Journey to Global Competence: Learning Languages, Exploring Cultures, Transforming Lives

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The future is something that is constantly taking place, and this constant “taking place” means that the future only exists to the extent that we change the present. It is by changing the present that we build the future; therefore history is possibility, not determinism.

—Paulo Freire
Pedagogy of the City (1993)

Abstract

This article reviews and summarizes the literature on global competence in order to begin to understand how to best foster global competence within the context of the world language classroom. Building on widely circulated definitions and models of global competence and analogous terms, this article provides examples of how teachers can foster global competence within the classroom. Because of the unique relationship between global competence and cultural understanding and the equally strong relationship between languages and cultures, world language educators are uniquely positioned to become
leaders in their organizations with respect to fostering global competence among students. Educators can foster global competence in their students by empowering them to learn languages in pragmatically correct ways, explore cultures with an emphasis on understanding cultural perspectives from product and practices, and by transforming lives by creating opportunities for students to take action and interact with speakers of their studied languages in natural contexts.

Introduction

Ask a few teachers why they do what they do, and they are not likely to speak of their passion for making sure students can take derivatives or diagram sentences. Ask teachers what they hope that students will remember from their course in 10 or 20 years and it is unlikely that any of them would have a specific piece of content in mind. Let’s face it: Those learning targets may help to keep us focused on what we are teaching at the moment, but they are not what gets us out of bed in the morning. Most teachers have a vision of what it is that students should take away from the experience as a result of having taken the courses that they teach. These visions are the grandest of our essential questions and often they are the most human element of everything that we do. My vision for my students is global competence. I want them to speak the language and I want them to love it, but if they were to forget every last syllable I would hope they would at least retain the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to communicate effectively in diverse environments. Personally, I have been reduced to tears while I asserted that despite the fact that many of my students may think that they are taking my class to fulfill a college admissions requirement, they will leave my classroom transformed. At least, that is the hope that gets me out of bed in the morning. Teaching is a political act (Freire,1993). I teach world language to foster an appreciation for diversity—to make the seemingly foreign, familiar. I teach to eradicate racism. I teach to end discrimination. I teach to change the world. Yet, I do not believe that I alone have the power to make any changes in my classroom. I come armed with mere questions. I create the environment for inquiry within that semi-structured space; I believe that my students are charged with the task of inventing and reinventing the world. In this article, I attempt to summarize what I have learned through my review of literature on the subject. On my professional development journey, I have created an outline of practices that have been recognized as empowering students to increase their overall global competence which I share here. Each day in my classroom is an attempt to make the world a better place. Each day on the road to global competence we learn languages, and we explore cultures; and, in the end, I hope we transform lives.

Making the Case for Global Competence

The United States Department of Education (2012) released a report entitled, “Succeeding Globally through International Education and Engagement.” The report is an indication the U.S. Department of Education realizes the need to galvanize students to be able to live and work in what Friedman (2007) termed a
“flat world”—a world of both global competition and global responsibility that is not merely metaphorically shrunk by technology but also leveled. In other words, in a flat world, individuals from all corners of the earth can be empowered to act globally and compete in ways that may have previously been thought impossible.

The Department of Education’s report outlined four major objectives. The first of the four objectives was the major focus of this article: “Increase the global competencies of all U.S. students, including those from traditionally disadvantaged groups.” The report listed a variety of motivations within the national interests of the U.S. for increasing the emphasis on students’ development of global competencies in education. Among these motivations were the strengths and areas of opportunity that result from the diversity within the U.S. own borders; the language and cultural expertise necessary for effective international diplomacy and national security; the knowledge and expertise necessary to address global concerns that transcend national borders; and the requisite global skills necessary for transglobal communication and commerce. The role of languages in authentic communication and transmission of cultural understandings along with the role of direct intercultural experiences is central to the plan outlined by the Department of Education in this report.

Many in both the public and private sectors, within this nation and in the broader international community have recognized and touted the benefits of fostering global competence in the interest of peace and prosperity (Barker, 2000; Mansilla & Jackson, 2011; Parkinson, 2009; Cushner, K., & Brennan, 2007; Caligiuri & Di Santo, 2001; Vance, 2005) There are a number of trends present today that are causing leaders to look for opportunities to foster global competence as a key 21st century skill. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (n.d.) identified three trends that present new demands and opportunities for a global citizenry:

- Significant and complex challenges.
- An increasingly international, interdependent and diverse world
- A tightly connected, digital world

According to Partnership for 21st Century Skills, the challenges that we face locally, regionally, or nationally often transcend our borders and have long-lasting pros and cons for diverse groups of people. Today’s challenges include things like improving the living conditions of the people who are poor and destitute, achieving sustainable human-environment relationships, increasing fair and sustainable forms of global trade, addressing health epidemics and pandemics, and creating the conditions for lasting peace and global stability (Reimers, 2009). These types of global challenges require decisions to be made by an electorate that can make informed judgments by accessing accurate information, discerning the nuances of multiple points of view, and communicating their own perspectives to effect change (The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, n.d.). Moreover, the way that the global citizenry of the 21st century must advocate for desired civic actions require the use of tools that didn’t exist even a few years ago or that haven’t been imagined yet (The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, n.d.). These 21st century realities are what many have been used to begin to make the case for global competence.
Global competence is a sought after skill in many professions. Parkinson (2009) explained why the globally competent individuals are in demand in the engineering field. He described how converging trends occurring over the past two decades have led to this demand. Among those trends are advances in telecommunication technologies, the opening up of formerly closed societies, the adoption of free-trade, economic policies and the expansion of multi-national corporations. As our world has become increasing global though these political and economic changes, so has our travel. Changes in the travel habits of the global citizenry have led to changes in health care. Many nursing programs are now making the case for global health as a vital curricular area. Peeks (2014) argues to this end by stating that healthcare is becoming globalized due to factors like travel and epidemics that transcend national borders, but also mentions human rights concerns and an increased awareness in the healthcare community of global disparities. These professionals note a need for a field specific version of global competency that they refer to in the literature as global health competencies (Peek, 2014; Frenk et al., 2010, Houpt, Pearson, & Hall, 2007). Houpt, Pearson, and Hall (2007) discuss competency in global health education in terms of three domains: Global disease, travelers’ medicine, and immigrant health.

