

EQUIPPING EDUCATORS FOR LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION AND PEDAGOGY

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Abstract

In an increasingly globalised and multicultural world, linguistic diversity within educational settings has become the norm rather than the exception and many educators are inadequately prepared to address the complex needs of linguistically diverse learners. This research investigates the challenges educators face in multilingual classrooms and explores effective strategies to promote inclusive communication and pedagogy. The study aims to equip educators with practical tools and insights that foster a more inclusive learning environment. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered through surveys distributed to primary and secondary school teachers, followed by in-depth interviews to provide richer contextual understanding. Analysis reveals that while educators acknowledge the importance of linguistic inclusivity, there is a gap between awareness and practical implementation, often due to a lack of targeted training and institutional support. Key findings highlight the effectiveness of culturally responsive teaching methods, translanguaging practices, and ongoing professional development in enhancing educators' capacity to meet the needs of linguistically diverse students. The study concludes that equipping educators with both theoretical knowledge and practical strategies are crucial for fostering inclusive, dynamic classrooms that respect and celebrate linguistic diversity.

Keywords: Linguistic Diversity, Inclusive Pedagogy, Multilingual Education, Teacher Training, Culturally responsive teaching, Translanguaging practices

Introduction

In an increasingly globalised world, educational spaces have become characterised by growing linguistic and cultural diversity. Patterns of migration, international mobility, and global interconnectedness have brought multiple languages into classrooms, creating both new possibilities and significant challenges for educators (García & Wei, 2014). As a result, teachers are increasingly expected to adopt inclusive communication and pedagogical strategies that enable all learners, regardless of language background or proficiency, to access meaningful and equitable education.

Despite these expectations, existing teacher education programmes often struggle to respond effectively to learners' real needs and broader societal demands. In some cases, there is a noticeable mismatch between the training provided and the competencies required in contemporary educational and labour market contexts

(Ayeni & Okey, 2025a). Traditional models of teacher preparation, largely rooted in monolingual assumptions, have proven inadequate for addressing the complexities of multilingual classrooms (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). Consequently, many educators lack sufficient linguistic awareness, training in second language acquisition, and confidence in applying inclusive pedagogical strategies (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016). These gaps often translate into barriers for linguistically diverse learners, limiting their participation and academic success.

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to explore the challenges educators face in responding to linguistic diversity and to identify effective strategies for inclusive communication and pedagogy. Specifically, it investigates teachers' perceptions of linguistic diversity, examines the strategies currently employed to support multilingual learners, identifies barriers to inclusive practice, and proposes ways to better equip educators for multilingual educational contexts. The study is guided by three key concerns: the challenges teachers encounter in supporting linguistically diverse students, the strategies they use to foster inclusion and the ways teacher education and professional development can be improved. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to both educational policy and practice. By foregrounding the lived realities of multilingual classrooms, it supports the development of more responsive teacher education programmes and inclusive policies. As Flores and Rosa (2015) emphasise, developing critical language awareness among educators is central to challenging linguistic hierarchies and advancing equity. Similarly, Odey et al. (2025) advocate differentiated pedagogy, which adapts content, methods and materials to learners' diverse needs, abilities and learning styles. Conceptually, linguistic diversity refers to the coexistence of multiple languages within individuals and communities, encompassing varied social, cultural and educational uses of language. This diversity supports the development of intercultural competence and effective cross-cultural interaction (Ayeni & Okey, 2025b). While traditionally understood through multilingualism (Grosjean, 2010), more recent perspectives such as translanguaging highlight the fluid integration of linguistic resources (García & Wei, 2014). Sociolinguistic hierarchies further shape educational experiences, privileging certain languages over others (Bourdieu, 1991). In contrast, scholars such as Cummins (2000) and Baker (2011) view learners' home languages as valuable cognitive resources. In multilingual contexts such as Nigeria, where over 500 languages coexist, teacher education must therefore address both the practical and ideological dimensions of linguistic inclusion.

Theoretical Perspectives on Linguistic Diversity

Linguistic diversity in education is underpinned by a range of theoretical perspectives that seek to explain how language shapes learning, identity and social interaction. These theories inform pedagogical approaches that promote inclusivity and validate multilingualism in the classroom.

