World language communities of practice: Bridging universities with internationalization at home

Amy Corrinne Roberts[1] 🆔
Dilnoza Khasilova[2] 🆔

[1]*College of Education, School of Teacher Education, University of Wyoming, Laramie Wyoming, USA.*
Email: aroberts@uwyo.edu
[2]*Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Wyoming, Laramie Wyoming, USA.*
Email: dkhasilo@uwyo.edu

(✉ *Corresponding Author*)

Abstract

This article explores how world language communities of practice advance internationalization at home on a university campus through qualitative case study research. These communities exemplify a multidimensional approach to global engagement, blending global perspectives with the local campus through non-formal and cross-cultural language initiatives. One specific program, the World Language and Culture Program (WLCP) served as the focal point of investigation. Participants included 15 WLCP teachers, international students, scholars and community members located on a university campus in the United States Rocky Mountain Region. The community of practice framework was used to examine the program. Data collection included interviews with WLCP teachers, participant observations of classes and analysis of program documents. The analysis employed a case-by-case approach focusing on each WLCP teacher as a distinct case. Findings suggest that WLCP teachers play a critical role in promoting intercultural competence and enhancing the visibility and active involvement of the international campus community. Implications indicate that the WLCP is a bridge between local and international campus communities, creating a space for cultural exchange and learning beyond traditional classroom settings. Non-formal initiatives like the WLCP highlight how leveraging the diverse experiences, languages and cultures of international communities can enhance internationalization at home.

Keywords: Communities of practice, Cross-cultural engagement, Intercultural competence, Internationalization at home, Non-formal education, World language and culture program.

Contents

Contribution of this paper to the literature
This study goes beyond the usual practices of internationalization such as cultural festivals and food- sharing events. It assesses how unpaid service instructors participate in pedagogical practices that enhance cultural exchange and the development of a global learning environment for the entire campus community. It fills a unique gap in the current literature by examining how domestic, non-formal education programs like the WLCP can effectively enhance internationalization at home, an area that has received limited attention.

1. Introduction

International experiences are often regarded as one of the most profound and stimulating factors that may impact an individual's identity and perspective. Students and faculty who travel abroad and various frameworks, theories, and ideas that are borrowed and adopted between systems within the institution of higher education universities everywhere in the world honor this stance with attention to and support of international learning initiatives as evidenced by collaborative research that is published in international journals (Altbach, 2004; De Wit, 2002).

Elkin, Devjee, and Farnsworth (2005) says that internationalization is not something that is either achieved or not achieved rather it is an engagement with a range of dimensions. When faculty, staff, and students get involved and are supported by the administration, there are limitless creative endeavors to strengthen the international dimension in research, teaching and service. One such enterprise is *internationalization at home*, a strategy coined by Soria and Troisi (2014) to provide student engagement with internationalization initiatives on the local campus. Internationalization at home typically centers on curriculum and program development but with less burden at the institutional level and more investment from particular departments or individuals on a university campus. Examples include credit-bearing courses with a global framework, coordinated university activities to enhance interactions between local and international students, and co-curricular campus-wide initiatives dedicated to developing intercultural competence and international perspectives.

In the United States, faculty and administrators on university campuses nationwide, recognize the need for internationalization at home given the high percentage of students who are unable to participate in study abroad, side by side with the expanding diversity of international students, scholars, and guest communities (Knight, 2020). Scholarship focusing on sustained commitment towards development, implementation and sustainment of internationalization at home is limited (Knight, 1997; Mok, 2021). Research is essential to investigate how domestic intercultural experiences can serve as a pathway for transformative learning, similar to what is often observed in international mobility (Jones, 2013).

The following paper details case study research conducted for two sixteen-week academic semesters at a rural land grant university in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States. The research aim was to explore how unpaid service teachers (international students, scholars, and guests) of a non-formal university initiative, the World Language and Culture Program (WLCP) impact and contribute to internationalization at home through individual and collective pedagogies of world languages and cultures. The WLCP is unique in that it represents deep structures of learning and cross-cultural experiences beyond popular initiatives such as organized cultural groups and events for international students to share their home food, music and traditions with USA peers.

