Multiliteracies and multilingualism in adult migrants

A systematic review

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Abstract

The communication paradigm has been restructured by globalisation and digitalisation, affecting the way we learn and adjusting language and literacy education. As adult migrants in urban contexts become socialised in learning environments with higher cultural complexity, a dynamic and flexible multiliterate and multilingual learning environment is needed in host countries to meet different needs. Of particular interest to the implementation of multimodal literacies is the consideration of recent advances in multilingualism proposed by the London Group mandate, which merges multilingualism and literacy. The aim of this study was to empirically investigate the interrelation of multiliteracy and multilingualism by conducting a systematic review that would shed light on how to grant ideological and implementational programmes for multilingual language education policy and practice in multiliteracy contexts. The study followed the PRISMA protocol to answer three research questions:
RQ1: Has previous research incorporated multilingualism / plurilingualism into multiliteracy models for studies with adult migrants?
RQ2: What research methods have been used for studies with adult migrants?
RQ3: What is the quality of the research methods?

Our results show that multilingualism is embedded in the various models of multiliteracy. However, the epistemological tradition in the field of multilingualism does not seem to have had a significant impact on the implementation of new educational programmes that meet the needs of adult migrants. We also found that quantitative research has rarely been used, and that there is a need to raise quality standards of research in this sub-discipline by reducing bias in the processes of designing, conducting and reporting research.

Keywords: multiliteracy, multilingualism, systematic review, adult, migrant

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1. Introduction

Mobility is changing the linguistic landscape in the world, leading to an increase in multicultural classrooms that has made linguistic diversity the norm in the urban school systems across the Western world. Indeed, there is no exception to this new panorama; every language is exposed to the richness of languages that migration brings about. Increasingly, we find a landscape with one or more official languages in a superstratum position, but permeable to several substratum languages (Ascoli 1881), and all are found in the continuum of English as lingua franca. This new configuration of the linguistic panorama dramatically alters the traditional notion of literacy; as students and communities engage in multiple forms of literacy (Cazden et al. 1996; Gee 2008), new Language Policy and Planning (LPP) strategies are needed (Modiano 2022). As a result, some linguists have addressed the need to tackle this new conformation (Cummins 2000; Lotherington 2012; Naqvi et al. 2012).

Prevailing pedagogical practices may jeopardise migrants' linguistic competence. They may face serious problems in achieving adequate literacy levels in the host country, with the aggravating circumstance that they risk losing their home languages (Grant and Wong 2003; Bialystok 2007; Wong and Grant 2007; Oller 2016). This is at odds with the main goal of education, which is to nurture rather than squander students' potential. Unfortunately, languages are not social equivalents; power is reflected in the way society privileges them, threatening language diversity and endangering minority and heritage languages (Bromham et al. 2022). Research on language policies has only recently begun to include the implications of locality to include everyday contexts where policies are interpreted and negotiated.

Most of the world's population is bilingual or multilingual (Ávila-López and Espejo-Mohedano 2021), and indeed, monolingualism as a basic human condition has been widely questioned in recent research (Ellis 2008). In fact, it seems to be more a question of the degree of multilingualism than whether one is bilingual. Piccardo (2013) highlights the need to review language learning policies and teaching practices in the light of the democratisation of the bilingual and multilingual ID. Research on the linguistic configuration of Europe has illuminated the notion of plurilingualism, which offers new perspectives on language education. We need to recognise that plurilingualism may be subject to complex political pressures and social needs, and one possible solution to this threat may be to move from a bilingual disposition to a field that promotes pluriliteracy (Potts 2013). Linguistic policies fall into this educational landscape; migrations have an impact on teaching and learning,

altering people's notions on the enactment of policies (Ramanathan and Morgan 2007).

2. The case of adult migrants

The pressing issue for migrants is not only how to deal with monolingual status (Gogolin 1997), which may be originally rooted in their home culture or in the public policy and social mindsets of the target one, but also that bilingual or multilingual competence in different literacies (cultures, languages and media) fits poorly into the model of mastery of the dominant language (or lingua franca), usually because of its categorical nature, which relegates minority languages to smaller, less public and very differently valued spaces. In multilingual host communities, migrants often face the challenge of adopting different linguistic identities that may even conflict with each other (Ali 2020). The use of different languages should be seen as a bonus rather than a dilemma, in line with the New London Group's (1996) idea of multiliteracies.

