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Intercultural Learning Perspectives of World Language Educators in Kentucky

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INTERCULTURAL LEARNING PERSPECTIVES OF WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATORS
IN KENTUCKY


By

Ernest Luke McClees, Junior

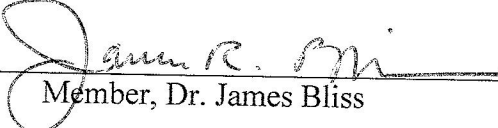
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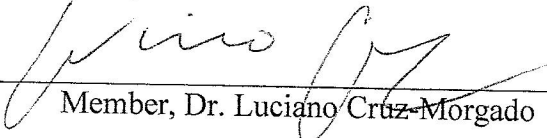
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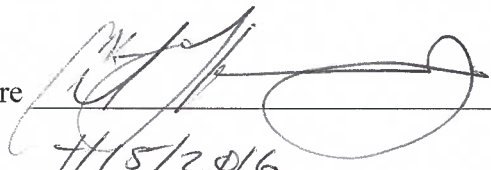


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Date

4/5/2016

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING PERSPECTIVES OF WORLD LANGUAGE
EDUCATORS IN KENTUCKY

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DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Linda McClees. She never gave up on me and pushed me to be a self-sufficient learner who never gives up. It is because of my mother that I learned to be a hard worker and to know that perseverance is more important than gifted cogitation. I also dedicate this work to my loving wife, Angela, who has provided endless support for me, as well as shown patience and willingness to shoulder the burden of extra household responsibilities. I also dedicate this dissertation to my one-week old precious daughter, Nora, whose arrival was a welcomed addition to our family--just in time to attend and sleep through my dissertation defense. Lastly, but just as important, I dedicate this dissertation to my son, Gabriel, who went to bed many nights without seeing his daddy return home from work, class, or writing this dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Above all, praise and deep gratitude to the sustainer and light of the universes. I ask Al-Ahad to reward all those who have helped me during the process of completing this work, as well as to all who helped me in my life. It is my desire to serve all to the best of my ability. I appreciate everyone who helped me build this foundation.

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I will always be grateful for the opportunity of pursuing this doctorate. This opportunity was made possible by Eastern Kentucky University and their Model Laboratory School. I am thankful for all the encouragement my colleagues have given me over the past four years of this course work. I look forward to working with all of them and making positive change in the future.

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helped me in numerous ways during my academic journey. It is impossible to sum up or measure my gratitude toward them. I am forever grateful to them for everything they have done.

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You think because you understand 'one' you must also understand 'two', because one and one make two. But you must also understand 'and'."

— Rumi

ABSTRACT

A line has become blurred between intercultural interactions and daily personal interactions. The once long distance for trade, travel and communication is at its' smallest gap. However, "American graduates have been cited as being culturally deprived and linguistically illiterate, compared to students from other countries" (2013 Kentucky Standard for World Language Proficiency). For educational leaders to improve this current educational inadequacy, it is important to understand teachers' intercultural beliefs and how they impact their classroom practices. What is not known is the present state of world language teachers' global competence understanding and what they perceive to be best practices to transmit intercultural competencies to students. Not knowing the best practices is problematic for the school administrators since they are responsible for setting foreign language skills policies for the school districts. In addition, the administrator who oversees the teaching must be aware of how best to guide teacher toward for providing best practices. Teachers of foreign languages also must know the best practices to be able to follow the district best practice requirements and have a capable way of teaching their students. The findings in this dissertation can begin to help form a base of experiences currently in the Commonwealth by those working with world language and global competence.

Keywords: Global competence, intercultural competence, cross-cultural, world language, Teachers, and Administrators

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Internationalization and globalization permeate almost every aspect of people's lives (Newton, 2014; Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). The line has become blurred between intercultural interactions and daily personal interactions. The gap in the once long distance associated with trade, travel, and communication has reached its smallest size to date. Now, more than ever, success is reliant upon ethnorelativism (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2006; Vance, 2014). However, students graduating from schools in the United States have been cited as being “culturally deprived and linguistically illiterate, compared to students from other countries” (Kentucky Department of Education [KYDE], 2013b, p. 1). For educational leaders to improve this current educational inadequacy, it is important to understand teachers' intercultural beliefs and the impact these beliefs have on teachers' classroom practices.

Students who are soon to be full participating members of society are in need of cultural soft skills to accompany their technical skills (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). Students who grow their knowledge and abilities of appropriate intercultural interactions will find better possible employment outcomes and better understanding of their fellow humans as well (Canals, 2012; MacDonald & O'Regan, 2013; Sayer & Meadows, 2012). The relationship between language and culture sets a foundation for second language acquisition as a springboard for learning and improving the type of intercultural competencies necessary to meet global demands (Canals, 2012; Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006; Geisler, 2006; Helm, 2009; Zapata, 2005).

Background of the Problem

The 21st century is an age of globalization, travel, and communication. All that is required is the time to click a button or sit in a seat for a relatively brief interval (Flynn, 2014; Wienclaw, 2014). The global economy has many similar characteristics to the economic drive that motivated people to once venture to far-off lands. However, the economic climate of the 2010s and beyond has people of different nationalities living side by side as a mix of natives, expatriates, and naturalized citizens in greater numbers than ever before (Bourassa, 2014; Flynn, 2014; Newton, 2014).

In the not too distance past, the perception of homogeneousness was created by enforcing a standard language for the people living within the imaginary boundaries of a country (Buttjes & Byram, 1991 p. 5). This concept was given more respect when national identity was viewed as a necessity (Auerbach, 2014). Nowadays, identity and boundaries are defined by the neoliberal notions of John Locke and Adam Smith (Bourassa, 2014). These are boundaries where cultural knowledge and language skills are not boxed by landlocked confines have given way to space dictated by a free market economy (Bourassa, 2014). This neoliberal trading system and structure requires people, corporations, and non-government organizations to be globally overlapped and intermingled (Stingl, 2014). The people who are the lifeblood of these organizations communicate better when they understand how cultural perceptions, language, and etiquette are best approached for every person. This competence of impartial personal interaction lends to eradicating the frustrations, criticizing, and miscommunication that result from poor cultural skills (Vance, 2014; Zander, 2007). Strong intercultural competence, on the other hand, increases empathy toward others, cultural knowledge,

self-confidence, and one's own cultural identity (Arāja & Aizsila, 2010; Baker, 2012; Bohlin, 2013; Byram, 2012; Johnson & Nelson, 2010).

Educational stakeholders should to be aware of intercultural function in societies impacted by the overlapping nature of globalization. Some of these stakeholders might have already formed an opinion about globalization as it is guiding our current existence (Bourassa, 2014; Stingl, 2014). Presently, populations are participating in an ongoing debate about globalization and internationalization (Newton, 2014). While there are many angles and opinions, there are two primary sides of the debate that support differing points of view (Vance, 2014). On one side, there is a view of globalization watering down cultural identity and creating imperialistic globalism (Bourassa, 2014). The other point of view is that globalization is not centralized and integrates countries throughout the world (Newton, 2014; Stingl, 2014). Whether an educational stakeholder's opinion is positive or negative toward globalization, he or she still needs the proper tools to function in the best capable manner in the current world. Using a foreign language, with all intercultural trappings included, might once have been viewed as helping someone function abroad. Nevertheless, the same skills are needed here in the United States. One such state where there are benefits to having intercultural competency is Kentucky.

Background of the Problem in Kentucky

The commonwealth of Kentucky is an active member with the majority of the world participating in the free market. Kentucky is a landlocked state in a country that historically is viewed as more isolated due to its eastern and western borders of water. Some residents lost their native languages, while others have not attained more than

English. Per census reports, the reality is that the multicultural shift within the state has been changing rapidly (Census 2010 Kentucky, 2010, p. 305).

The effects and contributions of a patchwork of backgrounds can be seen at many different levels in the state. Foreign-born students and their families contribute \$137.1 million to the state economy. Latino-owned businesses contribute sales receipts totaling \$906.9 million, and Asian-owned businesses contribute sales totaling \$2.1 billion to the Kentucky economy. These groups also contribute a large portion of the purchasing power of the state, with a combined total more than \$5 billion. The addition of unauthorized workers adds to large profits in the state economy. Earnings by unauthorized workers bring the state \$1.7 billion from the more than 12,000 jobs held by undocumented individuals (American Immigration Council, 2015).

As of the early 2010s, immigrants in Kentucky were nearing 5% of the total population; of this population, almost 2% are registered voters. In Kentucky, immigrants who have become naturalized citizens have a high school graduation rate of 81.2%, compared to the state average in 2010-2011 of 78% (Kentucky Department of Education, n.d., American Immigration Council, 2015). More than 7,000 of the residents in Louisville are of Cuban origin, and Cubans are moving to Kentucky at an average of 286 per year (Kentucky Census, 2010). From 1990 to 2011, the total percentage of the immigrant population in Kentucky grew by 2.3%. In 2011, Kentucky was home to more than 140,433 immigrants—a total larger than the total population of Springfield, Illinois. (American Immigration Council, 2015)

The commonwealth is also home to many well-established international and multinational businesses. These businesses, having both a global presence and

recognizable branding power, bring in people from their originating country and use native-born Kentuckians in their locations abroad. Some of these businesses include Toyota, Trane, Florida Tile, Alltech Inc., Webasto, and Square D (Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, 2016). Each employee in Kentucky contributes to both local and global economies. Not only do these corporations influence the economy, but they also add to the mix of the population within the commonwealth and abroad (Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, 2011).

Many schools in the United States do not require students to study a foreign language (Greifner, 2005). In contrast, “The modern languages taught in Kentucky support the state’s economic mission” (Kentucky Department of Education, 2013a, p. 2). Top trading partners of the commonwealth include Canada, Mexico, Japan, the United Kingdom, Brazil, France, Belgium, and China. Largest foreign investors in Kentucky are the foreign nations of Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Canada (Kentucky Department of Education, 2013a). Intercultural competence and having the ability to interact with these different demographics of people on equitable terms is beneficial to all parties involved (Baker, 2012; Bohlin, 2013; Byram, 2012).

A report in the *Journal of Business & Economic Research* (as cited in Kentucky Department of Education, 2013b) on preparedness of the commonwealth for the future points to a crucial flaw and weakness in the education system for producing a student capable of meeting global social and occupational requirements. As of 2016, Kentucky has a 2-year minimum foreign language requirement for admissions into 4-year colleges, but no high school graduation requirement for foreign languages (Kentucky Department of Education, n.d.). For schools offering foreign languages in the commonwealth, there

are concerns about whether students are being taught how to properly function in the language above and beyond word and grammar development. Knowing these facts will bring us closer to understanding students' level of preparedness for the future.

Ascertaining the true level of teacher intercultural competency and their capacity to transmit this concept in the foreign language classroom is a step toward preparing students' global pragmatic skill set.

Problem Statement

What is not known is the present state of foreign language teachers' intercultural understanding and what they perceive to be best practices to transmit intercultural competencies to students. Not knowing the best practices is problematic for school administrators because they are responsible for setting foreign language skills policies for school districts throughout Kentucky. In addition, the administrator who oversees instruction needs to be aware of where and how to guide the foreign language teacher so that he or she may provide best practices. Another reason for teachers of foreign languages need to know the best practices is because they are expected to follow best practice requirements established by the district and to have a capable way of teaching their students.

It is not known how foreign language teachers in Kentucky recognize intercultural competency. Teachers own construction of how they view others, and a global society could greatly determine what is being taught. Understanding this level of intercultural competency would allow for future improvements and refinements to take place, allowing for improvement by the educational stakeholders.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive study is to ascertain the present state of what foreign language teachers perceive as intercultural competency and what they perceive as best practices to convey intercultural competency to their students at a high school level in Kentucky. Data for this study were collected by questionnaires administered to foreign language teachers in Kentucky. The survey questions were drawn from the literature, and the participants for the survey were chosen through purposeful sampling.

Research Questions

This study was based on the method of description to obtain the direct perceptions of those who are leading foreign language education. The following questions were used to guide this dissertation study:

Research Question 1: How do foreign language teachers in middle and high schools in Kentucky perceive global competency?

Research Question 2: What do world language teachers in Kentucky middle and high schools perceive as best practices to convey intercultural competencies to students, and in what ways are intercultural competencies measured?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to the literature in second language instruction and intercultural competency by interviewing teachers and teacher leaders about their work using qualitative methods. While there is a growing body of research investigating various aspects of gaining, teaching, recording, and exposing intercultural competencies in the classroom, there has been no other current research from the perspectives of teachers and

leaders in the commonwealth of Kentucky. This research seeks to provide insights into foreign language teachers' perceptions of intercultural competency and how these teachers' personal beliefs influence classroom practices and students' sense of moving away from ethnocentrism. This qualitative study is an investigation of the perceptions of the very people who educational research seeks to help. Furthermore, this study serves as a vista of how students are becoming globally ready in the foreign language classrooms throughout Kentucky.

The results could be useful in providing an optimal approach for teachers and leaders to meet the cultural acquisition needs of foreign language learners. Findings of this research may also be useful for expanding effective communication among the commonwealth, districts, and school leaders as to those practices that could be offered to help teachers become more knowledgeable in intercultural competency. Ultimately, the findings in this research can be used as a resource for improving the dynamic concept of teaching and learning intercultural competency in the foreign language classroom.

Definition of Terms

Intercultural communication has been described as interactions by people who do not share the same social enculturation, ethnic background, nationality, occupation, and gender, age, or sexual preference (Kramsch, 1998, p. 81). The term has also been defined as what takes place when people from different cultures interact on an interpersonal level, both at home and abroad (Weaver, 2013, p. 22). In some cases, writers use this term and *cross-cultural communication* interchangeably (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Weaver, 2013, p. 21). However, there are external and internal emphases implied by the use of each term. *Cross-cultural* is properly used when two different cultures are being

compared. *Intercultural* is best used when different cultures are melded together. *Intercultural competence* is knowing how to perform effectively and appropriately when there is an exchange between speakers of different native tongues (Bohlin, 2013; Norris, 1996). The communication that takes place among people of different nations is *international communication* (Lusting & Koester, 2006, p. 54). All of these definitions are integral to the uses of foreign language acquisitions. The emphasis is placed on the intercultural aspect of language learning because of its important role in our current globalized society. Also, the intercultural aspect of language learning delineates the current state of foreign language learning and its possibilities to serve a learner, both in the learner's home country and abroad (Arāja & Aizila, 2010).

Useful Definitions for this Research

Acculturation: A change in culture or cultural learning as a result of contact from differently identifying groups.

Categorization: The sorting of perceived cognitive input into schema.

Cognition: The use of high mental processes (i.e., thinking, memory and the perception of stimuli).

Collectivism: Unit of culture where group goals are more important than individual goals.

Communication: Encoding, decoding, and interpreting messages in both verbal and nonverbal language.

Context: The social, physical, cultural and psychological environment.

Culture: Collective values, beliefs, and patterns shared by people who identify the same way and have a common shared history.

Cultural context: Common verbal and nonverbal settings within which people who share values, beliefs, and social patterns exist.

Dynamic: Something that is moving and in continuous change.

Environmental context: Geographical and physical location of communication.

Ethnic identity: How a person views himself or herself, and the lens through which he or she recognizes a shared history, social patterns, and language with similar people.

Ethnocentrism: Tendency to place how one identifies above all others, leading to a feeling of superiority.

Heritage speakers: A population that speaks one's parents' native language at home and functions in another language outside of the home.

Intercultural communication: Two or more people who identify differently in an exchange of verbal or nonverbal messages.

Interference: New or old information that prohibits recall of other information.

Kinesics: Body motion.

Member group: A collective to which a person views himself or herself as belonging and that includes interaction.

Microculture/subgroup: A collection of people who exist within a dominant cultural context.

Perception: A realization that occurs when a person interprets stimuli via sensation.

Perceptual context: Social, psychological, and environmental processes that influence how someone engages in communication.

Perceptual filters: Bias to stimuli that is influenced by social, psychological, and environmental processes.

Sex: Biological gender differences.

Social stratification: The hierarchical status of a culture.

Societal factors: Things that stimulate disagreement between groups of people.

These things could be political, ethnic, or pertaining to majority and minority populations.

Stereotypes: The overgeneralization of a group's traits and characteristics and the application of those traits and characteristics to individuals.

Symbol: Something that represents something else.

Relational empathy: Harmonizing interactions between people.

Values: Criteria for justifying behavior. Values are made up of three different components. These components are behavioral, cognitive, and affective.

Positionality

For the past 8 years, I have been a world language teacher. The cultural aspects of world language are what led me to want to study languages and help others do the same. Through contact with colleagues, I have noted that more attention is being paid to world language teachers in recent years as practitioners from other disciplines want to know more about conveying cultural lessons to their target audience. I believe that, for world language teachers to have best practices and help others do the same, it is important to have examples of what they are thinking and doing. There are many reasons why I was influenced to conduct this study. The subject matter and the manner in which the research was conducted are long overdue for this concept. This study was overdue particularly for

a population of educators who normally do not receive the attention that should be given in the educational system.

Early in my service as a world language educator, I noticed that world language teachers were at the center of teaching students to do much more than acquire the ability to speak, read, and understand another language. While this process is the point behind studying another language, it can never be a standalone objective, and has never truly existed alone on its own. When speaking with world language colleagues, I noted that we all experienced being a history teacher, English teacher, sociologist, geography teacher, and often opened hearts, all while also teaching students to be successful in the target language.

I have brought my experiences of living and traveling throughout the world and in the cultures of several of the target languages for extended periods of time. I found that world languages teachers with a similar set of experiences were passionate about the other cultural aspects of their languages. The teachers who did not share a similar set of experiences sometimes did not share the same outlook for the importance of knowing different cultural nuances to enhance the students' selection of tools for the appropriate situation or audience. Education in the United States has slowly been coming to the realization that students, teachers, and administrators will perform better and contribute more in the global economy when they are more aware of what has seemed to be foreign to many for the majority of their lives.

During my years of teaching, I have also noticed that, in Kentucky, there is a motivational divide among students to learn other languages and about other cultures. After teaching in urban areas and a more rural area, it appeared to me that my urban

students had more buy-in to the class and lessons as a whole. The rural students, on the other hand, more often viewed people unlike the people assimilated into their cultural norms as not being the same. However, the students who were motivated to go to college, enjoyed travel, or had friends from various backgrounds were more motivated to learn languages and more open to understanding intercultural knowledge. The divide could be echoed for teachers and administrators, as well.

Teachers and administrators also displayed different attitudes toward language and cultural learning, both in and out of the classroom. Within the organizational composition of schools, the faculty and administration who were the most open to providing the best current practices and understood the importance of equipping students to function globally were the ones who had more experiences interacting with people from cultures outside of the state. The current school climate in the state of Kentucky does not reflect and properly compel global and intercultural experiences. The default for many in the educational system is to mirror the schools systems in which they were educated.

There are two main problems with this situation. First, this context remains geared more for a homogeneous audience to perform well in. Second, the preparation outcome is structured more for preparing industrial workers over inventive, critical problem solvers who are sought after in the current world market. In recent years, the administrators who cared the most about demonstrating global competency in their schools were doing so because they were required to show how they were reaching students in a programs review.

As part of leadership teams within the state and the southeast region, I noticed that many of the administrators had not given thought to global competency before the 2015–2016 school year. When the 2015–2016 school year was upon them, they scrambled to find out how to label what they were doing, track evidence, and better provide global competency to their students. Often, they have delegating the task to their world language teacher or departments. Many world language educators in the state have reported that it was not until recently that they received better attention and support from their administration. This change has happened now, as the administration must now rely on the possible training and experiences of their world language teacher.

As a speaker for the Kentucky Department of Education this year, and as part of various leadership cadres for global competency, I have witnessed the rise in attention for global competency as well as the rise in confusion towards the topic. Many maintain a position of being skeptical that this emphasis is the current educational trend and that in another year or two, it will not be talked about. With Senate Bill 1 currently being proposed in the state of Kentucky, there is the possibility that the program reviews are an aspect of education that will no longer be required. This means the information that other world language educators have shared about their administration caring about global competency because of program review is in danger of attention being given to some other concept.

It is my position, from a multitude of experiences that the dynamic concepts of global competency align with language education and these concepts will prepare students to function on a worldwide scale. Students will be more likely to prevent future conflict, participate in a world economy, and be more open to understanding the true

oneness of humanity. Social and economic justice cannot be served and realized both at home and abroad if we do not refine and improve practices in these areas of overlapping study. I believe that there must be a revival of cultural ethics that takes place within our schools and that this revival should include multiple language and global cultural knowledge in the driver's seat of that which educational stakeholders should be guided to promote student mastery.

This research provides a current view of world language teachers' beliefs and perspectives. The participants include foreign language teachers who described the current state of intercultural competence in the foreign language learning environments. The findings in this study could be synthesized and added to additional research at a later date.

Delimitations of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore foreign language teachers' thinking and beliefs about the intercultural/cultural competency in Kentucky. The researcher did not work toward a generalization or strive to solve current issues regarding intercultural learning in the foreign language classroom. Additionally, this investigation did not and does not extend any alternatives to standing policies.

Assumptions

This research involved interviewing participants about their work as foreign language teachers to learn how they perceive intercultural competences. Twenty middle and high school teachers were interviewed for this study. All personal identifying information on original surveys will remain under three locks until the allotted time to destroy the material has passed, at which time all identifying information on the surveys

will be destroyed. It is assumed that all participants were honest and provided accurate information about their constructed perceptions during the course of the study.

Conclusion

Included in this chapter were the general problem background and the background of the problem as it was specific to Kentucky. These backgrounds highlighted the need to better prepare students for a world in which they are intertwined with people, both physically and virtually, near and far. Knowing languages and how to use them in with their proper cultural trappings is foundational to a contemporary education.

The problem statement and research questions guided the purpose of this study. Uncovering answers to the research questions allow others to be aware of what teachers perceive and practice to help guide others to best pedagogical practices. These questions drove all interview questions during the process of gathering information.

Terms defined, study limitations, position, and assumptions provided insight into what types of language are specific to language acquisition, culture, and intercultural communication were used throughout this research. These headings also provided parameters and intended purpose for the study and how all materials were safeguarded and ethically cared for.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the current intercultural competency perspectives of world language teachers in middle and senior high schools throughout Kentucky, and how these teachers perceived as being best practices for teaching intercultural competency. In this chapter, the theoretical framework and the reasons for using this framework are established to guide and ground this study to best facilitate the acquisition of qualitative data. This chapter highlights the various opinions on global culture, what global culture is, and who benefits from it. The case is made for the strong link between language and culture. Teachers' beliefs and practices are presented carefully, as found the research below. The conclusion of this chapter includes an abridged body of findings covering teachers' cultural learning, teaching, and perspectives. This chapter establishes what needs to be known about teachers' perceptions of intercultural competence.

Theoretical Framework

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

According to Piaget's (1920) theory of cognitive development, people learn by constructing schemas (Fosnot, 2013). These schemas are pieces of knowledge that build on each other and serve as a base for future learning (Piaget, 1976). The focus of this theory was the development of children; however, Kotthoff and Spencer-Oatley (2007) argued that schema can be developed by older individuals who can participate in open, critical thinking to allow for comparing dissimilar cultures. The intellectual growth that

takes place when one acquires languages and learns about culture fits well within the perimeters of Piaget's model of assimilation and accommodation. These processes of learning allow a person to learn as a response to his or her personal experiences and observations (Peterson, 2012). Assimilation allows for learners to build on existing schemas—those schemas they have already formed (Fosnot, 2013, p. 8). Accommodation exists when learners are not able to build on their existing knowledge and their schema must be modified to create new learning (Fosnot, 2013, p. 9).

The combination of assimilation and accommodation, coupled with a learner stage of development, move a young learner from basic manipulation to understanding abstract symbols and more abstract reasoning (Peterson, 2012). Matsumoto (2007) wrote that cultures are created from people adapting to their environments. This theory aligns with what Piaget (1920) theorized about learning: people are constantly adapting to stimuli presented in the environment, rather than sporadically in response to isolated experiences (Fosnot, 2013, p. 7). Matsumoto also pointed out that different cultures exist based on their different ecological context. These contexts lead to different cultural products and cultural practices. The transnational product of globalization has been the blurring of lines of the ecological context. Communication and employment demands have blurred the lines of cultural practices. With opportunities in new environments, global citizens are able to assimilate and adapt their learning in these new environments from their own motivation, according to Piaget's theory (J.-Q. Chen, Moran, & Gardner, 2009, p. 279).

Vygotsky

As Matsumoto (2007) explained, Vygotsky's theories gained attention in the 1970s; these theories helped to establish modern sociocultural theories, as well as developmental theories. Vygotsky was interested in understanding how people learned, with an approach to understanding this phenomenon by studying how children develop cognitively (Karpov & Bransford, 1995). This research led Vygotsky to believe that learning happened simply as a part of one being enculturated into one's surrounding social norms (Eun, 2010). In addition, Vygotsky discovered that learning took place in stages, and a person's language played a large part of the process. In fact, it was understood that language learning assisted in an individual's other learning. Vygotsky concluded that language aided other learning after noticing that a person would first learn from interaction with others and then, later, internalize the learning and make it more personal (Eun, 2010).

This process of learning was labeled the *zone of proximal development* (Wass & Golding, 2014). Social interaction and one's natural abilities or already learned information help advance learning and understanding (Maftoon & Sabah, 2012). Therefore, a person learns on his or her own, from others, combinations of the two, and with aid from his or her surroundings (Gredler, 2012).

Different Perceptions: Vygotsky and Piaget

Vygotsky and Piaget shared many of the same notions about understanding how people learn (Karpov & Bransford, 1995). However, they did not agree on many of the same ideas and theories as to how learning takes place for people. Vygotsky (2010) believed learning had much to do with a person's culture and environment. These two

factors provided people with the context they needed to learn. Therefore, it was Vygotsky's understanding that people from all over the world would learn information differently. Their enculturation would dictate how, what, and why they learned whatever they happened to be learning. This understanding is in contrast to the process of learning that Piaget (1976) believed took place. Piaget believed someone's cognitive development happened internally, and learning was applied externally as a situation called for it (Kausar, 2010). Vygotsky believed that the process of learning was much the opposite of Piaget's perception and that learning had to occur at a social level before a person could make it his or her own understanding.

The desired outcomes of understanding learning, although ultimately the same, were different for Piaget and Vygotsky. Piaget was interested in the learner explaining and expressing what it was he or she was learning (Lourenço, 2012). Piaget wanted his learners to describe from their perspective what was occurring cognitively for them. Piaget's approach was very different from that of Vygotsky. Vygotsky (2012) wanted to understand the context and the experience of an individual during the process of learning.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky observed and studied human interactions and studied to gain understanding of the cognitive process. Vygotsky believed that what people learn is presented in an already tiered learning transmission (Smit, van Eerde, & Bakker, 2013). This tiered learning takes place as a result of natural social exchanges that children have with parents, older peers, teachers, and any other person who has more experience and knowledge than the learner (Palincsar, 1998). Piaget understood that learning happens first as a part of an individual's own independent cognitive process (1920). According to this approach, the learner learns information for himself or herself before applying it to

interactions with others (1920). In keep with this understanding of the process, Piaget placed more emphasis on an individual's ability to learn as part of something that is innate in his or her heir function as a human (Kausar, 2010; Lourenço, 2012; Palincsar, 1998). Piaget's point of view was that understanding would come to others and to the world around a learner via individuals' biological abilities. Vygotsky took the individual view out of the process and placed the key to learning at a relationship level (Akhutina, 2003). As Vygotsky understood learning to occur, the younger individual had to interact with an older individual to attain learning and create context for further learning (1976).

Piaget's and Vygotsky's contrasting assessments of how people learn and build on learning were greatly influenced by their different perceptions of how people interact with one another (Kausar, 2010). Much like their other concepts, Vygotsky favored the notion of people working together and being dependent on each other to make decisions—the learning process was something people did together, in tandem with one another, to create a shared outcome. Yet again, Piaget held a different perspective; he perceived intersubjective interaction as happening from two different positions and from two separate individuals. Understanding, according to Piaget, was reached by the two individuals only as a result of each one of them having their needs met (Akhutina, 2003; Lourenço, 2012; Palincsar, 1998; Smit et al., 2013). While both Piaget and Vygotsky agreed on advancement through intersubjective interactions, their reasoning and the point of origin of learning were very much different.

Vygotsky and Piaget shared the idea that learners experience a sense of discomfort from learning. This discomfort is best described as a tension that learners go through while experiencing the exposure to learning new knowledge (Gredler, 2012). The

researchers had the same idea about the presence of a tension in learning. However, as with the other concepts on cognition, Piaget's view was personal in nature while Vygotsky's was a social view (1976). Vygotsky (1976) believed the tension occurred as a result of the person learning and included whomever was helping him or her to learn. Piaget expressed that tension was a result of a student being unable to describe what was being learned (Lourenço, 2012).

In summary, for Vygotsky, learning was a large part of a person's social interactions with humanity and the world around him or her (1976). Learning and social interactions cannot be separated from the process of enculturation and are dependent on intersubjectivity. Learning can take place between a person who is less knowledgeable or experienced in an area and an individual who has more knowledge and experience (1976). This belief in an approach to learning requires a student and teacher to have a variety of capacities to advance personal learning. Conversely, Piaget's view of the process of learning was much different from that of Vygotsky. For Piaget, cognition began at an individual's personal level, then affected others around him or her (1920). Piaget's emphasis was less on social components and more of a process that people are born with and act on naturally. Much of Piaget's ideas were the result of studies completed with very young subjects and in whom different learning stages were present across a spectrum of different cultures. According to Piaget, the innate capacity to learn helps influence learning from the inside out.

Deardorff's Pyramid Model and Process Orientation of Intercultural Competence

The pyramid model and process orientation of intercultural competence identify what must be present for an interpersonal interaction to have intercultural competence

(Deardorff, 2009; Krajewski, 2011). The model and concept of process orientation offer a visual representation of what skills and knowledge need to be used while making these skills flexible and adjustable (Deardorff, 2011). Both the model and process orientation are pliable, making their application appropriate to the dictates of intercultural context. Deardorff (2011) created the models and definition of intercultural competency after conducting a study with 23 intercultural experts using the Delphi technique.

Deardorff's (2011) grounded research yielded a framework for intercultural competency that is composed of different elements. These elements are not linear and actually are a part of a larger, ongoing learning process (Krajewski, 2011). Based on his study, Deardorff determined *attitudes, knowledge, skills, internal outcomes, and external outcomes* are the elements in this process. Attitudes, knowledge, and skills are important to unify the social and cultural (Han & Kemple, 2006). These elements bring together individuals' openness, curiosity, respect, awareness, worldview, sociolinguistics, listening, analyzing, and relating to showcase a majority combination (Deardorff, 2011; Han & Kemple, 2006; Krajewski, 2011). The internal outcomes represent the empathetic quality that is achieved after the first three elements are present. When the empathetic quality is achieved, an individual can see from another's perspective (Deardorff, 2009). The external outcomes are achieved when all other elements are present and an individual is able to interact with effective and appropriate behavior that can be witnessed by an outside observer (Deardorff, 2009).

To achieve proper intercultural competency in communication, one cannot approach these elements individually. Each element is interrelated and sets a foundation or builds upon another. When all foundational elements are in place and exist with

interdependence, the consequence is an appropriate, sensitive behavior (Deardorff, 2009; Krajewski, 2011). This interrelationship among the elements is represented in Figure 1.

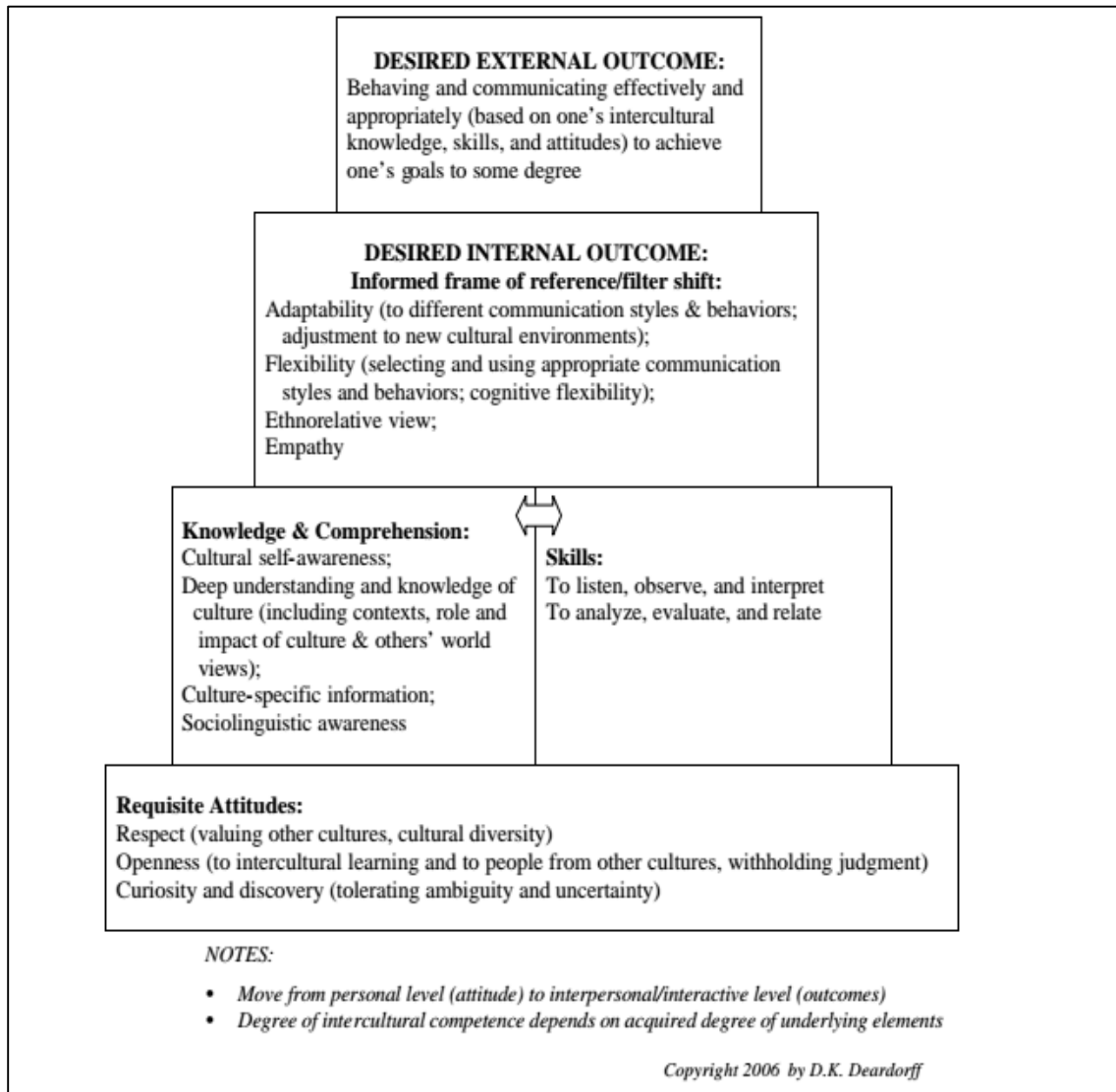


Figure 1. Pyramid model of intercultural competence. Adapted from “The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization,” by D. K. Deardorff, 2006, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10, p. 241-266 Copyright 2006 by Sage.

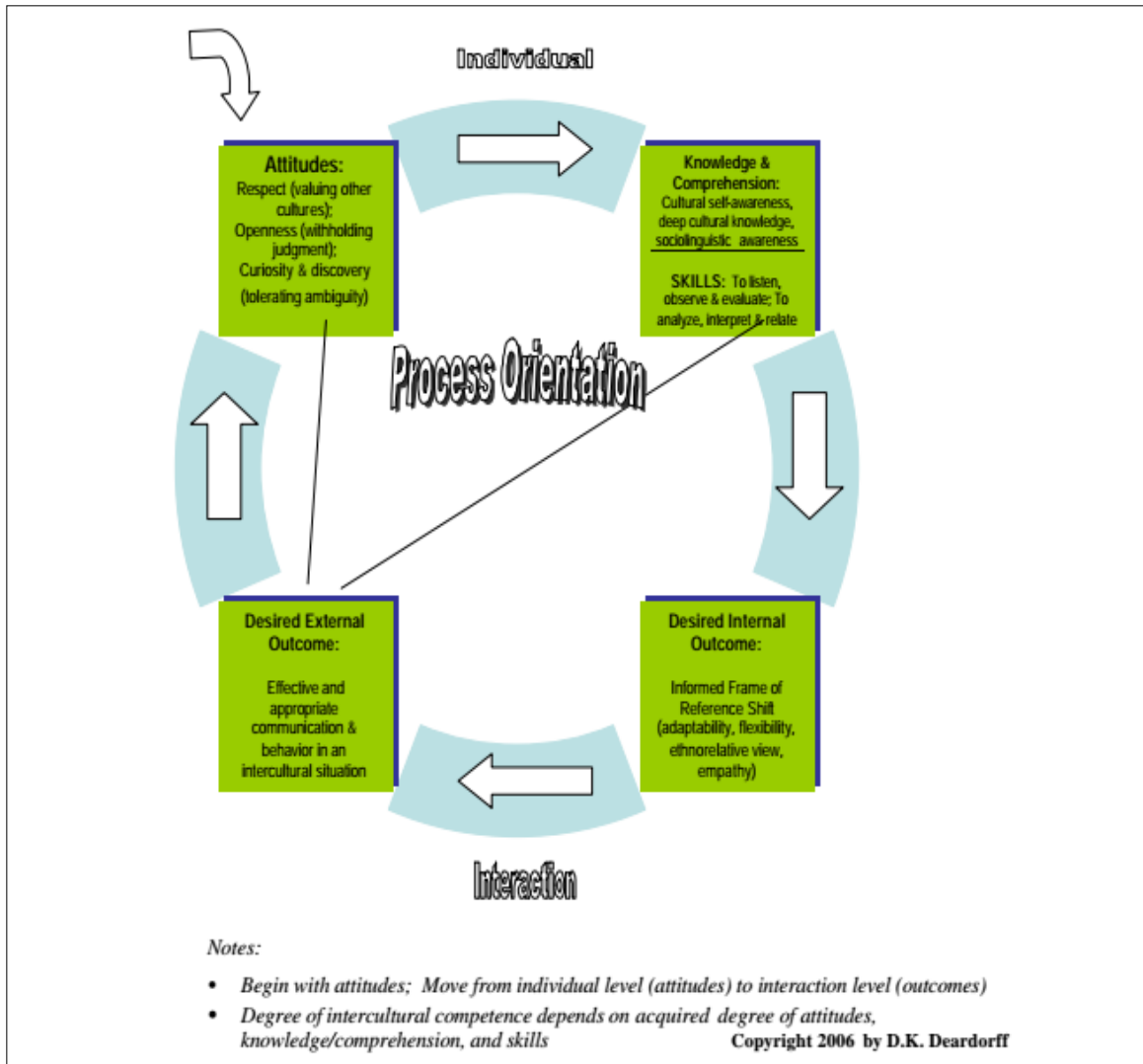


Figure 2. Process model of intercultural competence. Adapted from “The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization,” by D. K. Deardorff, 2006, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10, p. 241-266 Copyright 2006 by Sage.

Culture

The idea of culture is a concept that has been evolving since the term was first used by anthropologists. The current definition of *culture* is, “the way of life of a group of people passed down from one generation to the next through learning” (Weaver, 2013, p. 2). However, there are many slight variations of this definition that are commonly used to define culture. For example, Lustig and Koester (2010) defined culture as, “a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behaviors of a relatively large group of people” (p. 30). Culture has also been defined as knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, timing, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects acquired by groups of people (Matsumoto, 2007). These regional and national cultural concepts are evolving in contemporary times to global application.

Global Culture

The history of globalization is mixed, depending on the origin of the term one chooses to accept. Academics such as Pieterse (as cited in Vance, 2014) explained that globalization has been slowly happening throughout history. According to Pieterse, one can find evidence of the process wherever one finds traces of human civilization. The size of population, location, means of communication, and way of life allowed for the cultural globalization to function on a smaller, slower scale. Similar to Pieterse and Hopper (2007) believed that, for each period of history, there are contributors to cultural globalization. Contributions to culture are made by each historical period based on their own technology and social context for the correlating time period.

The other point of view of cultural globalization is associated with economists. Economists believed that cultural globalization evolved to support modern economic practices. This perception is in contrast to what sociologists Pieterse and Hooper explained in their writings. The economists' view is akin to a global big-boom brought about by trade purposes alone. Clark (1997) pointed out that cultural globalization has a lengthy historical presence. The difference between the economists' perspective and that of sociologists is that the world has become smaller as populations have grown, increased their production, moved their materials faster, and people have gained access to the quickest communication mechanisms, making cultural globalization a modernity (Clark, 1997). This idea is what some sociologists have reported as the intensification of world consciousness and the formation of cultural plurality.

The idea of a new, smaller world has been met with skepticism. Some scholars believe globalization benefits only corporations while creating labor stratification (Wienclaw, 2014). This labor force is poorly paid and overworked as a result of corporations using outsourced sweatshop staff. Others who originally held jobs lost their jobs due to outsourcing. Critics have pointed out that the world market of transnational corporations has led to the elimination of local businesses and to changes in local behaviors (Vance, 2014). Corporations measure their company *success* by short-term profit. This success in terms of profit is made at the expense of the ecological and social fabric (Preda, 2007, p. 319). This global practice has the potential for causing devastating effects, leading to a lack of opportunity and equality (Bourassa, 2014). If the outcome provides opportunity and equality, then other critics believe that a global culture will lead to a homogenized world culture (Flynn, 2014). The result would be a population with a

mindset of one people—one planet with minimal world diversity (Vance, 2014)—but these ideas are countered by an alternative point of view.

There is a perspective that global culture is a positive outcome. Globalization can lead to greater awareness of cultural differences and create an overall environment in which people are more accepting of each other (Vance, 2014). Some sociologists believe that a global culture gives way to better national politics (Stingl, 2014). The United Nations and the League of Nations were both founded on the writings of Kant, particularly Kant's *Perpetual Peace*. As Stingle (2014) explained, although Kant was idealistic, his concept of perpetual peace included the idea that *all individuals* should be striving towards understanding according to interpretation of Habermos. Leaders of nations and the world market have found that respecting cultural differences is a key ingredient to operating on a worldwide scale (Vance, 2014). Corporate leaders have found that cultural knowledge, coupled with corporate codes, has allowed for leaders to understand their workers while providing well-paying jobs in safe work conditions (Wienclaw, 2014). Tools of the global culture have also contributed to strengthening the identify of local cultures. For example, in the case of Uzbekistan, the Uzbeks have been using the Internet to reinforce national identity and language (Vance, 2014). Dying cultural practices, stories, and language are able to be preserved. Using virtual archiving made available by a global economy has helped to save what might otherwise have been lost to the Uzbek identity.

The idea of global culture is a complex, multidimensional concept. The global culture has been growing since people have been moving and socializing (Vance, 2014). Despite the global culture having both negative and positive attributes, the status quo

functions (Flynn, 2014), and one must recognize that cultures are ever-changing and fluid (Abdallah-Preteuille, 2006).

Language and Culture

The study of culture aligned with language is an approach that was championed in the 19th century (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This combination is essential to understanding intercultural interactions and communications. In reference to the importance of intercultural communication, Weaver (2007) stated, “We all can benefit from paying closer attention to language and culture” (p. 261). However, even though language and culture concepts are important to understand together, there is some debate regarding which of the concepts influences the other.

This section is an examination of the role of language and culture through a frame of what Enfield (2013) labeled as *innatism* or *functionalism*. These two categories set the parameters for the quixotic chase many academics have pursued to answer which idea is dependent on the other. One view of innatism is that humans have evolved physically to create language. Daegling (2012) pointed out that the human mandibular bone is a unique characteristic among other hominids. The human mandibular bones enable the creation of speech while other primates’ mandibular bones are used for mastication only (Daegling2012). This physical evidence is the first step in language innatism. There is human cognitive evidence that can be added to the physical evidence to further strengthen this concept. Christiansen and Chater (2008) wrote about a child's ability at an early age to grasp language before he or she is able to complete basic tasks such as tying shoes. One must think that this capability would suggest that the brain is wired for languages.

Innate cognitive speaking ability is a longtime perspective of Chomsky (Jack, 2006), which influenced his theory of universal grammar. Although there might be a connection, Chomsky claimed that universal grammar arose from biological adaptation or a non-adaption genetic process (Christiansen & Chater, 2008). Christiansen and Chater (2008) viewed language as being shaped to fit the brain and not the other way around. Either view refers to how the brain handles language. Thus, one can think about the human brain as having an innate capacity for language.

These ideas all demonstrate the process of development in language on an innate level. Haase (2011) added to the concept of innate language with an historical process—a process that began with the origin at a personal level and moved out to create cultural interactions with other individuals. It is an idea that there is genetic development from prior, more primitive forms of communication. Haase's visual model explains how humans make sounds first and, later, language aids in describing the culture. The innate aspect of Haase's writing is that speech is universal and, later, it is shaped by cultures. This progression is demonstrated in Figure 3.

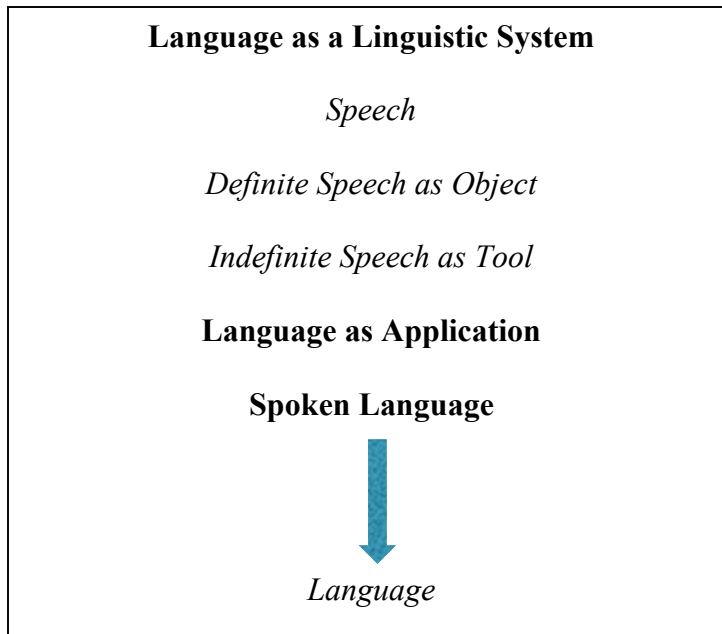


Figure 3. Haasegure * ARABIC monstrated in Figure 3.

Hasse's (2011) contributions to the relationship of language and culture are guided by what Everett (as cited in Enfield, 2013) referred to as a *cultural tool*. A cultural tool represents the notion that cultures use language as an implement to express the culture. Enfield (2013) explained that language is viewed by researchers such as Dor, Prinz, and Everett as an invention and that language is merely the ancestor to contemporary technology and gadgets that, once invented, people cannot live without.

Originally, language was used to record history and capture knowledge about beliefs and practices in people's environments (Flynn, 2014). Many sociolinguist pointed out that environmental change leads to cultural change, and these changes lead to a change in languages. The change influence idea suggests why some words are more relative in some cultures and not others (Howson, 2014). This idea also suggests that the use of language is specific to each individual culture, and not all cultures require the same *tools* to express themselves in their own proper social context.

In summary, learning a language is essential to functioning in a particular society (Howson, 2014). Furthermore, there is evidence demonstrating the same languages in different cultures change to help fit the cultural context (Williams, 2008). Again, through biological conditions, cultures express language to meet their needs. These needs create language tools, just as cultures have created wheels, guns, computers, and other inventions (Enfield, 2013).

Furthermore, the components of innatism and functionalism are different, yet could be seen as beneficial in studying intercultural competency in world language classrooms. The function of both views is to demonstrate the possible influences that both language and culture have on one another. Ultimately, despite the concept of language or culture coming first in influence, language is used in a subjective manner to express constructs provided by the material world (Majid & Levinson, 2011).

Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Bennett (1986, 1993, 2004) theorized that, for someone to be interculturally competent, he or she must first develop *intercultural sensitivity*. Intercultural sensitivity can enable learners to understand the personal situations and views of others. To aid people in understanding the process, a change must take place from a self-view to an intercultural understanding; to address this need for change, M. J. Bennett [2004] created the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Jain, 2013; Westrick, 2004). This model includes three stages at ethnocentrism and three stages at ethnorelativism. The model in its linear form demonstrates a possible starting point for people and the end point, which is the ultimate goal. Developing sensitivity requires an individual to through the stages of ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism represented in Figure 4:

| Ethnocentrism | | | Ethnorelativism | | |
|---------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Denial | Defense | Minimization | Acceptance | Adaptation | Integration |

Denial: Perceived complete denial of different ways of human existence (e.g., humans not treating others as human beings).

Defense: Others are recognized but there is great hostility and negative feelings towards them. Differences and negative attributes are perceived as a danger for own group (e.g., prejudice towards Jews in World War II, many minority populations in the 21st century).

Minimization: Existence of the other groups of people is tolerated, by minimizing the differences between groups (e.g., stating we are all different but have the same origin).

Acceptance: Acceptance of the others by respecting that there are differences in behavior and socially constructed values (e.g., school with multiple languages and intercultural perspectives is taught).

Adaptation: Empathy for others and adaptation of ones' own behavior depending on cultural context (e.g., parallel using one religious building for religious ceremonies of multiple religions.)

Integration: Integrating aspects of behaviors and values of "others" into our culture, but keeping ones' own culture too (e.g., use of culturally specific words, phrases, clothing, traditions, holidays, and food).

Figure 4. M. J. Bennett's spectrum of ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. Adapted from M. J. Bennett, 1986, *A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, p. 111. Copyright 1993

Evolution of Language Learning in the United States

During the mid-20th century, the process of teaching and learning a foreign language concentrated on the rote procurement of vocabulary and grammar (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Reading in the target language was a way to practice the appreciation of the target language. Modeling and reproduction of a language was the manner in which students would become successful and participate in class. Summative assessments of the

language came in the form of paper and pencil. Students demonstrated their knowledge by use of vocabulary, translation, and the ability to correctly fill in the blank with vocabulary or grammar. When culture was addressed in a class, its position was secondary to the other aspects of language learning. Culture was a detail that was reduced to a consequence of learning the desired language. The focus of language greatly overshadowed cultural facts and practices.

In the 1960s, change occurred in the classroom that added an emphasis on speaking the target language. This change allowed for the need to understand and transmit the context into language situations (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). These verbal interactions required the everyday scenarios that are at the core of human exchanges. With these language situations, students had the chance to make the language even more pragmatic. The step toward adding the auditory competence added an element of everyday culture that, at one time, might have been overlooked. However, as with the other components of language learning, the verbal abilities were broken down into small, repeatable phrases. This process converted the spoken connections into separate stand-alone pieces. The change that occurred was not radical, but the affixation of oral application acted as the vanguard for culture entering in as a part of foreign language pedagogy and learning.

Culture came to prominence during the next 20 years. The changes that occurred were rooted in a better understanding for sociolinguistics and how these changes were applicable to learning a foreign language (Lessard-Clouston, 1992, 1997). It was at this time that professionals agreed on the importance of recording and assessing the learning of culture in language. Students needed feedback on their cultural learning to help their

understanding of the context of the language being used and allowed teachers and students alike to understand the legitimacy of what was being imparted and its interconnectedness of language.

Since the late 1990s, the ubiquity of the Internet and telecommunications took a central role on the global stage. The power of this change has altered contact in governments, businesses, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, travel, entertainment, recreation, and personal interactions (Latané, 1996). All of these contacts have influenced the way language educators view culture and its essential position in learning. It also allows for the understanding that intercultural competence are not static, but rather dynamic.

Another shift came in the labeling of pure cultural understanding to intercultural understanding. This understanding was borne of more than one culture being able to speak the same language. The world has become interlaced with different languages as a result of business, immigration, colonialism, displacement, media, neoliberal globalization, and personal desire, thus, requiring that intercultural competency becomes more aligned with language fluency (East, 2012). Likewise, a different language other than one's native language might be expressed in local everyday interactions, rendering the classification of the language as foreign an inaccurate one. These aspects greatly influenced a worldwide need to soak up the target language, along with the frame of the target intercultural aspects. This language and culture unifier allowed for the best exchange in a language to take place so that it will have most the appropriate and effective outcome (Agudelo, 2009).

Application of Intercultural Communication to the Second Language Classroom

The goals for world language education in the 21st century require an alliance among cognitive ability, moral obligation, and global market ability. Moving students past language proficiency to a complete interaction in an appropriate social context has been echoed as an important goal for education (Byram, 2014). The result is derived from the academic realization that people, nations, and organizations have been and will continue to be interdependent. Educators have found ways to serve students in their educational environment and provide skills to operate in the global world (Krajewski, 2011). The age of this educational concept and the skill that it requires has allowed for educators to grow in their intercultural offerings. Best practice ideas have evolved and have varying degrees of differences. These differences can range from subjects that are taught, best teaching practices, and how student learning should be assessed. This broad and changing perspective has been reported in the field of education (Agudelo, 2009); however, a more refined focus has been evolving. An example is the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages and the work its members have done to improve this area of study and its application in the classroom (Van Houten, 2015).

The changes seen and experienced in world language education over the past 20 years have influenced the decision to make more accommodations for applying language in its intercultural context (Buttjes & Byram, 1991). Practices that have gained notable attention were the result of interests by members of the European Council to enable students within the European Union to seamlessly work and travel beyond their national borders. With a few academic article searches, it is possible for one to come across the

ideas, framework, and classroom applications stemming from work spearheaded in Europe.

In the 21st century, it seems as if language educators in both the European Union and the United States have wrestled with the dynamic nature of the intercultural concept and how to translate that into successful classroom practices (Byram, 2012). The dynamic features of learning intercultural competence exist because they are linked to culture. Many academics who have defined culture were quick to point out that it is always evolving and there are many aspects of culture that experience ebbs and flows. These changes can be sensitive to subcultures, regions, beliefs, and so on. Therefore, educators and learners alike must have strong cultural knowledge of a target culture to apply their target language for best possible results (Baker, 2012).

The facts about culture should also function with personal mindfulness that every individual will perceive information differently. One can also assume that this personal perception is also affected by the different roles in cultures and the world we, as individuals, play (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). Something as personal as an individual's perception of information, combined with effective communicating to the greater fabric of humankind, is something that one could assume by its nature would require much study, time, and effort to apply to the learning and teaching arenas (Sayer & Meadows, 2012).

Investigating how intercultural competence is applied in the world language classrooms is daunting; however, there is growing information about what is happening in contemporary learning environments. Moving past the rhetoric and speculations written on applying intercultural competence to the world language classroom, one can

be led to be curious of the starting point for this young learning. Navigating sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences is a narrow view in education; however, foreign language teachers have expressed the desire to develop students to understanding of cultures (Klein, 2004). In fact, intercultural learning was pioneered by world language educators who respected world populations and wanted to pass this veneration along to their students (Van Der Linde, 1997). However, there are some issues that have arisen after an educator's good intentions waned.

An integral part of understanding intercultural competence in world language is understanding that there must be intercultural competence language awareness (Arāja & Aizsila, 2010). There must also be an awareness of intercultural didactics and intercultural comparison. A disconnect occurs when learners need to have a better understanding of their own culture within their native language (Koike & Lacorte, 2014). Koike and Lacorte (2014) opined there might be a need to limit the obstacle of learning the first-language culture to lead to learning about other languages and cultures. In one study, researchers discovered that first language and target language are best explored at the same time (Koike & Lacorte, 2014). Monolingual learners work paired with heritage speakers to gain an insider's perspective of learning the cultures and employing language use.

Aside from needing to know one's own culture more deeply, there is an approach that calls for applying target language and target culture separately (Shepard, 2013). When studying the intercultural aspects of a target culture, students are taught in their native language. Pedagogy should be approached separately for the sake of effectively teaching the culture of the target culture. The idea is to deepen students' intercultural

knowledge, and educators are falling short of doing so when applying instruction techniques to the world language classroom (Osler & Starkey, 2000). This misstep is due, in part, to students lacking the world language prowess, and understanding that shortcoming allows them to learn intercultural competence in the target language being studied. Because intercultural aspects are more intangible and elusive than the target world language, the approach of learning them solely in the target world language and not in the student's native language might hinder positive student outcomes (Hall & Cook, 2012).

Teachers

The application of cultural views in educational learning environments is influenced by an educator's own beliefs, perceptions, and learnings (Piaget, 1976). Therefore, one might assume that the educator would be expected to actively participate in ongoing, continuing education in language, intercultural competence, and combinations of both (Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006). This continuing immersion in education would aid the average multicultural environment in which educators work, and with the knowledge that educators need to transmit in their learning environments.

Educators in the United States already live and work in a country made up of many heterogeneous and multilingual cultures (Van Der Linde, 1997). To build on this presence, educators must connect politically, culturally, economically, and socially in their language teaching (Chamberlin-Quinlisk, 2010). This work requires professionals to leave the one-size-fits-all approach type of pedagogy (Liddicoat, 2008). The current practitioners have been educators who are willing to disseminate language linked to

intercultural competence among their students; however, educators have often fallen short of combining intercultural communitive competence (Sercu, 2004, 2005).

Educators incorporating intercultural competence while teaching world languages have sometimes found the traditional classroom materials are inadequate for the purpose (Lee, 2013). Reportedly, most common classroom material in use is a world language textbook for the respective languages being taught. Many of these textbooks include cultural information woven into their content or as focuses of content. While the efforts on the part of publishers are commendable, there is a shortcoming regarding the cultural content in textbooks: world language textbooks stop at the big-picture concept of culture (McConachy & Hata, 2013). Therefore, with limited resources and textbook dependability, teachers normally stop at just the large overview of teaching culture (East, 2012).

The two-dimensional representation of culture with limited teacher embellishment could be damaging to the morale of both secondary and post-secondary students. This inability to apply intercultural competence past a text book is contradictory to what digital natives expect and need for learning motivation. Motivation must be present for learning a world language in what some might think is a monoglot culture (Oakes, 2013). While textbook limitations can be problematic, there are several immediate approach to applying world language and intercultural competence simultaneously to yield intended learning outcomes. Because intercultural learning requires a learner to be both culturally and interculturally aware, an available tool is that of technology.

Technology

Technology allows for a new dimension to be added to intercultural education (Garrido & Álvarez, 2006). While textbook limitations can be problematic, there are several i-platforms and programs students are using for their social recreation activities. One example is social media, which can be used to facilitate social engagement that can be used to obtain feedback from peers who are living in the target culture. These tangible and intangible aspects of learning can be used to obtain the feedback that is needed for learning language and culture properly (Lee, 2002). These interactions may also come in other forms with the aid of technology. Educator-monitored chat rooms, online newspapers, and country-based resources are used to facilitate and enhance intercultural exchanges; these media are viable examples of what could be used for lessons.

Ongoing partnerships are formed through collaboration using technology that would not be possible otherwise. These collaborations using technology can both directly and indirectly increase student learning about intercultural competence (Belz, 2005; Lawrence, 2013). In cases where educators are already exploring and applying language and intercultural skills to Internet-based collaborations, there are more options available because the educators will have already built a foundation of practices. Although using technology-based media as a standalone tool or paired with other tools is an option, there exists a possibility for different learning applications. This accessibility creates a separate category for using media in the classroom to aid both educators and learners.

Using media in the form of film is popular in teaching both language and culture. For example, students use the target language to express their understanding of the social context playing out in a movie (Abrams, 2014). Media such as a DVD or other device

might also be a cost-effective alternative to keeping up with the latest technological trends or maintenance. Although media offers advantages to learners, using media as the sole means of instruction could shortchange learners. Media alone does not allow for target culture feedback, but, if used in concert with technology, media could strengthen learning and teaching possibilities.

While both media and technology offer more to students than just a textbook alone, there are other methods and mechanisms to help facilitate learning. These other options are growing in number and are even required elements in some postsecondary institutions. The objective of using these other options is getting students in front of actual people—albeit remotely and virtually—in actual cultural situations. Intercultural studies combined with study abroad have helped students move away from ethnocentric views (Emert & Pearson, 2007; Sample, 2013). Traveling ensures that students will be exposed to the target language and target culture concepts for learning (Jackson, 2009, 2011; Smith & Moreno-Lopez, 2012). Travel allows students to have a firsthand experience in the target environment. Real-world experience alleviates having to take concepts applied in the classroom out of the classroom environment into the outside world.

The drawbacks of applying intercultural competence to language while studying abroad are realized almost universally in cost, safety concerns, and in time availability (Eder, Smith, & Pitts, 2010). While many teachers would love to teach and learn this way, it is not within the reach of all educational stakeholders. A possible second place for applying both target concepts to interacting with actual people in a face-to-face environment is for students to use their skills in a form of civic engagement. Civic

engagement allows students to apply both concepts while engaging in a service-learning project (Falce-Robinson & Strother, 2012). While the application might lack some elements of an actual physical presence in another culture, the civic project approach can allow for many of the similar elements to be in place for the students to learn. Student work would also be evident beyond the classroom and become a facet of local culture itself. Thus, the students' intercultural learning would become part of local intercultural interplay and climate.

Assessing Intercultural Learning

On par with all other subjects taught in the United States, learning languages must be assessed (Kaplan, 2015). Furthermore, learning languages with proper intercultural competence must be assessed (Byram, 2012). One must assume, when sifting through books and articles, that assessing intercultural learning and skills is a challenging task. The challenge comes from the fluid nature of cultural concepts that change, grow, and recede in seemingly all directions (Clark, 1997).

A popular method that is typically used for assessing the application of both language and intercultural skills is a journal. Journaling is a widely accepted mechanism for a formative assessment in both the United States and in Europe (Dietrich & Olson, 2010). Holmes and O'Neill (2012) studied a group of students who kept a learning journal as part of a portfolio, and who also received peer feedback as part of their learning experience. Their findings demonstrated the combination of reflective journaling and peer feedback increased the likelihood of mastering intercultural competence. The combination of focused summative tasks and formative portfolio assessments is also demonstrated to have a positive impact on student learning outcome in intercultural skills

(Zheng, 2014). Root and Ngampornchai (2013) highlighted that, by itself, study abroad might not increase a student's inclination toward ethnorelativism. However, Root and Ngampornchai uncovered that a mix of study abroad with reflective portfolios, coupled with pre- and poststudy abroad training resulted in a better understanding of intercultural skills and move toward ethnorelativism.

In the United States, Linguafolio, a portfolio assessment instrument used to gauge and track students' work in pursuit of foreign language skills, includes a scale to help guide students in self-assessing their language and intercultural learning (Cummins & Davesne, 2009; Van Houten, 2015). This notion is similar to the idea tested by Merrill, Braskamp, and Braskamp (2012), who administered a scale called the Global Perspective Index. The index allows students to conduct quick self-assessments on learning concepts and their skills. Students can then better articulate how they are learning intercultural skills in conjunction with world language.

Another assessment of intercultural skills in the world language classroom that is formative in nature is *critiquing scenarios*. Moeller and Nugent (2014) described how cultural-appropriate tasks are a natural way for students to learn language along with its unspoken nuances. Students' skills and strengths can be gauged against a list of skills or rubric as the instructor watches and listens to the scenario or tasks being completed. The combination of tasks, portfolios, scales, and training can help move educators and students away from the traditional summative-only assessed learning environment—an environment that, according to Yu (2012), was populated largely by language educators who assessed student learning by summative-only methods. There is no room in the

contemporary educational system for depersonalized learning; learning must include self-reflection, personal behavior, experiences, and cultural differences (Wang, 2014).

In closing, the application of both intercultural awareness and world language learning is still in its infancy. While educators express their understanding and knowledge for the need of proper communicational social context, their efforts might not extend beyond just understanding (Altan, 2012). Partly, this aborted journey might be a result of working with a newer concept or having to deal with something as unique as an individual's own perceptual filter. Lack of resources, exposure, training, and personal efficacy all plague applying intercultural competence to language (Dağlı, 2012). For many, it seems as though this lack of needed resources is common. Complicating matters further is the educational obsession of quantifying learning with summative test to be the sole means of demonstrating students' learning and capabilities (Donaldson, 2012). Understanding what one believes to be a best practice might allow insight to assessment choices, success, and shortcomings in the area of world language and global competence.

Knowledge and Belief

When researchers have written about teachers' cognitions, the concepts of knowledge and belief are normally present. Often, the two words are used interchangeably, depending on the researcher. The use of epistemology to make a distinction between the two words and highlight their relevance to this study was intentional by this researcher.

Knowledge is defined in the *Merriam-Webster* (n.d.) dictionary as "information, understanding, or skill that you get from experience or education." Knowledge is a mental concept that is built on prior concepts (Ball, 2013). Building on this definition,

Matthias (2014) wrote on epistemology, indicating that there are different types of knowledge. Matthias believed that there is a knowledge about how to do something, as well as knowledge about knowing a person or a place. When discussing intercultural competency, it is important to point out the relevance of knowing both people and places as world language educators. A world language educator's beliefs are a determining factor in what knowledge is perceived and needed to be relayed.

The word *belief* is defined in the *Merriam-Webster* (n.d.) dictionary as “a feeling of being sure that someone or something exists or that something is true.” Focusing on the word *feeling* in this definition, one can take away a personal ownership to this concept. A person’s belief is an idea that is completely in his or her mind. Although a belief is very personal, “there is research that shows that beliefs are the most valuable construct that physiological influence has over teacher education” (Pajares, 1992). What separates the two concepts is the qualitative aspect of their mental representations.

Teachers' Beliefs

One of the functions of this research was to understand teachers' perceptions. An orientation of beliefs was made to understand what might be perceived by foreign language teachers later in this study. Pajares (1992) wrote,

Few would argue that the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their behavior in the classroom, or that understanding the belief structures of teachers and teacher candidates is essential to improving their professional preparation and teaching practices. (p. 307)

In recent years, the commonwealth of Kentucky has evolved into a host for many multinational parties. Students, businesses, expatriates, and immigrants live and work here. This occurrence in Kentucky, accompanied by the ubiquity of the World Wide Web and travel, has changed the need for citizens to speak and apply proper intercultural

competence to their communication from a desire or demand to an absolute necessity. The social interplay between people communicating is only fully understood and practical when one can communicate beyond the correct word choice.

The marriage of language learning with proper cultural context and behaviors ultimately rests on the shoulders of the educator. His or her approach, content, and understandings transmitted to students and their learning are heavily influenced by what an educator believes (Borg, 2011; Nishino, 2012; Rubie-Davies, Flint, & McDonald, 2012). There is an academic body of research on how educators' beliefs affect their teaching and what is being taught. However, there is little that unites language learning and intercultural competence in this area of research (Peiser & Jones, 2014). This topic is the focus of a growing body of knowledge, and although it has become more commonplace for language teachers to teach more than just proper communication, there is still more research needed into what teachers believe about teaching intercultural competence.

Educators' beliefs do have an effect on educators' actions (Krueger, 2007; Rubie-Davies et al., 2012). These beliefs translate into what teachers perceive is appropriate to teach and to what the students learn. A Spanish study about teachers revealed that cultural perceptions dictated what was appropriate and inappropriate for classroom practices from the educators' perspective (Miravet & García, 2013). The relationship between belief and action was demonstrated on an individual level rather than by the group as a whole. Ghanem's (2015) study of German teachers with a native or nonnative background demonstrated a difference in what educators believed about culture and how

they taught culture. Native teachers were found to have more confidence than nonnative teachers in teaching the intercultural aspects of language.

For many languages, there is more than one associated cultural identity. Often, languages are not confined to one area or single country (Laouris et al., 2009). This is a consideration depending on the language being taught (Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006). Young and Sachdev (2011) remarked on mounting evidence that suggests nonnative language speakers sometime lack confidence to explain on intercultural interactions that are not native to them. On the other hand, Young and Sachdev also highlighted that native speakers and their impact on language teaching and sociocultural knowledge has been questioned. This case of nonnative verse native helps demonstrate the problem of individual teachers perceiving intercultural competence and language.

Studies such as Young and Sachdev (2011) suggest that there might not be a natural advantage based on where a person was enculturated. For example, McConachy and Hata (2013) discovered that foreign language teachers felt the most comfortable teaching cultural aspects that are normally presented in textbooks. This information was the big *C* concepts of cultural that include politics, history, attractions, literature, and education. Next, educators reported feeling good about routines and mundane life procedures when teaching culture. Everyday types of information, such as food and drink, were reported highly for teachers' understanding. The area of least confidence for educators had to do with international relations, subgroups, and values and beliefs. One might take from these studies that the most dynamic information is the information about which educators are the least confident in passing along to their students.

Relationship between Belief and Action

What a person believes varies from person to person. Individual actions also manifest themselves in a wide variety and application (Parajes, 1997). The mindful person might notice subtle differences in people's beliefs come to life by their actions. Navarro and Thornton (2011) pointed to a deeper phenomenon about beliefs and actions and their link. Results of their case study revealed that a person's beliefs have a direct effect over his or her actions. However, a person's actions might also lead him or her to believe certain things. This mutual feedback strongly suggests that an individual's operations are heavily dictated by his or her environment.

Epistemological beliefs and self-beliefs are shown to have an impact on a person's kinetic outcomes (Mason, Ariasi, & Boldrin, 2011). Mason et al.'s (2011) research supports the findings reported by Navarro and Thornton (2011). Taken together these studies seem to solidify that ones' self-views and knowledge beliefs can result in dictating human behavior, as well as behavior having the capacity to help dictate beliefs. These studies demonstrate the possibility that humans operate with a type of free will that is formed from their constructed learning schemes. This relationship occurs within the parameters of an overarching environmental influence.

The phenomenon of beliefs and actions working to influence each other is unique to beliefs and actions—there is a prominent kind of run-off that happens in our lives. This run-off is a side-effect of learning, and it can have a great impact on both beliefs and actions (Alfano, Beebe, & Robinson, 2012; Beebe & Buckwalter, 2010; Beebe & Jensen, 2012). This side-effect reveals how the originally intended learning is not the only learning being assimilated. The unintentional actions and knowledge an individual gains

will have an influence on his or her future beliefs and actions (Beebe & Buckwalter, 2010; Beebe & Jensen, 2012).

The features of the relationship between belief and learning allow for functions in the physical world. There does not need to be an action to trigger a belief (Starmans & Friedman, 2013). From the vantage point of being a by-product or side-effect of gaining knowledge, beliefs and actions appear to be shaped by self-justification. Therefore, a cultural product or kinetic outcome does not have to exist for an individual to reflect at a cognitive level to influence how he or she thinks and approaches future situations.

Another consideration related to beliefs and actions is that of fractal knowledge. Knowledge of something need not be complete for it to have an influence on what one thinks and does (Keyser & Nagel, 2014). Making decisions based on fractional knowledge might have been done the norm when humans primarily survived on intuition. However, one could also assume that this approach led to many problems and misunderstandings. Construction of beliefs and influencing of actions could then have only been effective if it was based on untested and incomplete learning. Fractional knowledge would make it possible for beliefs to exist as a result of actions alone or possibly by a kind of chance (Starmans & Friedman, 2013).

Cases of incomplete learning that have not been tested, such as those involving fractal knowledge, side-effect knowledge, and self-justification can translate into beliefs that are made up of incorrect knowledge (Hindriks, 2014). Situations that were once believed to be better explained or justified in the correct context have been questioned. Schommer (1990) found that beliefs could influence incorrect conclusions

when readers tested were not given a full text to read. While readers' confidence was high about making a conclusion to a story, their results were oversimplified.

Research has demonstrated that beliefs influence actions as well as actions having influence over beliefs. These two concepts are set in motion by fueling one another. Incomplete knowledge and by-products of actions may result in constructing knowledge, but the knowledge is susceptible to problems. A person's self-constructed learning might not be as trustworthy as it was once believed to have been in a contextual sense (Schommer, 1990). What does remain is that knowledge is a symbiotic fountain from which self-constructed learning is fed. The two tributaries of the fountain are beliefs and actions. This relationship, combined with an individual's environment and social climate, appear to help set up the construction for learning about which Piaget theorized in his writings (Hindriks, 2014).

Foreign Language Teachers' Beliefs

One can assume that, from the history of teaching foreign languages in the United States, teachers' beliefs and actions have changed according to their knowledge and educational trends at the time. Today, a review of educational books or journals will more than likely reveal topics that pertain to intercultural communication or intercultural competence.

What a foreign language teacher believes about the contemporary world and what he or she believes to be best practices will have a great influence on what happens in his or her learning and teaching environment (Altan, 2012; Inozu, 2011). Educators influence what and how the students learn by disseminating the topics covered from the educators' own perspective. These perspectives and beliefs are not solidified and can change with

new exposures and learning (Altan, 2012; Inozu, 2011; Tejada, del Pino, Tatar, & Sayáns, 2012). As a teacher's knowledge increases, students are assumed to benefit as well. Students can also feel the effects of positive student learning as a result of a teacher having strong convictions, coupled with a strong sense of self-efficacy (Corzo, Chacón, & Alcedo, 2012).

Just as gaining more knowledge can increase teachers' beliefs, reflection and classroom awareness can also improve teachers' beliefs. When teacher discourse is analyzed and reflected upon, educators are shown to change or reinforce prior beliefs, which have demonstrated improvements in their professional lives (Borg, 2011, 2015; Durden & Truscott, 2013). Teachers' beliefs and practices have been studied extensively, and findings highlight a strong connection between what teachers believe and what they do in the classroom (Borg, 2011, 2015). However, some maintain teachers' beliefs can be misaligned with what happens in their learning environment (Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Lee, 2009). Another negative point is related to work in the classroom, where personal beliefs might extend beyond teachers' self-identification with their profession. A person who views himself or herself as a professional career educator might have other identifiers that are more important in his or her self-perception. These examples include someone's biospheric conditions, gender, social construction, public concerns, attitude toward objects, and individual attitudes (Buchanan & Stern, 2012).

There are also beliefs that activities or forms of instruction that educators might want to do in the classroom can never come to fruition (Arslan, 2013). This disconnect might be due to a lack of personal schooling, school funds, lack of equipment, and so on. Extensive searching is not required before a person comes across articles about the

socioeconomic composition of schools or the poor condition and funding of many schools. Therefore, socioeconomic conditions could exert greater control and influence over an educator than the educator's own sociopsychological beliefs.

Research has highlighted a strong connection between a teacher's beliefs and how he or she approaches the classroom. Given that many teachers in the United States are granted a degree of autonomy in the classroom, their beliefs drive much of the learning that occurs in their learning/teaching environments (Parker, 2015). Student motivation, involvement, and available resources all can have a negative impact on what the teacher wants to accomplish (Cerino, 2014; DiCarlo, 2009). Provided those variables are all in place, a teacher should demonstrate what, when, and how his or her learning content is made available and mastered by students. These variables are becoming more uniform in Kentucky and other states, but there is still a lack of training to improve classroom practices or better inform educators and administrators.

Teaching Materials for Intercultural Competence

Because intercultural competence is a novel idea, change and perspectives of what some think should be stressed continue to evolve. Many of the language textbooks available to 21st-century educators still highlight culture in broad brush strokes, focusing on whole countries at a time. Often, the result is that emphasis is placed on certain cultural aspects that have constituted long-standing stereotypes (Nguyen, 2011). Furthermore, there is little explanation about lexical differences or how they might be used in a region-specific manner (Isaev, 2014).

Book materials also lack possible views students might have about their own culture. Unless a teacher initiates a class dialogue about the students' own perceived

cultural practices, students might not ever bring attention to how their lives are similar or dissimilar to the people, places, and topics being covered in class. Byram (2012) believed that personal cultural views and values are the base for judging the cultural identifiers and practices of other cultures. The outcome of judging other cultures can be either positive or negative. However, an individual cannot effectively come to either personal conclusion without understanding his or her own cultural practices (McCalman, 2014). Educational stakeholders must also understand how and why their culture(s) came into practice or why they understand things the way they do. It is possible that students lack the historical, geographical, and self-awareness to understand the world around them.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This phenomenological study was conducted to support an understanding of the perspectives of world language teachers in Kentucky about intercultural competency. This research included an investigation of how these teachers assess their students' understanding of intercultural competence. There is a gap in the scholarly literature on this aspect of education. There is a lack of information from world language classroom teachers about how they understand, share, and evaluate students' intercultural competence. The concept of global competence in language learning is well defined, but is limited to several main topics. These topics include (a) why global competence should be studied, (b) critical understanding about intercultural competence, and (c) proposed methods for assessing intercultural competence. The researcher found little information in the literature about world language teachers in Kentucky. This phenomenological study was intended to provide information from the very practitioners who compose the backbone of high school world language learning in the state of Kentucky. All interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format. They were conducted with purposefully selected participants. These research contributors were also asked to provide evidence and supporting material as examples for their own and student intercultural competence understanding.

Sampling

This research study included world language teachers from Kentucky. World language teachers from all over the state represented various languages and gave had different experiences associated with the culture(s) of the target language they teach. This

study allowed for deep and personal examination of intercultural experiences, beliefs of world language educators, and the impact of world language teachers on their students' learning. The initial information about potential contributors was obtained by contacting teachers through e-mail. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in a location of the subjects' choosing, outside of their place of work. This setting allowed the educators to express themselves more freely and at a pace that was the most comfortable to them.

Once I received approval from my dissertation committee and the university institutional review board, all potential participants were contacted by e-mail, and the e-mail messages were followed up with a telephone call. Once eligible teachers agreed to join the study, they were sent an e-mail providing a description of the study. The description of the study included an overview of the types of questions the participants were requested to answer during their interviews.

As anticipated, there were an adequate number of willing participants. Candidates were all selected with intentional consideration. Participating candidates were assessed for their ability to provide the information necessary to properly answer the questions that drove this research study. All were reminded that the objective of the study was to uncover personal information about personal views, personal experiences, and pedagogy practices. The points of view of participants and the extent to which participants might open up or the details they would provide were not known prior to conducting the study. This study was conducted to investigate Kentucky foreign language teachers' perceptions of intercultural competencies in a current context.

Value to the University and Participants

This study provides information that could be helpful in training teachers, understanding policy, advising students, creating/maintaining programs, and identifying effective practices for further study. This research can also serve as a reflective tool for the participants involved. It is possible that some participants would act in furthering their own knowledge as a result of their experience and enroll in a class or program to advance their education, intercultural communications, or world languages. This research could also act in serving future students and researchers who desire to build on and expand the study. Ultimately, this study is the first layer of many studies that need to be conducted to investigate this phenomenon.

Promises and Reciprocity

This researcher is protecting all information about the participants. All information, such as: examples of work, notes, memos, and recordings has been closely guarded and all handling protocols will be adhered to. Handling of material has been explained to every participant involved that all aspects of their identity have been protected from the onset of their involvement in full disclosure. All physical materials will be kept under two key security and destroyed after the proper time limit. All personal beliefs, perceptions and content of what participants have to share during the interview process have been respected.

Risk Assessment

There were no identified risks associated with this study. The potential participants were given all information prior to agreeing to participate so they could form an opinion on becoming or declining to become a part of the study. Participants were

notified that they were under no obligation to answer every question and they could withdraw from the study at any time. All participants were asked to verify the data collected to ensure the integrity of what they wanted to share remained intact.

Confidentiality

During the course of this study, all data collected were safeguarded. All data collected by recording were saved on a computer that is password-protected. The password on the computer was changed every 90 days, furthering the security of the information. Data that were provided in physical form were secured under a double lock in a filing cabinet. Any information shared with the committee was done using pseudonyms for all participants in the study. The pseudonyms remained as the participants' names for the duration of the study and for the final writing of the study.

Data Collection

The researcher requested full transparency from participants during the study. This transparency was coupled with the researcher's intuition to gauge the comfort level of the participants during the course of the interviews. Having been informed prior to the interviews, all participants were aware that there was no obligation for them to answer questions if they were not comfortable with doing so. Participants were informed that there were no negative consequences if participants wanted to stop answering questions or withdraw from the study completely. It was suggested to participants that they read the findings of this study and later discuss findings with both the researcher and committee members.

Researcher

All participants included in this study are from outside the realm of the researcher's working colleagues and social contacts. This purposeful approach was chosen to reduce all unconscious bias, misunderstanding, and any expectations. The maintenance of a healthy researcher/participant relationship was followed to help obtain material at every stage of the research. A professional relationship was also maintained during the course of the study to ensure the best possible experience for all parties involved.

This study of teachers' perceptions of global cultural competencies in world language classrooms in Kentucky schools was approved by the institutional review board of the university, and the researcher was available to elaborate on or answer questions pertaining to the research. Because this study was conducted as partial fulfillment for a doctorate, the dissertation committee and the chairs supervised all steps taken by the researcher in the study. I have completed all necessary course work in preparation for conducting this study, as outlined by the department and university. Completed coursework included instruction in qualitative research methods, educational leadership theory, and instruction on ethical practices.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this study were collected from world language teachers in the commonwealth of Kentucky. Each of the interviews was conducted in a semi-structured format at a location of the participants' choosing. All interviews followed a structured interview guide to allow for in-depth questioning and an opportunity for participants to share anything they believed the researcher did not ask and should have. Each interview

was between 30 and 60 minutes in length. All of the interviews were digitally recorded and saved to the same device. All digital recordings were transcribed in their entirety. Data for this study were carefully sorted, coded, structured, and restructured to illuminate the findings. The researcher followed the three Cs method of coding, as laid out by Lichtman (2006, p. 197). Applying the method moves raw data to the concepts in a process of steps. Data are translated into codes, then into categories, and finally into the concepts of the research. This process includes room for revisiting and revising every step, which lends to the accuracy and depth of study.

All permissions to conduct this phenomenological study were sought and obtained through the Eastern Kentucky University institutional review board process using a website application. Approval from the dissertation committee and the institutional review board were obtained before any potential participants were contacted. Information presented to potential participants included full disclosure of the study along with an e-mail address potential participants could use to get in contact with the researcher. Once potential participants agreed to join the study, a time, date, and location were determined for their interviews to take place. Every interviewee was asked to sign an informed consent and procedures form. This form was discussed with participants prior to the interviews to explain the purpose of the interview, recording, the right to terminate participation, and the right to review personal data. The boundaries of the study were also explained orally to the participants as a means of supplementing the written explanation included as part of the informed consent form. Any questions that the interviewees had were answered with the utmost care and to the researcher's best ability.

Data Collection Tools

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants in a one-on-one setting. Following this protocol with the world language teachers allowed the researcher to pose additional open-ended questions to aid in exploring teachers' perceptions. All data collected from participants along with notes taken about the participants during the interview were used to help validate the interview process during the course of the study. The information derived from these data included all nuances that might be apparent at the time of the interview. These nuances include interviewees' choice of interview location, pauses in answers, body language, and demonstration or absence of enthusiasm. The practice of incorporating nuanced information helped the researcher to achieve the type of depth needed for a phenomenological study (Creswell, 2007, p. 122). Any comparisons, uncertainty, or further clarification were drawn when the interviewee was asked to review his or her transcribed interview for accuracy. This process was completed before any coding occurred to help clarify the information that rose to the surface during the coding process.

Examples of work, lesson plans, curriculum maps, and other items were included in the review process, provided by the interviewees, to supplement the interviews and create an entire snapshot of the phenomenon that was occurring throughout the world language classrooms in Kentucky at the time of the study. The purpose of this study was to understand the intercultural perceptions of world language teachers in high schools and how these perceptions had an impact on classroom practices. Obtaining samples of how teachers were incorporating intercultural material and experiences might lead to a better understanding of why some teachers transmit one type of cultural competency over

another. It might also be possible to identify leading trends in the coding that could to help highlight the overall strengths and weaknesses in world language classrooms in Kentucky. In doing so, all educational stakeholders might be able to gain immediate insight into this aspect of language learning and preparing for their future.

Throughout the course of conducting this study, I kept notes of my observations and my own perceptions during the investigative process. The goal of this practice was to track observations made of both the participants and the researcher. These notes were made from a first person's perspective of this interviewer and included participants' demonstrated mood, openness, connections made between interviews, comparative analysis, and general ideas. Allowing for this practice helped with the qualitative questioning that drove this study to develop a holistic view (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 3).

Data Analysis

Marshall and Rossman (2011) explained that in qualitative research the process of investigation involves seven phases: organizing data, immersion in the data, generating category, ad themes, coding, and interpretation via memos, searching for alternative interpretations, and presenting the study. All meaning emerges through the process of reducing data, interpreting data, and making a thorough description of what the teachers reported understanding in all manners of intercultural competence. All data were read and then re-read to safeguard that all aspects of proper coding occurred. In this study, as with all qualitative research, as the study was being conducted, the theory developed. The proper analysis of the materials ensured no missteps were taken in the creation of a

theory that best explains the experiences by world language classroom teachers in the commonwealth of Kentucky.

An outline of themes was made to demonstrate the interrelated variables. All data that created the story from the participants' perspective were been shared. From this information, a mindful interpretation was made of beliefs about intercultural competence from world language educators.

Managing the Data

All digital recordings were and continue to be stored on a computer that is password-protected. The password on the computer is changed every 90 days. Handwritten notes and all materials gathered from the participants were and continue to be kept in a filing cabinet that is located in an office. The door to the office and to the filing cabinet have been and will continue to be locked at all times. Once transcribed, all recordings were moved to a flash drive pre-designated for this study. The flash drive has been and will continue to be locked up the filing cabinet, along with the other notes and materials collected for this study. The prescribed time to keep all materials related to this study is 3 years. The materials will remain protected throughout this time. Once the materials have been protected and stored for the prescribed 3-year period, they will be properly disposed of.

Limitations of the Study

This study was intended to generate a deep understanding of answers to the research questions rather than to collect general data from a large sample group. The very nature of this research was to yield insights into current of foreign language teachers' beliefs; the study was not intended to reveal any conclusive findings. The study

population was world language teachers; no efforts were made to seek insights from any other populations and there was no intention for findings to be generalized outside of this population of teachers. It should not be assumed that the information uncovered could be applied to teachers of other subjects. This study was phenomenological in nature, but the findings could be synthesized into a statistical format at a later date if material is uncovered that allows for the proper validity and reliability.

Researcher Bias

This researcher approached, treated, and reported all information with neutrality. The researcher acknowledges that every individual has biases. However, the explanation of this study was described with complete objectivity. Where objectivity exists, so does the truth (Stake, 2010, p. 151). At all times, the researcher remained conscious of each participant's unique experience and their perceptions. The phenomenon of teachers' beliefs was the focus of the study; therefore, the researcher did not sully any information with any predispositions so as to relay the most accurate, current picture.

Several safeguards were put in place during the study to prevent researcher bias. First, the researcher made self-reflection notes and reflected on the interviews and research process. Second, the semi-structured interview process allowed for questions to drive the data collection process according to the answers provided by the participants. The only deviation from this practice was the process of asking for further elaboration of an answer or clarification of an answer. Finally, all interviewees were asked to review transcripts of their own interview responses to ensure the integrity of words and experiences were accurately portrayed. These measures, coupled with the literature review, allowed for the proper manifestation of findings.

Summary

Chapter 3 provided the framework for a phenomenological study of world language teachers' perceptions of intercultural competence. This study was conducted to gain a better understanding of multiple individuals who have shared experiences. These multiple individuals created the criterion of information to help give insight to the essence of the experience (Creswell, 2007, p. 236). The potential for bias and researchers' safeguards against bias were explained. The study process was described, from selecting potential candidates through how the findings were sought and reported. Detailed descriptions were made of the interview process, self-reflection, and gathering of classroom materials. The possibilities for study limitations were covered. This research were not intended to be transferable to teachers of other subjects or in other contexts. This study was conducted with the objective of better understanding the perceptions of intercultural competence of world language teachers in Kentucky schools and whether these perceptions have an impact on their classroom practices.

CHAPTER IV.

FINDINGS

Chapter four of my qualitative dissertation study includes the findings from my inquiry data. Information and themes of this dissertation study are presented in the form interviews and observations of all twenty participants. All questions and observation are shared as they apply to the conceptual framework that guides this study. The findings in this study are shared based on themes that emerged from interviews with the research participants and what I observed while conducting the one-on-one interviews.

The purpose of this research was to uncover Kentucky world language educators' perceptions, practices and experiences with global competency. All participants were Kentucky world language teachers at the secondary level of schooling. Their backgrounds and the schools they served were all unique and represented an array of schools locations.

The security and privacy of the participants has been upheld with the upmost attention. Pseudonyms are used in place of identifiers such as birth names and school or districts names. Many of the participants are the only world language educator in their school. The teachers' personal, educational, and educational environmental experiences are different for each of the educators. The diverse influences and experiences become evident in the findings as teachers express various nuances of global competency and understanding. My selection choices of participants were based on the educators' relation to world language education, the state and location within the state that they

taught. Participants' biographical information provide insight to who is teaching world languages and leading schools in global competencies. The teachers interviewed were *all* at the time of the interviews members of the Kentucky World Language Associate, *many* were members of professional organizations related to the language they teach, and *some* were members of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. A noteworthy mention is that Kentucky has the most developed Global Competency schools when compared to other schools at the time of this study (2016), when it comes to including and emphasizing global competency aligned with world language learning. The Kentucky Department of Education has recently included global competence learning standards to the world language curriculum. However, the Kentucky Department of Education has placed global competence as being more important than world language acquisition. This move further highlights the recognized importance that global competence has within the Commonwealth.

Analysis of the Interviews

This study utilized a phenomenological qualitative methodology to gain the direct perceptions of those who are leading world language education. The following sections will address my research questions: How do world language teachers in Kentucky's middle and high schools perceive intercultural competency?; What is perceived by world language teachers in Kentucky middle and high schools as best practices to convey intercultural competencies to students and in what ways is it measured.

World Language in Kentucky

Recently, global competencies have been given attention but for many only because of the requirement to collect data and evidence for program reviews. The collection of information and proof that global learning and application has been falling on the shoulders of the world language teachers who are often operating as a point of contact and judge for the entire school. At this time, there is no set pedagogy for teaching or adding global competency into lessons, class, and schools in Kentucky. Many of the educational stakeholders outside of world language still view world language and global competency as a standalone focus and not as something that can improve overall education or cognitive abilities of students in other subject areas. Although, there is much research making a case that the more a student knows about languages and cultures will improve other subjects and problem-solving skills the tendency that world language educators are still struggling to obtain adequate support and recognition in their part of improving the lives of individuals.

The Union of Culture and Language

All participants during their interviews shared that they believed language and culture were overlapped or simply complemented each other. Neither could be taught as a standalone concept to teach their students how to communicate effectively. Learners need the tools of language to express and understand concepts while using the tools in a cultural context. Likewise, the cultural context is needed to give purpose and proper use to the language tools. Participant Zara said, “Culture and language are both a part of each other and one cannot exist without the other.”

Between language and culture there is some give and take--language and cultures relationship and evolutions are believed to exist purely out of each other's function (Howson, 2014). Often, the transfer is simultaneous or a result of cause and effect. Simone, Isadora and Flynn (2014) demonstrate in their research that language and culture grown together as a result of peoples' environments. The chance of language or culture standing alone is an idea that expressed as being improbable from a summation of answers provided by the participants. The highlight of this union was stated clearly by Participant Lynne who teaches French in a south central Kentucky high school:

Culture is the vehicle in which languages travels and language is the vehicle in which culture travels. They both help move one another, but they both are the end goal. You have to have the language to function in culture, and you must know about culture to use your language. They will always need one another, they always have, they always will.

Lynne's insight from a firsthand perception of how both language and culture are a tool to be used in understanding both concepts. Her statement falls directly in line with the work of Enfield (2013), whose research lead him to understand that both language and culture where merely tools used in one, expressing themselves in their environment.

When participants' were asked for their definition of culture, all but two mentioned *language*--either directly or as a key component of culture. Culture and language mentioned in tandem demonstrates how closely world language professionals

perceive the link between culture and language. Further highlighting the idea of tools to be used in unison, Lynne shared, “Culture is anything a group of people does or makes.” Participant Molly, a world language teacher in a rural Western Kentucky School, defined culture as:

Everything about people. Culture is a kind of underlying value system of people; it is their beliefs, their attitudes, and their values. It’s expressed through their language, the products, the practices, and their perspective that they hold.

Another example of language was shared from the perspective of participant Lindsey, a Spanish teacher located in an urban area:

It is everything; it is a way that you look at the world, it is the way that you think about yourself and that you think about others. It is the way you interact with others, and this includes everything from your preconceived ideas to how you look at art, music, and language. I think that it is everything, all aspects and ideas come back to culture, and it just weaves in every part of who we are.

During her interview, Lindsey said that she has arrived at her definition from years of study and experience. She had lived in both Spain and Mexico for an extended period and held both an undergraduate degree and master’s degrees in Spanish. The exposure she has in both personal and academic life led her to see that culture was *everything*. Lindsey’s’ definition of culture is a close summation of what the other participants said in one way or another as well. These examples of the interconnection of

language and culture are prevalent throughout both the interviews completed for this study. For example, Piaget (1976) discovered that people used language to express what was in their environment. His work demonstrates what participants have shared about culture and language simultaneous existing with one another.

Other Cultures give Dimension to Enculturation

During the interviews, many participants reported that sometimes their students display a closed off behavior to learning about other people, places, and things outside of their own enculturated experiences in their immediate surroundings. This might be a result from what the research of Eun (2010) highlights. Eun's research demonstrated that children learned largely as a part of their own cultural norms. One could assume that without exposure to another culture they have nothing to build knowledge from. Zara reflects, "students don't see the world around them, some don't want to. Some don't even want to leave the state." Participant Yusuf explains, "I think my mantra in the classroom is, everything else and everyone else is not weird. Its' okay to be different, its' okay for there to be different views." These expressed observations give fist hand witness to the Bennett Scale (2011). Bennett writes out in linear form that people with less exposure to others tend to be more egocentric in thinking and world views. The world language educators who identified as those who teach in schools with higher income students described a more open population of students willing to learn about other cultures. Participant Maria explains, "I'm lucky, I have many students who travel with their parents and are motivated to learn about language and culture. I know they are able to do this because our students come from wealthy families." Also, the urban educators

teach a student population who are normally more inclined to learn another language. Lindsey shared, “There are some well to do, diverse students, who are already motivated to learn because they have been exposed to others in the real-world.” Maria and Lindsey experiences also highlight the work of Bennett (2011). The Bennet Scale also shows the progress toward being ethno- relevant. The world language teachers shared that many of their students had never compared cultural practices in the United States to any other culture before being exposed to lessons in their classes. Participant Maryam said, “Many times, students never think to compare both the positives and negatives between the United States and somewhere else.” Yusuf adds, “Most of my students either don’t care or assume that everyone in the world thinks the way they do.” If students have made a comparison to other cultures before learning the facts in class, the comparisons are made from pop-culture media or from perpetuating ideas they do not yet understand.

One experience of participant Nora is that her students are limited by available imagery. Nora said, “Students will often talk about people and places only from what their parents have said or from what they see on television. Television dictates much of what they think.”

Blanket Stereotypes can Change with Exposure

Overall the teachers reported that their preconceptions changed after being exposed to another culture. Change in thinking from exposure to others is highlighted by the works of both, Bennett (2011) and Deardorff (2009). The participants who reported no change also reported that they believed they had no preconceived notions before traveling, living, or studying abroad. There were three participants who reported no

cultural assumptions. They also shared that they had exposure to other people and places before having more in-depth travel. Yusuf explains, “I had the experience of living abroad earlier in life. My opportunities to have intermingled with a different race, before I became an adult and lived in Madrid.” Robert adds, “I knew I was going to be a missionary and live in Mexico. Before going, and I did not have any stereotypes.” In both cases, the participants had some experience in which were around other population that was different from the people and places they had grown to know at home. This interaction happened before their sojourn abroad, however, interaction still took place for them to become more open. Lindsey had a similar experience but through an academic setting. Lindsey first studied in Madrid and before going to study in Spain she had exposure to professors from Spain. During her interview, when asked about having stereotypes before studying abroad, Lindsey answered:

This is an honest answer not so much just because the professor I had at the time was from Spain. So, I had already heard a lot of details about the culture. There were, of course, certain experiences I had that were surprising, like going to my first bullfight that was unexpected. However, as far as the people themselves, no (I did not have any pre-conceived ideas).

Again, the idea of educators having exposure before they travelled somewhere to study or live aligns with the work of Deardorff and her Process of Intercultural Competence (2004; 2006; & 2009). The other participants who described a transformation from being exposed to other cultures also support the work of Bennett (2011) in his Bennett Scale that measures the move toward ethnorelativism. Angela, a Spanish teacher in a rural area of Kentucky shared her pre-travel impressions.

Yes, I did have stereotypes, but I found out that there was so much more. I also think, at this time in my life...I realized that there was much more to culture than something that was on a postcard or travel commercial. I realized that there were so many tiny aspects that all add up to something big. I think that I had typical stereotypes that anyone else would have. My stereotypes about Spain and the Spanish people and their way of life had been dictated to be by television and the media. To me, I think that the stereotypes had been reinforced to me when I was taking Spanish starting in high school.

Before traveling to live and study abroad in Ecuador, Participant Juan, a Spanish teacher in Eastern Kentucky, described his experience and transformation in his perception about the Ecuadorian population. Juan explained:

I will predominantly go to focus on Ecuador since I was there for two and a half years and I had more time actually to absorb the culture. Thinking about Ecuador, I went down with the mindset that there was a lot of poverty, and there was poverty really but, it wasn't poverty. Coming from Eastern Kentucky and comparing and contrasting it to Ecuador I believe that there are many similarities when it comes to resources but differences in modernization...In many ways, Ecuador was more modern, especially in the cities. They were also surprised that I lived on a farm in a rural area. Everyone in Ecuador I met thought that in the United States everything was like living in New York. When I told them that I

would raise a garden with vegetables in the country, there was a lot of people that were shocked in a lot of ways.

Another example of needing proper cultural exposure to eliminate blanket stereotypes comes from an experience of a Kentucky world language educator. For example, the Spanish teacher Molly talked about what she thought about Spain before studying abroad there.

Now remember, I went in 1988 as a student. This was before internet and film. I had studied Spanish (I'm from Texas) with people from Mexico for the most part. I had been to Mexico, and my impression was this so, when I went to Spain, I thought Spain would be a Third World, Second World, like Mexico. I was astonished how clean organized and functional it was. I had some definite prejudices going in as an undergraduate student...

These interviews also revealed that interacting with cultures move people away from ethnocentrism to understand more about others in-becoming more open. Juan shared that the more he learned about the Ecuadorean people, they also learned about people in rural Kentucky. Molly echoes that she moved toward a better understanding of Spanish culture once she had met and interacted with people in a proper cultural context. One example of a clear transition surfaces during the interview of Erica, a rural World Language teacher. Erica explained that the first time she traveled to Spain, "I thought everybody was a bullfighter and that they would all be running with the bulls..."

however, she goes on to say, “It was something quite different, and something diverse.” She also said, “no one told me it would be diverse until I went there.”

Participant Amina spoke about her time while studying in Cuernavaca, Mexico. She stated that she felt comfortable there. Amina contributed this to having had several opportunities to travel to Mexico before living there for an extended time to study Spanish. During her interview, Amina indicated, “I had no stereotypes about the population because luckily, it wasn’t my first time to Mexico. I had previous experiences visiting Mexico.” Much like the experience of Amina, participant Maryam explained that once she had more exposure to the Costa Rican people she moved more toward forming an openness to them she did not have before. Before coming to Costa Rica, Maryam did not know what to expect or how to prepare. Maryam’s experience and personal change are much like that reported by Angela earlier in this section. The small aspects of the culture change the notion of a postcard existence into something much richer and complex.

Global Competency and Language Acquisition are influenced by Experiences

Life experiences are assimilated into our learning construction as theorized by both Piaget (1920) and Vygotsky (1976). Participant Luc, who now teaches French in a rural school in Central Kentucky, described how he first acquired French living in the former French colony of Morocco. He had family that lived in France, and he moved there for a better quality of life. His education and interactions have been formed by his linguistic and past geographical history. When he moved from Morocco, he moved to the racially diverse city of Paris. There he was exposed to a mixture of expatriates, tourists,

immigrants, and French natives. Luc's experience helped shape his knowledge and outlook, especially in the area of various francophone identities. Luc explains, "I teach from the stand point of French being a world language and not just in Europe, this has been my experience. This helps student break some of their stereotypes." Each teacher interviewed had a unique story but a collective point that prior life events help narrate views of global and intercultural competency. Before becoming a Spanish teacher, Robert spent eight years living in Mexico during his time as a missionary. When he was interacting with people first hand both locally and within the country, Robert reported that this influenced his outlook and understanding of population with different enculturation. Participants Maya and Nora both shared how traveling to multiple countries help these participants rely on global competency to their students while also providing them with several perspectives. These examples help to demonstrate taking competency out of being associated with the target language only and truly providing more of a global world view.

Studying abroad experiences during academic studies was a highly cited occurrence among the participants. Often, the study abroad lasted for at least a semester and in some cases, there was multiple studies aboard programs attended. Also, travel before studying abroad or post studies often discussed. Participants indicated that one experience led to the next or even to multiple experiences. In a high percentage of reporting participants told how they always want to travel now after having experiences outside their culture. Angela stated, "I have studied abroad in my college program where I was in Madrid for a semester, and then I have traveled throughout Latin America to visit." Juan also lists a pattern of experience,

The first time I went out of the country was to Spain...then I did a summer program in Costa Rica. Next I lived in Ecuador for two and half years. Lastly, I studied in Mexico for 4-6 weeks in summer.

Yusuf had language education from the Defense Language Institute in California. However, this educational training was partly in direct preparation for a job that would first take him to Panama and then to Spain. Erin, a participant from the Northern Kentucky area had grown up in Panama before moving to Kentucky and becoming a teacher. She shares that her education also included travel and at the time of the interview she was preparing for a trip to Ecuador and planned on communicating with her students via online programs.

Lindsey shared that growing up in Western Kentucky made her curious about other cultures. She felt like there was not real exposure growing up in her area. She shared that when given the opportunity to travel during college she took advantage of the availability at that point of her life. Talking about her academic experiences Lindsey said:

The first time I studied abroad was in Spain as an undergraduate. The program was a summer program for five weeks, in Segovia, Spain. I lived with a host family who helped me get over the anxiety of speaking Spanish because I had only had two years of language learning in college. Next, I studied in Morelia, Mexico. Morelia is in the state of Michoacán. I also lived with a host family there. The program was during the fall semester, so I lived there for about three months.

The French Teacher, Lynne, shared that her experience traveling to France for study, turned into living there and becoming engrossed in French culture and worked for many years. Lynne talked about her time abroad:

I went abroad in 1999 to do my junior year abroad as an undergraduate, I stayed for that year and completed that certificate and then stayed to complete a year of post-bac work at the University Of Paris. After, I immediately entered a two years master's program in Paris. Then I started a professional life where I did internships and returned to University to study law for three years while I was working full time. So, in total I have lived in Paris or the greater Paris area for six years.

These examples outline that life, academic, and professional experiences all impact what individuals will go on to think and experience in the context of global competency. In each of these participants' lives, previous cultural exposure helped formulate their outlook both personally and in helping guide others. The professionals interviewed for this study help shape the current landscape of language and global competency in part from they experienced. These experiences indicate that exposure to other cultures help guide participants to interact more with people from different cultures and to help spread that locally in their communities that they currently live and teach in. In all cases one can assume that the participants' lives were influenced by their surrounding at home or abroad. Maffoon and Sabah (2012) point out in their research that people are learning from their surroundings and that this continues throughout life.

Global Competence Increases Self-Reflection

During the interviews, a theme that came to the surface was about self-reflection. Both the participants and descriptions of the participants' students demonstrated a cultural self-reflection once being exposed to how others carry out life practices. Kotthof and Spencer-Oatley (2007) research pointed to people learning more about other culture when comparing two or more dissimilar cultures. This practice allows an individual to think about a new culture while uncovering often overlooked aspects obscured by enculturation. When asked about global competence awareness the most common response had another culture to compare to enables individuals to have a reference for their cultural practices. Cultural referencing, for some, could be the first step in moving toward ethno-relevant behavior on Deardorff's scale (2006, 2009). Some examples from the interviews highlight what the world language educators are witnessing and experiencing when exposing students to global competency. Lynne says:

I am bridging their minds, and that sounds very cliché, but to worlds outside of their hometown. That is my big push, to get the students out of here to see the world. It changes who you are when kids have been abroad with me for example, after a few weeks they are totally different, the way they look at the world, they act differently, and they have a special bond.

In a more remote part of the State, Juan sees himself as the point of contact for his students to the rest of the world. He makes learning as real as possible and highlights that the reference points for cultures can be found in the state without ever leaving. He also

uses resources that allow for contact to come to his classroom. He explained that he would even fund expenses out of pocket to make a comparative learning experience possible for his student population. Juan shared the move toward reflection and how he creates opportunity for his students:

First, I let them know that we live in a remote area, but our area is not as remote as they think when it comes to the outside world. We are part of a global society. Last year I was able to bring one of the local senators and our world language directors as well as a Kentucky Department of Education executive director that has a background in French Studies. Everyone who came to visit my students told them that Kentucky is not a remote tiny place and that we are globalized, every time you use a Lexmark printer students are using global products. Procter and Gamble products right here in Cincinnati is a global product, horse racing, bourbon, all of these things have global aspects. Now, my students can appreciate what is happening in my classroom. We make Skype phone calls and connect with the outside world within a class. We have been able to call three continents, North America, South America, and Europe all in one class. Students obtain their research by calling a restaurant or by calling a hotel. The students can tell me what time zone the call is in, and this dramatically affects them. It goes way passed what a textbook could do. These activities allow students to reflect on what happens locally. This is obvious when students pre and post journal a learning activity.

Participants also shared that with high school students often learn simply about comparing. Lynne said, “Students will realize its’ two different things, it is apples and

oranges. It is alright not to make the apples become oranges but to know the difference between the two.” Luc shares, “I expose them to various French-speaking world cultures in North Africa, Caribbean, and mainland Europe. They are somewhat surprised but they begin to know that there are people different from us, which are not so different from us.”

The world language teachers all shared that their students went through some comparison and self-reflection as a result of being exposed to other ways of life. The teachers guided students and reminded them that differences were a normal way of life. This ability to pass this concept on to other generations of learners demonstrates that the educators themselves had made comparisons for themselves and had come to terms with this reality. Again, Lynne summarized, “Sometimes my students want me to pick France or America. I tell them I like them both for different reasons. I like French market and boutiques, but I also like American strip malls.” These types of comparisons and reflections allow students to experience more, have more options, and become more aware of the world in which they inhabit. This enables students to make new connections as they explore possibilities they have not thought about otherwise.

These practices allow the educators to move students toward understanding others and break away from Piaget (1976). He witnessed that people are not exposed to others and other concepts imposed their own cultural beliefs and perceptions.

Global Competence and Attitudes toward Others

A large concept in global competence is the ability to understand more about others and other populations. When paired with a world language it is used for better facilitating proper intercultural communication between individuals and groups (Byram 1997). It is understood that being able to view from another's perspective will help the orator communicate more effectively and efficiently. This skill seeks to fill in what just mastering a language only cannot do on a cross-cultural level.

Erin shared her ideas about how global competence can change students' views of others from outside their culture:

The more we can do to expose our students to other cultures, especially in a positive light, so they are willing to listen to people from other cultures and consider other ideas. I think that this is a fundamental part of our education. You have to do your work on what people are living through and why they are living through it to understand it. Until then, I do not think that you can make fully human decisions.

Lindsey elaborated on the move some of her students have to become more open to other people. She explains the experience as a positive one:

I think that sometimes you have to work to shatter some of their preconceived ideas about certain people. This includes my students who have grown up around a lot of other cultures. They have an advantage that I did not have growing up.

However, even though I teach students with a wide amount of backgrounds, there are things they have not been exposed to prior. For example, when we talk about racism against indigenous people in countries sometimes my students are surprised because it goes against the narrative they were taught in another country or by their family. Once they have time to work this out, they normally have a very positive change in the cultures or aspects of culture that we are talking about in class.

In a rural Western Kentucky school, Yusuf explained how his students begin his class as open or closed to new cultures at the beginning of the semester. He equated certain students who were more open to having more of a *growth mindset*. The students who were closed off had more characteristics of a *fixed mindset*. From the onset of the semester, there will be students more inclined to being open to learning while there are others who are not willing to see past their culture. Yusuf describes his school as not being very affluent, and he believes this is one of the reasons why there is a population of students who are not very open initially. He said that he helps the students who are initially closed off in two ways. The first is that he guides them from his perspective. “I teach them from what I understand, being someone who has lived years in other countries.” The second way he reaches out to his students is by saying, “Think of it as we are all extended family, they are distant cousins who may just speak differently than you.” He goes on to say that, “Students become more apt to learn about other cultures when they view it this way.” Ultimately Yusuf said, “Students end class with less egocentrism, and many tell me how they think of everyone as being in one big family.”

This section highlights several different research points from the theoretical framework. People can move toward understanding others as pointed out by Bennett (2011) and Deardorff (2009). Students who are globally minded and become open to truly living in a global society can become more like what Clarck (1997) reported as being culturally pluralistic. Lastly, this section shows how teachers can tier the interactions of student to others in the world to solely give them exposure. Tiring interactions (Smit, Van Eerde & Bakker 2013) enable learning while not overstressing their Zone of Proximal development (Vygotsky, 1976).

Global Competency Completes Language Learning

The world language teachers interviewed for this study all emphasized that there must be global competency present to have a pragmatic language learning experience. Languages are not complete on their own. All participants shared that there were a set or sets of global competencies that student must learn to make their world language learning realistic (Byram 1998). Meaning, no matter which teacher, their location, the language they teach, or school they serve, teachers are aware that students must be taught global competency. One theme that was persistence throughout the interviews was that students gain an openness to understanding information about others and their way of life. The participants expressed either directly or by using synonyms to describe moving away from ethnocentrism. Lynne spoke about culture learning-conjunction with language learning, “The first step is having students learn about a culture that is relevant to their culture.” She also goes on to say, “Learning that we are all human beings and the human experience is organized in different ways.” Similarly, Angela said, “The top competency

is not to be ethnocentric.” She goes on to say that she explains much of what we do as cultures are dictated by climate, history, and location. Similar to Lynne and Angela in their interviews, Maryam said, “Definitely students must be capable of knowing people are different, and we should accept them for who they are.”

During the interviews, the participants stated that they believed being open to others allows for communication to occur. Students have more confidence to apply the target language to situations if they know how to behave in an appropriate context when interacting in an intercultural manner. The idea of global competence aiding language in being socially appropriate interaction is reaffirmed by the work of (Buttjes and Byram 1991).

Tolerance and Oneness

The majority of the participants shared that they helped guide students to understand the human connection. Again, this is supported by the works of Bennett (2011) and Deardorff (2009). The world language teachers spoke of a similar phenomenon where students begin their classes closed to other people and points of view. After prompting and reminding students that all people are *one* and being exposed to cultural material they displayed or reported an understanding of this human truth. Again, Yusuf explains what he says to students to promote the right mindset, “Everyone is our extended family, they might speak a different language, but we are related.” Lynne discussed this in the context of cultural comparison. She said, “I allow them to see that there is no better way, just different ways, then students realize different cultures provide

different points of view.” Amina disclosed, “Many of my students from other cultures are already a little more open, however for my other kids, this is the first time they are experiencing another culture. We always examine the similarities and in time; they get it.”

Juan detailed an example of a student who gained tolerance during his interview. This example below helps illustrate the process that a student experiences and how it affects other students in the class. Juan’s process of assessing students understanding and change yielded that a very closed off student can move toward a positive understanding of others in just one class activity. Juan recounts:

For example, I took a field trip to Morristown, and I did a pre, mid, and post a survey on students engagement and understanding. Results showed that the class as a whole was not very engaged in the classroom, however, during and post field trip I was shocked on how good the reflections were. There were a lot of good reflection and presentations that came out of this experiences. I had amazing remarks from one girl who had been a behavior issue in my class before the trip, and she always questioned why she had to learn Spanish. During her presentation, she said that learning a second language and about people was not important before going to Morristown. During the presentation, she shared how seeing people on a personal level and interacting with them allowed her to understand that we are all human. She also stated that she wants to learn more, and it was one of her favorite assignments at school.

Participants painted a picture of not only introducing students to other cultures but allowing students to alleviate their perceived separateness from other people and cultures. The participants from higher income school and the urban schools tended to share that some of their students were already opened and eager to understand the concept of tolerance or being connected to other cultures different from their own. When students did not have a tolerant understanding, students could accept the idea of tolerance and cultural interconnectedness in time. Also, their classmates could help some students understand this concept tolerance and acceptance. The teachers in the more rural schools reported that some of the students were harder to reach because of their initial closed off approach to others and that the students would take more time to bring to an understanding that every individual is not separate from others. However, each participant described the ability to transform the large majority of the students' prior conditioning and learnings during their classroom time.

Global Competency aids in Realistic Intercultural Communication

Many of the educators interviewed for this study explained how they would like to make learning more realistic for their students. In explaining how they would do that, several themes emerged from their dialogue. One of the themes was that they would replace certain elements associated with the traditional summative test to help make communication more authentic. When explaining how they would go about assessing the students' work, many of the teachers shared that they would put students into a *real-world* situation or mimic one as close as possible. Mimicking life outside the classroom demonstrates the world language teachers' desires to make learning practical while

uniting language learning with global competency. Since the real world is now a global world students can begin to understand global competence in communication as part of functionalism (Enfield, 2013).

Some of the participants shared their ideas directly related to global competency completing a world language study. The participants said that language and global competency could not be separated. Luc, the French teacher, believes teaching things like hand gestures, regional accents, and body proximity all aided in teaching communication with a language.

Other participants supported Luc's ideas however, they also had different emphasis that they combined with language. For example, like Luc, Erica thinks that regional accents are important. She goes on to say. "Student need to know this accompanied with geography skills. It is easier to teach them when they know where things are located." Angela shared that she emphasized the same as Erica, "Geography is central to teaching how enculturation is different dictated by surroundings."

Other teachers' ideas that stand out are the educators who cited global competency as being important to language but had a more general aspect of global competence they would pair with the target language. A few of these world language educators even had a little challenge when they were describing what was important. However, it could be summed up as a general openness and willing to work toward learning about others. Maryam mentioned, "Simply knowing about people allows you to

communicate better.” Nora made a similar comment with a general competency, “Knowing more about culture will help you use the language better with other.” When using the language with others, what might come to one’s mind is making communication realistic. Amina said her key to global competency was, “Making the learning real and creating a real context for the students to learn in.”

Lastly, the global competency that is linked with language learning is one that would be very hard to measure. The view of measuring global competence is more of an attitude or a positive mindset requirement for success. Yusuf said, “I always tell students that attitude determines your altitude, like a plane's controls.” He said that once students obtain a positive outlook on intercultural learning that everything else improves. Lindsey also shares that she must change students’ attitudes for intercultural learning to take place. Lindsey said that when students know about a culture and are opened to it, this is when she has seen the most success in the classroom for both language and culture learning.

In the next section, provided are data that addresses Research Question 2: What is perceived by foreign language teachers in Kentucky middle and high schools as best practices to convey intercultural competencies to students and in what ways is it measured?

Administration Support

There were many participants who reported that their administration could provide more support for them when it came to global competencies and world languages. In fact, eighteen of the twenty participants had consistently similar responses. The most frequent answer, when participants were asked if they had support from the administration, was, “No.” Out of the two positive answers, one was accompanied by a story on how they had just been reprimanded for showing appropriate cultural material for cultural comparisons. Juan said, “I just had to talk to my principal for showing a movie that was perfect for social interactions in Spain. However, it was different from the United States and students complained.” The cultural context was not that of local enculturation, and the school administration had to have a meeting with the teacher about the class material and lesson. Often teachers said that they did not have input on classroom equipment, and support might only come from mentioning a personal development session. Maryam’s response to being asked if she had support was, “Yes and No.” She goes on to say, “For example, we had an open house tonight and they made no mention of offering my advanced placement class even though there were students who have requested it... I do not feel real support to be totally honest.” Zara’s answer starts off sounding the same but is a little more positive. She answered the question, “Yes, Um, the entire support I need? No. I feel like the administration, in general, is supportive. However, I am not even given enough instructional time.” Amina echoes Zara and Maryam by explaining that she just feels, *neutral*. She is concerned about her principals but nevertheless believes there is *some* support outside of school, especially with the Kentucky

World Language Association. Amina believes that her principals, “are more concerned with classroom management than anything else.”

Some examples of the complete negative answers are demonstrated perfectly in what the French teacher Luc experiences at his school. He is experiencing an overtly negative act that will affect his entire program. When asked about administrator support for global competency in the world languages he replies:

No, I don't, and that is a long story. I'll give you a good example. Right now our principal, after the previous one, is trying to phase out French from our school.

Now, I view this as something opposite of what you just said. That does not support for foreign language or global competency, you know. So, now, they're going to try to offer a dozen new elective courses, and they are trying to dismantle the French program.

Along the same lines, Angela tells of an administration that supports world language in a way to advertise that, “We have world languages at our school, and we are providing a service.” However, she feels that the support does not go past that. “I feel like I don't get the support with the materials, attention, and given importance.” She goes on to say that if her subject was tested that she feels, “I would probably get more attention than I currently do, but since I'm world language, I'm on par with physical education.” Maya also expresses that she has support but, “only to a degree.” She says this is because no one can give her feedback on lessons and she has no colleagues because she is the only world language teacher at her school.

Maya also points out one other shortcoming that is mentioned by many of the other interviewees as well. That is the fact that administrator does not possess the proper knowledge of global competency or world language to help anyone else. Yusuf answered that he cannot say every administrator is supportive. He said, “Do they understand...the language process, culture, what’s involved with it and where it goes?” Yusuf does say that it is possible to get support from administrators, “If they have the right background, it’s not like math or science where you direct correlation instantaneously.”

The remaining examples of support from administrator come from the participants who indicated that their principals were only interested in their program or their contributions as teachers because of gathering material for the program review. A couple of educators even said that the program review was the only reason their administrators mention global competency. Nora relays, “I have no input on technology or equipment...They want to try to give support when it comes time for the program review.” Robert says something similar when he says, “Yes, they’ve to ask me to be the lead contact for the program review.” Erica goes into a little more depth with this topic: Well, now that there is a program review they have started paying attention, however, before the program review I feel that most of the administrators did not pay too much attention to global competency. Many didn’t know what they are, and they dealt with world language like it was something that they had to include but it wasn’t important as everything being tested on a standardized test.

Lastly, the resounding positive support only came from two participants but, what they shared was very positive and demonstrates that leaders have a capacity for more than what many are currently providing. Lindsey answered, “I think that they do support us in general.” A little more detailed answer comes from Juan, “Yes, and it’s not just my administration at the school level but from the school board as well.” He goes on to say that he has gotten support on cultural field trips, using Skype in the classroom, and the assistant superintendent hired someone to start teaching Spanish to younger students so they will be better prepared when they get to Juan at the secondary level.

Student Challenges

The world language teachers overall reported that there was more acceptance coming from the urban school students and schools whose demographics were of higher income levels. The educators who self-reported that they served in rural areas tended to report that they had to work to get students interested in global competency and language learning. The term most often used for the rural area students was that they are *egocentric*. The teacher reported that the students from the rural areas required more energy to move away from their enculturated views to views of other cultures and intercultural relations. This can be from lack of means to be exposed to other cultures and places. Piaget (1976) points out that learners do apply their own cultural views, beliefs and perceptions when learning. When talking about her students, Molly said, “They are still young, they have no experience with another culture, they don’t understand anywhere else.” Juan speaking about his students and their geographical location said, “They are very limited in opinion, and they have a very limited view of their country.”

He also said, “They are from a very conservative area, and they are very closed off, however, in time I can have them see other parts of society without being any less prideful in their country.” Lynne reported that students are closed often closed off until she points out French culture in rural areas of Kentucky. “I ask them where their heritage is from, many who know are European. I name the French towns, cities, and products from right here in the state.”

From the interviews of the world language educators, it appears that the students from the rural areas are closed off to learning about other because of a stronger sense of separateness and more of a feeling of isolation from other populations. Some students appear to be stuck in what Eun (2010) cites as people learning from their cultural norms. This is partly because they are lacking the awareness that we are living in a global society and are capable of what Clarck (1997) calls cultural plurality. The world educator do report the ability to teach and improve the global learning of these students, but they also point out that it takes more time and energy to get them to the point of understanding and being open.

Creating Materials

When asked if participant had any pre-made, pre-packaged materials to help facilitate the teaching of global competency, all reported that they did not. In every case, the participants described the process that they went through to make or obtain to help teach global competency in the classroom. Lindsey stated, “...This is time-consuming because we do have to find so many materials ourselves and while I enjoy doing that, I

have to plan too. If you're a first-year teacher, it's super time consuming." She goes on to say as well, "Materials get dated in five years, and I prefer to find things on Pinterest or language teacher blogs to keep things current." Luc disused what he uses, "I use the internet and videos, and I try to get things from a variety of places." Angela told me that she believed that books and workbooks might not illustrate a true intercultural competency and that she uses technology to get students in touch with others students. She said, "I find that most of my materials come from online, I also use technology to put students in contact with the culture or sub-culture as it pertains to the language." Nora did tell that she had tried to get physical materials from her school board, but it was too much work. "I find stuff on the internet because you know, it's hard to even getting school board, the administration on board." Already present in this chapter is the answer from Juan, who said that he used online programs such as Skype to have real-time interactions between students and native speakers that extended far beyond the reach of his classroom. Molly said that I know it sounds superficial, but YouTube is probably my biggest tool that I use in the classroom. Using YouTube on the internet allows me to show students things in context and sometimes from other experts. These practices are supported by Abrams (2014) who demonstrated that using technology and media can help a learner understand the social context of communication.

Other world language teachers shared that brought back ideas that they could access online once they expose themselves to relevant symposiums and workshops. Several educators cited the same workshop as being beneficial for bringing online resources back to students to help illustrate and explain global competency and global

competency within the state. Several also shared that they were able to obtain online material when in contact with other colleagues.

Emphasis on Large Culture Concepts

When describing global competency in their classroom, a high number of participants explained what they focused on for teaching this subject. When describing what they did and talked about in class they recounted of a class climate that revolved around the larger cultural concepts--these are the concepts referred to by the work of McConachy and Hara (2012) which are cultural attributes that can be watered down sometimes to the point of stereotypes. Some of the participants spoke about regional hand gestures, accents, differing beliefs within a culture, many of these world language teachers stuck to the broader components of cultures associated with their respective world language. Luc, "I see French as being Multinational expressed differently in different countries." Some of the rural teachers believed that they were limited to exposing their students because it took some time to have their student have buy-in to the subject and cultures within the subject. Nora told me, "It's hard to get them on board, but once I do I can make connections." Maryam shared, " I'm teaching them everything, about a way of life, from the way people dress to the food they eat, the religious beliefs, daily routine, language, everything." Robert emphasized that more than anything he makes cultural comparisons. Several other participants echoed similarly about culture in the classroom. In Roberts's words, "I mainly compare and contrast cultural aspects to that of our culture." Erica, "I compare our culture and other cultures to teach students that everybody does the same thing."

Teachers shared that they were the resource that students needed for cultural learning. Some of the teachers were native speakers of the language they were teaching, and others had lived abroad and traveled for extended periods of time. With this, they shared about how they taught culture. Normally, it was still described as the larger cultural concepts and veered away from smaller more intricate cross-cultural details.

In closing, teachers can take students away from being solely ethnocentric in the classroom and allow them to become more open. Improving the ethnocentric climate in a classroom might be achieved through comparing cultures to our own culture and focusing on some of the larger cultural details that would stand out to most anyone. The practice of making comparisons was referred to by several of the interviewees for making a more tolerant class understanding.

Measuring Global Competency

In the areas of measuring global competency, almost all participants reported that they measured in a formative assessment or informal type of way. The tendency to be more formative in assessment for global competence has been cited as common by Zheg (2014). Zheg writes that the very nature of intercultural skills do not lend them to summative assessments. There were two participants who reported that they did not assess at all, and no participant reported including global competence on any summative assessments to help measure student mastery of the information presented. Some expressed that they did not feel like they knew how to assess properly while others describe what their practice was on assessments. Erica described what assessing students is like for her currently, “I think right now I only have summative assessments where I

can quickly check students without disrupting them.” Lindsey shared, “It is still a work in progress, and I’ve gone more to using *I can* statement for assessments.” Molly reported that students wanted to be told what they needed to learn. In her words, this is how she handles the students requests, “I make a rubric with everything on there they should tell me. That way they know what I expect.” Juan shared that he often has his student’s complete journals or they complete questionnaires’ before, during, and after activities. He shared that he tries to make his feedback to students one-on-one. “I meet with them and talk about their reflection response and what they wrote about.” Yusuf said that he used the Kentucky World Language Standards as a way to measure. He stated, “I look at the framework and use the interpretive, communicative, interpersonal, and presentational to look at what is being presented by students.” I also, use *I can* statement to assess what students can share what they are learning.” Lynne shared that for her classroom, she used materials off a blog that incorporated *I can* statements. “I use a language teacher blog that has assessments made to assess students with the “I can” statements. These statements include cultural focuses embedded in them.” Zara talked about how when it came to global competencies her assessments were kept informal. She thinks that class discussion is the best way to gauge students learning of global competency. Nora revealed that global competency assessment was not a focus but happened as a by-product of teaching world language. She said, “I normally don’t assess them directly, we talk about culture as it applies to language.” Robert conveyed, “I normally just tie in global competency into a language lesson, so I just ask as we go.”

The examples above help illustrate the current state of Kentucky's world language classrooms. Students are being assessed on global competencies by having more summative assessments built into activities. Participants believed that assessments built into classroom activities is the best way to assess students' global competence. Many participants stated that they were not comfortable enough with Global Competence to assess beyond in-class scenarios. A few reported that they needed to learn better ways to assess global competency.

Feedback on Global Competency

Students can measure their growth and monitor their understanding of global competency topics as they relate to language in some very specific ways. Feedback in global competency classes is often verbal and informal. Juan shared that his feedback is one-on-one while others described their feedback as given in a group setting. Two teachers reported that they did not assess their students' global competency, therefore there is no way teachers can provide feedback. Feedback also appears to be stand alone because there is no talk about what students have to do if they are not showing they have mastered concepts. Many teachers who focus on *I can* are allowing students to self-assess their work. Therefore, a follow-up assessment could be made as the students gain more confidence or learn more about the targeted competency. Van Houtan (2013) writes that student journals are a good way to give feedback and record student progress. The *I can* statement assessment allow students to be in the driver's seat of what they are learning and lends itself to teaching more comprehensible input and less about grammar.

Change in Practices

Every participant interview stated that there was something they would like to change the way they taught. The world language educators interviewed all reported something different that they would like to change. However, there were several teachers who would want to change classroom practices. Robert cites that he would want to have more face-to-face opportunities for his students. He answered, “I am working on having cultural nights where students can have interviews with our growing Hispanic population.” Zara reported, “I would like to make language learning more relevant to the students, so they feel like it's valuable for their time. I want them to learn culture through language.” Yusuf reports a more interpersonal change that he would have in his classroom. “I would have more of a connection with the students, a personal connection because relationships mean something.” Lindsey said that she would always improve. “I would constantly challenge myself and improve.” Keeping in line with changing classroom practices Angela answered, “I would change by removing all paper tests from my classes, and I would make all aspects of learning as realistic as possible. Luc also says, “I would have fewer tests, and I would make things enjoyable for the students. I would also try to have more control over what I can share with the students.”

Maryam supports what the previous teachers mentioned, and she said that she would reduce tests and make things more practical for the students. Erica practically restated what Maryam said in bringing a real pragmatism to her classes. The way that Amina shared that she would make it more real is by, “Using the target language more.” Nora also agrees with the other educators and she desires to make her classroom more realistic

as well. “I would make my classes more hands on, more speaking and doing, opposed to, paper and pencil assessments. Things would be more project based.” For Lynne change would come with embedding grammar into authentic texts for students to improve their reading with the target language while students learn about pop-culture. She also shares, “I would do more to increase the priority of foreign languages.”

The large wishes come from Juan, Molly, and Becki. They all would take students traveling. Using the world and practical situations as their learning experiences to put students into real world situations for immediate learning outcomes. For an example Juan reported, “In my personal teaching practices, I would probably like to see the ability actually to travel abroad with my school.” He does go on to say, however, that travel is banned from his school due to liability issues.

In this section above, I covered how the study participant world language teachers change without any limitations or based on their self-awareness. In each case, the teachers described how they assess based on what they thought would lead to a better practice for their students benefit. Each teacher displayed a growth mindset attitude in their approach to improving their work or their class offerings.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Paying proper attention to intercultural differences and global knowledge is long overdue in mainstream secondary education. While many parties appear to be making an effort and improving their offerings to all educational stakeholders, the change cannot come quickly enough. Various forms of technology, globalized economic networks, rapid transportation, and world events are mixing populations for both temporary and permanent periods of time. Understanding cultural practices, subcultural practices, world views, interpersonal interactions, assumptions, and geographical influences impart a greater personal understanding, which may lead to the best possible and most productive outcomes. The move from creating an educated individual who is inclined to apply his or her learning through an ethnocentric outlook is now replaced with students who are more equipped to use a more critical, ethnorelativism in Kentucky. The model of grammar and language acquisition is now replaced with a global understanding and application of world languages in a more functional context. The Kentucky Department of Education has made a commendable effort thus far in bringing global competencies into the focus of language education in the commonwealth. This practice is, as of early 2016, in its infancy, but is being spread to other class subjects and becoming more formalized to guide student learning and understanding.

As with all teaching concepts and standards, the transfer of material from a study is achieved through the classroom educator. Gaining a view of world language teachers and their experiences in a global context will help all parties involved in education

understand the areas of possible strengths and weaknesses to address while pursuing a contemporary global understanding. Equipping students and teaching others in the educational system who are less exposed to global competencies is a responsibility that is currently placed singularly on the shoulders of world language educators. While many of the educators have a broad array of cultural exposures and experiences, it is not always the case. The exposure of those with firsthand knowledge, world views, and understanding of cultural attributes who are currently perceived as leaders of global competency make programming, adjustments, and adding new programs more transparent for educational organizations.

The data derived from this dissertation study participants reveals that world language teachers in Kentucky have a keen understanding of what culture is and how it should be explained and taught. Overall, participants were confident and knowledgeable about the cultures that were associated with the languages they taught. Most were able to share how the overarching concepts of global competency and intercultural knowledge could be applied to any culture and openness to the world at large. The participants' concepts of cultures were closely worded to the culture definition of Matsumoto (2007). Overwhelmingly, the participants' used the same words as Matsumoto and they also understood culture and language combined as defined by Byram (1997).

While the majority of the educators in this study were from rural areas, many reported that the student population tended to be less open to discussing cultures that they perceived as foreign. This was a challenge for many participants, but they noted that studying their target cultures gave them an opportunity to compare and contrast other cultures with that of the United States or Kentucky. Students who were reported as less

open to other cultures might lack knowledge about their origins or regional history of the people who make up their immediate area. This is the same phenomena that Deardorff (2006; 2009) points out in her work. This is also supported by the *Bennett Scale* (1986). This scale demonstrates how people with less exposure deny, are unaware, or unwilling to learn about other cultures. The view of combining global competency as it applies to the target culture and destination language was overwhelmingly agreed on by the participants. Each participant displayed a high concept of which culture is from an epistemological standpoint. They also demonstrated an understanding of how vital knowing a language is to fully gain insight into a culture and people.

All participants' spoke in ways that were reminiscent of Bryam (1987). They demonstrated a high level of understanding that language and culture create a functionalism, as researched by Enfield (2013). The lack or disproportionate absence of linguistic and cultural soft skills can perhaps lead to cross-cultural problems in communication. Participants were clear that language is a wellspring of culture, and culture is a wellspring for language. Each needs and feeds the other to create understanding and a developmental evolution.

All but two of the participants demonstrated a strong global understanding and were open to all cultures. The only two participants who indicated slight misunderstanding toward groups routinely targeted in the media and popular culture were the two participants who lacked the most exposure to academics and first-person experience with other cultures. Both were rural area educators who were also from the countryside, and they simply could not afford the time or financial burden of being abroad for an extended length of time. While their comments were not strongly negative,

they were out of character for the other 18 participants who were of similar career and educational demographics. This indicates that interview questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14 highlight that a teacher has formed strong global competence either before or during the early years of teaching. Most educators' experiences in study abroad were during their time in college. This touches on several works within the theoretical frame work of this study. Again, Deardorff (2011) demonstrates that attitudes have an effect on the external outcome of an individual. Exposure to cultures can lead to cultural plurality as highlighted by Clark (1997). Lastly, Sercu (2006) who writes that an overwhelming identifier for world language teachers in an intercultural ability.

Participants shared a broad array of reasons that global competency should be taught with other language acquisition. The majority of these reasons overlapped and intertwined, forming a patchwork that agreed or complemented each other. The attributes of social stewardship and economic preparedness dominated the manner in which students must obtain language and cultural know-how simultaneously. Also addressed was the topic of adding to students' overall education and abilities to better process all learning, both in and out of school. The ideas that knowing how others would approach a solution or the enhanced multilingual brain wiring led to participants sharing how important these soft skills are for future career-seeking citizens. These citizens are the population required by the work to be more driven by intellect and problem-solving skills and less by an industrial skill set. Metacognition was also raised in the conversations; the majority of the educators shared that students would have more avenues to analyze and think about the way they think and come to an answer with a firmer grasp of world cultures. This would lead to a more critically analytical student who is more likely to

refine his or her work and take a growth-mindset approach as opposed to a fixed mindset. Therefore, students could learn more, with better detail and for a longer period in their lives.

Participants revealed that culture and language were inseparable, classes tended to focus on acquiring use of the target language first. The majority of teachers had a functional approach to this strategy that included target and global cultural aspects build into performance-based lessons. These lessons often reflected what students were able to achieve and could be assessed in multiple categories that all centered around communication. The few educators who still taught with a grammar and word acquisition focus built culture into their lessons by mainly focusing on the big concepts of a target culture. These are the large concepts that are laid out by McConachy and Hara 2013). The influence or lack of influence was evident from the answers given when a teacher was disseminating his or her experiences into the class to help enhance the students' understanding or contributing to the overall sense of open-mindedness.

A comprehensive report from the participants was that there are no written materials available or in use for teaching global competency. However, in line with their keen understanding of culture, most stated that a book or workbook cannot keep up with the changes that occur in a culture and, therefore, these fixed media are not the best tools for teaching global competency. All shared that they used the Internet to derive most of their materials and class activity ideas when focusing on clear intercultural communication. In addition to using the Internet as a tool for gathering materials and lesson ideas, educators shared that they used the Internet as a vehicle for communication and collaboration. Programs such as Skype and Adobe Connect, blogs, videos, and

international phone and messaging apps are all being used to allow students to gain firsthand experiences on a virtual platform. This seems like a setback, however, it can be a very positive occurrence. Abrams (2014) writes that you can bring direct social context to language lessons making them more pragmatic. Costa and Mendes (2016) research shows that this practice is now a necessity for learning in proper intercultural context. With the Internet demanding people to have better cultural soft skills because they are in greater virtual contact, it only makes sense that the Internet would become a teaching tool used to acquire the appropriate skills. World language educators in Kentucky appear to be doing this current educational practice.

Many of the participants in the study spoke about bringing in people, cultural artifacts, and food as ways to help their students gain insight into cultures. In the most three-dimensional sense, educators also expressed that, when they had the support, they would make lessons or require homework that placed students in firsthand experiences and settings with native speakers. This was explained as a way for students to gain cultural and linguistic knowledge from a native or heritage speaker in a local context that highlighted the need for intercultural communication.

Most participants shared that they had a lack of support from their administration. There was an example of a teacher being reprimanded for a best practice and a ban on travel to expose students to languages and cultures. Almost every participant viewed that they only got support when it was time for the world language program review that included global competence. Many participants who said they knew their administrators well cited that their administrators lacked language and multi-cultural exposure. Therefore, this would indicate that the teachers' lack of support is derived from their

administrators being low on the Bennett Scale (1997). This low position on the scale shows that they are closed off or indifferent as a result of lack of education and life experiences. Wang (2016) research indicates that there must be more training for teachers and administrators alike for improving overall global and intercultural sensitivity.

Global competency was reported as being a central aspect of reducing the otherness myth and helping facilitate interactions that would bring about deeper, more empathic social and business communicative understanding. Dynamic, long-term learning was cited as fitting in with the knowledge of global and intercultural competency. Sometimes, the interviewees emphasized general and target cultures interchangeably. However, it was always positive and presented in the light of moving educational stakeholders to being more tolerant and strengthening social values. This also can be seen on both the Bennett Scale (1997) and Deardoff Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (2006; 2009). The more exposure the students are having the more they are realizing that they are a part of something larger. This happened when students were reported as more open or they had some type of classroom or life experience that changed their perception.

Recommendations

This research focused on the perception, practices, and experiences of Kentucky world language educators who are currently serving as teachers in the commonwealth. This study also was conducted for the purpose of finding out what teachers see and experience as global competencies are being taught to student populations or in regard to

support from their school administration. Practices and procedures in the classroom were investigated to gauge what global competency aspects were being upheld and disseminated in the learning environments. Lastly, educators' personal global and intercultural experiences were studied to help gain an understanding of which teachers best relay these ideas, concepts, and insights while delivering a world language education. Through these research goals, which were guided by the theoretical framework, a recommendation is made for the pedagogy of incorporating global competency, teacher development, and strengthening the true nature of human interconnectedness.

The commonwealth of Kentucky and the U.S. education system as a whole have a grave responsibility to develop students who are globally knowledgeable and linguistically capable of understanding others outside of their perceived self and enculturation. Immediately, school administrators and boards must reconsider the lack of attention given to world language and global competency. This attention includes the age at which students begin their language training and giving attention to these subject areas. Teacher and students training and development could be greatly improved with courses, manuals, and ongoing personal development to enhance outcomes for these dynamic concepts, which may be presented differently by teachers and received differently by students. All suggestions in this section are based on this study and the empirical nature of this study. The recommendation that I have found to be fit are as follows.

Recommendation 1: Make language learning with intercultural knowledge as highly important as other areas of study. While English remains the *lingua franca* for most of the world, students will not have a complete education unless they can

communicate with others on their terms in other cultural settings. The ability to honestly use intercultural communication is a necessity for supporting and promoting the best possible social and economic outcomes. These issues start with our state and span to a global level. The better implementation of global competency mixed with language skills enables students to come in contact with more information and lead to a growth mindset willing to think critically and solve problems from multiple angles, the capacity for which might be limited if a student possesses a monolingual, ethnocentric view in conjunction with education.

Recommendation 2: Educate students on the global population in Kentucky.

The world language educators interviewed all knew how important knowing culture was to understanding a language. However, their focuses were frequently on cultures in which they had a direct understanding from firsthand experience. While there were native speakers, the majority of the experiences came from academic studies abroad or work experience abroad as an expatriate or as a result of military service. This experience allows students to have high reference points to compare and contrast culture and move toward critical improvements. This also allows students to remain unaware of the evidence of the target cultures and language in their immediate areas.

Another negative aspect is that a diverse selection of cultures was never discussed as being explored past the large cultural concepts. It is important for students to gain confidence in speaking with anyone in the target language. A student who can build an idea of successful communication around an interaction is a student who will go on to learn and apply skills because his or her secure feeling provides motivation. Students should also be exposed to as many points of view and experiences as possible because

they all can contribute to students' cognition and metacognition, which can have a positive influence on their other learning. A complete mindfulness can be achieved when students realize that there are multiple cultures in proximity to them, and the skills they need can serve them just as well locally as they can globally. The label of “foreign” that their parents and guardians apply to intercultural interactions plainly does not hold the weight it once did because students understand this is a false construct.

Recommendation 3: Give student feedback and allow for student reflection.

During the interviews, it became apparent that world language educators must either enable students to self-assess or be given assessments that are heavily influenced by cultural aspects within the learning. Students must also be given time to reflect and refine what they are learning and consider its application at home and abroad. The learning must be real and alive for students, especially those students who perceive themselves as isolated in the most rural areas of the state. Feedback and students’ input centering on the critical application of global competency and target language will allow students to see the possibilities and break down the mental barriers to tolerance and understanding.

Final Reflections

The U.S. educational system must move away from one focused on producing a student inclined exclusively to enter an industrial labor force. Kentucky is no different from the rest of the country. Furthermore, a large part of the state economy is derived from international business. To prepare for the global economy and to better understand the interconnectedness of humanity and human interactions, students must be given the opportunities that were not given to many of their current administrators and teachers. Focusing on students applying what they have learned in a dynamic way to fit and

assimilate quickly and efficiently in different cultural context is a skill that is currently a necessity and is predicted to grow. Applying global and intercultural knowledge to language learning will allow students to know others and operate in the world with a better understanding and richness not otherwise able to be achieved. This richness can be manifested in all aspects of life, benefitting individuals as a whole. Outside the realm of academics and personal interests, the understanding that there is truly no otherness will help create a more empathetic global climate inclined to true empathy. This aspect alone could help populations avoid future conflicts and help others who might lack in resources or economic means for a human and human quality of life.

This particular study was limited to an investigation of Kentucky world language educators' experiences, perceptions, and beliefs as they apply to global competency. While this study is a starting point, it would be beneficial to research levels below and above that of this study. Finding out global competency knowledge and application of other subject teachers, administrators, and school emphasis would help current students as well as future students. Incorporating global competency training into schools and affiliated organizations should happen immediately and be a continuous focus of studies and soft skills education and training. Sharing and vetting materials from the Internet, self-made materials, and prepackaged materials must be shared among all educational stakeholder to help support best practices and secure a high level of pragmatism and rigor. Changing social and organizational landscapes by understanding and using proper intercultural contexts when using language or for filtering another knowledge allows educators to produce a generation of students who will operate in the world with a higher level of mutual respect and understanding.

It was the researcher's purpose in conducting this study to contribute to the best practices, perspectives, and outcomes knowledge base that will help future studies with other focuses and variables for all involved in the educational process. Students using global competency to influence positive results in critical education, program-based education, and growth mindset-focused education would serve as useful and interesting centers on research. It is my desire for this research also to influence the move to understanding and focusing on global competency, in not only world language but in education as a whole. This should take place on the state, national, and international levels, moving toward a complete picture that will benefit the population of the world and aid in working toward the best worldwide understanding on both cultural and interpersonal levels.

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Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

Project:

This study is an investigation of foreign language teacher's perceptions and practices of intercultural competency.

Purpose of the Research:

The design of this research involves the intercultural competency perceptions and practices by foreign language teachers in the state of Kentucky. The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of what teachers think, do, and apply cultural context to their teaching of subjects that are a gate way to multi-cultural interactions. Your participation in this study is voluntary and will take approximately 30–60 minutes to complete. Once starting the survey, there is no obligation to finish if you choose not to. In order to participate in this study, you must be a foreign language educator at the secondary level in the state of Kentucky.

Procedures:

Your generous participation in this research study is voluntary and will take 20–60 minutes to complete. You will be able to access the survey and answer in its entirety online. The survey will ask you some general demographic information, level of education, and intercultural perceptions and beliefs. No personal identifying information will be used for this study. Complete and total anonymity will be maintained at all times for all participants. Once all data have been successfully collected and entered into software, all surveys will be destroyed.

Risks and/or Discomforts:

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research study. In the event there are any problems as a result of this study, please contact the researcher at Ernest.Mcclees@eku.edu .

Benefits:

It is anticipated that all contributions made to this study will have positive impact on both foreign language education and education as a whole in the state of Kentucky. It is possible that this study will allow for participants to reflect on their intercultural perceptions and practices in a manner they have not explored prior to the study.

Confidentiality:

All information is kept strictly confidential. All individual data will be collected and reported as group results. The information collected in this study may be published in journals and presented at conferences. All information will be presented in numeric form.

Compensation:

There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

Opportunity to Ask Question:

All participants will have the right to ask any questions they may have during the study. If there are any questions or concerns about the research, participants may contact the researcher, Ernest McClees at Ernest.Mcclees@eku.edu .

Freedom to Withdraw:

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any harm.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:

All potential participants are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you will participate having read all presented information. You will be given a copy of the consent form.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Name of investigator: Ernest McClees

Ernest.Mcclees@eku.edu

Appendix B

Interview Guide

1. How long have you been a teacher in this school?
2. How many years total experience do you have as a teacher?
3. (If applicable) Where else have you served as a teacher?
4. How would you describe your race/ethnicity?
5. Can you tell me a little about the demographics of your current school?
6. Have you ever had the experience of studying in another country? Can you tell us what country and for how long you were there studying?
7. How did it feel to meet people from other cultures and other countries?
8. What type of stereotypes did you have about the people from this country? Did the people from this country have any stereotypes about you or your country?
9. Did any of your stereotypes about this population change after meeting them?
10. Was there any global competence knowledge that might help to avoid in misunderstanding with someone from the host country?
11. How should culture be defined in your own words?
12. Have you ever taken any classes specifically on language and culture for teaching language and culture?
13. How does teaching a world language impact your view of world cultures?
14. How does teaching a world language impact your students' views of world cultures?

15. How do your students view their own country in relation to other countries and cultures?
16. What is the best Global competence or global competencies that students need to complement pragmatic world language studies?
17. Do you see global competencies contributing to awareness of one's own culture?
18. What do you think about global competencies?
19. How important are global competencies when teaching world language?
20. What is the main purpose behind studying world language?
21. Are there materials available that can help facilitate teaching global competence?
22. Do you have good support from your administration when it comes to teaching Global Competence?
23. How do you measure student mastery of global competence?
24. Is feedback provided to students who fall short of demonstrating mastery and if so how was feedback provided?
25. What is the main competence you focus on in your classroom and why?
26. Are the global competence standards helpful in teaching Global competence?
27. Why do you think some teachers struggle with adding culture and intercultural aspects to their teaching?

28. Would you like to see any changes in your teaching practices? If so, what would they be?

Participant Letter

Thank you for considering to be a participant in this study. The purpose of this study is to get a current view of World Language Teachers perceptions and experiences of global/intercultural competence. Participation is completely voluntary and can be completed at a location of your choosing. All identifying information will be held in double lock and key and all names will be replaced by using a non-analogy replacement name generator.

This study will take place spring of 2016. All results will be written up, analyzed, and shared to help fill the immediate need for intercultural understanding within the state and possible fill a larger void. Again, thank you for your consideration and time. It is my aim to add to the existing literature that will impact both world languages and global competence in a positive and informative manner.

Thank you,

Ernest Luke McClees

VITA

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2016 Long Meadow Ct. 40475
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Education:

Ed.D, Educational Leadership, Eastern Kentucky University, Doctoral Candidate
Dissertation: Intercultural Learning Perspectives of World Language Educators in Kentucky

Committee: Deborah West (Chair), James Bliss (Chair), Charles Hausman & Luciano Cruz-Mogado

M.A., Education, Georgetown College, 2011
Concentrations: Teaching Foreign Languages (Spanish)

B.A., Spanish, University Of Kentucky, 2008
Concentration: Literature of the Americas

B.S., Recreation and Leisure, Murray State University, 2002
Concentration: Outdoor Recreation
Minor: History

University Pedagogy & Advising Experience:

Eastern Kentucky University College of Education

Instructor for Teaching of Language Arts in Secondary School (ESE 543) Fall 2015

Instructor for Teaching Foreign Languages P-8 (EME 442) Fall 2015

Instructor for Teaching of Language Arts in Secondary School (ESE 743) Fall 2014

Instructor for Teaching of Language Arts in Secondary School (ESE 543) Fall 2014

Instructor for Teaching Foreign Languages P-8 (EME 442) Fall 2014

Instructor for Introduction to Veterans Studies (VTS 200), Fall 2015 (Classroom)

Eastern Kentucky University Veteran Studies Program:

Instructor for Introduction to Veteran Studies (VTS200), Spring 2016 (Classroom)

Instructor for Introduction to Veterans Studies (VTS 200), Fall 2015 (Classroom)

Instructor for Introduction to Veterans Studies (VTS 200), Spring 2015 (Classroom)

Instructor for introduction to Veteran Studies (VTS200), Fall 2014 (online)

Instructor for introduction to Veteran Studies (VTS200), Spring 2014 (online)

Instructor for introduction to Veteran Studies (VTS200), Fall 2013 (online)

Secondary Education Experience:

Spanish Instructor, 2011-Current

Eastern Kentucky University, Model Laboratory School

Courses: Spanish I, Spanish II, Spanish III/IV, Comparative Spanish Language and

Cultures, Arts & Humanities

Spanish Instructor, 2008-2011

St. Peter and Paul Schools, Lexington Kentucky

Courses: Spanish, First-Eight grade

Created an expanded Spanish curriculum from middle school to entire school.

Research Skills:

Extensive knowledge of SPSS statistical programs, qualitative practices and Zotero.

Publications:

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (Forthcoming). "Pedagogy and Practice for Foundational Veterans Studies" Conference paper proceedings Virginia Tech Library eJournal, Blacksburg, Virginia

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2016). "School Mission Statements: A Look at Influencing Behavior" International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Review, Vol.2 Number 1. Portsmouth, United Kingdom

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). "Military Veterans as Intercultural Educators" Journal of Education & Social Policy, Vol.2 Number 6. New York, New York

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2013) Course Module for Organization of Teaching College Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky

Academic Presentations & Workshops:

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). "Pedagogy and Practice for Foundational Veteran Studies" Paper presentation at the Veterans in Society Conference, Virginia Tech, Roanoke, Virginia

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). "Global Competence in Kentucky: Why and When Kentucky" Department of Education Global Competence Symposium, Shelbyville Kentucky

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. & Chris Robinson (2015). "¿Las Fuentes Primarias en Los Lenguajes Principales? How do we make sense of those primary sources from non-English speaking peoples?" Presented at the Kentucky Council for The Social Studies, Northern Kentucky University METS Center.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. & Chris Robinson (2015). "We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike." Appalachia to Ankara- Teaching World Cultures and Taking Xenophobia out of the Classroom. (Updated with current research and methods) Presented at the Kentucky Council for The Social Studies, Northern Kentucky University METS Center.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). "Don't Make Mountains of Mole Hills: Global Competence for Teachers and Administrators" Kentucky Department of Education Global Competence Symposium, the Corbin Center, Corbin Kentucky.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr., Bryan Wilson & Jeremy Newell (2015). "Achieving Artistic Accountability" Kentucky Society for Technology in Education, Louisville Kentucky

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). Veterans in Education Symposium "Examples of Successful Models" Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2015). "Achieving Intercultural Accountability", International Conference on Technology in Higher Education, Hassan II University/Georgia State, Marrakech, Morocco.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. & Chris Robinson (2014). "We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike." Appalachia to Ankara- Teaching World Cultures and Taking Xenophobia out of the Classroom. (Updated with current research and methods) Presented at the Kentucky Council for The Social Studies, Northern Kentucky University METS Center.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. (2014). "Veterans as Intercultural Educators" Paper presentation at the Veterans in Society Conference, Virginia Tech, Roanoke, Virginia.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. & Jennifer Green (2012). "Energizing Instruction with Small Group Instruction and Projects" Berea Independent Schools' Pirate Learning Conference, Berea Independent School.

Ernest Luke McClees Jr. & Chris Robinson (2011). "We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike." Appalachia to Ankara- Teaching World Cultures and Taking Xenophobia out of the Classroom. Presented at the IDEAS Conference at Eastern Kentucky University.

Grants and Fellowships:

Leading Through Learning Fellowship, Kentucky Association of School Councils, (2015-2016)

Kentucky Department of Education World Language Teacher Cadre (2015-2016)

Lexington Living Arts and Science Center, \$75.00 (2015)

Lexington Arts and Science Center, \$100.00 (2013)

Lexington Arts and Science Center, \$50.00 (2012)

Awards and Honors:

Phi Kappa Phi, 2014

Dean's List University of Kentucky 2008

Sigma Delta Pi, 2007

Dean's List Murray State University 2002

Alpha Sigma Lambda Honors Society, 2002

Professional Service

Co-Editor: *Journal of Veteran Studies* (December, 2015-Current)

Kentucky World Language Association, Personal Development Support Team: Global Competence in the World Language Classroom, Kentucky, (2016)

World Language and Global Competence Advisor La Fontaine Preparatory School, Richmond, Kentucky, (2014-current)

World Language and Global Competence Advisor La Fontaine Early Learning Center, Richmond, Kentucky, (2014-current)

University Service

Coordinator for International Non-Violence and Peace Day: Event held in conjunction with schools from: India, France, South Africa, United States, Australia, Italy, Germany, Denmark, and Japan, (January 2016)

Senator, Faculty Senate, Eastern Kentucky University, (2012-2015)

Founder & Sponsor National Spanish Honors Society, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, (2012-Current)

Sponsor of Excel Society, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, (2013-Current)

Day of the Dead Community Education Display, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School Spanish Honors Society, Lexington Living Arts and Science Center, (2012-Current)

College of Education Diversity Field Experience Advisory, Eastern Kentucky University, (2014-Current)

Veterans Day Ceremony Participant, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, (2011-2015)

Veterans Day Ceremony Key Note Speaker, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, (2013)

Mentoring Students for Spanish SPA 321(Spanish for Social Service), Eastern Kentucky University, (2011-Current)

Mentoring Students for College of Education, Eastern Kentucky University, (2011-Current)

Co-Advisor Model United Nations, Rhodes College, Memphis Tennessee, (2013)

Co-Advisor Model United Nations, University of Indiana South East, (2012)

Department Service:

Class Sponsor, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, Class of 2018

Class Sponsor, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, Class of 2014

Senior Project Mentor, Combat Stress and Moral Injury paper and presentation by Matthew Hoover (2015)

Senior Project Mentor, Programming for Hypertrophy paper and presentation by Sam Gershtenson, Model Laboratory School, Eastern Kentucky University (2015)

Senior Project Mentor, The Irish Republican Army: A Highlight of History paper and presentation by Wyatt Hawn, Model Laboratory School, Eastern Kentucky University (2014)

Senior Project Mentor, Marine Corps and Contemporary Mission paper and presentation by Brandon Thomas, Model Laboratory School, Eastern Kentucky University (2013)

Community Service:

Coordinator for International Non-Violence and Peace Day: Event held in conjunction with schools from: India, France, South Africa, United States, Australia, Italy, Germany, Denmark, and Japan, (January 2016)

Madison United Soccer Association, Assistant Soccer Coach U-4, Richmond, Kentucky (2015)

Raider Project, Sponsor of area Military Veteran, (2015)

Habit for Humanity, Volunteer, summer (2013)

Habit for Humanity, Volunteer, summer (2012)

Leading Educational travel:

Spanish Adventure Educational Tour, Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School, Spain & Morocco, (2014)

Space Camp, Sts. Peter and Paul School, Huntsville, Alabama (2010, 2011)

Chicago City and Museum Tours, Sts. Peter and Paul School (2009, 2010)

Skills and Qualifications:

Full proficiency in Spanish Speaking/Reading

Working proficiency Portuguese Speaking/Reading

Working proficiency French Speaking/Reading

Limited proficiency Arabic Speaking/Reading

Outdoor Educator Certification, National Outdoor Leadership School, 2002