

Negotiating the Global in the Local: Professional Identity Construction of Local Teachers in an International School in Croatia

Rea Lujić Pikutić
University of Zadar
Croatia

ABSTRACT: This study examines how four local teachers at an international school in Croatia construct their professional identities, drawing on Varghese et al.'s (2005) identity framework and Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning. Through semi-structured interviews, findings reveal a daily balancing act: Novice teachers seek legitimacy through institutional alignment, while expert teachers reframe distance from the national curriculum as professional growth. The study urges educational policy-makers to develop professional support that recognizes the unique cultural and linguistic capital of local staff in international school contexts.

KEYWORDS: Teacher identity, international schools, local teachers, language policy, multilingualism

[Theoretical Framework](#)
[Methodology](#)
[Findings and Discussions](#)
[Conclusion](#)
[References](#)
[AI Use Statement](#)
[Author Contact](#)

Over the past two decades, teacher identity has shifted from a marginal to a central concern in applied linguistics, shifting the conceptualization of educators from mere “technicians” (Varghese et al., 2005) to complex social actors. This evolution, often framed within the social turn in second language acquisition (Block, 2007), acknowledges that a teacher’s sense of self is fundamentally intertwined with their classroom practices, professional development, and institutional interactions. As Duff and Uchida (1997) posited, teachers navigate a landscape of multifaceted identities, acting simultaneously as gendered individuals, cultural representatives, and specialists with distinct political and social convictions. Despite the contemporary globalized shift where most educators navigate diverse contexts, scholarly attention has remained disproportionately focused on expatriate teachers, leaving a significant gap in our understanding of local teachers in international educational settings. The urgency of addressing this group is underscored by recent market trends. According to ISC Research (2024), the number of international schools globally has increased by 8.5% over the past five years, reaching over 14,000 institutions. As Bunnell (2021) argues, the proliferation of international schools is not merely a market trend but a significant

sociological shift that creates new, hybrid professional spaces. These spaces challenge traditional national education boundaries, and it is precisely those working within them, specifically local teachers, whose positionalities deserve a closer and more careful examination. Existing literature has laid a robust foundation for understanding the international teaching profession, with seminal works producing essential typologies of international school teachers (Bailey & Cooker, 2019) and examining critical logistical and environmental factors such as contract precariousness (Bunnell, 2016) and cultural adjustment (Savva, 2015). Building upon these structural and environmental insights, there is a burgeoning opportunity to further explore the nuanced, internal, and subjective processes of identity formation from the teachers' own perspectives. Indeed, as Bailey and Cooker (2019) insightfully observe, while the impact of an institution's international identity on its staff appears profound, empirical evidence detailing this internal identity negotiation remains largely unexplored.

This study seeks to extend this dialogue by exploring the professional experiences of local teachers, educators who remain in their home countries but choose to operate within international curricula. By focusing on this specific population, the research complements existing analyses with a detailed look into the in-betweenness of those who mediate between national roots and global pedagogical frameworks. Unlike their students, who are often in international schools due to parental choices, these teachers voluntarily enter a third space of identity. They must navigate multifaceted linguistic disparities, ranging from variations in accent to differing levels of English proficiency, which fundamentally shape classroom dynamics. The central inquiry of this paper concerns the in-betweenness of these professionals: To which communities do they feel connected, national or international? Do they perceive themselves as intrinsically international educators or as local teachers who happen to work in a globalized niche?