The domain of global health competency concerned with immigrant health, reveals an important understanding that global competency is as important at home as it is abroad (Houpt, Pearson, & Hall, 2007). In fields where workers may be interacting solely with local clientele global competence (sometimes referred to in nuanced variations as intercultural competence, cross-cultural competence, and multi-cultural competence) is still touted as an important skill. The field of Clinical Psychology is one such example. Katz and Hoyt (2014) described the role of global, multicultural competence in the field of clinical psychology with respect to addressing the needs of traditionally underserved populations. They examined the level of prejudice of therapists and their awareness of these attitudes in relationship to their counseling practices. They concluded that more research in this area needs to be conducted and that more needs to be done to build therapists awareness of potential prejudice in order to serve the global community better. Other researchers have focused on more specific elements of culture. For example, Yarhouse and Fisher (2002) examined the relationship of therapist knowledge and beliefs about religion on their professional practice. In recent decades, many researchers have made projections regarding demographic changes that may occur within the U.S. According to the U.S. Census (2011), by the year 2050, children of color are expected to make up more than half of all children in the United States. As the United States continues to change demographically, individuals in service professions, like mental health, will need to invest in strengthening their abilities to serve culturally diverse clients.

How exactly teachers may best foster their own global competencies and support students in the development of the knowledge, dispositions, and skills, demands immediate exploration if these goals are to be achieved. In this article, this author compiles strategies for incorporating world language classroom practices that foster global competence. While in every content area, content should be taught
in a global context whenever possible (Fischer, 2014), world language teachers—as leaders in language and cultural brokering—may be in a central position to transform education (Kean, Grady, & Sandrock, 2001; Clementi, & Pierce, 2010). Because of their specific understandings about the inner-workings of language and culture and because of their international experiences, world language teachers may be able to more readily create activities aimed at developing students’ levels of global competence than teachers without these understandings and experiences. The Department of Education’s report may come as no surprise to world language educators as they have been increasingly focusing their professional development and literature on themes related to global competence or parallel ideas.

What is Global Competence?

The language around the concept of global competence has been in flux. Many analogous terms have been introduced in recent years like cross-cultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, intercultural and socio-pragmatic competence, and interculturality. Likewise, there is no single definition of global competence in the literature; rather, there are many parallel definitions. For example, the Global Competence Task Force (as cited by Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011) refers to global competence as, “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.” While in many language classrooms, global competence can be explained as “Knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom (ACTFL et al., n.d.).” The Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA)® uses Hunter’s Global Competence Model™ (2006) and definition of global competence (2004), “Having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, and leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s environment.” Hunter’s comprehensive worldwide research agenda sought to develop a universally accepted consensus definition and framework for global competence, and it resulted in the creation of the Global Competence Model™. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Global Competence Model™, outcome of worldwide global competence research, and upon which the GCAA® is based. (Hunter et al, 2006). Used with permission from Global Competence Consulting, LLC / Global Leadership Excellence, LLC
Upon further examination of this model, one notes that the authors suggest a movement outward from self-awareness, to include attitudes, global knowledge, and people skills, which includes the specific dimension of intercultural capability. Close examination yields differences between the inner circles and the outer circles. The two inner circles represent the Internal Readiness dimensions of global competence and the two outer circles, the External Readiness dimensions. In order for someone to have global competence they need to have both Internal Readiness and External Readiness. Global competence is the sum of all the uniquely different dimensions in the model. The Global Competence Model™ and its preceding definition are consistent with other models and definitions that explain the construct of global competence as a set of knowledge, skills and dispositions that leads to the abilities of individuals to transition through different cultural contexts easily communicating with and relating to other people. For example, Larson, Ott, and Miles (2010) conducted a qualitative descriptive study of the impact of a cultural immersion experience in Guatemala on the intercultural competencies of baccalaureate nursing students. For the purpose of their study they defined cultural competence as having five components including cultural desire, awareness, skill, knowledge and encounter. The overlap between the terms used by Larson, Ott, and Miles and those used by the Global Competence Model™ is evident.

Considering the number of terms for global competence that have been used interchangeably, one might wonder how definitions of those terms in the literature compare with Hunter’s Model. Deardorff (2006) defined intercultural competence as “The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes.” She also developed models to illustrate her definition. Consider her pyramid model of intercultural competence (See Figure 2 on the following page).

In Deardorff’s (2006; 2009) Model, she posits that intercultural competence, a desired external outcome is possible only when the other components including the requisite attitudes of respect, openness, and curiosity, the prerequisite knowledge and skills, along with the desired internal outcomes are present. In both Deardorff’s and Hunter’s models there are internal and external components. Likewise, in both models there are necessary dispositions that are considered foundational. Both mention self-awareness and appear to have a hierarchical structure outlining the order in which these aspects of global competence can be developed. While there are similarities, differences also exist. For instance, intercultural competence is a smaller portion of global competence as referenced in Hunter’s Global Competence Model™, where intercultural capability is one of the eight dimensions. Additionally, intercultural competence implies the ability to interact appropriately with another culture, while the scope of global competence is far greater, such that an individual has breadth of knowledge and skills to interact effectively with cultures across the entire world.