Socio-cultural Theory: One of the most influential frameworks for understanding linguistic diversity is Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. Vygotsky (1978) emphasises that learning is a socially mediated process, where language plays a central role in cognitive development. According to this perspective, linguistic diversity is not a barrier but a rich resource for meaning-making and learning. Teachers are therefore encouraged to engage students' full linguistic repertoires as tools for constructing knowledge collaboratively.

Translanguaging Theory: Translanguaging theory, developed by García (2009), challenges the traditional notion of languages as separate, autonomous systems. Instead, it posits that multilingual individuals draw from an integrated linguistic repertoire to make sense of the world. Translanguaging allows students to navigate and merge their languages fluidly in educational settings, thus supporting deeper understanding and learner agency (García & Wei, 2014). In this view, language practices in the classroom should reflect the dynamic, hybrid nature of students' linguistic realities.

Critical Pedagogy and Linguistic Diversity: Freire's (1970) theory of critical pedagogy provides another important lens. Freire argues that education should be a practice of freedom, where learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds are respected and validated. From this perspective, ignoring linguistic diversity perpetuates systems of domination and marginalisation. Educators must therefore, adopt pedagogical practices that empower students to critically engage with language and society.

Language Ecology Perspective: Haugen's (1972) concept of language ecology further informs our understanding of linguistic diversity. Language ecology examines the complex interactions between languages and their environments. Hornberger (2002: 35) expands on this notion, arguing that educational policies and practices must support the maintenance of minority languages alongside dominant ones to ensure linguistic sustainability and social justice.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy: The concept of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, articulated by Gay (2010), integrates linguistic diversity into broader multicultural education frameworks. Gay contends that acknowledging and incorporating students' linguistic and cultural experiences into teaching practices enhance academic success and promotes equitable learning environments.

Inclusive Communication in Multilingual Contexts

Effective communication in multilingual educational contexts is a cornerstone of inclusive pedagogy. Inclusive communication recognises the diverse linguistic backgrounds of learners and adapts strategies to ensure all students can access, engage with, and contribute to the learning process. As García and Wei (2014) note, inclusive communication goes beyond translation; it involves creating spaces where multiple languages and language practices are validated and leveraged for learning. Inclusive communication in multilingual contexts is built on several principles. Firstly, it embraces linguistic diversity as an asset rather than a deficit. Cummins (2001) argues that when educators affirm students' home languages, they foster positive learner identities and cognitive engagement. Secondly, inclusive communication requires flexibility in language use. Teachers should not insist on rigid adherence to a single language but instead encourage translanguaging, allowing students to move fluidly between languages to support comprehension and expression (García & Kleyn, 2016). Thirdly, inclusive communication must be culturally responsive. Gay (2010) emphasises that effective communication is not only about language but also about understanding cultural norms, values and modes of interaction that shape how students communicate and learn.

A range of strategies has been proposed to enhance inclusive communication in multilingual classrooms. One effective approach is the strategic use of translanguaging spaces, where students are encouraged to use all their linguistic

resources without fear of correction or marginalization (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Visual aids and multimodal communication such as gestures, images, videos and physical artifacts also support meaning-making across language barriers (Gibbons, 2009). Using peer support systems, such as language buddies or collaborative group work, enables students to assist one another linguistically and socially (Walqui, 2006). Teachers themselves must model inclusive communication practices by employing clear language, avoiding unnecessary jargon, and validating all contributions, regardless of the language in which they are made (Schleppegrell, 2004). This modelling reinforces the message that all languages are valued in the classroom.

Despite its importance, inclusive communication faces several barriers. Policy constraints often impose rigid language requirements that limit teachers' ability to incorporate multiple languages into instruction (Menken & García, 2010). Additionally, some educators lack training or confidence in managing multilingual communication, resulting in the unintentional marginalisation of students who are not fluent in the dominant language (Lucas & Villegas, 2013).

Implicit biases about the superiority of certain languages over others can also undermine efforts at inclusive communication. As Flores and Rosa (2015) observe, even well-intentioned language policies can perpetuate "racialised ideologies of language" that privilege the linguistic practices of dominant groups.

Pedagogical Approaches to Linguistic Inclusion

Pedagogical approaches to linguistic inclusion are central to creating equitable educational experiences for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Such approaches acknowledge the value of students' home languages and cultures, and strategically incorporate them into classroom practices to support both academic achievement and social belonging.

