

EDITORIAL

Epistemic Diversity and Multilingual Realities: Celebrating the Third YearHuseyin Uysal ^{a*}^a The Education University of Hong Kong* Contact Info: 10 Lo Ping Rd., Tai Po, N.T., Hong Kong SAR, China, huysal9@gmail.com**Article Info**Received: June 12, 2026
Published: June 30, 2026**THIRD YEAR, NEW HOPES**

As the Journal of Education for Multilingualism (JEM) is about to complete its third year, we continue our commitment to amplifying multilingual voices and creating a space for diverse epistemologies, linguistic realities, and educational experiences. Following the recommendation of our Editorial Advisory Board during our second-year board meeting held on August 14, 2025, we launched the Social Media Working Group. This initiative is made possible through the voluntary efforts of a group of doctoral students: Nicole R. Misra (University of Missouri–St. Louis), Arnon Jannok (The Education University of Hong Kong), Ming Ming Cheung (Michigan State University), and Shaila Shams (Simon Fraser University). Thanks to their efforts, JEM now maintains an active presence on Facebook and LinkedIn, expanding the visibility of scholarship published in our previous issues and helping us reach a broader international audience. The Editorial Advisory Board viewed this initiative as both necessary and timely.

At a moment when multilingual communities continue to navigate complex social, political, and educational realities, and when monolingual assumptions still shape educational policies and practices in many contexts, there remains a need to create more opportunities for scholars and practitioners from diverse settings to share their work and engage in dialogue. As multilingualism continues to evolve across diverse social, cultural, and educational contexts, JEM remains committed to creating spaces where multiple epistemologies, voices, and ways of knowing can coexist and enrich one another. This commitment is grounded in

our understanding of multilingual education as deeply connected to issues of identity, agency, community, and social transformation (García & Uysal, 2024; Kim & Uysal, 2025).

IN THE CURRENT ISSUE: REIMAGINING MULTILINGUAL REALITIES

The six articles, one brief report, two interviews, and two book reviews in this issue examine multilingualism from a range of perspectives and contexts. Taken together, the contributions challenge deficit-oriented and monolingual understandings of multilingual learners and invite readers to engage with multilingual realities as lived experiences shaped by history, identity, community, and social transformation.

A first theme concerns dominant assumptions about language, learning, and multilingual development that continue to privilege knowledge produced in a limited range of linguistic, cultural, and geographic contexts. Alabede introduces *èbùnlíngualism*, a framework rooted in Yorùbá epistemology that reconceptualizes language as a gift passed across generations through relationships of care, reciprocity, and community. In doing so, the article highlights that multilingual realities cannot always be understood through frameworks developed in the Global North alone and reminds readers that theories of multilingualism need not emerge from a single intellectual tradition, as local epistemologies can offer valuable insights into language, learning, and community. Similarly, the conversation between García and Johnson revisits translanguaging not simply as a pedagogical strategy, but as a philosophy grounded in agency, relationality, and sustainability. Donley further interrogates the persistence of monolingual assumptions within bilingual education and highlights the tensions educators encounter when attempting to enact more pluralistic understandings of language. Extending these conversations, King's review of *The Handbook of Translanguaging* showcases contemporary efforts to theorize translanguaging as decolonial, embodied, multimodal, and socially transformative.

A second theme centers on language as a lived, embodied, and relational experience. Across the issue, multilingualism is presented not merely as communication but also as belonging, identity, and social relationships. Pappas and Stergiou demonstrate how refugee-background preschool children draw upon their full linguistic repertoires through private speech as they construct meaning, develop identities, and navigate new educational environments. Molina and Boruah similarly emphasize the importance of relational trust, care, and critical consciousness in supporting refugee-background students, illustrating how socio-emotional dimensions are inseparable from learning. Meanwhile, Lupica Spagnolo,

Bartoli, and Lorenzová introduce full-body language portraits as a creative and multimodal methodology that allows participants to explore multilingual identities through the body, emotions, and personal narratives. Brinkmann's review of *Visualising Language Students and Teachers as Multilinguals* further reinforces this orientation by highlighting visual and arts-based approaches that capture multilingualism as lived, embodied, and multisensory.