The Global Competence Task Force, an educator led initiative to improve assessments for 21st century skills, has identified five key areas that are essential for students’ skill development for college and careers. Those areas are writing, global competence, creativity, problem solving and analyzing information (Boix
Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). All of these areas can be addressed in every curricular area and all are important for the 21st century. The task force has also identified six curricular areas and has created global competence matrices for each area: The arts, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and world languages. The matrices are instrumental in defining what global competence education looks like in each curricular area by aligning the goals to content already included in each of those curricular areas. Each matrix includes the same basic framework dividing goals into the following four major categories:

- Investigate the world
- Recognize perspectives
- Communicate ideas
- Take action

Investigating the world requires students to explore the world beyond their immediate environments. Truly globally competent people operate from a broad knowledge base. They are generalists rather than specialists. Recognizing
perspectives requires students to have developed an understanding of their own viewpoints and to be receptive to the viewpoints of others. They must learn to adopt an anthropologist’s mindset and focus on understanding rather than judgment. Communicating ideas encompasses the three modes of communication. In the interpretive mode, globally competent people can interpret a text while applying their knowledge of a people(s) history and cultural values. In the interpersonal mode, they are not only grammatically correct but pragmatically correct. Their correct use of pragmatics extends not only to their word choice but also to their non-verbal cues. In the presentational mode, globally competent people are able to present to diverse audiences for a variety of purposes. Some would argue that the last section of the rubric, take action, transcends the scope of global competence and moves into global citizenship. While most K-16 students, may not be able to go abroad to work on social action projects, globally competent people arguably make decisions informed by multiple perspectives. They act locally, regionally, and globally on issues of significance. People without well-developed global competence, act from limited perspectives.

In sum, Deardorff (2006, 2009) defined and explained intercultural competence. Intercultural competence describes an ability to interact appropriately within another culture. Hunter (2004) sought to define global competence of which intercultural competence is a part. Global competence implies an ability to interact appropriately across nearly any cultural context. The Global Competence Matrix articulates how global competence can be developed in a classroom context (Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011), but elements of the matrix transcend the idea of global competence and could be deemed global citizenship. In world language contexts, we focus on the interaction between people of different cultures and refer to that successful interaction as interculturality. All of these terms are related but not as interchangeable as they are often used. Still, when world language teachers talk about global competence we are likely talking about all of it: Intercultural competence, global competence, global citizenship and interculturality. The following model is this author’s attempt to combine the important elements of these analogous terms (See Figure 3 on the next page).

In the above model of global interculturality, certain internal attitudes and dispositions are prerequisite to its development. As people with those prerequisite attitudes and dispositions work to investigate the world, they gain socio-linguistic knowledge, historical perspective, and geographical awareness. As people do this they become globally aware. With global awareness internalized, these individuals can work to recognize perspectives. As they do so they begin to gain culture specific knowledge but also learn generalities about the nature of culture, they become more cognitively flexible, and develop a sense of empathy and ethnorelativity. As these skills develop, the individuals internalize an appreciation for cultural diversity. As individuals collaborate and share ideas with diverse groups of people, they become active listeners and develop communication skills. An ability to speak the language of the target culture enhances these skills. The emphasis on communication and linguistic skills within this model, provides the added
element of interculturality. As a result of the sum of their experiences, knowledge, and attitudes, these individuals at this point fit the definition of interculturally competent. As individuals interact with additional cultures repeating the above process—they are able to extend their understandings and strengthen each of the above skills. As these skills are strengthened and the cultural contexts are broadened, these individuals develop global competence. As globally competent individuals, they apply their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to take action on issues of global significance. As they do this, they become global citizens and to develop global interculturality. Again, this model is an attempt at broadening the definition of global competence by encompassing analogous terms.

**Global Competence in a K-16 Education**

As previously stated, global competence can be defined as “Having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, and leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s environment (Hunter, 2004 as cited in Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006, p. 6).” Regardless of which definition of global competence one prefers, Trilling’s (2010) list of the seven Cs for the 21st century contains 3 elements directly related to global competence of cross cultural understanding, communication, and collaboration. The inclusion of these 3 C’s suggests that we must work to nurture global competence in our students. Thus, global competence is not a single characteristic, but rather a composite of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Baumgratz, 1995; Egginton & Alsup, 2005; Johnson,
As globalization changes the way that we live and work, university leaders are responding to the demands of business and government leaders by increasing their involvement in global studies, multicultural education, and internationalization (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006; Baumgratz, 1995; Egginton and Asup, 2005). The idea of global competence is powerful; in fact, it can be considered a vehicle to harness soft power (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006). Soft power, a term coined by Nyes in the 1980s, is a force of attraction that co-opts rather than coerces others to share values, ideas, and ideals. Those interested in fostering peace prefer to harness soft power rather than hard power which consists of incentives and/or threats (Nyes, 2004). Hereby, if universities through their curriculum, internationalization, language requirements, and study abroad opportunities are able to foster global competence in their students, then they will have affected their values, ideas and ideals about people in the world and transitively changed the way that individuals interact with one another on a personal level (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006).

That transformative curriculum is present at most four-year universities, but according to the 2010 U.S. Census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011) only 19.5% of the people over 25 living in the U.S. are graduates of a four-year institution. Although the percentages of young people attempting college have been increasing, the fact that an overwhelming majority of Americans will not complete a college education, suggests that global competence cannot be addressed solely at the university-level, but must be present throughout an integrated K-16 educational system. Educators of compulsory levels need to think globally as 21st century skills go beyond the traditional three Rs (Trilling, 2010).

What do Teachers Need to Know about Global Competence?

First and foremost, global competence is an imperative (United States Department of Education, 2012). When students are not globally competent, they are ineffective communicators particularly with people different than themselves. Looking at Hunter’s model of global competence, one notes that not possessing global competence could be due to an external deficit that is easily corrected through a few additional experiences versus internal deficits that require much more work to develop. Global competence is not a mere content—rather it is a balanced package of interdisciplinary knowledge, dispositions, and skills. If students are not aware of their own cultural identities then they cannot be globally competent people. Being globally competent means being able to identify home culture. In order to accomplish this end, teachers must do mental battle against an “ethnic aisle” attitude towards culture in which only those considered “other” are considered ethnic—We are all ethnic (Muirhead, 2014).

There is a natural progression from our own personal, cultural self-awareness to global competence. Since many of our students may be unaware of their ethnic-selves, educators who are serious about fostering global competence must first find ways to connect with learners as meta-cognitive, cultural-beings. AFS (“AFS Educational Goals. AFS-USA,” n.d.) uses a pyramid illustration to explain the goals of their program. The base of the pyramid is personal knowledge or understanding. Moving up the pyramid respectively are interpersonal [communication], cultural
[understanding], and global [competence]. The trajectory along the side of the pyramid is consonant with development of global competence. One can clearly see the trajectory from self-knowledge to interaction with individuals of a target culture (presumably best accomplished in a target language) to awareness of a particular “other” culture to a larger, global understanding of how communication and cultures intersect. World language educators, particularly through our work with cultures and communities standards—are uniquely situated to empower students to develop their global competencies along this trajectory.

