

Teaching Languages in Migrant Contexts: Managing Heterogeneity through Inclusive and Multiliteracy-Based Approaches

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Why Migrant Classrooms Are Unique

- Urgent and uneven language needs
- Limited pedagogical resources
- Extreme diversity in age, literacy, and goals

Aim and Research Questions

Main goal:

To design inclusive, differentiated and multiliteracy-based teaching strategies for adult migrant classrooms.

Research questions:

- Which teaching moves best manage heterogeneity?
- How do multiliteracy and structured translanguaging improve access and participation?
- Which tensions (assessment, time, policy) must teachers navigate?

Theoretical Framework

Concept	Core idea	References
Dynamic bilingualism	flexible repertoires, structured L1 use	Otheguy, García & Reid (2015)
Investment & identity	participation tied to imagined futures	Norton & De Costa (2018)
Language as social practice	real-world, multimodal artefacts	Bezemer & Kress (2015)
Multiliteracies pedagogy	multimodal meaning-making	Cope & Kalantzis (2015)

Context and Participants

- Site: Espace 19, Paris 19e
- Period: Sept 2024 – June 2025
- 4 intact classes (A1–B2), N = 48
- Learners: first-arrival migrants, aged 30–60, mixed literacy and employment status.

Context and Participants

Table 1. Sample Description (N = 48)

Class Level	n	Site	Period	Questionnaire Administration
A1	12	Espace 19 (Paris 19e)	Sep 2024 – Jun 2025	Author (course teacher)
A2	12	Espace 19 (Paris 19e)	Sep 2024 – Jun 2025	Class teacher
B1	12	Espace 19 (Paris 19e)	Sep 2024 – Jun 2025	Class teacher
B2	12	Espace 19 (Paris 19e)	Sep 2024 – Jun 2025	Class teacher

Table 1a. Class Demographics by Level

Class Level	Female	Male	Other/Unspecified	Age range
A1	9	3	0	40–60
A2	10	2	0	30–60
B1	7	5	0	40–50
B2	7	4	1	30–60

Methodology and Lesson Design

Method:

- 6-point Likert questionnaire on 5 supports (visuals, glossary, bilingual setup, role rotation, task choice)
- Observational logs and artefacts

Lesson structure (120 min):

1. Setup: bilingual instructions (FR + MT glosses zh/ar/bn/en)
2. Visual + oral warm-up
3. Apply → Analyse → Evaluate → Create (Bloom-aligned tasks)
4. Questionnaire + debrief

Example Tasks (Administrative Theme)

Bloom level	Task example	Output	Assessment
Remember	Match icons and words	6–8 sentences	completeness
Apply	Fill a transport form	form	accuracy
Analyse	Order steps, justify	2–3 sentences	coherence
Evaluate	Compare two options	short argument	reasoning
Create	Mini-guide + voice note	poster & audio	clarity

Key Findings: Learners' Perceptions

Table 3. Perceived Usefulness of Supports (N = 48)

Support	Overall %	A1	A2	B1	B2	Notes
Visuals / images / drawings	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	Most helpful for task access
Glossary (icons + key words)	76	62	79	80	83	Uptake rises with level
Bilingual setup (same-L1 cooperation + MT instructions only)	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	MT into zh/ar/bn/en; setup phase only
Role rotation (scribe/interviewer etc.)	78	68	70	84	90	Lower willingness at A1–A2
Choice among parallel tasks (same Bloom phase/objective)	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	≥95	3–4 tasks per phase; same goal/theme

Table 3a. Overall Appreciation by Level (Likert — % Agree/Strongly Agree)

Level	%
A1	95
A2	89
B1	80

Key Findings: Learners' Perceptions

Perceived usefulness (Agree/Strongly Agree):

- Visuals → $\geq 95\%$
- Glossary → 83%
- Bilingual setup → $\geq 95\%$
- Role rotation → 68–90%
- Task choice → $\geq 95\%$
- Overall satisfaction → A1: 95%, A2: 89%, B1: 80%, B2: 84%

Classroom Dynamics (Qualitative Observations)

- Tiered inputs preserved cognitive demand
- Multimodal tasks bridged literacy gaps
- Role rotation distributed responsibility
- Structured translanguaging secured understanding while keeping French central

Discussion and Implications

Interpretation:

Heterogeneity = **complementarity**

Inclusive design transforms diversity into a learning resource.

For Teachers:

- Plan tiered entry points
- Script bounded translanguaging
- Rotate pair roles

For institutions:

- Small budgets for visuals and printing
- Short PD on differentiation
- Realistic expectations for mixed-literacy groups

Limitations and Conclusion

Conclusion:

“A coherent mix of differentiation, multiliteracy, and structured bilingualism can turn heterogeneity into a pedagogical resource.”

Limitations:

- Single site (N = 48)
- Self-reported data only
- No process measures

Future work:

- Interviews in learners' L1s
- Within-class replications

Thank you for your attention !

Q&A

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Boulevard Belleville rue et enseignes Wenzhou, 2015

