Towards European Researcher Development and Engagement for Equity and Inclusion: A Tripartite Data-Driven Review of Interculturality in Language Education

Editors
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Editors
Yasemin ORAL
Dilek İNAL

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Luís Guerra, Luís Elói

RECTOR'S PREFACE

The struggle for independence of the nation of Türkiye culminated with the proclamation of the Republic on October 29, 1923. The glorious victory achieved as a result of a great struggle, engraved in the annals of world history, is the product of the Turkish nation's determination to live free and independent, demonstrating unparalleled heroism with faith, courage, trust, and boundless sacrifice. The Republic of Türkiye, where sovereignty was unconditionally entrusted to the nation, is the greatest gift from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the leader of the National Struggle of Türkiye, to the nation.

In the goal of preserving the gains of the Republic and reaching the level of contemporary civilizations, education and science have always been the foremost guides. The greatest responsibility in achieving these goals undoubtedly falls on universities.

Among the esteemed and pioneering universities in our country, İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa is a research university that adopts a scientific approach, produces knowledge, and is committed to contributing to the development of society through its applications. As a higher education institution committed to the values of the Republic, we are launching the "*100 Books for the 100th Anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye*" project in collaboration with our academics, dedicated to the centenary of our Republic. Within the scope of the project, the books authored by our academics in their respective fields of expertise and published by our university's publishing house, "IUC University Press," are made available to the public through open access. Comprising 100 books prepared in various fields from health to engineering, social sciences to education, these books are of a quality that can be used as educational materials, textbooks, and as sources for research and development.

With the strength we draw from our deep-rooted history as İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, we continue to work and produce with all our might to carry Republic of Türkiye into many centuries ahead. We dedicate our "*100 Books for the 100th Anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye*" project, honoring all the heroes who contributed to the establishment of the republic that we celebrate on its 100th year anniversary, to all academics, students, and researchers for their use.

Rector
Prof. Dr. Nuri AYDIN
October 29, 2023

PREFACE

It was about three years ago, when we were all trying to deal with the unprecedented changes in our lives caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, that the earlier seeds of this book were first germinated in my mind, and we embarked on a process of developing a transnational project from these seeds. Needless to say, these seeds had their genesis in years-long experience and practice, unwavering dedication, and academic knowledge and insights as a teacher trainer and researcher. Ideas do not emerge from nowhere. Ideas do not emerge from a vacuum either. Equity, equality and inclusion have always been part of my agenda and work not only as an academic but also as a person. I could not help myself but have turned to 'sociological imagination' to better understand the contexts, practices, norms, values, forces and struggles that shape the world, in which academia also operates. Isn't it the sine qua non of the 'homo academicus'?

It felt ripe and right as the continuing global changes force us to explore our possibilities to respond to the increasing inequalities, conflicts and injustices to develop a project in order to develop capacity for a broader understanding of diversity and inclusion in education and research practices at the level of higher education. The project has been built upon a shared vision of enhancing the professional development of early-career researchers (ECRs) in order to develop an inclusive, accessible and sustainable researcher development and engagement path through an interculturality approach for a diverse group of ECRs involved in language education across Europe. As such, the present book is one of the outcomes of this project, namely "European Researcher Development and Engagement for Interculturality and Equity- EUREDIE" (Reference Number: 2021-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000029594), funded by the European Commission under the scheme of Erasmus+. I would like to express our deepest gratitude to them and the Turkish National Agency for their support.

Neither EUREDIE nor this book would have been possible without the hard work, diligent efforts and commitment of my colleagues in the project team. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to each one of them for making this project possible and for their contributions to this volume. My special thanks extend to Miriam Roßmantih and Katharina Weber from Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich for their invaluable contribution to the review of the literature, which was the result of precious time and highly appreciated effort. My special thanks also extend to Yakub Yıldız, a senior student in the Department of English Language Teaching of Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa and the student assistant of the project, for his diligent work in preparing the bibliography of the literature review for this book.

When we were drafting the project three years ago, I now realize, I did not actually know how challenging, demanding and overwhelming the implementation of such a large-scale project could be. As I look back, there are many things that I would have done differently had I known differently. This is not meant to express regrets but lessons learnt and insights gained throughout though. As such, I would like to express my foremost gratitude to Dr. Dilek İnal for her stable presence in those moments of desperation, of pessimism, of frustration, and for continuously supporting me in every possible way,

with trust and encouragement, despite whatever else is going on in her own life. De facto she has been the co-coordinator of this project.

When I first found out about the acceptance of the project, I did not know that only ten percent of the project applications were accepted. That was a moment of pride and satisfaction stemming from the recognition of the rigor and quality of our work. In this regard, I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Erol İnce, Dr. İrfan Şimşek, Dr. Murat Aydoğmuş and Volkan Şimşek of the European Union and International Projects Unit at Istanbul University-Cerrahpasa for their support and help right from the beginning till the publication of this book.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my special thanks to Prof. Dr. Ali Tilbe and Prof. Dr. Ahmet Akgül for their valuable contributions and support during the publication process and to Prof. Dr. Sevinç Hatipoğlu, Assoc. Prof. Tuncer Can and Dr. Özlem Etuş for their encouragement and support throughout. Our thanks also extend to the distinguished members of the Scientific Advisory Committee of EUREDIE, Prof. Dr. Adrian Holliday, Prof. Dr. Christiane Lütge and Dr. Maria Manuela Guilherme, for their immeasurable contributions to the success of this project.

Dr. Yasemin Oral
Project Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

This book presents in detail Result One of the EUREDIE Project, which is a tripartite review of the knowledge domain of interculturality with emphasis on the major lines of theoretical and methodological thinking of interculturality, an exploration of the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs and their research-related needs. Divided into three main parts, each concentrating on one of the components of this review, it aims to provide a thorough insight into the evolving landscape of interculturality in language education and the various ways in which ECRs position themselves in addressing and engaging with it in their research, all drawn from hard evidence.

Chapter 1 provides a thick description of the EUREDIE project, from its germination to implementation, outlining the project's innovative approach to professional development, research methodologies, and objectives, leading to its results and outcomes. It explains the forceful impact of diversity in all social domains on a global scale, how it necessitates an understanding of inclusion and equity and how EUREDIE responds to it within the scope of interculturality in language education by developing a Researcher Development and Engagement Path designed to capacitate early career researchers in their engagement with diversity-responsive and interculturality-sensitive research.

Part 1, the Review of The Literature on the Intersections of Interculturality and Language Education, consists of three chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the significance of a systematic review of the relevant literature on the topic of interculturality in language education within the context of the project, explaining the process as a whole, describing the construction of the corpus and methodological approach and procedures in detail and with reference to the aims of the project. Chapter 3 offers a comprehensive systematic review of a systematically selected scholarly literature within the interculturality- language education nexus from 2012 to 2016, mapping and describing the theoretical, conceptual and methodological themes and trends which overall point to a dynamic and transformative landscape. Finally, Chapter 4 continues with the review of literature, offering a critical examination of the evolution of interculturality in language education from 2017 to 2022, exposing the major theoretical, conceptual, and methodological developments in the field as observed in the selected 158 publications.

Part 2 focuses on the perceptions of the early career researchers of interculturality in language education. The opening chapter 5 presents significance of and the rationale for exploring ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education along with a theoretical exploration of the representations of ECRs in the literature, diversity and interculturality. Chapter 6 offers a comprehensive description of the research design and implementation process of the qualitative study the backdrop of which is outlined in the previous one, while Chapter 7 provides a thorough discussion of the findings on the diverse perceptions of interculturality, with an emphasis on the emergent themes and topics.

Part 3 provides an in-depth study of the analysis of ECRs' research-related needs. To this end, chapter 8 provides a discussion of theoretical considerations in which the needs analysis was conceived with reference to the literature on needs analysis and presents the rationale, explains the methodological

framework and design which support this study and describes the data collection tools and procedures adopted for data analysis. Chapter 9 follows with the identification, analysis, and in-depth discussion of the findings regarding the ECRs' needs and personal understanding of research activities, examining and interpreting both the qualitative and quantitative data and providing a multi-faceted discussion of the findings.

In addition to the overarching aim of presenting a tripartite review of the knowledge domain of the intersections of interculturality and language education, this book is intended to be read as a descriptive map that we hope will help readers find their own ways through the rather dynamic and complex terrain of interculturality in language education. Combining secondary research with primary research, it is our hope that this book will pave the way for a variety of further studies for different purposes. It is our hope that the perspectives and findings we present feed into a global conversation and proves an inspiration to work collaboratively to bring more equality, equity and inclusion to different domains of language education.

CHAPTER 1
THE EUREDIE PROJECT

Yasemin ORAL

The EUREDIE Project

ABOUT the CHAPTER

This chapter introduces the EUREDIE project, which is positioned at the intersection of language education research and professional development for early-career researchers (ECRs). Set against a backdrop of superdiversity, digitalization, and transnationalism, the project aligns with European Union (EU) policies promoting inclusive education and research excellence through diversity. The chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the project's social and theoretical underpinnings, emphasizing the role of interculturality in language education and the influence of EU policies on diversity and inclusion. It outlines the project's innovative approach to professional development, research methodologies, and objectives, leading to its results and outcomes. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the impact of the EUREDIE project on its target groups, offering insights into future educational practices and policies in a diversely interconnected world.

Keywords: diversity, inclusion, interculturality, early-career researchers, language education

Introduction

In an era increasingly characterized by superdiversity, digitalization, and transnationalism, inclusion and equity have become central themes in all spheres of social sciences and in the realms of higher education. Grounded in the rich and evolving field of interculturality, the EUREDIE project operates at the intersection of language education research and the professional development of junior researchers, aiming to foster a comprehensive understanding of diversity and inclusion in educational and research practices while simultaneously addressing global challenges such as social inequalities and conflicts. The project unfolds against a backdrop characterized by the European Union's (EU) commitment to embracing diversity and promoting inclusive education and research. Informed by the priorities of EU policies and strategies, the EUREDIE project aligns with the vision of research excellence through inclusivity and diversity, addressing the global demand for equity and equality in education.

Overall, the present chapter aims to introduce the EUREDIE project, guiding the reader through its various facets, which serves to set the stage for the following chapters in this book. It begins with a presentation of the social and theoretical background to the project, including the foundations of interculturality and its relevance to language education and the EU's policies on diversity and inclusion. The paper then examines the project's approach to professional development of researchers, its innovative aspects and the objectives of the project. It further discusses the methodologies employed in the project alongside its results and outcomes. Finally, the paper concludes by reflecting on the potential impact of the EUREDIE project on the target groups.

Background to the Project: Diversity, Equity and Interculturality

Diversity in its myriad forms is a globally recurring feature of people's day-to-day experiences and social interactions, manifesting in various contexts such as ethnicity, political ideology, education, and culture. This multifaceted diversity, accompanied also by expanding transnationalism and fast-growing digitalization, faces challenges such as social conflicts, discrimination and inequalities across the globe. These varied and intricate forms of diversity in contemporary societies have evolved into 'superdiversity'. It involves an exploration of diversity that goes beyond just migration origins and trajectories. The term was first introduced by Vertovec (2007) to describe and address the increasingly complex patterns of social diversity, particularly in the context of new and multiple dimensions of migration-related diversity. Thus, it represents a multidimensional approach to understanding the intricate tapestry of today's societies, marked by a blend of various cultural, linguistic, and social factors. This transition is also characterized by a deeper appreciation of the intricate and varied sources of inequality and identity formation in

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modern societies. It aligns with postcolonial and sociolinguistic perspectives on diversity and identity and represents a shift toward recognizing complexity and translocality in social sciences (Arnaut & Spotti, 2014), while emphasizing the interplay of various factors like ethnicity, religion, language, and social class, which collectively shape the experiences of individuals and communities in diverse societies.

These issues and challenges are particularly pronounced in the realm of education. In response to these challenges, the more the world experiences profound changes, shifts, and crises, the more there is an imperative for higher education institutions to adopt inclusive and equitable policies and practices. Such initiatives are not only a moral imperative but increasingly seen as integral to the fabric of educational excellence and innovation. The position of the EU in the face of diversity is one that enables and encourages a culture where differences are embraced, and diversity can thrive. Asserting that linguistic and cultural diversity are integral to the European identity, inclusion is consistently represented within European educational and research policies, strategies and programs.

EU policies openly promote the case for diversity-inclusive education and prioritize inclusive higher education systems. These policies are designed to promote inclusivity and equal opportunities, ensuring that the composition of Europe's universities and research institutions reflect the diversity of the wider population. The European Research Area's 2030 vision calls for research excellence through inclusivity and diversity in the production of knowledge. Furthermore, the EU's cultural policies integrate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on cultural and natural heritage, cultural education, cultural diversity, social inclusion, and gender equality. These priorities are common across different EU countries, highlighting the union's commitment to diversity-inclusive education (Vila, Miotto, & Rodríguez, 2021). The EU also stresses the importance of teacher education for the inclusion of children with diverse educational needs in mainstream schools. This aligns with international documents like UNESCO's Policy guidelines on inclusion in education and the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education's recommendations (Engelbrecht, 2013).

In response to the global concern for inclusion, equity and equality, this project is founded upon that the field of interculturality has significant potential to develop capacity in the training and research activities of a variety of disciplines in almost all higher education institutions. The EUREDIE project, conceived within this context, operates at the interface of language education research and professional development of junior researchers to develop capacity for a broader understanding of diversity and inclusion in education and research practices at the level of higher education. In its endeavor to achieve inclusivity and equity, it has been specifically grounded on the theoretical and conceptual landscape of interculturality.

Indeed, interculturality is neither new nor novel. As Dervin (2016) puts forward, people have always interacted across borders- national, regional, linguistic, religious, and/or social. For decades, in a similar vein, the primary concern of language education involved understanding how knowledge of so-called target culture can be developed to facilitate the learner's ability to communicate in the new language, along the essentialist lines of one nation=one language=one culture equation. Essentialist perspectives in language education have viewed culture and identity as fixed and closely tied to national boundaries and thus overlooked the diverse and often hybrid cultural experiences of language learners and speakers.

In the course of the 1990s, although the prevailing view of the relationship between language and culture was still that they were inextricably linked, this conviction split into a structuralist and a (new) poststructuralist variant (Risager, 2007, p.138). Informed by such poststructuralist concepts as identity, power, and discourse, these new perspectives have moved beyond the simplistic one nation=one language=one culture equation, recognizing the fluid and dynamic nature of culture. The hegemonic dominance of essentialist ways of understanding, speaking about and dealing with interculturality in language education has been severely challenged. By the late 20th century, the idea of interculturality became widely recognized, and the 21st century witnessed a significant paradigm shift toward poststructuralist and non-essentialist perspectives on interculturality. This shift was largely a response to the increasing global interconnectedness and the recognition of diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes as well as the larger philosophical changes that have given impetus to the critical endeavor to expose and problematize the socio-political and ideological aspects of interculturality.

Today the field of interculturality is characterized by a plethora of disputed and dubious terms and the plurality of theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives. Contemporary theories increasingly recognize cultures as dynamic, fluid, and intersecting in complex ways. Postmodern and postcolonial theories, for instance, challenge traditional notions of cultural homogeneity and fixed identities, arguing instead for a view of cultures as constantly evolving and influenced by power dynamics and historical contexts. Conceptually, there has been a shift from viewing interculturality merely as a matter of managing or bridging cultural differences towards a more critical approach that interrogates the very construction of these differences. Scholars like Bhabha (1994) and Hall (1992) have contributed significantly to this discourse, emphasizing the hybridity and 'third space' in intercultural interactions, where new cultural forms and identities emerge. These views have been fleshed out with, for instance, the small culture paradigm (Holliday 1999), the transnational paradigm (Risager 2007), the notion of cultural realism (Kumaravadivelu 2008), and the critical reflexive approach to interculturality (Dervin, 2016). Methodologically, the field has expanded from predominantly quantitative methods to include qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic studies, participant observations, and discourse studies and mixed-methods approaches. This methodological pluralism today allows for a more comprehensive understanding of intercultural phenomena, capturing both the depth of individual experiences and broader societal trends.

Interculturality also plays a significant role in EU policies, particularly in relation to managing cultural diversity, migration, and social integration. The EU's approach to interculturality focuses on promoting dialogue and understanding among diverse cultural groups within its member states. Intercultural communication

has become a key area in European language policy, driven by the expansion of the EU, globalization, and increased mobility. The EU's approach integrates a strong linguistic dimension and advocates for an intercultural 'third space' for negotiating identity and power relations (Kelly, 2009). Furthermore, intercultural competence and dialogue remain vital in EU education and culture policy, addressing discrimination at individual and structural levels. However, the focus on interpersonal skills has limited influence on creating structural change, calling for broader anti-discrimination policies and practices (Hoskins & Sallah, 2011).

Against this backdrop, EUREDIE has brought together a consortium of higher education institutions from three increasingly multilingual and multicultural countries- Turkey, Germany and Portugal, with a shared vision of enhancing the professional development of early-career researchers in language education in order to develop an inclusive, accessible and sustainable researcher development and engagement path through an interculturality approach for a diverse group of ECRs involved in language education across Europe.

The EUREDIE project shares some common features with and is complementary in some respects to a couple of other EU-funded projects involving the partner organizations. ILTERG Project (2016-2019), for instance, established international research groups to facilitate collaboration in the field of language teacher education, including Practicum in language teacher education, CALL in language teacher education, teacher cognition and classroom interaction, with the purpose of developing a long-term research strategy across participating institutions, contributing to researchers' continuous professional development and achieving greater visibility and impact of the research conducted by the novice and expert researchers (https://www.ilterg.com/). Another project aiming to provide networking structures for professional development for junior researchers in the field of language education was ENROPE Project (2018-2021), which particularly focused on plurilingualism at the interface of language education research and language teaching to foster strong and reflected professional identities and provide junior researchers with opportunities for transborder collaboration and professional qualification (https://enrope.eu/).

EUREDIE is similar to these two projects with their explicit focus on the collaboration and networking of researchers in the field of language. Its novelty primarily lies in the comprehensive way it foregrounds and considers interculturality as a pervasive undercurrent in language education, capitalizing on its potential to promote inclusion, equity, and equality in response to a need for diversity. By placing an infrequent focus on ECRs involved in language education and designing for and with them a development and engagement path that works towards their adoption of a critical and reflexive mindset to attain interculturality approach and provide them active engagement with a diverse group of researchers to actually experience inclusivity and diversity in the production of knowledge, the project presents an innovative approach against in response to the EU policies geared towards fostering inclusive and equitable practices in higher education institutions and research environments.

The EUREDIE project has been particularly directed to the involvement of early-career researchers, including graduate students and postdocs, from various disciplines involved in language education research on the grounds that, among the parties involved in language education research and language teacher education, junior researchers usually have the least opportunities for heterogeneous and multicultural development, cooperation and networking. This group is also pivotal due to its potential impact on future educational and recent trends and practices.

Given that building and promoting diversity-inclusive and connected higher education systems is also one of the key priorities for the European Union, this project has addressed this priority in a threefold manner: (1) by focusing on a target group of early-career researchers (ECRs) with less opportunities in the context of institutional, geographical, cultural and economic circumstances and (2) by explicitly working on diversity, inclusion and fairness related issues to achieve increased capacity for wider and equal access of its target group to researcher development and engagement activities through easily-accessible open online pedagogies, and (3) by adopting a transnational and participatory approach in its knowledge production processes.

Objectives and Methodology

In order to address the increasing social and linguistic diversity involved in language education and research, the EUREDIE Project has overall generated an inclusive, accessible and sustainable researcher development and engagement path for the early-career researchers involved in language education research through an interculturality approach, by capitalizing on the resources and opportunities that digital technologies offer today and adopting a participatory and data-driven strategy. The main objectives of the project to this end included the following, as formulated at the beginning:

- to put forward a comprehensive and pluralistic overview of the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with language education research aiming specifically for reviewing the knowledge domain of interculturality with a major emphasis on the major lines of theoretical and methodological thinking involved and exploring the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs and their research-related needs,
- to empower ECRs involved in language education research to develop a critical and reflexive mindset and to carry out research studies that are both sensitive and responsive to the inherent diversity and underlying interculturality,
- to create a sustainable open online course platform consisting of a website and a learning management system supported by enriched subject-specific content for continuous self-directed researcher development and networking.

The achievement of these objectives has required a multifaceted methodology, incorporating a variety of approaches and methods. In order to produce a comprehensive and pluralistic overview of the field of interculturality, *systematic literature review* was employed. This methodology involved systematically gathering, reviewing, analyzing, and organizing scholarly literature to construct a broad and inclusive overview of the field, with an exclusive focus on its intersections with language education. Given the theoretical

plurality characterizing the field of interculturality, with the purpose of exploring the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs and their research-related needs along these lines, a *mixed-methods approach* has been adopted by developing a survey which aimed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

To equip participating ECRs with the knowledge and skills to carry out research studies that are both sensitive and responsive to the inherent diversity and underlying interculturality, an online study program was developed and implemented by following the steps of the *ADDIE model of instructional design*, encompassing Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation components. In this way, as Branch (2009) describes, a systematic approach to course development, ensuring that educational materials meet learners' needs effectively, has been ensured. The course development was grounded on the findings of the needs analysis, while at the same time aligning with the principles of *task-based learning*. The course incorporated a series of problem-oriented and research-oriented tasks, and designed to engage ECRs actively and foster the application of the knowledge and skills in authentic contexts.

The development of an inclusive, accessible and sustainable researcher development and engagement path for the early-career researchers was ultimately achieved by creating an online self-directed course platform by developing a *learner management system (LMS)*, adopting a *participatory approach*. Aligning with the principles of inclusivity, the primary objective behind employing a participatory approach was that involving users in the design process enhances the usability and relevance of technological systems, which in turn ensures that the LMS is tailored to meet the actual needs of its end-users, thereby increasing its effectiveness and user satisfaction.

Results and Outcomes

In order to attain the above stated objectives, the following results have been produced with a time period of 24 months during the project. First, a *tripartite data-driven review* of the field, including the review of the literature in the last decade, ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education and analysis of their research-related needs. The review of the literature sought to map and outline the theoretical, conceptual and methodological aspects of the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with the field of language education. The aim of the second core component was to capture ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education at a variety of levels ranging from the personal and institutional to the national and global levels, while the third component aimed to put forward ECRs' needs to be able to design and carry out research studies that are sensitive and responsive to the underlying interculturality. Altogether, such a review sought to serve as a comprehensive reference material for researchers, academics, students and policy-makers involved in the field.

Based on the findings of the review, a problem/task-based *online study program* was designed and implemented by offering a six-week three-module online intensive summer school for a select group of ECRs involved in language education. The first module involved synchronous joint sessions of core seminars and

workshops pertaining to the theoretical and methodological perspectives and issues of the field, the second module incorporated self-study days supported by interactive discussion, exchange and reflection sessions that were carried out simultaneously by the selected mentors and involved a joint round-table discussion at the end, and finally the third module composed of joint sessions focusing on case studies and problem-oriented and research-oriented tasks in light of the first two modules of the study program. This result aimed to develop and provide the selected ECRs with an online problem/task-based researcher development program through the use of case studies and problem-oriented and research-oriented tasks that comprise different issues from the field of interculturality and are connected to language education research. This rather small-scale interactive study program allowed piloting, testing and refining the main components of the content of the self-directed e-learning and networking platform in the third result, while empowering ECRs to carry out research studies that are both sensitive and responsive to the inherent diversity and underlying interculturality.

Drawing on the these two results, a *Digital Platform for Researcher E-learning & Networking*, comprising an online open self-directed e-learning component on interculturality and language education related issues, including embedded interactive e-portfolios, an online researcher's handbook and an interactive space for discussion and networking, was designed and developed. This digital platform is the ultimate result of the EUREDIE project, offering a massive open online self-directed e-learning course centered around the issues of interculturality, inclusion, diversity and language education for the early-career researchers (ECRs) involved in the related fields. This result also includes an online open-access handbook which draws and describes a conceptual landscape that addresses how the theories attempt to explain interculturality, entails both the new perspectives regarding various facets of interculturality achieved throughout the study program, and maps a variety of research frames and perspectives together with a user manual for self-directed e-learning. This result is intended to increase capacity for wider, accessible, self-directed development of the ECRs to promote diversity, inclusion and equity in a critical and reflexive manner.

Overall, the production of these results has accordingly intended to achieve the following outcomes:

- a novel approach to address the many forms and aspects of diversity involved in language education and research
- increased capacity for the utilization of an open digital ecosystem for sustainable, inclusive, and easily-accessible researcher development and engagement path in a variety of fields involved in language education research
- increased knowledge and awareness of the role of interculturality in promoting social and linguistic diversity and greater understanding and engagement with inclusive and equitable knowledge production, among the ECRs involved in language education research.

Target Groups and Impact

To start with, while the results of EUREDIE were designed, developed and implemented with the participation of the partner

institutions and the participant ECRs, right from the beginning, they have been intended for application across Europe and beyond, anywhere where diversity and inclusion is an issue. In this respect, the expected impact of the project can be described at different levels:

The *ECRs,* who have participated in the online program and will engage the digital platform and the other project results in the future, are the main target groups of this project. The impact lies at their empowerment, equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills of interculturality, inclusion, and equity in language education. The nature and focus of their studies, their academic development, and their researcher identity will hopefully be enriched and improved along the lines of diversity, inclusion and equity. As these ECRs are the ones to shape the future of the related studies in the field, they are expected to utilize and implement the achieved perspectives in their own research activities, which in turn might ensure solid emphasis and evidence in the upcoming literature. Besides, given that these junior researchers will be academics in the near future, their involvement in the project activities and results is expected to help ECRs of today contribute to the development of the ECRS of tomorrow in gaining an intercultural approach and inclusion and equity principles. Through a sustainable platform that provides multi-user access, equal participation, content provision, and a supportive, guiding, and facilitating environment for new studies, ECRs will be able to follow good practices and posts closely. They will be able to seize appropriate opportunities for both content, structure, and cooperation for their future work. These working ethics and research habits will contribute to the academic bodies' (along with the teaching implementations) quality and success.

The *HEIs,* where these junior researchers are based, involve another major target group that EUREDIE aims to reach, including *students, academic faculty and administrative staff.* The users and beneficiaries of the digital platform and other project results including the present book are expected to contribute to transform their own contexts through increased awareness of interculturality, diversity, and equity, gained knowledge and skills on 'what', 'why', and 'how' of interculturality, diversity, and equity issues, further opportunities to conduct collaborative research on (at national and transnational levels), and expanded chances to lead a self-directed development and to share good practices with fellow researchers. It must also be noted that not all higher education institutions and academic bodies have the same and equal opportunities and facilities to conduct high-stake studies, which may lead to early career researchers getting crushed under the immense pressure of the 'publish or perish' principle.

Conclusion

The EUREDIE project represents a data-driven and participatory approach to addressing the challenges of increasing diversity and inequalities, by capitalizing on the opportunities presented by interculturality in language education. By focusing on the professional development of early-career researchers and leveraging the theoretical, conceptual and methodological landscape of interculturality, the project has navigated the complexities of cultural, linguistic, and educational diversity, aligning with the EU's vision of inclusive and equitable education.

The project's emphasis on participatory and transnational knowledge production processes also highlights the importance of collaborative and inclusive approaches in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education. The results and insights achieved throughout are expected to shape future practices and policies in language education, fostering a more inclusive, equitable, and culturally diverse academic environment.

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PART 1
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE INTERSECTIONS OF INTERCULTURALITY AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Background, Research Design and Procedures of the Literature Review

ABOUT the CHAPTER

A systematic review of the relevant literature on the topic of interculturality in language education is an important component of the EUREDIE Project. Its fundamental aim is to map and outline the theoretical, conceptual and methodological aspects of the field of interculturality with a particular focus on its intersections with the field of language education. Concurrently, it is expected to provide Early Career Researchers (ECRs) who work on the subject of interculturality in the field of linguistics, communication and literature with a state-of-the-art of the research field and to support them in their engagement with interculturality-sensitive research. This chapter will present the process in its entirety, stating its rationale and significance, describing the construction of the corpus and methodological approach and procedures in detail and with reference to the aims of the project.

Keywords: literature review, interculturality, language education, early career researcher, methodology.

Introduction

The EUREDIE project has produced three major results, the first of which is the tripartite report on the field of interculturality in language education, that is embodied in the present book. The other two include the development and implementation of a problem/task-based online study program through a six-week three-module online intensive summer school for a select group of early-career researchers (ECRs) involved in language education and a digital platform for researcher e-learning & networking offering a massive open online self-directed e-learning course centered around the issues of interculturality, inclusion, diversity and language education for the ECRs involved in the related fields.

Result 1 of EUREDIE includes three main components: review of the literature, a study on ECRs' perception of interculturality in language education, and an analysis of the research-related needs of ECRs. As part of the first result, this chapter focuses on the methodology of the literature review while the results are mainly addressed in chapters 3 and 4. What follows is a discussion of the rationale and significance of the study and then a detailed description of the processes and procedures of the methodology employed in the literature review.

The Rationale and Significance of the Study

The rationale behind this literature review lies in the contemporary plurality of theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives within the interculturality-language education nexus. The long-held essentialist approaches to culture and interculturality have been significantly challenged in the last three decades, and brought about a diversity and plethora of theoretical, conceptual and methodological perspectives to the field (see also Chapter 1). This was also accompanied with the explosion in the amount of research and knowledge available in general. It should also be noted that, due to the rapidly changing cultural dynamics in the world and the developments in the field of information and communication technologies, the relationship between culture and communication are also changing, which have a major impact on language and interculturality research and lead to drastic developments. In this context, a systematic review of this particular field was viewed to be necessary to outline the major lines of thinking and researching.

It is needless to say that it is possible to locate a number of studies that have already carried out systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses of the studies in the literature. One of the oldest ones is the "Meta-Analysis of Intercultural Communication Competence Research" by Bradford, Allen and Beisser in 2000, which explored the association between past studies on intercultural communication effectiveness and intercultural communication competence, and examined the relationship between knowledge-based

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and skill-based attributes in predicting intercultural communication competence within a corpus of 16 quantitative studies. One of the latest ones is a qualitative meta-analysis of intercultural research, with a major focus on computer-mediated, synchronic, oral interactions between language learners from different countries from the perspective of intercultural communicative competences (Clavel-Arroitia & Pennock-Speck, 2023). Another study includes a meta-analysis of the relationship between study abroad and intercultural competence, in which 72 studies that included a pre-test and post-test measure of intercultural competence in a study abroad program were reviewed (Burrow, 2019). In a similar vein, Shadiev and Sintawati (2020) reviewed twenty-five articles on intercultural learning supported by technology published between 2014 and 2019. Elias and Mansouri (2020) also reported the findings of a systematic review of studies on interculturalism and intercultural dialogue which included a corpus of 351 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters published over the period 2000–2017.