1.1. Research Setting and the WLCP Framework

The WLCP was established in 2013 by a group of international graduate students enrolled in various programs on the same university campus. They received internal grants to purchase curriculum materials and instructional technology and to organize WLCP service teachers from a pool of international undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, visiting scholars, and family members. The service teachers offer free in-person non-credit bearing language and culture classes in their first languages for university staff, students, and faculty as well as members of a nearby community and globally through Zoom since the 2020 pandemic. The WLCP course schedules follow the university academic calendar with class assignments based on available campus space. Since its inception in 2013, the WLCP has expanded rapidly as a non-formal learning initiative, offering 18 different language courses with more than 300 students registered each semester.

The WLCP is housed within the University of Wyoming, a teaching and research institution located in the landlocked state of Wyoming characterized by limited geographic mobility among its population. The majority of the university's approximately 13,000 students and 700 faculty members are from the surrounding region and are predominantly represented by the mainstream Rocky Mountain culture. The university's mission reflects a long-standing institutional commitment to foster global engagement despite this demographic context. This includes the cultivation of an environment that attracts international scholars and students; the enhancement of international awareness through curricula and the expansion of opportunities for study abroad (Office of the President, 2023).

The WLCP, as a university-sanctioned stand-alone service initiative within the larger campus community, qualifies as a Community of Practice (CoP). Wenger (2006) defines a CoP as a group of individuals who share a common interest or passion, engaging regularly to improve their practice. The WLCP service teachers demonstrate a collective commitment to maintaining a shared practice that involves creating and contributing to a knowledge base through sustained interaction resulting in a shared repertoire of resources (Wenger, 2006). According to Niesz (2010) and Takahashi (2011) participation in a CoP helps members develop and co-construct a shared identity and set of beliefs.

The WLCP framework promotes teacher collaboration in the development of new courses and the redesign of existing ones. Teachers meet regularly to discuss curriculum, pedagogy and the needs of each new group of students. Each semester professional development is provided to support and extend the WLCP framework based on the standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2014). This framework is emergent based on what each teacher brings to the WLCP; the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, however, guide the overarching aim of content and

instructional course decisions. Experienced teachers have curriculum autonomy while new teachers receive ongoing support and often begin as co-instructors in established courses.

Figure 1 shows the University of Wyoming (2023) "Breakin' Through" sculpture was created by Thomas (2015) and funded by a $500,000 gift from April Brimmer Kunz and Marian H. Rochelle. The sculpture celebrates women's accomplishments with a female rider breaking through a sandstone wall. It's located in the War Memorial parking lot on the University of Wyoming campus.

Figure 1. Breakin' through sculpture.

The image above is a photograph of a statue on the University of Wyoming campus depicting a woman riding a horse as she breaks through a sandstone wall. The intent is to symbolize the institutional spirit, conveying to all students, faculty, and staff that the   university aim is for "the cultivation of an environment that attracts international scholars and students; the enhancement of international awareness through curriculum and the expansion of opportunities for study abroad (Office of the President, 2023).

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Internationalization at Home: Formal and Non-formal University Settings

Internationalization at home encompasses both formal and non-formal university settings. Non-formal learning is defined as "organized, systematic and educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system" (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2015). Similar to formal education, non-formal learning is structured with clear objectives, time schedules, and support but it occurs outside the standard programs, courses, and mandatory activities offered by universities (Åberg, 2016). This type of learning is intentional from the learner's perspective (Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004) and provides alternative educational opportunities and specific life skills that address challenges (Cedefop, 2014). Examples of non-formal learning include adult literacy programs, vocational training, online courses, language programs, after-school projects, fitness classes, cooperatives, tutoring and professional development programs (Latchem, 2014).

In contrast, formal learning refers to structured and school-based instruction within formal university systems (Findsen & Formosa, 2011). Formal learning environments provide continuous and intentional education with organized objectives, often culminating in diplomas or qualifications. Elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, and universities exemplify formal learning settings. However, while non-formal learning provides flexibility and inclusivity for learners, its direct connection to internationalization at home initiatives in higher

education remains underexplored. Research has not sufficiently addressed how non-formal learning programs such as intercultural workshops, service-learning projects and student-led activities align with the overarching goals. This gap limits understanding of how non-formal learning complements formal education in fostering intercultural competencies.

2.2. The Role of Curriculum Transformation

In both formal and nonformal contexts, the goal is to develop intercultural and international competencies in all students. This applies regardless of their study abroad opportunities, areas of study or nationality. The literature on internationalizing higher education often emphasizes curriculum transformation (Knight, 2020). The American Council on Education (ACE) suggests that internationalizing the curriculum is the most effective strategy to ensure all students gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in a rapidly globalizing world (Green & Shoenberg, 2018). Stobie (2019) argues that such curricula prepare students for social and professional interactions in international contexts benefiting both domestic and international students (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). Examples include curriculum transformation projects, innovative teaching strategies and assessment methods that incorporate local, national, and global perspectives.