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the conceptualization of identity work as a dynamic process of continual construction through language and social interaction (Varghese et al., 2005). Within this framework, teacher identity is not a static trait but a multifaceted phenomenon that must be understood through two interconnected lenses: Identity-in-discourse and identity-in-practice. Identity-in-discourse recognizes that teachers construct their professional selves within specific discursive environments. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), the most explicit form of discursive positioning occurs through categorization, how educators label themselves within the hierarchy of novice, expert, or, crucially for this study, international school teachers. To capture the nuances of this positioning, we draw on Fairclough's (2003) critical discourse analysis (CDA), an approach that examines how language constructs, reproduces, and challenges social identities and power relations. Within this framework, an individual's

commitment to a social position is often revealed through two key analytical categories: modality and evaluation. While modality (e.g., must, should, possibly) signals the teacher's perceived obligations and agency within the school system, evaluation reflects their underlying judgments of professional "good" or "bad" (Trent, 2015). For local teachers in international schools, these linguistic choices reveal the extent to which they embrace or resist the dominant institutional culture.

Complementing the discursive lens, identity-in-practice views professional selfhood as socially and historically situated within concrete tasks and communal engagement. Drawing on Wenger's (1998, 2010) communities of practice (CoP) framework, we identify three distinct modes of belonging that facilitate identity formation. First, engagement involves active participation in the daily life of the school: Collaborating on lesson plans, staff meetings, and parent-teacher interactions. It is through doing things together that a teacher moves from being an outsider to a recognized member of the school community. Second, the process of imagination allows teachers to transcend their immediate environment and orient themselves within a broader global context (Lave & Wenger, 1991). A local teacher may imagine their classroom not merely as a local entity, but as a node in a global network, shaping global citizens beyond the national curriculum. Finally, alignment ensures that local activities resonate with broader institutional goals (Tsui, 2007). For the local teacher, this means reconciling personal pedagogical beliefs with the official school-wide strategies, international reporting systems, and reform initiatives. Through the interplay of these three modes, the identity of the institution eventually becomes the identity of the participant. Consequently, teacher identity is both demonstrated and transformed through participation in professional communities, both within and beyond the classroom.

Guided by this framework, integrating the discursive markers of modality with the practical modes of belonging, this paper seeks to answer the research question: How do local teachers discursively and practically negotiate their professional identities within the specific context of an international school?

Methodology

The present study employs a case study design, which allows researchers to provide a holistic and in-depth account of complex phenomena such as identity construction (Merriam, 1998). Given the fluid nature of professional identity, a case study approach is particularly suited to capturing the contradictions and shifts within individual narratives, patterns that predetermined categories would risk flattening or obscuring.

Research Context

The study was conducted at a state-funded primary school in Croatia that operates two parallel programmes: The standard national curriculum and an international programme accredited by the International Baccalaureate Organisation. The IB programme is divided into two consecutive stages: The Primary Years Programme (PYP), serving students in grades 1 through 5 (ages 7–11), and the Middle Years Programme (MYP), covering grades 6 through 8 (ages 12–15). The participants in this study are all MYP teachers. The MYP cohort consists of 78 students in total, distributed across three-year groups: Grade 6, grade 7, and grade 8.

Following Hayden and Thompson's (2013) typology, this institution is classified as a Type B international school, that is, it is a school that adopted an international curriculum not primarily to serve a transient expatriate population, but out of a deliberate philosophical commitment to a particular educational vision. As such, it is an ideological school in Hayden and Thompson's terms, meaning that its international character is rooted in pedagogical values rather than demographic necessity. It implements the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, focusing on inquiry-based learning and holistic education, while simultaneously integrating content from the national curriculum of the host country.

The school's linguistic landscape is highly complex. While English serves as the sole medium of instruction, the student body is linguistically diverse, representing over 20 different home languages. A significant tension characterizes the school's linguistic and cultural landscape, arising from the interplay between its international ethos and local reality. Although the institution prioritizes children of globally mobile parents, such as diplomats and expatriates, local students nevertheless constitute a substantial minority of the student body. This demographic mix creates a specific linguistic disparity. The majority of students function as early balanced bilinguals – individuals who acquired two or more languages simultaneously from birth or early childhood. The teaching staff, by contrast, is primarily composed of late successive bilinguals – professionals who acquired their additional language(s) after their first language was already established, typically in adolescence. This contrast in linguistic biographies is not merely a background detail; it serves as a critical catalyst for the teachers' identity negotiation, as they must reconcile their own linguistic development with the linguistic competencies of their students.