Even a cursory scan of these reviews of the literature would yet demonstrate that each of them is understandably limited in different ways, ranging from the type of studies reviewed and a focus on a particular aspect of the topic in question to scope and time span, which makes the present literature review highly timely and necessary. Against this backdrop, the literature review here has been carried out with the main purpose of mapping and outlining the theoretical, conceptual and methodological landscape in the field of interculturality with a particular focus on its intersections with the field of language education in the last decade, which in turn would inform the other two results of the project- online study program and the digital platform for researcher e-learning & networking. Specifically, the research question addressed in the review is as follows: What are the major theoretical, conceptual and methodological themes and trends in the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with the field of language education from 2012 to 2022?

Methodological Framework

Approach

The approach to literature review adopted in this study can be broadly defined as systematic and descriptive. Systematic reviews refer to a method of making sense of large bodies of information, mapping out areas of certainty/uncertainty, identifying where little or no relevant research has been done and where new studies are needed, and providing different perspectives on questions addressed (Howell Major, & Savin-Baden, 2012; Petticrew & Roberts, 2006) Systematic reviews follow well-defined and transparent steps, requiring the components of the definition of the question or problem, identification and critical appraisal of the available evidence, synthesis of the findings and the drawing of relevant conclusions (Boland, et al., 2017).

Our approach was systematic in that it aimed to include all findable articles that were written about the topic in question as much as possible, unlike other types of literature reviews which tend to use literature selectively. It also included the above-mentioned components throughout. Furthermore, in line with the research question of the review, no "hierarchies of evidence" or "typologies of evidence", which would require a selection of particular types of studies and/or particular study designs, were applied (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006: 58-60).

In this respect, as can be seen in Diagram 1 above, following the clarification of the research/review question, the review's inclusion criteria were set, the corpus of the review was constructed by locating and archiving the included studies, and finally a four-stage review and analysis procedure was carried out, including (i) creation of the descriptive reviews for each study, (ii) initial inductive coding, (iii) identification of recurring themes and trends on a yearly basis, and lastly (iv) narrative synthesis of the findings together with descriptive mapping of the trends and themes. Throughout these stages, the data was tabulated and analyzed in numerous ways to be able to identify cross-cutting themes and explore points of convergence and divergence across the data.

Corpus

The method of our research commenced with the construction of a corpus, a collection of the literature in the field under study. The first phase in the creation of the corpus of the relevant literature included the specification of the criteria for their selection and inclusion in the corpus. To do so, first a search span was selected from 2012 to 2022 - albeit until summer of 2022, when the collection was started, to be able to gear the focus towards the state-of-the-art of the field This was followed by the identification of the key words to ensure the relevance of the texts in our corpus. The list of the key words included interculturality, transculturality, intercultural/transcultural communication/competence/awareness, accompanied by another set of key words containing primarily language education/teaching/learning, as can be seen in Figure 1 below:
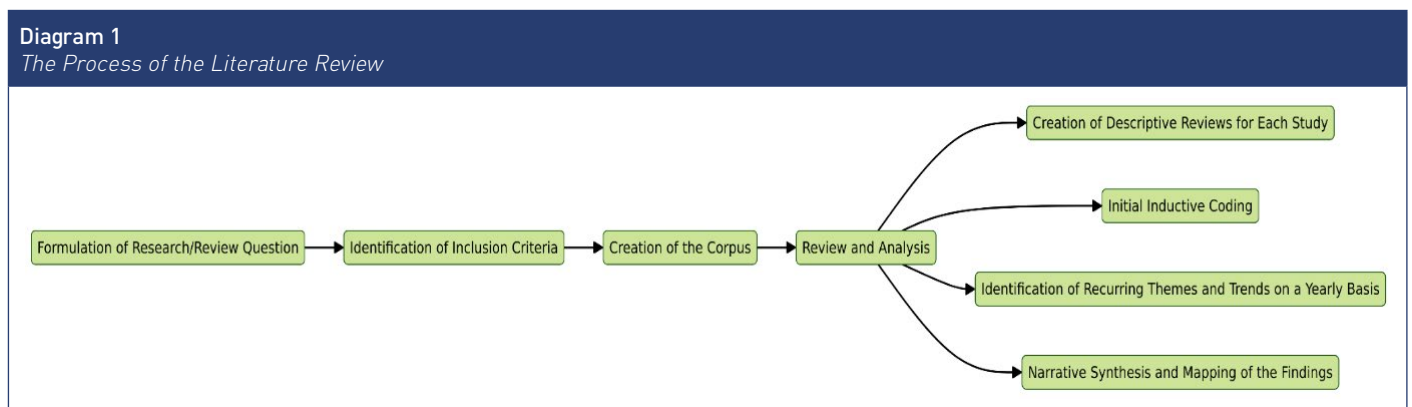
Diagram 1
The Process of the Literature Review

Figure 1
Keywords

The initial search utilizing these key words within the selected time span yielded a great number of papers and manuscripts, which was impossible to review and analyze. Therefore, we had to include further criteria to narrow it down with a focus on the publication/text type and the database and indexes, as can be seen in the following table (Table 1). A note of caution is in order, though. Any selection and/or inclusion process inherently involves excluding others, and, despite its necessity in order to draw the boundaries of the scope of the work, this may create potential gaps. In this regard, the present literature review had to leave out, for instance, the conference proceedings, non-indexed papers and dissertations that might provide valuable perspectives, insights and ideas. Furthermore, some very influential scholars in the field of intercultural communication, whose works mostly laid the groundwork for the studies within the interculturality-language education nexus, have also been excluded from this corpus.

The initial corpus included a total of 333 articles, 45 books and 15 book chapters. Yet, in the following phases, some works were excluded from the corpus due to the accessibility and/or relevance issues. As such, the final corpus consisted of a total of 315 articles, 37 books and 10 book chapters. Then, a table was created featuring the title, author(s), publication year, source of the publication, type of the publication, the database and the index of each work, the list of which was then further categorized according to its year and type of publication. This was followed by the creation of an archive including all the studies to be reviewed and analyzed.

The *first phase* of the analysis process included the readings of the selected corpus, with the purpose of creating a descriptive review for each item in the corpus, rather than relying on the abstracts in accordance with the aims of the literature review. A review template was created with a focus on four broad themes of: theoretical and conceptual framework/orientation, research question(s) and methodology, findings and/or new perspectives/insights, and the overall conclusion together with suggestions for further research. A sample review is presented in Figure 2 below for illustrative purposes.

Once the reading and review process was completed by the participants of each team of the project, in the *second phase*, the initial coding was implemented in order to identify the recurring topics and themes that emerge from the corpus, which yielded the following list. The initial coding was inductive in nature in that it included all diverse and/or alternating recurring elements appearing in the corpus.

- Intercultural Competence
- Intercultural Communicative Competence
- Critical Intercultural Awareness
- Cultural Representation
- Role of Culture in Foreign Language Teaching
- Otherness
- Identity
- English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
- English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
- Study Abroad
- Internationalization of Higher Education
- Citizenship Education
- Technology

These topics and themes were then sorted into three main categories and their subcategories, as can be seen in Table 2 below. This categorization provided an overview of the topics that occurred most frequently in relation to interculturality in language education research in the years between 2012 and 2022. This was followed by the tabulation of the corpus items according to these categories.

Following the initial coding, the data set was analyzed in more

Review and Analysis Procedures

Table 1
Inclusion Criteria for the Construction of the Corpus

Key Words	Time Span	Publication Type	Databases	Indexes
interculturality, transculturality, intercultural/ transcultural communication/ competence/ awareness accompanied by language education/teaching/ learning (not only English but also other languages	2012-2022	Book-length manuscripts, book chapters, handbooks, encyclopedia entries, and articles (i.e. Research articles, theoretical articles, review articles)	SCOPUS, Jstor, Google Scholar, ProQuest, EBSCO, ERIC, Web of Science, DOAJ, Open DOAR	Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), SSCI-Expanded and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)

Figure 2
A Sample Descriptive Review

Item Number (according to the final list)	323
Title of the article / book	Creating a virtual "third space" in a telecollaborative project to promote English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' language proficiency and intercultural awareness
Publication year	2022
Author(s)	Hui-Chin Yeh & Leechin Heng
Theory / Concept / Problem addressed	Telecollaborations afford language learners opportunities to interact with people from different countries around the world, targeting their communicative and intercultural adaptability, but research that focus on telecollaboration has mostly lent itself to the study of knowledge acquisition with particular emphasis on the development of reading and writing skills and learning Standard English. There is a need to expand that focus in order to create a telecollaborative virtual "third space" (Bhabha, 2017) as a meeting point of different cultures for language learners to not only improve language proficiency covering all language skills but also establish intercultural awareness. This study addresses this need in the Taiwanese setting.
Aims and objectives	The study examines how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' language proficiency and intercultural awareness, and the insights learners have gained from telecollaboration.
Methodology, e.g., research design, tools, participants, etc.	Participants: A total of 32 third-year university students from a university in Taiwan enrolled in a required EFL course and 23 and 9 first/second-year CAL university students from Australia and New Zealand respectively enrolled in Chinese major courses, took part in the study. The students were divided into 23 transnational pairs, with one from either Australia or New Zealand teaming up with a student from Taiwan. Procedures: In the five-week collaborative interchange, entitled WOWME, students in their respective groups were required to collaborate on a bilingual digital media production such as podcast, video, or e-brochure to be shared through Google drive. Data: Data were gathered from online interchanges, reflective essays, responses to open-ended questions that were included in E-Portfolios and which served as a summative assessment to evaluate the learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the course, and digital media output produced by participants in Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand. Data Analysis: As the study aimed to investigate the effects of creating a "third space" for Taiwanese students to engage in language exchange and intercultural learning opportunities, only their responses to the summative evaluation questions in their E-portfolios and their reflective essays were analyzed qualitatively through content analysis (Patton, 2014).
Findings	To answer the first research question of how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' language proficiency, the summative assessments in the Taiwanese learners' E-portfolios reveal that corresponding with their native English-speaking teammates in the third space enabled them to develop confidence in English communication and "practice English in a natural manner", codeswitching at times, which would be unacceptable in the classroom setting, and focusing exclusively on the intent of communication (6).
	To answer the second research question of how telecollaboration enhances EFL learners' intercultural awareness, data suggest that telecollaboration encouraged English learners to inquire about their teammates' cultures, allowing them to challenge their initial assumptions and encouraging them to learn about different cultures. To answer the third research question regarding the insights learners have gained from telecollaboration, data show that differences in time zones and problems related to vocabulary use were challenging for the Taiwanese learners.
Conclusion (For theoretical papers) new perspectives, re-definitions, new challenges, etc.	The results of this study confirm that telecollaboration activities provide valuable opportunities to interact with people from different linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds, who at first are "different" from themselves mostly based on the understanding of culture that is bound to national identity. Through participating in the "third space", learners were able to discover similar cultural norms and practices despite the differences in their nationalities. Moreover, as EFL and CFL learners interacted and gained intercultural experiences on an equal basis and were introduced to each other's sociocultural norms and practices, the deeply held notion of Western cultural imperialism underlying internationalization was countered. Overall, the study validates that telecollaboration activities suitable serve the goal of language learning which is to be able to use it to achieve one's communication purposes in real life settings. Thus, it extends knowledge transmission that is traditionally limited to the classroom instruction and use of coursebooks. Despite the time differences and preferred communicative styles infused with different accents, participants learnt to become more flexible and autonomous as they developed strategies to overcome challenges in communication.
Suggested further research	Firstly, future studies might investigate how similar projects conducted over a longer period of time might impact learners' learning outcomes and experiences. Secondly, their scope might be expanded to include foreign language learners in a variety of other countries and at different ages. Lastly, considering that technological development is an ongoing process, future studies may be focused on different modes and designs of telecollaborative spaces using advanced communicative tools for learners to come together from diverse backgrounds to engage in intercultural exchanges, of academic, scientific or recreational nature.

Table 2
Categories of the Emergent Topics in the Corpus

Conceptual issues	Cultural essentialization Culture as an evolving concept Communities of practice Intercultural understanding Intercultural communication Identity Cultural awareness Critical language awareness
Pedagogical issues	Intercultural education Intercultural language teaching Affordable methodologies Teacher education
Technological developments	Online communication Digital tools

depth in *the third phase* which yielded categories to allow more insight into the data and to map out the recurring themes and trends on a yearly basis, helping track down the changes and developments in the field of interculturality in language education. During this phase, each descriptive review was treated as a unit of analysis and coded with reference to models/theories addressed and/or adopted, schools of thought/paradigms, data collection and analysis procedures employed in methodology, key ideas and perspectives, simultaneously or sequentially, and then tabulated in the form of tables according to these codes. The following figures (Figure 3 and Figure 4) illustrate two types of tabulation of the studies in the years 2018 and 2019 respectively. The tabulated studies were then sorted into a chronological list and organized into two major periods, 2012-2016 (n= 184 articles, 13 books, and 7 chapters) and 2017-2022 (n= 131 articles, 24 books and 3 chapters), to be able to track down the evolution and/or stability in the identified areas.

Figure 3
A Sample Tabulation and Coding-1

Key Categories of Analysis (Year 2018)	Book 14	Chapter 11	Article No 195	Article No 196	Article No 197	Article No 198	Article No 199
Major models/theories	a different approach to the theoretical rational and methodological designs typically used to investigate cultural understanding in reading, in particular foreign language reading models, and approaches, which have emerged from „dialogic relationships between theory and practice, between teaching and learning, and between teacher and student".	Transcultural strategies for teaching English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP)writing, research design, and resistance to epistemic erasure	Interculturality, which has become very important to research on education over the past few decades, refers to interaction between representatives of different cultures rather than just learning about other cultures.	community-based service-learning for promoting interculturality	intercultural education is to attain a developing and sustainable way of living together in multicultural societies through the development of respect and dialogue between different cultural groups (UNESCO, 2006), and intersubjectivity refers to the ability to adopt the perspective of others which is different from one's own.	classroom is seen as a privileged space where GCE can be promoted as it has the potential to foster "intercultural communication among citizens in multicultural societies and in a global world"	(CLIL), has the development of interculturalism included in its theoretical background. This is in line with initiatives that are based on the internationalization of education, 21st century educational goals, and educational policies at supra-national levels (Knight, 2003), that promote intercultural education (IE) and incorporation of its principles in the curriculum.
Prominent authors (recurrently cited)		Pennycook (1997) Dewey's Corcoran and Englander (2016)	(Abdallah-Pretceille 2013; Holliday 2010).(Bauman and Raud 2015, pp. 9–10(Passarelli and Kolb 2012, p. 139).	(Byram, 1997) (Kramsch, 1998, p. 81)(Gorski, 2008; Porto & Byram, 2015), (Smolcic & Katurnich, 2017) (Dervin & Machart, 2015).	(Rommetveit, 1985)	(Evans, 2016) (Guilherme, 2002, p. 166).(Jordão & Fogaça, 2008; Nakamura, 2002; Porto, 2014; Tarasheva, 2008).	(Méndez-García, 2013; Sudhoff, 2010).Byram's (1997) Bouchard's (2010) and Pasquale's (2015)Portera, 2008
Key ideas/concepts/terms	pedagogical approach to reading an alternative approach to reading literary texts for intercultural understanding.The various intercultural competencies required for intercultural communication; Integrated approaches to language and culture learning; The role of reflection, critical thinking, and destabilization in intercultural learning; values, beliefs, and stereotypes cultural differences	Transcultural strategies for teaching ERPP writing, research design, and resistance to epistemic erasure	Experiential learning and interculturality in teacher education process, fluidity and diversities,diverse diversities;	mediate intercultural (with others) and intracultural (with self) encounters in diverse classrooms global citizens, intercultural and mediation skills self-awareness, empathy, humility and change.	intercultural education and intersubjectivity intersubjectivity can be defined as an agreement between interlocutors entering a dialogue with different views immigrants multicultural education acceptance of diversity	"citizens of the world" diversity, equity and citizenship.	Content and Language Integrated Learning intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Figure 3
A Sample Tabulation and Coding-1

	TOPICS	CONCEPTS/MODELS	CONTEXTS	PARTICIPANTS	RESEARCH DESIGN	DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	DATA ANALYSIS
C14	Intercultural Competence	Deardoff's Model of IC	Higher education	Chinese learners of Italian	Mixed Methods	Survey, Reflections & Oberservations	Descriptive analysis & thematic analysis
B18	Glocal Languages & Critical Intercultural Awareness	Guilherme's Glocademics model & Byram's model of CIA	Higher education in Brazil with a focus on Portuguese, Spanish, English and Indigenous languages as glocal languages	N/A	N/A	Review of teaching & research projects, curricular analysis, theoretical analysis, discourse analysis, review of research and state-of-the-art	N/A
B19	Intercultural Competence	It links the existing literature to practical skills by converting models and cultural knowledge into practical skills with a focus on the concept of culture, cultural identity, cultural models and theories, intercultural communication and cultural conflicts					
A239	Intercultural Citizenship		Study abroad: EMI in international higher education in UK	Postgraduate Chinese students	Mixed Methods	Questionnaire, Interviews & Focus groups	Descriptive analysis & thematic analysis
A240	ELF users/speakers in the context of Multilingualism & Transnationalism	Jenkins' ELF theory	Gymanisum in Berlin	five German-Turkish high school students	Qualitative: linguistic ethnographic study	semi-structured interview	local, translocal, and transnational scales as an analytical tool
A241	Plurilingualism and Translanguaging Practices		High school in Colombia	1 EFL teacher	Case study: classroom experience informed by a social-justice approach to teaching English	Not specified	Not specified
A242	Transcultural Approach to ELT	Byram	Internationalisation at Home (IAH)- secondary school- Spain & Poland	ninety-five learners of English who stayed in touch throughout the project through Computer-Mediated Communication	Mixed Methods	Semantic Differential Test (SDT), writing tasks	Thematic analysis & SPSS
A243	Intercultural Bilingual Education		Higher education in Colombia	two groups of teachers, five from a BA program in Bilingual Education from a private university in Bogota, and four from an indigenous school located on a reservation in Puerto Gaitan, Meta (Colombia)	Qualitative	focal groups, semi-structured interviews, and videos.	Taylor and Bogdan (1990): discover, codify, and revitalize.
A244	Intercultural Education & child language brokering (CLB)		Primary education in Spain: multicultural classes including immigrant students	30 teachers	Qualitative	Surveys and semi-structured interviews	Not specified

In the *fourth* and final *phase*, drawing on the results of the first two, the descriptive reviews, and when necessary, the original studies, were read thoroughly or selectively once again for narrative synthesis of the findings of the analysis. The aim was to identify the interpretable trends or draw overall conclusions about the existing conceptualizations, methods and findings, which then resulted in the descriptive mapping of the field along these lines. The trends in these areas were coded according to the scheme of key theories and concepts, research methodologies and emergent perspectives and insights. In doing so, a representation of the state-of-the-art within the interculturality-language education nexus from 2012 to 2022 was achieved. The results of the analysis and synthesis across the two periods are presented in the next section.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to describe methodology utilized for conducting a literature review in the field of interculturality in language education. The approach is meticulously designed to construct a comprehensive corpus, with clear inclusion criteria and a structured four-stage analysis process to ensure a thorough

examination of the literature from 2012 to 2022. It has emphasized the importance of systematicity and depth in reviewing literature to understand the evolving landscapes of theoretical, conceptual, and methodological trends in interculturality within language education.

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A Review of Studies between 2012-2016

ABOUT the CHAPTER

This chapter offers a comprehensive review of scholarly literature within the interculturality-language education nexus from 2012 to 2016, examining a systematically selected collection of 184 articles, 13 books, and 7 chapters. The review uncovers the major themes and trends in the theoretical conceptual and methodological landscape as revealed in the reviewed literature, identifying an underlying shift from traditional, static views of culture to a dynamic, fluid, process-oriented understanding. The key theories and concepts concentrate within three broad categories, including criticality, digitalization and inclusion, reflecting the impact of globalization on educational paradigms. The reviewed literature also reveals a broadening and diversification of research methodologies over time, transitioning from primarily qualitative methods to more integrated, ethically grounded, and technologically informed mixed-methods approaches. The emergent perspectives and insights from the reviewed literature point to the need to bridge gaps in practice and theory, and enhance interculturality in a diversely interconnected educational landscape with its full complexity.

Keywords: language education, interculturality, globalization, literature review, descriptive research

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of interculturality and language education, understanding the breadth and depth of research is crucial for advancing knowledge and practice. The last two decades has witnessed a significant proliferation of scholarly work that has shaped and defined current understandings in this field. Understanding the contributions and discussions during this era is essential for anyone seeking to grasp the current state and future directions in the field. The primary reason behind this literature review covering the last decade from 2012 to 2022 is to put forward a comprehensive and pluralistic overview of the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with language education research, aiming specifically for reviewing the knowledge domain of interculturality with a major emphasis on the major lines of theoretical and methodological thinking involved.

This paper particularly focuses on the research conducted from 2012 to 2016, encompassing a selected set of 184 articles, 13 books, and 7 chapters on the intersections of interculturality and language education. This diverse collection of sources is aimed to provide a broad yet detailed perspective, covering various dimensions and viewpoints within the field and capturing the richness and diversity of thought and research. Given that the methodology adopted for this literature review is described in the previous chapter, this chapter aims to outline and describe the theoretical, conceptual and methodological themes, trends and directions in the reviewed literature.

Grounded within the interface between interculturality and language education, the analysis will first focus on the evolution of the concepts of culture and interculturality in the reviewed literature. This analysis will not only highlight the foundational concepts that prevailed at the beginning of this period but also trace the emergence of new theories and pedagogical approaches that have gained prominence towards the end of this era. This is going to be followed by analysis of major theories and concepts addressed in the literature as well as the methodological trends and tendencies and concluded with the discussion of the emergent perspectives and insights, as revealed in the reviews.

Conceptualization of Culture and Interculturality: An Evolving Landscape

The evolution in the conceptualization of culture and interculturality emerges as a significant theme across a great number of studies in the reviewed literature, as can be

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inferred even from the names of the studies in the Appendix 1. The literature reflects a great variety of terminology especially including the 'intercultural', ranging from awareness, competence, understanding, communication, development, teaching, learning, and education. It must also be noted that the models of intercultural competence/awareness by Bennet (1986, 1993, 2017), Byram (1997, 2012), and Deardoff (2006) recurrently appear in the studies. The undercurrent discussion among these studies point to an explicit paradigmatic shift in the conceptualization of culture and interculturality, which increasingly acknowledge their fluidity, dynamism, and complexity.

The reviewed literature in 2012 suggests a departure from the conceptualization of *culture as information and facts* about so-called target culture, while still acknowledging that issues of culture are integral to the processes of language teaching and learning. Aligning mostly with the traditional understanding that language and culture are closely intertwined, the language classroom is seen as an ideal environment for developing *intercultural communicative competence* (ICC), engaging learners and teachers in multilingual and multicultural practices. This approach is usually underpinned by the notion of *critical cultural awareness* (Byram, 1997), extending the role of culture in preparing language learners for intercultural communication. However, especially in the context of ELT, the reviews also acknowledge the challenges in correlating the language with a specific culture or nation, given the role of English as a global lingua franca in diverse cultural contexts, calling for a re-evaluation of critical cultural awareness in light of the fluid communicative practices of English in its global context (see, for instance, Jackson, 2012; Sharifian & Maryam, 2012 in the Appendix 1).

The reviews of 2013 suggest a shift in the conceptualization of culture from traditional, static, and essentialist views to a more dynamic, process-oriented, and strategic understanding. Culture is seen not as a fixed set of characteristics but as something actively constructed and engaged within intercultural communication and interaction (see, for instance, Dervin & Liddicoat, 2013; Hua, 2013; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013 in the Appendix 1). In this respect, three significantly emergent themes in the reviewed articles can be identified as *'culture as a verb'*, *'culture as a discursive construct'* and *'culture as a strategic tool'*. It can be inferred from the reviews that the traditional perspective that views culture as something solid, comprising essential traits or characteristics that people or groups 'have', has been challenged, advocating for understanding culture as a verb, something people 'do' rather than possess. This perspective moves away from treating culture as a fixed set of attributes and instead sees it as an active, dynamic process in everyday life. In a similar vein, culture is conceptualized as being constructed through discourse, which establishes and maintains boundaries between people. These boundaries are often expressed in binary oppositions like male/female or native/non-native. This view highlights the problem of treating culture as a static construct based on the notion of difference, emphasizing that cultures are not distinct entities with separate identities but are rather constructed through social discourse and interaction. In addition the reviewed articles discuss the strategic use of cultural differences. Rather than simply resisting or embracing cultural differences, it suggests considering under what circumstances these differences can be strategically used to open up or close down possibilities for human action. This perspective treats culture not just as a static background against which human action takes place but as a dynamic element that can be actively engaged with and manipulated in intercultural interactions.

Regarding the conceptualization of interculturality, the reviews reflect the shift in the conceptualization of culture in two major ways. First of all, reflecting the polysemic nature of interculturality, the concept of 'intercultural' is mostly discussed as having multiple and varied interpretations, and challenges the researchers to position themselves within these diverse definitions and approaches. The reviews suggest a notion of *'renewed' interculturality*, which seeks to move away from differentialist and individualist biases and focus on exceptions, instabilities, and processes rather than structures. Secondly, the reviews highlight a clear trajectory in language education from focusing on teaching culture to developing intercultural competence, which often challenge reified notions of culture and suggest a more holistic and experiential approach to understanding and engaging with cultural diversity. Overall, the reviewed work suggests a dynamic and evolving understanding of interculturality.

In the reviewed literature of 2014, culture is mostly conceptualized as an integral part of one's identity, much like language. Similarly, intercultural communication is conceptualized as a process that emphasizes the capacity of speakers to recognize and engage in dialogical relationships between the dominant categories, norms, values, beliefs, and discourses of the cultures involved and involves configuring a complex and dynamic space that hybridizes these cultures. The emergent *process approach to interculturality* foregrounds *questions of identity*, highlighting the significance of understanding and navigating the diverse and often complex cultural landscapes that individuals encounter in communication.

The reviewed literature in 2015 presents an understanding of culture as dynamic, non-essentialist, and actively constructed in intercultural communication contexts. This conceptualization reflects a more *fluid approach to culture*, recognizing its complexity and the impact of global, national, and local influences. In the reviewed literature, culture is seen as complex and fluid given that language users draw on, construct, and move between global, national, and local orientations towards cultural characterizations. This view challenges traditional representations of culture, especially those centered predominantly on nation-states, which have been prevalent in language teaching practices. The relationship between language and culture is thus conceptualized as situated and emergent, acknowledging the dynamic and changing nature of cultural identities and expressions.

This involves moving away from viewing culture as a fixed, solid set of traits or characteristics that people "have" to understanding culture as something people "do." This perspective challenges the essentialist view of culture, emphasizing its active, verb-like nature in everyday life, and moves towards *non-essentialist views*. Culture is also conceptualized in terms of the discursive construction of categories of people, often framed in binary oppositions like male/female or native/non-native. This perspective underlines the problems with treating culture as a static construct based on the notion of difference, as it implies that different cultures have distinctive, separate *identities*. It advocates for a view of culture

as constantly changing, avoiding essentialism and reductionism. This approach critically questions the simplifications prevalent in ELT classrooms and suggests that formulations of intercultural competence should eschew simplistic cultural characterizations.

In a similar vein, interculturality is conceptualized with an emphasis on its *dynamic* nature, focusing on the development of competence and sensitivity to cultural nuances and interactions, rather than merely acquiring factual knowledge about different cultures. This shift reflects a more *holistic and experiential approach* to understanding and engaging with cultural diversity, with courses offering competence in intercultural communication and incorporating sophisticated models to analyze discourse in intercultural communication. These models consider the situatedness and interpersonal positioning in human interaction, moving beyond reified notions of culture.

In the conceptualization of culture, the reviewed literature in 2016 emphasized the context of the *internationalization of Higher Education Institutions* (HEIs) with an increasing focus on the context of *study abroad*. This process, driven by globalization, aims to include an international, global, and intercultural dimension in HEIs' education. It seeks to enhance the quality of education and research to contribute to society. It is suggested that internationalization may involve close bonds between culture and language development. The desired outcomes include developing skills like knowledge and appreciation for various cultures, openness to diversity, and the ability to comfortably interact with others. These skills are collectively termed as *international and intercultural competences*. In a similar vein, intercultural communication is conceptualized as a critical dimension in foreign language education, particularly in preparing students to function in international contexts. The reviewed literature highlights the importance of teaching the intercultural dimension in these settings. It is seen that using English for international communication with non-native speakers and people worldwide presents numerous

opportunities for intercultural learning. The study abroad programs and internationalized campuses are viewed as culturally diverse contexts that offer opportunities for intercultural learning, including language learning and the development of intercultural communicative competence.

The table above demonstrates the key features of the conceptual development regarding culture and interculturality over the years. Overall, it is possible to identify a common thread that runs through these trends in the evolution of the conceptualization of culture and interculturality from 2012 to 2016: the increasing recognition of the fluidity, dynamism, and complexity of culture and intercultural communication, key aspects of which include:

- Dynamic and Process-Oriented View: Over these years, there's a clear shift from seeing culture as a static set of information or traits to understanding it as a dynamic, active process. This change reflects a growing recognition that culture is not a fixed entity but something that evolves and is actively constructed through social interactions and communication.
- Integration of Culture with Identity: Increasingly, culture is seen as integral to personal and collective identity. This perspective acknowledges that individuals' cultural experiences and expressions are deeply intertwined with their sense of self and belonging.
- Focus on Intercultural Competence: There's a trend towards emphasizing intercultural competence over mere knowledge of cultural facts. This shift suggests a broader understanding of interculturality as involving skills such as empathy, communication, and the ability to navigate cultural differences effectively. It must also be noted that there's a noticeable evolution in how intercultural competence is conceptualized and taught. Early years focus on reflexivity and constructivist perspectives, while later years emphasize transcultural development and intercultural communication competence, reflecting a more dynamic and complex understanding of intercultural interactions.

Table 1
Key Features Emerged in the Conceptualization of Culture and Interculturality between 2017-2022

Year	Conceptualization of Culture: Key Features	Conceptualization of Interculturality: Key Features
2012	Culture began moving away from being just information and facts, aligning with the traditional view that language and culture are closely intertwined.	Focused on developing intercultural communicative competence in language classrooms, acknowledging challenges in correlating language with a specific culture.
2013	Shifted from static and essentialist views to a more dynamic, process-oriented, and strategic understanding, characterized as 'culture as a verb'.	Evolved to reflect multiple interpretations, moving away from differentialist and individualist biases, and focusing on developing intercultural competence.
2015	Presented as dynamic, non-essentialist, and actively constructed in intercultural communication contexts, challenging traditional nation-state representations.	Focused on developing intercultural competence and sensitivity, advocating for a holistic approach to understanding and engaging with cultural diversity.
2014	Conceptualized as an integral part of one's identity, akin to language. Intercultural communication emphasized engaging in dialogical relationships.	Highlighted the significance of navigating diverse cultural landscapes in communication, considering identity in the context of culture and interculturality.
2015	Presented as dynamic, non-essentialist, and actively constructed in intercultural communication contexts, challenging traditional nation-state representations.	Focused on developing intercultural competence and sensitivity, advocating for a holistic approach to understanding and engaging with cultural diversity.
2016	Emphasized in the context of the internationalization of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), driven by globalization, focusing on developing various skills.	Conceptualized as critical in foreign language education, particularly in preparing students for international contexts, emphasizing teaching the intercultural dimension.