Curriculum transformation (CT) is central to internationalization at home initiatives (Green & Shoenberg, 2018; Mansilla & Jackson, 2011) and often integrates interdisciplinary approaches such as problem-based learning (Major & Palmer, 2006). CT involves infusing international elements into course content, using global resources, and implementing culturally responsive methodologies (Schuerholz-Lehr, Caws, Van Gyn, & Preece, 2017).

Curriculum transformation (CT) is heralded as the centerpiece strategy for internationalization at home initiatives (Appelbaum, Friedler, Ortiz, & Wolff, 2009; Green & Shoenberg, 2006; Mansilla & Jackson, 2011) and is often associated with pedagogical approaches across disciplines such as problem-based learning (Major & Palmer, 2006). CT can be defined as "a process by which international elements are infused into course content, international resources are used in course readings and assignments and instructional methodologies appropriate to a culturally diverse student population are implemented" (Schuerholz-Lehr et al., 2017). CT implies representation of women and minorities in the curriculum (Clark, 2002; Hedges, 1996) alignment with diverse perspectives, attention to best practices for students with disabilities (Ouellett, 2004) and adaptation of innovative curricular approaches (Chasteen, Perkins, Beale, Pollock, & Wieman, 2011).

Emphasis on global perspectives highlights the following two core goals of CT: responsiveness to students from diverse cultural backgrounds and attention to *all* students for a 21st -century foundation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. (Clark, 2002; Hedges, 1996). Bates (2005) notes that internationalization of higher education is hegemonic as such it must be inclusive of social justice for individuals and groups on the margins of societies. The inclusion of intercultural competence is a point of reference.

2.3. Intercultural Competence and Equity

Intercultural competence was defined as the integrated mix of pragmatic, pedagogical, and hermeneutic activities (Bennett, 2015). The pragmatic emphasizes the development of students as intercultural speakers (Byram, 1997) with the ability to communicate successfully and culturally appropriately in cross-cultural contexts (Brislin & Cushner, 1996; Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2000). The pedagogical dimension recognizes the skill of empathy for awareness and acceptance of multiple perspectives and diversity (Gochenour, 1993; Seelye, 1996). The hermeneutic dimension honors engagement with diverse cultures that provides students with multiple ways of viewing the world in contrast to their personal and individual cultural frame of reference (Bennett, 2015; Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003).

Phipps (2010) describes teaching for "intercultural beings" as a process that "moves beyond culture with what students know about culture and reflects firmly on the symbolic and ethical significance of what they think they know." Themes of advocacy for international understanding among people are prominent and inclusive of the importance of learning languages and cultures to gain an understanding of others. The pedagogy of world languages and cultures serves as a means of communication and practice constructed by the ways participants understand themselves, their social spaces, histories, future possibilities and critiques that locate classroom practice within social visions and power structures (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 2024). Phipps (2010) says that the outcome should include critical reflection on the defining categories of culture.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design and Data Collection

This study was approved by the University of Wyoming Institutional Review Board protocol number 20171113DK01748, (2020). It was designed as a qualitative case study to examine the WLCP as a unique case within a rich detailed context. Yin (2021) and Merriam (2019) state that a case study is an empirical inquiry that aims at understanding a real-life phenomenon in its natural context where the distinction between the object of study and its context is not clear and which involves the use of a range of data sources.

Case study research questions are typically open-ended, exploratory and designed to gain deep understanding. The following two research questions were designed to answer *how, why* and *if* the WLCP, as a particular phenomenon was aligned with internationalization at home initiatives:

1. Are there teacher pedagogical attributes that align with the practice of internationalization at home?
2. Are there aspects of the WLCP that align with strategies for internationalization at home within the respective university community?

These questions guided the data collection process and were flexible enough to allow researchers to adapt as new insights emerged.

The critical lens of Freire (1970) and Freire (1978) informed the research process. Freire (1970) maintained that traditionally defined objects of investigation were nonexistent. He involved participants as partners in the research process, becoming immersed in their ways of thinking and encouraging participants to ponder personal frames of reference. In this study, participants were included in the process of investigation, examination, and

reinvestigation. Following the stance of Freire, participants were viewed as co-creators of knowledge through dialogue; meaning that everyone involved in the research process was encouraged to ask questions and openly express personal views. The focus was on the co-creation of meaning between researchers and participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2001). This stance allowed researchers to verify the interpretation of themes as participants reacted to, agreed with or corrected findings.