The school employs 18 local teachers in total. Five of these teachers have been with the programme since its early years, representing the longest-serving members of the faculty. A further four teachers have between ten and fifteen years of experience at the school, while the remaining nine have worked there for under ten years. This distribution suggests a notable degree of staff retention, with over half of the faculty having committed to the programme for a decade or more, a pattern that may speak to the sustained professional and institutional conditions the school has cultivated over time.

School Language Policy

The school's formal Language Policy functions as a powerful discursive tool, reflecting a pedagogical philosophy that seeks to balance global prestige with local integration. Central to this framework is the mandate for monolingual instruction, where English serves as the exclusive medium of learning. This approach aligns the institution with high-status bilingual education models (Flores & Baetens Beardsmore, 2015), effectively positioning English as the primary vehicle for academic and professional capital. Simultaneously, the policy acknowledges its geographical and cultural context by making the study of the host country's language mandatory for all students. However, a distinct ideological boundary is drawn regarding mother-tongue support. While the school provides the necessary infrastructure for external heritage language instruction, it strategically delegates the responsibility for maintaining students' diverse linguistic backgrounds to families and embassies. This arrangement suggests that, while multilingualism is institutionally recognized, the primary burden of its maintenance remains outside the formal curriculum, a factor that further complicates the linguistic landscape in which local teachers operate.

Participants

Participants were selected purposively based on years of experience at the school and subject area, with the aim of capturing contrasting perspectives within the faculty. Seven teachers were approached in total; three declined to participate, and four agreed and are represented in this study. The four participating teachers represent the two largest groups within the faculty: Two have been with the programme since its early years, while two are newer members with up to five years of experience at the school (Table 1).

Table 1
Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Subject Area	Total professional experience	Tenure at current institution	Contextual Background
Gloria	English Language and Literature	25 years	1 year	Recently transitioned from a prestigious private school
Brigita	French Language	5 years	5 years	Previous international experience in private school
Lana	Technology / Program coordinator	25 years	25 years	School veteran
Izabela	Host country language	26 years	26 years	Teaches both native and non-native speakers within the IB framework

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data source consisted of semi-structured narrative interviews (Kvale, 1996). They were conducted in the participants' first language to ensure depth and emotional nuance. Interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes and focused on: Linguistic interactions with students, reflections on school language policy and personal pedagogies, and negotiation of language ideologies within the international school context.

The narratives were analyzed using a two-level approach: Within-case analysis and cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1998). During the first level of analysis, individual datasets were meticulously coded to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the participants' professional identity development. This initial stage allowed for an emergent understanding of the teachers' lived experiences. In the second level, these themes were synthesized and organized into larger conceptual clusters, guided by the study's dual theoretical framework. Specifically, the analysis distinguished between identity-in-discourse, focusing on linguistic markers such as positioning and modality, and identity-in-practice, which examined the teachers' professional selves through the lenses of engagement, imagination, and alignment (Wenger, 1998; Varghese et al., 2005). Participants reviewed draft findings and flagged interpretive inaccuracies, which were revised accordingly (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

All excerpts were translated into English for reporting, with pseudonyms used to ensure anonymity. The translation of interview excerpts from Croatian into English introduced an inevitable layer of interpretive mediation. Where translation choices carried interpretive weight, the original Croatian term has been retained in parentheses.

Although, in the present day, I am a researcher based at a university where my work focuses on multilingualism and language education, I worked at this very school 15 years ago as a French language teacher. My interest in the in-betweenness of local teachers is therefore rooted in lived experience and a long-standing personal and pedagogical preoccupation with multilingualism that predates my entry into formal research. This insider positioning carried both advantages and risks. Familiarity with the institution's culture and its informal hierarchies facilitated rapport during interviews and enabled more nuanced interpretation of contextual references. Furthermore, my own memories of the institution, now fifteen years old, inevitably shaped which patterns I found salient and which I may have normalised or overlooked.

