

Chapter 1

Introduction



Mary Gutman , Wurud Jayusi , Michael Beck , and Zvi Bekerman 

Abstract The introductory chapter begins by clarifying the rationale that led the editors to delve into this project despite the many challenges in this field of study. First, we outline the rationale that preceded our journey, while explaining the gap in the academic literature in this field. Thereafter, we address each of the four parts of this book. The first part deals with immigrant and immigrant-origin teachers. It reviews the social and linguistic challenges they face in geopolitical contexts in Israel, Europe, and the USA. The second part reviews the experiences of indigenous teachers as minorities in multilingual and bilingual schools. The third focuses on international minority teacher educators, and examines the pedagogical and cultural challenges they face as educators, instructors, and supervisors of pre-service teachers. The fourth and final part showcases ethnic minority teachers integrated into educational frameworks around the globe, highlighting the challenges and benefits involved. We conclude this chapter by presenting the potential contributions of the empirical evidence contained in this open-access book to the growing theoretical and practical understanding of the potential benefits and risks involved in these processes.

M. Gutman (✉)
Efrata College of Education, Jerusalem, Israel
e-mail: maria_g@inter.net.il

W. Jayusi
Beit Berl College, Arab Academic Institute, Beit Berl, Israel
e-mail: wurud.jayusi@beitberl.ac.il

M. Beck
St. Gallen University of Teacher Education, St. Gallen, Switzerland
e-mail: michael.beck@phsg.ch

Z. Bekerman
The Seymour Fox School of Education, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel
e-mail: zvi.bekerman@mail.huji.ac.il

The thirty chapters included in the present volume were conducted in fourteen countries spread across five continents. Their main aim is to improve the understanding of the status and potential influence of teachers from ‘different’ cultural, ethnic, racial, and national minority groups working in mainstream schools. For a variety of reasons, increasing migration flows around the world has led many education systems to consider including minority teachers among the teaching staff in schools. It is assumed that these teachers’ cultural knowledge will help them mediate cultural and linguistic boundaries in school contexts with empathy, and thus effectively contribute to the success of minority students, while at the same time supporting prejudice reduction.

The search for potential studies for this book was conducted over a year. It resulted from the identification of a shortage of research literature examining the subject in depth, as has already been argued in meta-research in this field (Rubenko, 2018). As part of this process we faced challenges, the first of which was the heterogeneity of frameworks that integrate minority teachers into school staff. Most of these frameworks contain mixed populations of students from diverse backgrounds studying together, as found in recent studies (Bonner et al., 2018; Hajisoteriou et al., 2018; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). In other words, minority teachers tend to be assigned to heterogeneous classrooms rather than homogeneous classes that are dominant in the cultural and linguistic culture. Few studies that examine minority teachers (e.g., Rocheleau, 2017) focus on the interactions between them and students from the same ethnic group, thus ignoring the potential contribution of these teachers to the classroom climate as a whole, and to the resilience-building processes that teachers themselves undergo. Moreover, the existing literature does not examine in depth issues of policy in the education system on this subject, or the data regarding under-representation of minority teachers in the various frameworks.

Nevertheless, there were a number of ideological frameworks that led us to embark on this challenging journey. First, the research experience of the book’s editors (Gutman, 2019; Jayusi & Bekerman, 2019, 2020) shows that one of the challenges of the education system and teacher training lies in preparing graduates for life in a diverse, cosmopolitan, and multicultural society. This conclusion is consistent with the literature (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019; Smith Kondo, 2019) which holds that ensuring diversity among staff indicates overt support and contribution by the institution and the education system vis-à-vis such preparation. Since most societies in the world today are characterized by a diverse cultural mosaic, the chances of graduates of the education system meeting people with diverse identities are high. Moreover, defining cultural identity has become a complex, hybrid, and multidimensional craft. Recent changes in communication methods have contributed to the blurring of geopolitical boundaries, thereby creating the ability to make intercultural encounters accessible through technological-virtual environments. Moreover, multiple migrations and international mobility as part of career transitions that seek to improve the quality of life have created countless opportunities for such encounters.