In the case of migrants, literacy may indeed become a mobilising metaphor to "connect with, and appropriate, the positive meanings and legitimacy derived from other key symbols of government" (Shore and Wright 1997: 20). Migrants may in fact be expected to respond to the societal expectation of "adequate" multiliteracy to a great extent. On the part of the host community, the issue seems to be arguably to provide migrants with the necessary literacy skills, while the main question is how migrants should be catered for, should this be an appropriate term, and what literacy skills are offered (Holm 2011). More often than not, the phenomenon is mostly a case of acculturation rather than integration and cultural miscegenation (Lynch 2004; Ali 2020).

3. Creation of a dynamic and flexible multiliteracy and multilingual learning environment

Given the new social and educational realities, we need to take pedagogical approaches beyond structurally defined language and develop dynamic models that allow for tailored, plural and hybridised language learning (Piccardo 2013). New spaces of multimodal expression that include plurilingualism need to be created through communicative connectivity (Jenkins 2004). The pedagogical possibilities of multiple semiotic resources are endless and go beyond reading and writing codes (Kress 2003; 2009; Cope et al. 2018). Lotherington (2013)

proposes the introduction of a "third space approach to plurilingual education, conceived as linguistic inclusion in the culturally diverse classroom", where uncritical binaries – native and non-native speakers, L1 and L2, etc. (Norton 2013; Kramsch 2014) – are overcome by the possibilities of a digital universe that offers multiple opportunities for plurilingual convergence (Ivkovic and Lotherington 2009).

The development of research in multiliteracies must promote the integration of the different languages at stake. European research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL/AICLE/EMILE) and its counterpart in higher education – Integrated Content, and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) – have identified ways of democratising plurilingual practices and developed models that can facilitate the process of acquiring different languages in the educational system.

Although the perspective on literacy that has gained popularity in recent decades is the social approach, which focuses on how literacy practices operate in different settings and how these practices relate to larger power relations (Barton 1994), we are particularly interested in the cognitive approach to literacy that comes from a plurilingual epistemological tradition and assumes that language is an intellectual knowledge construct that is a *sine qua non* for the development of the other components of multiliteracy (Holm 2011). Multiliteracy is understood as a group of mental processes, an apparatus of the intellect (Goody 1999). Even though the so-called autonomous conception of literacy has been overcome in favour of the social one, the processes of language acquisition as a crucial component of literacy need to be considered in the current research on multiliteracy, which is based on avant-garde disruptive research.

The acceptance of learners' plurilingualism, its defining characteristics and potential, represents a paradigm shift (Piccardo 2013). A new concept of dynamic plurilingualism is needed to include the learners' linguistic potential, especially in the case of migrants who are caught between cultures and languages, where there is indeed a lack of tools and materials for teaching literacy and in linguistically heterogeneous classrooms. We must remember that the term multiliteracies originally emerged in response to the phenomena of mass migration and the advent of digital communication media that marked the end of the twentieth century (New London Group 1996).

For example, genre-based programmes are not usually integrated into multiliteracy programmes but are mostly used for monolingual instruction. A plus point in this context is that they are used in the education of linguistic minorities with vernacular languages (Lorenzo 2013). An interesting pedagogical alternative is to integrate this expertise into the target language for

migrant communities in host countries by embedding language use in socially complex multimodal contexts.

As part of the Multiliteracies for adult at-risk learners of additional languages (MultiLits) research project (see acknowledgements), we saw the need to incorporate plurilingualism into the educational curricula for vulnerable adults in host countries. The aim of our systematic review was therefore to determine the extent to which multilingualism and multiliteracy are interrelated in the literature. The following research questions are therefore central to this study:
RQ1: Has previous research incorporated multilingualism / plurilingualism into multiliteracy models for studies with adult migrants?
RQ2: What research methods have been used for studies with adult migrants?
RQ3: What is the quality of the research methods?

4. Materials and method

The review team adapted a systematic review protocol from PRISMA-P: Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses for Protocols 2015 (Moher et al. 2015).

4.1. Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria were set in relation to the objectives of the systematic review, namely RQ1. First, the operational characteristics of the independent (predictor) and dependent (outcome) variable(s) were defined. Multilingualism has been operationally defined as "the coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level" (COE 2020: 30), and plurilingualism as "the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner" (COE 2020: 30). As the concepts are inextricably juxtaposed, both have been used as independent variables-predictors. Similarly, the operational definition of dependent variable-outcome, multiliteracy, is defined as the ability "to negotiate a multiplicity of discourses" that "account for the context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalised societies, for the multifarious cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate", and also "account for the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies" (New London Group 1996). Finally, the moderator variable – adult migrants – is defined as people that have grown to full size and strength that qualify as migrants, returning migrants, immigrants, refugees, displaced persons and persons of immigrant background and/or members of ethnic minority populations that have been created through immigration (Cambridge Dictionary 2022; COE n.d.; EC n.d.).

