

## Glocal Network Shifts: Exploring Language Policies and Practices in International Schools

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### Abstract

In this article, we explore glocality within a transnational network of independent schools to understand the interdependence of the global and the local in language policies and practices. Using glocality as a lens, we draw on narrative school profiles written by educators at member schools within the WIDA International School Consortium, a network of 500 K-12 international schools, to examine how global practices are localized within different school contexts. We explore how key aspects of glocality, such as the blurring of boundaries across languages and shifting dynamics of power, become visible as international schools function as hybrid and transnational spaces in which diverse languages and identities intersect. We utilize our role as insider researchers to describe two new directions within our research context. First, we identify a shift from a global network initiated through US-based school-university partnerships towards an increasingly reciprocal exchange among international member schools, with reflexive sharing of ideas and practices between educators and stakeholders across geographic contexts. Second, we identify the increasing presence of a new type of international schools, **described in this paper as “glocal” schools, which reflect the deterritorialization of language and an intentional hybridity.** The emergence of glocal schools as well as the noted shifts in language and power, illustrate the transcendence of borders and identities closely tied to the concept of glocality. In order to understand the trends observed in this research context, we analyzed 34 narrative school profiles written by member schools and describe connections between macro network-level shifts and micro school-level shifts. Through our analysis, we found individual member schools adapted tools and resources to serve local needs, contextualizing them within a particular program context. As a result, educators shifted how they viewed multilingual learners and multilingualism with respect to English as a medium of instruction. This initial study provides important insights into how glocality as a construct helps explain significant changes occurring within the field of international education.

### Keywords

international schools, glocalization, community of practice, language ideologies, language policies, language practices

## Introduction

In this article, we draw on the conceptual lens of glocality to explore the interdependence of the global and the local within a transnational network of schools. Traditionally, private, independent English-medium international schools have reflected a post-colonial perspective and have privileged a particular type of monolingual cosmopolitanism. The historical legacy of English both as a tool for colonization and for hegemonic globalization requires a critical inquiry into how multilingualism is positioned in international schools.

The process of glocalization, a dynamic and reciprocal synthesis of the local and the global, provides a valuable tool for understanding change in transnational educational contexts. By providing a conceptual lens that blends perspectival shifts with a reflexive evolution of practice, glocalization can illuminate the intersection of the unique and the universal, and the blurring of boundaries between global teaching and local learning in **today's international schools. The** interdependent nature of language, culture and identity – for students, teachers, and schools – provides a rich focus for this inquiry framed by the lens of glocalization. A new glocal lens on education affords a valuable opportunity for reciprocal synthesis. While helping to redefine the transnational identity of a school, a glocal approach also redefines how international schools situate themselves within their **immediate context: “this model allows the** students to develop experience and perspective on issues facing their local communities and to develop expertise in understanding local **manifestations of global issues” (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018, p. 63-64).** International schools, both as individual contexts for inquiry and as a collective of transnational learning ecologies,

represent an opportunity for further study, yet scarce research to date has explored the relationship between glocality and language within the context of international schools and networks.

Glocality provides a useful heuristic for understanding 21<sup>st</sup> century schools, as noted by Mizrahi-Shtelman and Drori (2016):

**“Glocalisation, which not long ago stood as a** brave challenge to the dichotomous interpretation of globalisation as convergence or divergence and of globality as resulting in homogeneity or heterogeneity, is now understood as a commonsensical, rather than an unusual, description of **global–local interaction”** (p. 309). On one hand, *globalization* has become associated with a range of political, ideological and economic critiques, and has been particularly identified as a homogenizing, hegemonic and colonial project; on the other hand, *glocalization* might offer a more reciprocal, practical and descriptive lens. Using this lens of glocalization to investigate a network of international schools helps to illustrate how the global and the local integrate. At the micro level, we considered the positioning of multilingualism within the context of an individual school; and at the macro level, we investigated interaction across a transnational educational consortium.

Our context for research is the WIDA International School Consortium, a voluntary global network of affiliation managed by WIDA, a project in the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Madison-Wisconsin. Since the creation of the WIDA International School Consortium in 2013, schools in over 100 countries have joined. Membership in this global network provides access to WIDA English language proficiency assessments and WIDA K-12 English Language Development standards, rooted in an asset-

based approach to teaching multilingual learners (WIDA, 2020).

Through an analysis of 34 narrative school profiles written by WIDA International School Consortium member schools, we demonstrate how in some cases cultural and linguistic diversity were recognized as assets, reflecting a more glocal view of transnationalism and multilingualism. At the network level we describe a movement toward blurred boundaries, away from a clear divide between **the “global” and the “local” to shared multi-directional learning**. At the school level, educators shifted how they viewed multilingual learners and multilingualism with respect to English as a medium of instruction. We connect these macro network-level shifts to micro school-level shifts. Through our analysis, we found individual member schools adapted tools and resources to serve local needs, contextualizing them within a particular program context.

This initial study provides important insights into how glocality as a construct helps explain significant changes occurring within the field of international education. We also highlight the growing presence within the WIDA network of an emergent type of international school which can be considered glocal, based on an intentional fusion of languages and identities. These emerging glocal schools reflect the contextualization of global assessment tools, as well as a hybrid identity which integrates multilingualism as a resource rather than a problem.

### Literature Review

In this literature review, we provide an overview of key concepts which inform our analysis of language policies and practices within international schools and across a global network. First, we define glocality and consider how this concept provides insights into changing

definitions of international schools. Then, we focus on the intersection of glocality and shifting understandings of language, language users and language practices, in particular within the context of international schools.

