



mlrc

Multilingual Learning
Research Center

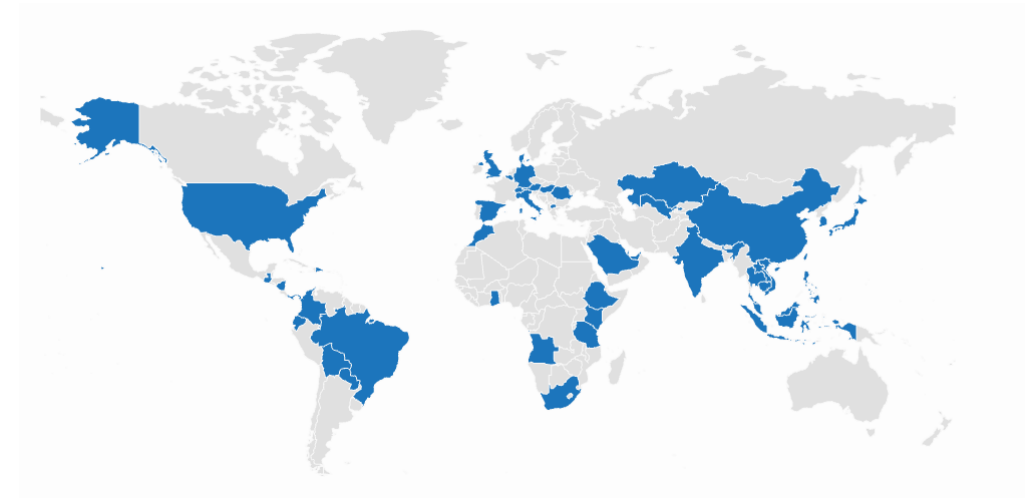


*Action Research
Webinar
October 15, 2026*

Dr. Jon Nordmeyer

The MLRC is a research-practice partnership that reimagines how we partner with leading scholars and schools around the world.

We focus on **equity, innovation** and **collaborative research** to improve outcomes for **multilingual learners**.



***150+ international
schools
in 60+ countries***

Today's Session

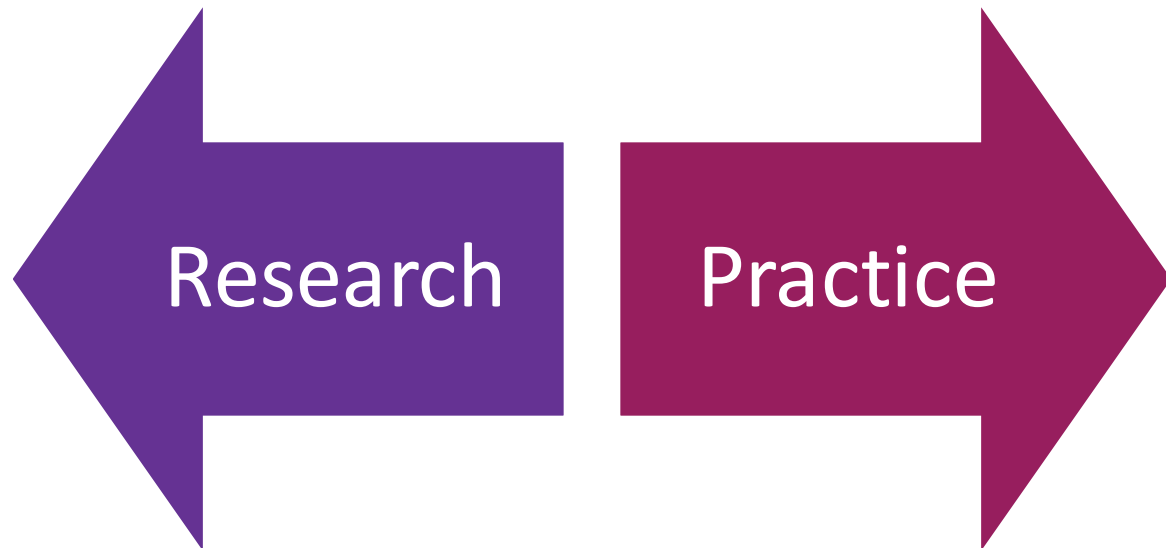
- **Research in today's international schools**
- **Action research: What, Why & How**
- **Action Research case studies**
- **Working with the MLRC**
- **Thinking about Next Steps**



Share in the chat



Why (not) Research?