The investigation was also defined as site-based research (Stake, 2023) at the time of the study and the principal investigators served in WLCP leadership roles. Strategies for maintaining objectivity included attention to reflexivity (Trowler, 2011). Emphasis on reflexivity meant that principal investigators engaged in self-reflection regarding biases that could have affected the study. Trustworthiness was established with triangulation of multiple sources of data and member checks (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006).

Procedures for data collection were completed in sequential phases using a convenience sampling technique (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Consistent with the case study methodology (Merriam, 2019; Yin, 2021) multiple data sets included interviews, focus group discussions, a review of curriculum documents along with student work, a focus group field log, bimonthly researcher debriefing sessions and classroom observations. In-depth, semi-structured voice- recorded interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with fifteen WLCP service instructors. The development of the interview guide followed principles outlined by Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) as the funnel approach. Interview procedures included an introduction to the discussion, an overview of the topic, ground rules, and the initial question.

3.2. Participants

Participants included 15 WLCP teachers' who were representative of diverse backgrounds, ages (26 to 54 years), and languages. They ranged from individuals who defined themselves as
1. Long-time USA residents.
2. Newly arrived international students, spouses, or community members.
3. Short- term study abroad students.
4. Professionals with positions as K-12 teachers, university professors, department heads or center directors.
At the time of the study, all participants had completed at least one semester of WLCP teaching.

3.3. Data Analysis

The WLCP served as the primary unit of analysis with the investigation initially focusing on individual participants as distinct cases within the broader study. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, and an initial set of codes and categories was developed to maintain consistency across the analysis. Categories were expanded, and new emergent codes and categories were identified (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding framework was refined by combining preliminary and emergent codes, reviewing each coded data segment to ensure alignment with the intended category description. The constant comparative method was employed to explore patterns across individual cases and broader trends (Carmaz, 2006; Merriam, 2019; Stake, 2023).

4. Results

The findings of this study are organized into three distinct case scenarios. These scenarios are not intended to generalize the experiences of all WLCP instructors but rather to illustrate a range of diverse ideas, strategies, and teaching approaches observed within the WLCP. Each scenario serves as a focused snapshot of the WLCP providing an in-depth perspective on participants' pedagogical practices and their unique contributions.

4.1. Case Scenario One: The Innovative Instructor

The innovative teacher participants immigrated to the USA with a spouse or for professional opportunities. At the time of the study, nearly all were experienced professionals trained in various social science and natural science disciplines. They had terminal degrees from European and Asian countries; a few studied in the USA but most completed degrees before settling in the area. All were multilingual and used English as a second or third language.

Many participants noted that experience with various cultures both within the USA and in other parts of the world influenced their approach to teaching WLCP courses. They expressed commitment to developing lessons that expose students to intercultural competence.

> Using language to focus on culture is an effective way of creating natural exposure to both language and cultural sensitivity. I want to immerse students including beginning-level students because this is where we begin with the largest groups in cross-cultural issues through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. I want to go beyond exposure to the world. Students should develop a perspective for the global (XIO-2).

A common teaching strategy among these participants was the use of authentic materials and hot topics to engage students and provide interactions with target languages and cultures.

Participants defined themselves as innovative based on their confidence in course development. They engaged with students to create curricula and relied on insider perspectives of language and culture to develop lessons about popular music, food, city life, and multiple perspectives of global current events. Participants rejected an authoritative stance with students preferring to create a collaborative classroom climate conducive to curriculum topics of mutual interest.

Participants' professional confidence and the cultural narratives they shared shaped a contemporary body of knowledge, attitudes and skills within the following three domains of pedagogy: cognitive, affective, and participatory. The cognitive provided content learning about the history, geography, ecological needs, and community efforts at work in target cultures. As world events unfolded, participants used their foundation of history and geography to help students interpret actions from the target language/cultural perspective. Participants also used controversial issues from personal life experiences to foster critical thinking for real-world issues.

The goals of effective and participatory pedagogy involved the cultivation of intercultural competence through a balance of experiential learning and classroom interaction. These interactions included classroom experiences that offered dynamic ways to frame problems. Participants explained that whether or not students embraced classroom experiences was secondary to their strengthened ability to think reflectively, discover insights about themselves, and develop global perspectives.