The study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for qualitative educational research. All participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study and its intended publication, and written informed consent was obtained prior to each interview. Pseudonyms are used throughout the manuscript and identifying institutional details have been anonymised to protect participant confidentiality. As the researcher had a prior professional relationship with all participants, particular care was taken to ensure that participation was understood to be voluntary and that withdrawal remained possible at any stage without consequence.

Findings and Discussions

The analysis of the participants' narratives reveals a complex process of identity construction, where local teachers constantly negotiate their professional selves between the national roots of their education and the global demands of the international curriculum. This process is categorized into four key thematic clusters, which are detailed below.

The Burden of Alignment: Policy Appropriation and Professional Capital

For the novice teachers in this study, professional identity is initially constructed through a relation of difference. Brigita, who has been working in the system for five years, having transitioned from the Croatian national educational system, describes her transition as a significant shift in pedagogical authority. She constantly contrasts the international framework with the national one, using the phrase “but in our system,” by which she means the Croatian national educational

system, to maintain a connection with her previous professional self. As she said, "In our system, the teacher is always at the center, whereas in the international program, the child is at the center and you are just a guide... a mentor, an advisor [laughter]." For Brigita, the institutional policy script is overwhelming, as she describes the constant influx of documentation as "going in circles," leading to a sense of never fully feeling like an international teacher. For Brigita, the documentation is not merely a bureaucratic inconvenience; it functions as the primary site through which the institutional expectations become tangible, and her difficulty navigating it reinforces her sense that full membership in the community of international teachers remains out of reach. In Wenger's terms, Brigita is caught in a demanding process of alignment, attempting to reconcile her existing pedagogical self with the institutional script of the IB framework. Crucially, this alignment is not yet generative: It consumes professional energy without yet producing a stable sense of belonging. She has not yet moved, in Wenger's language, from peripheral to full participation in the community of practice.

In contrast, Gloria represents a novice within the international school context who nevertheless brings substantial previous professional capital: Prior to joining the programme, she worked at a prestigious private school where student-centered approaches and high academic standards were already the norm. Her identity work is characterized by continuity rather than rupture: "I never worked in a mainstream program... it's not strange, new, or weird to me; it's just how things must be done." Despite this familiarity, Gloria highlights the intense labor involved in this alignment, noting that "the job is never done, not even at 10 PM." She positions herself as a pragmatic manager of requirements yet candidly describes her current state as a "kupus" (a jumble), acknowledging that she is still "scratching the surface" of the complex assessment systems. Gloria's identity work illustrates what Varghese et al. (2005) describe as identity-in-discourse operating through evaluation: Her repeated use of normative framing, "It's just how things must be done," positions the international curriculum not as a foreign imposition but as a natural professional standard. The modality here is revealing: "Must" signals not obligation but internalized norm, suggesting a degree of alignment that Brigita has not yet achieved.

Establishing a Professional Hierarchy: From "Normal" to "Addictive"

As teachers gain experience, their identity construction moves from mere alignment to a sense of professional superiority over the national system. Izabela, an expert teacher, uses the discourse of affective dependency to describe her relationship with the program: "I can no longer see myself in the national programme... I've become addicted to this [laughter]. It's life-like, every day is different; it doesn't feel like a typical school." This narrative draws on what Wenger (1998) calls the mode of imagination, the capacity to situate oneself within a broader professional landscape that extends beyond the immediate institutional context. By framing the national system as "typical" and her own practice as its

implicit opposite, Izabela does not merely describe her work; she constructs a professional self that belongs to a different, implicitly superior, order of teaching. Furthermore, Izabela reinforces her identity by criticizing the national system's approach to inclusion, arguing that while inclusion is an exception in national schools, in her environment, "the rule is that no two children are the same."

