

Research Article

“It’s Not Just Reading Books!”: Context-responsive heritage language curriculum adaptation in a Polish Complementary School in Scotland

Lianya Qiu¹ and Ania Byerly²

¹Moray House School of Education and Sport, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom (ORCID: [0009-0000-8754-8535](https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8754-8535))

²Moray House School of Education and Sport, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom (ORCID: [0009-0004-9940-6752](https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9940-6752))

This article explores a case of curriculum adaptation in a Polish complementary school in Scotland, which supports its multilingual learners in context-responsive, innovative ways. We draw on one qualitative case study from a larger doctoral research project about Heritage Language learners’ needs and the actual curriculum choices in Scottish complementary schools. Data collected through interviews with the school’s headteacher, teachers, parents, and students, as well as through classroom observations and analysis of teaching materials, is presented. Findings reveal that the school is able to engage in continuous curriculum adaptation to address challenges many complementary schools face in relation to ill-fitting content of textbooks and related teaching methodologies, created for monolingual learners in Poland’s mainstream schools. Teacher agency and understanding of young multilingual learners’ needs emerge as central drivers of this adaptation. Teachers select, modify, and supplement materials beyond focus on linguistic skills or knowledge about their country of heritage, leading active learning which aligns with their students’ lived experiences, interests and linguistic repertoires. The study also demonstrates how it is possible to escape tokenism and meaningfully engage Heritage Language learners in cultural themes and activities in complementary school settings. By highlighting creative, context-responsive curriculum practices, we argue that a culturally responsive Heritage Language curriculum adapts the traditional aims of complementary schools in maintaining the language and cultural development of its students, by including a critical assessment of their real needs, growing up in multicultural and multilingual migratory contexts. This article contributes to understanding how Heritage Language education is negotiated in diasporic settings, emphasises the importance of learner-centred, age-appropriate approaches in Heritage Language provision, and offers important implications for curriculum design and pedagogy in complementary schools.

Keywords: Complementary schools; Curriculum adaptation; Heritage language education; Polish diaspora; Teacher agency

Article History: Submitted 4 January 2026; Revised 30 April 2026; Published online 22 July 2026

1. Introduction

1.1. Heritage Language and Complementary Schools in the United Kingdom

Heritage language [HL] emerged in studies of applied linguistics and language pedagogy in the 1990s (Valdés, 2005) and has since been widely adopted. In the UK, HL commonly refers to a

Address of Corresponding Author

Lianya Qiu, Moray House School of Education and Sport, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AQ UK, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

✉ lqiu@ed.ac.uk

How to cite: Qiu, L. & Byerly, A. (2026). “It’s Not Just Reading Books!”: Context-responsive heritage language curriculum adaptation in a Polish Complementary School in Scotland. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202642174>

language other than English that connects individuals to familial or ancestral ties (Hornberger & Wang, 2017). In Scotland, it can be understood as an indigenous language, such as Gaelic or Scots. But in this study, we adopt the concept defined by Duff and Li (2009), which is the language opposed to national languages (i.e., English, Gaelic, Scots, and British Sign Language). HL learners are typically speakers whose home language is surpassed by the local language, resulting in uneven or incomplete development of their HLs (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007), and consequently a wider range of proficiencies closely tied to family or the extended community (Association for Language Learning, 2022).

Complementary schools, sometimes known as Saturday schools, supplementary schools or community schools, are oftentimes run by community members to offer part-time educational classes for children and young people, especially those from ethnic minority communities (Evans & Gillan-Thomas, 2015). There is a wide variety of such schools today, but historically, they emerged to address specific contextual needs, and therefore their organisational structures and aims differ by context.

A review of the socio-political history of complementary schools in the UK by W. Li (2006) identifies three broad types. The first emerged in the late 1960s within the Afro-Caribbean communities in response to the mainstream curricula that failed to understand their children's experiences and cultural backgrounds or protect them from systemic racism and discrimination (Gaine, 1987). The second developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s to provide religious education for the children of South Asian and African Muslim communities within a predominantly Christian schooling system. Meanwhile, the third was established by other minority communities, including Chinese, Turkish, and Greek, to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage. Despite those differences, the underlying driver was the same: mainstream schooling neglected minority children's needs, and government policy was not interested in addressing this structural exclusion (Li, 2006). At that time, complementary schools were often understood by policymakers as community-led, supplementary provision rather than a responsibility of the formal education system. This framing continues to shape policy and practice today, contributing to the ongoing limited institutional recognition and support for complementary schools, leaving them "on the outside, looking in" (Hancock & Hancock, 2021).

Today, complementary schools in the UK have diversified their roles and functions. One of the principles is to promote and maintain linguistic knowledge and cultural identity to pass on to future generations (Ganassin, 2017; Li & Wu, 2008). They now commonly provide classes for HLs, faith, religion, and cultural studies; heritage culture-related activities such as sports, music, and art; and classes targeted at National Qualification examinations (Evans & Gillan-Thomas, 2015).

Benefits of complementary schools have been documented in much of the HL education literature. For example, Creese et al.'s (2006) research on complementary schools in England suggested that these schools are safe spaces for learners exploring and forming their ethnic and linguistic identities. Newer research across complementary schools in England also shows that they are likely to make an essential contribution to their students' academic attainment (Evans & Gillan-Thomas, 2015). From a socio-political perspective, Ganassin (2017) argues that complementary schools play a crucial role in challenging the "ontologically stable and homogenised construction" of ethnic minority identities circulating in wider society. Instead, complementary schools create spaces where migrant communities can articulate and foster "their own claim for 'authenticity'" (p.107).

1.2. Common Issues in Curriculum and Pedagogy in Complementary Schools

Although HL education is often viewed as a component of L2 education, it differs fundamentally in learners' profiles and learning contexts (Li, 2025). In mainstream L2 classrooms, teaching is typically supported by established curricula, standardised materials, and relatively predictable learner progression. However, HL learners within the same classroom may vary in language exposure, usage, proficiency, and sociopsychological factors (Wang, 2017). This diversity creates

challenges for curriculum design and pedagogical practice, especially in complementary settings where teaching time and resources are limited (Li, 2005). These challenges are manifested in three interrelated areas: curriculum orientations, the selection and use of teaching materials, and pedagogical practices. In general, there is a lack of appropriate, context-responsive curricula and pedagogies for HL education in the UK (Wang, 2017).

To understand these challenges, we draw on Kelly's (2009) curriculum theory to analyse the underlying assumptions in the planned and enacted curriculum, where curriculum is conceptualised through three interrelated models: (1) curriculum-as-content; (2) curriculum-as-product; and (3) curriculum-as-development. Existing research indicates that HL education curricula often align with content- and product-oriented models: while the content-oriented approach prioritises the transmission of cultural and literacy knowledge (Lee & Kim, 2008), the product-oriented, or outcome-based approach emphasises measurable linguistic learning outcomes and predefined goals (Hancock & Hancock, 2018; Kondo-Brown, 2010). These two curriculum models often result in a textbook-driven curriculum and a strong focus on exams and content coverage, despite limited contact time and diverse learner needs, reflecting a banking model of education in which knowledge is deposited into passive learners (Freire, 1970).

