESLLA learners remain underrepresented in research (Godfroid & Andringa, 2023), it must be noted that within this scientific literature, relatively few studies report the perspectives of LESLLA learners themselves (Hooft, 2024). Furthermore, although these adult learners' plurilingualism is presumed or briefly documented (Browder et al., 2022), to our knowledge, LESLLA learners did not have the opportunity yet to report on their own views on language(s) and plurilingualism beyond their appreciation of language learning activities. Reprising Bigelow and Tarone's initial call for research, "doesn't who we study determine what we know" (2004, p. 689), we wonder how LESLLA learners would describe what they know and determine what they want to learn, at least in our local context. In order to report on how LESLLA learners participating or having participated in literacy and French language courses in Québec (Canada) conceptualize languages, plurilingualism and language learning, we are conducting a qualitative study over a six-month period, following a funds of knowledge approach (Moll et al., 1992). Our ethnographic study aims to make heard voices from this marginalized population, as well as uncovering the funds of knowledge potentially resourceful for their linguistic and social integration (Moll et al., 2013). In two distinct networks of exchange (Vélez-Ibáñez, 1988), with and around two focal participants, we conducted over 20 semi-structured interviews, over 40 participant observations, and collected artefacts and documents illustrating the networks' funds of knowledge. We focused on the plurilingual repertoires declared by LESLLA learners (Asta & Pugliese, 2021), their conceptualization of languages and language learning (Maynard et al., 2024), and their language brokering practices (Duran, 2019). In this presentation, we will discuss preliminary findings from our thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2021) regarding the participants' languages and perspective on language. Using data from all data sources previously mentioned, we will present 1) how LESLLA learners and their networks talk about languages, 2) how these perspectives may have shifted over their migration and schooling processes, 3) what plurilingualism represents for the participants, and 4) their plurilingual repertoires and language brokering practices, including the ways in which they impact their linguistic and social integration. Overall, findings from our study shed a new light on who LESLLA learners are by focusing on their perspectives outside of language and literacy classes, as well as treating them as active agents and full members of society instead of research subjects (Gani & Khan, 2024).

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Word stress identification by LESLLA learners and second-script learners

Phonological awareness is seen as a cornerstone of alphabetic reading development, and it might be a very good predictor for written language acquisition by adults with limited literacy skills and/or adults with competence in a non-Latin writing system (Landgraf et al. 2012). However, in German-speaking Switzerland, it is neither systematically taught nor used in literacy course allocations. According to the Austrian Rahmencurriculum für Alphabetisier- ungskurse (ÖIF 2022), participants of literacy courses should be able to recognize bisyllabic word stress after level 1 courses and multisyllabic word stress after level 2. If participants are able to recognize word stress, they can use it as a writing strategy. Trochaic words (bisyllabic words stressed on the first syllable) are much more frequent in German than iambic ones (e.g., Dohmas et al. 2008). In those words, the vowel in the unstressed syllable is almost always an <e>. Trisyllabic words are frequently stressed on the second (penultimate) syllable. Here, too, the final unstressed syllable often contains an <e>. To what extent are participants of literacy courses in German-speaking Switzerland able to recognize word stress in bisyllabic and trisyllabic pseudowords? Which factors might influence the development of this skill in LESLLA learners and second-script learners (e.g., age or first language)? To address these research questions, the data from 50 participants (24 women, 26 men; mean age = 30 years, SD = 10 years, 2 unknown) was analyzed. The stated first languages are: Farsi/Dari (n = 19), Kurdish (n = 10), Pashto (n = 6), Arabic (n =4), Tigrinya (n = 3), and others (n = 8). The analyzed sample consists of 8 participants at the lowest level (Alpha 1), 25 participants at the medium level (Alpha 2), and 17 participants at the highest level (Alpha 3). They heard 5 bi- and 5 trisyllabic pseudowords in random order and had to decide whether they are stressed on the first, second, or (for trisyllabic words) on the third syllable. The task was part of a bigger experiment conducted using PsychoPy (Peirce et al. 2019) and pavlovia.org. A paired-samples t-test showed that scores for recognizing word stress in bisyllabic pseudowords (M = 54.61 %, SD = 29.39 %) were significantly higher than those for recognizing word stress in trisyllabic pseudowords (M = 36.99 %, SD = 23.74 %), $t(50) = 3.42$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed). For both tasks, participants' average performance was consistent with chance-level responding. To explore which factors are associated with task performance, a series of follow-up calculations were performed. Thus, the difference between the two scores was, for example, bigger for men (65.26 % vs. 33.04 %) than for women (44.21 % vs. 44.55 %). Furthermore, participants in Alpha 1 courses performed equally in both tasks (32.26 % vs. 35.90 %), participants in Alpha 2 courses showed the biggest difference between the two tasks (64.21 %vs. 38.26 %), and participants in Alpha 3 courses performed slightly better in the task with bisyllabic pseudowords (51.56 % vs. 40.85 %).

