

**Developing Globally Competent Teachers through International  
Teacher Education: A Case Study**

A Thesis

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## DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

### **Abstract**

As the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and the cultural, ethnic, language and religious diversity increases in the Canadian education system, teacher education programs in Canada as well as in countries around the globe are challenged with the task of developing teachers' global competency for teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Through understanding five pre-service teachers' participation in an internationally themed teacher preparation program, this hermeneutic case study explored how pre-service teachers conceptualized and developed global competencies. Attending to the dynamics of global educators' identity formation, this study revealed key promising program structure and practices in developing globally competent educators. Recommendations for teacher education programs, teacher educators and future research were included in this study. This study provides new insights into how to transform conventional teacher preparation programs and effectively facilitate the development of teachers' global competencies and their identity as global educators.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

Teacher education programs have a responsibility to prepare new teachers to be successful and competent professionals. This is normally achieved by developing each pre-service teacher's knowledge of teaching, their knowledge of subject content and their skills as educators. The classroom context that new teachers must be prepared for is dynamic, and has seen significant changes over the years. One particular influence that is having a very profound impact on the teaching profession is the phenomenon of increased global interconnectedness. In a world where people and information travel the globe at a speed not experienced in previous generations, there is a clear motivation for education to support students in their development of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective participation in an increasingly interconnected world characterized by cultural pluralism (Merryfield, 1994). Zhao (2010) notes that globalization is one of the most powerful forces that will shape the future, and that is a critical consideration in the future-oriented business of teacher education. To successfully address the global influence on local education, teacher education needs to be considered in a global context (Bates, 2008).

The purpose of this study is to explore how pre-service teachers conceptualize and develop global competency through participation in an internationally themed teacher training program. The study is focused on investigating how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competencies through the course of a teacher training program and how the learning and experiences within the program support the development of global competencies.

With Canadian classrooms becoming increasingly diverse with respect to the ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students within them, and with the teaching profession becoming an increasingly global profession with Canadian trained teachers beginning their careers in countries all over the world, the need to prepare new teachers to thrive in this globalized environment is critical. Teachers need to have the skills and understanding to address diversity and have a firm understanding of the cultural identities of their students as well as of themselves. Teachers must also be prepared for the demands imposed by globalization so that they are competent to guide their students to explore issues of global and local importance within and beyond the curriculum and to prepare students for global citizenship and their role in an interconnected and interdependent world.

The interactions and relationships that teachers have within their profession are not limited to teacher-student. Teachers function in a profession that is influenced by numerous relationships, including those with parents, with other teachers in their schools, and with school administration, to name some of the more obvious. As with the increasing diversity that is being seen in today's classrooms, the staff room is also a place of growing diversity and varied perspectives. The interactions that teachers have in a professional setting characterized by the type of diversity noted previously, can be more effective when teachers have a global perspective and an appreciation of the cultural identities of their colleagues. The teacher's world is not one of universal outlook and background, but is a place that reflects the increased globalization within the student body and teaching staff as well as the general interconnectedness with the rest of the world which requires, among teachers, a level of global competency that ensures a preparedness to successfully navigate this dynamic profession.

In an age of globalization, the “success” of teaching is often measured in making comparisons to other nations on standardized testing results. International testing is often grounded in student performance in subjects that can be evaluated and easily compared across educational systems (Stack, 2006). Many policy makers see these results as insights into the preparedness and competitiveness of their students, and the results drive educational reforms that emphasise skills that address the requirements of the standardized tests rather than the social, political and economic realities of the age of globalization. Some would challenge this thinking with the recommendation that, in order to support the development of globally competitive citizens, an educational system needs to provide opportunities to develop creativity, critical-thinking, entrepreneurship and global competencies (Zhao, 2010), not to simply produce test-takers who outperform their international peers.