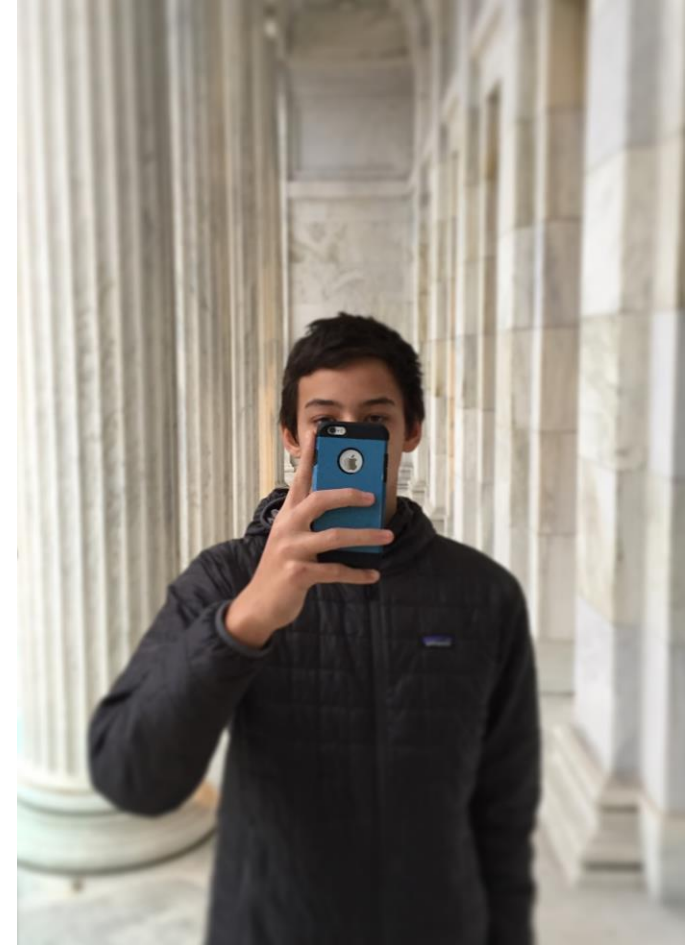


- **Leaders in high-performing schools** facilitate the collaborative examination of research and data both to identify problem areas and potential solutions to these problems. (Supovitz, 2015)
- **Only 1/3 of educators regularly engage with research** (Walsh et al., 2022)
 - *Research is not accessible or relevant to our practice or to our context*
 - *Researchers are often disconnected from classrooms*

