



## THE ROLE AND PLACE OF THE METHODOLOGY OF READING WORKS OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANT WRITERS IN THE FORMATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

*This article explores the significance of incorporating the works of Muslim immigrant writers into the training of future foreign language teachers, with a particular focus on how reading methodologies contribute to the development of intercultural competence. The study highlights the role of immigrant literature as a cultural and linguistic bridge, enabling students to gain deeper insights into issues of identity, cultural hybridity, and the challenges of integration in multicultural societies. Furthermore, it discusses pedagogical strategies for using such works in foreign language education, including critical reading, comparative cultural analysis, and the integration of reflective and discussion-based tasks to foster empathy, tolerance, and cultural awareness among future educators.*

### INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasing globalization and cultural interaction, the preparation of future foreign language teachers must transcend the traditional boundaries of grammar and vocabulary acquisition, extending toward the formation of intercultural competence. This competence equips teachers not only to instruct effectively but also to serve as mediators between cultures, fostering understanding and respect among diverse student populations. One of the most effective avenues for developing such skills is the study of literature by Muslim immigrant writers, whose works reflect the complexities of identity, displacement, and cultural negotiation.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Muslim immigrant writers, such as Leila Aboulela, Mohsin Hamid, and Kamila Shamsie, offer narratives that capture the struggles and triumphs of navigating bicultural identities, religious diversity, and social integration in predominantly Western contexts. By engaging with these texts, future foreign language teachers can develop a nuanced understanding of cultural differences, social stereotypes, and the importance of inclusive perspectives in their professional practice. The methodology of reading such works must therefore be carefully structured to not only enhance linguistic proficiency but also build students' ability to critically analyze cultural contexts and reflect on their own biases.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The works of Muslim immigrant writers serve as cultural artifacts that reflect real-world issues of migration, discrimination, integration, and identity crisis. These texts introduce future



teachers to the lived experiences of marginalized communities, fostering cultural empathy and broadening their worldview. Unlike canonical literary texts, which often reflect dominant cultural narratives, immigrant literature centers on voices that challenge stereotypes and reveal the nuanced realities of multicultural societies [1].

Through novels like Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* or Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*, students are exposed to the themes of displacement, belonging, and cultural adaptation. Such narratives allow future teachers to understand the emotional and psychological dimensions of migration, which can, in turn, influence their teaching approaches in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms.

One of the crucial aspects in the methodology of reading works by Muslim immigrant writers within teacher education programs is the integration of these texts into a broader framework of intercultural communication studies. While literary analysis traditionally focuses on narrative techniques, themes, and linguistic structures, using immigrant literature to build intercultural competence requires a shift toward contextual, dialogic, and experiential learning. This approach allows future foreign language teachers not only to study language in context but also to engage with real socio-cultural narratives that reflect the challenges of living between cultures [3].

A significant challenge faced by teacher education programs is how to balance linguistic and intercultural objectives. Traditional curricula often prioritize linguistic accuracy over cultural immersion, which can result in teachers who are technically proficient but lack the sensitivity to handle diverse classrooms. Reading works by writers like Leila Aboulela (*Minaret*), Mohsin Hamid (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*), and Kamila Shamsie (*Burnt Shadows*) provides an avenue for balancing these priorities, as the texts inherently combine rich linguistic diversity with complex cultural themes. These works present authentic language use alongside issues such as religious identity, Islamophobia, diaspora dynamics, and intergenerational conflict, all of which can be discussed in language classes to connect grammar and vocabulary with cultural meaning.

Furthermore, these texts are particularly valuable in helping teachers understand cultural hybridity and "third space" identities. Muslim immigrant writers often depict characters who navigate multiple cultural spheres, embodying neither a wholly Western nor entirely Islamic identity but rather a hybrid, fluid sense of self. Understanding these identities equips future teachers to address cultural and identity issues in their classrooms more effectively, promoting inclusive teaching practices. For instance, classroom discussions based on novels like Aboulela's *The Translator* or Hamid's *Exit West* can prompt student-teachers to explore how language learning intersects with migration experiences, cultural negotiation, and personal transformation [5].

Another key dimension is the development of reflective teaching practices through literary engagement. When future foreign language teachers analyze immigrant literature, they are prompted to reflect on their own cultural biases and teaching philosophies. Structured reflection tasks, such as journaling about personal responses to the texts or comparing cultural assumptions across characters, allow trainees to cultivate cultural self-awareness, a cornerstone of intercultural competence. Moreover, incorporating project-based learning, such



as collaborative presentations on the socio-political contexts of the novels, deepens their research skills while reinforcing cultural knowledge.

To maximize the benefits, teacher educators should adopt multi-modal strategies that combine literature with supplementary materials—documentaries, author interviews, and sociological studies on migration. Such resources help contextualize the fictional narratives, allowing future teachers to differentiate between the artistic representation of migration and its real-life complexities. By synthesizing literature with authentic cultural materials, students can develop a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of Muslim immigrant experiences, which directly informs their pedagogical approaches.

Moreover, it is important to consider the role of classroom dynamics and student engagement when implementing immigrant literature into the foreign language curriculum. Encouraging dialogic pedagogy, where students are invited to voice their interpretations, question cultural representations, and relate narratives to their own lived experiences, significantly enriches the reading process. This type of engagement not only fosters critical thinking but also supports inclusive classroom discourse that respects diverse perspectives.

In addition, digital literacy can be integrated into the reading methodology through the use of online discussion forums, digital storytelling, or multimedia projects that allow students to creatively respond to the themes in the texts. These interactive platforms serve as modern extensions of literary analysis, enabling students to collaborate across cultures, transcend linguistic barriers, and co-construct intercultural understanding in digital spaces.

Another dimension worth noting is assessment. Traditional evaluation methods may not fully capture the growth in intercultural competence. Therefore, formative assessments such as reflective essays, intercultural journals, or peer-feedback loops provide more meaningful indicators of students' evolving cultural awareness. These assessments promote continuous reflection and allow educators to guide the development of intercultural skills more effectively.

Finally, the selection of literary texts must also be mindful of representation and balance. While Muslim immigrant literature offers rich insights into postcolonial identity and diaspora, it is important to include a wide spectrum of voices to avoid essentializing a singular narrative of Muslim experience. Diversity within the corpus — across gender, geography, socio-economic status, and historical context — ensures a holistic and multidimensional perspective of Muslim identities.

Finally, the incorporation of Muslim immigrant literature aligns with global education trends that emphasize social justice and critical pedagogy. Future teachers trained through these methodologies become not just language instructors but agents of cultural mediation who can challenge stereotypes, promote dialogue, and empower students from diverse backgrounds [6]. This role is increasingly vital in today's multilingual classrooms, where cultural misunderstandings can easily arise.

## CONCLUSION

The methodology of reading works by Muslim immigrant writers occupies a crucial place in the preparation of future foreign language teachers, as it simultaneously develops linguistic competence and intercultural sensitivity. Through carefully designed reading strategies, students gain a holistic understanding of cultural identity, migration, and diversity, enabling



them to become educators who can navigate and enrich culturally diverse learning environments.

Incorporating immigrant literature into teacher education not only enriches the curriculum but also aligns with the broader educational goal of fostering global citizenship. As classrooms worldwide grow increasingly multicultural, educators who can blend language teaching with intercultural mediation will be better equipped to meet the needs of their students and contribute to more inclusive, empathetic, and culturally aware societies.

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