There are few teacher training programs that explicitly address the goal of preparing pre-service teachers to be global educators and many teachers enter the profession with insufficient experience or training to enable them to bring a global perspective to their teaching (Reimer & McLean, 2009). Walters, Garii and Walters (2009) note that North American public school teachers typically come from primarily white middle-class backgrounds, and that pre-service teachers’ professional identities are often based on their own secondary school experience and grounded in the cultural norms of that context. The perpetuation of this conventional teacher identity model may reinforce narrow traditional school norms and sustain a general lack of global perspective in the teaching profession (Bates, 2008; Santoro & Allard, 2005).

The importance of local context is not lost in the discussion of the growing influences of globalization on education, with cautions against globalizing at the expense of local needs and

context (Zhao, 2010). That said, it would be a disservice to education to only consider local context when it is evident that citizens, the products of a local education system, must be able to function and compete beyond local borders, particularly as the rest of the world becomes part of that new local context. Local education systems need to consider themselves global enterprises as their influence reaches beyond traditional boundaries and there is a need for educators to embrace “glocality”, that intersection of the global and local (Goddard, 2005; Zhao, 2010). The need for a global perspective in education is not predicated on the need to discard the traditional local context, but for education to take notice that the rest of the world matters (Britzman, 2000). This need seeks an effective way to address global awareness through creative and insightful teacher education programs that do not simply perpetuate the norms of the past.

### **Research Context**

This study was conducted in the Specialization in International Education (SIE) program at the Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI). The Specialization in International Education at UPEI is a unique concentration within the Bachelor of Education program, with a mission to develop students’ sensitivity to cultural diversity and to increase their understanding of global issues, so that their teaching is infused with a global perspective and they are better prepared to teach in other countries or in diverse cultural settings (<http://education.upei.ca/international>). Pre-service teachers in this program have various educational and professional backgrounds and come from different parts of Atlantic Canada as well as from other regions of the country. This program has been delivered by the Faculty of Education since 1998, and is characterised by completion of required internationally focused courses as well as participation in an overseas teaching practicum. Along with this prescribed

program structure, participants engage in a fundraising effort to support the cost of the travel requirement of the program, they also participate in a collaborative preparation process through their final year of their Bachelor of Education degree, to ensure that all SIE program participants are ready for the capstone overseas teaching placement. This program and its structure provides a relevant training environment dedicated to the concept of global education which is grounded in theory and guided by practice. It therefore serves as a very good context in which to examine pre-service teacher's conceptualization of global competency and to study the process of their identity development as global educators.

### **Research Autobiography**

As a result of my own participation in the Specialization in International Education program in 1998-1999, and the subsequent development of a career that has had an international education focus, I had the opportunity to reflect on my own experience as I explored the research questions for this study. My own interests in global education lead me to seek out work opportunities with an international theme, with each one in post-secondary education. Although interest may have led to seeking work in the international field, it was the competencies and skills that I developed through participation in the SIE program that were critical component which supported my securing of each position and being effective in each role. Skills in intercultural communication and understanding, global awareness, and an understanding of international education systems were a few of the competencies that provided a solid professional foundation on which to build my career in the international education field. This skills development and realization that my professional role and identity were growing beyond the framework of regional boundaries also lead me to want to formally explore this topic further.

The SIE program had an influence on my professional identity development and my concept of international education and global competency. This awareness of the program's impact on my own professional pathway helped me to consider the questions that guide this study so that there may be greater understanding of the impact of such a program on the students who participate in it and the changes they experience as they develop as global educators.

Growing up in rural Prince Edward Island, with public school experiences that were reflective of the time and the place, provided little in the way of exposure to global perspectives or cultural diversity. My educational journey was one dictated by geography, and the scale of public education in a rural region of a rural province. Although my reflections on my public education indicate a lack of exposure to diversity or global perspectives, things that I value, it is still an educational history I am proud of and hold as a significant influence on the person I am today. I began my formal education at 4 years of age in a small community-based kindergarten program, which I participated in as a 4 year-old and as a 5 year-old. Elementary school began in a one-room all-grades (1 through 4) school in my home community, but by second grade, I moved on to a more consolidated elementary school in a neighboring community. This elementary experience was still within a small community based school. My transitional step from elementary to junior high school, was again reflective of a rural structure, with only two grades (7 and 8) and two classrooms in the junior high I attended. Remaining in a family of rural schools, the move to high school continued to echo both scale (graduating class of 28) and lack of cultural diversity (almost exclusively white, Western-European descent) of the community that I was educated in. This creates a picture of an educational experience that lacked the richness of cultural diversity, one that would perpetuate parochialism and lead to a narrow