Second, the research designs under consideration for this study were both qualitative and quantitative. On the one hand, qualitative studies considered included ethnography, case studies, grounded theory, phenomenology and narrative inquiry (Richards 2009); on the other hand, quantitative studies were selected according to Campbell and Stanley's (1963) classification: pre-experimental, quasi-experimental, experimental, correlational and *ex post facto*.

Third, the eligible participants were adult migrants. Since adulthood can be defined differently in the different classifications, we did not set specific age limits. However, we excluded teenagers/adolescents, children/childhood and elderly/old people. Regarding *migrants*, we refer to people falling into the category defined above by the European Committee on migration.

Fourth, this study was time-limited because we felt that the contributions of the New London Group had produced an entirely new conceptualisation and theoretical model of multiliteracy. Accordingly, the studies under consideration were limited to publications that were released after 1996.

Fifth, no geographical and/or cultural restrictions were considered. The following languages of publication were considered: English and Spanish.

Sixth, depending on the type of publication, research studies published in journals and book chapters in edited books were deemed eligible, while other types of publications such as books, PhD theses, conference proceedings, blogs, etc. were excluded.

4.2. Sources of information

The aim of the search was to make a comprehensive and unbiased selection of relevant studies. To this end, two independent reviewers systematically reviewed and screened to identify relevant sources and develop tailored search strategies. The search for relevant literature drew on a variety of sources to ensure that published and unpublished studies (grey literature) relevant to the review question were included in the search process. Thus, the search process included a primary search examining electronic platforms and databases, and a complementary search in exploring other resources and hand searching of relevant websites, literature snowballing and contacting experts. Through this comprehensive search process, the review sought to arrive at a comprehensive and unbiased set of studies. This search was conducted during February and March 2022.

The primary search was conducted using the search engines: Web of Science, Scopus and Eric (ProQuest) in two different universities (University of Cordoba and University of Huelva, both in Spain) to increase the representativeness and

reliability of the data. The primary search in electronic platforms and databases can be found in Appendix B.

The primary search was supplemented by a complementary search to capture additional studies for inclusion in the study. It included Google Scholar and searches of other resources, such as hand searching of relevant websites and associations, literature snowballing and contacting experts (see Appendix C for details).

4.3. Search strategy

The search (terms) strategy was adapted according to the specifications of each electronic platform and database. They reflect the inclusion criteria defined above and try to strike a balance between sensitivity (i.e. finding all articles in a topic area) and specificity (i.e. finding only relevant articles).

For electronic platforms and databases with advanced search functions, we classified search terms according to three categories (independent variables-predictors, dependent variables-outcomes, and participant population), which were combined using the Boolean operator "AND" to identify potentially relevant studies in each electronic platform and database in title, abstract and keywords. We used "OR" with synonyms (multilitera* OR plurilitera*; multilingual* OR plurilingual*), and to narrow down the search we used "NOT" (child; adolescent OR teenager). In sum, the search terms and syntax for Scopus were: multilitera* OR plurilitera* AND multilingual* OR plurilingual* AND adult AND *migrant AND NOT child* AND NOT (adolescent OR teenager). Appropriate syntax changes were applied to the other search engines and databases.

5. Study records

5.1. Data management

The review team used Mendeley to manage and document the process. The software allows tracking of decisions for each identified citation throughout the search. The bibliographic information of studies from electronic platforms and databases was imported into Mendeley as well as databases with compatible formats. To enable transparency and reproducibility, the review team kept records of the search process. The search log included the database, the database interface, the type of database, the customised search strategy, the language of the search terms, the search string, the number of records found, the date of the search and the researcher's initials.

5.2. Selection and data collection process

Three screening levels were conducted to complete the selection process: (a) The first level of screening aimed to identify and remove duplicate registers and studies that were clearly related to other fields or topics based on their title (i.e. not focused on multiliteracy and multilingualism); or complied with the exclusion criteria, such as the language of publication, type of publication (e.g. book reviews or theoretical studies), or the target population; (b) the second screening level involved identifying and removing those studies that, after further examination of the title and abstract, did not meet the remaining inclusion criteria (independent variables-predictors, dependent variables-outcomes and participant population); and (c) at the third screening level the full text versions of the studies were read to ascertain eligibility based on both the inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria. Based on the review's inclusion and exclusion criteria, discrepancies were resolved by further review of the respective titles, abstracts and full text, and discussion by the two independent reviewers.

Data was collected by two independent reviewers and then discussions took place to confirm the data. Further analyses of the texts were performed when the two reviewers did not reach the same conclusion.