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Using picturebooks in plurilingual contexts: potentialities and risks

Picturebooks provide multimodal input that combines text, images, and graphic design, stimulating comprehension, engagement, and the use of learners' linguistic repertoires, even when language competences are still emerging. As noted by Arizpe and Styles (2003), reading picturebooks is an interpretative process that integrates verbal and visual cues, fostering narrative and inferential skills that support language learning. In plurilingual contexts, valuing the learner's entire linguistic repertoire means moving beyond monolingual approaches. Translanguaging enables the use of students' languages as a resource, encouraging authentic communicative strategies (García & Wei, 2014). Picturebooks thus become a space for negotiating meaning, comparing repertoires, and developing intercultural competences (Hartmann & McGillicuddy, 2025). At the same time, every picturebook conveys implicit representations of norms, belonging, and difference. It can support inclusive processes or reproduce unexamined cultural and linguistic hierarchies. A conscious and guided analysis of picturebooks is therefore essential to transform them into effective and inclusive teaching tools.

Objectives

- Promote critical awareness regarding the use of picturebooks
- Identify the potentials and risks of multimodal input
- Provide replicable tools for plurilingual contexts

Structure (120 minutes)

1. Introduction and individual selection of a picturebook for a teaching proposal (20 min)
2. Plenary brainstorming: selection and observation criteria (20 min)
3. Focus on multimodality and levels of analysis with examples (20 min)
4. Guided analysis in small groups using an observation grid (40 min)
5. Texts: content analysis
6. Images: representations and stereotypes
7. Graphics: linguistic landscape
8. Plenary feedback and final reflection (20 min)

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Posters

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If you are waiting for literacy and input: do analytic constructions emerge?

Studies on naturalistic second language acquisition in migration contexts have documented the existence of non-target morphosyntactic patterns in the interlanguages of learners with different L1/LT pairs, where a basic (i.e., morphologically unanalyzed) form of a lexical verb is combined with a functional element, such as the copula or the light verb 'do' (e.g. sono fermare '(rougly) I am I stop, i.e. I stopped'; fare dentifriciə '(roughly) to do toothpaste, i.e. to brush teeth'), encoding grammatical information otherwise conveyed by inflection on the main verb in the target language (see Bernini 2003; Benazzo & Starren 2007; Julien et al. 2016; Mocciaro 2020; Pfaff 1992; Starren 2001). According to Bernini (2003), these patterns are temporary compensatory strategies that tend to vanish once finiteness becomes morphologically marked on the lexical verb. However, Mocciaro (2020; 2025) has shown that in learners with low literacy, such analytical strategies may persist longer and appear more stable in the micro-diachronic development of interlanguages. Evidence from other L2 varieties (e.g. Dutch and English) points in a similar direction, suggesting, however, also a general developmental phase in interlanguage construction (Vainnika et al. 2017, inter al.). Whether or not literacy plays a role in other learner corpora cannot be proven, given the frequent lack of clear information on participants' profiles. As Mocciaro (2025) notes, what still needs to be clarified is not only why these constructions emerge, but which circumstances increase their frequency and relative stability. In particular, literacy – or the lack thereof – shapes both the quantity and quality of the input available to learners. This input must be understood in context: it is primarily the specific discourse situations in which learners interact with "native speakers" (meant as users of different varieties of a given language, cf. Berruto 2003; Coulmas 1981; Davies 2013 inter al.), including those created by data-elicitation tasks, rather than "input" in a broad, abstract sense.

Against this background, we will compare the contexts in which non-target analytical constructions occur by reviewing three corpora featuring various communicative tasks (e.g., interviews, narratives, picture-based descriptions), but representing different learner populations: European Science Foundation (ESF) corpus (Feldweg 1991; Perdue 1993), a longitudinal collection of oral data from 40 adult migrants in Europe acquiring second languages in informal immersion contexts with sporadic interaction in the L2. For this study, L1 Italian – L2 German; L1 Punjabi – L2 English; L1 Spanish – L2 French; L1 Turkish – L2 German; Stra-ParlaBO (Mauri et al., in press): Ukrainian, Moroccan, Chinese and Albanian speaker of L2 Italian; BRITA corpus, a longitudinal corpus of L2 Italian from Slavic learners (L1 Czech, Slovak and Russian.) in a university setting, with limited naturalistic input and classroom-bound L2 exposure (Lorenzová 2027, in prep.).