**Teaching with a Transformative Mindset**

Not only are world language educators uniquely situated to develop students’ global competencies, but they arguably have a moral imperative to do so. Most educators when asked about why they teach would not likely share a burning desire to impart their understanding of the pluperfect tense to students, but would rather indicate their passion for the language they speak and the cultures that speak the language. They would likely talk about human understandings, open-mindedness towards other cultures, and an ability to see an issue from more than one side. Teachers who want these results must adopt a transformative mindset. They are not teaching to eradicate poor grammar, rather, they are teaching to inspire their students to be the best versions of themselves that they can be. They do this for their students, but ultimately they hope that their students will be able to take action on issues of global significance. For these reasons, teachers need to be both culturally responsive and daring. Controversial issues like violence, hunger, international terrorism, inflation, and inequality must be addressed. Community-based learning, inquiry, dialogue and multiple perspectives must be part of classroom practices bringing the world into the classroom.

**Stop Preparing and Start Doing**

The 21st century is now. This statement may seem obvious, but how many mission statements talk about preparing students to be globally competent or to possess 21st Century skills, for the future. Our students are in the world now and they have potential to impact the world now with the choices that they make. Our curriculum should not be meant solely to prepare students for the future. In this era of assessment and data, educators sometimes feel so much pressure for students to be successful on high stakes assessments that they can forget to relinquish control and let the students create with language. When it comes to developing global competence, the time is now. Whether educators teach Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) or Advanced Placement (AP) level classes, there are opportunities within those levels to foster global competence.

**One example.**

Consider a high school level 1 Spanish course in which students have been talking about likes and dislikes and descriptive adjectives. The unit was previously based on a chapter in a textbook and had a geographical theme with a tourist
approach to culture. Nothing about that unit served to develop students’ global competencies particularly well. How could you make it better? There are many ways to do so; yet, the words, “Level 1,” intimidate many educators away from doing very much with culture. In my classroom, I use this unit to address my number one pet-peeve: There has existed a prejudice among many of my students over the years towards Spanish-speakers. Many of my students have professional or economic motives for enrolling in this course, but harbor an image of Spanish-speakers as abject immigrants. Native-speakers of Spanish to some of my learners of Spanish are seen as outsiders who do not contribute to this country. They are somehow other and separate in their minds. I know that they have thought these things, because they have told me. They have no qualms about sharing their opinions on the matter.

So for me, this unit which focuses on biographical information is a great opportunity to expose students to the reality that there are many native Spanish-speakers doing remarkable, even heroic things and contributing to the United States. Many great Hispanic-Americans are highlighted throughout the unit and heroes are discussed in terms of celebrities, family, and military personnel. In one lesson, students work together to interpret headlines in Spanish about larger issues of discrimination faced by heroes. One such headline included, “Obama condecora a 17 veteranos hispanos que no habían recibido distinción por discriminación—Obama decorates 17 Hispanic Veterans that hadn’t received distinction because of discrimination. (Redacción MundoFOX, 2014).” They also watched a video clip of a news broadcast in which Spanish-speaking veterans were being honored at a war memorial. In the one minute and forty-eight second clip, they saw a WWII veteran, several Korean and Vietnam War veterans and one family with 3 generations of war veterans—all Spanish-speakers. After listing the key words that they picked out from the clip, students were directed to a formal assessment in which they wrote letters to veterans. I had contacted a veteran’s organization with ability to distribute letters to Spanish-speaking veterans. Students used their first names and the return address of the school c/o the teacher. Many students commented to me that they related to this section of the unit, because they knew veterans in their own lives, or had relatives currently serving in the military. Those students were able to make a personal connection to the veterans that they saw in the photos and the videos, and they had already felt a connection with the veterans whom they imagined would receive their letters. A template was provided with some pleasantries that they hadn’t yet learned, but students were asked to complete the letters with content from their unit. One critical cultural consideration was register. I stressed that students needed to ask at least 3 questions of the veterans to whom they were writing. This task would require use of usted—the formal you—and its corresponding forms and formal language. This task requires a significant shift in thinking for many of my students. Through completing these culturally themed activities, students learned valuable cultural lessons and solidified their learning in a way that preparation just cannot accomplish.
Journey to Global Competence

Classroom Practices that Foster Global Competence

Learn Languages

From a purely communicative standpoint, global competence can be explained as “Knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom (ACTFL et al., n.d.).” At the core of language learning is authenticity. Teachers can do a self-audit of their current unit and lesson plans by using the “Check MATE” strategy. To do this, they look over their units for authentic Materials, authentic Audiences, authentic Tasks, and authentic Evidence; all of which are prerequisite to creating engaging, culturally valid units that can meet and exceed common core standards (Sandrock, 2014). Materials used should emanate from real sources originally created in the Target Language (TL) whenever possible. Tasks should reflect those things that people would actually do in the course of their real life. The authenticity of the task requires knowledge of the student population. A 2nd grade student would have a different list of authentic tasks, than would a high school junior; and that high school junior would have different authentic tasks than a real estate agent. Having an authentic audience and authentic evidence means that any products produced can have real world uses like furthering a cause, or solving a problem in the target language. All of this authenticity is the means to an end. Using these authenticity principles is meant to embed the language encountered in a course in a cultural context. Language and culture are seen to be inseparable.

Jiang (2000) offered several metaphors to explain the relationship between language and culture after exploring a comparison between the word associations of Chinese native speakers and English native speakers. She referred to language as flesh and culture as blood stating that without culture, language dies and without language culture has no shape. She also likened communication to swimming saying that language is to swimming skill as culture is to water. It's the combination between language and culture that equals communication just as it is the combination of swimming skill and water that equals swimming. Following that analogy, one swims swiftly and easily through familiar waters or communicates well in a familiar cultural context, but in unfamiliar contexts precedes cautiously, swims more slowly, communicates less effectively. Even with the right words in a grammatically correct utterance, if the speaker is devoid of cultural knowledge and skill an utterance could be pragmatically incorrect.