In HL contexts, the main problems with these approaches are the common expectations to first, pass on a certain set of knowledge about the heritage country, often detailed enough to enable learners a hypothetical return to their "country of origin", and second, to develop young bi-/multi-lingual learners' high proficiency in reading and writing as native speakers, which is often unachievable. In complementary schools, these assumptions are further reinforced through the use of textbooks designed for monolingual learners in the mainstream education system, which are often culturally distant from HL learners and do not reflect their lived realities (Pan & Wang, 2017). Importantly, these materials also embed particular representations of culture, often reflecting essentialised and nationalised views of heritage culture (White & Young, 2023). For HL learners navigating multiple linguistic and cultural environments, such a representation may limit opportunities for meaningful engagement. This highlights the need for complementary school curricula to move beyond essentialised, fixed, and symbolic cultural content towards more intercultural approaches, in which culture is understood as dynamic, negotiated, and situated (Wang, 2017).

From a curriculum perspective, this is in line with Kelly's (2009) curriculum-as-development model, in which the curriculum is not fixed but is continuously negotiated through interactions among teachers, learners, and the context. This perspective reflects aspects of intercultural language education, which positions cultural content as a resource for meaning-making rather than knowledge to be transmitted (Liddicoat et al., 2003). However, there remains limited research examining how such development-oriented and intercultural approaches are enacted in HL education, particularly within complementary schools.

In curriculum studies, the intertwined relationship between curriculum (what is taught) and pedagogy (how it is taught) means that the abovementioned issues in curriculum have direct implications for pedagogical practice (Lawson et al., 2015). In complementary schools, teachers often do not collaborate or receive additional curriculum guidance, instead relying wholly on textbooks to deliver the expected content (Pan & Wang, 2017). In this case, HL teachers commonly draw on teaching approaches from their home countries' educational backgrounds, with varying understandings of pedagogy and cross-cultural practices (Majhanovich, 1992). While this background can provide a foundation for teaching (Pan & Wang, 2017), it may also constrain adaptation to new contexts (Tse et al., 2012), assuming monolingual norms or prioritising teacher-centred instruction. In some cases, this results in more formal, lecture-style teaching and hierarchical classroom relationships (Huang, 2009), although such practices can also be understood as a coping mechanism for insufficient contact hours and pressure to cover content (Duff et al., 2017).

However, recent research suggest emerging shifts in HL curriculum and pedagogy. Pan and Wang's (2017) mixed-methods research on Chinese HL teachers' perspectives in Canada reveals that traditional pedagogy does not work, and the need to switch teaching focus to cultivating learners' interests, rather than preparing for exams. This aligns with more recent studies highlighting the effectiveness of learner-centred and project-based pedagogies in addressing diverse linguistic repertoires, proficiency levels, and learner goals in HL contexts (Carreira et al., 2019; Kondo-Brown, 2010). Although empirical studies support these approaches as effective ways of meeting HL learners' requirements, not dissimilar to mainstream education, a detailed account of how learner-centredness is practised in pedagogy to develop HL competence in complementary schools remains under-researched (Kondo-Brown, 2010).

In sum, previous studies on HL education suggest that many complementary schools often operate within a complex set of interrelated constraints, including misaligned curricula, reliance of reliance on monolingual teaching materials, and pedagogical challenges shaped by teacher background and structural conditions. While there is increasing recognition of the need for context-responsive and intercultural approaches, there remains a lack of detailed, empirically grounded accounts of how curriculum and pedagogy are adapted in practice.

1.3. Polish Complementary Schools in Scotland: Context and Provision

Scotland's linguistic landscape is shaped by its colonial history, indigenous historical multilingualism and demographic shifts of recent decades. Scotland's 2022 Census (Scottish Government, 2024) shows that 12.9% of the population is from a minority ethnic background, an increase from 8.2% in 2011. This is mainly due to the European Union's [EU] enlargement in 2004 and 2007, when people from European Economic Area [EEA] countries were invited to come to the UK to work, resulting in a significant increase in immigration, particularly from Poland (Scottish Government, 2015). According to National Records of Scotland (2021), Polish is now the most common non-British nationality in Scotland, with over 95 thousand Polish people calling Scotland their home, representing 1.67% of the total population of just over 5 million. Polish language, therefore, is the most commonly spoken main language other than English in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2024).

We argue that provision for Polish language learning should be considered in educational policymaking, given the significant number of Polish speakers in Scotland, and the Poles' tendency to settle long-term in the countries they migrate to (White, 2016). However, Polish language is not regarded as a valuable resource in Scotland, and there is no space for it within the mainstream Scottish education system (Kanaki, 2021), where French, Spanish and German, together with Mandarin and Arabic, are seen as the more economically-viable choices for second and third language learning (British Council, 2017). Martowicz and Roach (2016) identify two more issues contributing to the lack of provision of Polish language in Scottish schools: (1) problems with recognition of Polish teaching qualifications gained in Poland, resulting in a shortage of accredited teachers, and (2) a lack of national Polish language exams, despite their availability in England (Martowicz & Roach, 2016). Consequently, some Scottish resident learners attend Polish complementary schools [PCSs] to prepare and sit language exams in the English system (Kozłowska, 2024). This highlights a gap between the stated inclusivity of Scottish curriculum and Modern Foreign Language [MFL] policy and the unmet learners' linguistic needs from Polish-origin families (McKelvey, 2017). PCSs exist to fill that gap by accommodating Polish HL learners' needs for HL development and for formal recognition of their bi-/multi-lingualism.

Across the UK, PCSs are predominantly grassroots initiatives, sustained by the passions and commitments of teachers, parents, and alumni (Małek, 2019). The first PCS was established in 1948-1949, with the explicit aim of ensuring that the children of Polish WW2 soldiers living in the UK gained knowledge of Poland's culture, history, geography, literature, and language (Sword, 1996). Since then, PCSs have expanded considerably, and there are currently over 180 PCSs operating in the UK (Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.), and 16 in Scotland in or around 2021

(Hancock & Hancock, 2021). Their financial sustainability depends on limited support from Polish NGOs (often linked to the Polish Government) and on tuition fees from learner families (White & Young, 2023). Most schools operate for 3-4 hours on weekends or Friday afternoons, from rented buildings such as schools or community centres, having limited access to multimedia equipment and teaching resources (Małek, 2019).

Pedagogically, PCSs are notable for the high qualifications of their teaching staff: many hold qualified teacher status from Polish universities alongside teaching experience in Poland (Praszałowicz et al., 2012). Some have completed additional training specifically for complementary schools, organised by the Polish Ministry of Education, which is unique to these schools (Martowicz & Roach, 2016). However, this does not always translate into preparedness for teaching in complementary schools. Most teachers are trained in pedagogical knowledge to teach Polish as L1 within monolingual mainstream education systems, rather than to work with HL learners in bi-/multilingual and time-constrained contexts. This tension helps explain both the persistence of more traditional, textbook-driven approaches observed in many PCSs and the need for context-responsive curricula and pedagogical adaptations.

There is considerable variation in practices among PCSs. This paper focuses on one case that stood out in the larger doctoral study for its innovative approach to curriculum that seeks to respond to the contextual needs of its learners.