The two learner groups (that is, those in (1)-(2) and in (3)) differ in a crucial respect: the presence (3) or absence of different levels of literacy (1-2). Nevertheless, the degree of literacy can only be inferred rather than assessed properly, because this condition has not been assumed as an explicit variable in the corpora in question. Moreover, the access of these learners to input reveals a more complex picture. Migrant learners, although immersed in the target-language environment, often receive naturalistic input only sporadically and almost exclusively in oral form, because of social marginalization and, therefore, low interaction with locals. University learners, by contrast, have very little exposure to naturalistic spoken input; most of what they receive is text-based and mediated through textbooks, with only marginal contact with spontaneous L2 use outside the class. Ultimately, the two groups share a limited exposure to the input (albeit for different reasons) and the specific speech contexts in which they interact with native speakers, which are, by and large, data collection contexts or teaching contexts. Furthermore, all three corpora were compiled using partially overlapping data-collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews and other tasks designed to elicit monolingual Italian speech. Following Mocciaro (2025), we test the hypothesis that these contexts constitute the locus of change, the environments where analytic constructions might emerge, persist, and develop. To test this hypothesis, we will examine both the sociolinguistic setting of interactions (e.g. type of communicative setting and degree of exposure to naturalistic input) and the linguistic-discursive context in which analytic constructions occur. Particular attention is devoted to the input provided during the interaction itself, in order to assess whether specific elicitation patterns or lexical priming effects may facilitate the emergence of analytic constructions in learner varieties. The findings are expected to contribute to a broader understanding of the mechanisms of morphosyntactic development in L2 acquisition under constrained conditions, and to refine methodological reflections on how the data collection methods play a role in the construction of the data itself (Albanesi & Lorenzová 2025). This work was supported by the European Regional Development Fund project "A lifetime with language: the nature and ontogeny of linguistic communication (LangInLife)" (reg. no.: CZ.02.01.01/00/23_025/0008726).

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Understanding the Non-Comprehension of Instructions among Learners with Limited Schooling: A Comparative Conversation Analysis of French Language Integration Classes

Pedagogical tasks are central to language acquisition, yet their success depends on the teacher's ability to provide clear task instructions (Van Den Branden, 2009). Existing research has shown how task instructions are constructed (Markee, 2015) and how learners respond when they have difficulties in comprehending them (Sert & Jacknick, 2015; Somuncu & Sert, 2019). However, which aspects of task instruction delivery and designs lead to learner comprehension difficulties in L2 classrooms remains underexplored. Moreover, research on task instructions has predominantly examined learners with established schooling backgrounds (e.g., secondary students), resulting in limited insight into how learners with little or no formal education engage with instructions. For these learners, their comprehension can be constrained by a lack of familiarity with school-based literacy practices and task formats commonly presupposed in language teaching materials and methods (Ahmad Yar & Jourdain, 2018; Carroll, 2024). Addressing these two gaps, this study investigates interactional sources that hinder instruction comprehension among learners with different schooling backgrounds. The data draws on 72 hours of video-recorded classroom interaction from three French classes in the mandatory integration program for newcomers in Belgium, differentiated by learners' schooling backgrounds (less than 6 years and no mastery of the Latin alphabet, 6 years or more, and 12 years or more). Using Conversation Analysis (CA), which treats comprehension as a collaboratively achieved, moment-by-moment process that is made visible during interaction (Macbeth, 2011), we examine how participants build understanding during instruction-giving sequences through verbal and embodied actions. Our analysis shows that learners with less schooling depend on immediate, explicit, and multimodally supported instructions. In successful sequences, the teacher coupled verbal instructions with embodied actions, such as making circles on the exercise or pointing to the relevant exercise, enabling learners to trace down the correct exercise. Non-comprehension emerged when instructional delivery was delayed, such as when materials were distributed among learners without immediate instructions. In these cases, learners with less schooling initiated the exercise with a different task modality. For example, they circled answers prior to listening in a listening comprehension activity with multiple-choice questions. In contrast, learners with more schooling proceeded with the exercise and showed no signs of non-comprehension when the instruction was implicit or delayed. By analysing instructional sequences in situ, this study illustrates how instructions can lead to problems of non-comprehension for L2 learners with limited schooling. The findings suggest that the fewer years of schooling learners have, the more L2 teachers need to segment instructions and minimize the time lapse between each instructional step and its execution. These results resonate with Glaser (2020), who showed that sequencing and breaking down instructions enhance their followability among beginning L2 children learners. Overall, the study underscores the importance of treating instruction-giving as a central site of pedagogical intervention in L2 classrooms involving learners with limited schooling, and highlights the need for teacher training that foregrounds explicit, timely, and multimodal instructional design.