A desire to internationalize the WLCP curriculum through interaction with students and other instructors was a priority. Participants collaborated on a variety of initiatives including creating and revising curriculum and providing support for less experienced WLCP teachers. They appreciated the freedom to develop WLCP courses. Many viewed it as respect and validation for their backgrounds and their role as instructors committed to tailoring curricula to each group of students.

4.2. Case Scenario Two: Cultural Flare Instructor

Nearly all of the cultural flare instructor participants were in the process of applying to or registering in USA universities for graduate level study. Many were English as Foreign Language (EFL) instructors who relied on prior teaching experience to develop WLCP courses. Participants noted the importance of a toolbox of strategies to emphasize what students could demonstrate upon completion of their courses. They defined themselves as facilitators of WLCP courses to project the idea that instructor expertise was valued as one element among many in WLCP classrooms.

A common theme among these participants was inspiring students to think broadly about the world. This was evident for those who identified as experienced educators regardless of the target language; they noted broad implications for supporting students to act globally. One participant explained that her decision to participate in the WLCP sprung from her desire to prepare university-level students to reflect on personal cultural perspectives.

> I wanted to shake it up. I wanted to do something that engaged. To start to question them, to start to reflect on their own beliefs and where their own beliefs have come from because I believe that the only way that they're going to start to rethink those beliefs (XXI-1).

Participants defined the WLCP as a community within the larger university setting to gain professional teaching experience while also challenging students to be aware of personal beliefs, cultures, and perspectives.

Some suggested that university-level students did not have experience with others who were culturally different or with languages other than English. They reported that some WLCP students were not curious or knowledgeable about the world.

> And yeah, it is a concern. I mean, how can you be in the moment with people who come from around the world if you don't know anything about the world? If I can accomplish one goal, it's for them to become curious so that if they interact with someone from my country which is different from where we are right now, they might decide to Google it to find out about my religion, history, culture and place in the world (XXX-5).

Participants noted important components to develop WLCP students' intercultural competence detailed as culture-specific knowledge especially a deeper understanding of worldviews, historical contexts and other influences on culture. All participants agreed that it was essential to be able to understand the world from others' perspectives.

Participants reported that serving as WLCP teachers provided meaningful experiences through sharing and being made aware of new resources by other teachers and the international community in general. Many noted a positive relationship between quality teaching and honest open cooperation among teachers as a WLCP team. As an example, participants often changed or modified the WLCP course curriculum based on suggestions and ideas generated by other instructors.

4.3. Case Scenario Three: Newcomer Instructor

The newcomer teacher participants were recent arrivals to the university and often to the USA. Some were exchange students with plans to stay for a maximum of two semesters. They had unique challenges, given their limited experience with the USA system of higher education and less exposure to English speaking communities. At the time of the study, all newcomer teacher participants began WLCP teaching as tutors working with small groups of students.

Some reported that the initial goal of WLCP teachers was to gain experience with the structure, culture, and operation of USA university classrooms and students. All noted that the USA system was very different and thus the goal was to step out of their comfort zones and get acquainted as soon as possible.

Participants outlined numerous benefits based on service as WLCP teachers. The most commonly cited benefits were opportunities to network and expand professional communities. This mostly happened through interactions with WLCP instructors in group settings.

> I learnt that people are doing some interesting stuff on campus in the WLCP. They're spending time with people from other countries. They're doing a lot of interesting work that's connected to other countries and they have these relationships with others on campus that are from all over the world. If I hadn't been in the WLCP I probably wouldn't have known about this (XII-1).

Serving as WLCP teachers gave participants transparency; they reported a sense of belonging. This was important given that some reported feeling isolated as the only person on campus from their home country or region.

These case scenarios emphasize key pedagogical attributes that define teacher approaches, particularly how these attributes align with and support the concept of fostering internationalization at home. This involves integrating global and intercultural dimensions into the WLCP classroom context, providing students with meaningful opportunities to engage with diverse perspectives without requiring international mobility. Scenarios illustrate innovative strategies instructors use to create inclusive, globally aware learning environments by framing the findings through these attributes. They demonstrate the WLCP's potential to enhance intercultural competence and global understanding at the local level.

