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# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TEACHING IN WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION: CRITICAL CRITERIA FOR GLOBAL TEACHERHOOD

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*In world language teacher education, there are few opportunities that integrate preparing prospective educators for meaningful participation in intercultural dialogues and for deeper understanding of value conflicts. Student teaching abroad offers one such promising opportunity. With our conceptualization of a critical systems approach towards heightened global awareness, we present an alternative framework that can be used in studies on international student teaching (IST). Furthermore, we theorize a type of mindset that intercultural understanding can develop in student teachers: global teacherhood. After reviewing studies and drawing attention to the importance of preparing teachers for intercultural communication in their field experiences, we discuss the elements of our framework that include teacher reflection and worldview reframing. Focusing on interpretive findings from our exploratory study, we apply critical systems criteria to the cases of two prospective teachers participating in an IST program.*

## Introduction

Recently, World Language Education (WLE) has become the preferred title of our field. Among the reasons for this title shift is a vital effort to infuse language education with a heightened awareness of globalization.[1] Despite the inclusion of foreign language education in *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*[2] as a core part of K–12 education, school systems in the US still do not adequately respond to the increasing demands for international studies and world languages (Foreign Policy Association, 2004)—hence the current emphasis on language education for global leadership by the US Committee for Economic Development (2006). In

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[1]The scope of this article does not leave room for a discussion of various perspectives on globalization and "glocalization." An extensive discussion can be found in Ritzer, G. (2004). *The globalization of nothing.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[2]See http://www.ed.gov/legislation/GOALS2000/TheAct/index.html

this context, the admission and preparation of prospective WLE teachers involves a wide array of considerations.

Currently, WLE teacher education programs demand courses in both subject areas and educational sciences. Usually pre-service teachers major in one language, together with courses in its literature, language, and civilization. Programs commonly offer teaching methods courses with field experiences, course work in educational policy, educational psychology and/or special education, and philosophical aspects of education that raise future teachers' awareness of social justice issues of race, ethnicity, ableism, and gender. In this regard, the situation in our field has changed slowly since Bernhardt's and Hammadou's (1987) review. Nonetheless, of the few areas of change, one has emerged as a concern for the quality of teacher reflection in instructional decision-making. Following the reports by Holmes Group (1986, 1990), reflection has become integrated into professional development to help pre-service and in-service teachers build stronger links between theory and their practice. Later, within one decade, language educators have had "to come to terms with the proficiency movement, student-centered teaching models, performance-based instruction, and national standards" (Wildner, 1999, p. 223). Not only integrating these developments but also the use of technology and electronic portfolios has emerged as commonly shared practices in teacher preparation.

The *National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project* (1999) has also influenced WLE programs. These standards describe the content of language learning and constitute the core of K–12 language instruction. Here in our inquiry, we approach the standard for Cultures as the overarching standard that unifies Communication, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. By experiencing other cultures, it is assumed that students develop a better understanding of other people's views, ways of life, and contributions. Furthermore, by encouraging the extension of student experiences to multicultural communities where the target language is used, there is a potential to emphasize the nature of learning in a complex diverse global society. A primary arena where increased attention is drawn to preparing students to meet the Culture standards includes study abroad programs. International field experiences for prospective WL teachers also warrant closer examination for their potential to foster development of

more complex understandings of *foreignness*, globalization, cross-cultural communication and incorporation of teachers' critical reflection into their practice.

## Culture—Reframed

Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, and Colby (2003) define culture learning as "the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviorally, and affectively" (p. 4). Paige et al. (2003) stress that such learning would involve:

1) learning about the self as a cultural being;
2) learning about culture and its impact on human communication, behavior, and identity;
3) culture-general learning, i.e., learning about universal, cross-cultural phenomena such as cultural adjustment;
4) culture-specific learning, i.e., learning about a particular culture, including its language; and,
5) learning how to learn, i.e., becoming an effective language and culture learner (p. 7).

Elements of such learning were also noted by the *Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (Foreign Language Teacher Standards Writing Team, 2002), which emphasize cultural learning and reflection.

### Intercultural Communication and Teacher Education

In the past 15 years, given the increase in linguistically and culturally diverse school populations, several studies have investigated how teacher education programs need to better prepare teachers with intercultural knowledge and skills (Clift & Brady, 2005; Gomez, 1993; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Merryfield, 1998, 2000; Stachowski & Mahan, 1998). Research in this area has primarily concentrated on studying the role of teacher education courses

and domestic field experiences in such preparation. For example, Gomez (1993) drew attention to the challenges of preparing teachers for such understandings within the limited scope of courses in teacher education programs. Some teacher educators underscored the importance of immersing prospective teachers in local school communities and communities abroad in addition to student teaching (e.g., Stachowski & Mahan, 1998). Other researchers have expressed skepticism about the outcomes of preparing teachers for diversity (e.g., Finney & Orr, 1995). In their study on the experiences of prospective teachers enrolled in a cross-cultural education course in Canada, Finney and Orr (1995) reported that students demonstrated narrow understandings of complex social problems. While students reported how the course will influence their practice and social interactions, most of them were not able to situate these issues in relation to inequities in society. Experientially speaking, without attention to the systemic dynamics of cross-cultural communication, it is difficult to extend the scope of world education beyond readings in the social studies curriculum. Highlighting the importance of global awareness for professionals in an interconnected world, current national reports on internationalizing teacher education have also explored the preparation of prospective teachers for culturally diverse schools. In one study on internationalizing teacher education on 24 campuses, Schneider (2003) found that although study abroad programs were generally available on all campuses, only small numbers of education students participated in these programs. She also found that international student teaching (IST) experiences were scarce and those reported were primarily organized at American schools abroad. Another researcher, Merryfield (2000) surveyed 80 teacher educators across the United States to explore the origins of their interest in working on multicultural and global education. Her analysis of participants' narratives revealed that life experiences had significantly influenced many individuals' development of intercultural awareness. Many of the participants reported that living abroad led to reflections on their identities and perspectives on power dynamics at local and global levels.