- Impact of Globalization and Internationalization: The trends show an increased awareness of the role of globalization and internationalization, particularly in education. This awareness brings to the forefront the need for cultural and intercultural understanding in a globalized world where interactions across cultural boundaries are common.
- Holistic and Experiential Approaches: There is a move towards more holistic and experiential approaches in teaching and learning interculturality. This approach recognizes the importance of engaging with culture and interculturality in ways that are meaningful and reflective of real-world complexities.

Major Theories and Concepts: Trends and Themes

The analysis of major theories and concepts addressed in the reviewed literature from 2012 to 2016 reveals a dynamic and transformative landscape, indicating a gradual but significant shift to more technologically integrated, critical and inclusive perspectives that are situated within the broader context of *globalization*. This shift can thus be interpreted as illustrating the fields' responsiveness to the key challenges and opportunities presented by a rapidly changing world, characterized by increased global interconnectedness, the pervasive influence of digital technology, and a heightened awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity. This dynamic and transformative theoretical and conceptual landscape has revealed three broad trends- digitalization, criticality and diversity-inclusion, which is presented in Figure 1 together with their key themes.

Yet, before moving to these trends and themes, it must first be noted that the selected literature also reflects- albeit scarcely, three major constants of the overall literature of language education, in relation to their interplay with interculturality. The first

category is the teaching methods and approaches addressed in relation to the development of intercultural competence and/or learning. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), constructivist approaches and bi/multilingual education seem to take the lead among them (see, for instance, García, 2012; Lau, 2015; Ramirez, 2012; Rodrigez & Puyal, 2012; Stranger-Johannessen, 2015; Suwannoppharat & Chinokul, 2015).

Furthermore, there are also studies which exclusively focus on the role of such cognitive and affective factors as motivation, anxiety and memory in the development of intercultural competence as well as the cultural content and representation in textbooks (Awayed-Bishara, 2015; Bozzo, 2014; Kanat-Mutluoğlu, 2016; McEown, Noels & Saumure, 2014; Rashidi. & Meihami, 2016; Torres & Turner, 2014; Wenninger & Kiss, 2013). Finally, the last category involves the studies that focus on the intersections of language skills and competencies such as reading, listening, vocabulary, grammar and pragmatics with interculturality (Escudero, 2013; House, 2012; Liddicoat, 2014; Valdeon, 2014; Wang, 2014; Zheng, Bischoff and Gilliland, 2015). In line with the purposes of the project, yet, the focus here is rather geared towards the state-of-the-art, while acknowledging the importance of the novel and critical perspectives in those studies.

Digitalization

In the reviewed literature, there's a clear evolution from traditional theoretical frameworks towards integrating digital tools and online platforms in language learning and teaching, especially noticeable from 2013 onwards and increasing in 2015 and 2016. This includes the use of ICT in language learning and the exploration of online platforms for language learning as vital components in

Figure 1
Trends and the associated themes in Interculturality in Language Education between 2012-2016
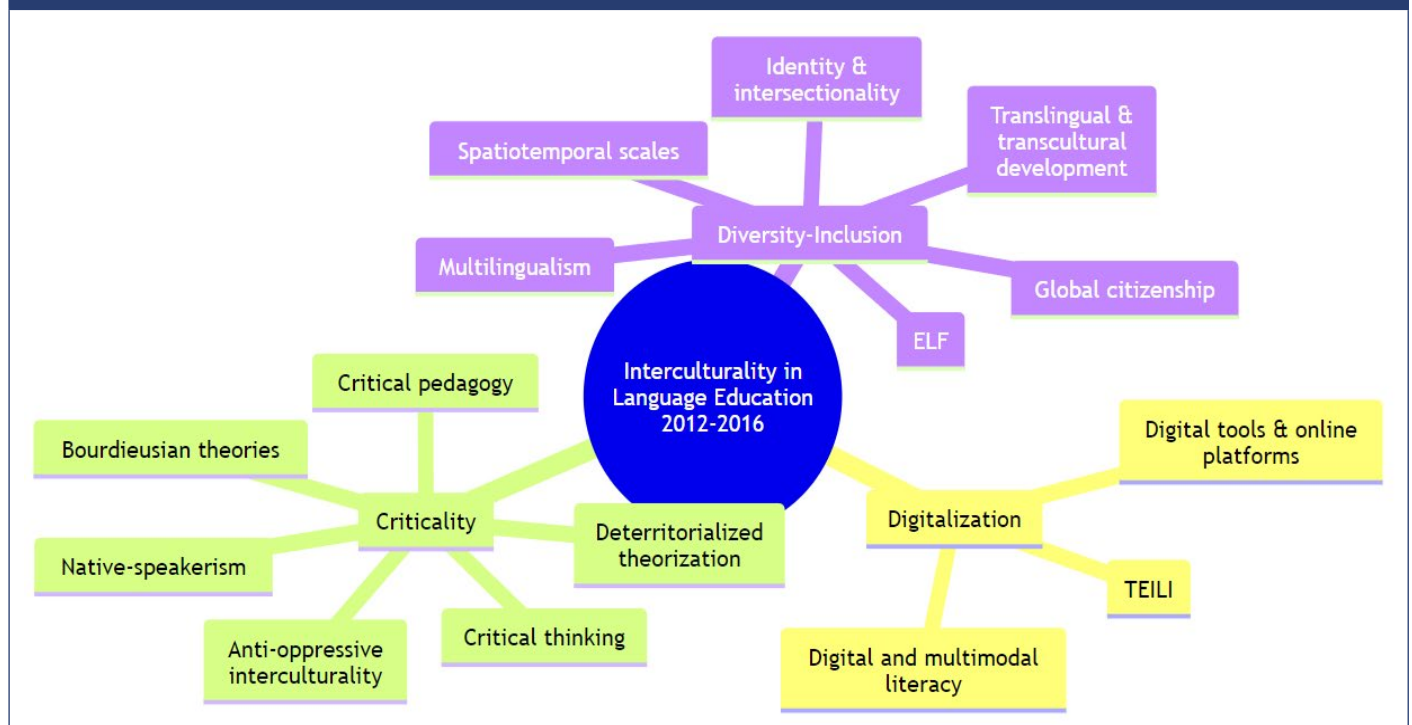
language education, offering new avenues and innovative ways for interactive and engaged language learning and enhancing global connectivity. *eTwinning, online gaming, telecollaboration, blogging, digital storytelling* and *video conferences* emerge as specific digital tools, facilitating cross-cultural collaboration and exchange among students and educators across Europe.

Toward the end of the 5-year period, the advancement of *digital and multimodal literacy* emerged, recognizing the importance of these skills in navigating the increasingly digital and interconnected world. Furthermore, integration of digital tools and online platforms transforms into *Technology-Enhanced Intercultural Language Learning (TEILI)*, arguing the effectiveness of TEILI in fostering linguistic competence and ICC, creating authentic language learning experiences that mirror real-life contexts. Overall, the digitalization movement in the literature reflects the omnipresence and persistence of ICT in the 21st-century global society, claiming to bridge geographical and cultural gaps, making language education more inclusive and accessible.

Criticality

The second trend, *criticality*, reflects a growing recognition and application of critical perspectives in both the theoretical and empirical literature. Among the major themes that emerge within this trend are expectedly *critical thinking* and *critical pedagogy*, which encourage educators to foster a learning environment where higher order thinking skills, reflection, reflexivity and questioning of societal norms are integral to the educational experience. Pierre *Bourdieusian theories*, providing a critical lens through which the intricate relationship between language, power, societal structures and individual agency could be examined, stands out to be another important theme.

Another key construct is the *anti-oppressive interculturality*, that seeks to dismantle the traditional narratives that often dominate educational discourse, recognizing oppressive relations, balancing individual agency with structural determinacy, and advocating for a more equitable and inclusive pedagogy that celebrates diversity and challenges systemic inequalities. *Deterritorialized theorization* in a similar vein calls for the deconstruction of conventional geopolitical assumptions, moving away from national and cultural reification and their implications for intercultural education. *Native-speakerism* also represents the increased criticality in the reviewed literature, addressing the biases, stereotypes and otherization often associated with native English speakers, and advocating a more equitable and diverse representation of language teachers.

Diversity and Inclusion

The last trend focuses on *diversity and inclusion*, deriving from the socio-cultural challenges including the increasingly complex linguistic and cultural diversity and the local-global tension. In this respect, the literature reflects a growing focus on such theoretical concepts as super-diversity, multilingualism, translingual and transcultural development, identity and spatiotemporal scales, reflecting the need to embrace and incorporate cultural and linguistic diversity within educational settings. To start with, there is a heightened focus on *global and intercultural citizenship* expanding beyond the local contexts, which indicates a recognition

of the importance of intercultural communication in a globalized society. This trend reflects an acknowledgment of the necessity for learners to navigate and engage with diverse cultures and perspectives effectively in a globally interconnected world. The EU-level *multilingualism* also emerges as a theme, demonstrating the complexities of linguistic diversity in educational policy and practice and the need to harmonize educational approaches to language learning against the backdrop of the cultural and linguistic richness within Europe. The focus on the local-global tension in language teaching points to a recognition of the need to balance global educational trends with the unique cultural and linguistic contexts of learners ranging from the urban to rural areas.

In this context, the *English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)* movement, challenging the traditional notions of EFL and ESL and recognizing the role of English as a global means of communication, also emerges as a major theme in the literature. In this regard, the use of ELF in academic contexts is found to underscore how language choice influences power dynamics and cultural norms. *Translingual and transcultural development* of learners also comes to focus in response to the need to navigate between and through languages and cultural complexities of the multilingual and multicultural classrooms. It has been also observed that the notion of *spatiotemporal scales* is employed to explain the changing social status of linguistic codes across social and geopolitical domains, addressing the portability of semiotic resources in migration. Overall, inclusion extends to focusing on creating learning environments that are equitable and responsive to the diverse needs, backgrounds, contexts and identities of all students in a multilingual and multicultural world. Above all, the reviewed literature shows a significantly growing interest in exploring *identity and intersectionality* in language education, acknowledging the complex interplay of race, gender, class, and other identity markers in learning experiences.

On the whole, the theoretical and conceptual landscape is characterized by the predominant theme of developing intercultural competence, echoed through various models and teaching methodologies; yet, at the same time, marking a significant move from traditional frameworks towards a more inclusive, technologically advanced, and critically engaged approach in language education. The emergence of digitalization, criticality, and inclusion as dominant trends illustrates a keen responsiveness to the challenges posed by increased global interconnectedness, the digital revolution, and the complex nature of cultural and linguistic diversity. These trends point to the necessity of equipping learners with skills to navigate a multifaceted global society effectively.

Methodologies in Research: Trends and Tendencies

The reviewed literature demonstrates a clear shift from predominantly qualitative methodologies towards a more integrated approach that includes both qualitative and quantitative methods over the years. At the same time, each year showcases a wide range of methodologies, reflecting the multifaceted nature of research in the field. There is also an evident emphasis on ethical and critical research practices, particularly in 2013 and onwards. In later years, especially in 2016, there is an increased incorporation of digital technologies and online platforms in research

methodologies, reflecting the evolving theoretical landscape of digitalization.

The chart below shows the tendencies in different research methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods) across the years 2012 to 2016. It is clearly seen that while qualitative methods are consistently dominant throughout the years, there's a notable increase in mixed-methods research, especially from 2014 onwards. Quantitative research methods show some fluctuation but generally maintain a lower frequency compared to qualitative methods, as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Tendencies in Methodologies Utilized in Interculturality in Language Education Research between 2012-2016
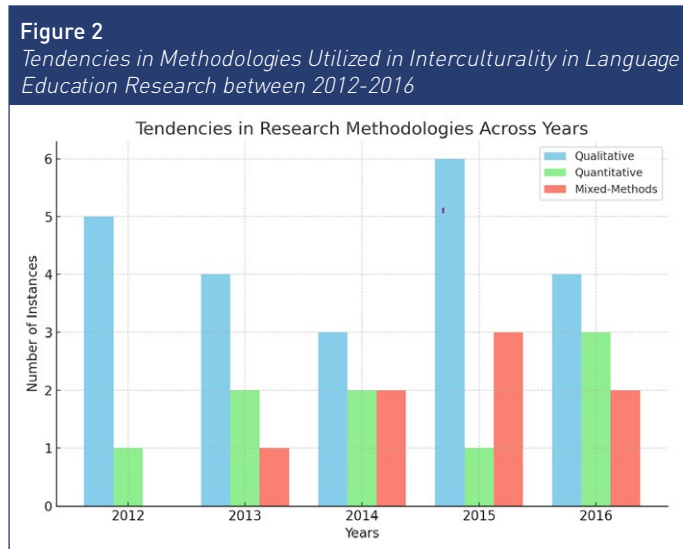
Regarding the use of various data collection instruments, Figure 3 shows that questionnaires and interviews are the most consistently used tools across all years, while participant observation, self-assessment inventories, focus group discussions, and literature reviews appear in specific years, indicating their selective use in research during those times.

Figure 3
Distribution of Major Data Collection Tools Employed in Interculturality in Language Education Research between 2012-2016
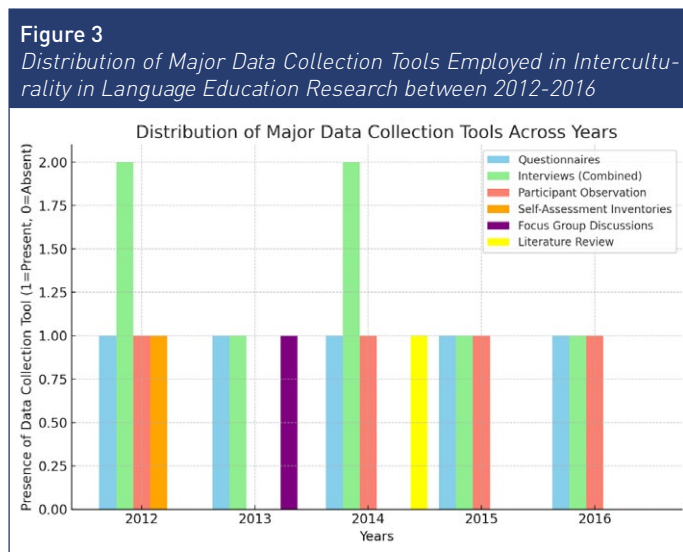
Regarding the participants and settings of the reviewed research, the primary group of participants include the learners from primary education to graduate education and teachers of different languages at both pre-service and in-service levels across and

beyond Europe, including Germany, Polanda, Italy, Spain, Portugal, UK, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan, Colombia, Brazil, Peru and the like. In addition, there are some studies which also focus on the contexts of migration, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English-as-a-medium- of-instruction (EMI) and study abroad. The study abroad contexts, including both short-term and long-term stays, has been particularly observed to show an increasing trend especially in 2015 and 2016.

Overall, the reviewed literature reflects a progressive broadening and diversification of research methodologies in studies over the years, moving from qualitative approaches to more integrated, ethical, and technologically informed mixed-methods approaches. This shift can be interpreted as an indicator of a growing recognition of the importance of integrating diverse research methods to gain a more holistic understanding of complex intercultural phenomena, while the diversity of data collection tools of the need for in-depth exploration of various aspects of interculturality and language education.

Emergent Perspectives and Insights

Interculturality in language education, as is obvious so far, represents a dynamic interface where communicative skills and cultural understanding converge, facilitating not only communication but also fostering interculturality. The perspectives, insights and challenges gleaned from the analysis of the reviewed literature will be presented below year by year, which can also be seen in Figure 4, hopefully providing educators, policymakers, and scholars with a rather comprehensive understanding of and guidance in the field.

The year 2012 features the findings that highlight the importance of integrating *critical cultural awareness* into educational settings, moving beyond traditional concepts of culture as a separate artefact and aiming to equip learners with the skills necessary to critically reflect on their own cultural biases and understandings and navigate and engage with diverse cultural contexts effectively. Along the same lines, the application of *sociological theories* is suggested to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities in intercultural education, which at the same time imply an increasing interdisciplinarity.

In 2013, while the trajectory of the development of intercultural competence remains constant, it seems to completely move away from essentialist views of culture based on fixed cultural norms and expand to consider the *situatedness and interpersonal positioning* in human interactions, including the micro-interactional level. In order to broaden and deepen the understanding of intercultural dynamics, it is suggested to focus on exceptions, instabilities, and processes rather than the fixed norms and structures. Another emergent perspective is the recognition of the importance of *ethics and equity* in intercultural contexts, particularly when dealing with culturally dependent situations and historical perspectives (see, for instance, Quist, 2013; Phipps, 2013; Nair-Venugopal 2013 in the Appendix 1). This perspective underscores the need to apply ethical restraints while engaging in intercultural discourse and practice. The importance of integrating intercultural dimensions in *ICT-mediated language learning* is also emphasized on the grounds that such an approach offers learners

Figure 4
Emergent Perspectives in Interculturality in Language Education between 2012-2016
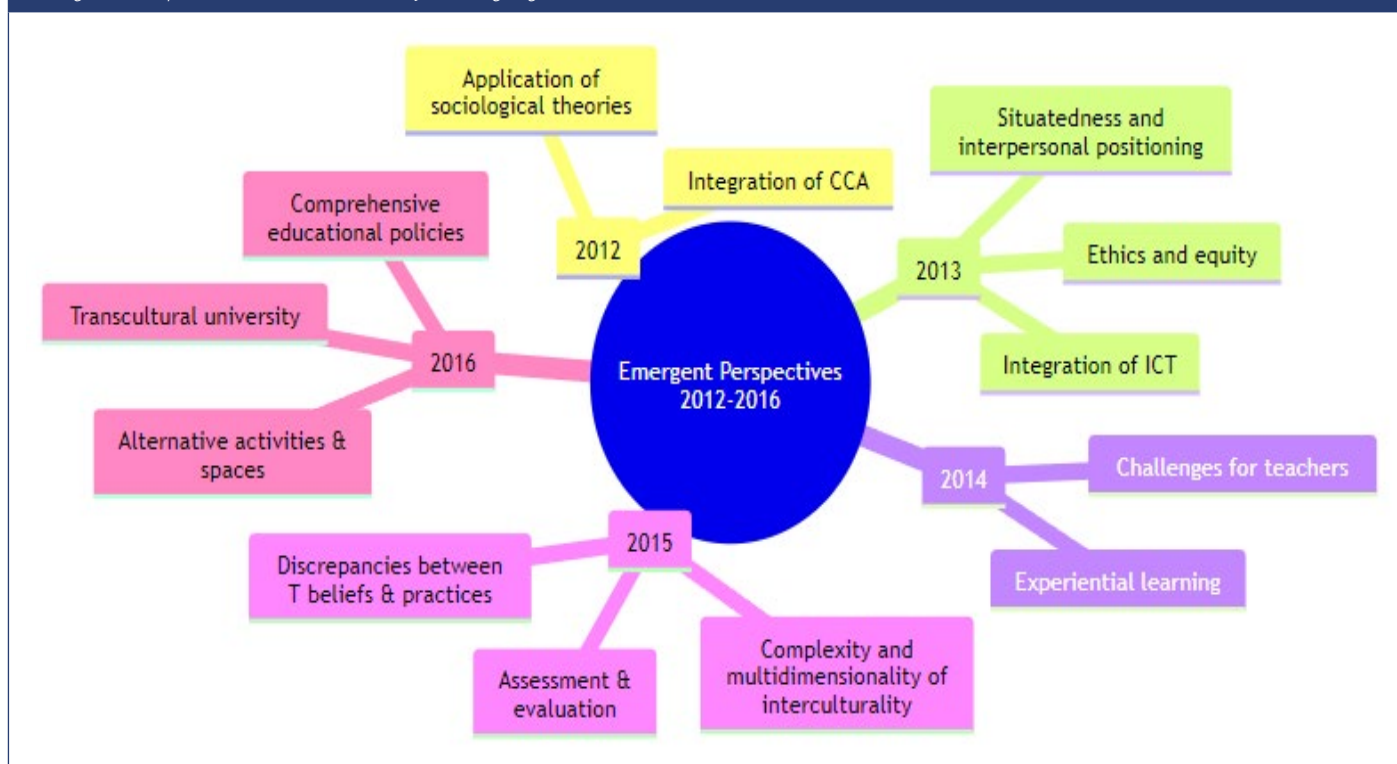
rich opportunities for language learning, intercultural skills, and developing meaningful relationships with people from different cultures, thereby adding a humanistic focus to language learning.

In 2014, several articles highlighted the value of *authentic experiences* that *students* go through in language learning, including study abroad programs, intercultural projects, and the use of digital tools and environments that expose students to the lived experiences and cultural practices of different speakers, which overall directs attention to the effectiveness of experiential learning in developing intercultural awareness. It is particularly found out that technology-enhanced projects and digital tools can create realistic learning environments, facilitate cross-cultural interactions, and provide access to diverse cultural materials. In a study by McGregor (2014), for example, which explores how emotional experiences of students abroad contribute to their transcultural development, it is concluded that encounters with different cultural views and emotional challenges significantly shape students' transcultural development.

Regarding the *educators*, whose role in fostering intercultural understanding is constantly emphasized, the study by Bickley, et al. (2014) points to the need for enhanced instructor/teacher education in intercultural education, while Breka & Petravic (2014) puts forward the inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding critical cultural awareness in language teaching. In a similar vein, Scott (2014) argues the importance of cultural immersion experiences in the preparation of preservice teachers for teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. Another emergent insight running across different studies relate to the *challenges* experienced by the teachers in integrating intercultural

communicative competence into language curricula, including the need for appropriate materials, overcoming stereotypical views, and the complexities of multicultural settings.

The studies in 2015 also collectively underscore the *complexity and multidimensionality of interculturality* in language education, emphasizing the need for culturally responsive pedagogy, inclusion of diversity, and the integration of digital and interactive methods in language teaching. One new emergent theme here is the *assessment and evaluation of intercultural learning*. Different studies suggest the need for awareness and training to prevent biased decision-making in assessment (Riley, 2015), the need for distinct assessment methods in online environments (Rubio, 2015), and the urgency of specific assessment tools in evaluating intercultural communication competence (Candel-Mora, 2015).

In 2016, some studies, like the one conducted by Chao T-C (2016), which highlight the *discrepancies* between teachers' self-reported ICC and their actual ICC-oriented teaching practices resonate with the reported inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding critical cultural awareness in language teaching in 2014. This obviously suggests a gap between teachers' perceptions of their intercultural skills and the implementation of these skills in teaching practices, requiring further research in this area.

Related to issues of diversity and inclusion in higher education settings, Baker (2016) introduces the concept of the *'transcultural university'* to describe the complex and diverse higher education environment, where linguistic and intercultural awareness are crucial for student mobility, while Olmos-Alcaraz (2016) calls for more *comprehensive educational policies* recognizing linguistic

diversity and promoting multilingualism in Europe, focusing on managing linguistic diversity in schools due to immigration. There are also a number studies which indicate the insufficiency of classroom contexts for the development of intercultural competence, calling for *extracurricular activities* (Liu, 2016), and emphasize the importance of *alternative spaces* for identity exploration in and outside of school (Dewilde and Skrefsrud, 2016).

In summary, the literature review from 2012 to 2016 reveals a progression towards a critical cultural awareness and the integration of innovative, technologically advanced teaching methods. The findings shed light on the challenges educators face in integrating intercultural communicative competence into language curricula and teaching practices, also highlighting the discrepancies between their beliefs and actual teaching practices. Furthermore, they highlight a critical gap between educators' perceived intercultural competencies and their practical application in diverse educational settings. The emergence of themes such as transcultural higher education environments and the advocacy for multilingualism in Europe reflects a growing recognition of the intricate tapestry of global education, laying a foundation for future research to explore these evolving dynamics, aiming to bridge the existing gaps and enrich the discourse on intercultural competence in an increasingly connected world.

Conclusion

Overall, this literature review has provided a thorough examination of key trends and developments in the evolving landscape of interculturality and language education from 2012 to 2016. It has highlighted a significant shift towards a shift from traditional, static conceptualizations of culture to a dynamic, process-oriented understanding, deeply intertwined with identity and global interconnectivity, thereby embracing and integrating the diversity and complexity within educational frameworks. This period has also seen a growing interest in more dynamic, interaction-based, experiential methods that reflect the complexities of globalized societies.

The findings emphasize the need for ongoing adaptation in teaching practices and curricula to foster more effective and meaningful intercultural communication. The reviewed works also highlight the growing importance of intercultural competence, reflecting a broader recognition of the necessity to navigate and engage with diverse cultures effectively in a globalized society. Moving forward, it is imperative that future research continues to explore these and new themes, focusing on the ways in which they can be leveraged to enhance intercultural understanding and communication in our increasingly interconnected world.

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A Review of Studies Between 2017-2022

ABOUT the CHAPTER

This literature review offers a critical examination of the evolution of interculturality in language education from 2017 to 2022. It examines a wide array of research, encompassing 131 articles, 24 books, and 3 book chapters, to expose the major theoretical, conceptual, and methodological developments in the field. The review shows a significant shift from traditional, essentialist views of culture to a dynamic and contextually rich understanding, underpinning the growing complexity in the conceptualization of interculturality. The major theories and concepts are studied concerning to the paradigms they relate to; namely, the constructivist paradigm, communicative competence paradigm, critical pedagogy paradigm, pluralistic paradigm, technological integration paradigm, and professional development paradigm. Notable trends include a move from theoretical frameworks to more empirical applications and critical pedagogy, with a keen focus on multilingual and transnational identities, and an increased emphasis on integrating native languages and cultures in language education.

Keywords: Interculturality, language education, literature review, trends, themes

Introduction

Interculturality in language education has never lost the attention it gained, particularly in the last decade. On the contrary, it continued to evolve conceptually and the methodologies to address it in research across a wide range of contexts and settings have suitably come to accommodate this evolution. Based on the literature found eligible and accessible within the scope of the present literature review, it is possible to talk about the underlying conceptualizations and emerging trends concerning interculturality in language education and interpret them within and across theoretical and methodological frames. Overall, the progression from 2017 to 2022 shows major developments in and a deepening and broadening of the concepts around interculturality in language education. In this regard, the notion of culture is first and foremost. The chapter will thus commence with a description of the developments observed in the conceptualization of culture and interculturality in the literature on a yearly basis and continue with a discussion of the recurring concepts that emerge in the review. Following an examination of the dominant conceptual and methodological trends that are revealed in the literature, the chapter will be concluded by the apparent perspectives and insights drawn from the review.

Conceptualization of Culture and Interculturality: An Evolving Landscape

The conceptual and methodological landscape of interculturality in language education between 2017 and 2022 showcases quite a diversification in terms of approaching culture and interculturality. Early views are more static and binary, resonating with the more traditional perception of culture as an observable entity, such as Euler's (2017) distinction between "surface" and "deep" cultures where surface cultures include observable and tangible aspects like customs and artifacts, while deep cultures probe underlying values, beliefs, and attitudes. The binary categorization of culture is foundational, and the nation-based large C culture approach is deemed helpful provided that other conceptualizations of culture are recognized.

In the research of 2017, culture is featured as an indispensable ingredient of linguistic competence and interculturality emphasizes interaction between cultures, with a focus on communication and mutual understanding. Accordingly, intercultural competence is emphasized as involving the ability to mediate between cultures and understanding the Other across borders, rather than learning about other cultures, which is crucial for language learners and educators (Dervin, 2017). However, focusing extensively on the differences among cultures is perceived as biased, and thus, unable to serve intercultural understanding. Equal emphasis is therefore placed on both similarities and differences,

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but intercultural communication is significantly perceived as being rooted in cultural awareness and sensitivity. To this end, the experiential learning approach is promoted as vital for integrating interculturality into education, thereby developing intercultural competence (Dervin, 2017). "Driven by the resolution of the dual dialectic of action/reflection and experience/abstraction" (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012:139), experiential learning encourages learners to actively engage with and reflect upon their intercultural experiences, promoting a deeper understanding and empathy.

Intersubjectivity appears as an issue in intercultural education and developing respect and dialogue between different cultural groups and the ability to adopt perspectives different from one's own is accentuated (Solbue, V., Helleve, I. & Smith, K., 2017).

2018 saw an increase in studies focusing on the "critical turn" in interculturality. Critical cultural awareness notably highlighted the ability of individuals and communities to adapt and overcome challenges, such as an essentialist frame of culture, discrimination, stereotyping, misunderstandings, injustice, xenophobia, and ideological hegemony, associated with academic contexts (Mukharlyamova et. al., 2018). Supported by constructivist engagements such as promoting active, reflective and contextual learning, learners are encouraged to cast a skeptical eye on different cultural perspectives for a comprehensive understanding of cultures. Studies also place emphasis on the cultural dimension in language instruction, as in the study by Gözpınar (2018), stressing the importance of incorporating cultural dimensions to avoid misunderstandings in communication. On a similar note, the significant role of language skills in facilitating intercultural interactions is also made an issue of investigation, such as in the study by Sarwari and Abdul Wahab (2018).

Whereas the review of literature in 2018 revealed a focus largely on theoretical understandings of intercultural education and its affordances and challenges, research in 2019 can be characterized by a move from theoretical discussions to more empirical and practical applications, a greater focus on multilingual and transnational identities, the integration of native languages and cultures in language education and addressing specific challenges and contexts in intercultural communication and education. Thus, 2019 brought forth broader perspectives on the intersection of language, culture, and intercultural communication, indicating a holistic approach to understanding these concepts in educational settings. There is an increased emphasis not only on multilingualism but also on the multilingual nature of English as a global lingua franca. In a similar vein, there is an increased focus on the role of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in migration contexts and its impact on cross-cultural mediation and communication, as explored by Sperti (2019). Studies like that of Erduyan (2019) examined how German-Turkish students navigate their multilingual identities, reflecting a growing interest in the fluidity of linguistic and cultural identities in a globalized world. There is also a clear emphasis on integrating students' native languages and cultural backgrounds into the language learning process, as seen in the work by Ortega (2019) on plurilingualism and translanguaging in EFL settings, which challenges the monolingual practices in the language classroom by resorting to multilingual pedagogies.

Research in 2020 is marked by a significant emphasis on the use of technology, particularly telecollaboration, for promoting intercultural competence. Studies such as those by Toscu &Erten (2020) and Ramírez-Lizcano & Cabrera-Tovar (2020) explored how digital communication tools like videoconferencing and online discussion boards enhance learners' intercultural communicative competence. This markedly contrasts with the research of previous years, where the emphasis was more on physical mobility and in-person interactions, such as study abroad programs as in the work by Santos Costa (2018). There is a continuing focus on the critical analysis of language learning materials, such as textbooks, for their representation of culture as seen in the study by Amerian and Tajabadi (2020). Similarly, a study by Xiong, T., & Peng, Y. Peng (2020) analyzes how textbooks in foreign language education, like Chinese and English, represented or failed to represent cultural aspects effectively.

