

Towards affective literacy for adult migrants: A systematic literature review

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Adult migrants need to attain proficiency in the language of their host society to fully integrate into those communities and lead meaningful lives. The concept of literacy, centred on reading and writing, has evolved to encompass multiliteracies, integrating linguistic, social, and digital aspects. This broader approach acknowledges that learners construct meaning through various modes such as oral, written, visual, digital, and multimodal, while reflecting their diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. However, literacy education often overlooks crucial affective aspects, such as learners' feelings and motivation, which are particularly relevant for adults who want to become literate. Affective literacy, understood as the impact that the act of reading has on the lives of adults, could fill this gap, as it includes emotional responses from readers evoked through interactions with the text, their teachers and their peers. This systematic literature review study defines affective literacy, analyses its implementation in language classrooms, and explores its implications for adult literacy research

by following the PRISMA protocol. Results evidence that the definition of affective literacy remains ambiguous, sometimes conflated with emotional literacy. More research, particularly focusing on adult migrants, is still needed because affective literacy is emerging as a valuable framework with vital implications for the well-being and integration of adult migrants into their host societies

Keywords: *affective literacy, adult learners, migrants, systematic review, multiliteracies, integration, adult language education*

Introduction

Interest in affect is not a recent phenomenon, but it notably grew in the 1970s, partly influenced by humanistic trends. In fact, the study of affect can be considered a multidisciplinary field that has been developing out of work in applied linguistics, psychology, education, sociology, and neurosciences. All these trends advocate for a classroom vision that considers not only cognitive aspects but also the affective factors involved in learning (Arnold, 1999). As Williams and Burden (1997: 30) point out, “Humanism provides an added dimension [...] in that it emphasises the development of the whole person rather than focusing solely upon the development and employment of cognitive skills”, and thus includes “the individual’s thoughts, feelings and emotions”.

Nowadays, cities are increasing in linguistic complexity due to migration, so learning foreign languages in these multicultural landscapes is of utmost importance, especially for adult learners with a migrant background who need to learn the language of the host country. For them, literacy in an additional language becomes essential for survival, integration, and inclusion (Fonseca-Mora, & Sosinski, 2023). Currently, the widely accepted concept of literacy, defined as reading and writing, has found newer approaches that focus on multiliteracies and integrate linguistic, social, and digital aspects, thus going beyond the print-based mode. The assumption is that the student learns and creates patterns of meaning through different modes and media of communication such as oral, written, visual, digital, and multimodal (Cope & Kalantzis, 2023), but that they also add their vision of the

world. Nevertheless, in numerous instances, the education provided to adults and adult migrants mainly focuses on conventional cognitive, skill-based literacy, which encompasses decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension of print texts (Tighe & Schatschneider, 2016). However, the systematic review by Piccinin and Dak Maso (2021) highlights those pedagogical practises aimed at teaching adults an additional language that are most effective when contextualised phonics instruction and oral skills development are integrated with a focus on learners' cultural identities and native languages.

Besides, the linguistic and cultural semiotic repertoires already possessed by adult migrants are often overlooked (Perry, 2021), as well as crucial affective aspects such as the impacts of cultural connectedness and ethnic group membership on the well-being of students from diverse backgrounds (Fonseca-Mora & Fernández Corbacho, 2024). Moreover, adult migrants may experience linguistic and cultural shock, cultural stress, or embarrassment due to their limited proficiency in the new language (Panicacci, 2021). Waterhouse (2020) describes affective disruptions, reminding us of the affectively charged events that may occur in our lifelong learning classrooms and provoke tensions that might require attention. Many of the decisions teachers make could be embodied reactions to classroom events, as Waterhouse (2020) reports in her study where she used vignettes as affective text-bodies to research teachers' responses to solve an affective disruption in a class with adult migrants.

Becoming literate nowadays includes, among other things, a change in the type of texts that can be read. Reading encompasses understanding print-texts but also acquiring patterns of meaning of multimodal texts (Cope and Kalentzis, 2023). But in any case, reading print texts or multimodal texts involves what Freire (1983) stated while reflecting on the importance of the act of reading: understanding the world always comes before understanding words, and understanding words means constantly interpreting the world, which is especially true for adult language learners.