This current view of the married nature of language, culture and thought is inherently in line with Bakhtinian philosophy. Bakhtin viewed “[language] as comprising dynamic constellations of sociocultural resources that are fundamentally tied to their social and historical contexts” (Hall, Vitanova, & Marchenkova, 2004, p. 2). Language according to Bakhtin is dialogic, or part of a larger process of social re-accentuation of the ideas of others--interactions through which ideas are transmitted and values are shared. While those following a monologist world view might seem to deny our essences as social beings, dialogism requires exactly that. Arguably, Bakhtin saw dialogism as the heart of our existence stating that,
Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds. He invests his entire self in discourse, and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium (Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984, p. 293).

This dialogic view of language has several significant implications for present-day understandings of world language learning. Foremost, language is a living tool—both structured and emergent. Through language one sees the genesis of culture. We mold our cultural worlds into existence with words, maintaining them, and shaping them for our own purposes (Hall, Vitanova, & Marchenkova, 2004). Additionally, since learning for Bakhtin is present in social interaction rather than inside a black box in the learner’s head, learning language does not mean collecting forms or structures divorced from context and culture but rather entering into ways of communicating that are defined by these forces (Holquist, 1990).

In the context of a world language classroom, language learners interact with one another and with classroom materials not from a fixed identity point but from many facets of their identities simultaneously. Bakhtin was by all accounts an advocate for the strength offered by diversity. Of Bakhtin, Emerson (1997, 223-224) wrote,

Any instinctive clustering of like with like threatens to reduce my “I” and its potential languages to a miserable dot. Those who surround themselves with “insider”—in heritage, experience, appearance, tastes and attitudes toward the world—are on a rigidifying and impoverishing road. In contrast, the personality that welcomes provisional finalization by a huge and diversified array of “authors” will command optimal literacy. It feels at home in a variety of zones; it has many languages at its disposal and can learn new ones without trauma. From its perspective, the world appears an invitingly open, flexible, unthreatening and unfinalized place.

For Bakhtin, communication was the pinnacle of human existence. “To be means to communicate. Absolute death (not being) is the state of being unheard, unrecognized, unremembered (Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984, p.287).” One’s orientation in the world is actively constructed through the use of speech genres to position themselves in their relationships and interactions. For Bakhtin, one is never complete in absence of the elucidating presence of the Other (Vitanova, 2004). Bakhtin argued:

In the realm of culture, outsidedness is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly … A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning; they engage in a kind of dialogue which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these
cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise for itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths (Bakhtin, Holquist, McGee, & Emerson, 1986, p. 7).

Bakhtin understood culture as a verb idealized in the dynamics of cultural identities and cultural practices. The dialogical nature of interaction within and between cultures spotlights those interactions that occur between the self and the Other or between cultural–semiotic spaces.

The opposite of the dialogism is monologism. For Bakhtin, Monologism, at its extreme, denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities, another I with equal rights (thou). With a monologic approach (in its extreme pure form) another person remains wholly and merely an object of consciousness, and not another consciousness. No response is expected from it that could change anything in the world of my consciousness. Monologue is finalized and deaf to other's response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any force. Monologue manages without the other, and therefore to some degree materializes all reality. Monologue pretends to be the ultimate word. It closes down the represented world and represented persons (Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984, p. 292-293).

Bakhtin saw monologism as a way of silencing the others rather than recognizing them. Monologism suppresses the voices of those that could be active participants in a conversation. The conversation suffers as a result. By contrast, new texts, meanings, and identities are constructed in the production of Thirdness that results from interactive, dialogic processes (Kostogriz, 2004).

This cultural learning is exactly what can occur in a world language classroom when educators structure curriculum, instruction and assessment to include deep cultural knowledge and skills. When educators present culture with depth and breadth, they are able to foster multi-faceted, positive dispositions toward the target culture(s) and its people. Through cultural comparison, students begin to see their home culture through the perspective of the other. When the exploration of the cultures is authentic, the comparisons/dialogue that students imagine between themselves and the target culture(s) are powerful. Not unlike the one-sided conversation that Bakhtin imagined in which the second speaker was present invisibly, saying, “His words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining effect on the present and visible worlds of the first speaker. We sense that this is a conversation...of the most intense kind, for each present uttered word responds and reacts with its every fiber to the invisible speaker...(Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984, p. 197)” Apart from discussions on culture as the sum of phenomena are those which focus on cultural totality (Bakhtin et. al., 1986). In world language classrooms, concerned with cultural authenticity and competency, educators often employ authentic texts as a part of their teaching of culture grounded in language.
Certainly “[l]iterature is an inseparable part of the totality of culture and cannot be studied outside the total cultural context...The literary process is a part of the cultural process and cannot be torn away from it. (Bakhtin, et. al. 1986, p. 140)” Perhaps, this is what Justice Sonia Sotomayor was referring to when she described her experience as an avid mystery reader of novels set in foreign countries. In her interview with NPR she stated that she loved reading these novels in particular, because she would learn about those cultures saying, “So I read mysteries about South Africa, and I really understood apartheid not from the history books I was reading in college but learning about the impact of it on people from the descriptors in these series of books (Totenberg, 2013).” If one broadens the definition of literature in the same way that many have broadened the definition of texts and then considers Bakhtin’s words regarding literature and the totality of culture, one may consider how cultural products like currency, flags, music and signage could be sources of deep cultural knowledge accessible to language learners at even the novice levels. When educators consider these types of texts they create opportunities for students to explore small “c” culture in context, thus comparing their everyday experiences with that of the target culture(s). While educators could never hope to know everything about a culture, providing students with these glimpses into the target culture(s) and modeling desirable behaviors and attitudes towards the target culture(s) and culture learning, they can hope to empower their students to begin their own explorations of the boundless universe of literature and culture. Despite the natural relationship of language, culture, thought and literature, language educators do not automatically intertwine them in their pedagogies. For cultural learning to be forefront in the world language classroom an integration of culture goals into the materials, audiences, tasks, and evidence used in classroom practices is essential (Robinson, 1981).

Another example.