### *Glocality*

Glocalization, also understood as thinking globally while living locally, is often described by first interrogating and then synthesizing dualities: global vs. local, homogenous vs. heterogeneous, universal vs. particular. And in the process of synthesizing, glocalization problematizes these less as dichotomies and more as continua. Robertson (1995) avers that:

The leading argument in this discussion is thus centered on the claim that the debate about global homogenization versus heterogenization should be transcended. It is not a question of *either* homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth-century world. (p. 4)

Glocalization describes how ideas, languages or practices circulate or diffuse from one place to another, becoming adapted and situated to their new local context (Mizrahi-Shtelman & Drori, 2016; Robertson, 2014; Roudometof, 2014). The process of glocalization has economic roots, and Robertson (1995) **describes advertising global ‘micro-marketing’ campaigns** that were contextualized to local and particular markets. In terms of management and organizations, glocalization is defined by

translation, diffusion, and adaptation (Roudometof, 2015). With greater mobility of products, ideas, people and culture, this flow has become reciprocal, dynamic and rhizomatic. Similarly, Welsch (1999) identified **“transculturality” as a fluid intermingling of cultural repertoires or “the entanglement with new realities and the validation of new, hybridized worldviews” (p. 101).** Welsch suggested that the notion of transculturality challenges not only the monolithic nature of culture but also the power ascribed within a cultural universe where some cultures orbit others. Glocalization distributes not only ideas and products but also power relations, through reciprocity and interdependence.

While the application of glocality is relatively new in educational literature, the notions of third space and hybridity have been widely discussed both in terms of mobility and language use (Bhatt, 2008; Kramsch, 2009; Rios & Adiv, 2010). Lam and Warriner (2012) **describe a ‘transnational habitus’ which is shaped or developed through people’s experiences and social positioning in various institutional structures and fields of activity within and across nations, which may lead to dualistic dispositions or comparative perspectives. Additionally, the concept of integrating the universal with the unique, or the global with the local, has been explored critically and reflexively in post-colonial literature, with important concerns expressed by Said (1978): “My two fears are distortion and inaccuracy, or rather the kind of inaccuracy produced by too dogmatic a generality and too positivistic a localized focus” (p. 8). An important feature of glocality is the blurring of boundaries in a kind of ‘hybridity continuum’ as a reinterpretation of the global/local dichotomy:**

Even as the traditions become appropriated by global culture

industries or move back and forth with transnational migrants, they are deterritorialized from their localities of origin and reterritorialized - that is, relocalized, mixed and brought into juxtaposition with modern and postmodern. (Levitt & Jaworsky 2007, p. 140)

Increased hybridity and mobility have contributed to what Vervotec (2007) has **described as “super-diversity” creating entirely new spaces for linguistic and cultural (re)integration.** Roudometof (2015) explains these glocalized communities within communities are no longer required to, **“acculturate into the host culture and empowered by new media of instant communication, the post-Second World War generations of ‘transmigrants’ have the opportunity to inhabit both the world of the home country and that of the host country” (p. 26).** At the same time, this global flow and resultant hybridity also reflect differences across individuals and communities with respect to language proficiency, socio-economic status or other systemic barriers.

Critiques of glocalization have centered on the opportunity gap due to socio-economic status or geographical (mis)fortune. The ability to choose a particular form of integration, assimilation or acculturation may be limited or enhanced by language, race or class. Bauman (1998) observes that some have the opportunity to choose, or not, to engage with the global flow of ideas, while an increasing majority of others do not, asserting that:

Glocalization, to sum up, polarizes mobility – that ability to use time to annul the limitation of space. That ability – or disability – divides the

world into the globalized and **the localized. 'Globalization' and 'localization' may be inseparable** sides of the same coin, but the two parts of the world population seem to be living on different sides, facing one side only, much like the people of the Earth see and scan only one hemisphere of the moon. Some inhabit the globe; others are chained in place. (p. 45)

Although it involves a reciprocal flow, glocalization is not an inherently equalizing process, and it can reify existing social or economic disparities. In applying the lens of glocalization to education, the global privatization and commercialization of schools cannot be ignored. This particular inquiry focuses on a subset of international schools in order to explore the concept of glocality and its application to language in the context of education; however, it is worthwhile to ask what factors might limit participation or access, who is being served by glocal schools, and to what extent private international schools perpetuate rather than disrupt global or local patterns of privilege.

### *The Evolution of International Schools*

A result of increasing global mobility and post-colonial globalization in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, private international schools were established to educate students of globally mobile families whose parents were employed by multinational companies, universities or diplomatic missions. Currently, there are over twelve thousand English-medium and bilingual international schools worldwide (International School Consultancy, 2020). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, international school demographics have shifted:

"While international schools catered mainly to the children of expatriates, who made up 80 percent of the study body more than thirty years ago, rather than to local children, the trend has been reversed in recent years with local students making up 80 percent of the student **demography**" (Tanu, 2018, p. 3). While today's international schools are similar in many ways to private, independent schools that exist within the framework of many national systems, a broad, conceptual definition of international schools proposed by Hayden and Thompson (2008) reflects how international schools differ from national schools, based on four characteristics: a) curriculum that differs from that of host country; b) teachers and administrators who tend to be non-citizens of the host country; c) unique structures of governance or ownership which are distinct from national schools; and d) students who are frequently not nationals of the host country.