Translanguaging Pedagogy: One of the most widely discussed approaches is translanguaging pedagogy. García and Wei (2014) describe translanguaging as the process by which multilingual speakers utilise their full linguistic repertoire to communicate and learn. In the classroom, this practice allows students to access content through all their languages, promoting deeper understanding and engagement. Translanguaging not only supports comprehension but also affirms students' linguistic identities, countering traditional deficit models that view non-dominant languages as barriers to learning.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching: Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is another vital approach. Gay (2010) defines this pedagogy as one that uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective. This model encourages educators to design curriculum content, communication styles and assessment methods that reflect and respect linguistic diversity, thereby fostering inclusive environments where all students feel valued.

Scaffolding and Differentiated Instruction: Gibbons (2009) emphasises scaffolding as a crucial technique for linguistic inclusion. Scaffolding involves providing structured support that enables learners to perform tasks they would not be able to complete independently. In multilingual classrooms, this might include using visual aids, simplified language, sentence starters or bilingual glossaries. Similarly, differentiated instruction—tailoring content, process and product to meet diverse

learners' needs—ensures that multilingual students can access the curriculum at appropriate levels of language proficiency (Tomlinson, 2014).

Collaborative and Cooperative Learning: Collaborative learning is particularly effective in multilingual contexts. Johnson and Johnson (2009) argue that cooperative learning structures promote interaction, negotiation of meaning and mutual support among learners, which are critical for language development. Group work provides authentic opportunities for language use and encourages peer teaching, where students can leverage each other's linguistic strengths.

Multimodal Teaching Approaches: Incorporating multimodal strategies enhances linguistic inclusion by supporting multiple means of communication. According to Kress (2010), multimodal learning environments, where information is conveyed through text, images, gestures, sound and movement, cater to varied linguistic abilities and learning preferences. Such approaches make learning more accessible and foster active participation from students with diverse language backgrounds.

Despite its advantages, implementing linguistically inclusive pedagogy presents challenges. Teachers often report limited training and resources for addressing linguistic diversity (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). Institutional pressures for standardised testing in dominant languages can also discourage inclusive practices (Menken & García, 2010). Therefore, systemic support through policy changes, professional development, and curriculum design is essential to enable teachers to adopt inclusive pedagogical approaches effectively.

Teachers' Competencies and Language Awareness

The successful implementation of linguistically inclusive pedagogy largely depends on teachers' competencies and their language awareness. Teachers must not only possess strong subject knowledge but also the skills, attitudes and understanding necessary to work effectively in multilingual settings. Language awareness, as part of professional competency, plays a critical role in recognising and valuing the linguistic resources students bring to the classroom.

Concept of Language Awareness: Language awareness refers to the explicit knowledge about language, sensitivity to language variation and the ability to reflect critically on language use and learning (Andrews, 2007). For educators, this involves recognising how language functions across different academic disciplines and how students' linguistic backgrounds can affect their access to content. Hawkins (1984), one of the pioneers of the language awareness movement, emphasised that all teachers—not just language specialists, must develop an understanding of the role of language in learning if they are to support students effectively.

Key Competencies for Linguistic Inclusion: Several core competencies are necessary for teachers to support linguistic diversity. Firstly, linguistic pedagogical knowledge is essential. According to Lucas and Villegas (2013), teachers must understand second language acquisition processes, cross-linguistic influences, and the socio-cultural factors that affect language development. Without this knowledge, educators risk misinterpreting language-related learning needs as deficits rather than differences. Secondly, the ability to implement linguistically responsive teaching strategies is vital. Teachers must adapt instruction to scaffold language and content learning simultaneously (de Jong & Harper, 2005). This includes using visuals, modelling academic language, promoting translanguaging practices and differentiating tasks according to language proficiency levels. Thirdly, teachers need to foster positive

attitudes towards linguistic diversity. As García and Kleyn (2016) note, teachers who view students' home languages as assets are more likely to create inclusive, affirming classroom environments that enhance both linguistic and academic development.