A distinguishing focus of 2020 research is on the exploration of the dynamics of language use in multicultural and multilingual settings. Exploring the language practices and perceptions of local and international students in a transnational university in China, Ou & Gu (2020), for instance, focus on the processes by which multilingual students negotiate language norms, reshape interactional contexts, and strategically configure diverse resources embedded in various spatiotemporal scales to achieve their communicative purposes. Such a focus on translocal spaces aptly draws attention to learners' negotiation and reconstruction processes, simultaneously addressing localities and mobilities within a holistic context.

Studies in 2021 reflect a deeper exploration of teacher identities and beliefs, continued utilization of technology in nuanced ways, diverse research methodologies, and a growing interest in multilingual identities and critical analysis of teaching materials. There is a greater emphasis on understanding the role of teacher identity in teaching intercultural communicative competence as presented in the study by Yang Frank Gong, Chun Lai & Xuesong Andy Gao, (2021). Assigning teachers a facilitative role in cross-cultural contexts, it is suggested that teacher identities are an important pedagogical resource in language education, which should be considered in teacher education. This focus is marked in other studies that explored how professional, sociocultural, and personal identity aspects of language teachers interact with their approaches to teaching intercultural communicative competence. Research focusing on teachers also explored their beliefs and practices, as seen in Kidwell's (2021) exploration of novice Indonesian EFL teachers' beliefs regarding teaching about culture. Focus on the concept of multilingual identity in language learning continued to be a subject of investigation. Fielding's (2021) study, for instance, proposes a multilingual identity approach to the intercultural stance, which is a new perspective emphasizing the importance of learners' linguistic repertoires in intercultural experiences. Although telecollaboration remained a key tool, the approach moved towards more advanced uses of technology.

In 2021 research, critical interculturality gains prominence. It repeatedly highlights the situated, co-constructed, and fluid nature of human interactions, challenging the traditional ways of teaching culture. It advocates for language education programs to offer and support opportunities for engaging in intercultural encounters, whether international, local, or digital, as seen in the study by Çiftçi, E. Y., & Daloğlu, A. (2021).

Relating to enhanced interculturality-based learning experiences, another continued strand of interest was critically analyzing teaching materials and texts in fostering intercultural communicative competence. Heggernes's (2021) review of texts in English language teaching underlined the importance of selecting culturally relevant texts and diverse activities to foster intercultural understanding.

By 2022, interculturality was increasingly viewed through a global lens. This view became conspicuous in the naming as well, with the prefix "trans" sometimes replacing the "inter", sometimes used as transcultural along with intercultural where "transcultural" communication maintains communication through, rather than between, cultural and linguistic borders, in which the borders themselves are transcended and transformed in the process. As discussed in detail by Baker (2022) in his book, this novel perception, which is in alignment with the communication realities and needs in both the real world and the language classroom, suggests a move away from more essentialist, cross-cultural approaches. The importance of intercultural citizenship was further reiterated through its involvement in learning that leads to change in individuals and communities on a global scale. It recognized the symbolic power of language and the role of identity in intercultural interactions, advocating for critical questioning and situating interactions within larger historical timescales.

Research in 2022 points to a turn towards integrating social activism and critical pedagogy into intercultural communication research and teaching. For instance, Holmes & Peña Dix's work (2022) combined new materialist theory with critical intercultural pedagogy, using creative arts to engage in intercultural communication and promote social transformation. This reflects a deeper engagement with societal conflicts and an activist stance in research and education. Studies that focused on the integration of technology in fostering intercultural understanding showed a continued interest in telecollaboration; however, there appears a more comprehensive exploration of its potential in creating a "third space" for language learners, as illustrated by Yeh and Heng's study (2022). This indicates a growing interest in how digital platforms can facilitate intercultural interaction and understanding beyond traditional language learning.

In the same domain, a strategy proposal to integrate critical digital literacy and inquiry-based pedagogy for online communication emerged as a novel approach in 2022, as exemplified by Dooly and Darvin. This indicates an increased recognition of the digital realm's impact on intercultural communication and the necessity to equip learners with the skills to navigate it strategically. Yet another novelty was observed in the approach towards decentring language and intercultural communication. This approach indicated the importance of context diversity and active engagement in the learning process, aiming to create more equitable and effective educational experiences as in the work by Holmes, P., & Peña Dix, B. (2022). The study suggests that adopting a decentred and aesthetic approach by creative performing arts offers ways of confronting various forms of conflict and actively participating in their learning and supports the necessity of breaking down disciplinary, linguistic, and other forms of borders that restrict individuals into limited positions where they are unable to actualize their potential to shape the environment.

Studies in 2022 also accentuated the need for critical examination of traditional paradigms. Monceri's (2022) work critiqued the traditional Western scientific method in the study of intercultural communication, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and reflective approach. This represents a move towards redefining the discipline to better capture the complexities of intercultural interactions. In a similar vein, studies such as those by Porto & Byram (2022) and Chen (2022), called for a transformation in pedagogic approaches to value linguistic and cultural diversity and address the challenges of teaching in an ELF context, which underscores the need for innovative pedagogies.

A chronological analysis of the literature, thus, manifests a trajectory towards a more critical, inclusive and comprehensive understanding of interculturality in language education from 2017 to 2022. Upon this trajectory, major theoretical and conceptual trends come to light.

Major Theories and Concepts

Themes

The landscape of intercultural research between 2017 and 2022 evolved from theoretical foundations to practical, empirical applications to encompass a collection of concepts that are novel or revisited in light of varying theoretical frameworks. Based on the review of this research, it is possible to identify and map out major theories and concepts onto a paradigmatic classification and examine how they intersect and synergize with others in and across their overarching paradigms. This approach will help understand the fundamental assumptions, methodologies, and thematic focuses underlying these theories and concepts in interculturality research. To that end, the recurring theories and concepts in the review of research between 2017 and 2022 fall into six broad paradigms.

The Constructivist Paradigm

The Constructivist Paradigm emphasizes the individual's process of understanding and adapting to cultural differences through direct experiences and focuses on how individuals construct intercultural understanding through interactions and experiences. It adopts a more holistic and experiential approach, recognizing the fluid and evolving nature of cultural understanding. Some of the most recurring concepts in this review- experiential learning and interculturality, intercultural sensitivity and critical cultural awareness- are informed by the Constructivist Paradigm. **Experiential learning** revolves around the idea that intercultural understanding is not static but develops through direct, immersive experiences that can take place in widespread settings as illustrated by the studies by Baker, W. & Fang, F. (2019) and Chen, R. T. H. (2022). The fluidity and diversity inherent in intercultural learning are underscored, recognizing that **cultural competence** evolves over time and through interaction. Based on models like Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, the concept of **intercultural sensitivity** underlines the progressive stages an individual goes through in becoming more sensitive and responsive to cultural differences. **Critical cultural awareness** involves the use of diverse resources, such as international news (Gomez, 2018), to develop a thorough understanding of different cultures. It encourages learners to engage critically with cultural

content, fostering a deeper awareness of global issues and their cultural implications.

Communicative Competence Paradigm

The ubiquitous concept of **intercultural communicative competence** (ICC) is central to this paradigm. Focusing on the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, ICC includes knowledge of cultural norms, language proficiency, and the skills to interpret and relate to diverse cultural contexts. Its occurrence in the reviewed literature centers on developing specific skills for effective communication across cultural boundaries, wherein language proficiency is perceived as the basis for successful intercultural communication. There is frequent reference made to Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence as a theoretical framework since studies often rely on Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence Model while examining the cultural content of coursebooks, such as the study by Abid & Moalla (2021), investigating the effects of telecollaboration on L2 learners' perceptions of ICC, such as the study by Maki & Kiyomi (2019), and exploring novice teachers' beliefs on teaching culture, such as the study by Kidwell (2021).

There is also a reference to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) being integral to understanding and navigating through different cultural settings effectively. In that respect, **telecollaboration** is another persistent concept that involves using online communication tools for collaborative learning between individuals from different cultures. It refers to "online intercultural exchange" in language learning, fostering linguistic skills, media literacy and ICC. Although it is by nature a digital means, its utilization of digital communication tools and skills enhances its prominence for its role in enhancing ICC, providing learners with opportunities for real-time, cross-cultural interactions.

Critical Pedagogy Paradigm

In the context of interculturality, **critical pedagogy** underlines the importance of understanding **power dynamics**, **social justice**, and **cultural narratives**. It has significant implications for educational practices, including curriculum design and teaching methods. It calls for curricula that are inclusive of diverse cultural perspectives and that challenge conventional Western-centric narratives. Teachers are seen as facilitators who guide students in examining cultural norms and global issues, promoting an environment of active, **participatory learning**. As it encourages learners to question and challenge existing societal norms and cultural assumptions and works towards the deconstruction of cultural stereotypes, it covers **critical approaches in intercultural education** and discusses the ethical considerations in teaching **intercultural citizenship** and navigating cultural differences. Researchers have called attention to how educational systems can perpetuate cultural biases and have proposed more inclusive and socially aware methods of teaching and learning. In that conceptual frame, **decentring language in education** is advocated for a more diverse and engaging approach to language education.

Pluralistic Paradigm

A significant number of recurring concepts in the review relate to the multicultural and pluralistic paradigm. This is undoubtedly the result of the acknowledgment of **diversity** as a reality of the globalized world and the consequent coexistence and interaction of multiple languages and cultures. Encapsulated in Dervin's (2017) "diverse diversities" which regards everyone as being different and constantly dealing with their own and others' diversities, there is constant multiplicity- of languages, of cultures, of English. Within that scope, **plurilingualism** is a repeatedly referred to concept, and **translanguaging** is used to refer to the native language and cultural background of the learners as resources. These concepts both acknowledge and value the coexistence of multiple languages within educational contexts. Concurring with critical pedagogies, they promote a more **inclusive** approach to language learning.

Drawing from its basis on an understanding of diversity, **intercultural citizenship** is another theoretical concept featured in the reviewed research that relates to the multicultural and pluralistic paradigm. References to intercultural citizenship are in one of two ways, though: as a content provider for training programs for language learners in different settings or concerning the **role of English**, where English assumes a foreign (EFL) or an international language (EIL) role or is used as a lingua franca (ELF). The accepted status of English as a global language or a conventional outlook may account for the way English is referred to; however, what needs to be noted here is the facilitative role it undertakes in intercultural interactions. Moreover, the research also makes use of the role of English as the medium of instruction (**EMI**) and investigates its impact on learners' preparedness for intercultural interactions.

Global citizenship education is another concept the review of literature brings forth. Drawing from the concept of **diversity** and focusing on preparing learners to become responsible global citizens, it encompasses teaching strategies that foster awareness and understanding of global interdependencies and cultural diversities, aiming to cultivate respect, empathy, and a sense of shared responsibility.

Technological Integration Paradigm

Due to technological advancements and numerous affordances of technological tools for instructional purposes, there is abundant reference to technological integration in the reviewed literature made apparent by concepts such as **telecollaboration, videoconferencing,** and **digital media**, all of which are tools used to improve intercultural learning experiences through **immersive and interactive learning experiences** and enhance the development of intercultural skills, combined with Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and Byram's ICC framework at times.

Professional Development Paradigm

As much as there is an emphasis on learners in language education, there is repeated reference to teachers and instructors in intercultural contexts in the reviewed literature. Focusing on **teacher perceptions**, training programs, and professional development in intercultural competence, there is a noteworthy number of studies that investigate the educators' understanding of intercultural competence and make a call for integrating **intercultural**

communication training into professional development process (Ghavamnia, 2020; Üzüm, Akayoğlu, & Yazan 2020).

Categorized broadly, these paradigms have their intersections and synergies. For instance, the multicultural paradigm intersects with the constructivist paradigm in promoting a holistic and inclusive educational experience that values diversity and personal growth. On the other hand, communicative competence and technological integration paradigms synergize to enhance intercultural communication skills through digital platforms, making intercultural education more accessible and effective. Similarly, the professional development paradigm is fundamental to all other paradigms. Therefore, it is not surprising to find in the reviewed research references and discussions that, for instance, relate the integration of technology to teacher education programs, to build and ensure capacity for intercultural communication for teachers.

Trends

The reviewed literature from 2017 to 2022 reveals trends that center on interculturality in language education (Figure 1). Collectively, they show a growing recognition of the complex relationship between language, culture, and identity, as well as the necessity for education systems to adapt to the evolving global and multicultural landscapes. They will be presented here concerning the kind of change they instigate and create an impact for.

Pedagogical Evolution

In 2017, there was a strong focus on integrating experiential learning into education, especially in teacher education. This approach involved hands-on experiences, reflective practices, and direct engagement with cultural elements in the learning process. The emphasis was on creating authentic learning environments where students could interact with different cultures, facilitating a deeper understanding of interculturality. This approach was especially prominent in the context of preparing future teachers to handle diverse classrooms and integrate cultural perspectives into their teaching practices. By 2022, the focus transferred significantly towards incorporating elements of social activism and critical pedagogy into language education and intercultural communication. This shift represents a move towards addressing wider societal issues, conflicts, and inequalities through education. Critical pedagogy in this context means encouraging learners to question and challenge existing social structures and power relationships, fostering a critical awareness that transcends traditional learning goals.

Technological Integration

The use of technology in language learning has grown to the extent that it incorporates a wide variety of technological means, telecollaboration being a frequently used one. By 2022 technological integration has grown to accommodate the expanded use of digital platforms to create interactive spaces for global communication and understanding. Encompassing a line of skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for effective, efficient, and ethical interaction with digital technology and information, digital literacy is noted to support intercultural understanding. To that end, there is considerable emphasis on the critical analysis of digital content, creative use of technology, and understanding the social and cultural implications of digital media.

Identity and Power Dynamics

There has been a significant progression towards a more subtle understanding of identity and power dynamics in language education and intercultural communication. This reflects a clear trend towards critical pedagogies that seek to empower learners by enabling them to understand and navigate the complex interplay of language, culture, identity, and power in a globalized world. In 2017, the focus on identity in language education was emerging, with an increasing acknowledgment of the role of learner and teacher identities in shaping educational experiences and outcomes. Identity here was understood as a complex and vigorous construct, influenced by cultural, linguistic, and social factors. The exploration was centered around how learners' and teachers' cultural and linguistic backgrounds influence their perceptions, interactions, and experiences in the learning process. This included examining the role of teacher identity in addressing cultural and linguistic diversity in classrooms. By 2022, there was a deeper examination of power relationships within the context of language education and intercultural communication. This involved understanding how power relations influence language use, cultural interactions, and identity formation. The focus also moved significantly towards incorporating elements of social activism and critical pedagogy into language education and intercultural communication while addressing wider societal issues, conflicts, and inequalities through education. Studies and pedagogical approaches began to critically question and challenge existing power structures and ideologies in educational settings. This included acknowledging and addressing the influence of historical, political, and economic factors on language and cultural practices. Studies like the one by Holmes & Peña Dix (2022) demonstrate this trend, where new materialist theory and critical intercultural pedagogy were combined. The approach was not just about understanding different cultures but also about using this understanding to engage in social transformation and confront societal challenges.

With the acknowledgement of the lingua franca use of English, there appeared a growing recognition of the importance of addressing identity issues in ELF interactions. This involved understanding the complex role of identity in communication across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. The focus was on how identities are negotiated, contested, and reshaped in ELF interactions, and the implications this has for intercultural communication and pedagogy.

Critical re-examinations of Traditional Paradigms

The critical examination of traditional paradigms involves questioning and reassessing long-held beliefs and practices surrounding culture and interculturality. Traditional paradigms often conceptualized culture as static, homogenous, and bound to national or ethnic identities. Recent scholarship, however, challenges these notions, advocating for a more insightful and intersectional understanding of culture. This shift acknowledges that intercultural experiences and identities are complex and cannot be reduced to simplistic or binary categorizations.

Reassessment of traditional paradigms also appears in the increasing awareness of the limitations and biases inherent in Western-centric models of intercultural communication and

education and the movement towards 'decolonizing' research and pedagogy in intercultural communication. This involves dismantling colonial legacies and power imbalances in knowledge production and dissemination. Scholars advocate for approaches that validate non-Western epistemologies and methodologies, encouraging a more egalitarian and reciprocal exchange of knowledge, such as Monceri's study (2022) in which she criticized the Western scientific method as one that is reductionist to the point of operating by binaries.

A re-examination of traditional paradigms also becomes observable in the integration of critical and postmodern theories into intercultural studies. These theories offer tools for analyzing how culture and power relations are constructed and maintained, and how they can be challenged and reimagined. This approach encourages critical thinking, reflexivity, and the questioning of normative assumptions, leading to a more refined understanding of interculturality.

A common thread among these trends and developments that can be seen in Figure 1, is the increasing recognition and integration of cultural diversity and intercultural competence within language education and the need for inclusivity. Over the years, there has been a consistent push towards not only acknowledging but actively integrating cultural diversity within language learning. This includes respecting and valuing the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of learners, such as through plurilingualism and translanguaging practices, fostering intercultural dialogue, addressing global citizenship, and decentring traditional language education approaches to incorporate diverse cultural contexts and experiences. All of these indicate a move towards education systems that are responsive and adaptable to the globalized and diverse nature of contemporary societies. This thread reflects an

evolving understanding of the integral role of culture in language education and the necessity of preparing learners for a globally interconnected world.

Methodologies in Research: Trends and Tendencies

The review of the literature between the years 2017 and 2022 shows clearly that the qualitative methodology was the preferred methodology over the six-year timespan. As can be seen in Figure 2, it reached its peak in 2019. Quantitative methods were used least frequently, and mixed-methods research showed a moderate and relatively consistent presence across the years.

Interestingly, there was a sharp increase in both qualitative and mixed-methods methodologies in 2018 and a sharp decrease observed in qualitative methodologies in 2020, more so in 2021 and 2022. Quantitative research methodology is opted for only in 2019 and 2020.

When the literature is studied to identify the data collection tools utilized for the specified research methodology across 2017-2022, there appears a selection of instruments as can be seen in Table 1 below. An evolving landscape of research strategies in the field of interculturality and education is in sight, and it reflects a response to technological advancements and changing academic needs. Overall, there is a change from traditional to modern techniques marked by a progression from case studies and structured interviews to more progressive methodologies that involve the active participation of respondents, like action research. More recent years reveal adaptation to technological changes, which was amplified by the social restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Online interviews and E-surveys catered to the needs of researchers during lockdowns, unexpectedly opening up new platforms for

Figure 1
Trends and the associated developments in Interculturality in Language Education between 2017-2022
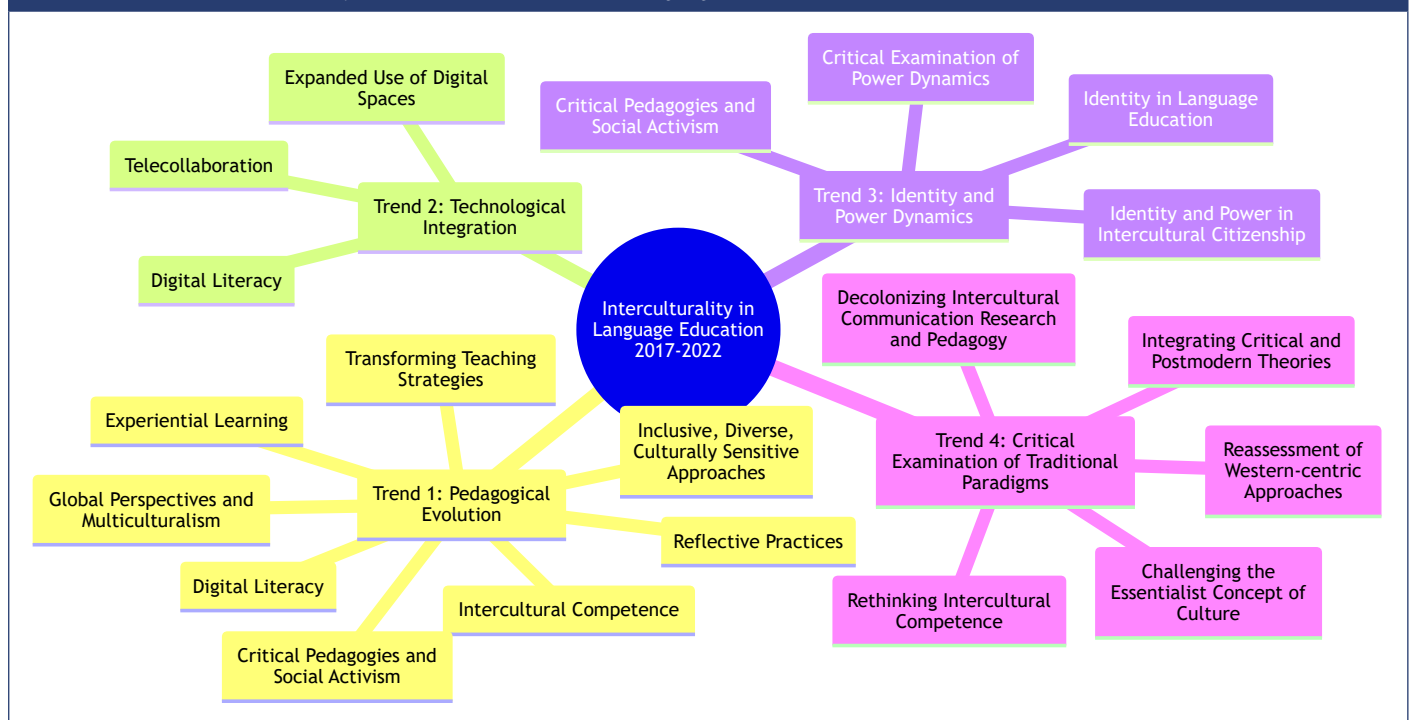
Figure 2
Methodologies Employed in Interculturality in Language Education Research between 2017-2022
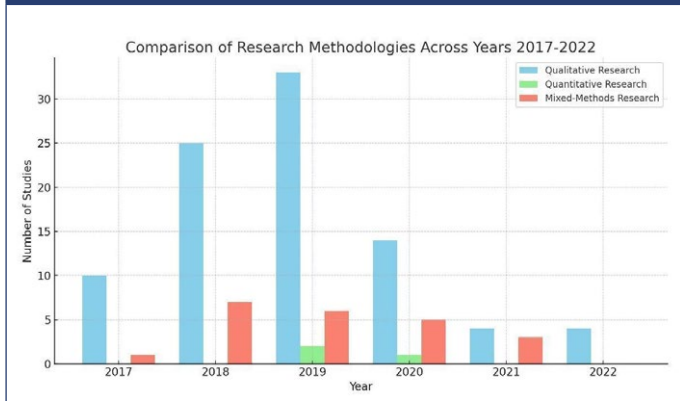
research purposes, allowing researchers and participants alike flexibility in time and space management for successful data collection.

The inclusion of interdisciplinary research and cross-cultural comparative studies in 2021 and 2022 can be interpreted as both a consequence of the ease of contact that came from technological interconnectedness and the adaptability and responsiveness of research tackling interculturality in language education in a globalized, multilingual, multicultural world.

Table 1
Research Methods and Data Collection Tools Utilized in Interculturality in Language Education Research between 2017-2022

YEAR	METHODOLOGIES	DATA COLLECTION TOOLS
2017	Qualitative methodology, descriptive analysis, case studies	Structured interviews, participant observations, document analysis
2018	Mixed methods research, experimental designs	Questionnaires, focus group discussions, content analysis
2019	Action research, longitudinal studies, narrative analysis	Diaries and journals, online surveys, video analysis
2020	Virtual methodologies, quantitative methodology, ethnographic studies	Online interviews, E-surveys, social media analysis
2021	Critical pedagogy approaches, interdisciplinary research, participatory research	Virtual ethnography, E-Portfolios, digital storytelling
2022	Cross-cultural comparative studies, Mixed-methods research, systematic literature reviews	Mobile surveys, online focus group discussions

Regarding research contexts, settings, and participants, the review of literature reveals that it is mainly educational context with settings ranging from higher education institutions to primary schools used the most. These are mostly international schools and study abroad settings offering multilingual and multicultural

environments. Studies were also conducted as part of larger projects and involved working in not one but multiple settings, as in the study by Holmes & Dix (2022). Research participants varied but often included language learners, pre-service teachers, teachers, and international university students, coming from a wide array of linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds.

Emergent Perspectives and Insights

The period between 2017 and 2022 marks a significant transition in the conceptualization of culture. The reviewed works show a discernible evolution, indicating a move from a more traditional, static understanding of culture to a fluid and critically engaged perspective. The more recent perspectives on culture incorporate global views and encompass transcultural capabilities, intercultural citizenship, critical interculturality, and the co-construction of cultural meanings in a global context, challenging the established paradigms in due course. Appreciating the continual evolution of culture in response to social interactions and historical contexts, these perspectives are consistent with contemporary views on globalization and the interconnectedness of societies.

Drawing from this expansion in the conceptualization of culture, the concept of interculturality manifests a similar change as evident in the research conducted between 2017 and 2022. In terms of how interculturality is perceived, literature reveals a noticeable progress that takes its course away from the rudimentary understanding that interculturalism is having to do with cultures as separate monolithic entities. It moves towards an expansive understanding that views intercultural as more complex. The concept of "intercultural competence" is eventually challenged due to its emphasis on understanding and mediating between cultures, which, while crucial, often lacks a deeper exploration of power relationships and historical contexts. Shifting thus from developing basic and more structured competence to engaging critically with the complexities of intercultural interactions where participants bring with them a wide variety of linguistic and cultural features, the evolving nature of intercultural interactions, influenced by changing social contexts and individual experiences is pointed out.

This evolution in the conceptualization of culture and the intercultural is in accordance with a broader progression in social sciences and humanities towards more complex, interconnected, and critical understandings of cultural phenomena. By 2022, a clear emphasis on decentralizing language from a solely communicative tool to a means of fostering a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and engagement appears. Acknowledging the importance for researchers and teachers to engage in educational and pedagogic approaches that focus on conflicts in society and learners' experience of them to provide them with the resources to confront the resulting inequalities and oppression in the face of such conflicts, it invites researchers to take a social activist standpoint to confront the linguistic, cultural and social powers, inequalities, and other forms of injustice emerging from conflict.

The increasing recognition of the field as revealing the interconnectedness of language, culture, and identity, and the necessity for pedagogies that reflect this complexity evidently motivated researchers and scholars to examine interculturality in language education in wider, deeper, and multi-faceted perspectives.

Conclusion

The trajectory of interculturality in language education from 2017 to 2022 manifests a change towards a more critical, inclusive, and comprehensive understanding of interculturality. This is marked by the integration of diverse cultural perspectives, the adoption of innovative pedagogical approaches, and the recognition of the changing nature of culture and language in the context of global interconnectivity. The insights gathered from this review highlight the evolving nature of intercultural interactions and the imperative for education systems to adapt and respond to the changing landscape of global and multicultural societies. This evolution represents a move towards redefining the discipline to better capture the complexities of intercultural interactions in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world.

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PART 2
EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTERCULTURALITY IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Nazlı Ceren IŞIKLIGİL
Gülay KIRAY

Background to The Study

ABOUT the CHAPTER

Although there still is not a consensus on a solid definition of early career researchers, it is commonly believed that ECRs have the torch at hand to shed light into the future direction of the literature. Thus, considering this vital role they play, this chapter introduces ECRs, the studies conducted on ECRs – particularly demonstrating the challenges ECRs encounter in their teaching acts, research practices and forming an identity-, the plurality and diversity of interculturality understanding together with the linguistics, cultural, methodological, and theoretical diversities in language education before diving deep into ECRs' perceptions in the upcoming chapters. In doing so, this chapter follows a theoretical approach in portraying the literature before concluding the rationale behind this study and the significance of the current study. The content of this chapter is to serve as a background to understanding why and how the data was collected from ECRs on their perceptions of interculturality in language education within the scope of EUREDIE project.

Keywords: Early career researchers, perceptions, interculturality, language education.

Introduction

Within the scope of EUREDIE project, after reviewing the literature about interculturality studies, the next step was to analyse the early career-researchers (ECRs) perceptions of interculturality. Within Part 2, the rationale for exploring ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education (Chapter 7), the method followed together with the data collection procedure applied in gathering and analysing ECRs' perceptions (Chapter 8), and the results of the analyses leading us to ECRs' perceptions are portrayed holistically. This chapter, thus, with the aim of exploring different meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs at various levels, from personal and institutional to national and global levels, starts with the representations of ECRs in the literature, the plurality of interculturality, and diversity and interculturality. Then, the chapter concludes with the rationale and significance of the study.

Literature Review

ECRs and Their Representations in the Literature

ECRs have a significant impact on shaping the future of research and knowledge in the current dynamic academic setting (Bazeley, 2003; Pizzolato, et al., 2023). Sutherland and Taylor (2011), by using a more generalized classification, state that early career academics are a significant, but ill-defined and under-researched population within higher education. Even though the definition of ECR varies widely across contexts, Hall (2002) defines ECRs as the ones just starting their careers in academia. Bazeley (2003), on the other adds more specificity in her definition of ECRs and defines them as people who "are currently within their first five years of academic or other research-related employment allowing uninterrupted, stable research development following completion of their postgraduate research training." (p. 274) Browning et al. (2017, p. 363) agrees with this definition in their context by citing Australian Research Council (2006) "Although the terminology varies across countries and institutions, in this context an Early Career Researcher is defined as having been awarded a PhD 'within 5 years, or longer if combined with periods of significant career interruption." However, there is no consensus on the number of experience year; while Bosanquet, Mailey, Matthews, and Lodge (2017) agree on limiting the experience year to five, Boeren et al. (2015) mentions that the ones with no more than 10 years of research experience are considered as ECRs. Hillier (2016) points out an age limitation as he mentions that the European Union accepts the ones under the age of 35 as early career researchers in academia. To include those early in their training and professional career, Febria, et al. (2022) extends the definition of ECRs as "graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, science practitioners, and faculty members within

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the first five years of their academic appointment" (p.850). Within the scope of current study, ECRs are considered as the ones:

- working in the field of language education (English Language Education, Linguistics, Language Studies, etc.) and/or are in the process of writing a thesis or conducting research in these fields,
- graduate students enrolled in ongoing Master's and Doctoral programs,
- researchers graduated from Master's and PhD programs in the last 5 years,
- researchers and research assistants who conduct postdoctoral research.