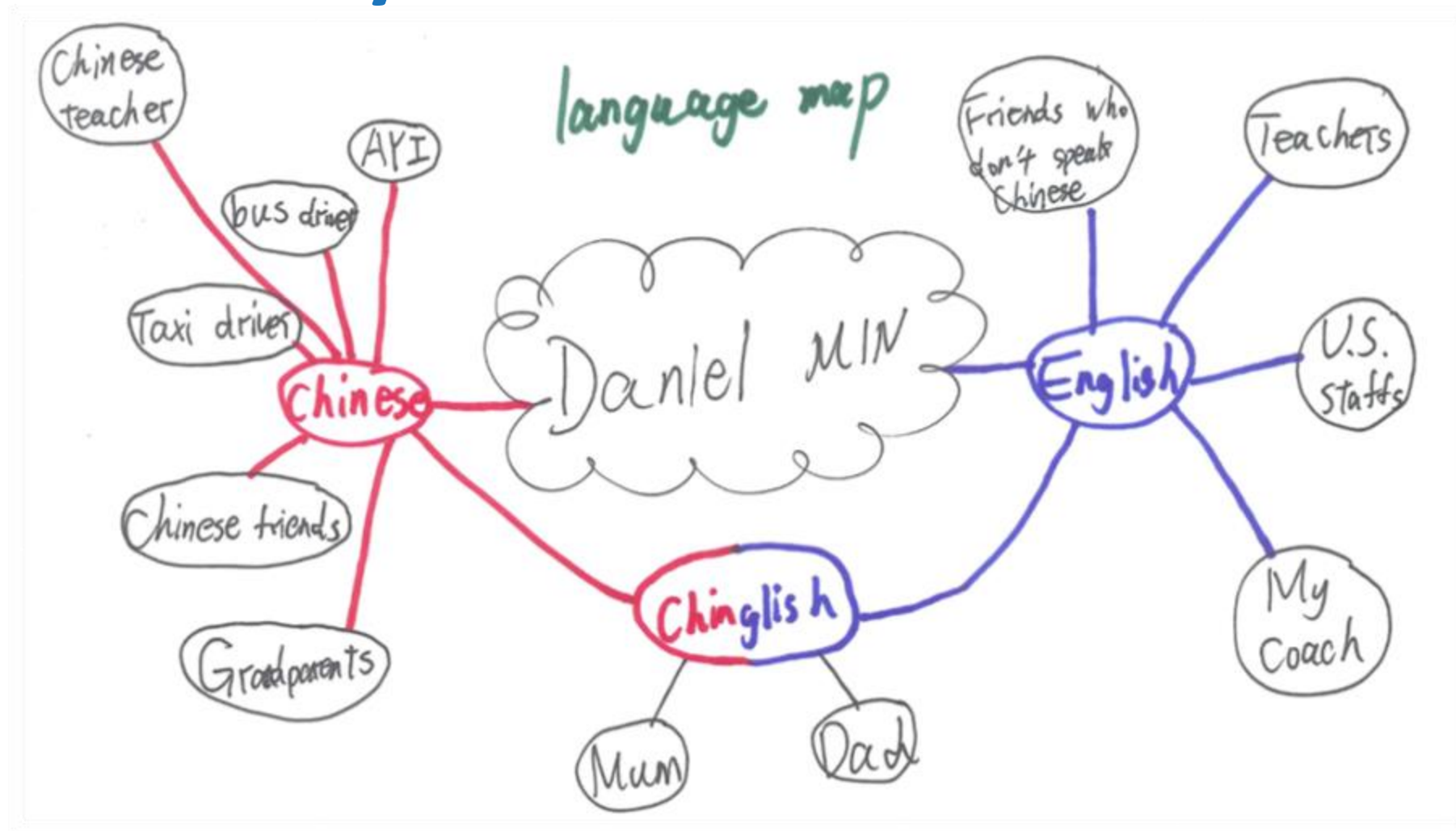
Changing Demographics

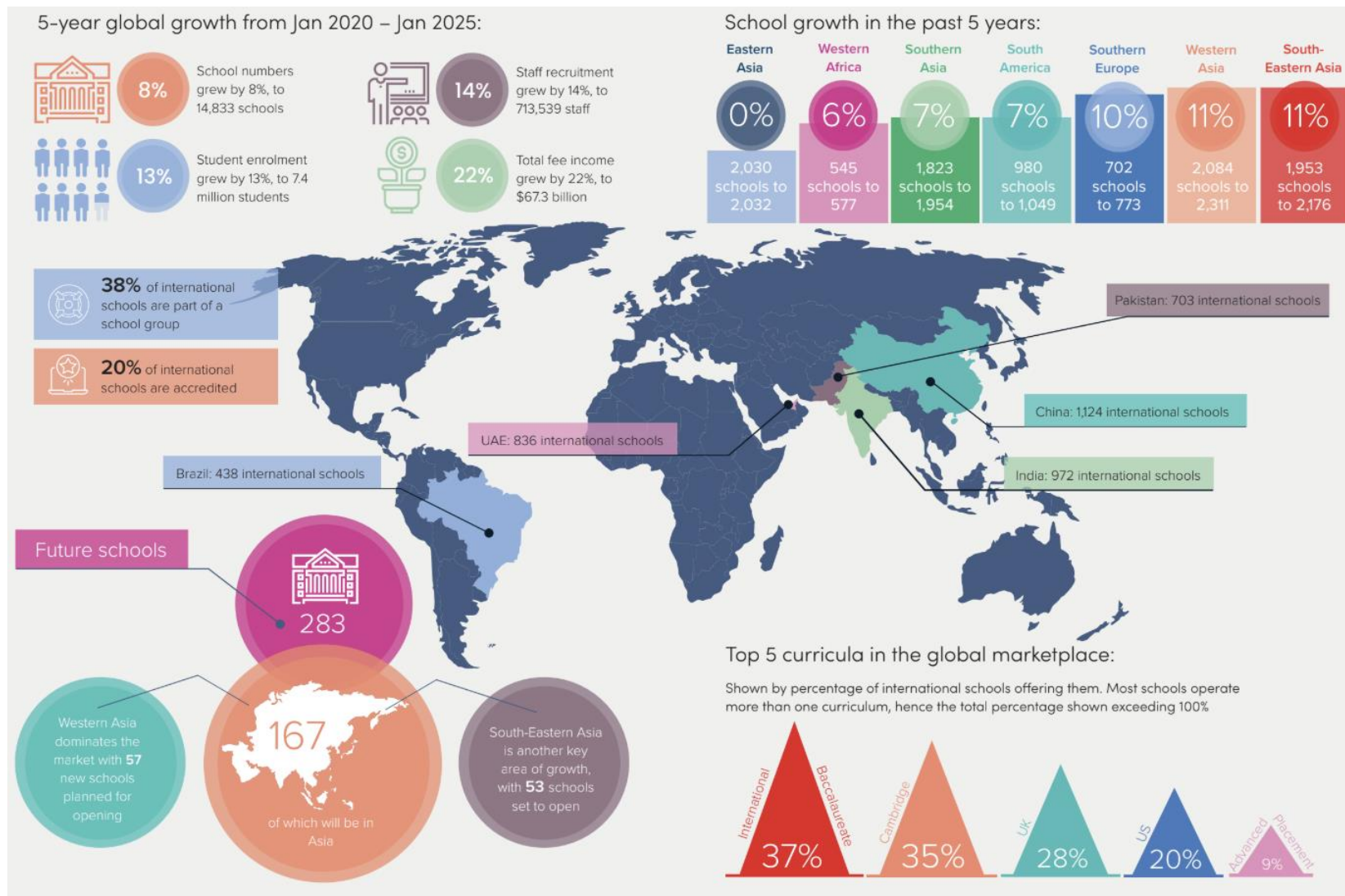
- *International school populations are changing- but how?*
 - More diverse linguistically?
 - More students with EAL support but more homogenous?
 - More students from local community?

