

16.00-17.30 CET 3rd September 2026

Plurilingualism and education for democracy Le plurilinguisme et l'éducation pour la démocratie

Amélie Cellier and José Ignacio Aguilar Río

This presentation, which will be given partly in English and partly in French, addresses the critical role of languages and language education stakeholders in building and preserving democracies. Against a backdrop of rising autocratic trends highlighted by the V-Dem Institute, we question the true representativeness of contemporary democracies. We argue that linguistic hierarchies, often established through national language performance, can marginalize populations and undermine democratic inclusion.

Drawing on global political commitments and European case studies, the session examines how language policies can be instrumentalized for population regulation rather than integration. Specifically, we analyze the misuse of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and national integration strategies that inadvertently foster exclusion. Conversely, we explore pluralistic approaches as vital levers for democratic resilience.

Through interactive reflection and concrete examples from diverse educational contexts, including English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and plurilingualism, this session invites participants to reconsider the relationship between language education and civic engagement. We aim to identify how stakeholders can foster inclusive, resilient democracies by promoting linguistic diversity and challenging monolingual norms. Ultimately, the session posits that a plurilingual language education is not merely a pedagogical choice but a fundamental democratic imperative.

And here is some information about the **speakers**:

Dr. Amélie Cellier is an associated member of the DILTEC research laboratory at Sorbonne Nouvelle University (Paris III), specializing in multiliteracies and the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (FLE). She obtained her PhD in Language and Culture Didactics from Paris III in December 2023. In 2025 she published *Une approche en FLE de la pédagogie des multilittératies* with l'Harmattan. In this book, she develops two conceptual tools: mediation of multimodal meaning and the cognitive model of meaning-making in French as a foreign language.

Dr. José Ignacio Aguilar Río is an Associate Professor in Language Education at Sorbonne Nouvelle University (Paris III), where he has been a member of the DILTEC research laboratory since 2011. He holds a BA in Spanish and an MA in English from the University of Málaga and completed an MA in Language Teaching at Sorbonne Nouvelle in 2005. He obtained his PhD in Language and Culture Didactics from Sorbonne Nouvelle in December 2010. His research focuses on language teacher education, the relationship between intra- and interpersonal dimensions in language learning, pedagogical mediation, and teacher identity. He has been involved in research projects that investigate cognition and emotion in language teacher training, and collaborates on Franco-German initiatives regarding hybrid teacher training. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Langscape network.