5. Implications

The aim of this study was to explore the practice of internationalization at home within the WLCP as a nonformal university initiative. The WLCP was defined as a culturally inclusive space on a university campus with a shared bond of teaching and learning world languages and cultures among international and local students, staff, and faculty. Participants' varied backgrounds, experiences, and professional characters meant that the WLCP embodied diverse worldviews, teaching styles, knowledge, languages, cultures and life experiences. This composite was the thread that characterized the WLCP as a CoP to foster strategies for interaction between international and local students, faculty, and staff.

The WLCP models intentional inclusion of international and intercultural teaching and learning within nonformal curricula in a purposeful way. The essence of the WLCP as a CoP was an essential strategy to bring all instructors together with commitment for ongoing professional development. Even seasoned instructor participants who studied and had professional lives in other countries needed support in adapting and understanding internationalization practice within the local intercultural contexts of a United States university campus. Hence, ongoing professional development for international at home initiatives such as the WLCP should be supported and viewed as a critical feature. This implies that adding or infusing random internationalized curriculum elements or electives are insufficient for universities that strive to be globally minded.

Consideration of the WLCP as a strategy for internationalization at home means that it should be valued as a channel of university efforts. Engagement with university stakeholders is important for accountability as well as for recognition and transparency of the WLCP within the larger knowledge base of internationalization. This means that a range of stakeholders across the university should be engaged with nonformal initiatives as viable components of the internationalization agenda. This might include international officers, educational developers, and faculty administrators.

5.1. WLCP Alignment: Strategies for Internationalization at Home

The presence of the WLCP as a non-formal teaching initiative on a university campus validated the international community as a group of leaders and as a point of contact for bringing the local and international communities together. This is noteworthy given that international students are among the most valuable yet underutilized resources on United States university campuses. International students represent the academic elite of their home countries but are often invisible within the wider campus communities of United States host institutions (Bates, 2005). Their roles as WLCP service teachers provided transparency for diverse professional and personal life experiences that represent assets for the university. Participants' responsibilities as WLCP teachers gave them a voice as well as an invitation to actively participate as members of the university community.

Implications suggest that the WLCP provides an alternative model of possibilities to enhance strategies for internationalization at home. Participants embodied critical perspectives noted here as the disruption of authority; in classroom settings they assumed active roles in collaboration with students in what Freire (1970) refers to as *transforming the world.* Teacher involvement is key to internationalization efforts (Allan & Estler, 2020) yet often there are just a few teachers identified as specialists or as the go to people for internationalization. They are appointed to teach the internationalized curriculum serve on international committees and lead study abroad programs. In contrast, the WLCP provides a model for the importance of internationalization spread throughout the faculty and student body as a collective initiative that is fluid with the ability to develop as a standard of practice. In a nutshell, the WLCP lends substantial strength to the importance of non-formal initiatives across the institution. It highlights that learning takes place within formal classroom settings but also across informal and non-formal initiatives.

The WLCP highlights the value of a local intercultural context as a powerful vehicle for transformational learning similar to that achieved through international mobility. This is supported by research noting that international experiences play a crucial role in cultivating transferable and marketable skills (Crossman & Clarke, 2010).

5.2. WLCP Instructor Attributes Aligned with Internationalization at Home

Research suggests that intercultural competence cannot be acquired in a short amount of time or one course (Bennett, 2015). Rather, as exemplified by participants, it is a process that needs to be nurtured and addressed explicitly. Participants modeled intercultural competence exemplifying various knowledge, skills and attitudes that illustrated to students the behaviors and communication styles that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.

In this respect, participants were learner-oriented. Using the study of culture and language as a classroom vehicle integrates the experiences and knowledge of all students. Teaching activities and assignments were designed to stimulate exchange and collaboration among students whether they were United States or international; participants' pedagogical stance did not depend on the presence of international students. Rather they motivated students to seek the intercultural as well as the international through the study of language and culture. This stance offered all students global perspectives regardless of their program of study or whether or not they were preparing for study abroad.

Participants' diverse perspectives contribute to an internationalized campus that embraces teaching about the differences and similarities of people worldwide. Including participants as active agents in their own learning led to confidence in their abilities for understanding issues of culture. It also led to a high comfort level for discussing controversial issues in the classroom and embracing intercultural communication as fundamental to the core content of their courses.

The WLCP broadened participants' thinking about current and future endeavors in support of their service within the university community. Participation in the WLCP transformed the way they thought about the content of their courses and the outcomes for students. Participants with a variety of perspectives on the purpose, goals, and importance of internationalization could be viewed as advocates and ambassadors for internationalization

19

efforts at the institutional level. These participants might continue to engage with internationalization in their future endeavors both while in the United States and beyond.