perspective of the world. There may be some truth in that assessment, however this was a reflection of place and time, and likely not all that different from rural education experiences (maybe even some urban ones) around the world. With that context in mind, in reflecting on my perception of my educational history, I never saw anything missing and was always proud of my rural roots and strong sense of community and place that developed out of that experience.

This is an educational context that is not as common any longer, and even as I began to move on to post-secondary education, there was a change happening in the world, and in me. By the time I needed to determine my post-secondary options during my senior year of high school, I had a growing desire for education in a different context and scale. I also had a desire to gain some anonymity and the experience of a new place and new perspectives. My choice to attend Dalhousie University was not a tremendous risk-taking venture, but it did give me the opportunity to be part of an educational community that reflected greater local, national and international diversity among the student body and the faculty, as well as the experience of living in a city that was more cosmopolitan than the rural community that I had grown up in. Although the nature of my studies (Bachelor of Science) did not necessarily guide me to be more globally minded or to gain global perspectives, I did begin to develop a greater interest in experiencing more of the world. At the end of my degree, I volunteered with an international youth organization (Youth Challenge International) to spend 4 months in Costa Rica working on a community development project. I worked in the most rural location available to participants on this project; probably a reflection of my connection to rural life, albeit in a completely new cultural context. The project involved a close partnership with the rural community I lived in, and saw the successful construction of a school for the children that lived in the broader agrarian

community. This was a formative experience in my life, and I believe it solidified my interest in gaining greater perspective into the diversity that the world had to offer. I had the opportunity to live and work with peers from Canada and Australia, and to work and live alongside Costa Ricans, in their home community. Although I always had a strong sense of who I was and where I came from, this experience forced me to expand my identity and my perspective of the world. Not only was I learning about another country and the cultures of the people who lived there, I was also redefining myself, with new and expanding reference points for my interconnectedness with the world, my influence on it and vice versa. I never considered myself as having a narrow view or closed mind, but this experience opened my mind in a new and significantly real way. I was not simply gaining knowledge or adding to the list of places visited; I was experiencing a fundamental shift in my understanding of other people, other cultures and myself through this international experience. I developed a greater appreciation for communication, and cross-cultural understanding, not only in the context of a foreign language, but in the recognition of another's culture and perspective and how that influences the sharing of experiences.

After a few years of feeding my own interests for travel and participation in activities that gave me the sorts of opportunities I was looking for at the time (outdoor adventure travel, primarily), I made the decision to return to university. This time, my choice of school and program was not so geographically influenced, although somewhat serendipitous, but was based on my growing interest in gaining greater global perspective and understanding. This interest was certainly sparked by my experience in Costa Rica, however I always had an underlying motivation for new experiences, and the experiences I was most intrigued with at this stage were international in nature. I chose to complete a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of

Prince Edward Island, and the primary reason for choosing this program was the option of a newly formed Specialization in International Education. After some uncertainty about what the next step in my education would be, I thought that a teaching degree was a pathway to satisfy some of my professional goals, and the Specialization in International Education was an important part of meeting those goals while appealing to an interest that I wanted to explore further. At the beginning of the two-year program, I was aware that the Specialization was concentrated in the second year of the program, however I became involved in a Faculty activity that gave me the opportunity to spend my first-year final practicum in another country (two countries actually – Finland and Sweden). In my second year, I enrolled in the required elective courses for the Specialization, and began to make plans for my second overseas teaching experience (Iceland). I found the course-work very valuable. It provided me with foundational knowledge about education in international contexts and instilled a deeper understanding of the world, its interconnectedness and my personal and professional position within it. The course-work also challenged my understandings of education and the contexts in which education occurs. Although the course work was a critical component of the program, much of my focus related to the Specialization seemed to pivot around the preparation for, and the participation in, the overseas teaching placement. This did not diminish the importance of the course-work, but perhaps the excitement and novelty of the overseas opportunity overshadowed the theoretical components, somewhat. In reflecting upon how the program (SIE) impacted my own professional identity development, I believe it was critical in my continued pursuit of a profession that had an international theme, but began to move away from the idea of beginning my career as a classroom teacher. I did not become disenfranchised with teaching or education,