Hence, reviewing the concept of "affective literacy" appears to be pertinent in addressing these gaps because adults trying to become more literate are really in need of high levels of motivation. While the concept of emotional literacy is mainly based on how to handle our emotions to

improve our relationships (Steiner, 2003), Cole (2009) defines affective literacy as “a move to enhance teaching with a powerful emotional and theoretical underpinning” (p. 1), which relies on teacher and student engagement by advocating for the pleasure of reading, extracting affective themes from text, and designing effective pedagogies. In this way, the role of affect in learning is that of understanding how to optimise “the process of changing a learner’s inner resources so that they will become more useful” (Stevick 1999, p. 55), and, in the case of adult migrants, it is seen as a way for them to show and contrast their previous knowledge and their own life experiences and thus benefit from a transformative educational process.

The challenges we face in our study are twofold. On the one hand, finding studies that analyse affective literacy with adult language learners and, on the other hand, the profiles of adult migrants: from those who have never been literate to those who are university graduates but whose native languages belong to different logographic scripts, as is the case with the Chinese or Arabic alphabets, for example. Moreover, in Spanish courses for migrants, for example, it is easy to find students with different literacy profiles, also due to their mother tongue and/or their level of schooling. Since it is almost impossible to address all these different profiles at the same time, our systematic literature review focuses on multilingual adult migrants who are at a pre-intermediate level in at least one of the languages they know and on non-multilingual adults. While we consider that emotional literacy embraces the whole process of becoming a highly literate person, affective literacy relates to learners’ engagement with texts; where the text helps them to clarify their standpoints and to open their minds to others’ perspectives. Therefore, our main aim is to identify theoretical and empirical studies on affective literacy, to analyse its implementation in the classroom and to establish how it has been researched to conceptualise affective literacy as a possibly beneficial approach for adult migrants.

Present study

The specific aims of this article are to identify, appraise, and synthesise studies related to the concept of “affective literacy” for adult populations to acknowledge the following research questions:

- RQ1: How is affective literacy conceptualised?

- RQ2: What are the main affective literacy teaching practices?
- RQ3: What does empirical evidence show about affective literacy practices?

Method

This research employs a systematic review following the stages provided by Cooper (2017): formulating the problem, searching the literature, gathering information from studies, evaluating the quality of studies, analysing, and integrating the outcomes of studies, interpreting the evidence, and presenting the results.

A systematic search was carried out through the PRISMA protocol (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & PRISMA Group, 2009) to identify research related to affective literacy with adults and to analyse if benefits could be extended to adult migrants. This protocol is a validated tool that provides the requirements to conduct a systematic review with appropriate quality standards. The quality of the research papers was assessed using the Mixed-Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT; Pluye et al., 2011) because it allows simultaneous evaluation of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods.