Most recently, Curran (2006) investigated intercultural development stages prevalent within a cohort of 131 pre-service teachers at a northeastern university. One important finding re-

ported that while the participants primarily identified themselves with ethnorelative orientations to cultural difference, the analysis of their Intercultural Development Inventory scores revealed that the pre-service teacher group was characterized by ethnocentric orientations. Ethnocentricism refers to "assuming that the world-view of one's own culture is central to all reality" (Bennett, 1993, p. 30). Ethnorelativism, on the other hand, is grounded in "the assumption that cultures can only be understood relative to one another and that particular behavior can only be understood within a cultural context" (Bennett, 1993, p. 46). Participants with experiences living abroad had slightly higher scores in the inventory. Curran (2006) suggested that, despite education on intercultural sensitivity, language education students' scores increased very little after a year. These findings affirm that world-view transformation is a complex process, which in the scope of a teacher education program, may never actually be guaranteed.

## Critical Systems Approach Toward Heightened Global Awareness

The ability to recognize the framing of one's own worldview is a first step toward developing heightened global awareness. This can be followed by understanding the layers of interconnectedness between our local and global contexts. In social science research, systems thinkers' critique of impenetrable disciplinary borders has prompted interdisciplinary work in examining complex phenomena. Similarly, the complexity of world languages and cultures and their interactions pose challenges that cannot simply be addressed by a single discipline. In this article, we consider WLE as a key transdisciplinary area of study that offers potential formation of a sense of global teacherhood (Tochon, 2002a).

Systems thinking involves a realization of the centrality of the human element in social systems. Ecological systems theory and bioecological theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1992) can illuminate otherwise subtle processes in WLE. Bronfenbrenner's work led to recognition of the interrelatedness of processes, persons, environments, and time in human development. With an ecological systems view of human development, Bronfenbrenner clarified context—the layers of

connected systems in the environment of the human that affect development. Below, we quote Bronfenbrenner's framework of two of four layers (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macro-system) of socio-cultural ecosystems:

> A microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief.
>     The mesosystem comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person (e.g., the relations between home and school, school and workplace). In other words, a mesosystem is a system of microsystems. (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p. 148–150)

In the following sections, we use Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic model as a heuristic focal point for our analysis. Specifically, we examine the interactions of the microsystems and the emergence of a mesosystem in cross-cultural communication. The heuristic tool associated with the set of criteria proposed by Critical System Theory derives from soft systems standards (Fuenmayor, 1991), interpretive systemology (Fuenmayor & Lopez-Garay, 1991), and the Habermasian trends of Critical Systems Theory (Bausch, 2001). Critical systems thinking (e.g., Ulrich, 2003) has furthered a community-oriented effort to expand the scope of systems studies with inquiry on issues of power, society, and human interaction. This framework will provide the analytical tools and interpretive frame for our research.

Under idealized communicative conditions, undistorted communication would allow a dialogue where the best arguments could win. Since human relations of power impede these conditions, analysis of communication is approached through critical heuristics. Consequently, in a critical framework, humans and societies as well as cultures are understood as communicative systems, in which dialogue and the integration of oppositional views are crucial. The major work of Habermas (1985) emphasizes a need for argumentation break-offs to challenge dominant worldviews because conditions for full rationality are not met in real life. Without opposition or argumentation break-off, systems indeed tend to become monological. The inability of a communicative system to dialogue is a sign of social sclerosis.

Monological humans and monological systems become insular through creating and maintaining boundaries themselves. In the same manner, top-down impositions of worldviews indicate the rigidity of boundaries raised by a system around itself. Therefore taking boundary break-offs into account and integrating argumentation break-offs are signs of a system's cognitive, human, and social flexibility, authenticity, comprehensiveness, and ability to adapt. Hence a dynamic communicative system requires authentic dialogue.

Dialogue allows individuals and social systems to revisit and adapt their worldviews. Ways of referring to social situations are appreciated through reference frameworks of underpinning worldviews and "boundary judgments" (Ulrich, 2005). Interpretive systemology sets critical standards or criteria to keep systems soft and open to different "interpretive contexts" (Fuenmayor, 1991, p. 236). For example, one standard is to understand one's partiality in viewpoint, recognizing that what we perceive as facts are actually interpretations molded in one's worldview. Another standard is the recognition that truth cannot be fully expressed by individuals and that claims for truth are illusory: authenticity and life are inscribed within a dynamic, ever-moving process. Soft systems standards inform our criteria by functioning as key heuristics in building mesosystems-systems that are able to communicate globally and value discussion. For the analysis of our data, we devised the following guiding questions based on our analytical review of the tenets of soft and critical systems (Bausch, 2001; Fuenmayor, 1991; Habermas, 1985; Ulrich, 2005) in an intercultural communication context:

- Is the cross-cultural speech situation dialogical?
- Are argumentation break-offs and opposition valued and integrated?
- Does one recognize partiality in viewpoints?
- Does one recognize that claims for truth are constrained by individuals' worldview?