but did consider that there may be other options other than classroom teaching, particularly because my interest in international aspects of education began to grow. I started to recognize other skills and competencies that I wanted to develop. I wanted to understand more about the world and the dynamics of the many interactions that occur between borders and between cultures. I wanted to have other meaningful international experiences that continued to expose me to varied cultural norms and that challenged my own perspectives and understanding of the world, locally and globally.

By the end of the Bachelor of Education program, I was still uncertain about my next professional step, but did not worry about it immediately, as I was making another transition in life; getting married and moving to a new city. The desire to begin my career as I entered this next phase of my life seemed the number one priority once settled, but I still did not feel like classroom teaching was going to be my pathway. I reflected back to the elements of the Specialization in International Education that originally drew me to the program and that interested me most, and used those to guide my professional roadmap. I found opportunities to work in international comparative educational research, in overseas development and contract training projects, and in management of an international post-secondary provincial strategy over the course of my first few years after graduation. These opportunities, guided by my overriding interest in the international aspects of education (post-secondary in these cases), continued to steer me toward opportunities that allowed me to remain engaged in international education themed professions, which have continued on in my professional life. Although becoming a classroom teacher seemed the most obvious broad identity that should develop within a Bachelor of Education student, it was not the case for me, but there is no question that my professional

identity development was impacted considerably by the experience and learning gained within the Specialization in International Education and that it provided the foundation for an enriching professional journey. My current role as Assistant Registrar at the University of Prince Edward Island gives me the opportunity to continue to apply and develop global competencies as I manage processes and services that impact international students, domestic students seeking international experiences, as well as working daily with students and colleagues in global contexts related to the management and delivery of post-secondary education. Much of this work occurs in the local context of the institution, but is consistently influenced by the global nature of the university environment.

The study that I embarked upon as the thesis of my Master of Education program is one that is rooted in my own educational experiences, particularly as a participant in the very program I am using as a study case, and reflects my interest in how a pre-service teacher constructs an identity to be a global educator, how that identity development is impacted by individual student histories, and the learning and experiential opportunities made available through their participation in the Specialization in International Education to build global competencies. It was this program that created a foundation for me to establish my own personal and professional identity, and I am interested to explore and understand this process and its impact on pre-service teachers, further.

### **Research Purpose and Questions**

The purposes of this study were to (1) examine how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency and (2) to identify how their global competencies were developed through

participation in a globally focused teacher training program, by examining their lived experiences. The study examines the meaning of global competency and the promising practices for developing globally competent teachers.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency?
2. How does the Specialization in International Education program generate space and possibility for pre-service teachers to develop global competency?
3. How does the experience of developing global competencies impact pre-service teachers in the Specialization in International Education program?

The results of this study will support a broader understanding of the experience of pre-service teachers as they engage in a teacher education program that is globally focused. The understanding developed through the study can play a critical role in evaluating teacher education programs and the impact and importance that global competency plays in the training of future teachers.

### **Significance of the Study**

Although much has been written on the importance of ensuring that teachers enter their profession globally competent in order to be successful educators in what has become an increasingly global profession, there is not a significant amount of research focused on pre-service teachers' experiences of becoming globally competent teachers, nor the effectiveness of programs like the SIE program on the development of teachers' global competency. This study provides new insights into effective methods of teacher training as well as further understanding

into the process of developing teachers' global competencies, and what that means to a pre-service teacher who is entering a new stage in the process of professional identity development. Global competency is seen as an important characteristic for all productive citizens to have in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As teachers have significant influence on the development of the next generation of community, national and world leaders, it is critical to develop a deeper understanding of the contributing factors and practices of teachers' identity as globally competent educators.