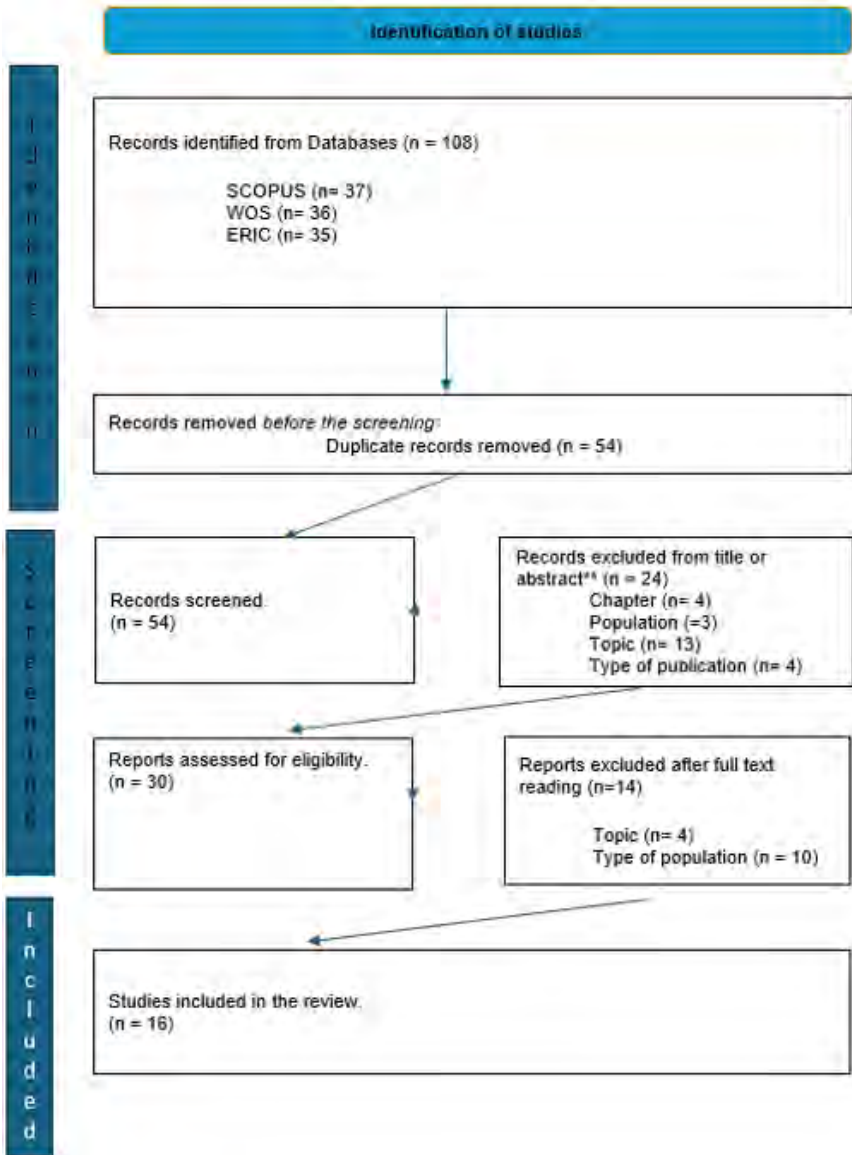
Scopus, WOS and ERIC databases were chosen due to their rigour and relevance according to the topic. Databases were searched from inception to March 18, 2024. The search terms were "affective literacy" AND "adult migrant"; "affective literacy" AND "adult education"; "affective literacy" AND "second language"; "affective literacy" AND "additional language"; "affective literacy" AND "foreign language"; "affective literacy" AND "low literacy"; "affective literacy" AND "lifelong learning". Due to the shortage of results, we simply searched for "affective literacy" AND "adult"/ "adults", so that all the combinations could be retrieved by the search engines. Finally, only the term "affective literacy" was used whenever the filter "adult education" could be activated, as in ERIC. The inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Peer-reviewed articles.
2. Published in Spanish or English, as authors of this review are fluent in these languages.
3. Available in full text.

4. Related to teaching and learning first or foreign languages.
5. Adult/adult migrant population, from 18 onwards.

Eligible papers were identified in a three-step process, controlled by the three authors/reviewers. This process yielded 108 articles. Files identified were gathered in the reference management software, Mendeley, to discard duplicate papers. 54 repeated records were removed. Then, the titles and abstracts of the selected papers were independently evaluated to measure their eligibility. After the initial screening, 24 articles were omitted since they did not meet the criteria. To evaluate the final 30 papers, the three reviewers read each record individually and completed an Excel chart with information about the author, year of publication, country of the study, population addressed, aim of the article, methodology, results, and definition of affective literacy. Disagreements were resolved through discussion among the reviewers. The final screening resulted in 16 studies (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Diagram flow PRISMA protocol



The MMAT scoring system (Pluye et al., 2011) was employed to assign an overall quality score to the 16 research papers identified. Scores ranged from unclassified to 100%. Theoretical studies and practical

applications were designated as unclassified. In our sample, five articles were evaluated with 100% of quality (Table 1).