IST programs hold promise as enriching sites providing different interpretive contexts within new cultures, school systems, and language communities. In this setting, we probe the usefulness of our guiding questions for the study of intercultural communication.

**Research on IST**

Several reports on IST primarily highlight personal and professional gains by prospective teachers (e.g., Korsgaard, 1971; Flournoy, 1993; Baker, 2000; Black, Karaman, & Serpil, 2005; De Villar, Jiang, & Bryan, 2006). A common result reported in these program evaluations is that pre-service teachers go through some level of personal change after living in a foreign community. Such personal change is often associated with the development of new perspectives on cross-cultural relations. Several reports suggest placement in an unfamiliar school system presents professional challenges that require prospective teachers to construct understandings of the local context through interactions with peers, mentors, and students. A survey of 161 Canadian pre-service teachers who completed student teaching in England revealed that when placed at a site within an unfamiliar education system, the student teacher is more likely to constantly make comparisons and return with a synthesis (Williams & Kelleher, 1987). In another study, Mahan and Stachowski (1990) compared the reflections of conventional US student teachers and IST program participants on "new learnings under the categories of classroom teaching strategies, curriculum content and selection, fact acquisition, human interrelationships, discoveries about self, world human life/global issues, aesthetic knowledge/appreciation" and found that overseas student teachers reported "a greater number of important learnings overall than did their conventional student teaching counterparts" (p. 15). Mahan and Stachowski (1992) also surveyed 190 pre-service teachers who participated in IST programs for 9–10 weeks. Teachers were in certification programs for elementary and secondary education, and K–12 music, special education, art, and physical education. Their analysis showed that 73% of reported changes and adaptations were related to personal and social reflections. Further analyses focusing on a subgroup revealed that prospective teachers were critical about specific aspects of their practice and expressed their need for improvement in classroom management (90%), addressing learners' needs (80%), lesson planning (43%), and evaluation (40%). Based on prospective teachers' reports, overall these studies enthusiastically suggest that IST may bring additional reflection opportunities grounded in experience.

So far, we have reviewed studies related to intercultural communication and teacher education, and introduced elements of a critical systems approach towards heightened global awareness. We also underscored the need for criteria that support such a growth and serve to guide our study. Our review of studies on IST pointed to student experiences with other perspectives as potential sources for change. In the next section, we will discuss two more elements: teacher reflection and worldview reframing. We, then, present the background to our study and analyses based on critical systems criteria.

## What Happens in an IST Program? Teacher Reflection and Worldview Reframing

There is vast potential to enhance reflection among pre-service teachers through their participation in IST. Here, we focus on a specific type of reflection, one that will help build global teacherhood. Tochon (2002a) re-conceptualizes the neo-Aristotelian concept of *acting mind* within Lefebvre's (1991) conception of space. He defines meaning as a space of action and intelligence, whether potential or actualized: meaning is produced by the impact of intelligence on space. The ability to catch, create, interpret and convey meaning is fundamental to teacherhood.

In response to the limited characterizations of teachers' competencies primarily prescribed through knowledge-transmissive policies, we use Tochon's concept of teacherhood to explore developing heightened global awareness in teacher education. Global teacherhood would be grounded in a theory of knowledge built through reflection and interactions, the acting mind, and would constitute an epistemic and political third space, i.e., a space where concepts are connected, where subject and object as well as current daily life and history merge. "In this perspective, the spaces of meaning are layered such that there is congruence among individuals who share an epistemic beam" (Tochon, 2002a, p. 132). In contexts of cultural learning, individuals may be living in spatial proximity yet not be open to exchanges. A rupture may be caused by not sharing the same conceptual and cultural beam. Individuals are separated by signs and tied to specific interpretive practices with symbolic systems

(Soja, 1989). In this conception, groups of humans are differentiated by their epistemic beams and interests. They find supportive environments in cultural beams that offer them a social space. The mindful forging of cross-symbolic systems or of linking metaphors to facilitate consensus could characterize *global* teacherhood.

Global teacherhood as a concept could act and develop through oral exchange and human contact. Meaningful constructive oral exchanges are not solely exchanges of information; rather, they also spread the construction of symbolic codes. Thus, teacherhood is grounded in communication—reminding us of Habermas' (1985) communicative act. Intelligence is the act of communicating and is born from contact that successfully builds reciprocity. As an interactively-accomplished concept,

> teacherhood is the manifestation of intelligence in potentiality in an interactional situation. It tends towards the political organization of space, with the purpose of transforming the spatiotemporal matrix that underpins meaning. Teacherhood is the bearer of becoming and conceives this "becoming" in the love of human beings. (Tochon, 2002a, p. 136)

One reflective process towards global teacherhood is worldview reframing. Reframing refers to the concept of deep reflection as described in Schon's (1987) work. Living and working in another cultural context can stimulate deep personal reflection. Consider the school interactions of student teachers abroad; there are so many challenges posed to their privileges by their temporary positioning in the unfamiliar education system and culture. Research on their continuous problem solving and reflective thinking to address successes and challenges to their conceptions, feelings towards others, and ultimately their identities, could reveal much about cultural understanding. Schon (1983) observed that practitioners can go beyond technical rationality and inflexible practices by reflecting-in-action. This involves bringing intuitions into the context and posing questions about one's own professional activity. For Schon, a practitioner reflecting-in-action, "becomes a researcher in the practice context" (p. 68).