In keeping with the discourse emerging in the academic literature, the book is divided into four parts. The first deals with the challenges faced by immigrant

teachers integrating into schools in a ‘foreign’ culture, while emphasizing language issues and culture-dependent teaching skills. The second part focuses on the most topical issue in academic discourse, in light of the rise of the international mobility of the global middle classes, which, as part of their mobility patterns, are routinely engaged in seeking educational frameworks for their children, among other parenting issues. These families, as well as families of immigrants, often choose bilingual and international schools for their children (Maxwell et al., 2019). Accordingly, this part deals with the issues arising from international and bilingual schools in the context of the minority teachers’ role. The third part deals with minority teacher educators, and is based on self-studies that present a variety of attempts by researchers, who also serve as minority teacher educators, to position themselves under the guidance of ‘majority’ pre-service teachers. The fourth and final part deals with ethnic minority teachers, and it raises an interpretation of under-representation of teachers from ethnic backgrounds who serve in mainstream education settings.

The purpose of this book is to provide a theoretical basis for the discourse surrounding the issues of diversity among teaching staff in a variety of education systems around the world, with an emphasis on integrating teachers of different identities. As a secondary goal, the book indirectly identifies a set of strengths among all of these teachers, drawn from empirical evidence.

Part I: Immigrant and Immigrant Origin Teachers as Unrepresented Groups

The part includes nine chapters which reveal the challenges of integration of immigrant teachers and their descendants in schools in a ‘foreign’ culture, while emphasizing language issues and culture-dependent teaching skills.

Chapter 2, written by Mary Gutman focuses on the unique positioning of Ethiopian origin teachers in Israeli schools, with the aim of examining COVID-19 as an extreme situation in which unique characteristics of minority-majority relations in the education system may be revealed and intensified. Interviews with seven teachers of Ethiopian origin in the early years of their work indicated two solid phenomena faced during the period of closure in the education system related to prejudices and low expectations towards their pedagogical abilities relevant to COVID-19. The study findings are discussed in the context of the Pygmalion effect.

In Chap. 3, Shahar Gindi and Rakefet Erlich Ron, present a qualitative study comparing the two largest migrations groups which have arrived in Israel in recent decades; teachers arriving from Ethiopia and teachers from the Former Soviet Union working in Israeli schools. The findings offer insights into the differential sense of belonging and alterity experienced by teachers in these groups.

In Chap. 4, Michael Beck, Carola Mantel and Sonja Bischoff provide an overview of studies dealing with transitions of pre- and in-service immigrant teachers in Swiss Universities of Teacher Education (UTED) and Swiss schools. The chapter discusses the reason for the rather low representation of immigrant teachers in these

settings even though the demand for teachers in Switzerland is high and jobs are secure and well paid. The discussion is supported by empirical data on practicing teachers with a so-called immigrant background who experience a lack of recognition and rather subtle forms of social exclusion, and exposes a range of strategies developed by these teachers in coping with these experiences.

Chapter 5 presented by Galina Putjata, Catarina Economou, Elin Ennerberg and Jana Arnold address training programmes for immigrant teachers in Sweden and in Germany, with a particular focus on multilingualism. The results highlight the importance of top-down- and bottom-up approaches to overcome the monolingual mind-set and the urgent need to include course leaders in the process of policy making, while raising their language awareness.

Chapter 6, written by Ji Yeong I and EunJin (E. J.) Bahng follows the journeys of two bilingual mathematics teachers, immigrants from Mexico and Korea. It describes the teachers' first experiences of anxiety when speaking English as a Second Language in their school contexts. Following their interaction with supportive and cooperative teachers and with culturally and linguistically diverse students, both teachers underwent a crucial shift in their thinking from deficit views to asset-rich views in terms of their own cultural and linguistic identities. The results of this case study suggest that teacher preparation programs should integrate ways of supporting bilingual teachers to promote their positive cultural identity and to bring enrichment through their linguistic capabilities.

Chapter 7 authored by Pei-Ying Wu focuses on six minority teachers from China as an analytical lens to elucidate what happened when they were teaching while simultaneously learning new ideas and practices in U.S. public elementary school contexts. The findings illustrate a number of personal and professional challenges encountered by newly-arrived minority teachers in their initial transitions to life and work in the U.S. The challenges include the unfamiliarity with U.S. public schools, inadequate teaching materials, a heavy teaching load, and other teaching-related issues.