6. Limitations

Despite the promising potential, this case study research is not without limitations. Foremost is its lack of generalizability. The focus on a detailed, context-specific case may have overlooked broader trends or patterns that could be identified through quantitative research. The research design was heavily influenced by the unique conditions of the particular setting further limiting the applicability of the conclusions to other institutions or regions. This limitation includes the findings that may not apply to broader university populations in different contexts. The specific demographics and cultural stance of the participants could have influenced the findings, making it difficult to extrapolate the results to other groups in other university communities. The sample size is likely too small to account for variability in experiences, reducing the ability to make inferences applicable to larger or more diverse populations.

Broadening the geographical scope of research could enrich the understanding of internationalization at home application and implications. This might encompass the lived experiences of students, staff and faculty in both formal and non-formal internationalization at home initiatives. Researchers might begin with questions addressing the challenges they face, and how the respective programs impact their intercultural growth and academic engagement.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, implications offer a rich context for research-driven understanding of what can be gained from non-formal university initiatives such as the WLCP to inform and enhance internationalization at home. Implications contribute to the landscape of meanings and strategies associated with internationalization at home at the level of practice. The WLCP is a reminder that collaboration across university communities is a prerequisite for the resources and information necessary to mentor and guide all students toward creating and sustaining a globally minded university community. Faculty, staff and students are called to reach beyond the formal classroom, to explore available resources with interested others in developing internationalized university communities on local levels.

The potential of non-formal initiatives like the WLCP encourages a shift from viewing internationalization as an exclusively classroom-based endeavor to recognizing the value of community-wide engagement. This collaborative approach ensures that internationalization efforts are inclusive, accessible, and impactful, fostering an environment where students and staff alike are empowered to develop global perspectives that create university communities that are interconnected and responsive. Universities can contribute meaningfully to the preparation of students for an increasingly interconnected world through such concerted efforts.

References

Åberg, P. (2016). Nonformal learning and well-being among older adults: Links between participation in Swedish study circles, feelings of well-being and social aspects of learning. *Educational Gerontology, 42*(6), 411-422. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2016.1139972

Allan, E. J., & Estler, S. E. (2020). Faculty involvement in internationalization efforts. *Higher Education Journal, 12*(3), 233-248.

Altbach, P. G. (2004). Globalization and the university: Myths and realities in an unequal world. *Tertiary Education and Management, 10,* 3-25.

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (2014). *World-readiness standards for learning languages.* Retrieved from https://www.actfl.org/educator-resources/world-readiness-standards-for-learning-languages

Appelbaum, P., Friedler, L. M., Ortiz, C. E., & Wolff, E. F. (2009). Internationalizing the university mathematics curriculum. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 13*(3), 365-381.

Bates, R. (2005). Can we live together? Towards a global curriculum. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, 4*(1), 95-109. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022205048760

Bennett, M. J. (2015). Developing intercultural competence: A processual perspective. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 49,* 30–41.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Brislin, R., & Cushner, K. (1996). *Intercultural interactions: A practical guide.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence.* Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Carmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cedefop. (2014). *Terminology of European education and training policy: A selection of 130 terms* (2nd ed.). Luxembourg: Publications Office.

Chasteen, S., Perkins, K., Beale, P., Pollock, S., & Wieman, C. (2011). A thoughtful approach to instruction: Course transformation for the rest of us. *Journal of College Science Teaching, 40*(4), 24-30.

Clark, C. (2002). Effective multicultural curriculum transformation across disciplines. *Multicultural Perspectives, 4*(3), 37-46. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0403_7

Colardyn, D., & Bjornavold, J. (2004). Validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning: Policy and practices in EU member states. *European Journal of Education, 39*(1), 69-89. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0141-8211.2004.00167.x

Crossman, J. E., & Clarke, M. (2010). International experience and graduate employability: Stakeholder perceptions on the connection. *Higher Education, 59,* 599-613. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9268-z

De Wit, H. (2002). *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Elkin, G., Devjee, F., & Farnsworth, J. (2005). Visualising the "internationalisation" of universities. *International Journal of Educational Management, 19*(4), 318-329. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540510599644

Fantini, A. (2000). A central concern: Developing intercultural competence. In A. Fantini (Ed.), About our institution. SIT Occasional Papers Series. In (pp. 25-42). Brattleboro, VT: The School for International Training.