5.3. Data items

From the selected sample of studies data and information were coded on variables related to: (a) title; (b) author; (c) year; (d) source; (e) type of publication; (f) data (qualitative/quantitative); (g) design (ethnographic, case study, grounded study, etc.); (h) theoretical paradigm; (i) focus of the paper; (j) target language; (k) sample number; (l) context (i.e. host country of the migrants); (m) educational level (university, non-formal, adult education, workplace programme, etc.); (n) results; (o) database (Scopus, WoS, ERIC, Google Scholar…); (p) research question 1 (yes/no); (q) research question 3 (1 low; 2 medium; 3 high); (r) researchers notes (for any type of observation).

5.4. Outcomes and prioritisation

The data used to determine the results of the study were included in columns (f), (p) and (q), which answered the three research questions. RQ1, – in (p) – asked whether previous research has included multilingualism / plurilingualism in multiliteracy models for studies with adult migrants. After reading the texts and analysing the theoretical models, the answer should only be binary. Further analysis and discussion took place when there were disagreements between the two independent reviewers. In (f), data was collected to determine

which research methods were used for studies with adult migrants (RQ2), whether quantitative, qualitative or mixed. Finally, in (q), responses to RQ3, i.e. the quality of research methods, were recorded. The research team established the evaluation criteria to determine the value of (q) based on the implementation of rigorous and comprehensive procedures of the studies.

No prioritisation parameters were established for the outcomes.

6. Results

The overall search and screening process is depicted in Figure 1.

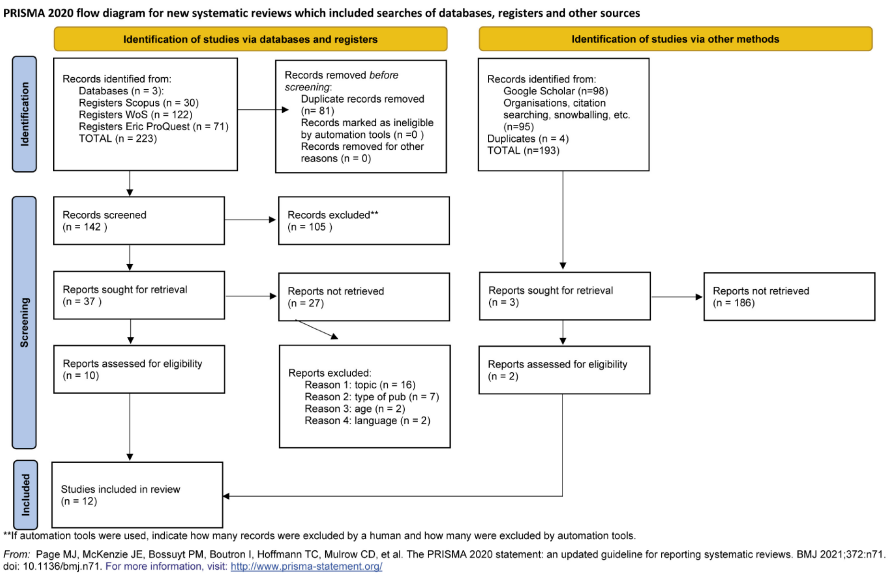


Figure 1. Identification, screening process and inclusion process

In the identification phase, 223 studies were identified from the databases and 193 from other methods, giving a total of 416 records. After eliminating duplicates and considering the exclusion criteria in the titles, 331 studies were selected for the first screening (142 from the selected databases and 189 from the other methods category), of which thirty-seven and three records were selected for the second screening. After the third screening, a total of twelve records were eligible for analysis, ten via databases and two via other methods.

In terms of total sample, these studies screened 178 participants (two studies did not report the number). The sample size ranged from one participant

to forty-six participants. The context of the selected studies was from six countries: one from Spain and France, five from Canada, one from Italy, four from the USA and one from Portugal. The target language was English (n = 7), Inuktitut and English (n = 1), Spanish and English (n = 1), Korean (n = 1), Italian (n = 1), and "world languages" (n = 1). In terms of educational level, data were collected at university (n = 5), non-formal adult education (n = 2), at work (n = 2), at home (n = 2) and in one unrecognised case.

The studies were published between 2000 and 2021 (i.e. 2000 = 1, 2013 = 1, 2014 = 1, 2015 = 2, 2017 = 3, 2018 = 1, 2020 = 2, 2021 = 1). The publication languages were English (N = 12). Out of those reviewed studies, all belonged to journal publications (N=12).