In revamping a “Mercado” (shopping) themed unit in which students had learned to bargain in a market place, a colleague of mine located video clips on YouTûbe including one that proved incredibly valuable because it showcased authentic interactions in a marketplace in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Previously, teachers, who were not native Spanish speakers, had taught this unit by modeling vocabulary and then providing a list of terms and expressions to students from a textbook with a related unit theme. After providing this input, students were asked to create marketplace skits. This time teachers worked collaboratively to dissect the video clips and pull out useful, true to life expressions. Additionally, teachers called on their own experiences and added other useful expressions. These expressions were taught through input using TPR, TPRS, SMART Board activities, presentation slides, and props. Teachers applied the three notions of design, so that students could create patterns of meaning from the multi-literacies around them. The first notion of design is available design. Available design refers to the use of a source/model text from which information, ideas, and patterns of language can be derived. The teachers provided available designs that included...
the grammars of language, various semiotic systems, and film, photography and gesture (Sánchez, 2014). The videos served as available designs and held a central role in these lessons. This time when students created their skits they were able to draw on these available designs to design. Design is the second notion of design and describes the process of using the existing to create the new. The finished products or the redesigned were skits that sounded true to life and were not only grammatically correct, but pragmatically correct as well. The skits were followed by interpersonal assessments that were equally impressive and by the end of this unit it was clear that students knew how, when, and why to say what to whom in the context of a Mercado.

Explore Cultures

We must understand that we are all unique cultural beings and that we are all ethnic. “Culture is a fluctuating embodiment of a group’s products, practices and perspectives. Inseparable from language, culture is also impacted by issues of power as it can be used to marginalize or privilege (Muirhead, 2009).” Over the last 75 years, many researchers have worked to identify cultural dimensions to explain the ways that cultures differ (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Hofstede, 1981; Hofstede & Bond, 1984; Triandis, 1995) Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) devised a list of six cultural dimensions:

1. The nature of people (good, bad, or mixed)
2. The person's relationship to nature (dominant, in harmony, or subjugated)
3. The person's relationship to others (lineal, collateral, or individualist)
4. The modality of human activity (doing, being, or containing)
5. The temporal focus of human activity (future, present, or past)
6. The conception of space (private, public, or mixed).

Edward T. Hall (1976) first discussed one particular dimension in his seminal work, Beyond Culture. He articulated a spectrum of cultures ranking them from high-context to low-context. His work illustrated how communication in high context cultures is implied and allusive. Communication is tailored for those within the culture. Much meaning can be conveyed with only a few words, because those inside the culture share experiences and expectations which they rely on to make meaning. Japanese culture is one such example. The communication style in Japan is merely hinting to outsiders who may not have enough shared cultural experience to decode all that is implied in a conversation by the context; whereas, the communication style in low-context cultures, like the German Swiss culture is explicit and straightforward. Single words hold less significance in low context cultures and outsiders have little trouble understanding what is being communicated because the language used is usually unequivocal and precise. Hofstede (1984) studied IBM employees in 53 countries, identifying four original dimensions of culture: individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty tolerance avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. Later, Hofstede and Bond (1984) collaborated to add another dimension that they called Confucian dynamism, which primarily was concerned with the conflict between long-term orientation
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(persistence, value placed on status) and short-term orientation (personal stability, high regard for truth). Many educators, professional trainers, and authors have created lists of cultural values that make it easier to compare cultures (Beamer & Valentine, 2000). Some researchers have critiqued Hofstede’s work. Indeed, whenever one makes generalizations about cultural dimensions/perspectives, there needs to be recognition that—although cultural differences may appear to be enormous, there is a common basic culture of all humanity throughout history (Allik, 2005). This cultural unity is partially founded on the psychic unity of all people. From culture to culture, people show remarkably similar distributions of personality types (Allik, 2005). In addition, the recognition that not all individuals follow all cultural patterns of a larger group and the distinction between a cultural generalization and a stereotype are an important part of a discussion of cultural norms and perspectives. Educators and students must be careful not to apply these cultural values too broadly. In our global society, characterizing people in a given country as being a certain way has become increasingly complex (Livermore, 2013). Nevertheless, using cultural dimensions can provide a useful framework for educators to discuss those perspectives (Livermore, 2013).

Building CQ.

In his discussion of Cultural Intelligence (CQ), David Livermore (2013) explains how common sense and social intelligence may be a wonderful aid in many cross-cultural situations, but when stressed these attributes alone are not enough to navigate cultural differences. Livermore describes recurring characteristics and skills that the “culturally intelligent” possess. CQ or global competence is something that anyone can develop and improve (Livermore, 2013, need page number ).

In order to build CQ, Livermore (2013) suggests assessing and working to improve each of the following CQ capabilities: Drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. One may note the similarities to Hunter’s model of Global Competence and Deardorff’s model of Intercultural Competence. Like Hunter and Deardorff, Livermore includes both internal and external aspects of global competence; the internal in the case of CQ capabilities being drive, knowledge, and strategy, and the external being action. Individuals with high CQ drive are highly motivated to adapt interculturally. An individual can have a high CQ drive but lack understanding about how cultures are similar and different. This second capability of CQ is referred to as CQ knowledge. Even with the proper knowledge, individuals with high levels of CQ or Global Competence will be metacognitively aware of their multicultural interactions—this capability is referred to as CQ Strategy. Lastly, CQ Action refers to the degree to which individuals can draw upon a repertoire of behaviors and skills by adapting their verbal and nonverbal actions (knowing when and how to say what to whom). If the ordering of these capabilities seems intuitive, there is a natural explanation. Both Deardorff (2011) and Livermore (2013) refer to similar lists of capabilities as processes developed in this specific order. Both educators and students may need to self-assess how developed they
are on each of these 4 CQ capabilities in order to identify an area in which to focus their attentions to building their CQ, or overall level of global competence.