Professional development programmes are crucial for building teacher competencies and language awareness. Research by Gándara and Santibañez (2016) highlights the importance of continuous, practice-oriented training that focuses on multilingual pedagogies, language policies and critical reflection on language ideologies. Teacher preparation should encourage critical engagement with issues of language, identity and power to equip educators with the tools to challenge monolingual biases (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Mentoring, peer collaboration and action research have also been found to support the development of language awareness among teachers. By engaging in reflective practice and collaborative inquiry, teachers can better understand their own linguistic assumptions and refine their strategies for inclusive education (Hélot, 2012). Implementing a language policy that fosters interaction and mutual enrichment between African languages and those inherited from colonisation is essential for advancing educational development. Such a policy should also respond to the pressing need to expand the workforce and to formulate and adopt standards that are recognised and accepted by the international community (Ayeni & Moruwawon, 2024).

Research Methodology

This study took a mixed-methods approach to explore how educators can effectively manage linguistic diversity in classrooms, combining numbers with stories to get a full picture. By blending quantitative and qualitative methods, it was possible to capture both the broad patterns of practice and the nuanced experiences of teachers navigating multilingual spaces. Surveys and interviews were conducted at roughly the same time, analysed separately, and then brought together to give a fuller, corroborated understanding of what was happening in classrooms. The research unfolded across 15 schools in Lagos State, including public and private primary and secondary schools. Lagos was chosen deliberately because, it is densely populated, culturally diverse, and has a highly multilingual education environment, which made it an ideal place to see how teachers handle multiple languages in practice.

In the survey phase, 150 teachers took part, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across school types and levels. Among them, 95 were female and 55 male; 90 taught in public schools and 60 in private schools; 80 taught at the primary level and 70 at secondary. For the qualitative side, 20 teachers were purposively selected. All had at least five years of experience teaching in multilingual classrooms and were already engaging with inclusive teaching approaches in some form.

Data collection combined structured tools with more open, observational approaches. The survey included 30 closed-ended items exploring language awareness, inclusive teaching strategies, challenges and professional development needs. A small pilot with 10 teachers confirmed reliability, giving a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84.

Alongside this, semi-structured interviews lasting 45–60 minutes allowed the teachers to speak freely about their classroom experiences, the strategies they used to navigate linguistic diversity and their thoughts on policy or training improvements.

Observation of 10 classroom sessions provided a complementary perspective, showing in real time how language was used, how students responded and how inclusive strategies played out in practice. In essence, this approach allowed the research to be both systematic and sensitive to the lived realities of multilingual classrooms. It combined the clarity of numbers with the richness of personal narratives, giving insight into how inclusive teaching and linguistic diversity are negotiated day-to-day, rather than simply in theory.

Findings and Analysis

This study explored how teachers navigate linguistic diversity in classrooms, using a mixed-methods approach that combined surveys with interviews and classroom observations. The aim was not just to collect numbers, but to capture the everyday realities of teaching in multilingual environments. A convergent parallel design guided the research, meaning that quantitative and qualitative data were gathered around the same time, analysed separately, and later woven together to create a richer picture of classroom practice.

The surveys contained 30 closed-ended items probing teachers' awareness of language, strategies for inclusion, classroom challenges and professional development needs. Before full administration, a small pilot with 10 teachers was conducted to ensure reliability, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84, indicating consistency.

Alongside this, semi-structured interviews lasting 45–60 minutes provided space for teachers to speak openly about their experiences. One teacher reflected, for example, that "Sometimes I switch languages mid-lesson, not because I plan it, but because I know my students won't understand otherwise." These conversations revealed the tension between official English-medium instruction and the multilingual reality of classrooms. Observations of 10 lessons gave a complementary, real-time view: how students responded when multiple languages were used, how teachers navigated explanations, and which strategies seemed to work best in practice.

Data were analysed with descriptive statistics summarising patterns across gender, school type and teaching level, to compare differences between groups. The qualitative data—interview transcripts and observation notes—were analysed thematically to organise and code recurring themes such as classroom inclusivity, pedagogical flexibility and teacher adaptations. Merging the findings from both strands allowed for triangulation, creating a robust picture that reflected the realities teachers and students actually experienced. Overall, this approach combined the clarity of quantitative trends with the richness of personal narratives, revealing how inclusive teaching and multilingual practices are negotiated daily. Rather than a distant policy ideal, the study captured the real, lived decisions teachers make—sometimes quietly bending rules, sometimes improvising mid-lesson—to ensure students could access learning in a linguistically diverse world.