Each international school represents a unique context, yet all international schools have typically shared a common feature: a multifaceted and diffused cultural identity, somewhat precariously suspended within a host culture. Caffyn (2011) observed:

International schools and their communities can become isolated from their immediate locality and from their homelands. This can, in turn, intensify relationships due to limited social possibilities and both psychological and linguistic **isolation...Fragmentation takes** place both inside and outside an international school, where diverse individuals with different backgrounds, nationalities, experiences and

profiles are forced together.  
(p.74)

Increasingly, educators and scholars recognize that traditional definitions of international schools no longer apply. While on one hand international school curricula and pedagogy might still reflect a post-colonial focus on serving a globally mobile, elite and professional class of expatriates, on the other hand expanded mobility and a growing middle class within many national contexts have produced the need for innovative alternatives to state education systems resulting in a new typology of international schools. Hallgarten et al. (2016) describe the emerging diversity among **international schools, stating: “some schools** (such as those backed by their local embassy) are focused on a specific migrant nationality, others multinational (with more than 50 nationalities, commonly) and others mixed, with national and **international students side by side” (p.8). In the** section below, this new type of glocal school is explored in more detail.

### *Glocal Schools*

Worldwide, international schools have responded to the need for an alternative to national systems of education as well as a more localized version of the traditional expatriate schools. Tanu (2018) further notes that the definitions of national and international education are merging, with both the growing popularity of international schools, as well as the internationalization of national schools. Many schools that have joined the WIDA International School Consortium in the past five years fit this description. These glocal schools reflect, in many cases, several of the characteristics of international schools discussed above: a global curriculum, a diverse faculty and unique school structures; however, glocal schools cater almost

exclusively to local host-country families and often utilize multiple languages for instruction (Nordmeyer & Wilson, 2020). While still serving a relatively elite population, the glocalization of international schools reflects an emergent cultural and linguistic hybridity.

Glocal schools provide an English-medium or bilingual education using an international curriculum for a majority population of local students and as Spiro and Crisfield (2018) observe, glocalization results in: **“programmes that are carefully developed to fit** with the local linguistic and sociopolitical landscape, and to promote positive models of bilingualism, stand to benefit the target populations immensely and are well worth the **time and effort in planning and delivery” (p. 26).** Mizrahi-Shtelman and Drori (2016) recognize:

In spite of the clear distinction between global and local, school principals note no contradiction between global and local. In this way, they define glocality in education by seeing the global and the local as distinct yet married into what are described as the core principles of education. (p. 320)

The International School Consultancy, a global database of schools, lists over three **thousand “local IB” (International Baccalaureate)** schools out of its total of fifteen **thousand “international” schools worldwide** (International School Consultancy, 2020). By adopting the IB curriculum, schools are supported in maintaining and leveraging home languages in the process of learning.

The emerging category of glocal schools represent a hybrid identity along a continuum of national and international schools, providing a way to conceptualize the process of glocalization in education as language becomes deterritorialized: both ideas and people become

increasingly mobile. This glocal identity is reflected in how these schools describe themselves and how they position their programs to function in this unique liminal space. For example, Aga Khan Academies describe their glocal mission:

As the Academies open, one-by-one, they will feature merit-based entry, residential campuses, and dual-language instruction. This language policy exemplifies our desire to square the particular with the global. English will enable graduates to participate fully on an international stage, while mother-tongue instruction will allow students to access the wisdom of their own cultures. (Aga Khan Development Network, 2004)

Glocal schools provide an opportunity for both transnational globally-mobile students and internationally-minded local students to bridge languages and cultures, developing a unique worldview in the process. However, glocal schools as sites of transnational contact must also problematize global power relations and systemic inequity through what Hawkins (2018) has proposed as **“critical cosmopolitanism”**. **Glocal schools can “integrate a focus on creating and sustaining just, equitable, and affirming relations with global (and local) others in global engagements and interactions through attending to the workings of status, privilege, and power between people and groups of people”** (Hawkins, p.66). In the reciprocal flow

of ideas between local and global, there is potential for the hybrid identity of both schools and individuals, as well as the possibility for critical inquiry into how these hybrid identities operate in the world.

### *Glocalizing Language*

In terms of language, the rapid increase in migration, global transportation and digital communication have accelerated the departure from an 18<sup>th</sup> century Herderian view of nationalism: the unity of nation, language and place. While multilingualism has been an accepted reality in many global contexts, within the field of education, and particularly language education, vestiges of traditional perceptions have persisted; for example, some may believe that the French is only spoken by French people within France. Yet, Blackledge and Creese (2013) claim that language use in our current society can no longer be explained through conceptualizing languages as separate and bound. Instead, heightened global migration and digital technology requires a new view of **language, in which individuals’ languages are** not positioned as separate entities, but as maintaining a plurilingual repertoire that users can draw on differentially to communicate (Piccardo, 2013). May (2014) argues languages are increasingly seen as dynamic and hybrid, as crossing artificially constructed boundaries and borders. This ideological shift has been noted by Flores and Schissel (2014), who point to a significant interest in heteroglossic ideologies, evidenced in the growing use of terms such as: translanguaging (García, 2009), flexible bilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), polylingualism (Jørgensen et al., 2011), and translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013). While each term reflects different epistemological perspectives, Flores and Schissel posit that all of them indicate a move away from seeing

languages as bounded and static objects towards **emphasizing “linguaging as a fluid, complex, and dynamic process” (p. 461)**. As noted by the Douglas Fir Group:

What globalization has accomplished is a heightened awareness of the reality of multilingualism in Western societies, which had accepted the monolingualism of the nation-state as the **‘real norm.’** Indeed, we see an interesting parallel between the mobility of people and transnationalism and the multidirectional, rhizomatic information flows enabled by technology and transdisciplinarity. (2016, p. 23)

Through the lens of glocality, we **recognize the “local in the global”, as noted by Canagarajah (2005)**, as we move to a view of languages and cultures as hybrid, diffuse and deterritorialized.