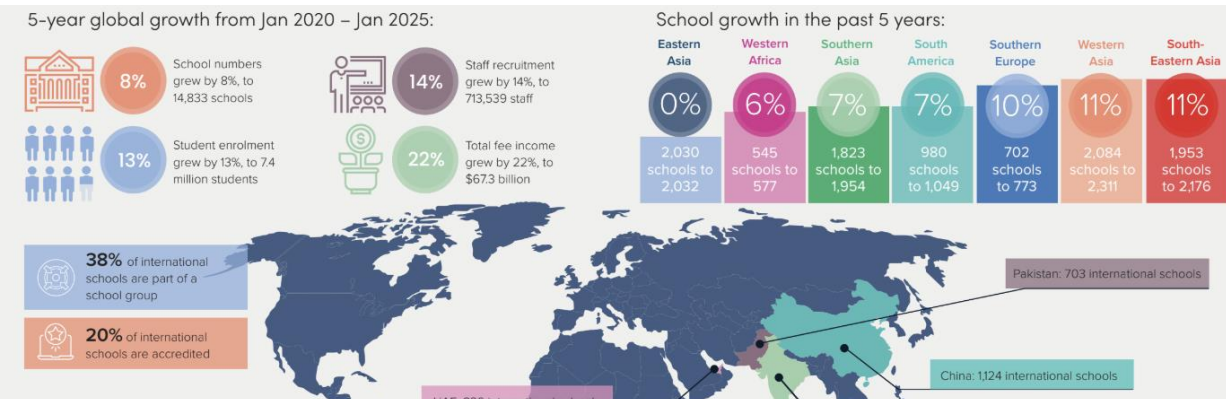
And what is the impact?



Today's international schools







7.4m
students
attend
international
schools
worldwide

Shifting Student Demographics

As student enrolment continues to grow, so does the diversity of languages and backgrounds within international schools. Many schools now report that the majority of their students are multilingual, and we are witnessing a global shift with local students making up an increasingly larger proportion of the student population.

Read our recent **white paper** to explore the challenges schools face and the key strategies for delivering effective EAL support amid shifting student demographics.

“Glocalization”

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- **Blurring of boundaries between global teaching and local learning** in today’s international schools.
- 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.

- Bettney Heidt & Nordmeyer (2021) “Glocal Network Shifts”

International school leaders:

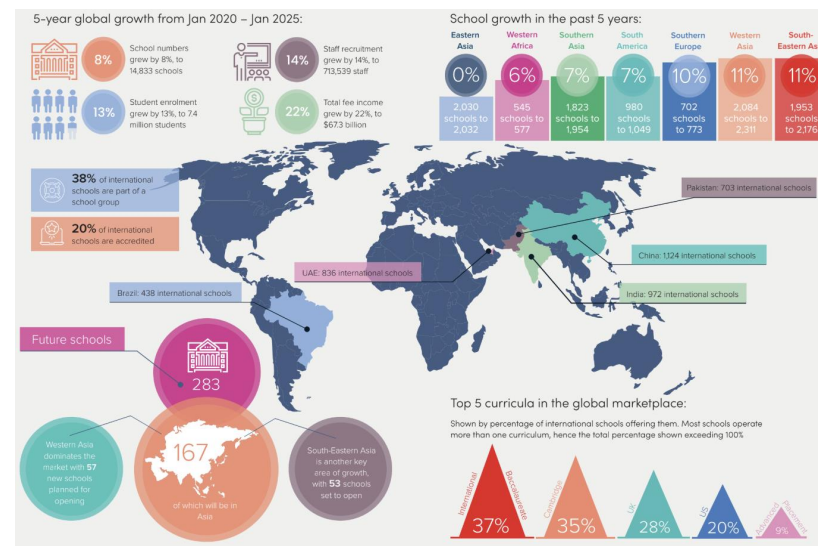
Top challenges related to supporting MLs

(MLRC 2025 study)

- ***Program implementation and consistent programming across the school are challenges.***
- ***Lack of training for teachers, particularly non-EAL teachers.***
- ***Finding the time to invest in training, refining programs for MLs, or evaluating services and support offered.***

Your School

How has your student
population changed in the
past ten years?
What challenges do you
face?