Table 1. Total MMAT scores

MMAT criteria	Number of studies
Unclassified	9
25%	0
50%	1
75%	1
100%	5

Results

Due to the varied nature of the studies, we deemed it appropriate to provide a narrative synthesis to present the findings of this review. To elaborate on the results of the studies, an annex titled “Affective Reading Literacy Review: Summary of findings” has been created, which offers basic information about the enclosed papers and presents a concise synthesis of all primary outcomes reported in the selected studies.

The 16 articles selected highlight the complexities associated with defining “affective literacy” as well as the need for diverse methodological approaches to examine its implementation in multicultural contexts. While 43.75% of this corpus examines the concept of “affective literacy” from a theoretical perspective, 37.5% reports data derived from empirical studies, and 18.75% shows practical applications in teaching adults. Some 67% of these articles have been published between 2020-2023. From a geographical perspective, this topic has been of interest to scholars mainly from English-speaking countries: USA (five studies), Canada (four), Australia (three) and UK (two); but there are also studies and collaborations with other countries: Japan (one), Korea (one), the Philippines (one) and Brazil (one).

The information gathered from the studies answers the three research questions in the following subsections:

RQ1: How is affective literacy conceptualised?

While interest in the affective domain has a long tradition, it is only

recently that this concept has gained momentum in literacy studies (Ahmed, 2004; Anwaruddin, 2016; Boldt & Leander, 2020; Perry, 2021; Ehret & Rowsell, 2021; Keegan, 2021; Truman, Hackett, Pahl, McLean Davies & Escott, 2021; Dernikos, Nightingale-Lee, Thiel, Lenters & Bailey, 2023; Suh & Huh, 2023).

Boldt and Leander's (2020) article offers a new alternative for reading research through the lens of Affect Theory. They argue that only paying attention to decoding, fluency, and textual interpretation is not enough to fully understand the reading process. Instead, they highlight the cognitive reading framework and insist that the meanings of reading need to be studied by its set of affective relations as well. Based mainly on how Deleuze and Guattari (2013) understood affect, they explain that Contemporary Affect Theory adds the vision of how "people, objects, ideas, words, feelings, senses, spaces, histories, and cultures – come together in non-hierarchical relations" (p. 518) to create and recreate meaning-making while reading. Boldt & Leander (2020) define affect as a dynamic process characterised by the flow of intensities that connect, separate and reassemble personal ideas and perspectives. This is to say, the text itself is presented to the reader as an invitation to explore the different affective relations through interactions of others so that characters from stories and readers create a relation and readers are affected by reflecting on what happens to characters. Affective literacy is based on the fact that texts influence the reader. It gives room for exploring readers' emotional reactions to texts by leaving space for cultural differences because emotions are what we humans usually have in common, even if they are felt at different times and for different reasons.

One step further, the affective approach to language and literacy education centres on the idea of "transformative". Anwaruddin (2015) enters into the concept of Critical Affective Literacy (CAL) to explain the role of literacy education in a time of increasing challenges including wars, violence, and trauma (p.3) where "affect, emotion and feeling are implicated in [...] the various challenges we collectively face at local and global levels" (Ahmed, Morgan & Maciel, 2021). CAL researchers try to find the literacy skills and practices needed for our societal changes and evolving needs and speak to Freire's maxim of "reading the world, not only reading the word". In fact, literacy is seen as a transformative tool aimed at fostering social change and cultivating individuals into active

participants in social activism. In this sense, Anwaruddin (2015) offers a CAL framework that advocates four principles for the literacy process:

- Examining why we feel what we feel. This principle defines emotions as relational (“towardness-awayness”). Emotions do, they provoke actions.
- Striving to enter a relation of affective equivalence or empathy.
- Interrogating the production or circulation of objects of emotions in everyday politics, where frequently fear or hate can be detected to manipulate citizens.
- Focusing on the performativity of emotions to achieve social justice, where the pedagogical work is to ensure students’ understanding that words “do” what they “say”.