While in the past, languages have been viewed as distinct entities to be kept separate, even in the mind of a multilingual, there is an increasing recognition of the fluidity of languages and languaging practices. According to Phipps (2019): “The languaged realities of the world when languages no longer remain rooted to specific territory but have broken loose and are establishing themselves in the life of new contexts and communities are an opportunity for decolonising work” (p. 91). Glocality helps to frame this deterritorialization, not only in terms of people and places, but also in the languages and languaging practices that were in the past artificially tied to particular communities or territories.

For the past fifty years, English as global *lingua franca* has been the medium of instruction in most international schools (Baker, 2009). In the past decade scholars have advocated for a shift toward a more dynamic and fluid view of language policy and practices (Menken & Garcia, 2010), yet traditional ideas of languages as separate, static and hierarchical persist. While some international schools may include various instructional languages, often the emphasis is on developing proficiency in particular high-status or power languages and not necessarily on valuing linguistic diversity or **students’ languaging practices** (de Mejía, 2006). Instead of promoting diversity, international **bilingual schools “continue to propagate the idea that English is best” (Ortega, 2020 p. 41)**. The spread of international schools and of English **instruction has been “detrimental to the development and/or use of local languages in education in many regions. English becomes the priority status language and the delivery of international curricula in English only reinforces this paradigm” (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018, p. 57)**. International school students, staff and families are often multilingual, however the language **ideologies reflected in many schools’** language policies and program models are often reflect monolingual ideologies and practices.

Three language orientations originally posed by Ruiz (1984) and employed by as a language planning paradigm by Hult and Hornberger (2016) help to illustrate the spectrum of how multilingualism can be viewed in international schools:

(1) **as “a problem” and thus** must be eliminated through English immersion and, ultimately, subtractive bilingualism with English replacing home languages;

(2) **as “a right” for which** students can be given special, but



separate, classes to acquire English through additive forms of bilingualism which maintain home languages but still privilege English;

(3) **as “a resource” where** the school recognizes multilingualism as the goal for all students, and staff. Based on this typology, some international schools demonstrate an **increasing recognition of students’ languages as a resource, shifting away from program models and language policies that exclude students’ home languages and the host country’s local languages.**

The past ten years have represented both challenges and opportunities for international schools. Some schools in international contexts have undergone a significant shift from a monoglossic and hegemonic view of language teaching and learning to engaging in heteroglossic approaches (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018). Increasing global mobility and the emerging glocalization of international schools provide an opportunity to transform policy, pedagogy and language practices: **“the everyday corresponds to a space which is strategically shaped by a meaningful action-context nexus where social practices, identities and ideologies can be (re)negotiated and (re)constructed, as well as opposed and subverted” (Mazzafarro, 2018, p.1).** However, within many international schools, tension exists in policies and practices which oppress **students’** linguistic repertoires versus a view of language which embraces the diversity of multilingual languaging practices. Significant barriers persist, not the least

of which is an ideological one, **represented by a “strong pull towards language separation in the classroom and the isolation of languages into separate spheres for bilingual learners”** (Spiro & Crisfield, p. 25). While international schools often position themselves as leaders in terms of diversity, this seems incongruent with the ongoing presence of language ideologies and practices which view languages as separate, static and hierarchical.

### Research Context

In order to provide context for this study and how we approached it, in the following section, we first provide background information on the global school network which is the focus of this study. Then, we discuss our own roles within the network to clarify our positionality as insider researchers. Finally, we describe how we have noted a key movement toward a more reciprocal and glocalized network, in particular during the ongoing global health pandemic.

#### *WIDA International School Consortium*

The WIDA International School Consortium is a voluntary global network of affiliation coordinated by WIDA, a project of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Madison-Wisconsin. Since the creation of the WIDA International School Consortium in 2013, schools in over 100 countries have joined. Membership in this global network provides access to WIDA English language proficiency assessments and WIDA K-12 English Language Development standards, rooted in an asset-based approach to teaching multilingual learners (WIDA, 2020). The rapid growth of the WIDA International School Consortium, with now over 500 member

schools, indicates a desire by schools to **“transform the conversation about what multilingual students can do” (WIDA, 2020) and** to move away from seeing multilingual students as deficient and in need of additional English language support.

Originally, WIDA was founded in response to a US federal policy change requiring all states to assess English proficiency. The three original states of Wisconsin, Delaware and Arkansas formed the Consortium, providing the original name of WIDA; the US WIDA Consortium now includes forty-one states and territories. As WIDA began to serve teachers in a variety of contexts, the WIDA International School Consortium was created in response to requests from international schools wanting to use WIDA standards and assessments to serve multilingual learners. This global WIDA member network supports schools in building capacity to serve multilingual learners, recognizing that while it is necessary to support educators in *testing* students, it is as important, if not more important, to provide support for *teaching* students. The WIDA network helps member schools to use English proficiency data and instructional resources to support multilingual learners through research, publications and professional development. The network also provides opportunities for international educators to connect to each other, facilitating collaboration across schools within the global network.