1.4. Research Gap and Research Questions

Much of the existing literature on complementary schools focuses on learners' and teachers' motivations, identities, and multilingual practices (Creese et al., 2006; Lee & Kim, 2008; Wu et al., 2011), teacher experiences (Tse et al., 2012), and parental motivations and roles (Li, 2005). While curriculum is often discussed, it tends to remain implicit in the broader issues of language maintenance, cultural transmission, and identity formation, rather than being the focus of analysis.

As a result, relatively little attention has been paid to how curricula and pedagogical practices are adapted to the diverse linguistic repertoires and lived experiences of HL learners. In particular, the pedagogical role of cultural content has not been sufficiently examined as a site of curriculum adaptation and meaning-making in HL classrooms. This gap is especially evident in the context of PCSs in Scotland. Despite Polish being the largest minority language in Scotland's contemporary linguistic landscape, PCSs received scarce research attention.

To address this research gap, we present one Scottish PCS as a case study and identify context-responsive approaches to curriculum adaptation for their Polish HL learners' needs. This research poses the following questions:

RQ 1) How is the curriculum adapted in a PCS to support their Polish HL learners growing up in Scotland?

RQ 2) How do teachers use cultural themes and activities to support Polish HL learning within this adapted, context-responsive curriculum?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This paper draws on a single qualitative case study (Yin, 2014) selected from a wider doctoral project, a comparative case study examining stakeholders' perspectives on curriculum design and development in Polish and Chinese complementary schools in Scotland. Among all five case schools in the doctoral project, one PCS, which we will call Anioł, was purposively selected for in-depth analysis in this paper. This selection was made due to Anioł's analytical relevance to our research focus on culturally responsive curriculum adaptation.

While all participating schools experienced tensions between prescribed curricular materials and the needs of multilingual HL learners, Anioł stood out for its explicit and sustained efforts to adapt curriculum content, pedagogy, and classroom practices in response to learners' linguistic repertoires and lived experiences. This made it an information-rich and exemplary case for

understanding how culturally responsive practices are enacted within the structural constraints that complementary schools commonly face.

In this study, we draw on classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with the headteacher, teachers, students and parents to capture multiple stakeholder perspectives on curriculum adaptation. These data sources enable us to address the research questions through complementary analytical lenses. Institutional perspectives (the headteacher) provided insight into curriculum design and intended adaptations (RQ1), while classroom observations and teacher interviews captured the enactment of these adaptations and the integration of cultural themes and activities into pedagogical practices (RQ1, RQ2). Parent and student perspectives extend the analysis by examining how these practices are experienced in relation to learners' bi/multi-lingual and multicultural lives, thereby situating curriculum adaptation within its broader sociocultural context. Specifically, we focused on Classes 1-3 (6-10-year-olds) with children of lower primary-school age. Focusing on this age group provides a relatively coherent set of developmental needs, as they are still forming their early linguistic, cultural, and social identities.

2.2. School Context and Participants

Anioł is a relatively new school (established within the past decade) serving a large Scottish city. It was founded by the current headteacher, a Polish migrant who initially established a small, parent-led community study group for young Polish HL learners. As the local Polish community expanded, the provision developed into a formally structured PCS. Anioł now enrolls approximately 150 students and around ten staff members, offering classes for children aged 4-16, including preschool groups, HL classes, GCSE and A-Level Polish (English examinations) preparation, with 3 hours of contact time per week. Class sizes vary, from approximately 10 to 30 students per group. While most learners come from Polish-speaking households, the number of children from mixed-heritage families is increasing.

In this study, Class 1 (pupils aged 6-7) and Class 2 (pupils aged 7-8) were selected for observation. The interview participants include the headteacher [HT], two teachers (T1, T2), four students (S1, S2, S3, S4), and four parents (P1, P2, P3, P4) (*Note*. Each parent-student pair with the same number came from the same family (e.g., P1 is the parent of S1).

All adult participants are first-generation Polish immigrants to Scotland after the EU Enlargement. All interviewed staff are middle-aged women who hold Master's degrees in education-related fields obtained in Poland, which is the minimum requirement for teacher qualification in Poland. However, they encountered barriers to accessing equivalent teaching posts in Scotland, including limited English language proficiency upon arrival and the non-recognition or non-transferability of Polish teaching qualifications. Most teachers worked in other sectors prior to joining Anioł. Their current teaching roles in the complementary school, therefore, represent not only a continuation of their professional identities, but also a space in which their pedagogical expertise is valued and recognised.

Parent participants migrated to Scotland in adulthood to reunite with relatives or partners already living there and to seek better job opportunities. The student participants consist of two boys and two girls, whose parents migrated from Poland. While S1, S3, and S4 were born and raised in Scotland, S2 was born in Poland and moved with his parents to Scotland when he was one year old. All students visit Poland annually during the holidays.

2.3. Data Collection

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the University Ethics Committee, and informed consent was negotiated with all participants. Data collection took place in 2023 over a period of eight weeks, with the data collected sequentially through:

- A semi-structured group interview with the headteacher and deputy headteacher (T1) to establish the institutional context, curriculum aims, and rationale for adaptation, and to inform the selection of observed classes.

- Non-participant classroom observations of Class 1 and Class 2 (three hours per session) to examine how the adapted curriculum was enacted in practice, including the use of teaching materials, pedagogical strategies, and classroom interactions. Teaching materials, such as textbooks and handouts, fieldnotes, and photographs, were collected as supporting data.
- Semi-structured interviews with two teachers (T1 and T2) whose classes were observed to explore pedagogical decision-making and teachers' interpretations of curriculum adaptation in relation to learners' needs.
- Semi-structured interviews and four students (S1-S4) from Classes 1-3 and their parents (P1-P4) to capture learners' and parents' perspectives on the received curriculum and their lived experience of the adapted curriculum.

Given the article's scope and word limits, the analysis presented here focuses on data on headteacher and teacher data to examine processes of curriculum design and pedagogical enactment. However, parent and student perspectives are included in the analysis and findings for a more comprehensive, multi-perspective understanding of curriculum adaptation through the integration of different voices

2.4. Data Analysis

Thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022) were conducted on the collected data to identify patterns related to curriculum design, pedagogical practices, teacher agency, and the approaches to culture in HL teaching. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase analysis framework, we undertook a process of reading and re-reading to develop initial coding. Coding was primarily inductive, but was also informed by relevant theoretical frameworks in culture and curriculum studies. In particular, selected analytical categories (e.g., dimensions of culture) were adapted from existing frameworks (e.g., Liddicoat et al., 2003).

The first author then familiarised herself with the dataset by repeatedly reading interview transcripts, observation notes, and supplementary documents. Initial semantic coding was then conducted across the dataset, focusing on teacher participants' accounts of decision-making, pedagogical practices, and learners' experiences. In our analysis, interview data provided insight into participants' perspectives and rationales, while observation notes captured the enacted practices and classroom interactions, and collected documents offered additional evidence of curriculum content and design.

Triangulation was achieved through constant comparison across these sources, for example, by examining the alignment and divergence between teachers' reported practices and observed classroom practice, and by using additional documents to contextualise and interpret both interview accounts and observed activities. Codes were subsequently organised into potential themes, which we reviewed, refined, and defined through ongoing comparison across data sources. The final themes were developed collaboratively by both authors to enhance analytical rigour.