In relation to the "weight" of evidence measure of research question 1, seven out of twelve studies included multilingualism / plurilingualism in multiliteracy models for studies with adult migrants. With respect to research question 2, all studies (n = 12) were qualitative, and the research designs were ethnographic or autoethnographic (n = 5), narrative (n = 1), focus groups (n = 1), multidimensional and situated (n = 1), case study (n = 2), grounded study (n= 1) and one based on interpretation of students. Finally, the quality of the research methods was distributed as high (n = 6), medium (n = 2), and low (n = 4). Six studies fell into the category of high-quality research, showing a reliable research method with clearly stated systematic data gathering and analysis. Two studies (7 and 9) presented flaws in one of the parameters under analysis (i.e. the research question was not well specified, nor the data gathering tool; the analysis was not systematic). Finally, four out of the thirteen studies were classified as low quality. Specifically, study 1 included interpretations that were obtained from an undetermined sample, from which only three participants appeared; study 2 did not offer a research-based design; study 3 did not specify the method for data analysis, nor the way to avoid subjective interpretation or bias with only one participant; and study 8 did not specify the method for the analysis of the data.

7. Discussion

The role of multilingualism in studies on the acquisition of multiliteracies in adult migrants seems to be a matter that has been little explored in the scientific literature. Our study aims to fill that gap by critically analysing the scientific production on the topic in the last twenty-five years.

The screening process left only 2.88% of the original studies located in the first search, which tunes with the initial concern of the researchers regarding the

inclusion of advances in plurilingualism in new multiliteracies programmes. Only seven studies really concerned the multilingual component in the multiliteracy process of adult migrants, indicating the need to develop robust studies that serve as a starting point for operationalising language programmes in multiliteracy processes. Multiliteracy programmes for adult migrants are particularly active in different parts of the world, however, the multilingual component that is considered a constituent part of the multiliteracy process is not integrated in the qualitative studies found for the analysis. It would be very important to have reliable studies on the potential of approaches such as CLIL, EMI or ICLHE in the contexts where multiliteracy programmes are developed with adult migrants, especially when we come to the formal or informal curriculum design stages.

The main ideas of the works reviewed for this study are now underscored. Patrick, Budach and Muckpaloo (2013) offer an interesting perspective on how indigenous lives are intimately connected to multiliteracy and family language policy. The study highlights the multidimensionality of family language policy (ideologies, cultural patterns and language, and literary practices). The research project pivots around the Inuit and English Literacy Program, which involves parents and children. The activities themselves (e.g. after-school book lending, senior and game nights) seem to be very interesting, and the applied action research is a source of change for the community. Interestingly, the practices do not seem to be based on scientific evidence about how to promote participants' multilingual skills, and there is a clear imbalance in the achievement of goals that favours the multiliteracy component but reduces multilingualism to mere contact with linguistic data.

Of particular interest to the present work is Burgess's (2020) proposal of sensory events and sensemaking pedagogy as a new way for multiliteracies to shake the language learning tree in a Canadian setting where the practitioners seek to mobilise and strengthen the multiliteracy and multimodal repertoire that migrants bring to the new community. She struggles to motivate her students, emergent bilinguals/multilinguals (García 2009), to engage in highly avant-garde multimodal and multiliteracy practices that relate to their personal and community realities. Burgess (2020) employs a post-structuralist, autoethnographic approach that informs the process and transforms her practice and educational persona. Consistent with the critical perspective we offer in the analysis, despite her twenty years as a language teacher, there is no mention of multilingualism except in the description of the sample. However, Burgess and Rowsell (2020) mention translanguaging as a technique for changing language assessment. The research process was based on ethnographic field

notes and interviews where most of the evidence was analysed in an impressionistic manner rather than using qualitative analysis tools to demonstrate the importance of alternative methods of assessing language learning.

Early's (2017) study focuses on literacy practices in English-only and anti-immigrant contexts. It looks at an after-school family literacy programme based on parental investment and shows how state policies related to language, ethnicity and citizenship can influence these literacy programmes. Her model honours all languages, cultures and experiences, and redefines the concept of sanctioned language and literacy learning in school settings. The study uses a grounded qualitative approach in which participants, i.e. parents, family members, students, teachers and researchers, describe their learning histories under favourable and unfavourable conditions to immigrants. The study draws on sociocultural theory (Vygotsky 1978), Cope and Kalantzis's (2000) concept of multiliteracies (based on the New London Group) and the concept of funds of knowledge (Moll et al. 1992). In short, the model recognises the diversity of languages and cultures in communities (i.e. it promotes equitable and inclusive language and literacy learning). Despite the fact that a thorough multilingual theoretical background was not included, RQ1 is answered positively.

Choi (2015) includes a qualitative analysis of multiliteracy curriculum that shows an increase in reading motivation in the heritage language (HL). There is no mention of multilingualism, and bilingualism is only mentioned in the description of the sample, although it is noted at the beginning of the introduction that the low literacy in HL may be due to the lack of bilingual programmes in US schools (RQ1). The analysis is conducted by the researcher without mechanical or electronic tools, which provides deep insight into student production, but prevents any clear conclusions from being drawn from the study (RQ2, RQ3).