ECRs have been the subject of extensive research in the literature. Although they have been mostly examined regarding their academic identity, agency, and teaching practices, only a few of the studies focus on the research conducted by them. Understanding and stressing the researcher identity of ECRs is significant since it not only deepens our understanding of their scholarly contributions but also supports forming a dynamic research culture among young academics. Yet, ECRs may encounter challenges in the process of developing their researcher identity. For example, Khoo-Lattimore (2018), highlighting the ethical aspects of researcher identity, has called for ongoing engagement and reflexivity with ethical concerns in order to assure success while upholding ethical norms. Enhancing the proficiency of ECRs in academic skills has been recognized as crucial for their achievement and development, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Merritt et al., 2019). Frances et al. (2019) have found that mentorship and support programs are beneficial in the process of developing ECRs' researcher identity. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the careers of ECRs, resulting in the suspension of research projects and the assumption of new tasks and duties (Denfeld et al., 2020). The literature explores the complex and diverse aspects of the identity of early career researchers, including subjects related to research biases, ethical dilemmas, skill development, mentorship, and the impact of external variables. Therefore, to develop a strong and ethically sound research identity, ECRs should engage in self-reflective practices, seek advice and support, and skillfully handle the changing circumstances associated with these challenges.

Given the growing interest in agency within the higher education context (Ashwin, 2008; Trowler, 2008), it is not surprising to find studies on the agency of early career researchers in the literature. Moreover, Pilbeam and Denyer (2009) emphasize the significance of agency in relation to the advancement of early career academics as autonomous researchers. ECRs, as independent researchers, have the freedom to choose the activities they want to participate in through ongoing agency growth (Billett, 2006).

Mathieson (2011) proposes a sociocultural approach-based induction model to give the novice academics the opportunity to more critically build their identities as academics by reflecting on the opportunities and restrictions by their institutions. In justifying the role of sociocultural approach in empowering novice academics' agency, Mathieson (2011) stresses that the individualistic approach in higher education generally attributes academics' knowledge and performance evaluations to individual deficiencies. However, an inductive sociocultural approach argues that academics

mediate complex expectations in teaching, research, and management, emphasizing that academics need to develop their professional judgment to understand and manage tensions between economies of performance and ethics of practice.

Academic agency is the term used to describe a researcher's ability to actively engage in the academic process and take ownership of their own learning. This concept involves the ability to make decisions, set goals, and take responsibility for the outcomes of one's own learning. It also includes the ability to actively engage in academic pursuits and take ownership of one's own learning. Bandura (1997), Zimmerman (2000), Deci and Ryan (2000), and Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) have established a strong connection between academic agency and self-regulated learning, intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement. Namely, cultivating academic agency is crucial for fostering academic success and developing the ability to study throughout one's life.

Another topic that has received a lot of attention is the challenges that ECRs face. In forming their professional identities and navigating the research environment, early career researchers face a variety of challenges and considerations. Mehta et al. (2020) stress the need to establish an equitable atmosphere for early career researchers and the necessity of significant adjustments to combat racism and advance diversity and inclusion in the scientific community. Bradley et al. (2020), for instance, have emphasized the challenges faced by early career researchers due to factors such as their geographic location, career stage, and indigenous status in order to focus on the inequalities in accessing scientific activities. Khoo-Lattimore (2018) underlines the importance of ethical reflexivity in research, emphasizing the need for ethical considerations among early career researchers. In addition, Richards et al. (2019) provide valuable insights into the necessary support for early career researchers by investigating the challenges and proposing potential solutions to maintain the future of the field. According to Laudel and Gläser (2007), a crucial aspect of the professional identity of early career researchers is transitioning from an apprentice to a colleague, which provides valuable insights into the transformation experienced by early career researchers. In their study, Johnson and Weivoda (2021) analyze the current challenges encountered by early career researchers, with a specific focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They highlight the dynamic nature of the field and how it has influenced these researchers. To conclude, it is evident that early career researchers have challenges in the domains of professional growth, ethical dilemmas, diversity, inclusion, equity, and the evolving landscape of research. Hence, the professional identities and success of early career researchers are dependent upon resolving these challenges and providing sufficient support.

Studies on early career researchers goes beyond the identity and challenges foci and include an extensive range of topics and methodologies in the field of language education. It is worth mentioning that most studies with the keywords of early career academics focus on the teaching acts of the target groups and somehow ignore the research tasks of the population of interest. However, with the aim of having an understanding of ECRs' teaching practices as discussed in the literature, we can for instance have a close look at a study by Mittelmeier et al. (2018) in which they stress the importance of equipping ECRs with the necessary knowledge and skills to engage

in rigorous research practices. They highlight the need for resources that can assist ECRs in developing the skills to interpret, analyze, and evaluate both large and small data sets. On the other hand, Chigisheva et al. (2017) explore the importance of functional foreign language literacy in fostering the growth of a global research career. Similarly, Jayaratne et al. (2021) and Benge and Beattie (2021) provide insight into the extent to which proficiency in a foreign language might impact the career aspirations and plans of aspiring researchers, which is particularly significant to early career researchers in language education who aspire to follow a worldwide research career.

Plurality of Interculturality

A thorough understanding of psychological, social, and educational dynamics is necessary to fully comprehend the complex and varied issue of the plurality of interculturality in diverse settings. According to the literature, intercultural relations must be fostered by encouraging respect for and awareness of cultural differences (Escarbajal-Frutos et al., 2019). This is especially significant in educational environments, where creating an atmosphere that is inclusive and promotes learning across cultural boundaries is essential to fostering positive attitudes and eliminating prejudice (Oczlon et al., 2021). Furthermore, research on acculturation and ethnic relations sheds light on the behavioural dynamics and psychological changes that result from interactions between various cultural groups (Berry, 1999).

Beyond conventional methods like multiculturalism and colorblindness, the concept of interculturalism has emerged as a strategy to manage diversity in the setting of multiple societies (Yogeeswaran et al., 2021). People from different cultural backgrounds can engage dynamically through interculturalism, which can result in the development of new and intricate self-understandings. This approach aligns with the requirement to confront superdiversity and cultural fusions—two new and growing realities in communities with different cultures (Yogeeswaran et al., 2021).

Moreover, the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the acceptance of cultural plurality are essential for cultivating intercultural harmony in plural societies (Berry & Grigoryev, 2022; McEvoy, 2022). This requires not only recognizing and valuing cultural diversity but also actively engaging in meaningful interactions and mutual influence amongst diverse social groups (Yogeeswaran et al., 2021). In addition, Howitt et al. (2013) emphasise that the development of intercultural competence is essential for harmonious coexistence, stressing the need of comprehending and honouring various cultural perspectives in a range of contexts, including environmental and geographical domains.

In short, the significance of promoting intercultural understanding, dialogue, and respect in plural societies are extensively emphasized in the literature (Cantle, 2016). The need for inclusive educational practices, the recognition of diverse cultural expressions, and the development of intercultural capacity to address the complexities of interculturality in diverse social contexts are needed (Kirpitchenko, 2014).

Diversity and Interculturality

Considering that the objective of interculturalism is to enhance intercultural competence and communication, the linguistic and cultural diversity cannot be ignored. While linguistic diversity is most evident in different aspects of society, as well as cultural, biological, and economic dimensions, the same link cultural diversity holds with the society is also observable. Both concepts have been featured in many studies in the field of interculturality and education (Gorenflo, et al., 2012; Hong, 2023; Jones, 2017; Kamwendo & Seretse, 2014; Khukhlaev, 2020; Pérez-Leroux & Glass, 2000; Yuan & Li, 2023).

The notion of diversity is not limited to linguistic and cultural variety, particularly in the education and research fields, we encounter disciplinary diversity in interculturality with regard to different disciples and pedagogical approaches. Liu (2023), for example, emphasizes the need to revitalize interculturality in education, particularly within the disciplinary field of Intercultural Communication Education (ICE), addressing the lack of diversity in this area. Moreover, the study by Jiménez et al. (2020) emphasizes the necessity of developing intercultural awareness and a disposition to interact with others from different disciplinary perspectives, highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of intercultural competence.

Furthermore, the methodological diversity of interculturality includes a variety of paradigms and methods to study in multicultural environments. In order to address the realities of other people, scholars have highlighted the necessity of critical interculturality as a decolonial approach (Padilla et al., 2014). In order to fully capture the variations in acculturative experiences among various social groups in multicultural environments, acculturation—a multifaceted and dynamic process of intercultural learning—needs methodological investigations that extend beyond quantitative approaches (Karim & Hue, 2022). Additionally, there is a call for community psychology to engage in intercultural work from a place of ontological, epistemological, and methodological parity, reflecting the political nature of this field (Cruz & Sonn, 2010). Moreover, prior intercultural and social cohesion studies provide the groundwork for current research on diversity and intercultural competence for sustainable community development, emphasizing the value of expanding on the body of methodological and practical knowledge already in existence (Nesterova et al., 2022). Emphasizing the importance of an intercultural approach to education and social studies education, context-specific interventions for immigrant children and adolescents must be taken into account in the context of education in multicultural environments in order to support their acculturation (Karim, 2021).

Rationale Behind the Study

In interculturality-related research, early career researchers (ECRs) are critical in influencing research culture and scholarly communications in the future. With a dedication to enhancing research culture and increasing diversity and inclusivity in science, they are viewed as possible change agents (Mehta et al., 2020). But ECRs have experienced several difficulties that have affected their work and well-being, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Byrom, 2020; Denfeld et al., 2020). Among these difficulties are the need for mentoring, competences, and professional development assistance (Suhonen, 2023; Daniels et al., 2015). Furthermore, the significance of intercultural communication and proficiency in career management has been emphasized, stressing the necessity of bolstering self-worth, assurance, and acquiring novel proficiencies (Žegunienė, 2021).

Additionally, ECRs play a role in interculturality-related research in the field of education, where they are required to acquire openness, self-awareness, and a commitment to social justice in order to become inclusive educators (Tangen et al., 2019). The wide range of interculturality-related studies is demonstrated by the acknowledged importance of intercultural sensitivity in many situations, such as multinational organizations and language acquisition (Jedynak, 2021; Ma & Li, 2023).

According to Farrell et al. (2019), mentoring and assistance from ECRs in the field of scholarly communications are essential to the survival of research organizations and academic societies. Building research capacity and guaranteeing the sustainability of research investigators at various phases of their careers depend on this assistance (Daniels et al., 2015). Additionally, it has been noted that critical thought is required to determine the best ways to educate and train the upcoming generation of early career education researchers (Mittelmeier et al., 2018). This underscores the need of supporting and directing ECRs as they pursue their research goals.

Thus, as we examine ECRs, it is crucial to consider the dynamic interaction of cultures within this sample. The concept of interculturality is becoming more important, recognizing that the experiences and efforts of ECRs are integrally connected to various cultural influences (Shah, 2004). Interculturality, when considering early career researchers, extends beyond geographical limits, encompassing a range of cultural origins, disciplinary norms, and research approaches that define the academic environment. Gaining insight into the influence of cultural elements on research practices, collaboration dynamics, and professional identities among ECRs is crucial for promoting inclusive and globally informed academic communities. Although the current body of literature recognizes the significance of diversity in academia, there is a noticeable lack of understanding of the perceptions of ECRs regarding interculturality in language education.

Conclusion

Considering the ECRs impact on the future research in the field, it is of utmost importance that their perceptions regarding interculturality in language education is consulted, which in turn would help in developing their agencies - in research, teaching, or overall academia - by finding their own voices. In this study, we aim to highlight that ECRs not only exist in teaching positions but also aspire to play a facilitating role in shaping their own understanding of interculturality, along with finding their voices and forming their agency in research practices. Although challenges faced by ECRs and the plurality of interculturality have been thoroughly explored in the literature, the significance of the current study lies in its contribution to ECRs' understanding of interculturality, the construction of their own identities, agencies, and communities from scratch, and building upon them.

Thus, within the scope of this study, we, specifically, aim to comprehend cultural diversity and the intercultural setting from the perspective of early career researchers. We also seek to identify opportunities and challenges that arise within this context and explore the ways in which cultural factors form the professional identities of these researchers. The study results are aimed at

substantially advancing cooperative learning and cultural adaptability. Within this framework, professional development recommendations, training curricula, and methods for managing cultural variety can be developed.

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Research Design and Implementation

ABOUT the CHAPTER

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the research design and implementation process of a qualitative study that aims to explore the perceptions of interculturality in language education among early career researchers (ECRs). The study is conducted as a part of the Erasmus+ project, namely European Researcher Development and Engagement for Interculturality and Equity (EUREDIE) (2021-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000029594). The project consisted of three primary results, each comprising its own components. The first project result included three core components: (1) a review of the literature across Europe in the last decade, (2) an investigation of early career researchers' (ECRs) perceptions of interculturality in language education, and (3) an analysis of ECRs' research-related needs. The current chapter focuses on the second component and aims to describe the methodological framework employed in the study that was carried out to explore the perceptions of interculturality in language education among ECRs at a variety of levels ranging from the personal and institutional to the national and global levels. This chapter centers on providing a detailed description of the research paradigm and approach followed, the data collection tools and procedures used, as well as the data analysis procedures and methodologies employed.

Keywords: interculturality, perceptions, early career researchers, qualitative analysis

Introduction

Interculturality is one of the fundamental concepts in the modern educational field, which arose in response to the worldwide imperative of promoting inclusion and equity. The European Union (EU) policies openly advocate for linguistic and cultural diversity as essential components of the European identity. They prioritize inclusive higher education systems and emphasize the need to examine instructional and research-based opportunities to enhance inclusivity, equity, and equality. Interculturality is recognized as having significant potential in achieving these goals.

Interculturality, which has become a common term in various fields, encompasses a wide range of interpretations, theoretical viewpoints, methodological approaches, and models. While not a new concept, the idea of "interculturality" has gained momentum in language education over the past few decades, resulting in the emergence of "intercultural talk" and the widespread use of the term "intercultural" (Dervin 2010). Its significance in the field of language education is notable as it pertains to both linguistic and educational goals, requiring investigation not in isolation but in conjunction with related issues and disciplines. Recognition of the full potential of interculturality and implementation of an innovative and transnational approach in professional development of early career researchers (ECR), will have consequent effects on diversity-focused research conducted in the field, knowledge produced through research and global dialogue formed on interculturality with a network of a diverse group of researchers. Seen as a necessary skill to cultivate, interculturality has had an impact on the language education field as well leading to a reinforced commitment to teaching, training, and research efforts.

To further develop the ECRs, who are the future of the field of language education, it is crucial to understand what guidance ECRs need to advance their professional development, what could be done to enhance their intercultural communication and proficiency, and what supports they think they lack and need to conduct their research studies and improve their teaching. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one can observe that there is a discernible absence regarding the exploration of ECRs' perceptions concerning interculturality in language education. Hence, it is crucial to investigate the perceptions of ECRs on interculturality and understand how their views influence their professional growth, given their significant role in developing the area of education through interculturality-related research. By comprehensively documenting the perspectives of ECRs, a more holistic fulfillment of the EUREDIE project's objectives could be attained.

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Therefore, in order to establish a sustainable and inclusive path that provides professional development and networking opportunities for ECRs, conducting a comprehensive study that thoroughly examines their perceptions using rigorous data collection and analysis methods was deemed essential.

As one of the training and research efforts in the interculturality field, the EUREDIE project aims to utilize the potential of interculturality to address concerns regarding inclusion, equity, and equality. The project seeks to enhance the capacity of a diverse group of early career researchers and promote their active engagement in the field. Specifically, it aims to develop an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable pathway for the professional development and engagement of the ECRs in the field of language education across Europe. This pathway focuses on addressing the growing social and linguistic diversity in language education and research. In order to accomplish this, the project utilized an interculturality approach, took advantage of the resources and opportunities provided by digital technologies, and implemented a participatory and data-driven strategy. To achieve this overall objective, three results were planned for the project. The first project result involved a data-driven review of the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with language education. The review was structured around three core components respectively:

- review of the literature across Europe in the last decade,
- ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education,
- analysis of ECRs' research-related needs.

The second component of the first project result, which is investigating the perceptions of ECRs regarding interculturality in language education, serves as the focal point of Part 2 and consequently, the current chapter. Part 2, titled "Early Career Researchers' Perceptions of Interculturality in Language Education", consists of three chapters: Chapter 5, 6, and 7. Chapter 5 provides a thorough explanation of the reasons behind the exploration of ECR's perceptions and emphasizes the significance of this exploration. In Chapter 6, which is the present chapter, the methodological framework, data analysis, and data collection tools employed to investigate the ECR's perceptions are discussed. In the following chapter, Chapter 7, a comprehensive overview of the findings related to the perceptions of ECRs is presented.

Given (2012) defines perception as a mode of apprehending reality and experience through the senses, thus enabling discernment of figure, form, language, behavior, and action. Individual perceptions are of significance since they influence one's opinion, judgment, understanding of a situation or person, the meaning of an experience, and how one responds to a situation. Thus, this study is broadly framed within the qualitative research paradigm since social perceptions are one of those qualitative areas that defy quantitative research (Holliday, 2007, p.5). Specifically, it utilized an online survey as the primary method.

Methodological Framework

This section examines the methodological underpinnings of the study that investigated the ECR's perspectives on interculturality in language education. The study aimed to investigate the level of understanding and awareness regarding the significance of interculturality among ECRs in their professional growth and involvement. An in-depth examination of ECRs' perceptions of interculturality will be one of the noteworthy ways to enable the researchers of the project to achieve the goals of the EUREDIE project, which aims to reestablish the importance of interculturality in the context of inclusive education that embraces diversity. This will foster social and linguistic diversity, as well as enhance comprehension and engagement in the creation of inclusive and equitable knowledge production among the ECRs engaged in language education research.

This research adopts an interpretivist paradigm, which acknowledges the subjective meanings of the participants and respects the diversity between individuals. Interpretivism embraces an ontology that leans towards idealism and relativism, along with an epistemology that is rooted in constructionism. According to the underlying beliefs of the interpretive paradigm, reality is socially constructed and existential, acceptable knowledge lies in the details of the researched situation and contains epistemic meanings, research depends on some values and offers an insider's perspective (Wahyuni, 2012, p.70). Hence, this study delves into potential interpretations and viewpoints of interculturality in language education.

The study adopts a qualitative method in the interpretivist paradigm, with a particular focus on exploration. Qualitative approaches to educational and social research emphasize the socially constructed nature of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). Qualitative research studies aim to uncover insights about a certain topic, especially social phenomena; therefore, qualitative research primarily focuses on analyzing individuals' verbal and behavioral expressions in a narrative or descriptive manner, aiming to accurately capture the participants' subjective experiences (Maykut & Morehouse, 2005). Blaikie (2007) identifies four distinct logics of enquiry: inductive, deductive, retroductive, and abductive. This qualitative study employs an inductive approach, utilizing participant replies to open-ended questions to explore the topic of interculturality from the unique viewpoints of the participants. As Blaikie (2007, p.9) indicates "inductive enquiry starts with the collection of data, followed by data analysis, and then proceeds to derive generalizations using the so-called inductive logic. The aim is to describe the characteristics of people and social situations, and then to determine the nature of the patterns of the relationships or networks of relationships between these characteristics".

Participants

Creswell (2013, p.5) defines research design as "the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem to writing research questions, and on to data collection, analysis, interpretation, and report writing". During the initial phase of data collection, this study obtained qualitative data from ECRs as part of a broader project aiming at a large population of ECRs. As one of the first steps of a research design, to specify the participants of the project and therefore of the study, a working definition of "ECR" is proposed. According to the working definition, ECRs are:

- Ongoing MA or PhD students
- MA or Ph.D. graduates who are within 5 years following the completion of their MA or Ph.D. or equivalent professional training

- Postdocs, fellows, or research assistants
- engaged in language-related academic fields (e.g. English language teaching, linguistics, language studies, etc.) and/or in others involved in thesis and/or research focusing on language and interculturality-related topics.

Given the impracticality of conducting in-person surveys, the data was gathered via online surveys and a total of eighty-six ECRs participated in the study.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

One of the main objectives of this project was to provide an extensive and pluralistic overview of the field of interculturality with an exclusive focus on its intersections with language education research. The project aimed specifically to review the knowledge domain of interculturality with a major emphasis on the major lines of theoretical and methodological thinking involved as well as explore the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs and their research-related needs. The development of data collection instruments to uncover ECR's perceptions of interculturality in language education was based on the findings of this comprehensive literature review (see Chapter 5).

In surveys, according to Scott and Usher (2011, p.117), the focus is defined as the extent to which the original agenda of the researcher is adhered to while the frame is defined as the way in which that agenda is realized. In this context, a strong focus is understood as the exertion of a large degree of control by the researcher over the contents of the exchange; correspondingly, a weak focus is defined as a limited degree of control exerted by the researcher over its contents. A strong frame, on the other hand, would include items such as tight control over the timing and duration of the survey, a blurring of the public–private dimension, no opportunities afforded to the participant for review or editing, the construction of a formal setting and the use of a controlled linguistic/paralinguistic framework. A weak focus is defined in opposition to this (Scott & Usher, 2011, p.119). Informed by such a framework, the first-stage surveys will be structured with a strong focus and a weak frame.

Since the aim is to capture ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education at a variety of levels ranging from the personal and institutional to the national and global levels, the study was geared toward the exploration of the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs specifically drawing from the following points of foci:

- An understanding of culture, including statements about culture per se, cultural resources and behaviors, cultural systems and structures, cultural familiarity/foreignness, and cultural artifacts
- Meaning(s) of cultural foreignness/differences and cultural familiarity
- Features of cultural membership and identity- the role nation plays and the role of small cultures with factors such as profession or family background, political or religious affiliation
- Contexts of interculturality, where recognition of linguistic and cultural differences emerges
- Personal narratives of intercultural experiences (personal intercultural trajectories)
- Positions in the face of cultural diversity

- Treatment of linguistic and cultural diversity in language education
- Role of culture and interculturality in one's professional identity

Therefore, to reveal ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education, as a primary data collection tool, an online survey was conducted to investigate the above-stated points of focus. The survey aimed to elicit the perceptions of the ECRs from a broad range of countries who are employed at the tertiary level in diverse language education-related research contexts. In the survey, open-ended descriptive questions (Spradley, 1979) were used to encourage the participants to describe their experiences, thoughts, and feelings preferably relating to specific events and/or incidents in detail in addition to the questions that were asked to elicit the demographic and professional details of the participants. The survey was composed of three main parts. The first part of the survey focused on examining the demographic and professional characteristics of ECRs. This included their age, current place of residence (city and country), affiliations, positions at their workplace, current degrees, research studies and topics, research methodology employed, international research-based experiences, current involvement in research studies, and any relevance to interculturality. In the second part of the survey, the ECR's perceptions of culture and interculturality were investigated, which provided the data for the study presented in Part 2. This section of the survey specifically examined the ECRs' perceptions of an intercultural context, both in terms of a culturally unfamiliar and familiar setting, as well as their comprehension of cultural variety. Furthermore, ECRs were requested to provide instances of both culturally foreign and familiar situations they encountered. Additionally, they were inquired about their engagement with cultural diversity and the strategies they employed to address it. Lastly, in this section, they were prompted to deliberate on the significance of culture and interculturality in shaping their professional identity. The first and second parts of the survey are given in the Appendix 2 of this book. In the third part of the survey, the needs of ECRs involved in research on interculturality and language education were investigated, which is elaborated upon in Part 3 of the present book.

The survey questions were generated using Google Forms and the surveys were distributed through the professional networks of the researchers using purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods. Via the same Google Forms, the participants were provided with a consent form and were informed that they could express their consent to the terms of the study simply by marking the following statement on the Google Form. The consent form provided explicit information regarding the objectives of the study, the types of questions that would be asked, and the estimated duration of the survey. It also emphasized the voluntary nature of participation in the survey. Additionally, it was stated that participants could withdraw from the online surveys at their discretion. The findings of this research project would be disseminated through publication and conference presentations, with participants being assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Furthermore, any identifying information such as the name of their institution or their position would be omitted from the research reports. To ensure confidentiality, the survey data was collected in the digital environment and then converted into encrypted files.

The data will be stored in an external memory for 2 years, under the supervision of the researcher, after which the encrypted files will be deleted.

Data Analysis Procedures

The initial step of the data analysis was to analyze the demographic and professional data gathered from the participants in the first part of the online surveys. As closed-ended questions were only used in the "demographic and professional information" part of the online surveys, frequency analysis was exclusively conducted at this step. The open-ended questions of the online surveys; on the other hand, were analyzed using qualitative data analysis. As Maykut and Morehouse (2005) indicate, "The process of qualitative data analysis takes many forms, but it is fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions" (p.112). Qualitative research findings are inductively derived from the data via thematic analysis. During a thematic analysis, the researcher identifies and codes the themes that are conveyed by the participants (Creswell, 2013), and these themes are illustrated by extracts (Silverman, 2015). Therefore, in this study, the researchers identified, analyzed, and reported themes to reveal meaningful patterns and insights. To achieve this, the researchers went through the following steps in the given order:

- Familiarizing themselves with the data via reading the data repetitively and thoroughly,
- Identifying and labeling meaningful data via assigning codes to each of them,
- Rereading the data and categorizing recurring codes, revealing the potential themes,
- Reviewing themes and making sure each theme is distinct and coherent,
- Organizing the themes and reporting the themes along with supporting quotes,
- To ensure intercoder reliability, analyses of the data by multiple researchers and discussions of findings with one another.

The initial intention was to analyze the data using the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA. However, due to the lack of familiarity of some researchers with the software, a decision was made to manually code the data for practical reasons.

Limitations

To enhance the credibility of the study and account for its exploratory nature, it is recommended to triangulate the data, as proposed by Stake (2005). As one of the triangulation methods, methodological triangulation refers to "the use of multiple methods in the examination of a social phenomenon" (Mathison, 1988, p.14). Initially, the methodological triangulation was intended to incorporate focus group discussions with critical incidents and cases as part of the data collection process. However, the focus group discussions were unable to take place due to scheduling constraints. Thus, a single data collection method, specifically online surveys, was employed in this study.

Conclusion

The study's findings had a significant impact by demonstrating ECR's understanding of the importance of interculturality in promoting social and linguistic diversity. It also provided researchers with valuable insights into ECR's current perspectives on interculturality and its role in language education and research. Therefore, as one of the cornerstones of the project, this study helped achieve the ultimate result of the EUREDIE project which is the generation of an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable researcher development and engagement path for the early-career researchers involved in language education research to address the increasing social and linguistic diversity involved in language education and research, by using an interculturality approach, capitalizing on the resources and opportunities that digital technologies offer today and adopting a participatory and data-driven strategy.

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Findings

ABOUT the CHAPTER

This chapter aims at identifying early career researchers' (ECRs) perceptions of interculturality and interpreting the relevant findings. In order to serve the field of interculturality and the population of early career researchers (ECRs) within the scope of EUREDIE project, qualitative data have been collected with 6 open-ended questions in an online survey. The data have been analyzed with a thematic focus and the findings have been interpreted and discussed with the illustrative response samples of the ECRs. Findings have shown that the ECRs participating in the research are reportedly interculturally responsive individuals and professionals as teachers or academicians. However, their perception of interculturality seems to center more on language and nation- based perspectives or in other words, big C of interculturality. Moreover, the participants' responses indicate a need for assistance in addressing and responding to diversity and interculturality in their teaching and research practices although they value it as part of their professional identities.

Keywords: interculturality, language teaching, early career researcher, qualitative research, perception

Introduction

EUREDIE project is an Erasmus + project aiming at providing ECRs working in language education research with a researcher development and engagement path to empower them in building capacity for research studies that are sensitive and responsive to diversity and interculturality. The project has been structured in order to achieve this aim through a series of actions, which compose the three results of the project (see Chapter 1). A tripartite review of interculturality in language education comprises result one, including a comprehensive review of the literature across Europe between 2012-2022, an investigation of ECRs perceptions on interculturality and an analysis of their research-related needs. This chapter will focus on the perceptions of interculturality as emanated from the survey questions and discuss them with reference to their impact on research practices, which was gathered through an online survey as explained in the previous chapter.

Despite the lack of consensus in the literature on the time period of ECRs' academic or other research-related employment (Bazeley, 2003; Boeren et al., 2015; Browning et al., 2017), in the present project ECRs are defined as researchers working in the field of language education and/or in the process of writing a thesis or conducting research in these fields, graduate students enrolled in ongoing Master's and Doctoral programs, researchers graduated from Master's and PhD programs in the last 5 years, and/or researchers and research assistants who conduct postdoctoral research. A number of studies focusing on the attitudes and needs of ECRs regarding their training needs (Bhakta & Boeren, 2016), the challenges they encounter (Christian et al., 2021) or their roles (Locke et al., 2018) are available in the literature; yet, the studies conducted with ECRs are generally scarce. Sutherland & Taylor (2011) underline the significance of working with the ECR population in the area of research, but they also note that ECRs are the ones who haven't frequently been among the researched population within the field of education. Thus, the present study provides data on this under-researched population, specifically in the field of interculturality.

The field of interculturality in language education is an evolving field mainly due to the various understandings of culture shaped by historical perspectives, globalization, socio-political movements, diversity and multiculturalism, technological developments and postmodern perspectives. Traditionally viewed as the shared values, beliefs and practices of a group of people, which are inherent and essential to this particular group, culture today is characterized by diversity, complexity and interconnectedness- designating a

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progression from an essentialist perspective to a non-essentialist one. While the essentialist paradigm is deterministic, the non-essentialist view of culture defines culture as unique but open to change and dynamic (Nathan, 2015). The dynamic nature of interculturality and its understanding is advocated by numerous scholars in the literature, such as Baker, W. & Fang, F. (2019) and Chen, R. T. H. (2022) (see Chapter 3 and 4 for an extensive discussion) Against this backdrop, it was imperative to examine how the ECRs perceived culture and interculturality in the first place. The findings of the qualitative data which were gathered with the six open-ended questions will be presented along with their interpretation and discussion. First, basic introductory demographic information will be provided about the participating ECRs, which will be followed by the description and interpretation of the six main themes emerged from the data with some sample responses to illustrate the interpretation. The presentation of the findings will be organized in accordance with the data analysis procedures, which was first commenced with the simultaneous analysis and interpretation with a thematic focus for each survey question and then continued with the overall analysis and interpretation.

Demographic Information about the Participants

The total number of participants who took the survey is eighty-six. They are mostly in their 30s ranging in age from 21 to 57 with the average score of 32.72 and median 33. Most of the participants did not provide any answer for their citizenship; however, they reside in different countries although most of them live in either Turkey or Portugal, which can be seen in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1
Residences of Participants
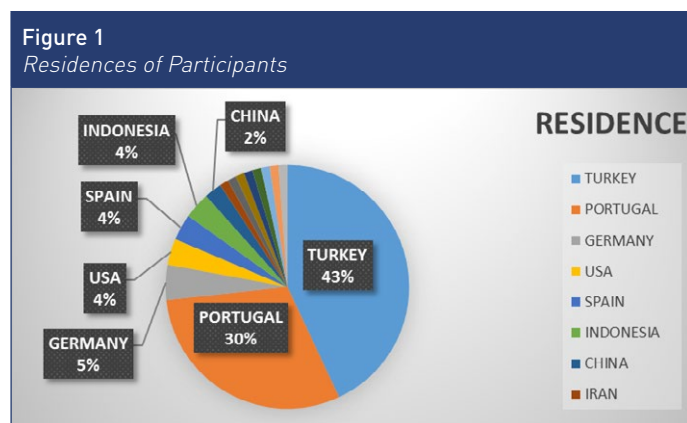
While 65% of the ECRs work either at universities or research centers, 35% work outside teaching and research institutions. Of all the participants, only 36 % have been involved in an international research project assuming the role of trainer/ instructor, student or researcher, and only 25 % have been to another university or organization for research purposes. For the scope of this part of the data analysis, the previously stated information on the participants' work experiences internationally and outside of their own institutions could be of value in relation to their interculturality experience since interculturality is not only about a difference of nationality but also about contacting varieties of communities.