3. Findings

Our analysis generated three interrelated themes explaining how curriculum adaptation is enacted at Aniol: (1) context-responsive curriculum adaptation, which examines how teachers adjust content, materials, and pedagogy in response to learners' linguistic and sociocultural contexts; (2) teacher agency in curriculum adaptation, which highlights teachers' roles as active curriculum designers who interpret and shape practice, and (3) teaching language through culture, which explores how cultural content is integrated into language learning.

3.1. Context-Responsive Curriculum Adaptation

The first theme identified is Aniol's flexible curriculum adaptation, driven by teachers' awareness and understanding of the linguistic, developmental, and contextual realities of Polish HL learners growing up in Scotland. Rather than implementing the curriculum used in Poland's mainstream schools as prescribed, teachers address the mismatch between monolingual textbooks'

assumptions and their learners' lived experiences by selecting more appropriate teaching materials and creating meaningful, hands-on, and interdisciplinary projects through learning-by-playing.

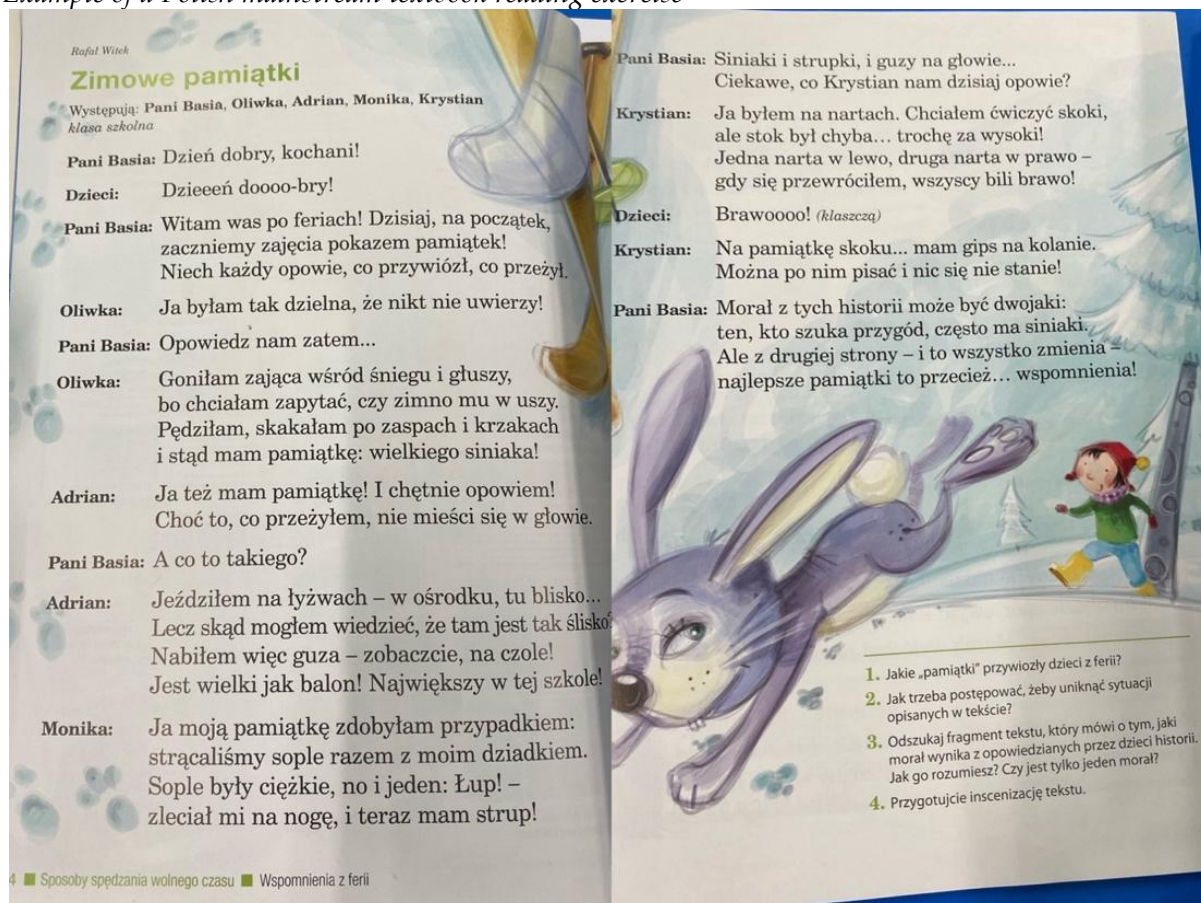
While many other PCSs in Scotland adopt a more textbook-driven and teacher-led approach aligned with mainstream Polish curricula, Anioł deliberately adopts the Curriculum for Students Abroad (Ministry of National Education of Poland, 2020), which explicitly positioned itself as guidance rather than strict regulation, with an emphasis on acknowledging "the specific educational situation of students living outside Poland and educated in different linguistic and cultural environments" (p.5), as the headteacher noted that "You can't teach children here like in Poland... They speak Polish five days a week, and we've got just three hours on Friday" (HT).

Anioł uses a variety of textbooks, including monolingual Polish textbooks used in Poland's mainstream schools. However, the teachers recognised the challenges their learners experienced with these textbooks, particularly in relation to linguistic difficulty and the cultural distance of reading passages. T2 questioned the necessity and relevance of teaching classic Polish literature to students living in a different cultural and linguistic context, explaining that "They [the students] speak Polish and understand Polish. But when you have to read something from old times... it's hard for them" (T2).

This was also evident during the classroom observation of Class 2, where a Polish mainstream textbook was still in use. Students appeared to experience difficulty understanding and practising the content while working on a reading passage. As noted in the observation fieldnotes, "The textbook seems to be challenging for the students... When reading it out loud individually, students need frequent breaks and assistance from the teacher" (O2). The teachers also recognised that the passage included poetic and stylistically uncommon expressions that are not typically used in everyday modern Polish. An example of the reading exercise used in this lesson is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Example of a Polish mainstream textbook reading exercise



For example, the phrase *"Goniłam zająca wśród śniegu i głuszy"* ("I chased a hare among snow and wilderness") uses **głusza**, a romantic or literary term for wilderness that is not commonly used in daily life. Similarly, *"czy zimno mu w uszy"* is a playful or poetic way of saying, "I wanted to ask if his ears were cold," reflecting a rhyme-driven inversion rather than the natural word order used in contemporary Polish speech.

Another key consideration was the impact of the dominant language on students' learning of Polish. Specifically, teachers observed that younger students often initially struggled when the same letters corresponded to different sounds in Polish and English. As T2 explained, "The most challenging [part of learning Polish]... I think is reading [words out] because there are a lot of different sounds in Polish" (T2). Students similarly commented on the difficulty of distinguishing Polish spelling patterns. For example, S2, a Class 3 student, reflected that "Spelling in Polish is different... there are lots of different letters [than English], but some are the same. It's hard to know which one is which" (S2).

In response, starting from Class 1, the school has recently adopted a newly published textbook series designed explicitly for heritage language learners in the UK and Ireland. One of its innovations concerned how children learned the alphabet. Instead of following the long-established order of teaching the Polish alphabet, the textbook capitalised on students' existing English literacy. As the headteacher explained, "With the next books, we could just quickly repeat [the letters with the same pronunciation], for example, 'A'. And we just focus mostly on the [different] sounds like 'ó'" (HT). This adaptation demonstrated Anioł's understanding of the differences between teaching monolingual and bi-/multilingual children, reframing bi-/multilingualism as a pedagogical resource rather than a deficit.