Duff, Wong and Early (2002) inquired about the nature of multiliteracy activities that newcomers engaged in during their practical workplace experiences. Although the importance of ESL research to the workplace is foreshadowed in the introduction, multilingualism is mentioned only to describe the environment in which the participants were working (RQ1). We have access to participants' voices in their own narratives and processing is based on the researcher's unspecified analysis.

Holloway and Gouthro (2020) emphasise the importance of cultural diversity in language acquisition and the inclusion of innovative approaches that ensure the transformational process of meaning-making in an ever-changing world. They use thematic analysis in their analysis, and code-switching and translanguaging were found to be important components of instruction in

a multiliteracy programme, with particular emphasis placed on developing multilingual competencies.

The last study that answers positively to RQ1 is Rivière's (2017). Her study examines how multilingual readers with and without an immigrant background access books in dominant or dominated languages. She uses a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews and concludes that access to print and digital books is higher in dominant languages. The theoretical approach is based on the analysis of language inequalities in the globalised book market, as the dominated language is more restricted. Conversely, Rivière points out some cases where there is a rapid development of publications of dominated languages, such as Catalan or Basque in Spain; however, for political reasons, both Catalan and Basque are the dominant administrative and educational languages in these regions. Accordingly, Rivière explains that the plurilingual condition has implications for various personal domains, such as discourse, ideology and power.

The next five studies overlook the role of multilingualism in the process of multiliteracy development. First, Carloni and Sisti (2018) consider L2 teaching methodologies a key element in the process of "inclusion" of migrants. While inclusion may not be the happiest term to describe how migrants interact in their host countries, we acknowledge that language should be central to the catalysing process of integrating cultures and cultural identity. Museum cultural mediators (migrant mediators with specialised training) are described as assets in the process of development of intercultural awareness and negotiation of hybrid identities. Despite the initial importance given to innovative methods, Carloni and Sisti (2018) do not rely on studies of multilingualism to support their analysis but start from the premise that mediation occurs because of the cultural interest of the activity in which they involve participants. There is no analysis of the data (RQ2, RQ3) but rather a description of interesting projects that serve as the basis for the rest of the theoretical framework.

Katz (2014) also does not mention multilingualism nor bilingualism in her paper, the analysis shows the problems of the convergence of political and educational agendas. Similarly, King (2015), analysing graphic novels in autoethnographic narratives in a new communication programme for migrants, does not mention bilingualism or multilingualism; identities and multiliteracies are not identified with the linguistic component of creating migrant or minority personalities (RQ1). The analysis presents the participants' insights in a visual representation showing that language is socially and culturally situated, but without any further attempt to find a common factor between the different narratives (RQ2, 3).

The study of Pires Pereira and Campos (2021) focuses on the construction of the pedagogy of multiliteracy. They analyse the role of focalisation in the development of critical analysis of multimodal narratives. To this end, they draw on the theoretical background of the New London Group (1996) and Kress (2010; 2015) to extend the notion of learning linguistic modes to the meaning-making of multimodal texts. Even though multimodality is analysed in digital communication contexts where globalisation is an important condition, the facet of multilingualism is overlooked, as well as in King's and Katz's studies. They use a case study of focalisation in an animated narrative that includes a hybrid multimodal text offered to students learning about refugees on a public digital platform. They conclude that semiotic analysis of visual narratives can lead students to further critical analysis that would enrich meaning-making. Like these group of researchers, Roundsaville (2017) does not mention or include bilingualism or multilingualism as part of the multiliteracy framework. Her study focuses on literacy development through transnational social practices of immigrants, using Clara as the only person in the sample of a grounded study. She analyses how genre repertoires are constructed from below and examines how out-of-school and formal literacy instruction interact.

RQ2 focuses on the nature of the research methods, and we have found that there is no quantitative data. Although the importance of qualitative research in modern research cannot be denied, especially for studies that involve content analysis, we still need a broader view which also contemplates quantitative analysis based on hard statistics, allowing inferences with metrics driven external validity. Developing quantitative studies out of the clues provided by qualitative ones, helps research gain a holistic picture with different stages of analysis, from validating hypotheses to advancing and understanding of the process. The scope of the studies needs to be widened through sound statistical analysis that may test proposals and indicate the way for further qualitative exploration. Moreover, we advocate the use of transdisciplinary research to better understand the complexity of the phenomena and provide new insights to social research topics.