A third theme highlights teachers as agents of transformation. Rather than portraying educators as passive implementers of policy, several contributions demonstrate how teachers negotiate institutional constraints, exercise professional judgment, and advocate for multilingual learners in their local contexts. This emphasis on teachers as active decision-makers aligns with recent calls to understand teacher agency as a contextually situated and transformative force in educational change (Uysal & Gao, 2026). Fu documents how an ESOL teacher in a rural context became a critical policy actor by redesigning local language support structures to better serve multilingual learners. Kang and Yi illustrate how a teacher in a Korean heritage language school negotiated curricular tensions and redesigned literacy instruction to make learning more meaningful and collaborative. The interview with Barko-Alva and de Jong similarly underscores the importance of mentorship, leadership, advocacy, and teacher education in shaping more responsive educational futures.

Collectively, the contributions in this issue remind us that multilingualism is not merely a linguistic condition but is closely tied to identity, relationships, learning, and participation across diverse social contexts. They challenge us to broaden whose knowledge counts, whose voices are heard, and whose realities are represented in multilingual education research and practice.

ANTICIPATING THE FOURTH YEAR

As JEM continues to grow, we are encouraged by the increasing reach of the journal. We are currently indexed in the *ICI Journal Master List* and are actively pursuing inclusion in additional databases. Looking ahead, we are excited to assign DOIs to published articles to further enhance the accessibility, discoverability, and long-term visibility of our contributors' work.

Too often, multilingual education scholarship is shaped by a limited range of contexts, languages, and research traditions. Since its launch, JEM has sought to address this imbalance by creating space for perspectives, experiences, and epistemologies that may otherwise remain underrepresented in the field. Across the five issues published since 2024, we have

featured scholarship from a wide range of geographical, linguistic, and cultural contexts, including Ukraine, Maldives, Mexico, Malta, Germany, Greece, Japan, India, Poland, Czechia, Italy, the United States, and Canada. This diversity reflects not only the geographical spread of our contributors but also the different epistemologies, educational traditions, and multilingual realities represented in their work. As García and Uysal (2024) remind us, multilingual education benefits when scholars adopt perspectives that challenge inherited assumptions about language, bilingualism, and learning while centering the lived realities of multilingual communities.

The contributions published in this issue further reinforce this commitment. They demonstrate that multilingualism is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but is closely connected to language practices, emotions, relationships, and experiences across different contexts. Language is intertwined with belonging, meaning-making, and personal and professional identity formation (Kim & Uysal, 2026). Likewise, emotions are not peripheral to language education but central to how teachers and learners experience educational spaces and negotiate their identities within them (De Costa & Uysal, 2025). Such perspectives encourage us to move beyond viewing multilingualism solely as a pedagogical concern and instead attend to how language shapes learners' and teachers' identities, relationships, and experiences across educational contexts.

Expanding participation in scholarly conversations is not only a question of representation but also a question of knowledge production. Different contexts raise different questions, challenge different assumptions, and generate different understandings of multilingualism. We are particularly proud of our continuing efforts to amplify scholarship emerging from the Global South and from communities whose voices have historically been underrepresented in academic publishing. We believe that collaborations across the Global North and the Global South contexts can help researchers learn from different educational realities, broaden collective understanding, and challenge assumptions that may otherwise remain invisible when research is concentrated within a limited range of settings. In this regard, we encourage future submissions that engage critically with local knowledge systems, community experiences, and multilingual realities in diverse settings. Such work is essential for advancing multilingual education that is responsive to the realities of learners, teachers, schools, and communities worldwide while also broadening the epistemic foundations of the field.

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