**Re-examining cultural perspectives.**

In addition to measuring development of CQ capabilities, Livermore (2013) also suggests that individuals assess their own personal orientations on ten cultural dimensions. Those same dimensions can be helpful in framing discussions on cultural perspectives in the classroom. Also, if students are aware of their own personal orientation on these cultural value dimensions, they will note that there will always be students in the room who have different personal orientations than that of the culture(s) to which they belong. Being aware of this within home culture(s) can help students to avoid stereotyping when discussing generalizations about the target culture’s perspectives. Consider each of the 10 cultural dimensions explained below. For several of them, examples of related products and practices are discussed (Note: This is a reverse process of what one would likely do in the classroom). The products and practices that are provided here are meant to show the relationships between the elements of the triad and illustrate the usefulness of these dimensions for understanding culture. In the classroom, teachers might ask, “What perspectives can be gained and products might exist from this practice?” or “What perspectives can be gained and what practices are associated with this product?”

1. **Identity: Individualist versus Collectivist**—the degree to which one’s identity is defined in terms of individual characteristics versus collective characteristics. Where a culture falls on this continuum between individualism and collectivism is its cultural perspective. The United States has been noted as possibly the most individualist culture in the world (Livermore, 2013). Consider the following photo of a United States cultural product (see Figure 4).

![Figure 4. Photo of a baby’s room. (Horton, 2014)](image-url)
What are the cultural practices associated with the baby’s nursery in the United States? Among middle class families in the United States, baby nurseries are standard. In the above picture the room has been customized for the baby. The family from the U.S. has taken great care to create an individualized, separate space for their new child. The child’s independence is established prior to his/her arrival (Carteret, 2013; Morelli, Rogoff, Oppenheim, & Goldsmith, 1992).

Now consider that the Chinese culture is considered to be the most collectivist in the world (Livermore, 2013). How would the cultural products and practices related to infant sleeping arrangements compare? In many collectivist cultures, co-sleeping is an unquestioned practice and having an infant sleep in another room is considered impractical culturally unacceptable (Carteret, 2013). The above picture would seem unthinkable to many from collectivist cultures.

2. Authority: Low versus high power distance—the degree to which members of a society are comfortable with inequality in power, influence, and wealth (Livermore, 2013).

Consider the cultural product of an e-mail from a principal to his staff. The e-mail reads:

I anticipate that about half of the north parking lot will be blocked off for the delivery of the new heating unit. We can also park in any open spaces at [the church across the street].

Thanks for your understanding.

Fred*

This cultural product reveals the cultural practice of bosses and employees referring to each other by first names. That practice reveals that the e-mail is from a culture with a low power distance. This e-mail is an actual exchange with equivalent substitutions made for identifying information from a school principal in the U.S. Although the United States has issues with discrimination and has large income disparities, acknowledging imbalances of power tends to make people from the U.S. uncomfortable (Livermore, 2013; Clearly Cultural, 2014). Whereas, in high power distance cultures like India or Mexico, differences in ranking are evident in dialogue between employers and employees. Calling a boss by a first name without a title and other linguistic markers of formal register would be unthinkable.

What happens when individuals from high and low power distance cultures interact if these differences are not known? Many different types of misunderstandings and awkward moments are possible. High power distance people in a low power distance cultures are likely to have a difficult time discerning how people relate to one another (Livermore, 2013). They may have trouble identifying who is in charge and may find the experience jarring. Likewise, low power distance people in high power distance cultures risk offending others by not following the rules of which they are unaware. They are also likely to find the systems blatantly unjust and rigid.
3. Risk: Low versus high uncertainty avoidance— is the degree to which most people within a culture tolerate risk when faced with uncertain, ambiguous circumstances (Livermore, 2013). The Japanese culture is said to be one of the most high uncertainty avoidance cultures on earth. Some have speculated that perhaps this avoidance may be due to the constant threat of natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and volcano eruptions (The Hofstede Centre, n.d.). However, the preparedness of the Japanese goes far beyond natural disasters. Everything is coordinated and rehearsed for maximum predictability. From birth to death, life is full of ceremonies and rituals. For example, every year Japanese schools conduct opening and closing ceremonies conducted in almost the exact same way throughout the country (The Hofstede Centre, n.d.). A related product might be school uniforms. Singapore is on the other end of the uncertainty avoidance dimension.

4. Achievement: Cooperative versus competitive—Cooperative cultures prioritize nurturing, supportive relationships while competitive cultures focus on achievement, success, and results. Hofstede (1984) called the cooperative dimension femininity and the competitive dimension masculinity. While researchers often talk about national cultures when discussing cultural dimensions, some studies have focused on how balancing diversity within an organization can encourage collaboration among work groups (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991). When looking at national cultures Thailand, Sweden, and Denmark are among the most cooperative Japan and the United States are among the most competitive cultures in the world (Livermore, 2013).

5. Time: Punctuality versus relationships— Cultures vary in their understandings of time. Some cultures are clock orientated (monochronic) and value punctuality and others are more relationally orientated (polychronic) and appear not to value punctuality. Consider the following cultural product (a birthday party invitation).

![Birthday Invitation](image)

**Figure 5. Birthday Invitation (2014)**
The invitation is from a monochronic culture and there is considerable evidence within the text to support that. Note that the party has a start and end time listed in addition to the term, “RSVP.” The difference between the start and end times is an hour and a half. In polychromic cultures, these time constraints and the RSVP may be considered too rigid. While many traditionally polychromic cultures have become more monochronic in the business world with regard to social obligations, polychronic traditional values prevail (Livermore, 2013).

The cultural orientations to time can also be observed in language (Biswas-Diener, 2013). Proverbs and slang expressions make excellent cultural products for examination. For example, in the U.S., people often use expressions like time is money, time flies, and I don’t have time for this. Whereas, in many eastern African countries people will call out “pole kazi” which more or less means—“work slowly.” In Trinidad people commonly say “Any time is Trinidad time.”

(6) Communication: Direct versus indirect—low versus high context, in a low-context culture speakers explain everything explicitly and directly. Very little emphasis is placed on using the context to interpret the meaning. They are direct. Cultures with this dimension can be found in North America and much of Western Europe. In high context cultures, communication is indirect and implicit. High context cultures can be found in much of the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America. When people from high context cultures do business with people from low context cultures there can often be conflict because people from low context cultures often rely on explicit contracts. People from high context cultures often think this signifies a lack of trust.