### *Insider Research Positionality*

As co-authors, we desire transparency about our own positionality as insider researchers (Costley, Elliott, & Gibbs, 2010). Jon is currently the International Program Director at WIDA and Esther is a Project Assistant with the WIDA International Program. Prior to working at WIDA, we both were teachers and

teacher leaders in different international schools. In our current roles, we are interested in questions about global learning networks and supporting multilingual learners, their teachers and their schools. We have observed in the larger discourse with colleagues, scholars and educators from international schools, significant shifts happening in many international schools away from traditional understandings and demographics of expatriate families to glocal schools, as described above. In managing a network serving member schools, we are motivated to understand these changes.

Based on our own professional and academic backgrounds, as well as our desire to further explore a shift toward a glocal understanding of international schools, we engaged in this research project. According to Costley et al. (2010), insider researchers bring several key advantages, particularly when conducting research within their own work context, noting:

As an insider, you are in a unique position to study a particular issue in depth and with special knowledge about that issue. Not only do you have your own insider knowledge, but you have easy access to people and information that can further enhance that knowledge. (pg. 3)

While our work as insider researchers provides both insight and access, it also brings a level of complexity in navigating potential bias and ethical considerations. Costley et al. (2010) **highlight in particular a need to be aware of “the issue of the subjective nature of researching your own practice, where there may be a lack of impartiality, a vested interest in certain results being achieved and problems concerning a fresh and objective view of data” (pg. 6).** We acknowledge these potential issues inherent to

insider research and took various steps to address these issues, which we discuss in the methodology section.

### *Glocalization of the WIDA Network*

As with many university-school partnerships, initially WIDA resources moved primarily from the US Consortium to the International Consortium and then to the local school context in a one-way flow of dissemination and implementation, however, this relationship has been shifting. There is a growing movement toward a more reciprocal flow of ideas between both the international network and local schools worldwide and between educators in the international program of WIDA and schools in the original US consortium. In terms of management and organizations, glocalization is defined by translation, diffusion, and adaptation (Roudometof, 2015). With an increased flexibility and mobility of resources, ideas and educators, this flow across the WIDA global network has become reciprocal and dynamic.

Furthermore, the 2020 global pandemic has catalyzed an evolution of the WIDA network to leverage this reciprocal relationship. For example, many international schools in the WIDA International School Consortium transitioned to online teaching before schools in North America. These international schools shared their expertise with WIDA, and in turn with educators in the US. Resources designed by the WIDA international program and informed by the experiences of global members of the International School Consortium were accessed on the WIDA website more frequently by teachers based in the US, even though they were written with an international audience in mind.

Leveraging the WIDA global network as a community of practice exemplifies this new glocal decentralization of power. Lave and Wagner (1991) describe communities of practice

as networks where learning can be shaped by mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared resources. Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) outline key components of communities of practice: domain, community and practice. The *domain* is a specific area of expertise, discipline or sub-discipline which provides common ground and a common identity. A *community* brings together a group by building relationships and creating a sense of belonging based on a common domain but with individual perspectives. The *practice* shared by the group may include common frameworks, tools, information and stories, providing a baseline of common knowledge and experiences.

The WIDA International School Consortium has provided an opportunity for local schools around the world to connect with, share and learn from each other as a community of practice. Wenger et al. (2002) observe that when a distributed community of practice extends beyond one organization or geographical location, challenges often include the potential barriers of physical distance, size, intellectual property and cultural differences. Two design models have been suggested for this type of extended and distributed group: hub-and-spoke or topical cells (Wenger et al.). In either design, a key principle is to allow for both local variations and global connections.

In response to the COVID19 global pandemic in 2020, WIDA brought together global educators using both designs. First, an open-source video sharing community was organized around topical areas. Second, in a hub-and-spoke design, members of the WIDA global network were invited to join for a series of video calls to collectively inquiry into common challenges and co-develop a set of shared strategies. The community was drawn from authors of WIDA newsletter articles, co-presenters from conferences, and other

influencers and activists within the WIDA International School Consortium. The domain for this community of practice has centered on the intersection of three subdomains: K12 teaching, education of multilingual learners, and teaching online. This emerging community of practice has invited educators to collectively inquire about teaching multilingual learners in online/hybrid schools.

These trends point to a glocalization and decentralization of the traditional university dissemination model in which ideas flow outward, in this case from a US-based national consortium to the transnational network of international schools. Instead, we have observed a shift towards reciprocal global learning among local educators and schools. As both a sharing network and community of practice, the WIDA International School Consortium serves member schools. As a research center, WIDA continues to develop assessment instruments, instructional resources and professional learning tools that are shared with member schools. In addition, individual educators continue to exchange ideas with the entire global WIDA network. Educators share problems of practice, engage with each other through social media, present together at conferences and co-author articles based on their shared experience. As noted by Roy-Campbell (2015), comparing the experience of teaching English to multilingual students in public secondary schools in the US and Kenya, while the WIDA framework may have originally be designed for the US context, there are opportunities for collaborative work across countries to build a better understanding of how to support multilingual students, and in particular, the teaching of English which continues to be prioritized by countries around the world. Roy-Campbell emphasizes the opportunity and importance of educational resources, like those within the WIDA network,

to support reciprocal learning across global contexts while emphasizing the importance of adapting to the needs of each local context. Seen through the lens of glocality, the WIDA global network demonstrates how ideas are constantly developing, taken up, shifting and adapted across global and local spaces.