In Chap. 8 Lisa Rosen and Drorit Lengyel present a meta-analysis of studies on ethnic minority (pre-service) teachers in Germany and in German-speaking countries. The meta-analysis identifies five main research areas focusing on intercultural education: intersectional perspectives on professional self-concepts of minority teachers; discrimination and anti-Muslim racism experienced by prospective minority teachers; language and multilingualism as relevant social categories of difference and inequality in the context of (prospective) minority teachers; and comparisons between (prospective) minority and majority teachers with a focus on the effects of representation of (prospective) minority teachers. They conclude, that in Germany and German speaking countries there is an urgent need to develop inclusive policies for minority teachers to overcome the ethnized attributions of professional competence and to focus on the discriminatory structures of the German education system, including teacher education.

In Chap. 9, Evghenia Goltsev, Galina Putjata and Anastasia Knaus apply a narrative review method to present a meta-analysis of the issues typical of teachers with an immigrant background in Germany and their strategies for integration.

Among the prominent issues they raise: ascriptions and self-perception of immigrant origin teachers' role in education; immigrant origin teachers' importance for students, students' own perspectives on immigrant teachers; and professional integration of immigrant teachers in schools.

With the aim to explore the conditions for successfully realizing the supposed positive impact in immigrant teachers, the tenth chapter by Josef Strasser focuses on the role of the school context, assuming that a supportive context offers better options for cooperation and cohesion. Based on two case studies, the author highlights how such an impact can come about and claims that the implementation of professional networks and learning communities of minority teachers may be a major step in developing multicultural schools. He concludes that schools with such communities seem to be open to professional impulses of minority teachers and give them space to develop a "diversity agenda", whereas other schools tend to marginalize them.

Part II: Indigenous Teachers as Minorities in Multilingual and Bilingual Schools

The part focuses on the most topical issue in academic discourse, in light of the rise of international mobility of the global middle class which, as part of their mobility patterns, are routinely engaged in seeking educational frameworks for their children (e.g. international schools) and other parenting practices.

The chapters in this part deal with the variety of obstacles encountered by these teachers and examine their perceptions as minority teachers in the local context. The five chapters included in this part are based on qualitative studies conducted in bilingual schools.

Chapter 11, written by Wurud Jayusi and Zvi Bekerman, deals with Arab-Palestinian teachers in Israeli schools and contributes to a better understanding of how minority teachers in majority schools experience their work and how their participation in such educational contexts helps shape their sense of ethno-cultural belonging and their sense of self-efficacy. Through comparative work, between teachers working at National Hebrew speaking schools and those working at bilingual (Hebrew, Arabic) integrated schools they gain insights into the context-specific conditions which might help support or undermine minority teachers' inclusion. Though differences are exposed in the analysis, both groups of teachers express satisfaction regarding their work at the schools. They are satisfied with their work and feel they belong to a very special 'club' a metaphor that affords them a strong and positive positioning within the school context.

Chapter 12, written by Tshatiwa Makula, aims at shedding light on Zimbabwean migrant teachers' experiences of acculturation in culturally diverse independent multilingual schools in Johannesburg, South Africa. It also seeks to identify educational leadership approaches that promote multiculturalism and acculturation in culturally diverse independent schools. The findings indicate absence of cultural

assimilation; immigrant teachers are treated differently from their South African peers and they do not blend in easily. It is suggested that changing this situation implies developing school policies and practices that are sensitive to cultural differences as well as the need for all stakeholders to face head-on the specific needs of educational multiculturalism.

In Chap. 13, Sjaak Kroon, Jinling Li and Agnieszka Dreef present two high-quality case studies at a multilingual community supplementary school teaching both the Chinese and Polish languages in the Netherlands. The authors claim that the migrant teachers who teach at these schools are generally community members who are not necessarily qualified as language (or culture) teachers. The findings reveal that these teachers are more oriented toward highlighting and promoting their home country's national history, identity, ideology and values than to preparing their students for living in the Netherlands' super diverse society in which Dutch language and culture are dominant.

Chapter 14 authored by Liliana Mayer and Verónica Gottau seeks to analyze the reasons for hiring migrant teachers in bi-national multilingual schools, and the motives of foreign residents in Argentina to work in schools of their own country of origin. The author states that one of the main reasons for this is the school ethos which closely aligns with values of cultural diplomacy added to the working conditions offered at these institutions. The authors conclude that bi-national multilingual schools tend to legitimate their added value through the hiring of foreign teachers, and foreign teachers find solid ground for a successful career path, granted by their place of birth.