Similarly, Lana emphasizes the complete personality required for this role, arguing that success requires a specific set of human traits: "You have to be flexible, never rigid... our norm is precisely that diversity. It takes immense patience because you have 18 different students who all need something different." By framing the international program as dynamic and the national one as static or homogenous, these expert teachers construct a professional hierarchy that justifies their intense investment in the IB framework.

Linguistic In-betweenness and the Crisis of Authenticity

Language is where professional identity becomes most unstable. The institutional English-only mandate assumes a linguistic competence that the teachers, all late successive bilinguals, must daily negotiate, perform, and at times conceal. Brigita experiences this as a sense of professional guilt, repeatedly using the adverb "unfortunately" when describing her use of English: "Unfortunately, sometimes even I find myself slipping into English... you instinctively respond in English. English is, unfortunately, the language that sometimes prevails." As a French teacher, Brigita feels that English encroaches on her subject-specific identity: The language of instruction keeps displacing the language she is actually there to teach. She extends this discomfort beyond herself, mourning the fact that some local students have not yet developed academic literacy in their own first language, whatever that language may be, and are simultaneously expected to learn through the medium of English as a second language.

Izabela articulates a strikingly different relationship with the same linguistic reality. Rather than experiencing her position as deficient, she reframes it through a cultural metaphor that encapsulates what linguistic vulnerability makes possible: "You cross a certain level of communication, you become an E.T. (extra-terrestrial), you are no longer just a teacher who explains and interprets... you both end up on the same level, in the same position [laughter]." The laughter that accompanies this image is itself significant, it suggests that Izabela holds the metaphor with a degree of ironic self-awareness, claiming its analytical power without fully inhabiting its more vulnerable implications. The cultural resonance of this metaphor deserves closer attention. E.T. is the titular character of Steven Spielberg's 1982 film, a gentle alien stranded on Earth who must navigate an unfamiliar world without the linguistic or cultural tools its inhabitants take for granted. Spielberg's E.T. is not simply a stranger, he is a figure who observes human behaviour with a precision that insiders lack precisely because they take their world for granted. Crucially, E.T. is never fully assimilated, yet his outsider position becomes the source of his most acute understanding. Izabela's

appropriation of this image suggests an intuitive grasp of what her linguistic imperfection actually affords her pedagogically. This dynamic maps productively onto Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation. In their framework, newcomers to a community of practice occupy a peripheral position, not as a deficit, but as a vantage point from which the community's practices are visible in ways they are not to full members. Izabela, as a late successive bilingual operating within an English-medium institution, inhabits precisely such a position. She is close enough to the linguistic norm to function within it, yet distant enough to remember what it costs to get there. What distinguishes her case from the standard trajectory of legitimate peripheral participation, however, is the direction of movement. Lave and Wenger describe a path from periphery toward full membership. Izabela does not seek full membership in the native-speaker community, she has relinquished that aspiration and reframed her permanent peripherality as a professional asset, inverting the standard logic. Rather than moving toward the centre, she has made the periphery the most productive place to teach from. This contrast between Brigita and Izabela is analytically revealing. Where Brigita's modality is dominated by "unfortunately," a marker of deficiency and reluctant concession, Izabela's linguistic choices enact what Bucholtz and Hall (2005) call *adequation*: The strategic downplaying of difference in order to construct commonality. Identity-in-practice here is not performed despite linguistic limitation but through it.

Gloria takes a more pragmatic position, using the national language as a strategic tool for comprehension while maintaining consistency across the class: "I assist with the host country language where it's needed for understanding, but I tell others to find translations in their own language." Where Brigita experiences linguistic slippage as failure and Izabela reframes it as pedagogy, Gloria instrumentalises it and makes language choice a classroom management decision rather than an identity statement.