Interpretation and Discussion

Spending extended time in these classrooms quickly made it clear that managing linguistic diversity is less about rigid policy compliance and more about everyday improvisation. Teachers and students were constantly negotiating meaning across languages, often instinctively, to ensure that learning could continue. The quantitative data from the survey provided a broad picture of teachers' practices and perceptions,

while the qualitative interviews and classroom observations revealed the nuanced, lived realities behind these numbers.

Survey results showed that a substantial majority of teachers (78%) reported regularly using more than one language to support student understanding. Classroom observations confirmed this: teachers frequently switched between English and local languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and Nigerian Pidgin, often mid-sentence. For instance, during a Social Studies lesson on civic responsibility, a teacher began explaining “rights and duties” in English. When students appeared hesitant, she seamlessly shifted into Nigerian Pidgin, drawing parallels with community decision-making and local governance. Immediately, students became more animated, contributing examples and asking questions. One student later commented in an interview, “When she says it in Pidgin, it makes sense. After that, I can write it in English.”

The quantitative data also highlighted perceived challenges. 64% of teachers identified assessment in English as a major barrier, noting that it often misrepresents students’ understanding. Classroom artefacts supported this observation: marked scripts revealed conceptual knowledge lost due to language proficiency rather than content comprehension. One Junior Secondary teacher explained candidly, “sometimes their answers are correct, but because the grammar isn’t perfect, the marks go down. I know they understand, but the system doesn’t.”

Interviews and observations further revealed that translanguaging had broader pedagogical and affective benefits. Teachers reported that using multiple languages helped maintain attention, clarify complex concepts, and increase participation. Lessons that allowed linguistic flexibility were noticeably more interactive: in one Basic Science class, students discussed photosynthesis in small groups using a mix of Ibibio and English, employing metaphors from local farming practices. The teacher later translated the discussion into standard English for the whole class. This peer-mediated learning not only reinforced understanding but also redistributed classroom authority. As one teacher put it, “they sometimes teach each other better than I can, and I don’t interfere as long as the idea is correct.”

Data from surveys and interviews revealed strategies that teachers found most effective for fostering inclusion. 95% of participants highlighted scaffolding instructions in multiple languages, using visual aids and encouraging peer explanations. Teachers also stressed the importance of building a classroom culture where students felt confident using their home languages alongside English. One senior teacher reflected, “if a child feels shy to speak because they fear getting English wrong, learning stops. Allowing them to mix languages changes that.”

The findings point to a persistent tension between practice and policy. While teaching was inherently multilingual, all formal assessments remained in English, creating a disconnect between classroom learning and evaluation. Teachers attempted to bridge this gap through post-assessment feedback sessions conducted in multiple languages. Students confirmed the value of this approach: “The test is in English, but the correction in Pidgin helps me really understand what I did wrong,” said one 14-year-old student.

Overall, the study shows that effective strategies for managing linguistic diversity are grounded in flexibility, responsiveness and empathy. Teachers employ a range of approaches—translanguaging, scaffolding, peer-mediated learning and culturally relevant examples—to make content accessible and inclusive. These practices not only support comprehension and participation but also foster confidence and a sense of belonging among students.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that managing multilingual classrooms is both an art and a science: survey numbers highlight patterns and widespread practices, while vignettes and participant voices illustrate the real human work of teaching across languages. Importantly, these findings challenge deficit perspectives on multilingual learners, showing that language mixing is a strategic, thoughtful response to the needs of students rather than evidence of confusion or inadequacy.

Challenges in Equipping Educators for Linguistic Diversity

Although linguistic diversity is increasingly acknowledged as a valuable educational resource, many educators still face persistent obstacles when attempting to implement inclusive communication and teaching practices. These challenges arise at multiple levels—individual, institutional and systemic—and reflect ongoing tensions between entrenched monolingual traditions, the realities of multilingual classrooms and rigid educational frameworks that are slow to adapt.

A central challenge lies in the limited preparation of teachers, both during initial training and through ongoing professional development. In many contexts, teacher education continues to prioritise a single dominant language of instruction, leaving educators ill-equipped to engage with linguistically diverse learners. As a result, many teachers lack both the conceptual understanding and practical skills needed to apply approaches such as translanguaging, multilingual assessment or linguistically responsive pedagogy. Where professional development opportunities do exist, they are often short-term, fragmented or overly theoretical, making it difficult for teachers to translate inclusive ideals into everyday classroom practice.