In Chap. 15, the last one in this part, Ana Carolina Hecht describes the co-teaching practices of a non-indigenous teacher and a minority indigenous teacher in a Toba/Qom neighborhood in Chaco, Argentina. The ethnographic data shows that the indigenous teacher played a key role as a translator/mediator between the school and monolingual children in their indigenous languages thus the goal of bilingualism has not been fully realized. Considering this complex sociolinguistic panorama, this chapter analyzes specific aspects of these new practices among the Toba/Qom teachers whose pedagogical tasks have shifted from teaching the indigenous language to reversing language shift. Additionally, it examines the experiences and knowledge of the native tongue among these minority teachers, who range from fluid bilingual speakers to less competent ones. As a consequence, from an anthropological perspective, the question of Bilingual Intercultural Education is raised.

Part III: Journeys and Identities of International Minority Teacher Educators

The experiences of skilled international teacher educators who have integrated into foreign institutions for teacher education for varying periods of time are described in this part. The chapters in this part present empirical evidence and

auto-ethnographic studies based on authors' international career trajectories that emphasize multifaceted impacts of such integration on their personal and cultural identity as foreign staff members, as well as a broad discussion of their potential and actual contributions to the local teacher education curriculum and culture.

Bing Xiao, in Chap. 16, documents her journey as a China born minority teacher educator of American pre-service teachers. She describes her efforts to balance her two identities as an "insider" in the teacher education program, but an "outsider" to American school culture. The research used a video-cued multifocal ethnographic method as well as interviews with university supervisors and instructors and demonstrates her growth as both instructor and supervisor in a foreign culture.

In Chap. 17 Yiting Chu explores how his intersectional identities as a foreign-born of Chinese descent, non-White, non-native English speaking; pre-tenure teacher educator had influenced his experiences and journeys at a predominantly White university in the United States. He used tenets of critical race theory (CRT) and Asian critical theory (AsianCrit), as analytic lenses to frame his auto-ethnographic recollections and explorations of what it meant to be a minority educator in a foreign cultural and institutional context and the strategies he used to navigate the White dominant academic space. He concludes by calling for a more inclusive framework in order to broaden our understandings of international minority teacher educators' journeys and experiences.

Chapter 18 describes two journeys saturated with pedagogical and linguistic challenges from two novice international minority teacher educators, natives of China and South Korea, who teach in a transcultural context in the U.S. Using a collaborative auto-ethnography, the authors, Xuexue Yang and Byungeun Pak investigate language, cultural and socio-political dimensions of the first space (teaching practice at the home country), and the second space (teaching practice at the host-country) while trying to design the notion of a third possible space.

Chapter 19, an auto-ethnography by Hyesun Cho, a native of South Korea, describes the linguistic discrimination she experienced during her professional trajectory as an international minority teacher educator, employed at an institution of higher education in the United States. The researcher describes the processes of negotiating her professional identity as a researcher and teacher educator in a foreign culture. It delineates various events she encountered in her journey with an emphasis on linguistic challenges and a process of acquiring self-efficacy in a foreign culture.

Chapter 20 begins with Lydia E. Carol-Ann Burke's past reflections on the fact that she was never taught by a science teacher from a racial or ethnic minority group. Later in the chapter, she documents her journey as an immigrant science teacher educator of racial minority status at a Canadian university. She documents significant events in her academic career with an emphasis on her racial, ethnic and gender identity as a Black woman from England of Caribbean heritage. Through an inter-sectionality theoretical framework, she examines her role and impact on the perceptions of diversity among peers and student-teachers.

The third part ends with Chap. 21, written by Amani Zaier's and Faith Maina', who describe the cognitive dissonance of White college students when taught by

immigrant professors of colour, and the way these professors restore harmony and balance in order to complete the course successfully. Using a qualitative method, the authors found that the students manifested dissonance by “othering” the professor through cultural and racial profiling, questioned his qualification, professionalism and credentials, and tend to express anger and anxiety towards the course. The authors claim that these processes have significant implications for the career trajectory of the immigrant professor of colour, while at the same time impacting the knowledge access for White college students.