Once the nature of the research paradigm was determined in our study, a further analysis on the quality of the qualitative studies was developed (RQ3). The critical appraisal of the evidence presented in research papers is an early step in the process of scientific development of emergent areas in human sciences. A standardised measurement tool developed by the researchers was used to evaluate the research quality and the data compiled using the measurement tool were analysed mechanically by the researchers. Our analysis started with measures of academic output such as peer review and

bibliometric, as tools for assessing research quality and its scientific merit. We considered the prestige of the journal in which the publication appeared (impact factor, etc.) and the number of subsequent citations in other scholarly works (Petersohn and Heinze 2018). To avoid the "evaluation gap" (Wouters 2017), we tried to consider the variety of innovative approaches, actors, research designs and mechanisms, as well as the societal impact of the studies. We used two main criteria to acknowledge the quality of research, scientific relevance and excellence, further materialised in: methodological quality, quality of reporting, appropriateness of methods and relevance to policy and practice (Aagaard-Hansen and Svedin 2009; Belcher et al. 2016; Anjana and Choudhuri 2018). Therefore, research potential, outreach and practical implication have been also considered in the evaluation procedure.

Our study was initially covering 416 records from different sources. The findings show how the quality of research papers published on multiliteracy in adult migrants is not up to the quality standards, no matter which paradigm they adhere to; an outcome of six high-quality papers is sparse to build up relevant knowledge on a topic, particularly if, as specified in many of the analysed papers, educational authorities are to develop language policies based on the findings of the studies. Furthermore, the fact that only six of twelve papers met high research quality standards indicates that researchers in this field may need to improve their research design and journals may also need to examine their review processes. In sum, quality research control procedures should be deployed in the field of multiliteracy and multilingualism in adult migration.

8. Conclusion

In this study we have tried to acknowledge the state of the art in the literature of multiliteracy and multilingualism. We have studied the theoretical model that is being used by researchers: specifically, whether multilingualism is embedded in the multiliteracy theoretical framework. Our study has concluded that this field needs further theoretical development, since 41% of the records did not contain multilingualism in the multiliteracy framework. More development is of paramount importance in order to provide sound educational and language policies that lead to pedagogical implementations that give a response to the current societal needs of vulnerable adult migrants (Lynch 2004; Hornberger and Johnson 2007). We must not forget that language is also a means of power (Barton 1994; Shore and Wright 1997; Cummins 2000), and accordingly,

these individuals can only be fully empowered by being able to interact using and understanding multimodal modes of communication in an increasingly globalised world. These multimodal modes should definitely include the linguistic repertoires that the migrants bring into the societal equation. These may include the first language (L)1, heritage languages (HL) or foreign languages (FL) learned at school, at home or in other social contexts.

Another insight found in this study is that quantitative research is not being conducted in this field. In our study all the records obtained for analysis used qualitative analysis in study designs, mainly ethnographic and case studies. We do not criticise the use of qualitative research, but the use of quantitative research can provide answers to various types of research questions that would be beyond the scope of qualitative methods. Quantitative research provides support to draw general conclusions from a study and also allows to predict outcomes. For instance, studies in formal educational settings that need to administer surveys or questionnaires to large number of participants can be appropriately done quantitatively. Even triangulation can be used so that researchers can reach a comprehensive understanding of phenomena throughout the use of multiple methods or data sources (Patton 1999). Further, higher validation can be gained by collecting data from different sources, namely, individuals, groups, families or communities (Denzin 1978). Why is quantitative research or triangulation neglected? We cannot offer an answer to this question. It seems there is a strong tradition for qualitative methods in social studies, but it might also be true that quantitative analysis involves complex statistical treatment, which is not at hand to many researchers, probably because quantitative research formation is traditionally done in other fields (e.g. psychology, medical and business curricula).

To have a supplementary view of this matter we also analysed the quality of the research methods. We found that only six out of the twelve records selected for analysis complied with the inclusion criteria. Undermined samples, unspecified report of data analysis, biased and subjective interpretations or unclear research questions were found in half of the studies. We obtained evidence to suggest that further work is needed in this field in order to provide reliable studies that can lead to social, political and educational policies. Multiliteracy and multilingualism in adult migrants suppose a new perspective in education which must be looked into scientifically to provide tailored guidelines and policies.

Nonetheless, our conclusions should be viewed with caution. The search of electronic databases was completed in February 2022, so literature published since then has not been included in the systematic review. Likewise, "grey

literature" published after that date has not been included either. We also need to consider the "file drawer problem", which refers to bias in the scientific literature due to selective publication of positive results, with negative or nonconfirmatory results being suppressed. We must also consider the short number of records that were finally drawn for analysis (n=12), which may not be high enough to provide an accurate extrapolation to the global research paradigm.