Findsen, B., & Formosa, M. (2011). *Lifelong learning in later life: A handbook on older adult learning.* Amsterdam: Sense.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Herder and Herder.

Freire, P. (1978). *Education for critical consciousness.* New York: Seabury.

Giroux, H. (2024). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning.* New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Gochenour, T. (1993). *Beyond experience: The experiential approach to cross-cultural education.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Green, M., & Shoenberg, R. (2006). *Where faculty live: Internationalizing the disciplines.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Green, M., & Shoenberg, R. (2018). *Internationalizing the campus: A user's guide.* Washington, D.C: American Council on Education.

Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (2001). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In C. F. Conrad, J. G. Haworth, & L. R. Latucca (Eds.), Qualitative research in higher education. In (pp. 57–72). Boston: Pearson.

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 27*(4), 421-443. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0147-1767(03)00032-4

Hedges, E. (1996). Curriculum transformation:" A brief overview". *Women's Studies Quarterly, 24*(3/4), 16-22.

Jones, E. (2013). Internationalization and transformational learning. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 17*(2), 182–197.

Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2006). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education.* New York: Routledge.

Knight, J. (1997). *Internationalization of higher education: A conceptual framework. In J Knight and H deWit (Eds.), Internationalization of higher education in Asia Pacific countries.* Amsterdam: European Association for International Education.

Knight, J. (2020). Internationalization in action: Strategies for campus engagement. *International Journal of Educational Development, 77,* 102256.

Latchem, C. (2014). Informal learning and non-formal education for development. *Journal of Learning for Development, 1*(1), 1–13.

Major, C. H., & Palmer, B. (2006). Reshaping teaching and learning: The transformation of faculty pedagogical content knowledge. *Higher Education, 51,* 619-647. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-004-1391-2

Mansilla, V., & Jackson, A. (2011). *Educating for global competence: Preparing our youth to engage the world.* New York: Asia Society.

Merriam, S. (2019). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mok, K. H. (2021). Remaking higher education for the post-COVID era: Critical reflections on marketization, internationalization, and graduate employment. *Higher Education Quarterly, 75*(3), 373-380.

Niesz, T. (2010). Chasms and bridges: Generativity in the space between educators' communities of practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(1), 37-44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.06.015

Office of the President. (2023). *Breaking through: 2017–2022.* Retrieved from https://www.uwyo.edu/president/index.html

Ouellett, M. L. (2004). Faculty development and universal instructional design. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 37*(2), 135-144. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680490453977

Phipps, S. (2010). High school social studies teachers' beliefs and education for democratic citizenship. University of Missouri - Kansas City ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.

Schuerholz-Lehr, S., Caws, C., Van Gyn, G., & Preece, A. (2017). Internationalizing the higher education curriculum: An emerging model for transforming faculty perspectives. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 37*(1), 67–94.

Seelye, H. N. (1996). *Experiential activities for intercultural learning.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Soria, K. M., & Troisi, J. (2014). Internationalization at home alternatives to study abroad: Implications for students' development of global, international, and intercultural competencies. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 18*(3), 261-280. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315313496572

Stake, R. (2023). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), The Sage handbook of qualitative research. In (pp. 435–454). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stewart, D., & Shamdasani, P. (1990). *Focus groups: Theory and practice.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Stobie, T. (2019). *Coherence and consistency in international curricula: A study of the international baccalaureate diploma and middle years programme. In M. Hayden, J. Levy and J. Thompson (Eds.), The SAGE handbook of research in international education.* London: Sage.

Takahashi, S. (2011). Co-constructing efficacy: A "communities of practice" perspective on teachers' efficacy beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(4), 732-741. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.12.002

Thomas, D. M. (2015). Breakin' through [Sculpture]. University of Wyoming, war memorial parking lot, University of Wyoming Campus. Funded by April Brimmer Kunz and Marian H. Rochelle.

Trowler, P. (2011). *Researching your own institution: Higher education, british educational research association online resource. ("(PDF) researching your own institution - academia.edu").* Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/10275988/Researching_Your_Own_Institution

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. (2015). *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good?* Paris: UNESCO.

University of Wyoming. (2023). *Strive to break through barriers and explore new frontiers of teaching and learning. Office of the President.* Retrieved from https://www.uwyo.edu/president/

Wenger, E. (2006). *Communities of practice: A brief introduction.* Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1794/11736

Yin, R. (2021). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.