Share in the chat



**Teacher
Collaboration**

Beyond Co-
Teaching



Translanguaging

Multilingualism
for Learning

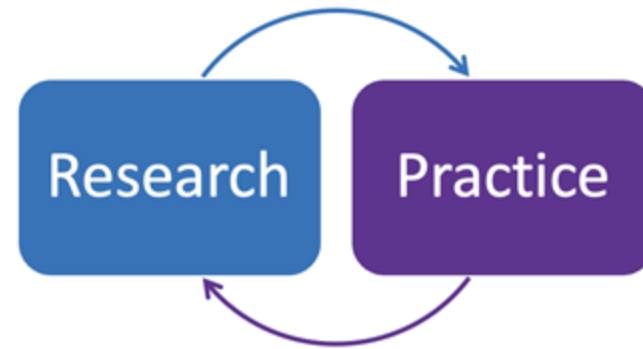


Inclusive EAL

Multilingualism
x
Neurodiversity



Action Research: What



A type of research conducted **by practitioners** within their **own context**, focused on **local innovation** or a specific **problem of practice** and resulting in an **action plan**.



Action Research vs. *Traditional* Research

Characteristic	University-Led Traditional Research	Teacher-Led Action Research
Primary Goal	Generate universal, generalizable knowledge	Solve localized problems & improve practice
Researcher Role	Neutral, objective observer	Active participant/change agent
Intervention Design	Static (controlled throughout the study)	Descriptive or Dynamic (modified across cycles based on findings)
Context	Decontextualized or controlled settings	Embedded in real-world professional settings

Action Research: Why



Action research can: “transform...unrelated individuals, frequently opposed in their outlook and their interests, into cooperative teams...on the basis of **readiness to face difficulties realistically, to apply honest fact-finding, and to work together to overcome them.**” (Lewin, 1946)

 **Learning**  **Collective Efficacy**  **Leadership**

Online meetups, peer support, virtual coaching
(4 months)

Design & launch action research projects

Research
Symposium
(2 days)

Learn about research on teaching
multilingual learners

Learn about the process of doing
research

Research Question

*What are students' perceptions of
academic, social, and emotional
impacts of
home language use in AISG's Upper
Elementary school?*

2026-7 Research Symposia



RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



November 21-22, 2026
Venice, Italy



RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



December 5-6, 2026
Shanghai, China



RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



February 27-28, 2027
Santiago, Chile

Action Research Projects

Research Question



What intentional co-planning
structures enhance the
instructional quality of co-teaching
in elementary school?

The International School Nido de Aguilas

MAY 2025

Final Research Question

How do international schools worldwide support students
needing both English language and learning support?



Research Question



In what ways does the implementation of
translanguaging strategies by middle school
content teachers impact the performance of
multilingual learners?

Research Question

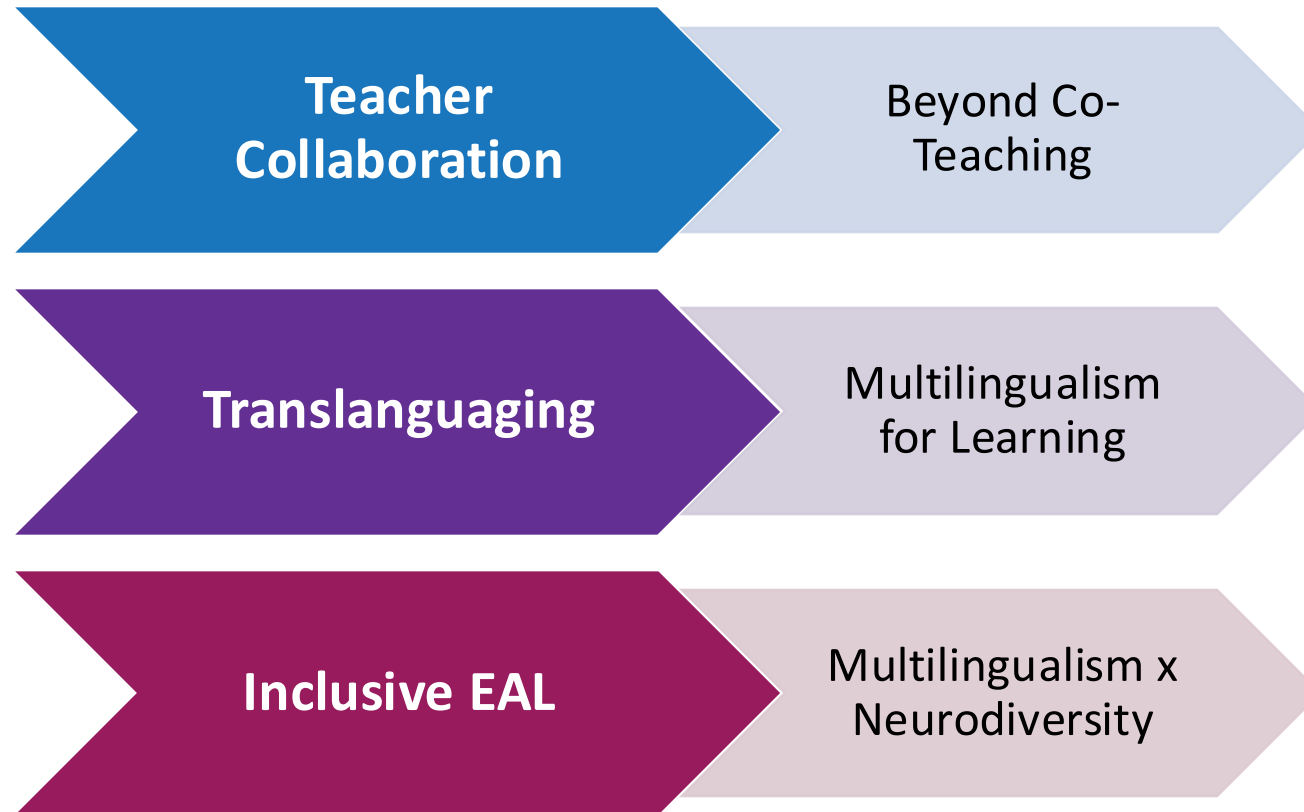
What are the prevailing language
ideologies among SSIS Secondary faculty
and administrators, and what influence do
these ideologies have on instructional
practices and students' access to learning?