### **Summary**

The teaching profession is being significantly impacted by a phenomenon considered to be one of the most influential factors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, globalization. Teachers need to be able to navigate this new reality and guide students toward success in this global context. The teaching profession in North America is grounded in tradition and cultural norms that perpetuate a conventional professional identity that generally lacks a global perspective. This study aims to explore how a teacher training program can support the development of global competencies in pre-service teachers as well as how they intellectualize and assimilate the concepts of global competency through an internationally themed program of study.

In this chapter, I have introduced the purpose and context of the study, presented my research autobiography, and stated the research purpose and questions. In Chapter 2, I shall present the literature that provides a scholarly background and conceptual framework for concepts and themes explored in this study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

There has been significant scholarly activity over the past decade exploring the concept of global education and how to develop globally competent teachers through teacher training programs. Global education and global competency research is informed by a rich history of work that is grounded in theory and supported through practical applications. The sources cited in this study come from work being done in many different countries, and reflect the importance of this topic in teacher training in many parts of the world. Although this study was conducted in a Canadian teacher education context, the experiences and conclusions of scholars from other parts of the world offer important perspectives to consider in exploring this emerging theme.

This chapter provides theoretical background and conceptual frameworks for global educators, together with a description of global competencies and identity development in the context of the development of pre-service teachers. Because the regional context has significant impact on this study and its participants, a review of the research context is also provided in this chapter. The literature review provides necessary background to help guide the study's framework and support the process of answering the key research questions.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study is grounded in a conceptual framework that centers on educators' global competency. The concept of global competency, its impacts and how educators develop as global educators has been explored and described by many authors. The work of Delvin-Foltz (2010), Merryfield (1994, 2008), Pike (2000), Santoro (2009) and Zhao (2010) has been used as

the basis for a conceptual framework to guide this study. In summary, the list of competencies identified by this group of researchers has been categorized under the following themes; a greater global knowledge, a civic consciousness or sense of world citizenship, confidence and self-efficacy, an increase in intercultural competency, and a greater adaptability to the range of social and cultural norms that exist in a pluralistic global context. The questions that were developed to guide the data collection process for this study and the analysis that was used in reviewing and categorizing the responses to questions were considered within this framework of global competency development.

### **The Need for Global Educators**

The meaning of global educator is contested in the field of international teacher education. For the purposes of this study, global educator is defined as a teacher who has developed global perspective and teaching skills as a result of participation in an internationally focused teacher training program, such as the Specialization in International Education. An itemization of specific skills or competencies may reflect the types of competencies noted in the literature of this topic, but it is important to also see these competencies as internalized elements of teachers' identities. How these competencies are acquired will be further explored in the next section of this literature review.

Globally competent educators are described by Delvin-Foltz (2010), Merryfield (1994, 2008), Pike (2000), Santoro (2009) and Zhao (2010) as those who demonstrate specific attributes, including:

- Greater global knowledge - a deepened sense of problems that impact the entire planet as well as a strong sense of global dynamics and the influences that an

individual's actions can have on the rest of the world as well as the international dimensions of their subject matter.

- A civic consciousness or sense of world citizenship that engages individuals to consider their civic responsibilities beyond national borders and to infuse global perspectives into their teaching to ensure the well-being of their community, the nation and the planet.
- Confidence and self-efficacy which prepares teachers to address the challenges of bringing a global perspective to their local classrooms.
- An increase in intercultural competency and greater adaptability to the range of social and cultural norms that are faced in their classrooms, as well as an appreciation for multiple perspectives and an increased proficiency with cross-cultural communication skills.