The Shift Toward Multilingualism: An Emerging Institutional Reorientation

A crucial finding is the recent institutional shift away from globalizing English toward what Izabela calls the "glorification of the native language." This phrasing is Izabela's own, drawn directly from her account of recent IB professional development workshops. Both expert teachers report that recent IB workshops have fundamentally changed the school's linguistic ecology: "There is a strong emphasis on multilingualism... the trend is moving away from globalizing and imposing English everywhere. Even in the library, we must have multilingual literature." Lana confirms this shift, noting that the previously "rigid" rules have softened: "It used to be rigid, everyone had to speak English... but now it's more flexible. If a child needs an explanation in the national language, why not? The other students tolerate it." Lana's account points to a gradual but consequential shift in the community of practice itself. Where alignment once required suppression of the local, linguistically and culturally, the community's norms are

now being renegotiated from within. This is precisely the dynamic Wenger (2010) describes when communities of practice evolve: Not through top-down mandate alone, but through the accumulated weight of members' lived experience pushing against existing boundaries. It is worth noting that Izabela and Lana use markedly different language to describe what appears to be the same institutional shift. Where Izabela reaches for an almost celebratory register, "glorification," Lana's framing remains pragmatic and cautious: Flexibility as tolerance rather than affirmation. Whether this reflects a difference in personal investment, subject area, or professional role is difficult to determine from the data alone, but the contrast is suggestive.

This institutional backing of multilingualism aligns with recent calls in the literature (Bunnell, 2021; Poole, 2021) for more inclusive, translational identities. It suggests that the "E.T. feeling," once a source of marginalization, is becoming a recognized professional asset in the evolving landscape of international education. Taken together, these findings complicate the portrait of international schools as monolingual, expatriate-dominated spaces that dominates much of the existing literature. The teachers in this study are neither the globe-trotting nomads of Bunnell's (2016) typology nor the culturally displaced professionals of Savva's (2015) analysis. They occupy a third position, rooted, linguistically hybrid, and increasingly recognised as such, that the field has not yet fully theorised.

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore that professional identity construction for local teachers in international schools is a non-linear, deeply affective process. It moves from an initial phase of strenuous alignment characterized by administrative burden and linguistic guilt toward a state of professional agency, where expert teachers like Izabela and Lana redefine their in-betweenness as a unique pedagogical asset. While previous literature often depicted international schools as monolingual English-only bubbles, the narratives in this study reveal an emerging "glorification of multilingualism." This shift legitimizes the local teachers' translational work and alleviates the identity friction experienced by novices. However, as the stories of Brigita and Gloria demonstrate, the pressure of administrative documentation and the lingering "native-speaker" benchmark still pose significant challenges to a stable professional self.

Despite the depth of the qualitative narratives shared in this study, certain boundaries must be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted within a single institutional context in Croatia, which necessarily reflects a specific organizational culture that may not be present in other international settings. Furthermore, the participant group consisted exclusively of female teachers, leaving the gendered dimension of international teacher identity as a fertile ground for future inquiry. A further limitation concerns the researcher's positionality. Having worked at the same institution approximately fifteen years prior to this study, I entered the field neither as a complete outsider nor as a current insider, a

position Wenger (1998) describes as peripheral membership. While this temporal distance provided a degree of analytical separation, it also introduced the risk of anchoring interpretations to an institutional reality that may have substantially changed. The school's recent shift toward multilingual inclusion, for instance, postdates my own experience there entirely, and I was dependent on participants' accounts rather than direct observation to understand its scope and texture. Future research might address this through extended ethnographic engagement, allowing the researcher to observe institutional discourse as it unfolds rather than retrospectively through interview narrative. Finally, the single-interview design, while appropriate for an exploratory study of this scope, necessarily captures identity at one point in time. Teacher identity is not static; it shifts in response to institutional changes, classroom experiences, and broader life events. The narratives collected here represent a snapshot rather than a trajectory. Longitudinal follow-up interviews would allow future research to track whether the professional confidence observed in expert teachers like Izabela and Lana was sustained, deepened, or disrupted by subsequent institutional changes, including the very shift toward multilingual inclusion they described.