Our research showed us that most of the participants were currently carrying out interculturality-related research, focusing on linguistic or language related interculturality issues such as multilingualism, ELF, language teaching specifically English language

teaching, English as a global language, translanguaging etc. Although mobility as an interculturality related topic is the second most popular, other issues of interculturality and literature have also emerged as the other mostly occurring fields of interculturality research. Language and language learning is still the most popular area of interculturality research. Topics of interculturality research that the ECRs worked on were presented under the main titles of *language related*, *mobility related* and *other topics of research* as presented in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2
Topics of the ECRS' interculturality research
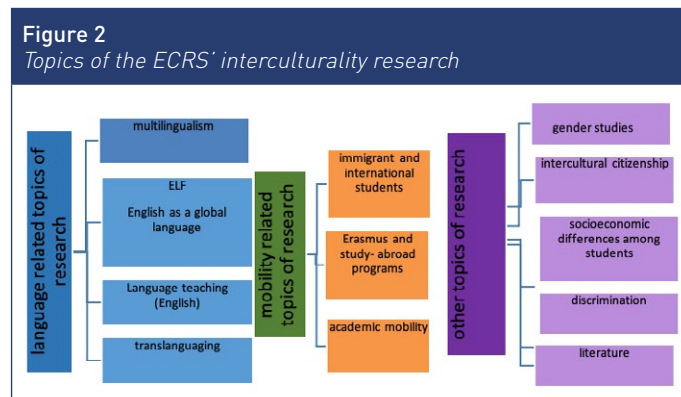
Findings

As previously stated, the data collected from the participants to identify and interpret the ECRs' perceptions of interculturality included responses to six open-ended questions. These questions, their aims and the salient codes discovered in the analysis of the responses are shown in Table 1 below. These questions, their aims and the salient codes discovered in the analysis of the responses are shown in the following table.

In the course of the analysis, firstly the responses to each question were analyzed separately to identify patterns and codes followed by the collection of these responses in one file to be able to identify the shared codes and draw the main themes emerging from the responses collectively After this second analysis, responses to questions have been re-coded and compiled under 6 themes to interpret the data in detail. Table 2 shows the main themes and the relevant questions whose responses have been presented in the following section of the chapter.

The initial analysis of the data showed that the number of replies vary for each question as some of them are not applicable. To the first and third questions only 1 participant, to the second and fifth questions 5 participants did not respond; thus, the responses of these participants were removed from the analysis. The fourth question was answered by all the participants with either yes or no. Still, only positive answers (94,77 %) have been interpreted while identifying the approaches ECRs employ while dealing with cultural diversity.

Responses to the sixth question have been coded for the purpose of naming and describing the roles of interculturality as part of the ECRs professional identity. Although all the responses underline the importance of interculturality in shaping their professional identity, 5 responses were removed since they did not describe the personal roles of the participants but only generalize for others or emphasize only the importance of interculturality.

Table 1
Survey questions and their aims

Questions	Aims	Salient codes
Question 1: What features, in your opinion, constitute an "intercultural context"?	To discover the ECRs' description of the components of interculturality context	Language Nationality Values Beliefs Customs Attitudes Preferences Ethnic background Religion Age Gender
Question 2: Please name and briefly explain two contexts/settings that are culturally foreign and two contexts/settings that are culturally familiar to you.	To explore what is culturally familiar and what is unfamiliar for the participants	Nationality Religion Language Customs Pastime activities Daily practices Eating habits Attitudes Values Professional practices
Question 3: What would be a suitable metaphor for "cultural diversity"?	To uncover the participants' understanding of cultural diversity	Unity Variety Wealth Beauty Aliveness
Question 4: Have you ever been in a situation where you had to deal with cultural diversity? Can you please explain the situation and how you approached it?	To identify the approaches of the participants to cultural diversity	With teacher role With student role With academician role At work In social life Tolerance Respect Open-mindedness Appreciation Understanding Mediation
Question 5: Can you describe a classroom situation which highlights cultural diversity?	To discover the way the participants, describe cultural diversity in the classroom	Student variety Language Religion Course content Classroom activities
Question 6. How would you describe the role of culture and interculturality as part of your professional identity?	To explore the role of interculturality in the participants' professional identity	Language mediator Conflict mediator Inclusive Cultivating awareness Role model Personal development

Except for 5 responses, all responses of question 2 were counted for the interpretation of results although some of the participants gave only one example for both familiar and foreign contexts, not two (17,55%). However, the responses including two examples for culturally familiar and unfamiliar settings naturally provided higher interpretive and comparative value of data.

Table 2
Emerging themes and relevant survey questions

Emerging Themes	Relevant survey questions
Traditional essentialist view	Questions 1&2
Pluralistic view	Questions 1&2
Unity of diversity	Questions 2&3
A positive attitude in facing cultural diversity	Question 4
Cultural diversity stemming from the cultural aspects of the learners in the classroom setting	Question 5
Interculturality as an elemental component of professional identity/work	Question 6 & partly question 4

Emerging Themes and Issues

The re-analysis of the data revealed that responses to both 1st and 2nd questions present a meaningful source of interpretation in order to unveil ECRs' perceptions of interculturality. About 50% of the participants define intercultural context with diversities of languages and nationalities, and others with other characteristics of culture such as background, values, beliefs, attitudes etc. while not referring to neither language nor national borders. On the other hand, ECRs' narratives and metaphoric symbolization (question 2 and question 3) helped us learn in detail how they define cultural diversity and comprehend whether ECRs associate cultural diversity with similarities or differences. After examining the perceptions of cultural diversity, responses to question 4 offer an insight to the approaches our participants make in order to deal with culturally diverse settings and provide information on how they manage conflicts when they occur. Additionally question 5 is the one which aims to understand the characteristics of cultural diversity in classroom settings and the roles participants take in these settings. Therefore, the responses have been read with these purposes. Lastly, the responses to question 6 together with question 4 have given insight into the roles interculturality plays in their professional identities.

Language and Nation-Based Interculturality Perception: a Traditional Essentialist View

The analysis of the responses to questions 1 and 2 revealed that when asked to describe the constituents of an intercultural context, ECRs firstly refer to the issue of language diversity. They do so in different ways: some ECRs refer to language directly while some in a more indirect way by referencing language with the word 'communication' or 'English' as a specific language of intercultural context. The following examples would exemplify this indirect reference to language diversity:

Q 1- ECR 28: Comunication, Different Culturas, Ethnicities

Q1- ECR 39: If the interlocutors are from different cultures and if they can express their culture while using English as the means of their communication, then I can say that this creates intercultural communication and context.

ECR 28 clearly includes ethnicity in the definition of interculturality; however, what they mean with communication and 'culturas' is not clear. In fact, 'culturas' could mean anything about culture; however, question 1 investigates what elements interculturality includes. The word 'communication' in response has been interpreted as a reference to language since language is one of the indispensable means of communication. ECR 39, on the other hand, refers to a specific language, English, as the ECR highlights the different language use between interlocutors and English is the target language of their interculturality perception.

Q1 ECR 44 Cultural diversity, language, Nonverbal communication

Q2 ECR 32 Intercultural context should be a rich environment where there is a gathering of people from different backgrounds and nationalities.

The responses sampled above are two examples of responses defining interculturality in a highly essentialist way with either language or nationality (ECR 44 with language and the latter with nationality). In these responses no other factor of interculturality is named; in contrast, language and nationality are the only factors of interculturality and referred to directly. Another participant, on the other hand, defines interculturality with both language and nationality as follows:

Q 1 ECR 9 the interaction of people from different geographies and with diverse native languages create an intercultural context

In this response *'geographies'* refers to nationality and *'diverse native languages'* refers to language diversity as constitutional ingredients of interculturality. However, some other responses approach interculturality as a phenomenon including various factors.

Q 1 ECR 17 Multiple vectors of difference in one group of people. Age, Nationality, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Ethnicity, Employment, etc...

The response of ECR 48 is the most inclusive in compiling the various factors of interculturality including cultural backgrounds, religions, traditions, languages, norms and values, communication styles, power dynamics, etc.

The responses of ECRs to question 2 are more enlightening in terms of discovering their perceptions of interculturality. Nearly all the responses include a reference directly to a country or continent name such as Asia, Germany, Turkey, the USA, Norway, Africa, Sweden, Greece, Italy and so on while describing what is culturally familiar and what is culturally foreign for them, which supports the idea that most of the ECRs define interculturality in alignment with the understanding of Culture with big C, and they have a rather essentialist view of interculturality. While the participants define what is familiar for them by matching it with their home country, they define unfamiliar or foreign in terms of other countries. An example could be the response of ECR 1 below:

Q2 ECR 1 A context in Sweden would make me feel culturally foreign as I have not been in Sweden before or do not have any information regarding this country, its people and its customs or a Christmas' Eve dinner with a Christian family.

A family breakfast on the first day of Ramadan Feast (Eid al Fitr) or Turkish family wedding

Q 2 ECR 12 Culturally Foreign: a- interaction between two students from different countries that hardly knew each other; b- First interaction with a new culture like food;

Culturally Familiar: c- Portuguese food; d- pastéis de nata.

ECR 12 clearly states what creates cultural difference; thus, interculturality condition is people coming from different countries and this is what culture as a big C relates to. On the other hand, there are still a couple of responses describing cultural diversity in personal terms rather than matching it with a specific country, nationality or language. For instance, ECR 22 never refers to a specific country or even a specific religion while listing what is familiar or unfamiliar to them. This is the same for ECR 80, and cultural familiarity or unfamiliarity is more personal for such participants; in other words, they don't define culture with more visible stereotypes peculiar to larger communities, even nations or the globe.

Q2 ECR 22 Culturally foreign: fried food; snow

Culturally familiar: family gatherings; religious practices

Q2 ECR 80 Culturally foreign contexts: night-life related contexts, engineering related contexts. These cultural contexts are not familiar because I am not into them, and neither is my social circle.

Culturally familiar contexts: teacher-related/educational-related contexts, traveller-related contexts. These contexts are familiar because it is close to my daily life.

Other Factors- Based Interculturality Perception: a Pluralistic View

More than half of the participants did not define interculturality with either language or nationality or both; however, some of these responses did not clearly state any other specific factor(s) to define interculturality, either. They only used the term 'cultural background'. Thus, the responses given to question 1 and thereby identifying interculturality with any other factor does not outnumber the ones identifying culture with language and nationality. ECR 10 below, for example, lists values, beliefs and practices as factors of interculturality, and ECR 19 gives examples for cultural familiarity and unfamiliarity with the practices of greeting and transportation; thus, matches interculturality with these practices in life. Based on all the responses, other factors included in the description of an intercultural context could be listed as gender, ethnicity, race, values, beliefs, religion, practices, experiences, ideas, backgrounds of working, traditions, traits, roles, lifestyles, preferences, challenges and identities.

Q 1 ECR 10 Having the chance of communicating freely with people who have different values, beliefs, and practices. To create an intercultural context, we should have freedom of speech, empathy, and an understanding environment free from prejudice.

Q 2 ECR 19 Kissing when you are greeting someone / shaking hands

Going to work by bike / going to work by car

An interesting finding has emerged when the responses to questions 1 and 2 were compared. While only very few of the ECRs define 'intercultural context' referring to religious diversity in question 1, they refer more to factors of religion, religious motives and practices whenever they describe what is familiar and what is foreign to them. One example is given below to show the reference to religion while describing an intercultural context:

Q 2 ECR 5 East Asia and Hinduism are two contexts that are culturally foreign to me. European culture and Islamic setting are the contexts that I'm familiar with.

Perception of Interculturality as Unity of Diversity

Data reveal that almost all participants use metaphors signifying variety and they symbolize this variety in the form of harmonious and rich combinations of things such as *melting pot, salad bowl and other food related metaphors (pizza, sandwich, aşure, fruit and vegetable basket), mosaic, rainbow, vibrant tapestry*, etc. There were also some creative metaphors such as *human, Milky Way, living treasure, a train full of people, a surreal art picture, fingerprints of a human, stars, fungi, tree and reef*, which suggest (celestial) existence, wealth and longevity. Only one participant (ECR 38) matched cultural diversity with a negative connotation word, *culture shock*, implying a conflict rather than richness.

Based on the metaphors used by participants, it seems that except for a couple of responses emphasizing differences the participants do not underline either similarities or differences, but rather a combination and harmony without uniformity, which resonates with unity of diversity. We must note here that "unity in diversity" was another formulation that was considered as the emerging theme, however, the use of metaphors which indicate a random variety of things brought together for no cause other than to form a wholesome new entity directed us to opt for "unity of diversity". However, when the responses to question 2 were analyzed again together with all the other responses to the other questions, data revealed that while narrating what is familiar and unfamiliar, some participants (4,28%) focused only on what is foreign for them; i.e., highlighting the differences. The response of ECR 48 below clearly shows that interculturality perception is based on differences rather than similarities.

Q 2 ECR 48 Culturally foreign to me:

-Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony: The Tea Ceremony is a highly ritualized event that involves a specific set of movements, gestures, and behaviours that have deep cultural significance in Japan.

-Hindu Wedding Ceremony: The ceremony involves a complex series of rituals and customs that are steeped in religious symbolism and meaning.

Culturally similar to me:

-There is nothing that is culturally similar to me because I belong to no-culture. I research, read, compare, analyse, and evaluate. Henceforth, no culture feels similar to me.

Lastly, when the answers to question 1 were scanned with the words related with differences and similarities, it was seen that only two responses marked similarities as a part of their definition of interculturality. Except for these two participants, all ECRs highlight the differences as features of an intercultural context.

A Positive Attitude in Facing Diversity

If most of the participants define interculturality with differences rather than similarities, the responses to question 4 include fruitful data to understand what approaches ECRs use while they experience cultural diversity and conflicts in their lives. Almost all ECRs have experienced cultural diversity contexts and in their responses to question 4 they tried to describe both their experiences and how they approached diversity.

Based on the ECRs' descriptions of their cultural diversity experiences, it can be said that these were either academic or social cultural diversity experiences. In the academic experiences, participants were either teachers or students. In terms of experiencing cultural diversity as a teacher, the participants mentioned that they were in the workplace, either in their home country or abroad, where they are with colleagues or pupils from different cultures. In addition, they stated that as teachers, they have participated in academic events such as international conferences and projects where they have met people from other cultures and encountered culturally diverse situations. In terms of experiencing cultural diversity as a student, attending a multicultural school in their home country or abroad allowed them to become acquainted with different cultures. In addition, by participating in student exchange programs such as Erasmus, they have been exposed to culturally diverse situations in which they came into contact with other cultures.

In addition to academic experiences, participants also addressed social situations in which they have been exposed to diverse cultures. However, the experiences as teachers, students, academic professionals and the experiences at workplaces highly outnumber the number of experiences in social lives of the participants. Although some of the social events, such as Christmas parties, meetings with friends, and visits to relatives or friends abroad are planned; others, such as traveling with strangers from other cultures and meeting someone new that a friend introduces are unplanned activities. Furthermore, some of the participants have lived abroad, where they have encountered culturally diverse situations on a daily basis, such as interacting with the owner of a bakery. See the excerpts below respectively exemplifying experiences of cultural diversity with the roles of teacher, student, academic professional and as a social being:

Q 4 ECR 1 I had a class which included 13 students who were from different countries yet it did not created a problem for me to deal with but an opportunity which provided many different topics to encourage the students to talk and share.

Q 4 ECR 43 Yes, I was. At that moment, I was taking a German language course in a German-speaking country. In the classroom there was a variety of nationalities, including the teacher. Performing activities that required interaction with the other students/teacher implied mediation as it as necessary to deal with many linguistic and cultural aspects that influenced communication/interaction and to establish a common ground so that the message was conveyed and, simultaneously, it was possible to promote mutual understanding.

Q 4 ECR 7 Partially yes I guess. I have been in academic gatherings where people from various cultural backgrounds were present. I usually try to hold no preconceived opinions about people, and I try to be as open as possible to different ways people do different things. Briefly, the situation becomes like "almost anything is possible and acceptable" for me.

Q 4 ECR 8 I used to go to Germany a lot to see my cousin. In one of them, we travelled to Italy by car with my cousin's workmates. One was from Italy and the other was from Poland. It took about 10 hours to arrive and we spent 3 days together. Although they were not good at English, I tried to get every information about their culture by trying to ask very simple questions and in the times when they did not understand, I tried to use everything such as body language, gestures. I asked them to teach me their local cultural slang a bit.

In their responses, the participants described a variety of approaches that they have adapted to culturally diverse situations. All participants have favoured adopting a positive attitude, such as tolerance and an open mind, respecting others, finding common ground, and acknowledging other cultures. When faced with situations that could have resulted in conflict, they have chosen to avoid the conflict and/or stereotypes, be as polite as possible, negotiate a solution to any problem, and adopt an appropriate communication style. When they have encountered something that sounds strange or unusual to them, they have made an effort to understand and appreciate these differences and to be accommodating. The majority of participants have viewed diversity as a source of wealth, and they have accepted these differences as they are. As teachers, they stated that in classrooms with students from diverse cultural backgrounds, they have attempted to adapt their teaching methods accordingly.

Cultural Diversity Stemming from the Cultural Aspects of the Learners in the Classroom Setting

In light of the analysis of the responses provided by the ECRs to question 5, findings suggest that the classroom setting provides a rich source for cultural diversity with the content and teaching practices (activities) of courses (usually language courses) as well as variety of learners with various cultural backgrounds, nationalities, religions they believe in, native languages, values and beliefs and even their individual learning styles.

In terms of course content and practices, festivals, local cuisines and celebrations are the mentioned contents, and the participants state that learning about these help students understand, raise awareness and interest in different cultures. Activities focusing on the relationship between language teaching and diversity also draw attention. In addition, learning a culture through language teaching and language learners' explanation of cultural norms are other frequently mentioned topics. Activities such as integrating reading texts and personal experiences into lessons, using music and films related to cultural diversity and problem solving or critical thinking were also emphasized. Besides, activities such as presentations and open-ended questions and discussions on debatable topics were also addressed.

Participants stated that it is important for the teaching materials and practices be compatible with cultural diversity and reflect various cultural values. In addition, the importance of the teacher's role in raising awareness about cultural diversity and planning and implementing the course content accordingly are emphasized. The following excerpt highlights the crucial role of a teacher in terms of cultural diversity in classroom settings.

Q 5 ECR 75 In a classroom situation that highlights cultural diversity, students from various cultural backgrounds come together to learn and collaborate. They bring with them their unique perspectives, traditions, and experiences, enriching the classroom environment. The teacher fosters an inclusive and respectful atmosphere that encourages students to share their cultural insights, engage in cross-cultural discussions, and learn from one another's differences. This multicultural classroom setting promotes cultural understanding, empathy, and the appreciation of diverse perspectives.

Some challenges were also reported within classroom activities related to cultural diversity. It was stated that some difficulties may be experienced depending on religious beliefs. Participants expressed that religious practices require adaptation. There are also answers stating that students may have difficulties in understanding others' cultural backgrounds. These show that students may have different cultural and religious beliefs during the implementation of activities that emphasise cultural diversity, and therefore difficulties that need to be taken into account may be encountered in classroom settings. ECR 5 describes the cultural diversity in the classroom with the following challenge related to religion the student believes in.

Q 5 ECR 17 When a student doesn't want to engage in an activity because it goes against a religious practice, like voting for class representative for Jehova's Witnesses.

In terms of the variety of students as a source of cultural diversity in classroom settings, the following response (ECR 65) is a well-exemplifying one of an individual difference as a source of cultural diversity although other varieties such as cultural and linguistic backgrounds, nationalities, etc. are more extensively given as responses by the participants of the survey.

Q 5 ECR 65 In a classroom with students from diverse cultural backgrounds, the teacher may notice that some students are more comfortable working independently, while others prefer to work in groups. This can be attributed to cultural differences in communication and learning styles.

Interculturality as an Elemental Component of Professional Identity/Work

While almost half of the participants take more active participant roles in responding to interculturality as part of their professional identities, others approach interculturality as a crucial component of their individual and professional identities or as a skill necessary in order to improve themselves as professionals. This finding is compatible with the findings of question 4 as almost half of the participants' experiences of cultural diversity have been encountered in their professional environment while working as a teacher or academician. Thus, it is not unexpected that the same participants define and describe the roles of interculturality crucial as part of their professional identity. Intercultural competence is

either a skill they have acquired and they believe to develop over time or a skill that they should actively apply in their professions and help others acquire as well.

It has been observed that ECRs shape their professional identities as teachers or teachers of the future and place a limited emphasis on their researcher identities. While ECR 65 brings forward the role of interculturality in forming professional identity as an academician, ECR 33 does this as a teacher emphasizing the mission of being a role model, helping students become more interculturally aware citizens and designing lessons accordingly to promote intercultural competence.

Q 6 ECR 65 Culture and interculturality are essential components of being an academician. Academia is a global community, and cultural diversity is present both among students and faculty members. Intercultural competence is necessary to navigate and succeed in this diverse environment. Roles include promoting diversity and inclusion, facilitating global collaboration and exchange, and preparing students for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

Q 6 ECR 33 Teaching a language can not be separated from teaching other cultures, helping students broaden their minds, and helping them become decent, fair and honest citizens and world people. Since our students will take us as examples, we should always improve ourselves, respect ourselves and others, be decent, fair, honest citizens and act accordingly. Apart from being examples, we should try to help students know much about themselves, their country, their values, their prejudices and about other countries, their values, beliefs and so on. through texts, discussions, assignments and projects. Shortly, first, as examples, secondly, through the lessons we design, we can promote intercultural competence.

The stated roles of interculturality as reported by the ECRs could be listed as follows: mediating between languages, cultures or both, and conflicts in the classroom, raising, promoting and creating awareness of interculturality, developing intercultural competence of students, being a role model by approaching students and their diversities in an interculturally responsive and respectful way, and creating an interculturally responsive, equal for all and inclusive learning environment. Except for all these active roles, all participants value being interculturally responsive people in their individual and professional settings and some of them state that their multicultural classroom environments, experiences of working with diverse populations or potential of understanding and valuing cultural backgrounds as their individual identity contribute to their personal growth as professionals. ECR 6 emphasizes the role of multicultural classrooms in promoting the development of intercultural competence of not only students but teachers as professionals as the responses state that ′*A multicultural or intercultural classroom atmosphere promotes the development and unique opportunities for both local and international students as well as the EFL teachers/instructors*′ .

Conclusion and Discussion

The main findings and interpretations of ECRs perceptions of interculturality could be summed up as follows:

- The ECRs participating in the study seem to perceive interculturality rather in terms of the linguistic and national diversity compared to other factors and/or elements, which is noticeably incoherent with the more recent conceptualizations of interculturality, have shifted to a more inclusive and multifaceted understanding, as is discussed in chapters 3 and 4.
- ECRs mostly base their views on interculturality on differences rather than similarities; however, they have a shared tendency to approach differences with respect, open-mindedness and a potential of understanding which align with the dimensions of intercultural communicative competence.
- All of the participants have reported that they have experienced intercultural diversity in their professional and social settings, and they perceive it as richness. This result is not an unexpected one when juxtaposed with the realities of the increasingly globalizing world allowing for more mobility and increasing trends of global or intercultural citizenship.
- In their professional context and in the classroom environment ECRs have reported an awareness of their own interculturally responsive identities. While some take more active roles in their professions as teachers or researchers to transmit their potential understanding of interculturality to others such as their students or colleagues, others perceive intercultural competence as either a component of their individual and professional identity or an obligatory skill which needs to be developed over time.

Overall, the findings of this study have laid a fertile groundwork for the development of an online study program for ECRS, the second result of the EUREDIE project. Juxtaposed with the dynamic and evolving theoretical and conceptual landscape of the interculturality-language education nexus described in the first part of this book, the findings here were utilized for course development, content generation and task design during the development of the online study program.

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PART 3
ANALYSIS OF EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS' NEEDS

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Background, Research Design, and Implementation of ECRs' Research-Related Needs

ABOUT the CHAPTER

A needs analysis is a foundational step in educational project planning as it ensures that the project content is relevant, meaningful, and applicable to the participants' real-world needs, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of the educational intervention. As such, this chapter details the analysis of early-career researchers' needs within the EUREDIE project, by providing theoretical considerations in which the needs analysis was conceived and presents the rationale and significance of this research. In addition to this, the chapter not only explains the methodological framework and design which support this study, but also specifies the data collection tools and procedures adopted for data analysis. In essence, this needs analysis study facilitated the establishment of an online researcher development programme and open online self-directed course both seeking the involvement of early-career researchers with the matters of interculturality, inclusion, diversity, and language education.

Keywords: needs analysis, research design, methodological framework, data analysis

Introduction

The primary goal of the EUREDIE Project is to support early-career researchers (ECRs) working in language education by reinvigorating the significance of the field of interculturality in relation to diversity-inclusive education, considering the intersections between the multifarious standpoints in interculturality research and language education. In light of this, the project seeks to provide ECRs engaged in language education research with enhanced knowledge and awareness of the role that interculturality plays in promoting social and linguistic diversity, as well as increased comprehension and engagement with inclusive and equitable knowledge production. By utilising the resources and opportunities that modern digital technologies offer, and mainly by taking an inclusive, data-driven approach to knowledge production, the EUREDIE Project also aims to increase capacity for the creation and utilisation of a digital ecosystem for sustainable, easily accessible, and inclusive researcher development and engagement, which in turn, targets a wider impact and network of ECRs primarily throughout Europe, and possibly other regions.

In order to accomplish this main objective and create a path for the development and participation of researchers that is inclusive, accessible, sustainable, and which addresses the significance of the interculturality approach for the ECRs involved in language education, one of the project's components and specific results was to conduct an analysis of the ECRs' research-related needs. Together with the other specific results presented in this book, namely the review of the literature on the intersections of interculturality and language education, and the gathering and analysis of ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education, the study of the ECRs needs analysis is essential to provide data-driven and evidence-based knowledge upon which a path for the development of research capabilities that take an informed and sound approach to interculturality can be built. It is a common misconception that interculturality in language education is a single, narrow field of study. To address the growing concerns for inclusion, equity, and equality, it is evidently both feasible and vital to take full advantage of all the possibilities that the knowledge from the field of interculturality has to offer today. In this manner, regardless of the particular subject or research topic ECRs work on, the aim of the third component is to identify the needs and requirements for ECRs to be able to plan and conduct research investigations that are attentive to the inherent interculturality and present diversity that characterizes an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world.

Therefore, in line with the novelty and originality of the EUREDIE Project's implementation and results, this chapter addresses the background and methodological approaches to the analysis of ECRs' research-related needs conducted within the framework of the project. It provides a discussion of some of the literature and theoretical considerations in which the needs analysis was conceived and presents the rationale and significance

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of this study. Moreover, this chapter discusses the methodological framework and presents the data collection tools and procedures, as well as the procedures adopted for data analysis. Finally, this chapter will conclude by addressing how this needs analysis contributes more specifically to the overall project results and the impact it may have on more ECRs development of knowledge and skills to conduct interculturality-sensitive research, as well as pave the way for the subsequent chapter in this Part 3, which deals with the analysis and reporting of the findings related to this study.

Theoretical Considerations on Needs Analysis

Needs analyses (NA) are largely employed in many fields and domains such as business, technology, healthcare, education, adult education and language education, among others, and a considerable body of research is dedicated to its theory and implementation. Within the framework of the EUREDIE Project, the NA was conducted in order to identify ECRs' research-related needs in order to inform the design and implementation of the online problem/task-based researcher development programme that took place over the summer of 2022, and to guide and illuminate the design and development of the massive open online self-directed course which aims to engage participants with the issues of interculturality, inclusion, diversity, and language education. Needs assessment and analysis has proven to be a prolific field of research in itself, therefore this section centres on reviewing some of the orientations and approaches related to NA and provides the basis on which the NA conducted within the remit of the Project was developed.

NA in Applied Linguistics and Language Education

Within the scope of the field of Applied Linguistics and Language Education, studies on NA have developed mainly in relation to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) but have since expanded to other areas in language teaching. In his state-of-the-art article, West (1994) explains that 'analysis of needs' as a term related to language teaching was first seen in the 1920s in India, and what students need to do with the foreign language in the target situation they are learning for, as well as how students might best master the target language during the training period they are involved in, are the two distinct and possibly contradictory concepts of 'need' that were introduced in the discussions at the time. Moreover, West (1994) goes on to assert that a single definition of what constitutes 'need' has not been agreed on, and in his review finds that some scholars identify this difficulty to be related to "the distinction or even contradiction between various concepts of need: *necessities* or *demands* (also called *objective, product-oriented or perceived* needs), learners' *wants (subjective, or felt* needs) and the methods of bridging the gap between these two *(process-oriented* needs)" (p. 3). Due to this ambiguity 'need' is usually considered to be an umbrella term (West, 1994).

In this light, the definition of need is typically associated with the difference or gap between one's intended knowledge, skill, competence and performance, and one's existing knowledge, skill, and performance. From an organizational and management (project development and evaluation) perspective, Watkins et al.

(2012) define that "*Needs* are simply the differences between your current achievements and your desired accomplishments. Thus, needs most commonly represent discrepancies—often deficits—between your ambitions and the results of your current performance" (p. 20-21). However, the use of the word 'deficit' in this definition of needs may be perceived, on the grounds of educational theories, as coming from a deficit perspective (Patton Davis & Museus, 2019), which might as well be avoided. Therefore, 'gap' likely represents the intended meaning better, and 'Gap Analysis' has also been used in some domains as a synonym for NA (e.g. Davies, 2022).

When it comes to the concept of NA and its underlying theory pertaining Applied Linguistics in general, and ESP in particular, Flowerdew (2013) states that it "was first established by the Council of Europe with their model for describing the language proficiency of adults whose jobs entailed working in different countries in, what was then, the European Economic Community" (p. 325). This led to more studies on the nature of NA and Munby (1978) is considered to have pioneered and laid the foundations for its theorization by incorporating elements of the communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1971) in terms of communicative needs, and that was based on a focus on functions, which had been proposed earlier (Wilkins, 1976; Richterich & Chancerel, 1977). As Flowerdew (2013) explains, in the 1970s NA was primarily seen in terms of the target situation analysis (TSA), which outlines the tasks that second- or foreign-language learners must complete in the target situation. However, a focus on the gap between what students can perform with the language when they start a course, and the intended performance in the end of the course, was later put forward and characterised as present situation analysis (PSA) (Richterich & Chancerel, 1997). As Flowerdew (2013) concludes, "broadly speaking, whereas the target situation analysis is concerned with "needs," the present situation analysis addresses learners' "lacks" and "wants", three aspects addressed at length in Hutchinson and Waters (1987)" (p.326). In fact, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) consider external elements such as resources and materials that can be accessed, and the prevalent attitude or culture, as important factors in their characterisation of present situation analysis (Flowerdew, 2013).