Beyond material adaptation, teachers also emphasised the importance of age-appropriate and engaging activities. These practices differ from more transmission-oriented approaches commonly reported in complementary schools, where limited time and curricular expectations often force teachers to prioritise content coverage. Drawing, crafting, movement, game-based activities, and hands-on tasks were frequently observed in teachers' pedagogical practices. For example, over several weeks around Easter, students across all classes worked collaboratively on Easter-themed tasks during their last hour of learning. They discussed the history and meaning of Easter in Poland, retold stories, decorated eggs, completed worksheets, and planted seeds (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Photo of planting activity around Easter



This reflected teachers' understanding of their learners' needs and interests. As the Class 2 teacher explained, "I know that a lot of kids in my group love to draw... So that's why I like to do

Figure 4

Photos of the materials used in a project about Mikołaj Kopernik



teaching team. While Anioł aligned closely with the *Curriculum for Polish Students Abroad*, teachers interpreted curricular goals flexibly and adapted the content and syllabus in response to learners' needs. As the headteacher explained, "We have books and the curriculum for students abroad... But many materials were prepared by ourselves" (HT).

In particular, for classes still using monolingual textbooks to Polish mainstream schools, there was a lack of well-developed resources to support the design of activities appropriate for the experiences of students living in Scotland. Therefore, teachers adapted materials from these textbooks, developed their own worksheets and activities, and drew on external professional resources such as webinars and online teaching platforms. T2 explained, “There’s a lot of ideas I took from webinars... lots of things they showed us how to prepare ourselves. I just wrote them down in my notebook, and I can use them” (T2).

Anioł’s decision to transition Class 1 to a heritage language textbook for English-speaking learners further illustrates this agentic approach. Teachers perceived the new materials as more realistic in terms of pacing, linguistic expectations, and pedagogical support. However, even when such resources were available, teachers continued to exercise autonomy by adapting lesson plans and materials based on their professional judgement.

Crucially, teacher agency at Anioł was also exercised collectively through regular planning meetings and ongoing informal collaboration. Teachers met regularly to discuss teaching priorities, share resources, and coordinate activities linked to the Polish cultural calendar. These meetings provided spaces for negotiating curricular decisions rather than following a top-down approach. As the headteacher described, “We’ve got meetings... once every two months... and we talk about what we want to do. The teaching plan is usually based on books and also on calendar plans” (HT).

Teachers also initiated exhibitions, concerts, and thematic activities designed around significant cultural events in both Scotland and Poland, which were then collaboratively developed and implemented. The headteacher noted that “[our teachers] had many ideas for the exhibition in [city name] for a few months and some concerts as well” (HT). This collaborative approach is a particularly strong example of good practice for other complementary schools, where teachers often work part-time or on a voluntary basis and may lack access to formal curriculum planning structures. Curriculum planning in Anioł was therefore shared across the teaching team and relied on collective expertise and mutual support.

3.3. Teaching Language through Culture

The last theme identified is Anioł’s approach to teaching language through culture, in which culture plays a central role, but is neither treated as a separate subject nor reduced to tokenistic representations of national identity. Instead, teachers conceptualise culture as heritage to support language learning, while adapting cultural content to students’ lived contexts in Scotland.

The headteacher and teachers primarily conceptualised culture as heritage that must be preserved and transmitted to children growing up outside Poland, reflecting Anioł’s role in maintaining language, culture and identity for HL learners. It also serves a strategic function in enhancing the school’s visibility and securing support from the Polish government and wider community. Within this overarching theme of culture as heritage, we identified three particularly outstanding strands: culture as *national tradition*, which emerged inductively from the data; culture as *societal norms* and culture as *area studies*, categories adapted from Liddicoat et al. (2003).

The most visible expression of heritage culture was the focus on Polish national traditions, festivals and commemorations. Teachers described a strong sense of responsibility to introduce these occasions and met routinely to plan lessons and performances around them. Activities included Independence Day assemblies, Christmas carol concerts, Easter celebrations, and the All Saints/All Souls (Wszystkich Świętych and Zaduszki) cemetery tradition, etc, as both HT and T1 noted:

Christmas time... we also got in our calendar... the nativity or a carols concert... Because they learn Polish carols, which is good for them, for the culture. (HT)

In November, we went to a cemetery, where we saw Polish soldiers, and we brought candles... It’s like a carpet with candles in a cemetery... It’s some kind of celebration in Poland. This is also what we teach children to remember about our ancestors. (T1)

These events were also perceived by participants as contributing to the school's public profile and sustainability. As P3 noted, such celebrations provided opportunities to engage with external stakeholders and showcase the school's activities:

We really appreciate this event [the Independence Day celebration], I know they invited many important Polish people to the event, so they can promote the school... and the support for finance. (P3)

In addition, traditional arts and music were embedded in the curriculum as forms of cultural heritage. The headteacher described inviting performers, including a well-known highlander musician who played the Polish bagpipes, so that children could experience traditional folk music in embodied and interactive ways. As she explained, "He plays Polish bagpipe instrument... He showed this to the children... So, they could see and feel what it looks like... He was playing here, and they could dance as well" (HT).

These examples show how culture is often framed as a set of Polish traditions and symbols, closely tied to the nation-state. This view provides students with rich exposure to Polish rituals and artefacts, but it also tends to present culture as relatively fixed and homogeneous, leaving less room for questioning whose Polish identity is being represented and how it connects to young multilingual students in Scotland, when some traditions taught are distant from their everyday lives.

Culture was also enacted through the transmission of Polish social norms, which are viewed as the practices and values that typify and are embedded in society. These norms and values are particularly evident around family, respect for elders, and remembrance of ancestors, which were not taught as explicit "lessons" but were embedded in school events and routines:

This is also what we teach children: to remember our ancestors, family, and culture. In Poland, January 21st and 22nd are Grandma's and Grandpa's day. ... We make cards and then take photos, or they learn some short poems for grandparents, and we make some videos so grandparents [living in Poland] can see them. (HT)

Here, culture was connected to the moral values that shape how children should feel and act, such as becoming caring grandchildren, respectful descendants, and proud members of a Polish community.

Meanwhile, the headteacher and teachers also articulated an understanding of culture as a reflective process for language learning, reflecting an approach of teaching culture through language and language through culture. As the headteacher explained, "In my opinion, the best way to teach children Polish language is to also show them the culture" (HT). Similarly, T2 stated, "When we talk about legends, when we talk about holidays, we teach language through that" (T2).

To achieve this, teachers designed context-responsive cultural projects that deliberately connected Polish cultural heritage to students' present lives, repositioning heritage culture from something geographically and temporally distant to something locally situated and experientially meaningful. Two examples were the school's project on a Polish musician, a Polish composer who lived in the same city in the 1800s, and yearly school trips to a historical place of interest with a Polish connection in the city centre. The school viewed these activities as unique opportunities to connect Polish cultural heritage with Scottish local history, creating an intercultural bridge between the two contexts in which students live. As the headteacher noted, "We've been invited by [the musician]'s four times great-granddaughter... We were the first school in the world to have this project, so our children were learning about [the musician]" (HT).