Studies analyzing teachers' reflections have been concerned with the focus and content of reflections to understand shifts

in teachers' orientations as they build experiences in the profession. Bainer and Cantrell (1992) analyzed 96 pre-service teachers' essays and found that prospective teachers' reflective thinking concentrated on the planning and implementation of teaching. In another study, Atkinson (2004) contended that during an assigned reflection activity, there are "ideological conflicts within which the student teacher is struggling to form his identity as a teacher" (p. 392). Drawing attention to the nexus of power and individuals' identities, other researchers have also noted that pre-service teachers often criticize the nature of assignments involving reflective journal keeping in their programs. Thompson-Cooper (2002) reported that prospective teachers could resort to fabricating reflection narratives due to concerns about their grades. These incongruities may well be highly symbolic of a situated focus on meaning-making within specific socio-cultural environments. Nonetheless, student teachers' reflections on these conflicts can potentially be tapped to guide them to adopt lifelong professional actions (Tochon & Black, 2006). Teacher educators, as well as teachers, need to develop critical, reflective uses of feedback and cognitive conflict. With cross-cultural challenges as well as temporal, spatial, and social disruptions that student teachers may face while living abroad, IST programs can be one venue to guide such profound reflection. When cultural codes are unfamiliar, individuals can be guided to reflect on their "outsiderness" to make sense of everyday interactions. Such situated experience and reflection may potentially help student teachers develop greater intercultural sensitivity and construct critical selves and global awareness.

Do student teachers reframe their worldviews during international field experiences? What types of circumstances could stimulate this reframing process? We argue that, in a sense, ideological conflicts determine if and how student teachers reframe their worldviews and develop a global perspective. This heightened global awareness is produced by the clash of student teachers' cultural microsystems and the cultural microsystems of the persons they interact with abroad. When learners begin to negotiate their *foreignness*, then a cross-cultural mesosystem emerges. In this study, we explore this intercultural process and apply the critical criteria we presented as tools for analysis.

**Method**

*Participants, Context, and Setting*

Four pre-service teachers of Spanish, enrolled at a midwestern university, were focal participants in this study. At this institution, in addition to some English-speaking countries, other program sites such as Ecuador, France, and Germany were added to extend cultural learning opportunities to world language student-teachers. As part of their post-major K–12 certification program, WLE student teachers have the option of spending one or half a semester teaching abroad. The program incorporated some international sites where English was taught as a world language and early childhood settings where participants could teach L1 literacy or other subjects in the target language. Arguments supporting this decision included:

1. Student teachers would increase their target language proficiency through immersion.
2. Culture learning could be fostered with immersion (e.g., stays with host families and professional relationships at local schools).
3. Professional development in second language acquisition approaches would be supported by student teaching EFL. This IST program included: (a) pre-departure meetings; (b) delivery of some pedagogical materials on site; (c) meetings with the site coordinator and the local cooperating teachers.

The three 3-credit generic Methods courses on teaching world languages in the 51-credit post-major teacher education program of all participants serve an important preparatory function for these sites. The program goal was not to certify these students as EFL teachers but to lead to learning about culture in the target language and professional development in a country relevant to their specialty. Therefore, the program administrators considered the limited EFL training as sufficient for these students.

For the purpose of this article, we chose two contrastive cases. Both teacher candidates had been admitted to this optional program before they were invited to participate in this study.

They had also already completed a one-semester practicum with classroom observations and two semesters of student teaching in the United States. Their program abroad involved eight weeks of student teaching at schools in Cuenca, Ecuador, after which they continued their student teaching at Spanish language (L2) classrooms in the Midwest for the other half of the semester. The third largest in Ecuador—located near the mountains in the south—Cuenca is a beautiful city with a population reaching 300,000. Vibrant and thriving, Cuenca is socio-culturally diverse with Spanish and Quechua speakers. In addition to interactions with speakers of these languages, IST participants had opportunities to explore Ameri-Indian heritage and colonial history in context. The teacher candidates lived with host families and worked with Ecuadorean cooperating teachers. Their student teaching supervisor was an Ecuadorean educator who oversaw program activities.

## Data Collection

We collected data in the spring and fall semesters of one academic year. Before the participants departed for Ecuador, we observed their participation in monthly IST orientation meetings and conducted two semi-structured interviews. These meetings and interviews helped us engage in awareness-raising dialogues in which needs, expectations, and concerns were shared. Three weeks before completion of the program, we made ethnographic observations concentrating on interactions at teaching sites and within the community. In addition, we conducted interviews with each participant in which they were asked to describe their daily activities as well as their interactions with community members, host families, cooperating teachers, and students. The primary researcher had several conversational interactions with the participants on program sites. His interviews with the student teachers emphasized the experience sharing dimension. He had no status relation vis-à-vis the program; which, we feel, has eased participants' sharing of considerations on the formative dynamics of their professional immersion. The second researcher was not on site when the data were collected. Posing broad questions regarding their interactions with the pre-service teachers, we also inter-

viewed some cooperating teachers, host family members, and the
program supervisor.