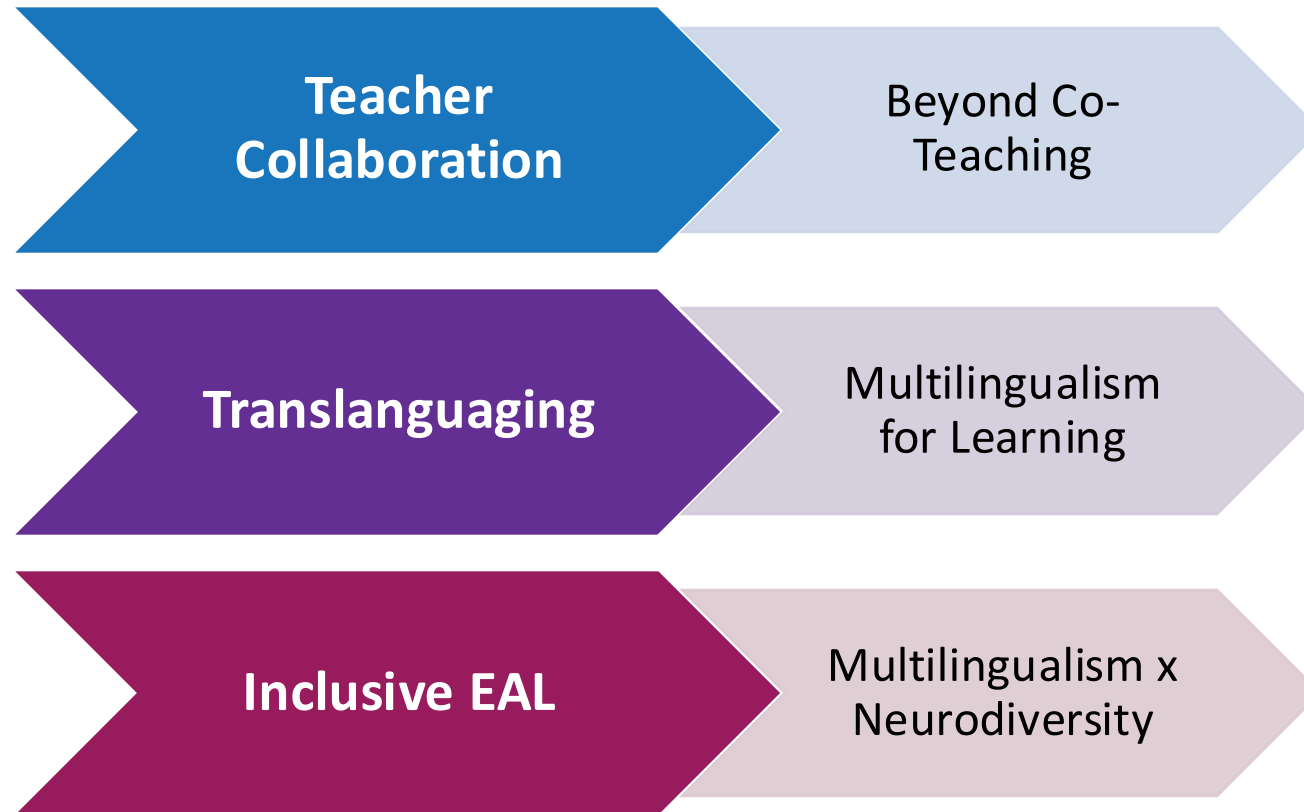
MLRC Action Research Stories

1 minute video clips

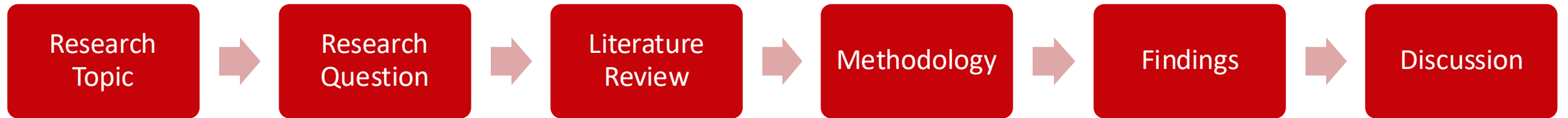




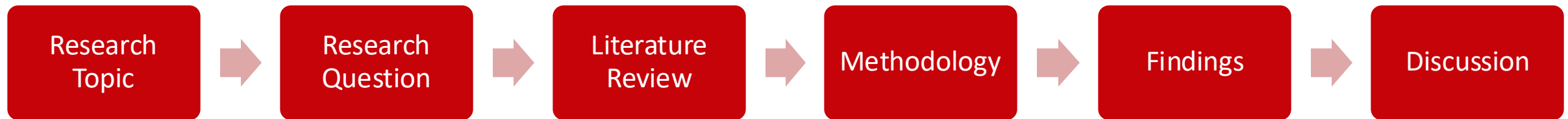
*How do these questions connect to teaching **MLs** in your context?*



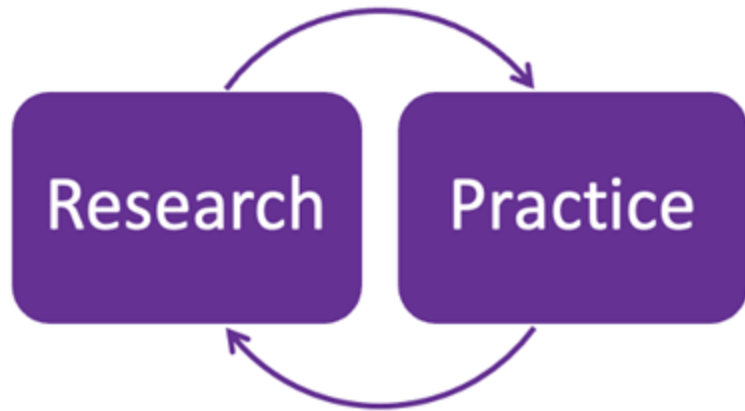
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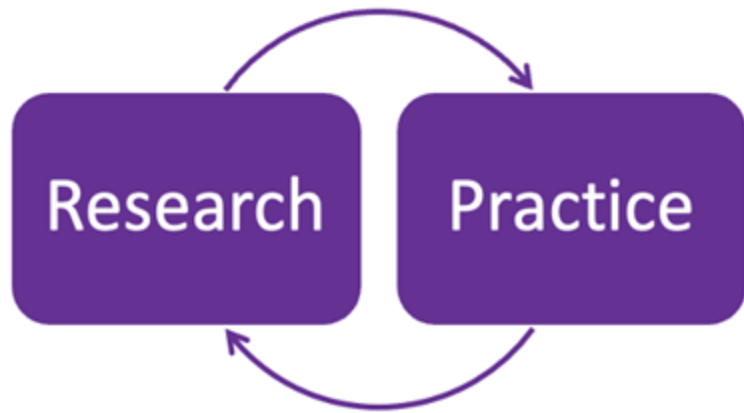
How did they engage with research evidence?



How did they engage with research evidence?



***What did you hear about
increased confidence or
competence?***



*What did you hear about
increased confidence or
competence?*

Exploring MLRC Capstone Projects



MLRC.wisc.edu/research/action-research/

Explore MLRC Capstone Projects



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for Learning



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Multilingualism
x
Neurodiversity

**What did the
team learn?**

IMPACT

- **Identity:** Professional status
- **Team building:** Shared purpose around a common goal or problem of practice
- **Collective efficacy:** Confidence and competence to lead change



Action Research Support for Accreditation

Aligns with principles of change management: integrating inquiry and buy-in

Uses tools of systematic analysis for both deepening and documenting learning

Explores problems of practice to identify factors to move a school forward

Offers opportunity to experiment, test hypotheses or scale up existing innovation

What do participants believe are the **impacts** of engaging in Action Research?