According to Ahmed et al. (2021), this affective approach to literacy education could empower teachers and students to confront influences like misinformation and individual bias by starting from the certainty that

emotions play a crucial role in the ‘surfacing’ of individual and collective bodies. Such an argument challenges any assumption that emotions are a private matter, that they simply belong to individuals and that they come from within and then move outwards towards others. It suggests that emotions are not simply ‘within’ or ‘without’, but that they define the contours of the multiple worlds that are inhabited by different subjects. (Ahmed, 2004, p. 25)

Nevertheless, affective literacy converges with critical literacy by focusing on the exploration of feelings as well as social and cultural values, but affective literacy does not necessarily aim to engage with marginalised groups (Cole, 2009, p.74).

Another conceptualisation of affective literacy focuses on pluriversal literacies (Perry, 2021) that are “not literacies of any particular place, topic, or people; rather, they are a practice of making sense and forming actions in relation to an always emerging global context” (p.305). While working in an informal context in Uganda, as a European literacy expert, she noticed the wide and diverse students’ semiotic repertoire and their needs for many different types of literacies that did not really join the

print literacy model. She reflects on how functional literacy could “be made accessible without the erasure of other ways of engaging with the world” (p. 302), while respecting as well these pluriversal literacies. Perry’s pluralistic vision of literacies (2021) evidences our map of communication that enables us to comprehend extensive aspects of human interaction, communication, meaning-making, decision-making, and behaviour.

Although there exists a growing body of literacy scholars in search of a transformative model that adapts to adult literacy, the concept of affective literacy applied to second language learning is scarce and still requires a deeper analysis and consensus among second language literacy researchers. Suh and Huh (2023) reviewed the literacy frameworks proposed by the body of critical literacy research, with its transformative and social activism vision, and the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies, which expanded the concept of critical thinking to encompass multimodal life skills. Suh and Huh (2023) concluded that research on these literacy frameworks insufficiently emphasises language development for individuals learning to read in additional languages. On the other hand, they analysed models that adapt to foreign language learners’ proficiency needs. Luke and Freebody’s (1999) Four Resources model, for instance, addresses learners’ roles as codebreakers, meaning constructors, text analysts, and text utilisers, while Bobkina & Stefanova’s (2016) model is designed for literature classes and based on the four components of the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. However, according to Suh and Huh (2023), both models are rationality-based models that neglect emotions and morality in pursuing intercultural citizenship (p.329). Therefore, they suggested a model for English as a foreign language that includes conventional skill-based literacy, critical affective literacy and adds intercultural citizenship education. Their intercultural citizenship education embodies the phases of dialoguing (students relate stories to their own lives, share with peers, and contrast with text characters), speaking from marginalised perspectives (students look for underrepresented viewpoints), and embracing otherness (students are helped to understand cultural differences).

As a general conclusion, affective literacy considers readers’ feelings and personal life perspectives when confronted with a text and allows them

to interact with the text, with their teacher and with their classmates to merge their different visions and better facilitate the transformative process of becoming literate.

RQ2: What are the main affective literacy teaching practices?

Considering the teaching practice process, a variety of resources promote literacy in adults: Digital practices (Jiang, 2023; Kole, 2018), literary texts (Cole, 2009), songs (Tadiar, 2009), humour (Mayes & Center, 2023), among others, were the most used. All these experiences shared the improvement of literacy in adults' mother tongue either to catch readers' attention through real-life topic passages that resonate with learners personally to provoke emotional responses to texts, or to open discussion where all voices were heard through the interactions between the values of the text, the students, the teacher, and the society (Cole, 2009).

The concept of affective literacy exemplified by the articles evaluated demonstrated how the selection of specific emotional extracts (Cole, 2009) can engage readers towards the process of literacy. For example, Cole (2009) chose a passage from *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley to make students conscious about the artificial life created by human beings and provoke affective responses towards the text. Santos (2020) outlined the concept of affective queer sexual literacy in Japan, a genre that heavily influences a group of women readers known as "rotten women" or *fujoshi* who embrace "queering normative notions of gender and sexuality in Japanese popular media" (p. 3). Affective literacy "has the power to impart information to readers through experience" (p. 10) often experienced as immediate feelings or visuals, which leads to a more compelling reading experience, and thus serves as a pedagogical tool. These articles collectively endorse the influential philosophers Deleuze and Guattari's concept of affective literacy (Deleuze, 1995; Deleuze & Guattari, 2013), which involves selecting particular text passages that affect or could "be affected", texts that allow for the inclusion of readers' voices, as each reader brings previous knowledge and life experiences which may affect the interpretation of the texts.