## *Data Analysis*

The interviews with the student teachers were transcribed verba-
tim and coded. During the coding phase, we worked on the ori-
entation observation notes (OON), the pre-departure interviews
(PDI-1 and PDI-2), the on-site interview (OSI), and the on-site
ethnographic observations (OSEO). Our framework for the anal-
ysis of data drew upon Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic framework
(2005), Habermas' work on communication (1985), Bausch's re-
view of critical and soft systems (2001), Fuenmayor's soft systems
standards (1991), and Ulrich's critical systems heuristics (2003)
to devise four critical criteria posed through guiding questions.
Our coding attempted to reveal how student teachers acted vis-
à-vis ideological and cross-cultural communication conflicts.

As a result of our analysis, we identified two types of ideo-
logical and cultural conflicts that student teachers experienced:
(1) conflicts that were pedagogical in nature; and (2) conflicts
in their visions of reality when their worldviews differed from
those of the host community. Their ideologies about pedagogy
and day-to-day worldviews were challenged. These included their
ways of perceiving how a teacher should behave in a classroom
situation or in society and how activities should be planned. Stu-
dent teachers' clashes inside a new cultural reality were recorded
through observations and interviews, allowing us to study how
they reacted. We critically analyzed these through our guiding
questions. Although host community members are not focal par-
ticipants in this article; it is important to note that, in interactions
with IST participants, they also experience challenges related to
cross-cultural communication.

In the next section, we present a selection of interview data,
in which we differentiate two cases. In the first case, we observed
sufficient evidence of reflective thinking that addressed our critical
criteria and formation of a sense of global teacherhood during the
field experiences. In the second case, we saw indications that the
reflective process of developing the criteria for a global teacher-
hood was emerging, yet not complete. We discuss each below.

## Findings

### *The Case of Rainbow*[3]

Rainbow, a 22-year-old white female, had grown up in a small midwestern city and lived in the same state for the majority of her life. Rainbow's prior experience abroad consisted of a summer-study-abroad program in Spain. In Ecuador, Rainbow was placed in two schools: one public and one parochial. While the public school was a girls' vocational high school in which Rainbow became a student teacher in a class for students concentrating on secretarial training, the parochial school was a girls' high school with a general academic curriculum. At both schools, Rainbow worked with experienced cooperating EFL teachers.

*Criterion 1: Is the cross-cultural speech situation dialogical?* In one pre-departure interview, Rainbow had related her prior experience in a study abroad program in Spain. She had complained that her classmates were peers predominantly from the United States. She felt she did not have enough interactions with local students and expressed her hopes that the student teaching program in Ecuador would make possible more interactions with local community members. [Data source: PDI-2] When we talked with Rainbow three months later in Ecuador and asked what she had gained from this experience, she recalled a week-long trip to Morocco she had taken when she had been in Spain. During this trip she had had an opportunity to get to know a host family and the local community.

> As a human ... I don't know ... To remember ... to remember as much as I can of how I feel while I'm here because I think in Morocco I felt a lot of emotions and I tried to journal it and I tried to photograph it to remember how ... cause I felt so strongly emotionally while I was there and I came back and came back to the United States and still felt some of it but it gradually lessened. I got into my life in the United States, forgot a lot about what it was like. [OSI]

Partly due to the moving hospitality she received from a rather impoverished host community in Morocco, Rainbow had

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[3]For both cases, pseudonyms were used. There is no association between assigned pseudonyms and the actual participants.

experienced a strong emotional response and attached great importance to it. Through her statement, she illustrates a value derived from cross-cultural dialogue that she continues to reflect on long after her return home. She delighted in having abundant opportunities to interact in her new community in Ecuador as well. For her, though her memory resulted fallible, such valuable experiences and fragile understandings needed to be treasured.

> So, here I'm living it and feeling it now and I want to remember the relationships that I was able to form here and the things that I saw ... the life here ... to take that with me and remember it. Everyday! So that I appreciate what I have, and remember that I have a role in this world, in this society that's bigger than just my life. I have responsibility for the betterment of ... [OSI]

Rainbow made systemic connections based on an understanding of interrelatedness. During the same interview, she told us how the long conversations with her host sister helped her understand the role she can play in fostering intercultural sensitivity in any community. Furthermore, her interactions helped her reflect on how she can have an impact upon her return home based on her cultural learning. Overall, we coded Rainbow's cross-cultural communication as "dialogical."

*Criterion 2: Are argumentation break-offs and opposition valued and integrated?* Rainbow told us that she initially had been quite surprised with some behavior she observed at schools in Cuenca. The differences in rapport between teachers and students led her to question practices and professional behavior which had always appeared to her as the 'best' model. For instance, in this setting, she observed it was all right to be very "friendly" with students even outside school. These encounters could also have led to conflict. But, with her observations, Rainbow made comparisons, and came to perceive the difference she experienced in this context as enriching. She did not rigidly transfer her training to evaluate this setting. Overall, she clearly perceived opposing viewpoints as opportunities for growth and valued her discussions.

> As a prospective teacher, I'm taking back the responsibility to teach my students about the world ... about the cultures ... about difference ... about acceptance.... I think we have more than just the responsibility of teaching the language. We have the responsibility of teaching about a culture ... about people.... Language is nothing without people....