7. Lifestyle: Being versus doing—Should time be spent primarily on being productive, or is it more liberally dispersed across various obligations in life? There are many cultures that have “being” orientations (Livermore, 2013). These cultures are often more concerned with family and hobbies than work. They may be very productive, but there school and work calendars show significantly less hours taken up by scholastic or vocational pursuits. Norwegian culture offers one example of a culture with an expanding economy that has a being orientation (Livermore, 2013). Other cultures have high doing orientations. People in doing cultures often log a significant amount of time at work or school. Career often takes precedence over other areas of life and leisure is often seen as a vice. Cultural products/practices that could be discussed around this dimension include smart phones, drive-through restaurants, awards and making introductions.

8. Rules: Particulist versus Universalist—the dilemma between obligation to rules and laws versus obligation to relationships. This dimension relates to how people judge human behavior (Livermore, 2013). Universalist cultures expect that the rules are uniform and apply equally to everyone; whereas, particulist cultures believe that the rules may need to change depending on specific circumstances. One common example of particulist culture at work is haggling/bargaining over an item at a market place. Oftentimes the price set for the tourist is different than the price set for the neighbor. People of particulist cultures do not view this
marketplace behavior as unfair, but people from universalist cultures are often offended when they learn that there are not fixed prices for merchandise.

9. Expressiveness: Neutral versus affective—is the way we express emotion—not whether we feel emotion (Livermore, 2013). Highly affective cultures include Poland, Italy, France, Spain, and countries in Latin America while more neutral cultures include the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland, Germany and most Asian cultures.

10. Social norms: Tight versus loose—According to Livermore (2013) two key components form the construct of tight versus loose: the strength of social norms and the strength of sanctioning (or the amount of tolerance for deviance from those norms). Tight cultures tend to be isolated and homogenous and value preserving their oneness. Diverse cultures tend to be loose and more accepting of differences. Tight cultures can have strict penalties for non-conformity. People in loose cultures often cannot understand why people in tight cultures feel as they do and can be outraged. Likewise people in tight cultures are often morally offended by the variations in behavior that loose cultures view as acceptable. Anglo cultures tend to be loose versus Japanese and Saudi Arabian cultures which are tight.

Transform Lives

Learning languages authentically by using materials, audiences, tasks, and evidence that are true to life and culturally valid creates many of the circumstances necessary for students to develop global competence. Given the process that global competence develops through improving pragmatics is not enough to label individuals globally competent. Globally competent individuals must not only adopt the mindset of linguists but also the mindset of anthropologists. They must be able to observe cultural products and practices and suspend judgment. Exploring cultures in the context of a language class is important. Culture should be the driving force of the curriculum. Articulating clearly how the triad of culture works and developing understandings of the cultural dimensions through which people can differ, provides a way to think and talk about culture. All of this instruction—all of these experiences—can foster global competence, but the true test of globally competent individuals relates to their intercultural behaviors. Transformative pedagogy is not transformative because of how it changes individual students; rather, transformative pedagogy is transformative because of how it empowers individuals to transform the circumstances that around them no matter where they find themselves.

Using the matrix.

The Global Competent Matrices have four clear objectives for students in each content area. Students should be able to investigate the world, recognize cultural perspectives, communicate ideas and take action (Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). The first three of these objectives are easily accomplished in most language classes simply by doing a thorough job in creating units that address our standards. The
last of these, take action, is the particular part of the matrix that teachers may need to more carefully consider.

The overarching descriptor of take action reads, “Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011, p. 8).” In order for students to be able to accomplish this task our units must boldly address some of the most pressing issues of our time. We cannot be afraid to introduce contemporary world problems into our curriculum. The Matrix further articulates what this objective looks like in a world language classroom by listing 4 more specific ways to take action.

The first of these states, “Use their native and studied languages and culture to identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to improve conditions.” Educators addressing this objective would be fully integrating the 5 C’s of Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities in their planning. Requiring students to access articles from a variety of sources across languages to support their claims and explain their reasoning is important. The recognitions that important ideas are conveyed in languages other than English and that people from other cultures may think differently about an issue are central to being able to propose feasible solutions to world problems.

The second objective states, “Use linguistic and cultural knowledge to assess options and plan actions, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives, and potential consequences.” This objective is cross-curricular, students need to provide evidence that they can research the history of an issue from more than one cultural perspective, think critically, and make predictions about the ramifications of choosing one way over another.

The third objective reads, “Use their native and studied languages and cross-cultural knowledge to act personally and collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to sustainable improvement and assess the impact of the action.” Ideally for this standard to become a reality, educators need to create opportunities for students to collaborate with other students in other classrooms around the world. There is a power dynamic that cannot be ignored (Freire, 1993). Our students need to believe that they are capable of contributing to solutions to big problems, but they need to believe this equally strongly about people from other cultures. Unfortunately there is a predominant sense of American dominance in world affairs and that combined with White privilege, provides many of our students with a false sense of their role as “savior” in world affairs (McIntosh, 1993). Perhaps, one of the most effective ways to combat this is to share the ideas of others from other cultural backgrounds in ways that highlight rather than mask from whom the ideas originated.

The fourth objective states “Reflect on how proficiency in more than one language contributes to their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally.” In this objective the communities’ standard is central. We want our students to use the language in its natural context. Only in doing so, will they have the experience of realizing how their studied language connects them to people and global concerns in a different way than their native language(s) do. Not all learning needs to happen in the classroom. Rethinking homework, so that students
have experiences outside the classroom that they could not have within it, may be one way to address this issue.

**Conclusion**

Global competence is a key to success in today's world. Nearly every profession has some literature devoted to how to better foster global competence within its professional community. Because of the unique relationship between global competence and cultural understanding and the equally strong relationship between languages and cultures, world language teachers are uniquely positioned to become leaders in their organizations with respect to fostering global competence among students. Teachers can foster global competence in their students by empowering them to learn languages in pragmatically correct ways, explore cultures with an emphasis on understanding cultural perspectives from product and practices, and by transforming lives by creating opportunities for students to take action and interact with speakers of their studied languages in natural contexts.

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