This focus on the cultural and social characteristics of the context, referred by Holliday (1994) as "means analysis", is emphasised by Holliday (1995) who takes an ethnographic approach to conduct language assessment needs in a corporate environment, and demonstrates the advantage of a more holistic approach to research language needs in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the situation. As Holliday (1995) asserts, the institutional context plays a vital role in influencing the research for the NA as the extent and kind of access granted to the researcher is an important condition for the analysis, as well as the overall institutional nature that must be addressed in such investigation. Hence, Holliday (1995) highlights the suitability of this approach:

> [t]he employment of an ethnographic approach to the investigation seemed appropriate in that both needs and means were to be seen within the whole fabric of the culture of the institution, and because it was important to interpret the internal realities of this culture to gain some

understanding of how the actors within the culture saw the issues surrounding the role of English and training (p. 117).

This author concludes that the culture of the organization, the interests that drive the implementation of the results of the NA and knowledge of the larger educational background of the context all play an important role in conducting such investigations, and that emphatically "[l]anguage needs cannot be separated from the social context in which they play a role" (p.126).

As in the case of Holliday's (1995) study, the ethnographic approach to NA, which may be of particular interest to research on the intersections of interculturality and language education, started to receive more attention in the 1990s as genre-analytic perspectives in discourse within curriculum development became more prominent, and needs became "articulated in terms of genres situated within the wider discourse communities in which they are produced and enacted" (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 330). This was very different from approaches previously adopted in which the products of NA usually comprised synthetic syllabuses with itemized lists of target language items (Flowerdew, 2013), which, in turn, was one of the driving considerations that led to the proposal of task-based needs analysis (Long, 2005). As Long (2018) argues, the work of the Council of Europe in the 1970s addressed issues related to the form-function debate and proposed the target situation analysis, which was mostly based on intuition, as was Munby's (1978) communication needs processor (CNP). However, since the product of such analyses would be mostly synthetic linguistic syllabuses, which from a second language acquisition (SLA) perspective are not able to account to how learners actually learn a language, the solution was to adopt a task-based approach to NA (Long, 2005). The approach of the Task-based NA has become more common (Long, 2005), and many recent studies focus on its design and implementation, as well as on its intersections with other areas or subfields of research (e.g. Gilabert, 2023; Smith et al., 2022), and "reflect the dynamic qualities of the target discourse, thus revealing more than static, product-oriented text-based analyses" (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 329). Overall, in procedural terms, the sources of information for NAs usually come from learners, teachers, specialized literature, applied linguists and experts in the fields of application, and a combination or triangulation of sources (Flowerdew, 2013; Long, 2005). In terms of methods utilized in NA, these usually include surveys, questionnaires, interviews and observations, among others (Long, 2005; Berwick, 1989).

As can be seen from the developments in the thinking of NA in the context of ESP and related fields, many dimensions need to be considered in the development and implementation of NA. In this light, Hyland (2006) provides a comprehensive definition:

> Needs analysis refers to the techniques for collecting and assessing information relevant to course design: it is the means of establishing the how and what of a course. It is a continuous process, since we modify our teaching as we come to learn more about our students, and in this way it actually shades into evaluation – the means of establishing the effectiveness of a course. Needs is actually an umbrella term that embraces many aspects, incorporating learners' goals and backgrounds, their language proficiencies,

their reasons for taking the course, their teaching and learning preferences, and the situations they will need to communicate in. Needs can involve what learners know, don't know or want to know, and can be collected and analysed in a variety of ways (p. 73).

NA in Education and Adult Education

Until now this section has focused mostly on studies of NA in relation to the field of Applied Linguistics, which of course is of interest to those working on language education research-related topics and overlaps with much of the thinking behind the theory on NA in other fields, especially those related from the social sciences. In this manner, in order to study ECRs' research-related needs to fulfill the requirements for achieving the objectives and specific results of the EUREDIE Project, considerations on studies about the design and implementation of NA from the broader perspective of education also becomes necessary. From the perspective of adult education, Hunt (1986) proposes a definition of NA in which "needs assessment is concerned with determining goals and identifying discrepancies between goals and the status quo" and it is "the process of determining the gap in results between "what is" and "what should be"" (p. 289). This is in line with Brackhaus' (1984) proposition that needs assessment must involve the process of identifying and analyzing needs based on an evaluation which follows established criteria and uses appropriate diagnostic procedures. This process then allows for setting priorities based on those identified needs. However, Hunt (1986) argues that NA often focuses on descriptions of the "what is" of the present conditions, while the process is largely based on abstractions or focused on product means, hence, strategic referents must be defined as constructs with greater specificity to be effective and have instructional value.

Adding a more comprehensive perspective, Sava (2012) argues that as the difference between the present condition and the intended state, the identification of needs is intrinsically related to the context from which those specific needs arise. Therefore, for a NA to be thoroughly conducted and provide significant information that can be used to address the real needs of participants, it is necessary to consider that,

> [a] proper understanding of the social context and the conditions influencing people's attitudes, motivation, and continuing education decisions requires an understanding of the general culture and the larger societal context, as well as an understanding of the micro-socio-cultural characteristics of the social groups that are being targeted (Sava, 2012, p.28).

In this study such considerations were carefully taken into account, as it is expected from a NA carried out to capture the research-related needs of ECRs involved in work on interculturality and language education. Some studies suggest that ECRs' voices and interests have not been well researched (Bhakta & Boeren, 2016; Hakala, 2008); therefore, the NA in this Project also aimed at providing a space for ECRs to express their voices and needs so as to serve as a basis on which a platform for researcher development, in the context of the present global concern for diversity, inclusion and equity, can be built.

Rationale Behind the Study

Interculturality, defined as "the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect" (United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005, Art. 4.8), has at its heart the global concerns about diversity, inclusion and equality. This concept is particularly relevant to today's world, which on the one hand is characterised by immense and interconnected diversities, increasing transnational flows, and fast development of information and communication technologies, and on the other hand sees ever-increasing social tensions, prejudice, and hostility. Central to these tensions is the relevance of interculturality to proposed responses to such paramount issues, which are also continuously reflected in educational and research policies, initiatives, and programmes across Europe. Similarly, as the globe has gone through increasingly deep transformations, shifts, and crises, more inclusive and equitable policies and practices have become ever more relevant and necessary across all types of domains and organisations, including higher education institutions. In this scenario, it is necessary that interculturality becomes more prominent in the teaching and research activities of a wider range of disciplines, including the field of language education in which it has traditionally been assumed to be implied.

In this manner, it is essential to consider that, nowadays, the domain of interculturality is marked by a multitude of approaches and varied and contested terms, along with a diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives. Recognising the evident necessity to harness the full potential of interculturality in addressing the growing concerns for inclusion, equity, and equality, and to enhance the capabilities for the involvement and advancement of a diverse group of researchers, the EUREDIE Project, as previously stated, aims to create an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable pathway for the development and involvement of ECRs engaged in research in language education. As a result, it is foundational and essential to understand ECRs' research-related needs so that this path for development, based on a data-driven and evidence-based approach, can be planned and designed in order to inform and contextualise the responses to the needs of the target group. To this end, the NA reported in this chapter has been developed and carried out.

Significance of the Study

There have been various studies and reports focusing on the needs of ECRs, who are also usually referred to in the literature as 'new researchers' or 'junior researchers' in the context of North America (Bhakta & Boeren, 2016; Gappa et al., 2007). As Bhakta and Boeren (2016) point out, ECRs are often defined in relation to the number of years of postdoctoral experience, the type of work or tasks carried out by them (usually including teaching and research), as well as on their "non-tenure" status. Locke et al. (2018) explain that over nearly the last three decades, many studies investigated doctoral careers in regions such as America, the UK and Europe, and some of these studies have focused on ECRs in the social sciences. These authors studied the range of roles, opportunities and support accessible to ECRs in the social sciences and found that the participants' definition of who is an ECR

was not necessarily time-bound but seemed to be less related to the number of years since graduation than to their levels of confidence and experience, as well as to their appointment to a permanent academic position. In addition, this study suggests that participants in the research call for a "a more holistic, strategic and integrated approach to initial and continuing professional development for researchers" (p. 65), and concludes that individuals also have the responsibility to look for development opportunities available and to inform themselves. Furthermore, research has shown that ECRs benefit from networking opportunities which allow them to connect with like-minded researchers and generate identification and a sense of belonging (Martin et al., 2023).

In this scenario, only by thoroughly understanding the needs of ECRs, within the scope of the EUREDIE Project, it is possible to propose an effective pathway for the development of researchers' capabilities that addresses these needs in a more holistic manner. Capturing the ECRs' needs is also essential in order to put forward an opportunity for development and networking that adopts strategies, content, methods and materials that contribute to a better understanding of the significance of interculturality in general, and to research in language education in particular. Furthermore, studying the needs of ECRs involved in research on interculturality and language education is not only essential to the fulfillment of the objectives of the Project, but it also contributes to the wider body of knowledge on ECRs' research-related needs and the provision of the necessary support.

Methodological Framework

As previously stated, the research study, within the wider scope of the project, has two main goals: to capture ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education, and to identify ECRs' research-related needs to be able to plan and conduct research projects that are aware of and more sensitive to the role of interculturality and current diversity, regardless of the specific area or topic on which they work. Therefore, for the purposes of the NA, a mixed-method approach was adopted as the use of quantitative and qualitative methods offer more affordances for identifying and putting forward the research-related needs of ECRs. Scholars such as Dornyei (2007) advocate for mixed methodologies as a valuable third approach in social sciences research, acknowledging the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods. While each method has its merits, the mixed-method approach, according to Dornyei, offers unique advantages and may enhance research on a wide range of phenomena. Long (2005) suggests that employing mixed methods in NA allows for data triangulation, thereby increasing the credibility and reliability of the research. Park (2021) supports this view, stating that mixed methods contribute to the rigour and systematic nature of NA, enabling the triangulation of diverse sources and analyses for a more comprehensive understanding.

More specifically, to capture the research-related needs of ECRs across diverse countries, higher education institutions, and research contexts, an online survey approach, which utilises both quantitative and qualitative approaches, has been implemented. Online surveys offer advantages such as accessibility to a broader population, time efficiency, as they can be completed at the respondent's convenience, and cost-effectiveness. According to

Dornyei and Taguchi (2010) and Callegaro et al. (2015), these benefits make online surveys a practical choice. Moreover, Hitchcock et al. (2015) emphasise the mixed methods nature of survey development, suggesting that a combination of approaches is essential for creating targeted surveys adaptable to various cultural and contextual settings.

The target population for this NA, the ECRs in this study, encompasses individuals who are either current Master's or PhD students, recent graduates within five years of completing their degree, or those with equivalent professional training. Additionally, postdoctoral researchers, fellows, and research assistants involved in language-related academic fields (such as English language teaching, linguistics, language studies, among others), or those conducting research and theses on language and interculturality topics, are included. ECR participants have been identified and recruited through purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods, starting mainly from the professional networks of the researchers conducting the study. Furthermore, the study also incorporates a diversity principle, intending to include sixty percent of the overall participants from ECRs facing fewer opportunities. The intention was to reach individuals who are situated in remote or rural areas, lack significant economic, social, and symbolic capital, and are affiliated with relatively smaller universities or research institutions, as opposed to the more resource-abundant top-ranking universities in the partner countries.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

Considering the data collection for this study, the research instruments to establish ECRs' needs were divided into three essential parts that are explained in the following paragraphs; however, for the purposes of this chapter, only the first two focus on the NA of ECRs.

The first part, based on Sava's (2012) work on NA, took into consideration a number of factors about the ECR community, namely its demographic features with information concerning its homogeneity/heterogeneity; the institutional structure focusing on data regarding the organised social relationships developed to assist their needs; the value system, including values that are given high priority among the community; power structure with data on central persons who are in a position of control and who can make things happen; and finally, factual information based on researchers' investigation activities.

The second part was centred on the ECRs' perceptions and engagement with interculturality-related research in the studies conducted so as to find out how and to what extent interculturality is explored. In order to do so, a number of issues were considered to guide the preparation of the second part, such as the cultures of research, dissemination and impact; research governance; the preference of research approaches, concepts, and methods; researcher positionality (i.e., the researcher's viewpoint or positioning regarding the social and political conditions of the study - the community, the organisation or the participant group) and reflexivity (i.e., evaluating our own beliefs, perceptions and practices throughout the research process and how these may have an impact on the research undertaken); the perception of and connection with those being researched (i.e., participants or informants);

the recognized importance of the topics being researched on regarding interculturality; the researching of issues of social justice and equality; and lastly, handling ideological and political forces.

The third and last part explored the same topics, however, in a different fashion, by bringing several examples of research cases for ECRs to respond to, so as to validate the findings collected in the preceding part.

It needs to be noted that qualitative data about ECRs residing across Europe was collected via an online survey created on Google Forms, as face-to-face interviews would be difficult and not practicable. These participants were contacted via professional networks using purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods and were carried out throughout the 2022/2023 academic school year to reach the largest possible number of ECRs. Since the intention was to capture ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education at a variety of levels, ranging from the personal and institutional to national and international levels, the study aims to explore the diverse meanings of interculturality as perceived by ECRs. To achieve this, the interviews encompassed open-ended descriptive questions (Spradley, 1979) to encourage respondents to explain in detail their experiences, opinions, and state of mind regarding certain occurrences or incidents. In this sense, the needs analysis in the online survey is divided into four sections: a) information regarding the ECRs' communities (questions 9 to 20); b) cultures of research (questions 21 to 25); c) research governance and choices (questions 26 to 31); and d) researcher positionality and reflexivity (questions 32 to 43).

As for privacy issues, the interview data was collected in a digital environment and then converted into encrypted files to be stored in an external memory for two years, after which the encrypted files will be destroyed.

Data Analysis Procedures

Following the data collection process, a systematic and organised set of methods was then used to inspect, clean, transform, and interpret data in order to extract useful information, draw conclusions, and support decision-making. Conducting data analysis from a mixed-methods survey on Google Forms involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis, therefore the data collected from the survey was cleaned and organised, checking for missing or incomplete responses, and was then found suitable for analysis. Basic statistics were calculated and represented in the form of bar charts and pie charts to visualise the quantitative data. When applicable, cross-tabulations were carried out to explore relationships between variables. With respect to the qualitative analysis, responses to open-ended questions were extracted with the aim of creating a summary of patterns and emergent themes. A thorough analysis regarding the content of qualitative responses was also conducted in search of deeper insights. Quantitative and qualitative results were then compared to validate or enhance overall findings. This triangulation helped to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data were combined in visual representations, making the way for interpretation, conclusions and implications based on the analysis. In the end, a report summarising the analysis and findings was drawn up.

Conclusion

Any attempt to propose opportunities for the development of individuals' knowledge, skills, and perspectives in order to achieve capacity building must necessarily start from the understanding of participants' needs, concerns and contexts. This is particularly important within the scope of the EUREDIE Project, which specifically intends to propose a pathway that provides ECRs working on language education research with more understanding and awareness of the relevance of interculturality for their field and topics of study, as well as greater comprehension and involvement with inclusive and equitable knowledge creation.

It was in this light that the NA study approached in this chapter has been conceived. The background and theoretical orientations, methodological framework, and the design and procedures for data collection and analysis presented here demonstrate that ECRs' needs are at the forefront of the initiatives proposed by the EUREDIE Project. Understanding ECRs' needs and carefully considering their voices, contexts and backgrounds open possibilities for further dialogue, networking, and knowledge building, which have been essential not only for the implementation of the online researcher development programme that took place over the summer of 2022, but also crucial for the establishment of the open online self-directed e-learning platform and to sustainably engage more ECRs with the issues of interculturality, inclusion, diversity, and language education. Since the background and methodological considerations have been put forward, it is now possible to turn to the next chapter and consider the results and findings of this NA study.

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Findings of ECRs' research-related needs analysis

ABOUT the CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to identify, analyze, and discuss the findings regarding the needs and personal understanding of research activities of eighty-six Early Career Researchers (ECRs). First, it examines qualitative and quantitative data from an online survey concerning the ECRs' needs analysis and their perceptions of research activities. Data are divided into the following sections: information regarding the ECR's communities; cultures of research; research governance and choices; researcher positionality and reflexivity; and personal understanding of research activities. It then goes on to discuss the issues and emerging themes related to the data presented and discussed in the previous sections. In essence, one of the main goals of the EUREDIE project is to identify the needs of ECRs so they can plan and carry out research projects that are sensitive to the inherent interculturality and represent diversity, regardless of the specific subject they investigate. By and large, this goal is fulfilled through the examination and discussion of the needs analysis survey.

Keywords: Early career researcher, needs analysis, research activities

Introduction

Recent research on Early Career Researchers (ECRs)' needs and attitudes has been somewhat scarce. To illustrate, the following are representative of these investigations: Bhakta and Boeren (2016) carried out a survey to investigate the training needs of ECRs in British research-intensive universities; Eigi-Watkin et al. (2018) held focus-group interviews to investigate ECRs' needs regarding support, frustrations, and resources; Locke et al. (2018) conducted a survey and interviews to assess ECRs' roles, opportunities, and support in the social sciences; Christian et al. (2021) implemented a survey to examine ECRs' overall needs and challenges; Berezko et al. (2021) conducted a survey on European ECRs' attitudes towards Open Science and scholarly publishing taking into consideration economic, geographical and research career variables; Jackman et al. (2021) carried out a survey to investigate ECRs' perceived benefits and challenges of the COVID lockdown in the UK; Merga and Mason (2021) held interviews to identify ECRs' perceptions of sharing research with academic and non-academic audiences.

In these circumstances, the EUREDIE Project aimed at filling in this gap by conducting a thorough analysis of ECRs' research-related needs in the field of interculturality in language education. Fundamentally, this chapter aims at identifying, analyzing, and discussing the findings regarding ECRs' needs and personal understanding of research activities. The analysis and discussion of the needs analysis survey allow for the fulfillment of one of the main objectives of the project, namely, to put forth ECRs' needs so they may plan and execute research projects that are sensitive to the inherent interculturality and represent diversity, regardless of the particular subject they investigate.

Overview of the Data

The purpose of this section is to examine data regarding ECRs' needs analysis and their perceptions of research activities. Eighty-six ECRs replied to an online needs analysis survey as part of an online survey targeting ECRs' perceptions of interculturality in language education For the project's purposes, ECRs were defined as (a) ongoing MA or PhD students; (b) MA or PhD graduates who are within 5 years following the completion of their MA or PhD or equivalent professional training; (c) postdocs, fellows or research assistants; and (d) engaged in language-related academic fields (e.g. English language teaching, linguistics, language studies, etc.) and/or in others involved in thesis and/or research focusing on language and interculturality related topics.

The data that concern the project participants' needs analysis are both quantitative and qualitative in nature as the questions consist of multiple-choice questions, quantifiable open-ended questions, Likert scale questions and open-ended questions that require a

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critical analysis. To facilitate the interpretation and understanding of the data, they are grouped into the following sections: information regarding the ECR's communities; cultures of research; research governance and choices; researcher positionality & reflexivity; and personal understanding of research activities.

Needs analysis: Information regarding the ECRs' Communities

This section provides data about the participants' perceptions of the age average of the academics at their university/organization and the participants' perceptions of their academic context.

Age Average of the Academics

The data show that there is a good balance in the age distribution (see Figure 1). 40-49-year-old participants make up for 39.3 % of the academics, followed by 23.8% who range from 30 to 39 years old. The younger generation of academics aged 20-29% account for 23.8% and finally 13.1% are aged 50 and over. Results indicate that most respondents report that academics at their university/organization are between the ages of 30 and 49, which possibly suggests we are dealing with more experienced academics in this particular study.

Figure 1
Academics' age average

Which category below best reflects the age average of the academics at your university/organization?
84 respostas
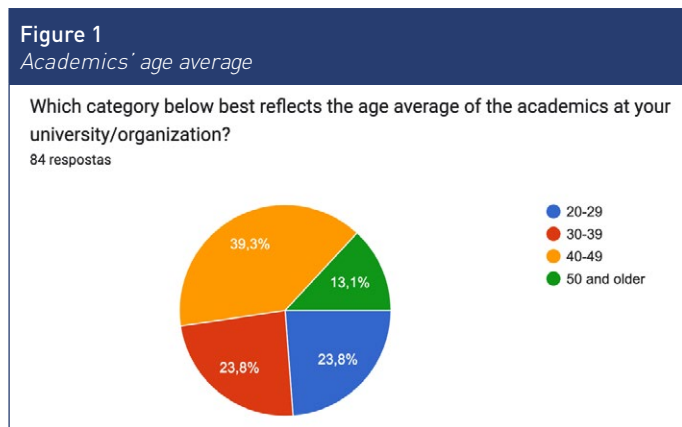
Perceptions of the Academic Context

When asked to best describe their university/organization, respondents were allowed to select as many options as they deemed necessary. The three most common answers describe universities/organizations as a community that values collaborative research (63.1%), a community that values diversity of research (60.7%) and a community that categorizes its members based on their academic titles/positions (59.5%). Along with a strong sense of hierarchy, responses emphasise the importance of collaborative and diverse research. The following three most selected options portray these institutions as a community that values interdisciplinary research (53.6%), a community that values individual research (46.4%) and a community that categorizes its members based on their disciplinary background (41.7%). Once again, the importance of research and hierarchization emerge from the respondents' answers.

Needs analysis: Cultures of research

This section illustrates the cultures of research at the participants' university/organization by examining aspects like the research

topics encouraged/preferred, means of research dissemination encouraged, prioritized target groups for research dissemination, research methods that have greater authority, and the academics' role/responsibility for carrying out research activities.

Research Topics Encouraged/Preferred at the Participants' University/Organization

Participants were inquired about the specific research topics in their field of study that are encouraged and/or preferred at their university/organization. Understandably, answers were wide-ranging and reflect the interests of these institutions, and what follows is a collection of the most common answers. An important feature to highlight at this stage is that 24.3% of the respondents claimed that there were no specific indications regarding preferred research topics at their universities, and that researchers were free to carry out activities in their field of choice. However, another 23.4% revealed that topics related to language teaching (e.g., ELT, ESP, EFL, ELF, EFL, CLIL, bilingualism, among others) were highly favoured. Moreover, 17% claimed that topics related to intercultural studies were popular among their organizations whereas 12.1% indicated linguistics as a preferred theme. Finally, matters related to ICT integration in the classroom (e.g., CALL, MALL) account for 6% of the answers while teacher education is referred to by only 4.8% of the respondents.

Means of Research Dissemination

Unsurprisingly, journal articles (64.3%), conference presentations (59.5%) and book chapters (42.9%) are the most common means of research dissemination in participants' universities/organizations (see Figure 2). Books (38.1%) and web pages (28.6%) account for the next most popular choices whereas 39.3% of the respondents claim all the options indicated above are encouraged.

Figure 2
Means of research dissemination encouraged

Which means of research dissemination are encouraged at your university/organization?
84 respostas
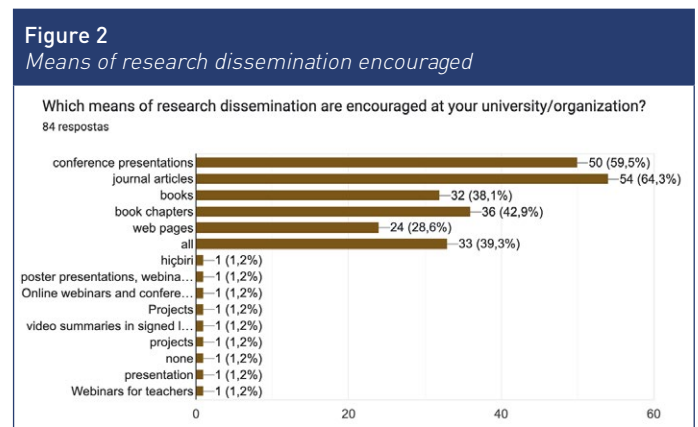
Prioritized Groups for Research Dissemination

For 44% of the participants, research dissemination at their university/organization is mainly aimed at 'other researchers' (see Figure 3). 'Professional groups', selected by 40.5% of the respondents, is another target group as far as research dissemination is concerned. Other groups preferred were 'policy makers' and 'wider community', with 16.7% of the answers each. Moreover, 'industry' was the choice of only 9.5% of the participants. Interestingly, 34.5% picked all groups identified ('other researchers', 'professional groups', 'policy makers', 'wider community', 'industry')

Figure 3
Prioritized target groups for research dissemination

Which target group(s) are more prioritized for research dissemination at your university/organization?
84 respostas
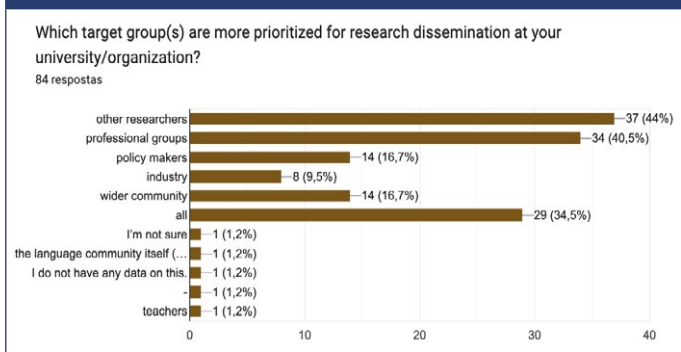
Figure 4
Research methods that have greater authority

Which research methods have greater authority at your university/organization?
84 respostas
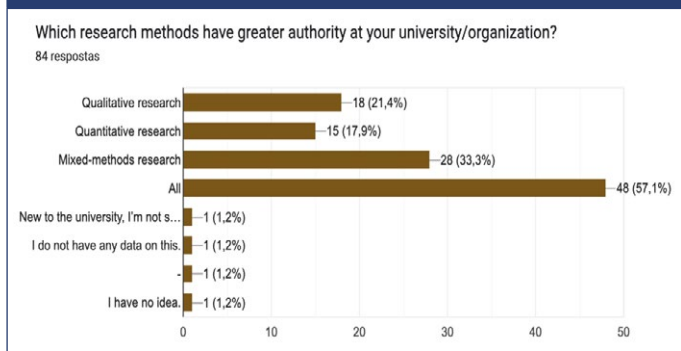
as possible targets of research dissemination. Finally, it is worth mentioning that 'teachers' and 'the language community itself (minority group)' were selected as target groups of research dissemination by just one respondent (1.2%) each.

Research Methods That Have Greater Authority

Regarding the research methods that have the greatest authority at universities/organizations, more than half of the respondents (57.1%) stated that all types of research methods are valued at their institutions, thus including qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research (see Figure 4). This was followed by mixed-method research (33.3%), qualitative research (21.4%) and quantitative research (17.9%). Only a very slim percentage (4.8%) stated that they did not know how to respond to this question. These responses clearly indicate that the great majority of institutions value all types of research.

Academics' Role/Responsibility for Carrying out Research Activities

Answers regarding who is primarily responsible for conducting research activities at participants' organizations show divergent results (see Figure 5). While 46% of the respondents claim that all researchers (senior, junior and graduate) are responsible for this task, the same number of responses (46%) reveal that it is the senior researchers who are in charge of carrying out research activities. A smaller number (29.8%) signals junior researchers as accountable for this task while 15.5% of the answers collected show that it is graduate students who are expected to carry out these activities.

Figure 5
Academics' role and their responsibility for carrying our research activities

Who is primarily responsible for carrying out research activities at your university/organization?
84 respostas
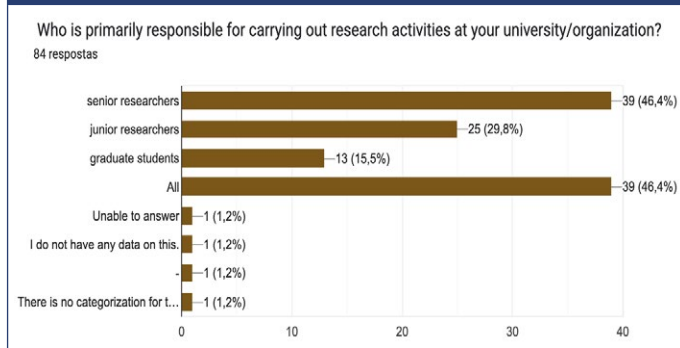
Needs Analysis: Research Governance and Choices

The data presented in this section are based on a Likert scale (1=not at all, 5=very much) as participants were asked about the research environment at their university/organization, more specifically, if it (a) was supportive of research activities, (b) encouraged research cooperation between people who have complementary expertise, (c) encouraged inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities, (d) supported a diversity of competencies, experiences and merits of individuals within the research community, (e) supported a diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs, and communication types, and (f) if researchers at their university/organization were free to pursue research activities of their own choice. Overall, participants reacted somehow positively to all questions as the mean for the answers provided ranged from 3.73 to 3.91 (see Table 1).

Table 1
Views of the participants on their research environment

Sub-heading	Mean	Ranking
Support of research activities	3.86	2nd
Research cooperation between people who have complementary expertise	3.82	3rd
Inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities	3.82	3rd
Diversity of competencies, experiences and merits of individuals within the research community	3.73	6th
Diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types	3.91	1st
Ability to pursue activities of the researchers' own choice	3.74	5th

Support of Research Activities

When asked if their university/organization was supportive of research activities, the majority (65.5%) replied positively, with 27.4% selecting the neutral reply (see Figure 6).