### Data and Analysis

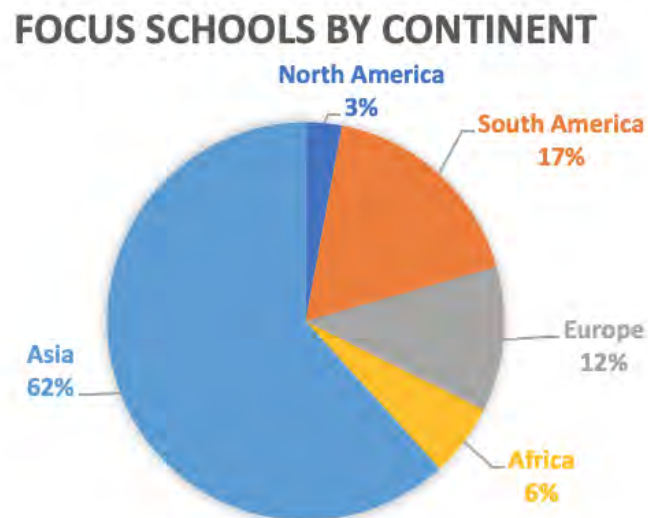
The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between a voluntary transnational network of schools and K-12 language policies and practices within each school context, using the lens of glocality. This study draws on school-based narrative profiles written by educators at member schools to address the following research question: *How does participation in a global network impact language policies and practices with a local school context?* In this section, we describe the process by which the school profiles were written and submitted, as well as some basic demographic information regarding the member schools represented in the profiles. Finally, we describe the analytical process we engaged in to answer our research question.

The primary data source for this project was a set of 34 narrative member school profiles, published between 2015-2019. Educators at various member schools submitted a written profile for their school. In some cases, the educators were asked by team members within the WIDA International Program to submit a profile, based on their involvement in professional development opportunities at WIDA. In other cases, schools were nominated by other member schools or self-nominated through the monthly newsletter. The authors were asked to respond to the following prompts: Why did you join WIDA? How has working with WIDA impacted teaching and learning at your school? Profiles were proofread by a WIDA staff

member, but the content was not altered. All school profiles were originally published through the monthly WIDA International newsletter which now has approximately 40,000 readers. The profiles remain publicly available through the WIDA website.

The 34 published school profiles represent the wide geographic range of the 500 members schools currently part of the WIDA International School Consortium. As illustrated in Figure 1, most focus school profiles are from schools in Asia, which proportionately represent the higher numbers of schools in the network.

Figure 1



All profiles published between 2015-2019 were included in the data set. It is important to note that schools either volunteered or were invited to write a profile for WIDA; therefore, the data may reflect some selection bias as the schools included in our data set are schools that are more likely to have a strong relationship or regular interaction with the network. In addition, the profiles were

written by educators at each school who were aware that their profile would be published in the WIDA International School Consortium newsletter, and they therefore may have emphasized the perceived positive impacts of this relationship. The purpose of this project is not an evaluative judgement of the relationship between the schools and the network, nor the efficacy of the network, but instead an exploration of how the educators described the impact of engagement with the network on language policies and practices at their school. Therefore, while keeping in mind these data may be skewed to emphasize more positive impacts, the data still serve the purpose of demonstrating

the possibility of impact on local school practices.

After gathering and conducting an initial reading of all profiles, we conducted an inductive thematic analysis using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software. We employed Saldaña's (2016)

recommendation to code in two major stages: first cycle and second cycle coding. In first cycle coding, we focused primarily on assigning codes to chunks of data. After coding four Focus School profiles, we began to organize the codes into categories and created a provisional code tree with descriptions for each code. We then moved into second cycle coding, applying the provisional codes to finish coding the rest of the data, adding and collapsing codes and readjusting categories as necessary. In the Findings section below, Table 1 demonstrates

how the codes were grouped into categories that informed the findings.

Throughout the analysis, we remained mindful of our roles as insider researchers and worked to leverage the advantages of being insiders, while mitigating the potential limitations. For example, as part of the coding process, we engaged in inter- and intra-rater checking and actively sought out outliers within our data set. We also included all profiles published within a given five-year time period, as opposed to selectively choosing certain profiles to analyze. Finally, Esther, the first author on this paper, was not involved in the inviting, selecting, editing or publishing of the profiles and therefore approached the analysis **from an arm's length. While all researchers must** continually reflect on their own positionality to determine how it impacts the research itself, as insider researchers we have more responsibility to be transparent about our position throughout the research process.

## Findings

Based on our inductive analysis, the school profiles illustrate how participating schools describe language ideologies, policies and practices within local school contexts. The profiles indicate how membership in the global network supports educators in taking up new ways of viewing multilingual learners and contextualizing new approaches to assessment and instructional in order to influence local policy and practices. In the following section, we will highlight three key shifts we noted in the data: 1) a **view of students' multilingual repertoires as assets**; 2) inclusive program models which support multilingual learners through intentional teacher collaboration; 3) a clearer understanding of assessment and **instructional tools to support students' learning**

about and through multiple languages. Each of these shifts reflects how schools not only adopted but adapted mindsets and tools and adapted them to their local context.

Table 1 (see end of article) provides an overview of the codes, which have been organized by finding. For each code, we have described the code inductively, based on the data. For each code, we have selected a representative quote to provide a further understanding of the meaning of the code.