> I mean ... the language is what you use to get to know people. So, what I
> know of people here, what I know of people in Spain. That's my respon-
> sibility to my students. To make them aware ... of other perspectives ...
> of other ways of living.... Yes, to have ... to give them that knowledge
> and what they choose to do with it is their thing. [OSI]

Through this excerpt, Rainbow illustrated her recognition that understanding the world's diversity included recognizing the value of differences. For her, WLE needed to be redefined to incorporate cultural learning. Based on her experiences, Rainbow viewed opposition and difference as resources which help build understandings in cross-cultural interaction.

*Criterion 3: Does one recognize partiality in viewpoints?* Recognizing partiality entails envisioning how other considerations are being excluded in a decision-making and activity situation. With the unfeasibility of accommodating all possible views in a given situation, one can at least be mindful of this condition. Referring to discussions on the local political agenda, Rainbow reported reflecting on her positionality. She also acknowledged partialities in viewpoints and what she told us signaled an emergent identity influenced by her living experience with the host family.

> I was sort of in between ... because I didn't feel like an outsider because I
> have been here for so long. But I didn't feel like I could say: I'm impacted
> by whether they sign this (controversial trade pact) or not ... because it
> is not going to affect my life directly.... It'll affect my host family's life
> and they were telling me how it would change and what would happen.
> But, I felt part of it but I'm not completely part of it. So, I felt somewhere
> in between. [OSI]

Had Rainbow not recognized partialities, she could have advocated that a particular position in the past could have been the *only* route to the solution. While participating in discussions on local issues, Rainbow not only built empathy with her hosts but also recognized the partiality of all viewpoints.

*Criterion 4: Does one recognize that claims for truth are constrained by individuals' worldviews?* When her relatives came to visit Rainbow, they expressed frustration when road blocks, demonstrations, and strikes intensified.

> Why don't you understand that ... how different it is being here? How
> lucky you are that you can get up and leave and just go, go home and

be safe! And there are people here who deal with this every ... I mean
this is a common thing for strikes to happen; for buses to not run because
it is unsafe to go this road.... [OSI]

While her visiting relatives were primarily concerned with
the immediate impact of strikes on their travel arrangements,
Rainbow considered their attitudes ethnocentric. She questioned
their construct of safety. Furthermore, she expressed sympathy
when talking about the local activists and critically reflected on
the relativity of truth. We coded this as the growth of a meta-
cultural thinking pattern in which Rainbow provides evidence of
her awareness of cultural frames shaping viewpoints.

During her sojourn, Rainbow viewed conversations with lo-
cal people as an opportunity to gain an understanding of their
culture and she explored how this cultural learning should in-
fluence her personal development. She was also able to make
connections and translate cultural learning into intercultural sen-
sitivity. For Rainbow, interactions with *the cultural other* are not just
means for her personal development. She was confident that she
could contribute to intercultural understanding among others
as well. Overall Rainbow's reflections illustrate the critical cri-
teria we coded for global teacherhood. Her case represented a
prospective world language teacher who reflected on the bene-
fits of the international field experience in cultivating heightened
global awareness.

### The Case of Butterfly

Butterfly, a 21-year-old white female, had grown up in a small
midwestern city and lived in the same state for the majority of
her life. Similar to Rainbow, Butterfly's only experience living
outside state occurred during a summer study-abroad program
in Spain. In Ecuador, Butterfly was placed at one private school
and every week she worked with a different cooperating teacher
at different EFL levels ranging from early childhood education
to high school classrooms.

*Criterion 1: Is the cross-cultural speech situation dialogical?* Dur-
ing our interviews, Butterfly brought up several examples of sit-
uations in which she felt frustrated during cross-cultural com-
munication [OSI]. We did not find clear indications that she was

aspiring to try new strategies for dialogue at the time. When communication gaps appeared, she generally chose to give up and not express her difficulties. Butterfly had faced difficulty negotiating her position in the professional domain. She also seemed to be heavily invested in upholding her home identity within her new cultural system. At the time of this interview, our coding of her communication patterns did not fall into the "dialogical" category.

*Criterion 2: Are argumentation break-offs and opposition valued and integrated?* While Butterfly constantly contrasted the local setting with her home culture, unlike Rainbow she often framed issues by withdrawing and deciding who needed to change. In our view, such framing may hinder the understanding of difference as a heuristic for developing a heightened global awareness.

> Butterfly: When I teach classes in the United States, I plan. Ahead of time! I don't just walk into the classroom and teach a class ... off the top of my head."
>
> Interviewer: Does the cooperating teacher here plan himself?
>
> Butterfly: Yes.
>
> Interviewer: So then, why aren't you made aware of what will happen?
>
> Butterfly: I don't know. It happened ... during the first week and then twice. And then, I talked to the student teaching supervisor about it and then she said: "welcome to Latin America" and that that's just how things are ... I also talked to her about classroom management and how that was frustrating me ... how the students, you know, don't—can't be quiet when I talk ... and things like that ... and she basically said: "well that's how it is here" and so I'm struggling to try to figure out whether I should expect them to change for me or whether I need to change for them. [OSI]

Obviously, this planning-related episode may well just represent the preference of this particular teacher during a specific period. When we interviewed Butterfly's student teaching supervisor, she argued that many student teachers often have difficulty reaching understandings of the existence of different realities in another cultural system and that inflexible stances hindered understanding the context. Discussions with the supervisor and teacher ended with a break-off in argumentation. Accordingly Butterfly had difficulty accepting argumentation break-offs as opportunities for building new understandings.