Figure 6
Support of research activities

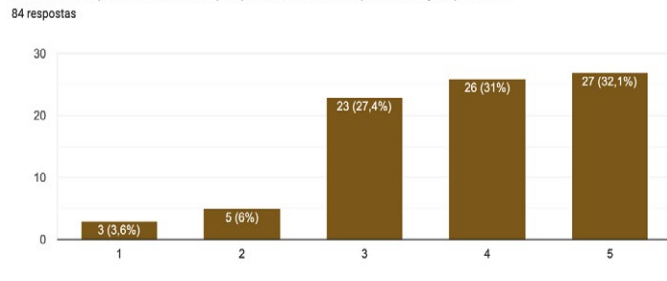To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization is supportive of research activities?
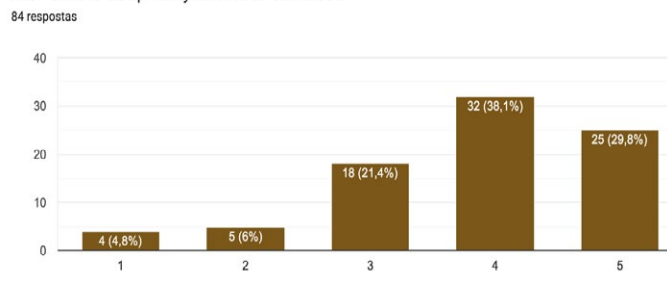84 respostas
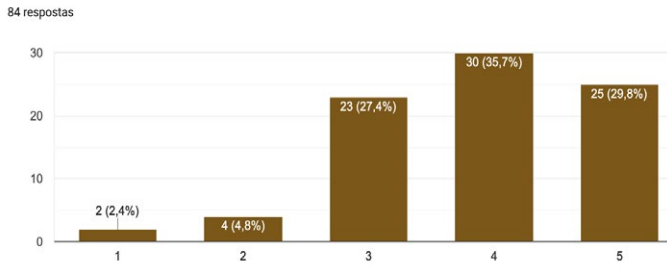
Figure 7
Research cooperation between people who have complementary expertise

To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization encourages research cooperation between people who have complementary expertise ?
84 respostas

Figure 8
Inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities

To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization encourages inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities?
84 respostas

Figure 9
Diversity of competencies, experiences and merits of individuals within the research community

To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization supports a diversity of competencies, experiences, and merits of individuals within the research community?
84 respostas

Figure 10
Diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs, and communication types

To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization supports a diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types?
84 respostas

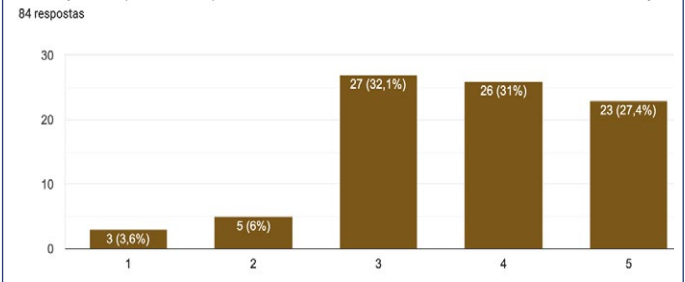### Research Cooperation between People Who Have Complementary Expertise

Regarding their university/organization encouraging research co-operation between people who have complementary expertise, respondents also answered favorably (63.1%) (see Figure 7). Similar to the previous statement, 27.4% chose the neutral option.

Inter- or Trans-Disciplinarity in Research Activities

Participants were then asked if their university/organization encouraged inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities (see Figure 8). Results show that 67.9% replied approvingly, and that 21.4% of the answers were impartial.

Diversity of Competencies, Experiences and Merits of Individuals within the Research Community

Participants' beliefs regarding to what extent their university/organization supported a diversity of competencies, experiences and merits of individuals within the research community were also optimistic, with 63.1% of positive replies (see Figure 9). However, 27.4% replied in a neutral manner.

Diversity of Research Methods, Data, Tools, Outputs and Communication Types

There is also an overall positive perception of the participants regarding their university/organization's support of a diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types (see Figure 10) as the majority (64.3%) chose the two positive Likert items. Interestingly, this question received the highest neutral response (31%) of all questions in the section.

Ability to Pursue Activities of the Researchers' Own Choice

Finally, participants were questioned if researchers at their university/organization were free to pursue research activities of their own choice. Significantly, 63.3% believed researchers were free to choose their research activities (see Figure 11). Nonetheless, 22.6% selected the neutral option while 14.3% expressed a more negative opinion (the highest among the six questions in this section) about research freedom in their university/organization.

Figure 11
Researchers' ability to pursue research activities of their own choice
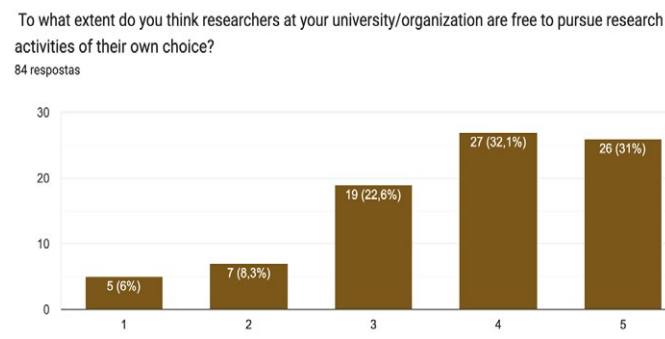
Needs Analysis: Researcher Positionality & Reflexivity

In this section, participants were asked to state the degree of their agreement or disagreement regarding the following 11 statements based on a Likert scale that ranges from (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) undecided, (4) agree to (5) strongly agree.

Social Research Is Separate from Wider Society

In the first statement, "Social research is separate from wider society", the vast majority strongly disagreed (40.2%) or disagreed (40.2%) with this, while some were undecided (13.4%). Only a few participants strongly agreed (1,2%) or agreed (4.9%) with this statement (see Table 2).

Social Research Is Free from Ideological Forces

As for the following statement, "Social research is free from ideological forces", once again, the majority strongly disagreed (20.5%) or disagreed (43.4%) with this, while there were 15.7% of undecided responses and 20.5% who agreed (14.5%) or strongly agreed (6%) (see Table 2). The fact that many believe social research is constrained by ideological forces may have to do with which country respondents are based, as there may be certain limitations in terms of the research conducted or data obtained.

Social Research Is Independent of the Individual Researcher's Biography

Regarding the third statement, "Social research is independent of the individual researcher's biography", more than half of the respondents strongly disagreed (17.1%) or disagreed (41.5%), with 23.2% of respondents as undecided and 18.3% who agreed (13.4%) or strongly agreed (4.9%) (see Table 2). Once more, it is clear that many consider that social research is dependent on the researcher's biography.

Social Research Is a Process in Which the Researcher and the Researched Participate Jointly in Knowledge Creation

With the next statement, "Social research is a process in which the researcher and the researched participate jointly in knowledge creation", the vast majority agreed (45%) or strongly agreed (32.5%,), while only a few were undecided (11.25%), disagreed (3.75%) or strongly disagreed (6.25%) with it (see Table 2). In essence, these results prove how social research is perceived to be

a joint process where both parties, the researcher and the researched, are required to collaborate.

Researchers' Multiple and Varied Positions, Roles, Values, Beliefs, Experiences and Identities Are Intricately and Inextricably Embedded in the Process And Outcomes of Social Research

Subsequently, with the statement "Researchers' multiple and varied positions, roles, values, beliefs, experiences and identities are intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of social research", roughly two-thirds of the respondents agreed (51.2%) or strongly agreed (17.1%), only 14.6% were undecided and 17.1% either disagreed (11%) or strongly disagreed (6.1%), hence proving that researchers' backgrounds cannot be disassociated from the process/outcomes of social research (see Table 2).

Social Research Ultimately Seeks to Find the Most Effective Tools to Solve Problems Arising From Daily Necessities

Whereas more than half of the respondents have a positive view on the statement "Social research ultimately seeks to find the most effective tools to solve problems arising from daily necessities", i.e., 38.75% agree and 20% strongly agree, 12.5% disagree and 11.25% strongly disagree with the statement. Lastly, 17.5% of the participants provided a neutral answer (see Table 2).

Social Research Ultimately Seeks to Understand How Different Groups of People Are Doing What They Are Doing and Also Why They Are Doing So

On one hand, 54.22% and 27.71% agree and strongly agree, respectively, with the statement "Social research ultimately seeks to understand how different groups of people are doing what they are doing and also why they are doing so" (see Table 2). On the other hand, 1.21% of the participants disagree and 6.02% strongly disagree, while 10.84% of the respondents did not express any position about this question.

Social Research Ultimately Seeks to Empower the Subordinated Groups in Society through Demystifying Social Institutions, Practices, and Policies That Produce and Reproduce the Domination of Certain Groups in Society

Whilst more than half of the respondents expressed their agreement with the statement "Social research ultimately seeks to empower the subordinated groups in society through demystifying social institutions, practices, and policies that produce and reproduce the domination of certain groups in society", i.e., 34.94% agree and 19.28% strongly agree, 12.05% disagree and 6.02% strongly disagree with it. Slightly more than a quarter of the respondents (27.71%) did not express either agreement or disagreement (see Table 2).

The Larger Socio-Political Context Where the Researcher Is Located Influences the Research Activities

When asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement "The larger socio-political context where the researcher is located influences the research activities", the majority of respondents agreed (44.6%) or strongly agreed (25.3%)

with this declaration. Furthermore, 14.5% of the respondents indicated they were undecided, and a similar number expressed they disagreed or strongly disagreed (8.4% and 7.2%, respectively) (see Table 2). These results seem to indicate the importance of the broader socio-political setting for the informants and show that for most respondents the context has an impact in the activities in social research.

The Researcher Has Greater Authority Over the Research Process Than the Research Participants

As for the statement "The researcher has greater authority over the research process than the research participants", 43.4% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed (35% and 8.4%, respectively) (see Table 2). However, there was a considerable number of respondents who indicated they were undecided (31.3%), while the remaining ones (25.3%) disagreed (16.9%) or strongly disagreed (8.4%). These numbers seem to indicate conflicting views regarding the roles of researcher and research participants, researcher positionality, and/or choices of methodological orientations in social research.

The Research-Study Context Influences the Research Activities

The vast majority of respondents (81%) agreed (53.6%) or strongly agreed (27.4%) with the statement "The research-study context influences the research activities", while 10% of the participants were undecided, and the same number disagreed (3.6%) or strongly disagreed (6%) (see Table 2). Again, this shows that context is recognized as very important for the respondents in terms of its impact on the research activities, and in this case the specific research-study context.

Table 2

Researcher positionality and reflexivity (ST: statement)

ST	Strongly disagree [%]	Disagree [%]	Undecided [%]	Agree [%]	Strongly agree [%]
1.4.1	40.2	4.02	13.4	4.9	1.2
1.4.2	20.5	43.4	15.7	14.5	6
1.4.3	17.1	41.5	23.2	13.4	4.9
1.4.4	6.25	3.75	11.25	45	32.5
1.4.5	6.1	11	14.6	51.2	17.1
1.4.6	11.25	12.5	17.5	38.75	20
1.4.7	6.02	1.21	10.84	54.22	27.71
1.4.8	6.02	12.05	27.71	34.94	19.28
1.4.9	7.2	8.4	14.15	44.6	25.3
1.4.10	8.4	16.9	31.3	35	8.4
1.4.11	6	3.6	10	53.6	27.4

Personal understanding of research activities

The data presented in this section result from five open-ended questions that require a more critical approach as they consist of qualitative data. These data are related to the participants'

reasons to do research, their perceptions of how their research activities may affect or will affect the setting/context and the participants involved in the study, their viewpoints on how their socio-cultural background, identities, world view and experiences are involved in their research activities and processes, what they think about the uses or possible uses of their research findings, and their thought on the possible impact of their research activities. Considering that the data provided contribute to the analysis of emerging themes and issues, they are the object of discussion in the following section of this chapter.

Emerging Themes and Issues

The purpose of this section consists of presenting the emerging themes and issues regarding the quantitative and qualitative data identified and described in the previous sections (1.1 to 1.5).

Needs Analysis

Regarding the ECRs' communities, the data show that most academics' age range is between 40-49 years old and that the majority of the respondents value aspects like collaborative research, a community that values diversity of research and that categorizes its members according to their academic titles/positions.

With reference to the cultures of research, the data report several topics, i.e., research topics, means of research dissemination, research target groups, research methods and the type of researcher. Firstly, while some researchers were free to choose the topic of their research activities as there were no specific indications about preferred topics, others stated that they were encouraged to carry out research activities related to language teaching. Secondly, journal articles, conference presentations and book chapters represent the top three choices of the participants as encouraged means of research dissemination. Thirdly, the data show that research dissemination is mainly aimed at other researchers. Next, all types of research, i.e., qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research activities, are the preferred research methods among the participants. Finally, results indicate two realities relevant to the research contexts of the respondents: either all researchers are responsible to carry out research activities or only senior researchers are.

Regarding research and governance choice related to research activities, the data show that the participants have a positive view on their research environment. Significantly, more than half of the participants express that (i) their organizations are supportive of research activities; (ii) they are encouraged to develop cooperative research with other researchers who have complementary expertise; (iii) inter- or trans-disciplinary research activities are encouraged; (iv) their organizations support a diversity of competencies, experiences and individual merits within the research community; (v) their organizations support a diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types; and (vi) the participants have the ability to pursue research activities of their own choice.

In relation to the participants' positionality and reflexivity, whilst a considerable number of respondents demonstrate agreement with the majority of the statements of the survey, some of them seem to disagree. On the one hand, several participants expressed

their level of agreement on items related to the process of social research, the context in which the research takes place, and the researcher, as follows: (i) social research is a process in which the researcher and the researched participate jointly in knowledge creation; (ii) social research ultimately seeks to find the most effective tools to solve problems arising from daily necessities; (iii) social research ultimately seeks to understand how different groups of people are doing what they are doing and also why they are doing so; (iv) social research ultimately seeks to empower the subordinated groups in society through demystifying social institutions, practices, and policies that produce and reproduce the domination of certain groups in society; (v) the larger socio-political context where the researcher is located influences the research activities; (vi) the research-study context influences the research activities; (vii) researchers' multiple and varied positions, roles, values, beliefs, experiences and identities are intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of social research; and (viii) the researcher has greater authority over the research process than the research participants.

On the other hand, some participants expressed their level of disagreement related to aspects of social research, as follows: (i) social research is separate from wider society; (ii) social research is free from ideological forces; and (iii) social research is independent of the individual researcher's biography.

Personal Understanding of Research Activities

The following analysis of the qualitative data regarding participants' own understanding of research activities is presented according to the five open-ended questions they answered.

Why Do You Research? What Kinds of Interests Motivate You to Do Research?

The reasons provided by the participants for carrying out research activities can be grouped in the following categories, from the most to the least frequent, accompanied by some of the participants answers (see Table 3):

- Intention to contribute to their field of study and work, i.e., Language Studies, Education and English Language Teaching;
- Self-development and curiosity for learning;
- Institutional and professional expectations that are placed on them and the impact on professional advancement;
- Pressure to publish in academia;
- Importance of carrying out research, although they do not like it.

The data show that most of the participants aim to contribute to their field of knowledge while other participants carry out research activities for personal fulfillment. Some respondents expressed that the reason associated with their research activities is related to institutional and professional expectations, as well as the possibility of career advancement. A few participants feel some pressure to publish, and a few others do not like to carry out research activities, in spite of being aware of their importance.

How Do You Think Your Research Findings Affect or Will Affect the Setting/Context and the Participants That You Studied?

In this section, the data show the participants' views on how they perceive their research findings affect or will affect the setting/

Table 3

Reasons of the participants for carrying out research and some illustrative answers)

Contribution to their field of study and work

"To contribute to the development of English Language Teaching in local and global context and to help not only my own students but also other English language learners and teachers"

"I am very motivated to do research about foreign languages as interculturalism should be more represented in the specific field"

Self-development and curiosity

"Doing research itself motivates me. Because I know that I am going to learn something about the topic I am interested in"

"To improve my teaching abilities"

"I love learning and I am curious about the issues that I am conducting research. I am motivated to learn, and question more. I want to express people's situation, the context and how and why things are like how they are"

Institutional and professional expectations

When I do some research it's always for academic purposes. Even though I'm motivated to explore cultural topics, I don't usually do research for pleasure."

"I do research due to professional and personal reasons. Some main reasons are because of obligation as a lecturer to do research, next because I want to find solutions to some problems or to find answers for some questions."

"I do research as part of my degree/job."

Pressure to publish

"First, publish or perish. Second, my personal interests in the topic I am doing research."

Importance of carrying our research despite disliking it

"I'm not a fan of research. I actually find it boring and uninteresting."

"The honest answer is that I do not like research but that I realise (after completing my BA Hons TESOL) how important (up-to-date) research is in my field. I want my students to excel in their studies and the only way to do so is by equipping them with the necessary skills. However, many factors hinder people from achieving success and at the forefront of this, is cultural differences. Issues that revolve around English competency and what is perceived as competency remain problematic and this often puts people off from reaching their potential, as they feel inferior. This is mainly what motivates me, to conduct research into what would make me a better teacher, what would make the experience worth it for students."

context, as well as the participants involved in the research. Their perspectives are grouped in five categories, as shown next.

Firstly, the respondents have a positive view on the impact of their research findings as they believe that their research findings have or will have a positive impact on the setting/context and on the participants of their investigation. The reasons that justify this view are as follows:

- Positive impact on the teaching practice;
- Expansion of knowledge of the participants involved in the study and/or the researcher's knowledge about the research topic;
- Increased (critical) awareness and understanding of the

participants involved in the study and of the issues approached;

- Impact on policy-makers and/or other researchers;
- Creation of a better classroom environment for the learners;
- Fostering of a feeling of empowerment on the participants as they see their interests, needs, and resources as valuable in the research;
- Stimulation of more publishing/sharing of knowledge and experiences;
- Personal development;
- Curiosity;
- Need to take an active role in the research.

The majority of the participants demonstrate a positive perspective because the findings have a positive impact on the teaching practice, contribute to the expansion of the participants involved in the study and/or the researcher's knowledge about the research topic, and lead to an increase of (critical) awareness and understanding of the participants involved in the study and of the issues approached. At the bottom of the list, the respondents state that the findings of their research activity contribute to personal development, to spark curiosity and that to have a positive impact, the participants are required to have an active role in the research.

Secondly, the respondents also have a negative view on the impact of their research findings. Some of the reasons behind these perspectives are listed below:

- The setting/context and individuals (participants and/or the researcher) can be affected in general;
- The findings provide insightful results but have little impact on the setting/context and/or on the participants due to the reduced number of participants of the study;
- The participants can benefit positively from the findings if they can access them but will have little benefit if they cannot access them.

Most participants expressed that the findings can affect the setting/context and individuals in general as well as provide insightful results, although with little impact on the setting/context and/or on the participants of the study. Since the type of impact is not clearly specified, it is possible to interpret it as both positive and negative.

Lastly, the respondents demonstrate neither a positive nor a negative view on the impact of their research findings. Some of the motives that support this attitude is related to the following:

- Difficulty in identifying the kind of impact;
- The findings do not affect the setting/context and/or the participants;
- The findings do not provide information on this matter.

The data show that the respondents believe it is difficult to determine the type of impact their research findings have and that they do not have any impact on the setting/context and/or the participants. In both cases, it is possible to interpret these results as generating neither a positive nor a negative impact.

How Do You Think Your Socio-Cultural Background, Identities, World View and Experiences Are Involved in Your Research Activities and Processes?

Participants were also requested to reflect on how their socio-cultural background, identities, world view and experiences are part of their research activities and processes. As expected, answers are based on first-hand knowledge or experience and consequently diversified. Nonetheless, it was possible to verify a consistent trend in the data collected. Out of the 80 answers available, the majority of these responses claim that the personal features indicated above greatly influence their research outcomes, as the following observations clearly indicate:

- "Who I am affects what questions I ask and how I analyse the data";
- "It influences how one views the world and one way or the other we will look for what we believe in, even if unconsciously";
- "They have formatted who I am and what I am interested in";
- "I think all of these factors stated above determine the research topics, research problems, questions, approaches, methods, tools we choose, language we use, actions we take";
- "They shape the core of my research. The topics, methods and everything is influenced by these".

However, despite the influence that socio-cultural background, identities, world view and experiences may have on a researcher, participants acknowledge the need for unbiased research, as the claims below clearly show:

- "I usually take every precaution I can take to prevent my identity influencing my research. I know completely eliminating is impossible, but I try my best to prevent it";
- "I would do everything to avoid that";
- "I can't escape my own biases in research but I can strive to acknowledge and mitigate them";
- "I will do my best to be objective and unbiased. Hopefully process won't be affected";
- "I try to be an unbiased researcher. My identity as a teacher sometimes blocks me but I guess I've learned how to overcome this problem";
- "I think that a researcher must be objective and that qualitative research must be peer reviewed".

In What Ways Do You Think Your Research Findings Are/Will Be Used?

Some of the main arguments regarding the use of some participants' research findings were that they may provide understanding of problems addressed in English language teaching and teacher education, emphasizing possible innovative solutions and suggestions on how to deal with them. Furthermore, some respondents stated that research findings were meant to identify gaps in research, raise awareness and bring about change in the research field, in the home institution as well as other institutions, and inform stakeholders, such as, directors, decision-makers and curriculum developers. The following are some of the answers to this question

- "They (will) bring some understanding of the identified problems related to the English language teaching, provide solutions and suggestions to the identified problems regarding the English language teaching. In addition, they (will) bring innovative ways to English Language teaching and English Language teacher education. Furthermore, they will both raise

awareness and knowledge of the other researchers in the field for further studies."

- "To support weak spots in the research field and improve what is good for better results."
- "Hopefully, it will be read and used by other researchers and students in the field but my ultimate goal is to create a change in the practice. So, I try to address issues with possible teaching implications."
- "My PhD study can contribute to the reading acquisition of bilingual as well as monolingual children."
- "My research findings can be used in various ways. They can be used to change applications both in my institution and also in other institutions. They can also be used to raise awareness of the topic and inform directors, decision-makers, and curriculum developers. In addition, my research can help to inform the development of new technologies."

What Do You Think Is the (Possible) Impact of Your Research?

When asked about the (possible) impact of their research, respondents' answers were quite varied. While there were some who chose to simply not answer this question, there were others who mentioned that they did not know the impact of their research. There were still several who considered the impact low, as one mentions, "I am skeptical that my research will have a significant impact. It will most-likely be read by a handful of people interested in the same line of work." However, the great majority did answer, and responses indicated their research is largely connected with education, teachers and students, demonstrating the practical side of the research conducted as well as the impact it may have in schools. Some answers included issues such as:

- creating awareness among policy makers and other authorities, which can eventually lead to educational policy changes;
- having administrators, teacher educators, teachers reconsider programs, so to make changes and redesign them;
- raising teachers' awareness about their autonomy and their teaching styles;
- helping teachers to create lessons and courses that motivate students;
- raising the standards of English language teachers;
- getting student teachers and teachers to reflect on their own or future professional understandings, practices and dispositions;
- developing teachers' skills and improving their teaching practices. As for learners, helping them improve their learning outcomes and academic achievement;
- analyzing how institutions treat immigrants;
- instigating change;
- creating awareness;
- contributing to the professional development of other practitioners.

Conclusion & Discussion

The analysis of the data regarding ECRs' needs analysis and their personal understanding of research activities is quite revealing. First and foremost, it is interesting to note that the data show that the academics at the participants' institutions are relatively young as the majority are between 30-49 years old. Moreover, participants perceive their academic context as a community that values

collaborative research, diversity of research, and that categorizes its members based on titles/positions.

At the same time, the topics of research in those institutions are diverse, reflecting the interest of the respondents' academic communities, which tend to publish their research in journal articles and present it in conferences. Hence, they aim to disseminate their research among other researchers as well as professional groups, employing qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research. Carrying out research is also valued, although the participants differ on who has more responsibility, i.e., whilst some believe that all researchers should be involved in research, others think that senior researchers should have a preponderant role.

Furthermore, the participants' institutions show a pattern of support regarding research i.e., carrying out research activities; cooperation between people with complementary expertise; inter- or trans-disciplinary research; diversity of competencies, experiences and merits of individuals within the research community; diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types; and the possibility of pursuing activities of the researchers' own choice. As noted in section 1.2.1, some respondents mentioned their ability to choose the topics of their research. Thus, there is a parallelism between the possibility of choosing the topics and the research activities.

Significantly, most of the participants' expressed firm beliefs regarding their positionality and reflexivity about research. According to them, research is related to external factors such as, connection to society, to the individual researcher's biography, and influence from ideological forces. The role of the researcher and of the participants is also valued, i.e., participants hold that social research generates knowledge due to the interaction between the researcher and the individuals involved in the research, although they believe the researcher has more control over the research, due to the researcher's own individuality. More specifically, research is solution-oriented, provides insight, and empowers individuals, i.e., it finds solutions for daily life problems, understands the way people act and their reasons, and empowers subordinated groups in society, respectively. In addition, carrying out research is related to the socio-political context where the researcher is located and by the research-study context.

The data enable the identification of five main emerging themes regarding the contribution of research: (1) research contributes to the expansion of knowledge; (2) research findings have a positive impact on the setting and on the participants involved; (3) personal characteristics of the researcher influence the research findings (which is in line with the data provided in 1.4.3 and 1.4.5, i.e., the researcher's profile and their background); (4) research findings help to understand and solve existing problems, (which is in consonance with the solution-oriented purpose mentioned in 1.4.6); and (5) research raise awareness among professionals responsible for changes in educational policies. Overall, the respondents value research activity, see it connected to their personality and background, and envision it as a possible contribution to necessary adjustments in the educational field.

Some of the findings presented in this chapter have also been the object of analysis of recent studies, such as ECRs' motivation to

research (Krauss et al, 2023), collaboration with other researchers (Martin et al., 2023), impact of external factors on the ECRs' professional life (Jamali et al., 2023), social network relations and new professional roles (Rienties & Hosein, 2020), use of digital tools for research dissemination (Nicholas et al., 2018), and ECRs' role and professional activities as well as initiatives that could be implemented by the larger socio-political context to support research activities (Pizzolato et al., 2023).

All in all, taking into consideration one of the primary goals of the EUREDIE project which is to highlight the needs of ECRs so they may organize and carry out research projects that reflect diversity and are sensitive to the intrinsic interculturality regardless of the specific topic they study, the findings above of the needs analysis survey distinctly indicate ECRs increasing awareness of fundamental research-related matters.

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APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

Online Survey for Early Career Researchers

Early Career Researchers' Perceptions of Interculturality in Language Education

We kindly ask you to respond to the following questions. The specificity of the information you provide is of utmost importance to us.

Demographic and professional information

- How old are you?
- Where are you from (i.e. city and country)?
- Where do you live?
- Where do you work and what is your job title there?
- What is your current degree?
- How many research studies- including MA, PhD, project, etc., have you carried out so far?
- What were their topics?
- Which research methods have you utilized?
- Have you ever taken part in any international research project? If yes, in what role?
- Have you ever been to another university/organization in the short or long term for research purposes?
- Are you currently involved in a research study? If yes, briefly describe it please.
- Do you think any of the research studies that you have carried out so far and/or your current research study is relevant to interculturality in any way? If yes, how?

PART 1: PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURE & INTERCULTURALITY

Please answer the following questions as specifically as possible, using as much space as you need.

- What features, in your opinion, constitute an "intercultural context"?
- Please name and briefly explain two contexts/settings that are culturally foreign and two contexts/settings that are culturally familiar to you.
- What would be a suitable metaphor for "cultural diversity"?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you had to deal with cultural diversity? Can you please explain the situation and how you approached it?
- Can you describe a classroom situation which highlights cultural diversity?
- How would you describe the role of culture and interculturality as part of your professional identity?

PART 2: NEEDS ANALYSIS

Section A: Information regarding the ECRs' communities

1. Which category below best reflects the age average of the academics at your university/organization?
   a. 20-29
   b. 30-39
   c. 40-49
   d. 50 and older
2. Please choose the statements which best describe your university/organization. You may choose as many options as necessary.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their gender.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their ethnicity.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their disciplinary background.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their racial origins.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their income.
- It is a community that categorizes its members based on their academic titles/positions.
- It is a community that does not categorize its members in any way.
- It is a community that values diversity of research.
- It is a community that values invariability of research.
- It is a community that values research which creates monetary benefits.
- It is a community that values interdisciplinary research.
- It is a community that values research that extends to policy makers on national and/or international scales.
- It is a community that values individual research.
- It is a community that values collaborative research.
- It is a community that values research on controversial (cultural) topics.
- It is a community that values research which refrains from (cultural) controversies.
- It is a community that operates on a strict hierarchy of academic titles.
- It is a community that allows formation of special interest groups.
- It is a community that allows research initiatives to all its members.
- It is a community with members of the same national/ethnic background, speaking the same language and sharing the same cultural values.
- It is a community with members of the same national/ethnic background, speaking different languages and sharing similar cultural values.
- It is a community with members of various national/ethnic backgrounds, speaking the same language and sharing no common cultural values.
- It is a community with members of diverse national/ethnic backgrounds, speaking different languages and sharing no common cultural values.
- OTHER: (Please state) ....

Section B: Cultures of Research

1. Which specific research topics in your field of study are encouraged and/or preferred at your university/organization?
2. Which means of research dissemination are encouraged at your university/organization?
   a. conference presentations
   b. journal articles
   c. books
   d. book chapters
   e. web pages
   f. all
   g. other (please state)

3. Which target group(s) are more prioritized for research dissemination at your university/organization?
   a. other researchers
   b. professional groups
   c. policy makers
   d. industry
   e. wider community
   f. all
   g. other (please state)
4. Which research methods have greater authority at your university/organization?
   a. Qualitative research
   b. Quantitative research

c. Mixed-methods research
d. All
e. Other (please state)

5. Who is primarily responsible for carrying out research activities at your university/organization?
   a. senior researchers
   b. junior researchers
   c. graduate students
   d. All
   e. Other (please state)

Section C: Research Governance & Choices

Use the following scale:1 = not at all, 2 = only a little, 3 = to some extent, 4 = rather much, and 5 = very much. For each statement, write in the left margin the number corresponding to the degree of your agreement or disagreement.

1. To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization is supportive of research activities?
2. To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization encourages research cooperation between people who have complementary expertise ?
3. To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization encourages inter- or trans-disciplinarity in research activities?
4. To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization supports a diversity of competencies, experiences, and merits of individuals within the research community?
5. To what extent do you think the research environment at your university/organization supports a diversity of research methods, data, tools, outputs and communication types?
6. To what extent do you think researchers at your university/organization are free to pursue research activities of their own choice?

Section D: Researcher Positionality & Reflexivity

Use the following scale:1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree. For each statement, write in the left margin the number corresponding to the degree of your agreement or disagreement.

1. Social research is separate from wider society.
2. Social research is free from ideological forces.
3. Social research is independent of the individual researcher's biography.
4. Social research is a process in which the researcher and the researched participate jointly in knowledge creation.
5. Researchers' multiple and varied positions, roles, values, beliefs, experiences and identities are intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of social research.
6. Social research ultimately seeks to find the most effective tools to solve problems arising from daily necessities.
7. Social research ultimately seeks to understand how different groups of people are doing what they are doing and also why they are doing so.
8. Social research ultimately seeks to empower the subordinated groups in society through demystifying social institutions, practices, and policies that produce and reproduce the domination of certain groups in society.
9. The larger socio-political context where the researcher is located influences the research activities.
10. The researcher has greater authority over the research process than the research participants.
11. The research-study context influences the research activities.

PART 3: PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Please answer the following questions as specifically as possible, using as much space as you need.

1. Why do you do research? What kinds of interests motivate you to do research?
2. How do you think your research findings affect or will affect those that you studied?
3. How do you think your socio-cultural background, identities, world view and experiences are involved in your research activities and processes?
4. In what ways do you think your research findings are / will be used?
5. What do you think is the (possible) impact of your research?