### ***Finding #1: A view of students' multilingual repertoires as assets***

First, many narrative school profiles mentioned a shift in staff mindsets toward viewing multilingual students from an asset-based perspective, highlighting the value of a rich linguistic repertoire. One participant wrote, **"The data** provided by WIDA MODEL, and other WIDA resources, help us make decisions based not only on what our students need, but also highlights the assets students have and ways those can be leveraged towards continued **growth."** Another profile pointed to the WIDA's Can Do Descriptors, one of the most commonly used resources within the WIDA framework. The Can Do Descriptors represent what learners can do with language across different academic content areas. **The author wrote, "We started implementing WIDA's Can Do Descriptors a few** years ago to support our growth-mindset approach to supporting English language **learners."** Focusing on linguistic diversity of the local school community as an asset helps to support a more glocalized, heterogenous and hybrid school identity. In most cases, the authors focused on this mindset shift amongst staff, yet did not necessarily indicate a similar shift in how students saw themselves or how they were viewed by their peers; this shift toward an asset-based outlook might also have been occurring within the student population in

various schools, but it was not discussed in the profiles.

While many authors noted a shift toward an asset-based mindset, in line with **WIDA's Can Do Philosophy**, not all profiles reflected these ideas. Some participants noticed a shift toward more asset-based perspectives, while other schools the focus remained on **students' English language acquisition. While home languages were recognized as an asset, several schools focused on how students' English language development provided them with access to mainstream classrooms and the academic language required within those classrooms. In some cases, students were still described as lacking in their English proficiency or having "language needs" which limited their access to English content. Although these data indicate a variety of perspectives on English in the international school context, English remains a privileged, neo-colonial language of power, simultaneously a lingua franca, a medium of instruction and the target language.**

*Finding #2: Inclusive program models which support multilingual learners through intentional teacher collaboration*

The second key shift noted in the data refers to a move toward more inclusive program models which support multilingual learners through intentional teacher collaboration, reflecting common local changes across schools in the global WIDA network. Several authors highlighted this programmatic shift, indicating a movement in their school from relatively **exclusive "pull-out" models in which multilingual learners were taken out of their mainstream classes for English language support to more inclusive "push-in" models, where content and language teachers worked collaboratively to support multilingual learners within the mainstream classroom. Further,**

international educators noted how their engagement with WIDA resources influenced their collaborative practices as well. One teacher **wrote: "Our work with WIDA helped my co-teacher and I to develop shared expectations for our students. It also gave us insights about scaffolds we could use to support individual students and our class." By building on various WIDA resources available through the International School Consortium, schools incorporated these tools into their local programs, moving towards more collaborative practices in support of multilingual learners.**

*Finding #3: A clearer understanding of assessment and instructional tools to support students' learning about and through multiple languages*

Finally, through their engagement in the WIDA global network, teachers developed a clearer understanding of assessment and **instructional tools to support students' learning about and through multiple languages. Many authors indicated how the WIDA framework provided important insights into how students engaged with language, particularly in regard to academic language. One author wrote, "WIDA's comprehensive focus gives us insights about how students interact with language throughout the day in the four domains, and across disciplines."** In addition to a greater **understanding of how students' used language at school, authors noted significant changes in classroom instructional practices. For example, one school used their assessment data to "heterogeneously build class groups which neither exclude nor segregate our ELL populations across all divisions."** Others noted how their use of WIDA resources helped them in differentiating language goals for students in one or more languages as well as in developing individualized supports for these students. Most authors focused on the local programmatic or

instructional changes, and others described the specific impact on students, particularly regarding improving student engagement and learning.

### Discussion

Throughout this paper, we have engaged with glocality as a conceptual tool to understand the relationship between the WIDA International School Consortium and its member schools as well as language policies and practices within individual school contexts. Through an inductive analysis of the focus school profiles, a clear pattern emerged in which **authors describe how schools' engagement with the WIDA global network had influenced key shifts in language ideologies, policies and practices at their local school level.**

By drawing on professional literature we examined how glocality informs our understanding of language and international schools. In describing our research context, we explained how the WIDA network provides the macro context for our study. We demonstrated how various tenets of glocality were present within recent shifts within the WIDA network. To explore glocalization on the micro level, we examined individual school contexts. Analyzing narrative school profiles, we found three important shifts as educators within the global network increasingly viewed languages and languages users from a stance of hybridity and fusion. At this point, we will endeavor to synthesize the macro and micro level shifts to further understand how important aspects of glocality are reflected across both individual schools and the entire network.

First, we observed a macro-level shift across the network toward reciprocity. This provided space for member schools to incorporate a given framework of language standards and assessments while at the same

time adapting tools for their specific context in line with the shift in their own local language ideology. WIDA member schools demonstrated they were not blindly adopting WIDA tools, but were instead considering how instruction within their own local contexts could be informed by key principles undergirding the tools, such as an asset-based approach. We described how a system of assessments and instructional resources developed at a US university provided a transnational platform for dialogue and collaboration with educators across member schools. Importantly, we found that as schools contextualized WIDA resources, they were able to respond to issues in their local student and teacher population by connecting with schools around the world making similar programmatic and policy changes. We documented how glocalization helped to explain a shift within this particular educational network from a centralized model of university-based dissemination and implementation towards a more decentralized community of educators, developing glocal approaches that can inform teaching and learning across the network.