*Criterion 3: Does one recognize partiality in viewpoints?* During course observations, Butterfly realized several teaching practices that she believed would be considered inefficient at her home institution.

> ... when they were studying those four words, there was always reinforce-ment of numbers and colors and things like that; but I just felt like they could have gone through it a lot faster and moved on. And it's frustrat-ing to me, because I don't quite know my place. And I don't know if it's something that I can suggest that we move faster. And maybe they want to focus more on really learning the content well. [OSI]

This practice did not match Butterfly's conceptions of good teaching. Butterfly thought about the difference, made compar-isons, and reconsidered the differences. She was able to rec-ognize partialities in viewpoints when evaluating this situation. Her thinking incorporates sensitivity to the notion that no action could represent all possible considerations in a given situation.

*Criterion 4: Does one recognize that claims for truth are constrained by individuals' worldviews?* During one pre-active interview, Butter-fly detailed her reflections on her class observations. We felt that these initially perplexing situations had helped her consider the relativity of claims for truth depending on worldviews. She was careful not to jump to conclusions about which approach worked best.

> I feel like—in the United States, sometimes in language classes—we are so much focused, preoccupied with meeting standards; and you know getting through. This semester we have to get through chapter eight in the book. So, they whip through things really fast. Maybe here it's more about learning things—very thoroughly before moving on. So, I—I feel like because I am only here for a short time it's not my place to bring that up to my cooperating teachers. But I'm starting to feel that I have a better relationship with them. And that they have faith in me now as a teacher. So, maybe I will eventually talk to them about it—not expecting change to happen, but just to try to understand why they move at the pace they do. [OSI]

Here, we observe that Butterfly's relationship status also af-fected the communication process. As a student teacher, Butter-fly chose to keep her thoughts to herself rather than discussing concerns with her cooperating teacher. So, despite her effort to

try to compare and understand the different practices, she remained silent and was unable to inquire to hear local teachers' explanations.

## Discussion

The participants experienced two types of ideological and cultural conflicts: (1) those of a pedagogical in nature, and (2) conflicts in their visions of reality when their worldviews differed from those of the host community. Their pedagogical ideologies were challenged. Their day-to-day worldviews about the way one behaves in society were equally challenged.

Both participants initially turn to their home cultures as their reference systems. Rainbow finds more opportunities to access different worldviews through long conversations with local peers and teachers. Consequently, she benefits from these dialogical interaction patterns. Butterfly primarily negotiates differences through conversations with her *foreign self* (Tochon, 2002b) and peers from her home-institution. Thus her cross-cultural interactions, at the time of these observations, could be characterized as monological. For example, as depicted in Figure 1, barriers built around Butterfly's microsystem prevent the development of a mesosystem toward transformative intercultural experience. Here, it is important to note that she was "disappointed" that her host family didn't have any children her age living at home. For Rainbow, it was delightful to build friendships partly because her hosts included an attentive host sister. Rainbow reported enjoying discussions of differing worldviews, recognizing the value of the multiplicity of perspectives around the world and integrated such understandings to her professional domain. For Butterfly, it is still confusing to face different worldviews. She negotiates whether one party ought to change her stand for the sake of harmony. In contrast, Rainbow ably reflects on the partiality of viewpoints. She highlights how her thinking is prone to leave out the contextual consequences that would only affect those community members. Butterfly also recognizes that her viewpoints are partial and begins to build empathy. Rainbow recognizes that claims for truth are constrained by individuals' worldviews. She questions why other visitors from abroad are unable to see the
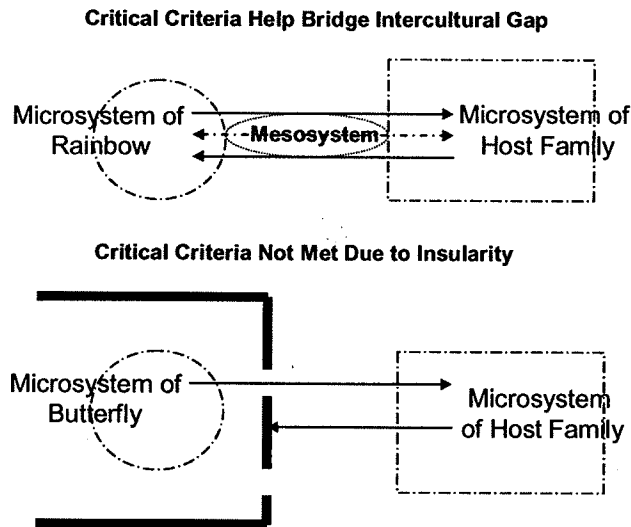
**Critical Criteria Help Bridge Intercultural Gap**



**Critical Criteria Not Met Due to Insularity**



**FIGURE 1** Contrasts between cases: The need for a mesosystem of communication.

partiality of their perspectives. Butterfly also begins to reflect on how interpretations of realities are constrained and how she disapproves of certain practices based on her own reference system. In a way, she is critical within a conversation with the *self.* However, she states not feeling prepared to make that argument to those concerned.