Part IV: Ethnic Minority Teachers as Cultural Mediators

The fourth and final part deals with ethnic minority teachers who serve in mainstream educational settings. It contains diverse empirical evidence from various countries around the world that reveals the potential inherent in employing ethnic minority teachers in schools in terms of agency, mediation, “cultural brokering”, and its inestimable value for students in majority educational settings.

Chapter 22, written by Fatih Yazıcı focuses on Kurdish teachers teaching history in Turkey, trapped in between the ‘truths’ of official history and their own understandings of ‘truth’ The chapter describes in detail the identity problems they face in the social and political spheres. The interviews conducted with Kurdish teachers of different religious/sectarian, political and sexual identities reveal the complex relationship existing between such teachers and their students, colleagues and the educational establishment while trying to uncover the meaning of being a history Kurdish teacher in Turkey.

Chapter 23 by Zbyněk Němec touches on the unique context of Roma teaching assistants in the Czech Republic, who traditionally provide an irreplaceable form of support for the education of socially disadvantaged Roma students. The study shows the potential benefits these assisting teachers can offer when serving as cultural mediators for students in the foreign culture and while supporting communication between the school and the Roma students’ families. Moreover, Roma assistants also represent an important resource of information for local teachers which can help them overcome their own prejudices.

In Chap. 24, Nuraan Davids offers an in-depth narrative account of the experiences of a first-year ‘black’ teacher at a historically advantaged (‘white’) school. Her narrative sheds light on the intersectional complexities and discourses, which led to her eventual departure from the school. In concluding the author turns her attention to what the implications of her experiences are for democratic citizenship in South Africa. According to her view, these teachers (as well as the presence of a diverse student cohort) are of great importance as cultural mediators and as such contribute to the enactment and preservation of democratic values.

Kelly R. Allen, in Chap. 25, focuses on the experiences and perspectives of Ricardo, a Latino educator in US adopting a post positivist realist approach to identity. This chapter analyzes a collection of focus groups, individual interviews, and

curriculum artifacts as a means of approaching and analyzing Ricardo's experiences as a cultural mediator. The analysis makes visible how language and hybrid classroom discourse practices were used to connect with students so as to create bridges to the official curriculum. The findings underscore the need for teacher education programs to better support ethnic minority educators in navigating the complex position they assume, as educators and as minoritized individuals, and the ways that these multiple identities intersect with their practice.

Chapter 26, an auto-ethnography written by MaryJo Benton Lee, describes her work, as an ethnic minority professor (a white American) teaching at a University in China. The author describes her own self-perception as a "cultural ambassador" in this context and describes how her learning about educators' work in China, brought her to a deeper understanding of her own USA culture. a process which reflected on her Chinese students' understanding of their own country.

Chapter 27 focuses on the experiences and perspectives of Muslim teachers, who serve informally as "cultural brokers and mediators" in Finnish and Swedish schools. The author, Inkeri Rissanen, presents qualitative data from semi-structured interviews conducted with fourteen such teachers. The results offer insights on who is perceived to be a good cultural broker and how this role should be encouraged and developed in educational settings. In the conclusions the simplistic view of cultural brokerage as a role for teachers is critically reviewed while questioning the practice of outsourcing "all things multicultural" in school settings.

Chapter 28, authored by Jennifer M. Barreto, examines her ethnic identity, through the inter-sectionality of language, culture, and teaching as a Latinx teacher in the United States. The auto-ethnographic effort acknowledges and validates her Latinx presence as well as draws attention to her marginal position inside dominant structures of education. The author investigates the importance of similarities and differences that permeate everyday life as a teacher in complex ways and discusses the everyday negotiations of being Latinx, culture and teaching in an elementary school.

In Chap. 29 Hana Turner-Adams and Christine Rubie-Davies discuss the experiences of Māori teachers who are currently or were previously employed in English-medium schools and centers in New Zealand. Their study clearly shows Māori teachers connecting and engaging more readily with Māori students due to their shared culture and background while, in contrast, many Pākehā/New Zealand European teachers show a limited understanding of Māori language, knowledge systems, values, and customs, which often brings them to hold low expectations for Māori student achievement.

In Chap. 30, Dina Zoe Belluigi and Gladman Thondhlana presents a critical theoretical discussion and analysis of sources reflecting the under-representation of black female teachers in institutions of higher education in South Africa. The analysis reveals multiple factors (structural, cultural, and political), which stand in the way of minority faculty members serving as cultural mediators in the diverse South African society.