However, most of the teaching practices in our sample focused on CAL, which highlights social issues through pedagogies of discomfort (Boler, 1999). In CAL, readers engage with specific social problems to provoke

reflection and inspire action or protest. For Tadiar (2009), and Mayes and Center (2023), lament songs and humour, respectively, enable them to work with political issues in a non-threatening way. At the same time, they increase learners' engagement with these topics and may develop a sense of belonging and collective identity, or social justice. In the same line, Kole (2018) proposed storytelling to connect literacy skills and personal experiences. Fairy tales address themes concerning power, gender, and socioeconomics and confront the impact of these issues on society, communities, and individuals. Mayes and Center (2023) worked with multimodal texts to fight against climate change of an uncertain environmental future. The reviewed teaching practices followed an action-oriented methodology and gave students a voice about the social problems conferred.

This approach to literacy relates to the concept of identity since “language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols; it is also a complex social practice in which the value and meaning ascribed to an utterance, are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks” (Kole, 2018, p.368). This idea also connects with the vision of adult students as active agents who use their newfound knowledge and skills as catalysts for change within their spheres, broader communities, and even on a societal scale (Holloway & Gouthro, 2020). All these examples foster an affective relaxed classroom atmosphere to achieve literacy.

RQ3: What research methodology is used to study affective literacy?

Ehret and Rowsell (2020) agree that turning to affect will help researchers to explore new avenues of inquiry. In the same vein, Truman et al. (2021) confirm that a trend of scholars are moving towards posthumanism and Deleuzian theories, suggesting that previous frameworks like New Literacy Studies, multi-literacies, and multimodality were deemed insufficient. According to Truman et al. (2021, p. 225), “affect theory brings to light the difficulty of representing what is felt”.

Of the studies selected, 37,5% have been identified as empirical studies; one of them is a mixed-method study, and the rest use qualitative methodologies that enable a more comprehensive understanding of the issues under study. In this case, the complex relations between affect,

literacy, social justice, individuals' contexts and teaching practices.

The six studies present a variety of contexts while revealing a research trend based on the analysis of affective literacy practices. Regarding the research methodology and population, 50% are duoethnographic studies carried out in multilingual university settings; there is one case study conducted with first-year university students; one single-case retrospective study focused on the literacy experiences of an adult woman; and a mixed-method study completed with further education adult learners.

Returning to the duoethnographic studies, the three articles are based on university teachers' reflections and dialogic inquiry about their teaching practices, almost all with adult learners, probably migrants, in Canadian universities. Duo/trioethnography is a dialogic and iterative methodology, in which researchers juxtapose their experiences and life histories. According to the authors, this methodology requires respect, openness and "affective risk-taking" (Morgan & Ahmed, 2023); it has several benefits, such as allowing self-reflection and the exploration of feelings that are often mobilised to construct identity.

In terms of data sources, data is typically collected through recorded interviews, or semi-structured interviews; diaries or written reflections, classroom observations and, in one of the studies, a questionnaire is also used. Then, data is analysed and coded using mainly a content analysis approach, and main topics are identified. Final products such as written assignments or digital storytelling videos were also analysed.