Individual/Team

- Shifts individual teaching practices
- Develops research self-efficacy
- Professionalization of role and growth in capacity to contribute

School

- Contributes to school improvement and evaluation of individual programs
- Informs professional learning opportunities for colleagues
- Supports accreditation processes

External

- Presentations by participants at regional conferences for international school educators

*Research has
become more
accessible to me.
It seemed
daunting before
this process.*



*It absolutely
empowered me
to see myself as
a researcher.*

*My interest is to help **understand challenges and new practices in learning and navigate solutions through action research.***

Next Steps:

How can we get (more) involved with the MLRC?

Become a member school: Get access for your entire school!

- ✓ ***Attend a Research Symposium:*** Build collective efficacy through action research
- ✓ ***Present your work:*** At your school or a conference
- ✓ ***Write with us:*** Co-author articles to share your story

Collaborate. Connect with other schools & global scholars.

Discover. Engage with the latest research.

Transform. Create an action research plan.



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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION | UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

ขอบคุณ!

Thank you!

谢谢!

Questions?



MLRC@wcer.wisc.edu

Today's International Schools

100-year legacy:

- Serving expatriate families
- Anglophone (North American & UK) origin stories
- Defined by exceptionalism: teachers, students & curriculum *different* from host community schools.

Changes over the last decade:

- **Shifts:** demographics, linguistic landscape, curriculum
- **Lenses:** Post-international, glocalization, hybridity
- **New approaches to multilingualism:** from fixing the student to fixing the system

What we DO know

What we DON'T know

Targeted Review and Research Summaries

- MLRC analysis of five years of EAL online discussions
- Identification of three core research topics
- Targeted review to curate the most relevant articles
- Research summaries of published research
- Annotated bibliographies contributed by the community



Leaders in high-performing schools facilitate the collaborative examination of research and data evidence both to identify problem areas and potential solutions to these problems.
(Supovitz, 2015)



Source: OECD (2025), "How can research and initial teacher education institutions support research use?", *OECD Education Policy Perspectives*, No. 129, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/7a197444-en>

According to ITE institutions, graduating teacher candidates ...



Action Research: How



Engage with
research
insights or
inquiry
processes

Problem Framing...

1. Think about a dilemma, problem of practice or question **related to multilingual** learners. Might be related to...



collaboration



translanguageing



inclusion

2. Jot some notes to share:



What would you like to solve or shift?



Why do you care about it? Why does it matter?



What would you need to know?

The MLRC School Network



Access

Research-based tools for professional learning *to build knowledge and skills in teaching MLs*

Improvement

Collaborative inquiry *to identify assets, provide feedback and set school goals for serving MLs*

Action

School-based action research, implementation and dissemination *to build collective efficacy*

Insights

Shared investigation across the network *to create new knowledge about teaching MLs*

Improvement

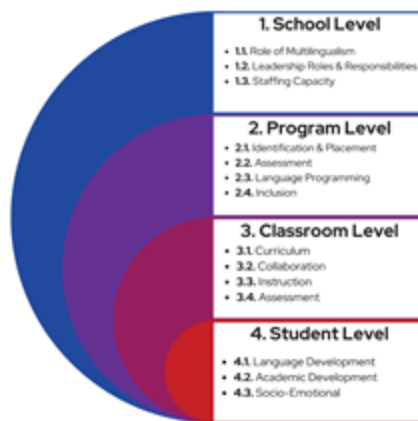
Collaborative inquiry *to identify assets, provide feedback and set school goals for serving MLs*

MLRC School Improvement Framework

DIY Tools

Independent Self-Study
Inventory

Playbook & Self-Study
Activities



Accreditation
connections (WASC)

MLRC Reviews

On-Site
Comprehensive
Program Review

Online
Facilitated
Guided Review

Wednesday: Steal This Workshop: You Can Lead PD at Your School
(Preconference)

**Thursday: Translanguaging for Learning: Navigating Policies, Pedagogy
& Parents** (11:30 – 12:45)

**Friday: Collaborating for Impact: Why Co-Planning is More Important
than Co-Teaching** (10:00-11:15)

**Saturday: Action Research: Enriching Teacher Leadership and Collective
Efficacy** (10:00-11:15)

Next Steps:

How can we get (more) involved with the MLRC?

Become a member school: Get access for your entire school

- ✓ ***Use DIY Workshops:*** Download and facilitate for your faculty
- ✓ ***Join the Language Policy Working Group:*** Review or revise
- ✓ ***Write with us:*** Co-author articles to share your story
- ✓ ***School Improvement:*** Collaborate for a program review
- ✓ ***Attend a Research Symposium:*** Build collective efficacy through action research