Showing photos on her phone, the headteacher proudly described students performing and presenting what they had learned: "Here you can see... The students were talking about [the musician]. They were talking about his life... they were singing some Polish songs" (HT).

The project to visit a historical place of interest connecting the two countries in the city was also exciting for students and became part of the school's yearly calendar of activities. After reading a children's book on the historical place of interest, students went on a field trip to visit it. This enabled students to connect Polish history with a well-known landmark in their own city. As T2

explained, “We read and compared Krakow legends with Warsaw ones... We started working with our reading. And next week we’re going on a trip to see and draw the [name of the place of interest]” (T2).

Students and parents also recognised and appreciated this interdisciplinary approach. For example, S4, a Class 1 student, stated, “We learn very important legends about Poland... I remembered we also saw the [name of the place of interest]” (S4). Similarly, P3, a Class 3 parent, commented, “It’s good they do something outside the school and spend time in a different way. It’s not just about the language” (P3).

This place-based learning brought culture from abstract content into students’ lives, enabling them to encounter Polish history not as something distant, but as something present and visible within their everyday Scottish environment.

In addition, the school also began engaging the wider Scottish community. Teachers made intentional efforts to include non-Polish speakers at some school events, demonstrating an openness to cultural exchange beyond the Polish community. For example, during the celebration event of the Polish musician project, the school invited representatives from local Scottish institutions, the public sector, and other communities:

There were also many guests like Polish scouts, the Scottish representative, a councillor, a Scottish businesswoman... We prepared also some brochures in English about [the musician]. Scottish people could read what would happen in the assembly, even if it was in Polish language. (HT)

Additionally, Anioł's participation in a large Polish national charity collection (Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy) also facilitated a form of intercultural awareness, positioning students within transnational networks of care and solidarity. These initiatives allowed students to feel connected to contemporary life in Poland, even ome children don’t get many opportunities to spend time in Poland and experience it firsthand:

Each year, we raise the money. We join this [charity event in Poland], and the children can support it... Sometimes, they do not go to Poland, and I think this is the opportunity for them to take part in some Polish events. (T1)

Through these initiatives, heritage culture is not only remembered but actively lived and re-contextualised, supporting students’ sense of belonging across multiple places.

4. Discussion

This article presented a case of context-responsive HL curriculum adaptation in one PCS in Scotland. We demonstrate that curriculum adaptation at Anioł is not limited to pragmatic adaptations of teaching materials but reflects broader pedagogical choices in which teachers actively negotiate curriculum content, teaching methods, and cultural representation in response to learners’ linguistic repertoires, developmental stages, and sociocultural contexts. In this section, we discuss these findings through three interrelated lenses: (1) curriculum adaptation as developmental and reflective practice, (2) teacher agency and bi-/multi-lingualism as pedagogical resources, and (3) the strategic positioning of culture and visibility in minority language education.

4.1. Curriculum Adaptation as Developmental and Reflective Practice

The findings presented reflect elements of a curriculum-as-development model (Kelly, 2009). Rather than treating textbooks and curricular frameworks as prescriptive, teachers used them as flexible reference points that provided some structure, while allowing space for interpretation and modification. Textbooks functioned as a broad outline for content selection, but were routinely supplemented with games, multimedia resources, project-based activities, and culturally situated tasks linked to festivals, local events, and students’ everyday lives. These adaptations are consistent with evidence that meaningful learning can be strengthened when teachers move beyond textbook-centered instruction, connect school knowledge with students’ everyday experiences, and integrate authentic, technology-mediated, or locally grounded learning activities (Deloy et al., 2026; Okumura, 2026).

This approach reflects a deliberate pedagogical stance in which curriculum decisions are continuously and actively reviewed in relation to learners' needs and contexts (Broley et al., 2023). Importantly, adaptation was not framed as compensatory or a last resort, but as a necessary and productive response to the realities of HL learning in diasporic settings. This finding challenges the traditional image of complementary schools' teaching methods as "old-fashioned", "ineffective", or "boring" from previous research (Archer et al., 2009, p. 481), and not in line with HL learners' developmental socio-affective needs and interests (Li & Wen, 2015). We illustrated how curriculum adaptation in complementary schools can be context-responsive, child-centred, engaging, and conceptualised as an ongoing developmental process rather than a series of isolated adjustments.

4.2. Teacher Agency and Bi-/Multi-lingualism as Pedagogical Resources

A central contribution of this study lies in revealing collective and individual teacher agency as the driving forces behind curriculum adaptation. Teachers at the case school acted as curriculum designers who exercised professional judgement in selecting materials, sequencing content, and designing pedagogical activities.

Crucially, they also conceptualised multilingualism as a pedagogical resource rather than an obstacle, recognising the benefits of drawing on learners' existing linguistic knowledge in additional language learning (Jaekel et al., 2023). This reframing challenges deficit-oriented views of heritage learners, such as the view that HL is a negative influence on English as an additional language learners, which fails to capture children's multiple and transformative identities in their bi-/multi-lingual lived experiences (Lytra & Martin, 2010).

One contextual factor shaping this practice may relate to the teachers' professional and personal trajectories. Participating teachers developed their child-centred pedagogical practices in Scotland, drawing on observations of pupils' learning in Scottish schools (often their own children too) engaging with interdisciplinary, play-based, and project-based approaches commonly seen in mainstream primary education. While this does not imply a lack of commitment or care in other complementary schools, it highlights how teachers' professional reflections in context can shape curriculum responsiveness.

4.3. The Strategic Positioning of Culture and Visibility in Minority Language Education

The findings also offer important insights into how culture can be positioned within the curriculum. Teachers partly framed culture as heritage to be preserved through national traditions, commemorations, and canonical figures, a view that aligns with curriculum approaches in which culture and heritage are associated with cultural continuity and the formation of national consciousness (Yilmaz, 2022). However, cultural practices were not treated solely as symbolic representations of national identity; they were also mobilized as pedagogical resources for language learning, reflection, and intercultural connection. This interpretation is consistent with culturally responsive approaches that position local histories, community events, figures, traditions, and learners' lived experiences as meaningful resources for curriculum enactment and classroom learning (Anyichie, 2024; Deloy et al., 2026). This interpretation emerges from the data, where teachers simultaneously emphasized the importance of transmitting visible national traditions while adapting these cultural elements through context-responsive, project-based activities connected to learners' lives in Scotland. In this sense, culture functioned not only as content to be transmitted, but also as a flexible resource for situated language use, collaborative inquiry, and cross-context meaning-making (Okumura, 2026; Rahmat et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the continued presence of nationally framed and sometimes essentialised cultural representations should be understood within the broader sociopolitical conditions shaping complementary schools. Despite being a commonly spoken minority language, Polish remains largely invisible in Scotland's formal education system. The Polish language remains a heritage, rather than an available MFL option for all Scottish children. In this context, cultural visibility becomes not merely symbolic but instrumental for institutional survival (Gorter & Cenoz, 2024).