Applying Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic framework, in Figure 1, we illustrate one dimension of the systemic dynamics experienced by participants engaged in cross-cultural communication. Obviously, there are several other layers of communication processes that the interacting person engages in. Here, we do not intend to give the false impression that the realities experienced by these people are reducible to this mapping. We present it as a conceptual tool that helped us interpret these complex interactions. Furthermore, grounded in our understanding of *open systems* (Bertalanffy, 1968) which are interacting with their environment, we honor a frequently overlooked aspect of representations of human interaction by using permeable forms.

Here, based on our earlier discussion of the cases, our goal is to capture and code the different communication processes

experienced by each participant. Rainbow is able to locate a mesosystem that helps her reflect on her experience as she tries to make sense of the intercultural exchange. Butterfly attempts to find a mesosystem but gradually resorts to building barriers instead. The development of global teacherhood requires a perception and acceptance of differences in worldviews and ideologies that support daily actions. Whether the two parties will enter into a dialogic relationship that leads to a reframing of their worldviews is always uncertain. For that purpose a mesosystem of communication that bridges the gap between their microsystems could be created. Such a growing mesosystem may become a threshold for the ability to recognize different cultural macrosystems. This would be the path towards global teacherhood.

## Critical Considerations on Program Ecologies

*National diversity versus international experience:* When deemed anthropologically worthwhile, immersion abroad may become the preferred way to encounter *foreignness* due to possible reluctance towards meeting the Other in one's home society. Experiencing Otherness is a part of our daily lives everywhere. Diverse settings in one's home setting are often linguistically underexploited; and they could provide an equally beneficial language experience.

*Mutuality of impact:* Are programs taking advantage of institutions and communities abroad, without giving much in exchange? Is there any effort towards hosting student teachers from other countries? What ensures that the people who welcome our students have reciprocity in terms of benefits? If—from either party—episodic demonstrations of superiority, careless attitudes, prejudices, lack of respect, or insensitive verbal behavior emerge, can intercultural understanding flourish?

*Critical ethical questions in a cultural relativist stance:* As breaking the perceptual and conceptual distance that separates us from others becomes one major goal of world reconstruction, the dimension of caring is one fundamentally needed in education worldwide. Global teacherhood is a concept that certainly does not seek to develop a relativist and amoral view of the relationship with the Other. On the contrary, it intends to re-conceptualize the social contract and communication across cultures on the

principle of meaningful conversations. This principled attitude does not prevent the student teacher from communicating un-easiness or opposition in an appropriate way. Empathy, the ca-pacity to understand others, is not subject to measurement. It is one of the factors that facilitate teaching. It marks the distinction between relationships based solely on teaching-and-learning and relationships that emerge from "transformative" teaching-and-learning (Robertson, 1997; Taylor, 1998).

The relationship of cultural, transformative learning to so-cial action and power within the epistemology of Habermas's critical theory situates transformation within an emancipatory framework (Mezirow, 1998), which emphasizes personal trans-formation that can lead to social transformation. This would be within a cycle in which social transformation also feeds per-sonal transformations. Transformative teaching-and-learning is not just a stringing-together of knowledge; it transforms the cul-tural paradigm with which the person was reflecting at the out-set. It consists of creative transformation, used with the meaning Freire (1998) gives this term.

## Conclusion

Studies grounded in systems thinking do not approach individ-uals and societies through a reductive lens, isolatable from the universe. Out of conflicts in interactions with the Other, in this study, we have observed the re-framing of a holistic notion of the Other in relation to Self (Rainbow's case) versus the suspicion towards the specific Self that is constructed with the Other (But-terfly's case). These reframings are dialectic elements in flux; they should be understood as fluid, relational, and dynamic. In a sense, these dialectic contrasts between Rainbow and Butter-fly reveal an opposition in perspective between co-production of Self and Other in the foreground and taken-for-granted Self in conflict with Other in the background. The shift in perspective for the Other teacher demonstrates the activity of reframing and shifting viewpoints that undergird the positioning to construct global teacherhood.

It is our hope that this exploratory study will stimulate fur-ther research on international field experiences. One of our major limitations was not being able to fully incorporate voices

representing cooperating teachers, host families, and community members in our analysis. Future studies may find life history methodology helpful in this effort. Teacher educators may find this study particularly helpful when organizing IST programs. As stakeholders in these programs, host families and cooperating teachers can be meaningfully involved when preparing program participants. For instance, pre-departure dialogues via letters, emails, or video exchanges can help elucidate settings, expectations, or concerns—thereby developing interpretive frameworks that will help parties better understand each other.

In this article, we devised an analytical tool from various theoretical bases. One of our major emphases was to build depth in teachers' understandings with critical cross-cultural communication awareness that may be developed during IST. In this exploratory study, we pilot tested our analytical tool with data to code and interpret teachers' development. Our analyses juxtaposed two prospective teachers' experiences to develop codes for examining how new orientations emerged within our predicted stage-model. Finally, we discussed issues of "fit" of the data to our model with particular emphasis on the critical reflections on programs and links to the criteria. We defined global teacherhood as the development of an international orientation, sensitivity to otherness as well as one's own foreignness (Osborn, 2006). The critical criteria can be field tested to further develop judgments beyond current indicators. Certainly further research in this direction to specify quality indicators in each criterion would help teacher educators and learners identify features of experiences that broaden their perspectives and develop skill in dialogue with other viewpoints.

## Acknowledgments

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