The last chapter in this part, Chap. 31, authored by Atifa Manzoor, closely examines the life-stories of three minority female teachers, seeking to answer the question: How does their cultural identity influence their teaching in regards to classroom curriculum, environment and relationships with students? Major themes to emerge from the data referred to minority teachers as role models and culturally responsive teaching. They provided a unique perspective to which some students might relate. Manzoor claims that with an ever-changing demographic, it is advantageous to have diversity among educators that mirrors that of the student population.

All in all this volume wishes to contribute to the growing theoretical and practical understanding of the potential benefits and risks involved in the process of integrating minority teachers in mainstream educational systems. This goal was implemented by empirical and theoretical studies made by the authors from diverse academic worlds and contexts. Most of the chapters in this volume present studies using the qualitative approaches, with the exception of three chapters which were done using the systematic review approach and meta-analysis of studies in the field. Given present migratory trends, it is clear that the need to include ‘minority’ teachers in mainstream educational settings will only grow. Their proper inclusion can clearly benefit all – locals and new comers – but these benefits can only be realized if we are careful when developing policies and programs which honestly confront the many obstacles clearly described in the thirty chapters included in this volume. Doing so will take courage and personal transformation, from the part of all relevant stakeholders, and a profound understanding that contexts are always local and complex and do not allow for ‘one fits all’ solutions. Yet what we have learned while producing the volume has enriched us and hopefully will enrich its readers too by suggesting a few common directions which cannot be ignored.

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Mary Gutman is researcher, teacher educator and a head of the research authority at Efrata College of Education in Jerusalem, Israel. She is a graduate of the excellent programs of Ph.D. studies (President's Scholarship Program, Bar Ilan University) and the Postdoctoral Program (Mofet Institute). Her main research interest refers to multiculturalism in teaching and teacher education, minority-majority relationships and immigration in educational contexts. In recent years she has published dozens of articles in leading international journals and received a number of competitive research scholarships and grants.

Wurud Jayusi is the Head of the Arab Academic Institute - Beit Berl College. She is the former head of the Center for the Advancement of Shared Society at the College. She teaches planning & evaluation for learning at the Education faculty. Her main interests are in the study of peace education, multicultural/multiethnic education, and minority-majority relations in the education system. Her recent work has examined cross-cultural teaching. Wurud has published multiple papers in a variety of academic journals and presented her research at multiple international conferences.

Michael Beck is a research fellow and lecturer at St. Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland. He studied social sciences with a focus on sociology and research methodology in Mannheim, Germany, and received his Ph.D. in Educational Sociology at the University of Bern, Switzerland. His fields of interest are social mobility, educational inequality, research in teacher education and assessment of student competencies.

Zvi Bekerman teaches anthropology of education at the School of Education, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel), and is a faculty member at the Mandel Leadership Institute in Jerusalem. He is also an Associate Fellow at The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for The Advancement of Peace. His main interests are in the study of cultural, ethnic and national identity, including identity processes and negotiation during intercultural encounters and in formal/informal learning contexts. He is particularly interested in how concepts such as culture and identity intersect with issues of social justice, intercultural and peace education, and citizenship education. His recent work has examined the intersection between civic and religious epistemologies in educational contexts. In addition to publishing multiple papers in a variety of academic journals, Bekerman is the founding editor of the refereed journal *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education: An International Journal*. Among his most recent books: Bekerman, Z., & Zembylas, M. (2017). *Psychologized language in education: Denaturalizing a regime of truth*, Palgrave Macmillan – Springer; Bekerman, Zvi (2016), *The Promise of Integrated and Multicultural Bilingual Education: Inclusive Palestinian-Arab and Jewish Schools in Israel*, Oxford University Press; Bekerman, Z. & Michalinos, Z. (2012), *Teaching Contested Narratives Identity, Memory and Reconciliation in Peace Education and Beyond*. London, Cambridge University Press; C. McGlynn, M. Zembylas, & Z. Bekerman (Eds.) (2013) *Integrated Education in Conflicted Societies*, Palgrave, Mcmillan; and Bekerman, Z. & Geisen, T. (Eds. 2012) *International Handbook of Migration, Minorities and Education Understanding Cultural and Social Differences in Processes of Learning*. New York: Springer.

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