Another significant barrier is the persistence of monolingual ideologies and deficit-based attitudes within schools. Multilingualism is frequently viewed as a problem to be managed rather than a resource to be harnessed. Such perspectives can lead to the marginalisation of learners' home languages and shape low expectations of multilingual students, negatively affecting their confidence, identity and academic engagement.

Educators are also constrained by rigid curricula and standardised assessment regimes. These systems typically prioritise rapid mastery of the dominant school language and offer little flexibility to accommodate diverse linguistic trajectories. High-stakes testing further discourages experimentation with inclusive practices, as teachers feel pressured to focus narrowly on examination outcomes.

Also, the lack of multilingual and culturally relevant teaching resources places an extra burden on teachers, particularly in under-resourced settings. Finally, weak institutional backing and unclear language policies mean that inclusive practices often depend on individual initiative rather than sustained systemic support, increasing the risk of teachers' frustration and burnout. Together, these challenges highlight the need

for coordinated, system-wide reform to genuinely support linguistic diversity in education.

Future Directions

Future initiatives aimed at equipping educators for linguistic diversity should be grounded in a long-term, integrated approach that connects research insights, policy decisions and everyday classroom realities. A central priority is the reframing of teacher education, where linguistic diversity is treated as a fundamental aspect of teaching rather than a specialist add-on. Initial teacher training should consistently include practical and theoretical engagement with approaches such as translanguaging, culturally sustaining pedagogy and multilingual assessment, complemented by meaningful teaching practice in linguistically diverse learning environments. This would better prepare new teachers to respond confidently and effectively to multilingual classrooms.

Equally important is the strengthening of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for practising teachers. Future CPD initiatives should move beyond short workshops and instead foster sustained, collaborative learning communities in which teachers reflect on inclusive practices, exchange experiences and apply research-informed strategies. The use of digital tools and blended learning formats can further enhance access to professional learning, especially for educators working in resource-constrained or remote settings.

Again, there is a clear need for more context-specific research on inclusive communication and pedagogy. Long-term and mixed-method studies could provide deeper insights into how linguistically responsive teaching shapes learners' academic progress, identity formation and classroom engagement over time. Research attention should particularly focus on multilingual contexts in the Global South, where diversity is a lived reality.

At the policy level, future efforts must prioritise coherent language-in-education frameworks that recognise multilingualism as a valuable educational resource. Aligning curriculum goals, assessment practices and classroom expectations will help reduce the pressures teachers face. Finally, sustained investment in multilingual and culturally relevant teaching materials will be essential to support inclusive and equitable education systems.

Conclusion

This study highlights linguistic diversity as a central reality of today's classrooms and stresses the urgent need to prepare educators to work confidently and ethically in multilingual learning environments. As migration, global mobility and sociolinguistic diversity continue to reshape education systems, inclusive communication and pedagogy are no longer optional additions but core requirements for quality and equitable education. The findings show that teachers who employ linguistically responsive practices—such as translanguaging, culturally sustaining pedagogy, differentiated instruction and multilingual assessment are better able to support learners academically while also affirming their identities and encouraging active participation. Rather than treating linguistic difference as a barrier, these approaches reposition it as valuable resources that enriches learning, deepen engagement and support meaningful knowledge construction. Inclusive communication further strengthens teacher–student relationships, minimises misunderstanding and fosters

classroom environments built on respect and mutual understanding. The study also underscores the critical role of institutional support. Ongoing professional development, flexible curricula and enabling language policies are essential for sustaining inclusive practices. In contexts where such support is absent, teachers often depend on improvised strategies, limiting the reach and durability of inclusive pedagogy. This points to the need for stronger alignment between teacher education, school leadership and national policy frameworks. Beyond academic outcomes, equipping educators for linguistic diversity contributes to social cohesion and democratic participation by validating learners' linguistic identities and promoting educational justice. Ultimately, addressing linguistic diversity requires an integrated approach that connects classroom practice with institutional and policy-level action, ensuring education systems are inclusive, resilient and socially responsive.

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