The insights gained from this study raises some practical implications for school leadership and the broader international education community. To support the sustainability of the profession, schools should move beyond purely technical training and formalize mentorship programs that provide socio-emotional support for novices to the international school setting, helping them mitigate the guilt that may be associated with linguistic "slipping." Furthermore, institutions should actively leverage the local professional capital, recognizing that local teachers, as late successive bilinguals, possess a unique empathic expertise that is vital for supporting students in their own linguistic and cultural transitions. This requires a fundamental redefinition of inclusion, where leadership fosters a culture that celebrates the "E.T. feeling," the sense of being a linguistic and professional hybrid as an asset rather than a shortcoming.

Teaching in a foreign language, in your own country, is a specific kind of identity tension, one that these teachers have learned to use to bridge the gap between national roots and global aspirations. Schools that actively support this in-betweenness are likely to retain local teachers longer and to foster a more authentic and inclusive understanding of what multilingualism looks in practice. As international schools expand into new national contexts, the "E.T. feeling" described here is likely to become more common, not less. How schools respond to it will shape the degree to which local teachers are recognised and valued as central contributors to the project of genuinely international education.

References

- Bailey, L., & Cooker, L. (2019). Exploring teacher identity in international school: Key concepts for research. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 18(2), 125–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240919865035>

- Block, D. (2007). *Second language identities*. Continuum.
- Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7(4-5), 585–614. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605054407>
- Bunnell, T. (2016). Teachers in international schools: A global educational 'precariat'? *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 14(4), 543–559. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2015.1068163>
- Bunnell, T. (2021). The role of the International Baccalaureate in the 'globalisation' of schools: A critical perspective. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 19(5), 612–624. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2020.1846955>
- Duff, P. A., & Uchida, Y. (1997). The negotiation of teacher's sociocultural identities and practices in postsecondary EFL classrooms. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(3), 451–486. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587834>
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.
- Flores, N., & Baetens Beardsmore, H. (2015). Programs and structures in bilingual and multilingual education. In W. Wright, S. Boun, & O. García (Eds.), *The handbook of bilingual and multilingual education* (pp. 205–222). Wiley.
- Hayden, M., & Thompson, J. (2013). International schools: Antecedents, current issues and metaphors for the future. In R. Pearce (Ed.), *International education and schools: Moving beyond the first 40 years* (pp. 3–23). Bloomsbury.
- ISC Research. (2024). *What data tells us about the international schools market*. <https://iscresearch.com/reports/data-white-paper-2024/>
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. Jossey-Bass.
- Poole, A. (2021). Beyond the tyranny of the typology: Moving from labelling to negotiating international school teachers' identities. *Educational Review*, 73(2), 1157–1171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.1943384>
- Savva, M. (2015). Characteristics of the international educator and the strategic role of critical incidents. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 14(1), 16-28.

- Trent, J. (2015). Towards a multifaceted, multidimensional framework for understanding teacher identity. In Y. L. Cheung, S. B. Said, & K. Park (Eds.), *Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research* (pp. 44–58). Routledge.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (2007). Complexities of identity formation: A narrative inquiry of an EFL teacher. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(4), 657–680. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00098.x>
- Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 4(1), 21–44. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327701jlie0401_2
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of practice and social learning systems: The career of a concept. In C. Blackmore (Ed.), *Social learning systems and communities of practice* (pp. 179–198). Springer.

AI Use Statement

The author utilized Claude by Anthropic for language editing and proofreading purposes to enhance the readability of the manuscript. The final output was critically reviewed and approved by the author, who maintains full accountability for the integrity and accuracy of the work.

Author Contact

Rea Lujic Pikutić, rlujic@unizd.hr, is a researcher at the University of Zadar, Croatia, whose work focuses on multilingualism and language education.