Drawing on the concept of neo-essentialism (Pande, 2017; Spivak, 1988), the reliance on visible, recognisable cultural forms can be interpreted as a tactical response to conditions of precarity. Public celebrations, cultural performances, and alignment with Poland's curriculum frameworks function as mechanisms for claim-making and gaining legitimacy, access to funding and recognition. This is particularly prominent given that many PCSs rely on competitive, time-limited funding from governmental and community sources, which may implicitly shape expectations around cultural representation (White & Young, 2023).

From this perspective, the coexistence of essentialised cultural forms and more fluid, intercultural practices should not be read as a contradiction, but as a negotiated response to competing pedagogical and institutional demands. Teachers at Anioł navigated these tensions by pairing visible cultural symbols with context-responsive projects that connected heritage culture to learners' lived experiences in Scotland, thereby expanding the pedagogical function of culture beyond static transmission. However, while visible cultural forms support recognition and engagement, they may also risk reinforcing simplified or homogeneous representations of heritage culture. This highlights the ongoing challenge of balancing cultural visibility with more critical and intercultural understandings in complementary schools.

5. Implications

As we have illustrated in this article, even the most innovative complementary schools face various constraints. While the practices at Anioł provided more context-responsive and engaging learning, they entail challenges in balancing multiple stakeholders' HL expectations with adaptation and sustaining the high levels of teacher agency required, as curriculum adaptation is shaped by a complex interplay of pedagogical values, teacher agency, collaborative leadership, structural conditions, and sociopolitical conditions of the HL.

This case study challenges the traditionally negative narratives that position complementary schools as pedagogically traditional, disengaging, or inward-facing, instead highlighting their potential value as sites of intercultural learning and innovation in curriculum and pedagogy. That's all possible even without breaching the territory of truly multilingual practices, translanguaging and developing intercultural citizenship, amongst other, newer critical ideas in the field of language education, showing the reader that the road ahead is still open to many developments.

We also hope to highlight the need to recognise local HL teachers' work and their roles in curriculum decision-making, and the legitimacy of locally adapted HL curricula. Without such recognition, complementary schools remain vulnerable in their development. Furthermore, a path to securing a formal recognition of learning in complementary schools, while valuing community-based linguistic resources, could enable talented and resourceful Polish teachers in complementary schools opportunities to work towards entering mainstream language education workforce and contributing to address the growing problem of losing linguistic skills in the general British population.

More broadly, we would like to raise the need for stronger collaboration between mainstream schools, local authorities, and complementary schools. Moving beyond ad hoc or symbolic engagement, complementary schools could be repositioned as educational partners rather than peripheral actors.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to thank the participating school, teachers, parents, and students for their time and contributions to this study.

Author contributions: The first author designed and conducted the study, collected and analysed the data, and wrote up the manuscript. The second author contributed to the development of the research design, supported the interpretation of data, provided academic supervision throughout the project, and wrote up the manuscript.

Data availability: The data that support the findings of this study are not publicly available

because of ethical restrictions and participant confidentiality. The study involves qualitative interviews and classroom observations conducted within a small community, and the data cannot be sufficiently anonymised to protect participants' identities.

Declaration of interest: The authors declare no competing interests.

Funding: This research received partial financial support from the University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Research Student Funds Research Costs/Conference (RCC) Fund, which supported the costs of Polish-English interpretation during data collection.

Ethics Declaration: Ethical approval for this study was granted by the School of Education and Sport Ethics Sub-Committee, Moray House School of Education and Sport, The University of Scotland, under the project titled Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Curriculum in Complementary Schools: A Comparative Case Study of Polish and Chinese Complementary Schools in Edinburgh (Ref: LQIU16112022; approval date: 2 February 2023). The study was conducted in accordance with the approved ethical protocol and the ethical requirements of the institution.

References

- Anyichie, A. C. (2024). Engaging preservice teachers with culturally relevant microteaching activity: A university professor's experience and perception. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*, 6(3), 125–137. <https://doi.org/10.33902/jpsp.202429217>
- Archer, L., Francis, B., & Mau, A. (2009). 'Boring and stressful' or 'ideal' learning spaces? Pupils' constructions of teaching and learning in Chinese supplementary schools. *Research Papers in Education*, 24(4), 477–497. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671520802584111>
- Association for Language Learning [ALL]. (2022). *Home, heritage and community languages advisory group: vision and goals*. <https://www.all-languages.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Vision-statement-for-HHCL.pdf>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.
- British Council. (2017). *Languages for the Future*. https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/languages_for_the_future_2017.pdf
- Broley, L., Buteau, C., & Sardella, J. (2023). When preservice and inservice teachers join forces: A collaborative way to support the enactment of new coding curricula in mathematics classrooms. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 7(2), 21–40. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202318636>
- Carreira, M., Chik, C. H., & Karapetian, S. (2019). *Project-based learning in the context of teaching heritage language learners*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429457432-9>
- Creese, A., Bhatt, A., Bhojani, N., & Martin, P. (2006). Multicultural, heritage and learner identities in complementary schools. *Language and Education*, 20(1), 23–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780608668708>
- Deloy, R. S., Salon, M. L., Solatorio, M. R., Jr., Requina, A. M., Amora, C. J. P., & Seclot, J. S. (2026). Local history as a pillar of sustainable, culturally responsive social studies: Public secondary teachers' perspectives. *Sustainable Education and Digital Transformation*, 1(2), e38764. <https://doi.org/10.33902/SED.T.202638764>
- Duff, P. A., & Li, D. (2009). Indigenous, minority, and heritage language education in Canada: Policies, contexts, and issues. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 66(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.66.1.001>
- Duff, P. A., Liu, Y., & Li, D. (2017). Chinese heritage language learning: Negotiating identities, ideologies, and institutionalization. In O. Kagan, M. M. Carreira, & C. H. Chik (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of heritage language education: From innovation to program building* (pp. 1–14). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315727974-29>
- Evans, D., & Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015). *Descriptive analysis of supplementary school pupils' characteristics and attainment in seven local authorities in England, 2007/08 – 2011/12*. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <https://www.phf.org.uk/assets/documents/PHF-supplementary-schools-analysis-final-report-alt-image1.pdf?v=1715617390>

- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum Books.
- Gaine, C. (1987). *No problem here: A practical approach to education and 'race' in white schools*. Hutchinson Education.
- Ganassin, S. (2017). Chinese Community Schools in England as Intercultural Educational Spaces: Pupils', Parents' and Teachers' Constructions of the Chinese Language. In T. Jin & F. Dervin (Eds), *Interculturality in Chinese Language Education* (pp. 107–130). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58322-2_6
- Gorter, D., & Cenoz, J. (2024). *The visibility of minority languages*. Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781800417151-009>
- Hancock, A., & Hancock, J. (2018). *Extending the 1+ 2 language strategy: Complementary schools and their role in heritage language learning in Scotland*. The University of Edinburgh.
- Hancock, A., & Hancock, J. (2021). On the outside, looking in: Learning community languages and Scotland's 1 + 2 Language Strategy. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 22(3), 328–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2020.1867415>
- Hornberger, N. H., & Wang, S. C. (2017). Who are our heritage language learners? In D. M. Brinton, O. Kagan, & S. Bauckus (Eds), *Heritage language education* (1st edn, pp. 3–36). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315092997-2>
- Huang, J. (2009). What happens when two cultures meet in the classroom? *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 36(4), 335–342.
- Jaekel, N., Ritter, M., & Jaekel, J. (2023). Associations of students' linguistic distance to the language of instruction and classroom composition with English reading and listening skills. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 45(5), 1287–1309. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263123000268>
- Kanaki, A. (2021). Multilingualism and Social Inclusion in Scotland: Language Options and Ligatures of the "1+2 Language Approach". *Social Inclusion*, 9(1), 14–23. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v9i1.3488>
- Kelly, A. V. (2009). *The curriculum: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Kondo-Brown, K. (2010). Curriculum development for advancing heritage language competence: recent research, current practices, and a future agenda. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 30, 24–41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190510000012>
- Kozińska, M. A. (2024). *GCSE Polish Guide for Students and Parents*. Embassy of Poland in London. <https://www.gov.pl/web/unitedkingdom/gcse-polish-guide-for-students-and-parents>
- Lawson, H., Byers, R., Rayner, M., Aird, R., & Pease, L. (2015). Curriculum models, issues and tensions. In P. Lacey, R. Ashdown, P. Jones, H. Lawson, & M. Pipe (Eds), *The Routledge companion to severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties* (pp. 233–245). Routledge.
- Lee, J. S., & Kim, H.-Y. (2008). Heritage language learners' attitudes, motivations and instructional needs: The case of postsecondary Korean language learners. In K. Kondo-Brown & J. D. Brown (Eds), *Teaching Chinese, Japanese and Korean heritage language students: Curriculum needs, materials, and assessment* (pp. 159–186). Erlbaum.
- Li, G., & Wen, K. (2015). East Asian heritage language education for a plurilingual reality in the United States: practices, potholes, and possibilities. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 9(4), 274–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2015.1086623>
- Li, M. (2005). The role of parents in chinese heritage-language schools. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 29(1), 197–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2005.10162831>
- Li, W. (2006). Complementary schools, past, present and future. *Language and Education*, 20(1), 76–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780608668711>
- Li, W. (2025). Home, heritage and community language learning: A distinct path of cultural sustainability. *The Language Learning Journal*, 54(1), 153–159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2025.2556192>
- Li, W., & Wu, C.-J. (2008). Code-switching: Ideologies and practices. In A. W. He, Y. Xiao, & W. Li (Eds), *Chinese as a heritage language: Fostering rooted world citizenry* (pp. 225–238). University of Hawaii Press.
- Liddicoat, A. J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., & Kohler, M. (2003). *Report on intercultural language learning*. Research Centre for Languages and Cultures Education, University of South Australia.
- Lytra, V., & Martin, P. W. (2010). *Sites of multilingualism: Complementary schools in Britain today*. Trentham.
- Majhanovich, S. (1992). *Multicultural education: A Canadian perspective* (ED343851). ERIC.
- Małek, A. (2019). "They Do the Heavy Lifting Around Here." Civic activism amongst polish female migrants – a case study of Polish saturday schools in Italy and the UK. *Migration Studies – Review of Polish Diaspora*, 4(174), 101–117.

- Martowicz, A., & Roach, A. (2016). *Polish language learning in Scotland – key facts and opportunities*. Scottish Parliament Education Subcommittee. <http://www.appla.org/pliki/polishlanguagescotlandreport.pdf>
- McKelvey, R. (2017). Language provision in education: A view from Scotland. *Social Inclusion*, 5(4), 78–86. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i4.1150>
- Ministry of National Education of Poland. (2020). *Curriculum for Polish Pupils Abroad*. <https://polskamacierz.org/app/uploads/2024/07/Podstawa-programowa-dla-szkol-polonijnych-w-jezyku-angielskim.pdf>
- National Records of Scotland. (2021). *Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Scotland, July 2020 to June 2021*. <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/media/5n5hdr5a/report.pdf>
- Okumura, S. (2026). Video creation in technology-mediated task-based language teaching: A study in Japanese elementary classrooms. *International Journal of Didactical Studies*, 7(2), e36929. <https://doi.org/10.33902/ijods.202636929>
- Pan, M., & Wang, S. (2017). The construction of interculturality: A study of Chinese as heritage language teachers in Canada. In T. Jin & F. Dervin (Eds), *Interculturality in Chinese language education* (pp. 63–87). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58322-2_4
- Pande, R. (2017). Strategic essentialism. In D. Richardson, N. Castree, M. F. Goodchild, A. Kobayashi, W. Liu, & R. A. Marston (Eds), *International encyclopedia of geography* (1st ed., pp. 1–6). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118786352.wbieg1170>
- Polinsky, M., & Kagan, O. (2007). Heritage languages: In the ‘wild’ and in the classroom. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 1(5), 368–395. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818x.2007.00022.x>
- Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (n.d.). *Polish schools in the UK*. <https://www.gov.pl/web/unitedkingdom/polish-schools-in-the-uk>
- Praszałowicz, D., Irek, M., Małek, A., Napierała, P., Pustułka, P., & Pyłat, J. (2012). *Polskie szkolnictwo w Wielkiej Brytanii: Tradycja i nowoczesność* [Polish education in Great Britain: Tradition and modernity]. PAU and UJ. <http://pau.krakow.pl/index.php/pl/dzialalnosc/projekty-badawcze/raporty/polskie-szkolnictwo-w-wielkiej-brytanii>
- Rahmat, W., Tiawati, R. L., Rahardi, R. K., & Saaduddin, S. J. (2024). How international students can well understand adapted online collaboration project? The case of BIPA learners. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 8(1), 143–158. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202423689>
- Scottish Government. (2015). *Characteristics of recent and established EEA and non-EEA migrants in Scotland: Analysis of the 2011 Census*. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/characteristics-recent-established-eea-non-eea-migrants-scotland-analysis-2011-census/documents/>
- Scottish Government. (2024). *Census 2022 reports*. <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/2022-reports/>
- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. Macmillan.
- Sword, K. (1996). *Identity in flux: The Polish community in Britain*. University of London. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10078280/1/SSEES0012.pdf>
- Tse, S. K., Ip, O. K. M., Tan, W. X., & Ko, H.-W. (2012). Sustaining teacher change through participating in a comprehensive approach to teaching Chinese literacy. *Teacher Development*, 16(3), 361–385. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2012.722439>
- Valdés, G. (2005). Bilingualism, heritage language learners, and SLA research: Opportunities lost or seized? *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(3), 410–426. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00314.x>
- Wang, D. (2017). Developing intercultural competence through cultural activities in London Chinese complementary schools. In T. Jin & F. Dervin (Eds), *Interculturality in Chinese Language Education* (pp. 131–150). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58322-2_7
- White, A. (2016). Polish migration to the UK compared with migration elsewhere in Europe: A review of the literature. *Social Identities*, 22(1), 10–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2015.1110352>
- White, A., & Young, S. (2023). UK Polish saturday schools and civil society during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Studia Migracyjne – Przegląd Polonijny*, 49(187), 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.4467/25444972SMPP.22.007.15707>
- Wu, H.-P., Palmer, D. K., & Field, S. L. (2011). Understanding teachers’ professional identity and beliefs in the Chinese heritage language school in the USA. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 24(1), 47–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2010.545413>
- Yılmaz, S. (2022). Multicultural education in Turkish social studies curriculum and textbooks. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*, 4(1), 35–55. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPSP.202213248>
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage.