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DEVELOPING GLOBAL COMPETENCE THROUGH INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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A capstone submitted in fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Overview of My Capstone Question and The Structure of Chapter One

As a teacher I see this as one of my primary responsibilities - creating a world that is more compassionate and understanding. To support me in this effort this capstone project will explore the question: What components of a classroom project build intercultural communication between students of different countries, develops their sense of global competence, and promotes a mindset oriented towards peace? My capstone question and proposed capstone project provide me the time and space to develop a unit for elementary students to engage in dialogue with students of the same age group in other countries. A motivating force for exploring this question and creating opportunities for this dialogue is reflected in the song *Imagine* by John Lennon and Yoko Ono (1971, side A).

Lennon sings: “Imagine there’s no countries. It isn’t hard to do. Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion too. Imagine all the people living life in peace” (Lennon & Ono, 1971, side A). One of my motivations in becoming a teacher is to support my students in creating a world where peace is the norm. For me a fundamental outcome of education is providing people with the disposition and skills to look past their differences and unite in their shared humanity. If my students can develop these dispositions and skills it could reduce the conflict and disagreement that is almost inevitable in a complex and diverse world. Given the current access to technology at my school I have the ability to create

opportunities that connect my students with other students in remote places. The long term educational outcome of creating these opportunities is that my students and the ones they connect with will be able to find commonality, to find a shared vision, and to create a more peaceful world.

This chapter details the benefits of teaching youth to be open-minded, to have compassion and empathy, and to view themselves as a part of a larger world. It describes the need for people to see themselves as citizens of the world and to work together cooperatively. This chapter discusses how my own personal and professional experiences interacting with people from other countries have transformed my life and encouraged me to develop a sense of self within the larger world. I write about how my experiences living around the world have helped me to see that we are all one people and that we benefit the most when we all work together to make this world a peaceful place.

This chapter also segways into the literature that supports the importance of developing global competence, which is the ability to understand the world and interact with it (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012) and the research that details the various methods of developing intercultural communication initiatives. For the purpose of this capstone intercultural communication is defined as the “ability to communicate with people from different cultures” (Mitchell & Benson, 2018, p. 1). This capstone provides teachers with one model of how they can invite their students into a conversation with other students from around the world.

An ambition for this capstone project is that these conversations and interactions will help students to see their shared humanity and it will help them to develop empathy,

understanding, and compassion for all people of the world. As a teacher I envision that this kind of mindset will lead children to want to create a world where there is peace, understanding, and cooperation. For the purpose of this capstone mindset is defined as one's perspective or outlook on the world.

Rationale for My Capstone Project

Both my personal and professional experiences support the importance of people viewing themselves as citizens of the world. In order to gain this perspective it is necessary to go beyond the context of your local community. It requires one to learn about the world, to engage in the world, and to create connections in the world. As a teacher, in my mind, it is advantageous to begin this process from a young age. The importance of starting the process at a young age is based on my own life experiences that had a major impact on how I view the world. In each of my experiences interacting with people from around the world, my perspective has grown, and it helped me discover that we are all human. Being human for me means sharing a humanity that if discovered can possibly, one day, create peace.

Throughout my life I have had numerous experiences engaging in dialogue with people from all over the world. In both my hometown of Minneapolis and in my travels throughout the world I have been able to interact with people of various cultures and backgrounds. My experiences in meeting, talking, and developing friendships with people in different countries has made a direct impact on how I think we should view ourselves in the world. My experiences support one of my core values as a teacher - the need for my students to see themselves as citizens of the world. Also, being a citizen of

the world means that in making decisions my students should not just consider how it affects our nation, but the entire world community. A way to envision this is to think about an issue such as climate change.

According to Mansilla and Jackson (2012) if the nations of the world can work together to reduce carbon emissions and work cooperatively to slow down the heating of our planet, then we as citizens of the world all do better. The authors continue that for example, if all nations tried to adopt policies that encouraged the use of renewable energies and reduced the use of fossil fuels, then collectively as a world, all people will benefit. However, Mansilla and Jackson (2012) also describe how this kind of action is only possible when all actors in our international community work together in cooperation. Kellas (1998) describes one factor that can make international cooperation difficult. Kellas (1998) notes how cooperative action is more difficult when the actors of the international community operate under a mindset of competitive nationalism or an ideology that produces ethnocentric behavior. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) also point out that lacking this international cooperation is problematic given the number of global issues that need to be addressed.

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that the pressing issues of our time such as addressing climate change and handling unprecedented human migration requires “a generation of individuals with a strong capacity to cooperate across national borders-individuals able to solve global problems in the workplace, among many nations, through the internet, and in private decisions” (p. 9). As someone with a major in political science and who has lived extensively abroad I am in full agreement. My education and

experiences support that when people are able to see themselves as a citizen of the world they will be more inclined to work cooperatively and collectively on the world stage. My experience and the work of researchers such as Mansilla and Jackson (2012) suggests that in order for people to recognize their shared humanity, people need to work together as a unified entity. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) describe that to create a sense of unity it is so important for these groups to actually meet, discuss, and engage in dialogue. Living abroad taught me that interacting with people from another culture helps you feel more connected to them. My experiences have taught me the value of creating meaningful relationships with all people. As teachers it is possible to do this kind of connecting in the classroom.

A goal of this capstone project is to help my students make connections with people who live in another corner of the world who lead different lives and have different lifestyles, come from different cultures, and speak different languages. Despite these differences, it is an intention of this project that students involved will have the opportunity to make connections and find similarities with each other. An ambition of this project is that students learn that no matter where one is from in the world, or what culture one associates themselves with, that we are really all just human beings.

Seeing each other as human beings is important at a time when our world can seem so divided, and where there seems to be a lack of empathy and a lack of understanding among people who are different from each other, it seems necessary to build bridges between people of all backgrounds. Again Mansilla and Jackson (2012) note teachers can help their students cultivate a sense of empathy for other people. They

also highlight how as educators of young people teachers have the opportunity to help students develop a globally competent mindset. As a teacher I expect that the experience of engaging in intercultural dialogue and engaging in the skills of global competence will have a transformative impact on my students.

As a teacher I am influenced by the transformative worldview. According to Creswell (2014), research from this perspective is oriented towards creating social and political change. Creswell (2014) writes that research grounded in the transformative worldview is often “rooted in the goal of transforming the lives of its’ participants, lifting their consciousness, and engaging the participants in action that will transform their lives” (p. 38). For me this means that teachers have a commitment to create a just and compassionate world. Therefore this capstone project is rooted in the transformative worldview.

The outcomes of this capstone reflect a transformative worldview because it seeks to have children increase their knowledge about the world, communicate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds while being respectful and reflective of their opinions, and take proactive steps to improve the world. In doing these actions my students are not only engaging with the world but they are also having the opportunity to transform their own life and perhaps someone's else life as well. As they engage in these skills they will hopefully begin to see themselves as citizens of the world who are capable of interacting cooperatively with people of diverse backgrounds. An intent of this project is that these interactions will help my students and the ones they interact with to begin to value their shared humanity. The next sections describes examples of my intercultural experiences

that have shaped my belief that through creating intercultural dialogue we can build relationships to cultivate understanding, cooperation, and peace between people.

Examples of My Transformative Intercultural Experiences

My personal and professional experiences interacting with people from around the world have taught me that by knowing the world we can better understand the world. I have learned through my friendships with people in various countries that we are all part of humankind and that this should be something that unites us and incentivizes us to work cooperatively and to work towards building peace. If people could truly grasp the sense of a shared humanity, than perhaps we could resist the conflicts of the world that pit nation against nation, or ethnic group against ethnic group. Perhaps then we could have peace.

One of my foundational assumptions is that to achieve peace individuals needs to engage in peacebuilding. As someone who has participated in peacebuilding initiatives as a child I know that it can begin in the elementary school classroom. As a teacher it is my goal that my capstone project could be used in classrooms and childcare programs in our nation and in all the nations of the world. This capstone project would help young people engage with each other and thus provide an opportunity for peacebuilding to flourish.

While attending middle school and high school in the late 1990's and early 2000's I attended the Concordia Language Villages in Bemidji, Minnesota. I went to Skogfjorden, the Norwegian language camp. Not only did the Concordia Language Villages help me to learn a language, but they also introduced me to the culture of another country, and they provided me with my first opportunity to develop international

friendships. At Skogfjorden I made friends with Norwegian students who were there to learn English and participate in a cultural exchange.

This was an early experience where I was encouraged to partake in a different culture and envision the world from a new perspective. These camp experiences also encouraged me to see myself as a world citizen through their international day events. At international day, campers that attended one of the seventeen languages camps would join together in a celebration of a diverse and united world. The international day event promoted a vision that people of this planet could cooperate and work collectively to create a more peaceful world.

From my experience the Concordia Language Villages are a wonderful place for young students to develop a global perspective. However, the cost, location, and size of these camps limit the population that participate in them. As an educator my desire is to have the messaging and the experience that comes from attending such a camp transferred into the classrooms of the world. From my current experience, the social studies lessons of today's classrooms do not encourage students to see themselves as connected to a larger world or a unified humanity.

As someone who works daily with young people I think it is necessary that students have the opportunity to interact with other children from around the world in order to experience their shared humanity. The capstone project that I propose is one way in which school children could experience a connection to the larger world. The following paragraphs describe my own life experiences that influenced me to see the world from a global perspective. These experiences also helped sculpt my vision that

participating in intercultural dialogue is a means of developing a shared human identity between people who come from different backgrounds.

Between 2002 - 2006 when attending high school, I had opportunities to develop international friendships. My high school participated in an exchange program with high school students from Mexico City. While these students were visiting for two weeks, I began friendships that would continue into the future and would also lead me to travel out of the country for the first time. When I was seventeen in 2005, I went to Mexico City for two weeks and I stayed with these friends. While in Mexico City, not only I was able to deepen my friendships, but I also learned about the history and culture of Mexico. It was these friendships from Mexico that led me to pursue Spanish language learning in college. This experience also taught me the value of creating connections and relationships with the people of the place where you visit or live.

While in high school I also had the opportunity to meet weekly with mid career professionals from developing countries who were studying at the University of Minnesota as International Fellows and Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows through a program sponsored by the State Department and organized by the Institute for International Education. I am very grateful for the opportunity to meet these individuals. They helped reinforce my appreciation for cultural diversity and understanding, and encouraged me to look at the world from a global perspective. Through conversations with these individuals I was able to learn about their families, their communities, and their homeland.

After graduating from high school in 2006, I deferred college for one year to attend Agder Folkehøgskole in southern Norway where I spent the year learning

Norwegian and becoming fluent in the spoken language. This opportunity allowed me to immerse myself in the Norwegian culture, to build international friendships, and to continue to look at the world from another perspective. Being in the international class I became close friends with students from eastern and western European countries, Thailand, Peru, and Somalia. Often in conversation, we would discuss the political climate of our home countries or our perspectives on global affairs. These conversations helped me to learn more about the world, but also served as a means of connecting us and deepening our friendships.

I spent the 2010 spring semester of my junior year of college in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I lived with a 78 year old host-mom, Mariela. In addition to my limited Spanish conversation skills when I first arrived, there were also age and cultural differences between us. However, over the course of my stay and as my Spanish improved, she became my best Argentine friend. Through our dinner time conversations we learned that we had different political ideologies, but we found common ground and discovered shared common values and beliefs.

I respected her ability to maintain that it is a beautiful life despite the hardships she went through, such as living under corrupt governments and her husbands' early onset of Alzheimer's. Her stories also gave me a greater understanding of Argentine culture. I was often surprised by the depth of our conversations; she was a remarkable teacher and friend. Not only did our conversations help me earn Mariela's trust and respect, but it also deepened my understanding of the economic, historic, political and social phenomena of Buenos Aires.

After college I lived in Turkey from 2011 to 2012. It was friendship that helped spark my initial interest in the country of Turkey. In high school I had befriended a foreign exchange student from Turkey. I showed my friend around the city and took her to high school events and social get-togethers. Upon entering college at Seton Hall University my interest in Turkey took a deeper turn. I began to study its history, people and politics. My interest in learning the Turkish language and my interest in working as a foreign service officer in the State Department led me to pursue the Turkish Critical Language Scholarship. I was admitted into this program and thus began three months of intensive language study of Turkish in Bursa, Turkey. While living in Turkey, I not only studied the language, but I made very meaningful and lasting friendships with a diverse group of people. My experience living in Turkey continues to influence my feelings about the wellbeing of their nation. It is my hope that Turkey will be able to peacefully resolve its current divisive political climate.

I remember that before travelling to Turkey being curious as to how living in Turkey would be different than living in the United States. I perceived that living in Turkey would be quite different than living in Minnesota. In particular I was interested in what it would be like to live in a place where a significant portion of the population practiced Islam. Upon arriving there and living there I discovered that these perceived differences played a pretty insignificant role in daily life and that people's lives were in many ways so similar.

For example, they would get up, go to work, come home, eat dinner with their family, socialize, go to bed, and then do it all over again the next day. Daily activities of

shopping, going out, and socializing with friends were very similar. Children were interested in sports, video games, and boy bands. There was of course differences. For example, the food was significantly mediterranean, you could attend a Turkish bathhouse, the call to prayer would sound throughout the day, and from an outward appearance it was different to see about half of the population of women dressed in a head-covering. Despite these differences, life pretty much played out the same way as it would in the United States.

I found that the Turkish people were very welcoming, friendly and excited to share their culture with me. The hospitality of the Turkish people was so great that a Turkish couple even invited me to live with them after the Turkish language program ended. I did take them up on the offer and we lived with each other for an entire year as I worked as an English language teacher. My roommates were like family to me and today I still retain a close friendship with this couple. The friendships that I developed in my time spent living abroad taught me above all else that we are all human, and as such, we should strive to create and live in a world where we can all live as equals and live in peace.

Conclusion

This capstone asks: What components of a classroom project build intercultural communication between students of different countries, develops their sense of global competence, and promotes a mindset oriented towards peace? As an educator my goal is to create the opportunity for my young students to interact with other students from around the world. The learning outcome of these interactions is that the students involved will view themselves as part of the world, i.e. citizens of the world. These conversations can also empower them in their own education. It could inspire them to learn a language, or to become more interested in subjects such as geography, history, social studies, and politics. It could even lead them to go live, study, or work in another country when they are older.

Experiences that I had growing up such as attending Skogfjorden and meeting International Fellows from the Humphrey program played a significant role in my decision to pursue opportunities to further my education in other countries. I lived for a year in Norway, a year in Turkey, and a half-year in Argentina. These experiences abroad not only contributed to my education but they also broadened my world in ways that would not have been possible if I had just lived in Minnesota my entire life. Together these experiences taught me the importance of developing an identity that is more global than national. A mindset that is open-minded and empathetic instead of narrow-minded and selfish. When reflecting upon the state of worldly and political affairs I realize that there is much to be done in advancing a mindset that recognizes our shared humanity.

This capstone project is meant to be a bridge-building device between students of different nations and cultures. It is a tool that is meant to help children and their teachers break down the barriers that exist between people who see themselves as unlike or different. As a teacher I envision that this project can be used as a way to build dialogue, understanding, and maybe even friendship between children who live in various parts of the world. As a mentor of young people it is my intention that this project will inspire students to see themselves as part of a larger world and maybe one day see themselves as a citizen of the world.

The design of this project was influenced by my desire for it to be easily implemented by other teachers in their own classroom. My role is to be an advocate encouraging elementary school teachers and educators in before and after school programs to utilize this project. I will begin utilizing this project with the before and after school program with which I work and encourage other school sites within my district to implement the lessons of this project. Once the project is completed my plan is to contact other principals in the district to arrange meetings to present this project to the elementary school teachers. While implementing the project is relatively straightforward, the most challenging aspect of this project is finding another school in another country to engage in this project. I will assist teachers in finding classrooms willing to participate.

I would like to see this project utilized outside of my current school district. As I live in a large metropolitan area this project could easily be presented at conferences where teachers from other districts could learn about the project and bring it to their own schools. I could also reach out to my principal or my superintendent as a means of

connecting with principals and superintendents of other districts. I am also considering a career as a foreign service officer in the U.S. Department of State where I would pursue the public diplomacy career track. As a foreign service officer I envision the opportunity to promote this project with schools around the world. Lastly, I envision that this project could be used as a means of engaging urban and rural America. As the political divide in this country is often split between rural areas and urban areas, this kind of project could be utilized as means of engaging students from rural and urban areas in dialogue.

Chapter Two, the review of the literature and research, is focused on developing global competence in students and the tools that are used to develop an intercultural exchange. Chapter Three describes the design of this project and its implementation. This project utilizes global thinking routines and the implementation of the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model to develop four global competences (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012; Larsen et al., 2014; Mansilla, 2016). Chapter Four reflects on the process and design of this capstone, and discusses its significance within the field of education.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

This capstone asks the question: What components of a classroom project build intercultural communication between students of different countries, develops their sense of global competence, and promotes a mindset oriented towards peace? Two premises ground this capstone project. One is that engaging elementary school students through intercultural communication will develop their sense of global competence and promote a mindset oriented towards peace. For the purpose of this capstone intercultural communication is defined as the “ability to communicate with people from different cultures” (Mitchell & Benson, 2018, p. 1). The second is to model a method for developing global competence in elementary school students. The objective of this chapter is to build a strong case to support these premises.

This chapter begins by defining global competence and identifying the competencies of a globally competent student. In other words this project hopes to nourish the four global competencies that are defined by Mansilla and Jackson (2012) and described in this literature review. It is important to have an understanding of global competence and the competencies in order to create a project that cultivates global competence in students (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012).

This chapter also defines intercultural communication and reports on methods that have been utilized in creating conversation and connections between individuals in different countries. This capstone project draws upon the research, methods, and projects

that have focused on intercultural communications as a means to develop a project of fostering global competence through online video chats, exchanging letters, and sharing short films.

Global Competence: How it is Defined in the Research Literature

This section focuses on defining global competence and identifying the characteristics of a globally competent individual. Furthermore, this section distinguishes the four competencies of a globally competent student. Lastly, this section compares and contrasts differing definitions of global competence.

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) define global competence as “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance” (p. xiii). In understanding global competence it is helpful to consider the qualities of a globally competent person. The authors write that globally competent individuals:

Are aware, curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works. They can use the big ideas, tools, methods, and languages that are central to any discipline (mathematics, literature, history, science, and the arts) to engage the pressing issues of our time. They deploy and develop this expertise as they investigate such issues, recognizing multiple perspectives, communicating their views effectively, and taking action to improve conditions. (p. xiii)

In other words globally competent individuals are both knowledgeable about the world and they are effective in engaging with the world. They are also able to understand various points of view, communicate effectively, and are dedicated to creating a better world.

Most importantly globally competent individuals, according to Mansilla and Jackson (2012), are proficient in four competencies. The authors describe how globally competent students should be able to demonstrate the following four competencies:

- (1) Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research;
- (2) Recognize perspectives, others' and their own, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully,
- (3) Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers;
- (4) Take action to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating effectively. (p. 11)

In the following sections these competencies are described and it is shown how they have been put into action in the classroom.

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) define the four competencies as the central components of global competence. However, other researchers have defined global competence in other ways. Kang, Kim, Jang, and Koh (2018) define global competence as the “comprehensive ability to live, communicate, and work in a multiculturally connected world” (p. 684). These researchers have identified three commonalities that are found in research on global competence. These commonalities are “(1) open attitudes towards difference and diversity in the multicultural and interconnected world, (2) intercultural communication skills, and (3) knowledge of other societies, cultures and people” (Kang et al., 2018, p. 684). They write that language learning and foreign

language proficiency can also be considered as key components of global competence.

Kang et al. (2018) also note that “global competence can be shaped and enhanced by the environments and experiences to which an individual has been exposed” (p. 685).

The core competencies of global competence presented by Mansilla and Jackson (2012) are related to the commonalities of global competence identified by Kang et al. (2018). Both Mansilla and Jackson (2012) and Kang et al. (2018) agree that for individuals to have open attitudes towards diversity they need to be able to recognize others’ perspectives. These two groups of researchers also note how possessing intercultural communication skills requires an individual to effectively communicate with diverse audiences.

These researchers also support that one way of developing global competence is by investigating the world so that individuals are able to deepen their knowledge about the world. When considering these relations it can be suggested that that their findings are quite similar (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012; Kang et al., 2018). The most significant difference between these sets of researchers are that Mansilla and Jackson (2012) emphasize the importance of taking responsible action and Kang et al. (2018) highlight the importance of learning and speaking foreign languages.

The Four Competencies of Global Competence

This section defines the four competencies of global competence. The four competencies are investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas, and taking action (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012). Each section identifies how a

globally competent student is able to utilize these competencies and gives examples of how students have engaged in these competencies.

Investigating the world. Investigating the world is the first competence of a globally competent student. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that as students investigate the world they should be encouraged to ask and explore answers about the world. In inquiring about the world students should learn to make connections between their local environment and the world. Additionally, Mansilla and Jackson (2012) describe how students should try to step outside of their comfort zone and explore the world beyond what they already know.

Furthermore, Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that globally competent students are able to investigate the world by seeking information about a local, regional, or global issue. They are able to ask questions about that issue and define its significance. Students are able to further their investigations by engaging in research that utilizes national and international resources. The authors describe how students can then use these resources to consider various perspectives and determine which are of importance to their question or issue that they are investigating. Students then analyze and organize their findings into a response to their question. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that as a result of their investigation students are able to construct an argument and draw conclusions based on the research and perspectives that they identified in learning about an issue and in answering their question. Jackson (2016) provides a concrete example of a high school where students engage in the investigative process described by Mansilla and Jackson (2012).

Jackson (2016) writes that the Denver Center for International Studies (DCIS) is a high school in Montbello, Colorado that has been successful in engaging its students in investigating the world. This school has a two year capstone project beginning in the junior year where students conduct research and write on issues of global significance. During this capstone class students can investigate current events or historical events.

Jackson (2016) describes one example of the two-year project, a calculus teacher who had their high school students “find photographs of Syrian artifacts destroyed in the current war. Students then used their math skills and computer-assisted design systems to create 3-D renderings of what the original artifacts would have looked like” (p. 20). Students were then able to print the 3-D renderings with a 3-D printer. Although, these items were lost to war, this project honored these artifacts by recreating them. This project highlights an example of how a globally competent students engage in investigating the world. The first competence of investigating and learning about the world is essential to the second competence of globally competent student, recognizing perspectives. As students begin to inquire about the world they will discover a magnitude of perspectives.

Recognizing perspectives. Recognizing perspectives is the second competence of a globally competent student. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) state this competence encourages students to listen and consider the perspectives of others. It requires students to be aware and respectful of cultural contexts, to defy stereotypes, and to recognize that we are all human. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) emphasize that recognizing a shared humanity is critically important. To develop a shared humanity the authors assert that

students need to be taught to see past differences, even if their lives are vastly different from those with whom they are interacting.

When students are able to see past differences they are starting to become globally competent. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that globally competent students are able to:

recognize and express their own perspective on situations, events, issues, or phenomena and identify the influences on that perspective; and they are also able to examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify the influences on those perspectives. (p. 31)

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) also argue that in recognizing perspectives student should be able to, “explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues, or phenomena, including the development of knowledge; and articulate how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives” (p. 32). However, being able to explain the influence of cultural interactions is not all that is required of globally competent student.

Moreover, Jackson (2016) states it is important that students are able to acknowledge, evaluate, and articulate various and differing perspectives in order to understand various issues of the world. For example, the author notes how Deering High School in Portland, Maine has a program for refugee students that has been successful in encouraging students to recognize perspectives. Jackson (2016) writes this program:

highlights and compares U.S. culture with the students’ home cultures,

teaching them how to recognize and weigh perspectives at a personal, local level that has a global impact. The program also helps these students celebrate their home cultures in tandem with the cultures of their new home. (p. 21)

The aforementioned program is an ideal example of how school classrooms can engage students in acknowledging the influence of their own culture on their perspectives, as well as encouraging students to understand how another person's culture and background influences the perspective of that person. This competence of seeing differences but moving past them to recognize a shared humanity is essential to the third global competence of communicating ideas. Students need to learn to communicate respectfully as they navigate a world of diverse perspectives.

Communicating ideas. The third competence of global competence is communicating ideas. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write the third competence requires that students learn to use respectful dialogue. Students need to learn how to address situations where there are differences of thought or belief. They need to learn the language and the skills that will help them navigate differences of opinion. Students need to learn how to listen thoughtfully. They also need to have the courage to participate in conversation and share their own thoughts.

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that as students learn to communication ideas that support becoming globally competent students they will be able to "recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that impacts communication" (p. 39). They write that students should consider how their verbal and nonverbal behavior will be considered by diverse

audiences. In other words students need to be thoughtful about how their message will be interpreted with different audiences. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) add students need to be reflective on "how effective communication impacts understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world (p. 39). Jackson (2016) concludes that students need to consider the potential challenges that they will encounter when working within a diverse and complex world.

Students are able to develop communication skills in various ways. Jackson (2016) gives the example of how Deering High School in Portland, Maine cultivates communication skills through the writing and producing of plays that address issues of complexity, sensitivity and sometime controversy. Jackson (2016) writes that a production from 2016 for example addressed the issue of human sex trafficking. In learning how to communicate effectively and respectfully students prepare themselves for the fourth global competence, taking action. In order to make effective change in the world students will need the ability to express themselves effectively to a diverse audiences.

Taking action. Taking responsible action is the fourth competence of a globally competent student. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) assert that students should put their knowledge and their learning to effective use by solving problems, by working collectively with others, and by becoming motivated to take action on issues of global and local significance. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that globally competent students are able to take action by being able to:

- (1) Identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to address situations, events, issues, or phenomena in ways that improve conditions.
- (2) Assess options and plan actions based on evidence and the potential for impact, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives, and potential consequences.
- (3) Act, personally or collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally and assess the impact of the actions taken.
- (4) Reflect on their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally. (p. 45)

Ultimately, taking action is the ability of the student to address a situation that they seek to change in the world. It is the ability to use their knowledge and perspective, and communicate this to the world in way that makes change.

Taking action is described by Jackson (2012) as “the culmination of all the other domains of global competence . . . a student who takes all that work and turns it into action can learn to create lasting change at the local, regional, or global level” (p. 22). By acting upon their investigation students are seeking to make a change or impact on the world. They are taking what they have learned by investigating, considering perspectives, and communicating with the necessary participants of the issue, and putting this knowledge into practical application for the world.

Students have been able to take action in numerous ways. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) describe how an 11 year old girl in London, for example, wrote an essay that focused on the appalling situation that asylum seekers face at detention centers in England, in particular the essay focused on how the detention centers incurred

psychological and physical harm on young children. In writing this essay the young girl won the honor of being Amnesty International's Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year 2010. Furthermore, she joined a campaign that seeks to abolish child detention in the U.K. and instead grant legal status to the children of refugees upon arrival (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012).

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) state that it is important for students to use these competencies in conjunction with each other. In other words globally competent students are able to use all four competences in a collective manner in order to have a balanced, diverse, impartial, and open perspective on the world. A foundational assumption of this capstone is that students are in need of global competency skills because they live in a world that is growing more and more interconnected. As such, students, including my own, need to investigate the world in order to understand it's globalized nature and the diversity of perspectives of the people who inhabit it. Furthermore, students need to be prepared to communicate and act effectively if they are going to participate in this globalized world.

Reasons that Global Competence is Needed

This section addresses the reasons why my students need to adapt to a changing world. Jackson (2016) writes students need to develop the skills of global competence as a means to create greater cultural understanding and to reduce extremism. According to Jackson (2016) teaching global competency skills will help students develop into world citizens that are accepting and respectful of people who come from different cultural backgrounds. Jackson (2016) suggests teaching students these skills will hopefully

dissuade students from developing attitudes that are intolerant and violent, and as a result, this will contribute to peace.

Global competency skills are also needed to help students adapt to an increasingly global world. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that the world of today is being transformed by three major forces: “the flattened global economy and changing demands of work; unprecedented global migration and the changing nature of neighborhoods, identities and citizenship; and climate instability and the growing need for global environmental stewardship” (p. 1). Mansilla and Jackson (2012) assert that in order to address these transformative forces students need to be taught global competence skills. And Kang (2018) discusses the relationship between mass media and global competence. The following sections will address how the world is in need of people who possess the skills of global competency.

Eliminating extremism and intolerance. Jackson (2016) writes the frequency with which acts of intolerance and acts of violent extremism occur in the United States and across the world is becoming ever more prevalent. One needs only take notice of the daily news to see how frequently acts of violence or extremism occur. Take a period of two days in October, 2018. On October 25, 2018 a white gunman fatally shot two black people at a Kroger Supermarket in Jeffersontown, Kentucky. The gunman in this incident was reported to have shouted racist remarks (Stevens & Chow, 2018). In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on October 27, a white gunman armed with a AR-15-style assault rifle killed 11 people at a Jewish synagogue while shouting anti-Semitic slurs (Robertson, Mele, & Tavernise, 2018).

When considering the numerous cases of violence and extremism, coupled with the nature of the political climate in the United States and around the world it becomes ever-apparent that there is a great need for “greater cultural understanding, both in the United States and abroad” (Jackson, 2016, p. 18). Jackson (2016) writes that, “education has been seen as the antidote to intolerance and conflict for centuries” (p. 18). I agree with Jackson’s (2016) assertion that education can be an antidote and that teachers have a responsibility to create opportunities to teach against intolerance, radicalism, and extremism.

The long term learning outcome of these opportunities is to have students develop global competence. Jackson (2016) states that in teaching youth to learn about the world, to consider various perspectives as a means of being open-minded and tolerant, and to communicate with a diverse group of people, educators can help to create a world where people are tolerant of each other and where people move to resolve conflicts peacefully. Ultimately, the skills of global competency could play a role in creating a globalized world that is more peaceful.

Flattened global economy. Teaching students global competency skills also helps prepare them to live in a world where there is a flattened global economy. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that the globalization of the world has led to a world that operates within a flattened global economy. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) state in a flattened global economy employers attempt to operate their businesses in a manner that minimizes expenses. Companies outsource work that can be done inexpensively in one country in comparison to another country. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) argue that in such

a flattened economy it is necessary for the worker to have more than “specialized skills and basic information. Our age demands workers able to synthesize different types of information creatively” (p. 2). For teachers to prepare students for a globalized economy students need globally competent skills.

Mansilla and Jackson (2012) suggest that in order to be successful, students need to understand fundamental areas of global significance in the potential fields in which they will work. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that students need to understand “the very economic, technological, and social forces shaping their lives and their future work” (p. 2). They also say, students need to know how to “investigate matters of global significance . . . recognize their own and others’ perspectives and communicate their positions clearly. . . and that they learn to identify opportunities for productive action and develop and carry out informed plans” (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012, p. 3). Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write that “prepared students view themselves as informed, thoughtful, and effective workers in changing times” (p. 3). In the world of today it is more likely that you will either be working cooperatively or in competition with people from all over the world. In order to participate effectively in this globalized world it is essential that students are learning the skills associated with global competence.

International migration. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) describe how international migration is occurring at exceptional rates. This kind of migration is altering the dynamics of societies and making them more complex and diverse. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) insist that students need to be prepared to live in societies where they will meet and interact with people of different social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious

backgrounds. According to these authors, in order to be successful in these complex and interconnected societies students need to be taught skills such as “fostering kinship, communicating effectively, working together, valuing difference, and benefiting from diversity” (p. 4). Mansilla and Jackson (2012) add students need to understand the cultural dynamics of their own nation, but also of other nations. To develop the understanding described by Mansilla and Jackson (2012) it is important that students acquire a diverse range of knowledge about people around the world. This knowledge should include lessons about history, languages, geography, and cultural contributions of people. Furthermore, students should be provided with multiple opportunities to discover what happens when people from different cultures meet.

Kang et al. (2018) write mass migration on the other hand involves people travelling from one nation to another, and in doing so the people of various nations meet and influence each other. As people familiarize themselves within a new culture they learn from it and adapt to it. As people of different cultures engage with one another it opens up a door for people to learn about and from each other. By learning about different cultures through exposure people are also able to build skills that make them more globally competent.

In increasingly complex and diverse societies it is necessary for students to develop the globally competent skills of recognizing others perspectives and communicating ideas effectively. According to Mansilla and Jackson (2012):

Students will need to understand how differences in power, wealth, and access to knowledge affect opportunities for individuals and social groups. Thriving in a

world of diversity involves communicating with diverse audiences-being able to recognize how different people may interpret information informed by their own perspectives. It demands that students listen and communicate carefully and respectfully. (p. 5)

In summary, it is essential that the young people of world learn the skills of global competency so that they are knowledgeable about the world, they can successfully navigate the diversity of perspectives of the world, they can communicate effectively and respectfully, and they can act responsibly and morally to the challenges of the world.

Climate change. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) assert that climate change is another global issue that is impacting the entire world. Mansilla and Jackson (2012) write students need to be prepared to “manage the consequences of climate change and devise effective solutions for mitigation and adaptation” (p. 5). According to Mansilla and Jackson (2012) teachers need to help students understand “the workings of the earth, why and how climate change (past and present) takes place, and what consequences it is likely to have on various habitats and ecosystems” (p. 6). In order to handle the complexity of climate change students need to learn how to “investigate climate change sources and impacts . . . recognize perspectives carefully . . . and to communicate effectively about the approaches to mitigate and adapt to climate change” (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012, pp. 6-7). Climate change is yet another factor that highlights the importance of young people learning globally competent skills such as investigating the world and taking action in order to combat the impact of this world changing phenomena.

Mass media. Kang et al. (2017) write that mass media is another environmental factor that has been shown to influence global competence. As technology has expanded and as media has proliferated across national boundaries it has become increasingly accessible for people to experience the cultures of others from the comforts of their home environment. Kang et al. (2017) assert as culture is often embedded in media, the spread of media all over the world can help people increase their cultural understanding. In order to help students develop global competence it is beneficial for teachers to engage students in the practice of utilizing global thinking dispositions that are described in the next section.

Global Thinking Dispositions

This section discusses Global Thinking Routines (Jackson, 2016) that can be utilized in the classroom that will help students develop global competence skills. The Global Thinking Routines mentioned in this section are The 3 Ys, How Else & Why, and Beauty & Truth (Jackson, 2016, pp. 14-16).

Mansilla (2016) writes that educators should help students develop global thinking dispositions. Thinking dispositions are defined by Mansilla (2016) as “(1) the ability to perform certain kinds of thinking, such as close observation, making connections, and reasoning with evidence, (2) the sensitivity to recognize occasions for using such ability, and (3) an ongoing inclination to do so” (p. 13). Mansilla (2016) proposes that it is important to promote four global thinking dispositions in students. These dispositions align with the global competencies, which are inquiring about the

world, understanding multiple perspectives, using respectful dialogue, and taking responsible action (Mansilla, 2016).

Mansilla writes (2016) in order to cultivate global dispositions it is necessary that students experience:

Ongoing participation in classroom cultures in which these dispositions are visibly valued and extensively practiced. To cultivate global dispositions, teachers must weave opportunities to inquire about the world, take multiple perspectives, engage in respectful dialogue, and take responsible action as a routine and integral part of everyday life in the classroom. (p. 13)

Mansilla (2016) recommends that Global Thinking Routines are a way in which global dispositions can be nurtured continually in the classroom. By practicing these routines students can develop global competence skills over time. Global Thinking Routines that Mansilla suggests include the following The 3 Ys, How Else & Why, and Beauty and Truth.

The 3 Ys. Mansilla (2016) writes that when using the 3 Ys, students ask three ‘why’ questions in reference to a subject such as an issue of global significance or story in the world news. The first question is, “Why might this (topic, question) matter to me?” The second question is, “Why might it matter to people around me (family, friends, city, nation)?” The third question is, “Why might it matter to the world?” (p. 14). By asking these questions students are given the opportunity to reflect upon why a topic is significant.

The first question encourages students to consider their own incentives for considering a topic. It helps the student to reflect upon their own views and questions about a subject. This question assists students in developing the ability to examine why a topic is personally important to them and why. The second question and third question supports students in their ability to look beyond themselves. They reinforce the disposition to understand multiple perspectives. It also invites students to contemplate on how a topic relates to them at local level and a global level, and to consider how these levels are connected (Mansilla, 2016).

How Else & Why. Mansilla (2016) asserts How Else & Why is another global thinking routine that teaches students to “interact respectfully across cultures and situations” (p. 14). It encourages respectful dialogue by having students consider alternative ways of making a particular claim. Students are encouraged to ask themselves, “How else can I say this? And why?” (Mansilla, 2016, p. 15) before they make a statement. Mansilla (2016) writes in asking these two questions students are encouraged to consider the “intention, audience, and situation to reframe his or her language, tone, and body language” (p. 15). This routine is very helpful when students are discussing controversial topics. It can help to relax a conversation so that students can be more intentional and thoughtful in their communication choices. Mansilla (2016) writes it also helps students to avoid making offensive or accusatory statements.

Beauty and Truth. Beauty and Truth is the third global thinking routine recommended by Mansilla (2016). This routine encourages students to consider “how beauty and common human experience can help us bridge cultures and contexts”

(Mansilla, 2016, p. 16). In this routine students consider a photograph, picture, experience, or work of art and discuss the following four questions. The first question is, “Can you find beauty in this story/image/photograph?” The second question is, “Can you find truth in it?” The third question is, “How might beauty reveal truth?” The fourth question is, “How might beauty conceal truth?” (Mansilla, 2016, p. 16). Mansilla (2016) argues that these questions help students to reflect on the world and on the shared human experience. These questions help students to dig deeper as a means to understand the world. Furthermore, this global thinking routine, along with the others, will help students in developing the skills of global competence.

Lessons Learned from Global Competence

In developing global competence at the elementary school level it is important to consider the four cornerstone competencies of a globally competent student: investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas effectively, and taking action (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012). In this capstone project exchanging letters, online video chats, and the sharing of student made short films are the tools that are used for students to engage in intercultural communication and to develop the four competencies of a globally competent student. Utilizing these intercultural tools as well as the global thinking routines described by Mansilla (2016) will help to foster global competency skills in students in the classroom.

In addition to developing the global competencies in the classroom environment Mansilla and Jackson (2012) also recommend remembering the reasons for developing them, otherwise dedication towards developing them may well be lost when considering

all of the demands of a teacher. According to the authors students need to learn these skills in order to engage in a world that is in constant flux due to the transformative forces of a flattened global economy, mass migration, and climate change. Another reason for learning these competencies is expressed by Jackson (2016).

Jackson (2016) notes how students also need these skills so that they can develop into adults who are open-minded and respectful of people who are different from them. According to the author these skills need to be nurtured in students so that they do not give in to attitudes that are based in fear, misunderstanding, and prejudice. Jackson (2016) concludes that learning the skills of global competence will influence students to be leaders in pursuing a more peaceful and tolerant world. If students become the leaders that Jackson (2016) describes it provides support for one of my foundational assumptions in exploring my capstone question and designing my project. That assumption is the skills of global competence both benefit and enhance the next topic cross-cultural communication.

Cross-Cultural Communication/Intercultural Communication

Kang et al. (2017) state that cross-cultural communication, also referred to as intercultural communication, can occur in the classroom using various methods and approaches. This section defines cross-cultural communication and highlight various examples of how cross-cultural communication has been utilized in classrooms all over the world. This section also discusses cross-cultural competence and its' importance in developing cross-cultural communication.

This section informs the reader of the purpose of the cross-cultural communication in various scenarios. When considering the purpose of cross-cultural education this section examines the research and knowledge that led to specific design preferences. It explains how the cross-cultural communication was implemented in these classrooms. Specifically, it focuses on how technology was utilized in the implementation of the cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, it shares the learnings and findings of the various approaches to cross-cultural communication. This section informs the reader of both the successes and the challenges of cross-cultural communication.

Defining intercultural communication. Mitchell and Benyon (2018) write that intercultural communication is a soft skill that is becoming increasingly more important in an ever increasing globalized world. Intercultural communication is a skill set that is often seen in a person who is cross-culturally competent. Reichard et al. (2015) state that a cross-culturally competent individual does not hold a bias towards his or her cultural group and a bias against other cultural groups. Instead, a cross-culturally competent individual is open-minded and exhibits positive attitudes toward different cultures. A cross-culturally competent individual is also able to adapt to unfamiliar cultural contexts.

According to Mitchell and Benyon (2018) a person with strong intercultural communication skills is also likely to be a culturally intelligent person. Thomas and Inkson (2003) define a culturally intelligent person as someone who is “skilled and flexible about understanding a culture, learning more about it from interactions with it, and gradually reshaping their thinking to be more sympathetic to the culture” (p. 15).

Thomas and Inkson's (2003) definition of a culturally intelligent person is similar to how Huber and Reynolds (2014) define intercultural competence; they write intercultural competence is:

a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills applied through action which enables one, either singly or together with others; to understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself; respond appropriately, effectively and respectfully when interacting and communicating with such people; establish positive and constructive relationships with such people; understand oneself and one's own multiple cultural affiliations through encounters with cultural "difference." (pp. 16-17)

Intercultural competence and being culturally intelligent are skill sets that are similar and compatible with each other. They are also skill sets that aid in the process of intercultural communication.

Both of these skills sets highlight the importance of understanding and respecting other cultures. They also demonstrate the value in being able interact respectfully and effectively with people from other cultures. There are various methods of developing and improving intercultural competence and communication. The following sections describe ways that educational institutions have tried to improve intercultural communication and competence.

Intercultural Communication in Practice

This section examines methods that have been used to promote intercultural communication between students in different countries. The methods described in this

section all highlight the importance of technology in promoting intercultural dialogue. First, it reports on how U.S. and South African students used online tools such as email and Skype to participate in intercultural communication. Second, it examines how Dutch and Kenyan schools utilized a 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication model as a means to promote intercultural communication and health consciousness. Third, it reviews a cross-cultural online project focused on building global competence between U.S. and South Korean students.

U.S. and South African information systems students collaborate. Alanah Mitchell and Rob Benyon (2018) designed a “global, technology-supported collaboration assignment where U.S. and South African students worked together in order to become more globally aware and increase their intercultural competency” (p. 2). The students were university students who specialized in information systems. To begin this assignment students learned about concepts of intercultural communication competency and technology collaboration tools. Mitchell and Benyon (2018) explain that U.S. students were partnered randomly with South African students. Students were instructed to connect with their partner and become acquainted with each other using online tools such as e-mail, Skype, Facebook, Facetime, Snapchat, and WhatsApp. Students were also given talking points to help start the dialogue.

During their dialogues Mitchell and Benyon (2018) write that students were expected to learn about the personal interests and biographic information about their partner, the education system and job process in their partner’s country, and information about daily life in their partner’s home country. Once students were connected it was

expected that students begin their own dialogue with their partner. Mitchell and Benyon (2018) write at the conclusion of their assignment students were instructed to, “reflect on their partners and what they learned (as well as communication complications), the opportunities and challenges related to the assignment or the technology, and any final lessons that they learned” (p. 3). These reflections gave the researchers beneficial information that was utilized in reporting the outcomes of the assignment.

Mitchell and Benyon (2018) report that students took away valuable lessons from the reflection at the end of this assignment. The reflection piece in particular was useful because it gave students the opportunity to analyze new learnings, to reflect upon similarities and differences that they had with their partner, it allowed them to examine preconceived stereotypes or expectations, and to consider the advantages and challenges of engaging in intercultural dialogue. Mitchell and Benyon (2018) contend that another key takeaway of the assignment they created is the importance of technology in promoting intercultural dialogue.

The authors pointed out that without email, video chat platforms, and other social media tools, this kind of assignment would have been more difficult and inconvenient to accomplish. This assignment created by Mitchell and Benyon (2018) utilized technology to get students from the U.S. and South Africa to work cooperatively and engage in intercultural communication. Similarly, in the next section is a description of how to utilize technology for students to engage in intercultural communication.

Cross-cultural communication exchange between Kenya and Denmark.

Larsen et al. (2014) developed a pilot project where grade 6 students in Nairobi, Kenya

and Copenhagen, Denmark participated in a cross-cultural communication exchange utilizing information and communication technologies. For this project, Larson et al. (2014) were investigating how cross-cultural communication could help promote daily movement as an effective component of health. In pursuing a cross-cultural communication study between students of Denmark and Kenya, Larsen et al. (2014) hoped that the students would not only learn about each other and each other's culture, but that it would also spur interest in the topic of health promotion. Larsen et al. (2014) writes, "The educational rationale for using cross-cultural communication is that meeting the unfamiliar (different children, cultures, schools, contexts) leads to curiosity and reflection about one's own situation; and subsequently that reflexivity builds actions competence" (p. 107).

Larsen et al. (2014) explain that for this cross-cultural study students discussed the themes of movement and physical activity. To begin the exchange the students first wrote and exchanged letters. In these letters students introduced themselves and wrote about topics such as family, home, and hobbies.

Larsen et al. (2014) write that the next step involved students from both countries making short films about physical activity in daily life. These films were then edited and exchanged. The authors report that after students watched the films from the other country, the students reflected on the films in their class and were interviewed by the researchers to learn their reaction.

After watching these films, the project required students to generate questions to ask their Kenyan or Danish counterparts for the upcoming Skype session. Skype is a

video calling platform where people can call each other and see each other via video.

During the Skype sessions, Larsen et al. (2014) reported how the students had the chance to engage in dialogue with each other. Upon completing the Skype phone sessions, the participants of this cross-cultural study were asked to reflect upon the process.

Larsen et al. (2014) concluded that this project demonstrated that students were excited and motivated to participate when engaging in the cross-cultural activities of letter writing, filmmaking, and participating in Skype sessions. Four positive outcomes of the project reported by the authors were:

- Students participated in this project enthusiastically
- Students develop ownership in the project as they exchanged information about their lives and became knowledgeable about each other.
- The reflection process “leads to learning about oneself and one’s place in the world by sharing with others and then again looking at oneself in a new perspective” (p. 116).
- Skype conversations served as an opportunity for students to improve their foreign language and communication skills.

In addition to the positive outcomes Larsen et al. (2014) report four challenges related to the implementation of the project.

The primary challenge was limited access to technology for the students in Kenya. In order for this project to be successful the researchers had to hire an information technology engineer to set up internet access and they had to provide a computer with a projector to the school in Kenya. A second challenge reported by the authors were

delays related to the difficulty in sending films via the internet. To address the second challenge the films eventually had to be delivered by hand on CD-ROMS.

A third challenge described by Larsen et al. (2014) is that it was difficult to implement this project during the school hours for the Kenyan school because the curriculum of the Kenyan school requires that teachers strictly adhere to it. For future projects, Larsen et al. (2014) recommend that this kind of project take place as a kind of extra-curricular in the afternoon. The final challenge was how one Skype session was not enough time for students to reap the benefits of becoming acquainted with each other and making friends. In creating and implementing this project the authors of this project were able to reflect upon it and then develop a model for educators to implement intercultural communication activities in their own classrooms. This model is described in detail below.

14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication. From this project the authors created a 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model that they suggest can be utilized in subjects across the disciplines (Larsen et al., 2014). A brief summary of the model follows. Larsen et al. (2014) describe that Step 1 through 3 involve selecting the schools, and introducing the model to the school and the classrooms. During the first step it is important to determine that the schools have access to the internet and that the teachers have basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The authors note that in Step 3 classrooms should ensure that activities and learning outcomes are coordinated in unison so that both classrooms are working towards the same goals.

Larsen et al. (2014) state that Steps 4 through 14 involve the implementation of cross-cultural activities. These activities include having students:

- Write and exchange letters, and then reflect on this process.
- Select a theme for a film, prepare for the film, implement the filming of scenes, edit the film, exchange and watch the films, and reflect upon the films.
- Specific preparation multiple Skype sessions. In the first sessions it is recommended that students get acquainted with each other. In later sessions students should discuss educational themes. Then the students are to reflect upon the Skype sessions, as well as the experience overall.

The 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model developed by Larsen et al.

(2014) is an effective example of a intercultural communication that utilizes technology.

The next section describes the way Kang et al. (2018) implemented another intercultural communication project between U.S. and South Korean universities.

U.S. and a South Korean university assess cross-cultural online projects.

Kang et al. (2018) write that universities in the United States and South Korea implemented a “ ‘cross-cultural online project in their apparel and textile courses’ in order to determine if the online project had an effect on the students level of global competence” (p. 684). The author designed the project so that students in the United States and South Korea became acquainted with each other through self-introductory videos on YouTube. Then students formed small groups and worked collaboratively on a project, and gave presentations and had discussions through an online system.

In implementing this project Kang et al. (2018) had to identify what significant experiences had already impacted the students level of global competence. To measure impact the authors had students complete a pre- and post- test, and open-ended question at the end of the project.

The pre- and post- test survey measured students “open attitude towards differences, intercultural communication skills, and knowledge of the others country’s basic information, culture, university student life, fashion/business market, and consumers” (p. 687). At the end of the project students completed open-ended questions about the project. The data from the two tests was then evaluated to see if the online course affected intercultural communication skills. Kang et al. (2018) report that:

The results revealed that after the implementation of the projects U.S. students’ intercultural communication skills and knowledge of Korea had significantly increased, but no difference was found in their open attitude. The Korean students’ open attitude and knowledge had improved. However, they showed no improvement in intercultural communication skills. (p. 688)

Following the analysis of the data Kang et al. (2018) concluded that, “the projects, as an educational tool, generally increased the global competence of participating students but the magnitude of the impact varied across the sub-dimensions and the countries” (p. 690). In particular Kang et al. (2018) found that the semester long project had a significant impact on students developing more knowledge of another country and culture. Kang et al. (2018) measured the knowledge of the “other country’s basic information, culture, university student life, fashion business/market, and consumers” (p. 687).

Kang and her colleagues (Kang et al., 2018) also noted that, “when individuals encounter foreign cultures/peoples, they come to recognize their cultural barriers and boundaries first before stepping into others’ culture, and then seek to clarify their own cultural meanings and others’ ” (p. 691). Kang et al. (2018) suggest that in order to overcome these barriers it is recommended that students should be given “more opportunities to develop personal relationships with their peers in other countries prior to the start of the projects, using social media to get to know each other personally” (p. 691).

Lessons Learned from Intercultural Communication in Action

Intercultural communication is a skill that the students of our classrooms need to develop in order to successfully adapt to globalized world. Luckily, the advancement of online technological tools and the widespread availability of these online tools makes it very possible for students to engage in intercultural communication. The aforementioned collaborative projects all relied heavily on the use of online technology tools. These collaborative projects used a range of online tools such as video chats, email, and social media applications.

Through these online tools students were able to develop personal relationships with students of other countries. The researchers of the projects that are discussed in this literature review all highlight the importance of utilizing online tools and having students develop personal relationships during the course of the project. The researchers discuss how the development of personal relationships is beneficial in that it is enjoyable for students and it appears it assists in the development of intercultural competencies. The

online relationships helps students to become curious about each other, to learn about each other and other cultures, to consider new perspectives, and to take action on a subject or topic.

The lessons learned from these collaborative project influence this capstone project in that online tools are utilized as a means for students to build intercultural communication skills as they get to know students from another country. Specifically, this capstone project utilizes the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model developed by Larsen et al. (2014).

Conclusion

The review of the research literature for this capstone supports the idea that intercultural communication and global competence go hand-in-hand. The research reviewed highlights five positive outcomes of creating opportunities for students to engage in intercultural communication to develop global competence. These include:

- A person who is skilled in intercultural communication is capable of understanding a culture and learning from that culture as they interact with it.
- A person skilled in global competence is able to inquire about another culture and seek knowledge in order to broaden their understanding of another culture.
- An interculturally competent and globally competent individual are both able to recognize, understand, and respect other perspectives and cultures.
- An individual with strong intercultural communication skills and global competence skills is also able to effectively communicate with diverse audiences in a manner that is thoughtful and courageous.

- A globally competent student and a student with strong intercultural skills are reflective and they are able to collaborate with others as a means to make change in the world.

By engaging elementary school students in intercultural dialogue students have the chance to develop their intercultural skills and their global competence (Kang et al., 2017).

In creating a project the four competencies of global competency are taken as a framework. Students have the opportunity to investigate the world when they learn from their partners in the collaborative video chats, through the exchanging of letters, and through the sharing of short films that are created by the students. Students have the chance to recognize the perspectives of others as they engage in these intercultural activities. They also learn to communicate their own ideas in a manner that is respectful and considerate of cultural differences. And finally students have the chance to act upon their new learnings.

In considering the lessons learned from the online collaborative projects, students are given the opportunity to get to know each other and learn from each other. They also become familiar with using online video technology in a manner that is safe and respectful. In communicating and learning from each other, students have the opportunity to grow into a more globally competent individual and in this process make the world a more interconnected place where peace can flourish.

The following chapter considers the best methods for developing intercultural communication skills and global competence. The chapter describes how global thinking

routines can be utilized in collaborative online video chats. The 3 Ys, How Else & Why, and Beauty and Truth are examples of the global thinking routines that can be utilized in preparing and in the implementation of online video chats. Most importantly, the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication model presented by Larsen (2014) and his colleagues serves as a basis for creating an effective cross-cultural communication system that develops the skills of global competence at the elementary level of education.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

This capstone explores the question - What components of a classroom project builds intercultural communication between students of different countries, develops their sense of global competence, and promotes a mindset oriented towards peace? In the literature review global competence was defined and it was established that investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas, and taking action are the four competencies of a globally competent student. This chapter will describe how this project will contribute to the development of these four competencies in elementary students.

This chapter establishes a theoretical framework for my capstone project that adopts and modifies the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model developed by Larsen, Bruselius-Jensen, Danielsen, Nyamai, Otiende, and Aagaard-Hansen (2014) in the article, *ICT-based, cross-cultural communication: A methodological perspective*. The modified 14 Step 3C model is the method that will be utilized in developing the four global competencies.

For this project lessons plans have been created for step four to five and steps eleven through thirteen. The lessons plans are designed to help students engage in the competencies of global competence. The lesson plans for steps four and five have students share their own perspective and recognize the perspective of others through writing and reflecting on letters that are exchanged between students in different countries. In these lesson students also develop the global competency of communicating

effectively as they write their letters. In lessons plans for steps eleven through thirteen students also use the competencies of recognizing perspectives and communicating effectively as they prepare for, participate in, and reflect on a Skype conversation with students in another country. In the future every step of the modified 14 Step 3C model will be created into lesson plans that engage students in the skills of global competence. The next section details how this project will be implemented at a future time and it describes how each step will develop the skills of global competence.

Theoretical Framework for the Capstone Project

This project will establish an intercultural exchange between elementary school age students in a large metropolitan area of the upper Midwest and Bogotá, Colombia. The students in the upper Midwest attend a before and after school program and the students in Bogotá, Colombia attend a well-known institute for learning English. The creation of the project took place in Spring 2019 and the proposed implementation of the project is Fall 2019.

The teachers from these two programs will collaborate in order to implement this project with their students. This intercultural exchange will adopt and modify the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) method developed by Niels et al. (2014) in the article, *ICT-based, cross-cultural communication: A methodological perspective*.

The 14 steps are described below and it is discussed how the implementation of these steps is designed to nourish the development of global competence in students. In modifying this project I will add a step between step 3 and 4 and for simplification

purposes call it step 3.5. In this step students will be introduced to Global Thinking Routines as described by Veronica Boix Mansilla (2016) in *How to Be a Global Thinker*.

The first step of developing a intercultural exchange involves selecting the schools that will participate in the exchange. According to Larsen et al. (2015) it is important that school is dedicated to the project, has a strong pedagogic environment, has access to the internet, and has teachers that are skilled in information and communication technologies. In determining the schools to be used in this project, the recommendations of Larsen (2015) and his team are taken into consideration and applied.

For this project a before and after school program in a large metropolitan area of the upper Midwest is being considered. An after and before school program would be ideal for this project because of the freedom of time that the students and the researcher can devote to the project. The institute in Bogotá is being considered because the students are learning English and the researcher has a connection there. Having a common language that the teachers and students speak in this project is beneficial because the project can overcome the language barriers that would hinder communication between students.

The second and third step involve introducing the 14 step model and the project to the schools and the participants in the project. This project will follow the guidelines recommended by Larsen and his colleagues. The researcher will reach out to the the people in charge of the before and after school program and the institute to ensure that they are able and willing to participate. The researcher will then reach out to the teachers who will be involved in implementing this project to establish a connection and assurance

that all parties are committed to the project. For the elementary school in the upper Midwest I am the Site Lead for the program and this involves getting the permission of my supervisor in order to implement the project. For the institute in Bogotá this involves reaching out to the director of the institute and a teacher that I am already acquainted with.

In the initial discussions with the leaders and the teachers, they will learn the purpose of this project, which is to shape globally competent students. They will also discuss the methods and the activities that will be used to help foster the global competencies in students. A goal of the early interactions between the teachers at the two programs is to confirm that the purpose of the project has been explained carefully and that all parties are at an equal understanding of what the project will entail. In the initial meetings the two parties will also need to determine a timeline in which the project will be implemented.

Once both schools and teachers are prepared in their understanding and implementation of the project, the model and the project will be introduced to the students. It will be the responsibility of the teachers to get parent permission to participate in this project. The teachers will also be responsible for stating the expectations and learning goals of this project. It is possible for the teacher to connect the learning goals of this project to the Common Core State Standards (Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), 2019).

In participating in this project students are meeting many of the English Language Arts Standards as set forth by the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019). The Common Core Standards “outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade” (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019, About, About the Common Core Standards, ¶ 1). In exchanging letters with students from other countries students address the standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6, which states that students should be able to “use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others” (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019, English Language Arts Standards, Production and Distribution of Writing, ¶ 3).

In preparing and engaging in the intercultural exchange via online video chats students address the standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1, which states that students should be able to “prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively” (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019, English Language Arts Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, ¶ 1). In utilizing the global competence skill of recognizing perspectives students are working towards achieving the standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3, which states that a student should be able to “evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric” (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019, English Language Arts Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, ¶ 3).

In making a short film on an issue that they wish to address students have the opportunity to apply standard CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4. For this standard students should be able to “present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience” (CCSSO & NGA Center, 2019, English Language Arts Standards, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas ¶ 1). It is important to consider these standards because it is hoped that this project will serve as a model to follow in elementary school classrooms.

In step 3.5 students will be introduced to the Global Thinking Routines established by Veronica Boix Mansilla (2016) in her article *How to Be a Global Thinker*. First students will be introduced to the ‘How Else & Why’ global thinking routine during a class time setting. This routine encourages students to think about the words, tone of voice, and body language that they use when they make a particular claim. In this routine students ask themselves the question, “How else can I say this? And why?” (Mansilla, 2016, p. 15). Students will practice using this routine in scenarios where there will likely be differences in opinion and conflicting ideas. They will begin with scenarios that they could face when playing and interacting with classmates. They will also have the opportunity to utilize this routine in a scenario where there are cultural differences. In using this global thinking routine students are developing the global competencies of recognizing perspectives and communicating ideas effectively.

In step 3.5 students will also be introduced to the 3 Ys global thinking routine. In this routine students consider the significance of a topic as it relates to them personally, to

their community, and to the world. Mansilla (2016) writes that students should ask themselves the following three questions:

1. “Why might this (topic, question) matter to me?”
2. Why might it matter to people around me (family, friends, city, nation)
3. Why might it matter to the world?” (p. 14).

In implementing this routine the teacher will utilize a variety of topics for discussion. The topics will draw on students interests and experiences but also encourage them to look beyond their immediate world. Most importantly, this routine will teach students to “determine whether something matters to them and why” (Mansilla, 2016, p. 14). As students practice this routine it will hopefully encourage them to become more curious about the world, and in becoming more curious they will hopefully begin to investigate the world and take action to improve it, both competencies of global competence. This routine also encourages students to consider various perspectives.

The fourth step is focused on writing and exchanging letters and in the fifth step students reflect upon the letters that they have received. The letters are exchanged in order for students to get to know each other. As part of the fourth step students will be taught how to write a friendly letter. In the letters the students will introduce themselves and their families, and write about things that have significance in their life such as their school environment, community, hobbies, and mealtimes. In these letters students will also discuss cultural items such as their favorite foods and music. The teacher should remind students that these letters are a reflection of themselves and as such the letters should be written in a respectful manner.

These letters will be produced in class. Teachers will have student brainstorm a list of ideas for students to write about, provide a sample outline of a friendly letter, and assist in the drafting of the letter. Students will be asked to share a photo if they wish. Students will also peer edit the letters and teachers will review the letters before they are sent in order to check for clarity and respectful voice in the letter. These letters will be sent electronically by scanning them from a scanner and uploading them to Google Drive. The teacher can then print the scanned copies of the letters. The letters will be sent electronically in order to offset the delay of time in sending them via snail mail and to avoid the letter from being lost in transit.

After the letters have been sent and received students will have the opportunity to read the letters as part of the fifth step. Students will read a letter and then write a short reflection on how they relate to the student who wrote the letter. Students will then work in small groups to discuss their reflections. The teacher will help students to find commonalities and differences in the perspectives of students. The teacher will also lead the student towards further investigation of topics and themes that stood out from the letters. The follow up Skype discussions will rely on these letters as a basis for conversation.

In writing, reading, and reflecting upon these letters students engage in the first three competencies of a globally competent student. By reading a letter from a student in another country they are investigating the world in that they they get to learn about a life of a student in another part of the world. They can reflect upon how their life is similar or different. In their reflection upon the letter they can begin to recognize others

perspectives. From the letters students will be introduced to other ideas and perspectives on family life, school environment, and local community. In writing the letters student will also need to learn to communicate their own ideas so that it will be understood by a reader who comes from a different cultural background. In the writing process students will need to consider how to describe their lives and interests to a person who is not familiar with their life.

In Step 6 teachers begin to prepare for the online video chats and the creation of short films. In preparation for the online video chats the teachers will need to decide on a platform that they will use and they will need to make sure that they have access to the appropriate technology that will allow them to use that platform. In this project the online video chat that will be used is Skype. In arranging for the the creation of short films teachers will need to make sure that they have a phone or a camera for recording. The teachers will also need to know how to use the necessary technology for editing a short film.

In Step 7 through 10 a short film is made, edited, exchanged and then reflected on by students. In these shorts films students are asked to come up with an idea about how they can help their school environment or community. In considering a topic to film about the students might consider an issue about how they can make a change in their school or community. They could consider a theme that relates to an ideal that that they want to uphold in their community such as being a friend to all or standing up to bully behavior. The students are given the opportunity to decide the topic as it relates to their school environment or community in order for students to have choice in the decision and

so that students are interested in participating in the project. Students are encouraged to choose a theme for a film that focuses on how to change or improve their school or community because this relates to the fourth competence of a globally competent student. A globally competent student is able to take action to improve the world. It is important for students to reflect upon how they can make a change in their immediate world in which they live.

The teacher will guide the process of creating the video. It is important that the video presents the problem to be addressed or the change to be accomplished. The video should tell why this issue is important to the students and what they plan to do about the issue. It will be the most ideal if the students can take action to implement the change that they wish to see and that they incorporate this into the film. The purpose of the film is both to identify an issue and take action to address it. The teacher will be responsible for the filming and editing of the film. The film can be edited with the software of their choice. After the filming and editing process is complete, it is recommended that the film is uploaded to Google Drive so that it can be easily accessed by both schools. The teacher is also responsible for writing a short description of what the students proposed and accomplished in the film. This written description will help to explain the action taken by the students.

Then the teachers can show the films that were made by the students of the other school. After watching the film the students will then be asked to discuss and reflect on the video that was created by the other group of students. Additionally, they will be asked to come up with questions for the students that made the film. In a later Skype session

they will be able to ask these questions to the students who created the film. In watching the video the students are again getting the opportunity to engage with the global competencies. They are able to learn about the world outside of their own environment by watching a video made by students from another country. They are also able to consider the intentions and perspectives of the students who made the film. Furthermore, in creating the video they need to consider how they will effectively communicate the purpose of their project to an audience that is unfamiliar with their cultural setting.

In steps 11-13 students prepare for the online Skype video chat, conduct the Skype video chat and reflect upon the experiences of communicating directly with other students from another part of the world. For this project the students will participate in two Skype chats. In the first chat the students will focus on getting to know each other. In preparation for the first chat students will review the letters they received in order to generate questions for the Skype conversation. During the first Skype chat students will introduce themselves, exchange pleasantries, and exchange in conversation topics based on the knowledge of each other from the letters.

The goal will be for students to get acquainted with each other and to find similarities as well as differences in regards to their personal interests and hobbies, families, school, and community. As students from different countries engage in dialogue around these topics it is hoped that they are utilizing the global competency skills of investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, and communicating ideas effectively. For these interactions students will be encouraged to utilize the skills learned from the global thinking routines in order to participate in a manner that is the most respectful.

In the second video chat students will discuss the projects that they implemented, as well as the projects that they observed from the short videos that were exchanged. In getting ready for this video chat, the students will have seen the short films that were made by the other groups and they will have reflected on those films. This chat serves as a means to discuss the videos that were created. In furthering conversation, students are making a choice to explore the world of the partnering school, to recognize the perspectives of the students at that school, and to communicate in a manner that leads to mutual understanding.

After each of the Skype chats students will be provided with the opportunity to reflect upon their conversations with the students from the other country. They will write a short written reflection and then discuss their reflection in small groups. In reflecting students will explore how the Skype conversation with a student from another country helps them to recognize perspectives and develops the concept that people share common experiences. Students will also write about how the experiences impacted them.

In last step of this model and project the teachers and the leads of the programs are given the opportunity to reflect upon the process and implementation of this project. First, the teachers and leads will be given a survey that asks them about what they learned from participating in this project, the strengths and weaknesses of the project, and what could be changed to make this project even more successful. Then the teachers and the leads will meet together on a Skype group chat to discuss what they observed. Their conclusions about the project will be taken into consideration by the researcher as a tool of improving the project in future attempts to utilize it.

Conclusion

This project will help elementary school students develop four global competencies through the exchange of letters, the creation of short films that address a world issue, and the intercultural dialogue between students in an online video chat. In preparing for these exchanges students will learn how to use the global thinking routines in order to develop the global competencies of recognizing perspectives and communicating ideas effectively. In writing, reading, and reflecting upon exchanged letters students will be learning about the world, recognizing the perspectives of others and learning to communicate their own ideas.

By creating a short film about how they can help their school environment, their community, or the world, students are taking action, which represents the fourth competency of global competence. In the sharing of these films they are also called to further investigate the world. Finally, in the online video chats students are able to use the global competency skills of investigating the world, recognizing perspectives and communicating ideas effectively. In participating in this intercultural exchange it is hoped that students will begin to see the world from a global perspective and begin to consider their role in working towards the creation of a more peaceful world.

In Chapter Four the lessons learned from designing this project will be discussed and explained. The fourth chapter will consider the successes, the limitations and the challenges of designing this project and will make recommendations for how this project could be utilized in other schools and institutions. Finally, chapter four will highlight how

developing the four global competencies in students creates well-rounded individuals who will be successful in the globalized world.

CHAPTER FOUR

Critical Reflection

Introduction

The research question addressed in this capstone is: What components of a classroom project builds intercultural communication between students of different countries, develops their sense of global competence, and promotes a mindset oriented towards peace? The purpose of this capstone was to produce a series of lessons where students would engage in the process of intercultural communication, develop the skills associated with the ability of global competence, and discover that they share common life experiences with students who live in different countries. For the purpose of this capstone intercultural communication is defined as the capacity “to communicate with people from different cultures” (Mitchell & Benson, 2018, p. 1) and global competence is defined as the ability to understand the world and interact with it (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012).

An objective of this capstone project was for students to engage in intercultural communication using various modes of communication. Therefore, the lessons created for this project are based off of the 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model developed by Larsen et al. (2014). In using this model students exchange written letters, make and share short films, participate in online video conversations, and engage in reflection.

Another objective of this capstone project is for students to develop the four competencies related to global competence. Therefore, the lessons developed for this

project included goals where students develop the globally competent skills established by Mansilla and Jackson (2012): (1) investigating the world beyond their immediate environment; (2) recognizing perspectives, both their own and others; (3) communicating ideas effectively with diverse audiences; and (4) taking action to improve the world.

The final objective for this capstone project was for students to discover a mindset oriented towards peace. As a teacher of young people I have a responsibility to engage my students in practices where they learn to find commonalities with people who come from diverse and different backgrounds. As a teacher I can encourage students to reflect upon how their life is similar to the life of a student in another country.

As someone who has lived around the world, I know that this process of looking for commonality between people is influential in developing an outlook of recognizing a shared humanity in the world. As a teacher I have an obligation to create opportunities for my students to learn; about the world, to recognize their own perspective as well as others, how to communicate their own ideas effectively and respectfully, and how to take their knowledge and turn it into action. As I fulfill these obligations for my students the goal is that students will discover that they are a citizens of the world. With this realization of a shared stake in the world I hope students begin to understand the value of working towards achieving peace among people in the world. As a teacher I believe it is our responsibility to teach students that pursuing peace is a valued and foundational norm for the world.

Chapter Overview

In this chapter there is a description of how the four competencies of global competence are essential for the process of intercultural communication and for helping students recognize their shared common experiences. My assumption that by teaching students how to use the four competencies teachers perform their duty of sculpting a world that is more united and at peace. I illuminate the importance of technology in advancing the possibilities of intercultural communication. Also addressed in this chapter is a description of how the process of creating this capstone project will transform my career as I am now more experienced in putting research into practice. This chapter will inform how the research of Mansilla and Jackson (2012) and Larsen et al. (2014) were influential in the development of the lesson plans for the capstone project. This chapter acknowledges that global competence is a skill that is developed over time. However, as global competence develops it also reinforces how intercultural communication exchanges can be transformative experiences.

This chapter also describes how the implementation plan for the project and my intention of gathering data to inform future revisions. Also addressed are my plans for growing this project past its' current intention. I envision that the lessons created for this capstone project could be used by (like-minded) teachers around the world. Additionally, an explanation of the important role that teachers have in influencing the lives of students is described and it is argued that this capstone project is an instrumental tool that will help students develop the four competencies of global competence as they engage in intercultural communication and consider their own role within the larger

world. Lastly, this chapter describes how the lessons for this capstone project can be easily adapted for a diverse range of subject matters.

Major Learnings

As educators we have a responsibility to create a world that is compassionate and understanding. It is our duty to teach students how to interact with people who come from different backgrounds. Embarking upon this capstone project I discovered research on the topic global competence, which is the ability to understand the world and interact with it (Mansilla & Jackson, 2012). It was exciting to learn about global competence because it is the perfect tool that will help teachers fulfill their responsibility of creating a world where students look past their differences and unite in their shared experiences.

I learned that the first competence of investigating the world is a skill that encourages students to learn about the world so that they may better understand it. As educators if we can teach students to engage in the practice of learning about the world, then we have a better chance of teaching our students to care about the world and the people who live in it. It was enthralling to learn that the second and third global competencies are recognizing perspectives and communicating effectively because they are skills that help educators teach students to interact with diverse audiences in a way that is authentic and respectful. I also learned that the fourth global competence of teaching students to take action is an advantageous tool for teachers in the classroom because it encourages students to search for meaning in their learning, connect it to their lives, and to take meaningful steps to address issues that are of importance to the students.

Another major learning identified during this project is that technology has transformed the way that people can communicate with each other. New technologies gives teachers and students opportunities to engage in intercultural communication that were not possible in the past. In this project for example students will be able to send their letters via email instead of the mail. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to meet face to face in an online video chats. And finally students are going to be able to create and share a video that they create. As a teacher it is exciting to envision how technology can be used to create interactions that would not be possible otherwise.

As an educator I also have learned how engaging in the process of research and continued learning can improve upon my own practice as a teacher. As I gain more experience in the profession of teaching my intention is to rely on academic research to improve my own practice of teaching. As a teacher there will be challenges and opportunities for growth. When facing these situations I now know that I am fully capable of turning to the academic research on a particular subject, and then use that research to transform my own teaching practice. As I did for this capstone project, knowledge from academic research can be used to support me in creating lessons plans to be used in the classroom.

Revisit Literature Review

The research and writing conducted by Mansilla and Jacksons (2012) on global competence and its' importance within the realm of education had significant influence on guiding my literature review and developing my capstone project. The lessons that have been designed for this capstone rely on the four competencies of globally competent

student that are identified by Mansilla and Jackson (2012). For example, in the lesson where students prepare for and participate in Skype chat introductions, students have the opportunity to utilize three of the competencies of a globally competent student. Student use the first competency, investigating the world, as they learn about the lives of students in another country. Students use the second competency and the third competency, recognizing other perspectives and communicating their own ideas effectively, as they engage in the Skype conversations. The other lessons designed for this project are similar in that they also nurture the development of the four competencies of a globally competent student.

The 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication model developed by Larsen et al. (2014) also played a significant role in developing the lessons for this capstone project. The lessons of this capstone project largely follow the cross-cultural activities recommend by Larsen et al. (2014). The lessons that have been designed thus far include the activities of writing, exchanging, and reflecting on letters, as well as, the preparation, participation, and reflection on Skype chat sessions.

Limitations

A goal of this capstone project is to develop the skills of global competence. A limitation of this project is the limited scope of the project. Developing the skills of investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating effectively, and taking action are not skills that are learned simply over the course of one ongoing project. These are skills that need to be developed continuously over the course of many years. Although this project has a relatively short timeframe in which it is completed, it is hoped

that this project will inspire teachers to consider how they can continue to use the skills attributed to global competence in the classroom. Furthermore, if students are inspired by this project, perhaps they will take it into their own hands to continue down a path where they engage in intercultural communication and develop the skills of a globally competent student.

Future Research

At the moment this project consists of four lesson plans that pertain to the modified 14 Step Cross-Cultural Communication (3C) model that was developed by Larsen et al. (2014). Thus far, there are lessons plans for writing the letter to a student in another country, reflecting on the letter received from a student in another country, preparing and participating in a Skype conversation, and reflecting on a Skype conversation. The next step to be taken is to create all of the lesson plans for this project.

Upon completing these lessons plans, the entire project will be implemented at the current before and after school program with which I work and the institute in Colombia. In implementing this project I would do so with a critical eye in order to find ways to improve the project. I would make my own observations as well as get feedback from teacher and student participants. This feedback will be used to revise and improve the project.

I am also interested in creating a survey that would measure student growth and development as related to the four competencies of global competence. In future reiterations of the project students would have taken the survey before they embarked on the project and at the completion of the project. The survey questions would be designed

to see if students developed any skill sets related to global competence and intercultural communication. The post-project survey would also ask students to reflect upon if this project led them to new learnings about themselves or the world in which they live. The post-survey would ask students if their experience in engaging in intercultural communication and using the skills of global competence had an impact on their life or the way they view the world. It would be preferential if this survey revealed both quantitative and qualitative data.

Communicating Results

My plan is to revise the project after implementing it with the before and after school program for which I work and the Institute in Colombia. Once revisions are completed the lessons will be posted with a link to my capstone in teacherspayteachers.com. My current project will also be catalogued in [Hamline University's Digital Commons](#).

Next, the plan is introduce this project to the other before and after school programs in the school district for which I work. My intention is to help these sites with the implementation of the project. I would also use my relationships with the staff and teachers at my current elementary school to see if there would be teachers that would be interested in implementing this project in their own classroom. I would offer my own support to the cooperating teachers interested in utilizing this project. Upon seeing how this project works in the classroom I would make the necessary revisions to improve the project and then reach out to the superintendent of my school district to see if this project could be used across the district.

Benefits to Profession

This project is beneficial to teachers everywhere in that it can be easily adapted to various uses. It could be used at the elementary level as intended to develop intercultural communication and the skill of global competence. However, it could also be used in a science class where students collaborate on scientific research or try solve a shared problem. It could be used in a foreign language class for students to have the opportunity to speak with native speakers of the language that they are learning. It could be used in a social studies class where students discuss the present-day or past interactions of their nations. The lessons are designed in a way where they could be easily adapted and transformed to meet the needs of teachers in other subject areas and at higher grade levels. This project is a wonderful tool for teachers who wish to collaborate with other classrooms around the world.

Conclusion

Teachers have a very important role in that they influence the lives of children every day. Their role in educating the young people of our country is critically important to the success and continuation of society. This project is beneficial to elementary school teachers because it encourages them to consider their role in developing a child as whole. As a teacher I think it is the responsibility of our profession to create a world where students are taught to recognize the shared experiences among all people. That is what this capstone does.

This capstone project provides an opportunity for young student to engage in intercultural communication and to develop the skills related to global competence. As a

teacher I believe a project of this kind will benefit children in that it will encourage them to be open-minded and empathetic. This project encourages students to see the world beyond their immediate environment. My aspiration for this project is that the conversations and interactions that students experience in participating in this project will help students develop a sense of shared humanity in the world. And if students can discover this sense of shared humanity, then perhaps they will begin to value the keeping of peace within humanity. If students are taught the skills of global competence and given the opportunity to participate in intercultural exchanges they are given the gift of exploring the world as a global citizen that recognizes the interconnectedness of humanity.

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APPENDIX A

Links to Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan for Writing and Editing Friendly Letters:

- [Lesson Plan for Writing and Editing Friendly Letters.](#)
- [Brainstorm Questions for Friendly Letter Writing.](#)
- [Formative Assessment Options One and Two.](#)
- [Sample Letter Example 1](#)
- [Sample Letter Example 2](#)
- [Friendly Letter Checklist Worksheet.](#)
- [Friendly Letter Rubric Worksheet.](#)

Lesson Plan for Reflecting on Friendly Letters:

- [Lesson Plan for Reflecting on Friendly Letters](#)
- [Reflection on a Letter from a Student in Another Country.](#)
- [Reflection on Letter Rubric.](#)
- [Observation Checklist for Reflecting on Friendly Letters.](#)

Lesson Plan for Skype Chat Introductions:

- [Lesson Plan for Skype Chat Introductions](#)
- [Preparing for the Skype Conversation Worksheet.](#)
- [Observation Checklist for Skype Chat Introductions.](#)

Lesson Plan for Reflection on Skype Chat Introductions:

- [Lesson Plan for Reflection on Skype Conversation](#)
- [Reflection on Skype Conversation with Students from Another Country.](#)
- [Reflection on Skype Conversation Rubric.](#)
- [Observation Checklist for Reflection on Skype Chat Introductions.](#)

Links to Information on the Global Competencies:

- [Investigating the World](#)
- [Communicating Ideas](#)
- [Recognizing Perspectives](#)
- [Taking Action](#)