The conceptual framework of most of these studies is that of CAL carried out with adult multilinguals in university settings. Concerning the results of the studies, all of them underline the positive effects of introducing an affective literacy approach. The three duoethnographic studies (Ahmed et al., 2021; Ahmed & Morgan, 2021; Morgan & Ahmed, 2023) emphasise how CAL assists in building a multilingual identity, helps learners understand others; and promotes the agency of educators and students in a distributed manner. But, according to Ahmed et al. (2021), it requires a reconceptualisation of academic practices where languages are taught, not only focusing on linguistic aspects, but for the development of democratic citizenship to achieve social justice. Besides, Ahmed and Morgan (2021) advocate for "fostering a sense of attunement in the classroom" (p.12), building educators and learners

equal relationship so that “students can feel safe and supported” (p.13) when mobilising their own linguistic and affective repertoires. In the same line, Jiang (2024) claims for the creation of safe and inclusive classroom environments where learners can express their emotions. Her study with first-year university students in a language course also shows the feelings that arise when students are allowed to express them through the creation of storytelling videos. She advocates for a “holistic approach to digital literacies” (p.262) that engages learners emotionally. Sadness, empathy, and hope are all evident in learners’ creations. It is a kind of “pedagogy of discomfort” that drives learners to an “action-oriented empathy” that can achieve a social transformation (p. 260).

As for research conducted in an adult education setting, Kole’s (2018) study, drawing on New Literacy Studies theory that offers a more holistic development of the learner, shows how an experience based on using fairy tales improves participants’ linguistic, cognitive and affective skills. Bacon, Rolim and Humaidan (2022), in turn, warn against school literacy practices that can marginalise individuals because they limit people’s possibilities to grow, as shown in the case of the 25-year-old dis/abled adult woman presented in their study.

In short, most of the studies are qualitative research studies that are conducted in highly educated environments, in many cases with multilingual adult participants, which might imply that some learners have had a migration experience, although not usually explicitly mentioned, except in some cases in the duoethnographic studies.

Discussion and conclusion

The field of reading literacy, traditionally and still dominant in many learning environments today, has emphasised teaching cognitive elements, such as decoding and fluency. However, without considering how linguistically and culturally diverse readers emotionally relate and respond to the different kinds of texts they encounter, this process may be insufficient. This is what affect theory has brought to adult literacy.

The 16 studies reviewed, despite sharing the “turn to affect” (Anwaruddin, 2016), present different conceptualisations of affective literacy. From a socio-cultural perspective, affective literacy adds interesting proposals to conventional skill-based literacy and seems to be truly relevant for a plurilingual and multicultural world. Deleuze

(1995) illustrated the need to build affective literacy in education by selecting texts containing affective themes designed to engage both teachers and students. These themes could facilitate a positive relationship between reader, text and society, enhancing personal development and social integration in the new country. Affective literacy focuses on feelings, and social and cultural values; however, unlike critical literacy, it does not necessarily relate to a marginalised group (Cole, 2009). Anwaruddin (2016) combined affective literacy to the existing critical literacy studies and developed the concept of Critical Affective Literacy, emphasising the idea of literacy as a transformative tool for social change. In this line, many studies adopting this approach tend to address concerns, such as equity, diversity and inclusion.

Regarding the findings of this study, the starting points for approaching affective literacy in the reviewed articles are varied: the need to optimise the literacy process of adult learners (Kole, 2018), the search for social change and social justice (Jiang, 2004; Morgan & Ahmed, 2023) or the desire to make more visible vulnerable populations (Dernikos et al., 2023). Still, they all converge on the same turn to affect literacy education. Thus, affective literacy, or CAL in some studies, can meet the needs of adults from different cultural and linguistic contexts.

One of the wishes migrants pursue when they settle down in a new country is to become literate in the new additional language as soon as possible to be part of the host society. Indeed, socialisation during language learning experiences triggers positive attitudes and motivation to learn languages (Fekete, 2023). However, the complexities created by the diverse profiles of migrants and their linguistic and cultural multiplicity seem to hinder the teaching process (Council of Europe, 2022), probably even more so when their “reading of the world” and their semiotic repertoires are ignored.