Second, at both the macro network-level and then micro school-level, **educators' understanding and integration of multilingualism was evolving.** Data suggested a shift toward understanding languages as fluid and move away from valorizing monolingualism **norms to viewing the complexity of individuals' linguistic and cultural repertoires as assets.** Schools reported an emphasis on inclusive program models which support multilingual learners through intentional teacher collaboration to integrate language and content learning and a clearer understanding of assessment and instructional tools to support **students' learning about and through multiple languages.** This reciprocal and rhizomatic view of language use on the local level, viewed through the lens of the WIDA global network,



helps to illustrate a global deterritorialization of language, and promotes the value of multilingual **students' use of rich linguistic repertoires in the service of learning.**

In sum, in this article we examine the interdependence of the global and the local within the context of international schools and across a transnational network of schools. Through an analysis of narrative school profiles, we explored how engagement with a global network influenced significant shifts at the local **level, as schools' policies and practices reflected** new understanding of language as fluid and multidimensional. The process of glocalization informed our developing understanding of a reciprocal movement within the transnational network toward an increasingly reflexive sharing of ideas and practices across geographic contexts. Finally, we reflected on and theorized about how the growth of glocal schools reflect the deterritorialization of language and an intentional hybridity of cultures.

As we look forward, we are cognizant of both the historical challenges of international schools, acknowledging the layers of privilege of **who gets to define themselves as "international"** and who does not. Transnational students and glocal schools provide the potential for innovation and intellectual exchange resulting from the fluid interplay of ideas, languages and cultures. However, this potential remains unrealized if language policies and programs privilege English over other languages or ignore historical legacy of English both as a tool for colonization and for post-colonial hegemonic globalization. This requires a critical inquiry into how multilingualism is positioned in international schools and an emphasis on the role of critical cosmopolitanism. We recognize opportunities for ongoing studies which provide a more in-depth look at many of the questions raised throughout this paper, such as a case study of one of the many new glocal schools, or a

study **focused on understanding students'** perspectives on the role of language within their classrooms. While important critiques of glocality as a conceptual idea have been raised, glocality also serves as a lens to understand the transformative power of the movement of ideas, languages and practices across diverse spaces.

**Table 1: Coding Chart**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Code Description</b>	<b>Quote from School Profile</b>
<i>Finding #1: A view of students' multilingual repertoires as assets</i>		
<b>Equity</b>	How schools viewed issues of equity, such as inclusive programs for multilingual students	“WIDA’s core philosophy of being committed to developing inclusive programs that build on the assets of all learners matches our school mission and ethos perfectly.”
<b>Language Ideology</b>	Explicit or implicit beliefs about language, language use and language users	“System-wide, the discourse about our students with language needs has shifted and continues to shift towards an asset-based conversation where all the domains of language acquisition are included.”
<b>Understanding of language</b>	Development or changes in teachers’ understanding of language, in particular the development of academic language	“I found the WIDA Can Do statements gave me a much better understanding of how language develops in those formative years.”
<b>Student Achievement</b>	Criteria to define student success, particularly in regard to language acquisition	“Our program is highly successful and 80% of our entry students with little to no English achieve monitor status within two years.”
<b>Supporting Students</b>	Descriptions of how schools are supporting multilingual students, focused on their language acquisition	“Besides using just the WIDA assessments and Can Do Descriptors for instructional planning, we are creating personalized goals for and with our students based on their current levels of development, and reporting on student progress toward reaching their individual language goals.”
<i>Finding #2: Inclusive program models which support multilingual learners through intentional teacher collaboration</i>		
<b>Collaboration</b>	How engagement with WIDA supported shift toward more robust teacher collaboration at the school	“This year, our team changed how we scheduled our push-in support. In our new model, half of our classroom teachers collaborate for a full learning cycle, pushing in everyday, with the other half collaborating in the following cycle through push-in. We also created and scheduled a co-planning block with each teacher before each cycle of push-ins begin. This co-planning time is important because WIDA helped us realize that one of the most important aspects of the co-teaching cycle is co-planning.”
<i>Finding #3: A clearer understanding of assessment and instructional tools to support students’ learning about and through multiple languages.</i>		

<b>Coherence</b>	WIDA framework as a tool to support schools in developing coherence through common language	“(We) joined WIDA’s International School Consortium in an effort to create aligned systems across all school sections and to provide common vocabulary for all teachers and administrators to use.”
<b>Influencing practice</b>	How WIDA framework influenced program models, policy decisions and or/ practice at the school	“The WIDA framework has also influenced the need and allocation for staffing in the elementary school and we are excited to be adding another ELL specialist to our department next school year to support this approach.”
<b>Future Orientation</b>	Specific plan or ongoing consideration for next steps for implementation at the school level	“Our next steps are to evaluate our program on the WIDA action steps to best determine our program goals and objectives for the upcoming years.”
<b>WIDA Resources</b>	Use of WIDA resources, including assessments	“An integral part of that support are the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards and the WIDA MODEL Assessment. The decision to start using this amazing tool and framework came about from the need to develop a program that would support both EAL students and teachers working with them in an our ever changing International context.”
<b>WIDA Professional Development</b>	Professional development offered by WIDA or educators offering professional development to their colleagues, drawing on the WIDA framework	“(We) offered a professional development session to all teaching staff that highlighted WIDA’s philosophical and theoretical approach, the WIDA framework including the guiding principles and essential actions, and how to use the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition to help with lesson planning.”

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