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Real Literacies in Adult Second Language Literacy Instruction: An Intervention Study

Adult second language and literacy instruction for LESLLA learners in Germany is still largely dominated by cognitively oriented, bottom-up approaches that conceptualize literacy primarily as the sequential acquisition of subskills such as phonological awareness and grapheme–phoneme correspondence (Franz dos Santos, 2026). While these skills are undeniably important, studies have shown that LESLLA learners may experience limited transfer to everyday literacy demands under mainly cognitive approaches (Allemano, 2013; Maddox & Esposito, 2011). From the perspective of the New Literacy Studies, literacy is conceptualized as participation in socially situated practices shaped by context, values, institutions, and power relations (Street, 2012; Papen, 2005). From this perspective, learning to read and write involves participation in meaningful literacy practices rather than merely mastering isolated cognitive skills. Against this backdrop, my doctoral project investigates whether a pedagogical approach grounded in sociocultural learning theory and literacy as social practice can better support the development of functional literacy among LESLLA learners of German as a second language. The study draws particularly on the Real Literacies approach (Rogers, 1999) and the concept of Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 2020). Learning is organized around authentic, learner-relevant literacy practices and ethnographically identified literacy events from participants' everyday lives.

The study addresses the following research questions: (1) To what extent do instruction based on the Real Literacies approach and strategy-focused learning counselling differ in their impact on the development of technical and functional literacy skills among LESLLA learners? (2) How do LESLLA learners mobilize linguistic, social, and multimodal resources when engaging in authentic literacy tasks within different instructional settings?

The study is designed as a mixed-methods intervention study employing a quasi-experimental pre–post design. Sixteen LESLLA learners participate in two intervention groups within a German literacy course. Group A participates in instruction based on the Real Literacies approach, while Group B receives strategy-focused learning counselling targeting mainly cognitive subskills such as decoding and encoding (Markov, Scheithauer & Schramm, 2015). The interventions are conducted by the researcher herself and take place over a 15-week period with two additional instructional hours per week. Pre- and post-testing are conducted individually in a one-to-one setting using a criterion-referenced, LASLLIAM-based performance test developed specifically for LESLLA learners (Franz dos Santos, 2023). The test assesses both technical and functional literacy through authentic everyday tasks presented orally and in learners' L1. In addition to the analysis of test results, the data are further examined through qualitative multiple case studies based on video recordings of test administrations and intervention sessions as well as semi-structured interviews conducted after the intervention phase. The qualitative analysis focuses on how learners approach authentic literacy tasks, which linguistic and multimodal resources they draw on, and how participation in different instructional settings shapes the development of functional literacy. The presentation will discuss first empirical insights and their implications for adult second language literacy instruction and assessment.

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Devising a radical grammar: grassroots drama as pedagogical tool

This poster presentation draws on a ten-year drama project at the charity Women for Refugee Women in London, UK, to show how drama techniques can support language acquisition for refugee women with emerging literacy and help participants feel welcome in new educational environments. It examines the ethical framework of the drama project and introduces two models developed through the work: Drama for Life and Drama for Performance. Together, these approaches offer personalised and reparative language learning that challenges the bureaucratic and often discriminatory narrative structures and demands of the UK state asylum process. Language teaching that welcomes this "radical grammar" (Reed & Hayes Laughton 2023) deliberately breaks with the epistemic expectations of juridical, humanitarian, and state institutions. It can enable participants to learn language that articulates their experiences in forms that exceed institutional legibility and introduces critical thinking in pedagogical environments. The project builds on Creative ESOL methods (Cox & Dix 2012) and is informed by grounded theory (Charmaz 2006, 2020), trauma-informed practice (Lewis Herman 1992, De Haere et al., 2010) and sensory ethnography (Pink 2021). Examples from the Drama for Life workshops illustrate creative session planning and games based on low-stakes collaboration, the development of foundational English vocabulary, and personalised creative goals. These sessions prioritise care and healing for women newly arrived in the UK. The Drama for Performance pathway invites participants to devise scenes and create short narratives in English with methods blending the spoken, the written and the enacted. This pathway encourages regular attendance and culminates in public performances, where participants practise speaking and performing in English and other languages as an ensemble. Weekly classes provide an inclusive environment for women from diverse national, religious, educational, and socio-economic backgrounds to collaborate and negotiate creative ideas and support one another's learning. This paper foregrounds the importance of radical care (Low 2021) in the hosting of these activities, and the teaching environment of safety and choice for participants. Increased participant well-being, both the hedonic elements, related to enjoyment, and the eudaemonic, related to purpose and achievement (Fancourt 2026), mean higher success in integration into classroom settings and future engagement with formal learning. Featuring links to our performance poetry videos, and activities from the Drama Games of Welcome book, the poster presentation shares insights from ten years of our classes. It also invites teachers and practitioners to critique methods, successes and challenges as part of the wider LESLLA community of teachers and learners.

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