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Appendix A

List of records selected

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Appendix B

Electronic platforms and databases included in the primary search

Platforms	Databases
ERIC (Proquest)	
	Arts and Humanities Full Text, Bibliografía de la Literatura Española (Bibliography of Spanish Literature), Ebrary e-books
	EconLit, International Index to Music Periodicals Full Text, International Index to Performing Arts Full Text, Library and Information Science Abstract Medline, MLA International Bibliography, Periodical Archive Online Periodical Index Online, Proquest Aquatic Science Collection, Proquest Computer Science Collection, ProQuest Library Science, ProQuest Psychology Journals, ProQuest Social Science Premium Collection (i.e., ASSIA, ERIC, IBSS, LLBA, PAIS International & PAIS Archive, PILOTS, ProQuest Education Journals, ProQuest Social Science Journals, ProQuest Sociology, ProQuest Sociology Collection, Social Services Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, Worldwide Political Science Abstracts), PsycARTICLES, PsycCRITIQUES, PsycEXTRA, PsycINFO, PsycTEST.
Web of Science	
	Social Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Emerging Citation Index, Book Citation Index
	BIOSIS, Chinese Science Citation Database, Current Contents Connect,
	Derwent Innovations Index, Korean Journal Database and SciELO Citation Index
Scopus	

Appendix C

Complementary search strategies and resources

Search strategies	Resources
Hand searching	
	Reference lists of included studies and reference lists of relevant reviews were searched
Web search	
	A general web search was conducted using Google Scholar to identify potential unpublished studies. Advanced search options were used to refine the grey search strategy
Open access (grey literature)	
	OpenGrey (EAGLE-European Association of Grey Literature Exploitation), GreyNet International-Grey Literature Network Service, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), OpenSIGLE, Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR), Open Access Scholarly Information Sourcebook (OASIS), Science Commons, COPAC and Urbadisc
Ongoing research	
	CORDIS, Regard database of Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Centre for Review and Dissemination (CRD), NBER Working Papers, The Campbell Collaboration and RePEc
Personal contacts	
	Personal contacts with national and international researchers were made to identify unpublished reports and ongoing studies
Relevant institutions and networks	
	American Institutes for Research, What Works Clearinghouse, EPPI Centre, Educational Evidence Portal (EPP), IZA World of Labor, Social Science Research Network (SSRN), Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), Office of English Language Acquisition (US Department of Education), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), The Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe, and European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education
Key journals	
	Reading Research Quarterly, *American Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Educational Research*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *Innovation in Language Teaching and Learning*, *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *Language and Education*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *Cine Qua Non-Bilingual Arts Magazine*, *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*, *Bilingual Review and Bilingualism*

Résumé

Le paradigme de la communication a été restructuré par la mondialisation et la numérisation, affectant la façon dont nous apprenons et ajustant l'enseignement des langues et de l'alphabétisation. À mesure que les migrants adultes en milieu urbain se socialisent dans des environnements d'apprentissage à plus grande complexité culturelle, un environnement d'apprentissage multilittéraire et multilingue dynamique et flexible est nécessaire dans les pays d'accueil pour répondre aux différents besoins. La prise en compte des progrès récents du multilinguisme proposé par le mandat du London Group, qui fusionne multilinguisme et alphabétisation, présente un intérêt particulier pour la mise en œuvre des alphabétisations multimodales. Le but de cette étude est d'étudier empiriquement l'interrelation entre la multilittératie et le multilinguisme en menant une revue systématique qui éclairerait la manière d'accorder des programmes idéologiques et de mise en œuvre pour la politique et la pratique de l'éducation linguistique multilingue dans des contextes de multilittératie. L'étude a suivi le protocole PRISMA pour répondre à trois questions de recherche : QR1 : Des recherches antérieures ont-elles intégré le multilinguisme/plurilinguisme dans les modèles de multilittératie pour les études avec des migrants adultes? RQ2 : Quelles méthodes de recherche ont été utilisées pour les études auprès des migrants adultes? RQ3 : Quelle est la qualité des méthodes de recherche?

Nos résultats montrent que le multilinguisme est intégré dans les différents modèles de multilittératie. Cependant, la tradition épistémologique dans le domaine du multilinguisme ne semble pas avoir eu d'impact significatif sur la mise en place de nouveaux programmes éducatifs répondant aux besoins des migrants adultes. Nous avons également constaté que la recherche quantitative a rarement été utilisée et qu'il est nécessaire d'élever les normes de qualité de la recherche dans cette sous-discipline en réduisant les biais dans les processus de conception, de réalisation et de rapport de la recherche.

Mots clés: multilittératie, multilinguisme, revue systématique, adulte, migrant