With this linguistic and cultural diversity in classrooms and the demand for multiple literacies in the 21st century, language teachers confront significant challenges in ensuring that all adult migrant students are heard, that they develop their critical thinking abilities, and that inclusive practices are implemented within the learning environment. Research shows that adult language educators are trying to respond to the language needs of adult migrants. For example, in a study conducted with adult migrants in Sweden, after observing and analysing second

language teaching practices, the researchers concluded that adult teachers need to increase their awareness of the linguistic resources adult migrants bring to the classroom (Norlund Shaswar, 2022). Slade and Dickson (2020), in turn, present the results of a learner-centred project where adult educators focus on learners' motivation, flexible delivery or classroom relationships to provide language classes where migrants can learn in a safe, friendly and social space. Although they found good practices in the project, they also identified limitations. Apart from funding problems and the fact that it is an under-researched area, they acknowledged limited success because "students do not actively contribute to the curriculum" (p. 117). Bacon et al. (2022) warns literacy practices that ignore who the learners are can marginalise individuals because they limit their possibilities to grow. Nevertheless, with regards to the results attained, we believe that affective literacy could help language teachers to better assist those learners, who are, indeed, in serious need of guidance not only in the language learning process but also in learning how to face today's multiple challenges. Adult migrants can bring their emotional responses to texts connected to their life experiences and knowledge to the classroom.

Our systematic review concludes by defining affective literacy as the impact that the act of reading has on readers' lives. This implies the evocation of emotional responses to print (Cole, 2009) or multimodal "texts", where the different "bodies" or elements that participate in the reading process affect each other and are affected. Furthermore, it also entails allowing students to use their own resources and empowering them to apply knowledge creatively, with their final artefacts representing their learning. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2023).

In terms of affective literacy practices, the sample in our research shows successful practices, such as testimonies, fairy tales, songs, or texts that do not marginalise social groups, that are used to engage readers and promote writing as a way of giving voice to learners. These are good options for migrant adults as they allow learners to bring forward their life experiences and their emotions. Moreover, when the topic is related to real-life situations, some common feelings are shared despite the cultural differences since they are human emotions. An affective literacy framework also needs to consider multimodal resources, not only print texts to help learners of additional languages make meaning and give room to linguistic, cultural, and social differences. By creating

a flexible environment, learners can explore and make use of all their semiotic repertoires, enhancing multiliteracies. Along the same lines, authentic problem-solving tasks are promoted, to enable participants as active agents who cooperate to make decisions, while they develop their plurilingual and multicultural competence.

However, in our sample, most studies are conducted in highly literate settings, specifically with university populations. It is noticeable, though, the lack of studies with adult migrants under the label of affective literacy, given their specific needs and vulnerability, but new studies are emerging. For example, Järvinen & Suopajärvi (2024) show the results of qualitative research based on the ways in which gender, race and trauma diversity was present in Finnish education. They explained how learning a language was usually seen as the key element for integration since it provides adults with the possibility to understand themselves in a new way.

It is also possible that some participants are not identified as migrants, even though some of them are more than likely to have migrated to the countries studied. In fact, most of the research is carried out in countries that have traditionally received migrant populations (e.g. USA, Canada, or Australia), and have a longer history of a multicultural and multilingual population, which may promote this type of studies.

In any case, there is a paucity of studies on affective literacy in the context of adult education. Literacy is a core element in adult education, but emotion and affect are to some extent insufficiently theorised, and their role in the process of teaching and learning an additional language remains primarily hidden. As argued above, when education focuses on affect, it offers a holistic approach beyond cognitive aspects. This is the reason why affective literacy practices should be included in adult education. As the neuroscientist Damásio (1994) affirmed some decades ago, “We are not thinking machines that feel, we are feeling machines that think” (Damásio, 1994, p.28). Building on Suh and Huh’s (2023) insights, our advocated affective literacy approach for adult migrants emphasises shared feelings and concerns with the hosting society, alongside respecting intercultural differences. Addressing the specific literacy needs of this population is paramount. Although this approach remains understudied in second language literacy research with adult migrants, the findings of this systematic literature review suggest that

conducting empirical studies on affective literacy with adult migrants could provide relevant data on their additional language acquisition process, as well as equip adult migrants with another tool to integrate into their host countries and lead meaningful lives.

Endnote 1: *Annex 1: Affective Reading Literacy Review: Summary of findings.* (Uploaded as Data Set document). Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10272/24402>

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