Programs like the Specialization in International Education have particular goals, as outlined above (page 4). These goals are often reflected in the impact that they have on pre-service teachers, and the types of influence they have on those pre-service teachers, personally and professionally. Broadly, pre-service teachers who participate in these types of programs have been shown to gain greater global knowledge which is described as a deepened sense of problems that impact the entire planet as well as a strong sense of global dynamics and the influences that an individual's actions can have on the rest of the world (Merryfield, 1994, 2008; Pike, 2000). Along a similar theme, Pike (2000) and Merryfield (2008) also identify a civic consciousness or sense of world citizenship that develops in pre-service teachers who participate in globally oriented teacher training programs. This citizenship education engages individuals to

consider their civic responsibilities beyond national borders and to infuse global perspectives into their teaching to ensure the well-being of the nation and the planet. More practically, Guo (2013) outlines the dimensions of global citizenship education and how it can transcend subject matter and other teaching parameters, leading to authentic ways to see and connect with global issues in everyday teaching. This world citizenship can be seen as stewardship of the local and the global community through global education.

### **International Teaching and Global Competency**

Engaging in overseas teaching has been shown to impart a confidence and self-efficacy in pre-service teachers (Pike, 2000; Santoro, 2009; Walters, Garii & Walters, 2009), as they develop teaching skills in response to the challenge of a new cultural teaching context. This self-efficacy translates into confidence within teachers increasing the likelihood that they will bring a global perspective back to their local classrooms, and develop intercultural and professional competences, as well as becoming more adaptable to the range of social and cultural norms that are part of their classrooms (Pike, 2008; Rothwell, 2005).

One of the most important competencies that can be gained by pre-service teachers who engage in international teaching programs like the Specialization in International Education, is development of a stronger sense of self and of other (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Johnston, Carson, Richardson, & Donald, 2009; Santoro, 2009). Often, pre-service teachers' definition of themselves as teachers is based on their own secondary school experience and is a reinforcement of and perpetuation of traditional school norms (Bates, 2008; Santoro & Allard, 2005).

International experiences in pre-service teaching have been shown to broaden this perspective, and allow pre-service teachers to gain a deeper sense of their own cultural identity and to

understand that ethnicity and identity are not just descriptors of who they are, but that race, position and class impact both identity and classroom practice (Santoro, 2009; Santoro & Allard, 2005). Davis, Ramahlo, Beyerbach, and London (2008) describe the importance of pre-service teachers critically examining their own cultural backgrounds so that they are aware of how it impacts their teaching. This self-examination is supported by Johnston et al. (2009) who describe the importance of pre-service teachers internalizing their cultural identity so they are able to have a deeper engagement with the diversity they will experience in their classrooms. Santoro (2009) notes that knowledge of self and knowledge of other are mutually constitutive, and that without opportunities for reflection and direct engagement with culturally diverse student groups, knowledge of self and of other cannot fully develop or inform effective teaching practice.

The literature identifies that there is a close tie between knowledge of self and of other. Merryfield (2002, 2008) highlights the importance for global educators to gain a deeper understanding of other by confronting stereotypes, resisting oversimplification of other cultures and by being perspective conscious. Perspective consciousness is a state of appreciation for how our cultural beliefs, values and norms influence and shape our perception and interpretation of events and issues, and allow us to attempt an understanding of how individuals from different parts of the world may perceive events and issues differently (Merryfield, 2008). Santoro and Allard (2005) raise the question of how teacher education programs can effectively give pre-service teachers the skills to move beyond constructing the other as “exotic”, and to be aware of their own cultural position to allow them to negotiate a greater understanding of their students. This opportunity to deepen knowledge of self and other is something that is addressed in the structure of internationally focused teacher training programs, particularly those that promote

global competency as something that engages the whole person, professional and personal, not just the intellect (Flournoy, 1993). As with other aspects of the teaching profession, a personal and professional understanding of self is an important factor in the development of global competencies.

Global competency can also include the knowledge and skills that help people understand the “flat” and interconnected world in which they live, the skills to integrate across disciplinary domains to comprehend global affairs and events, and the intellect to create possibilities to address them. An additional global competency includes an attitude that makes it possible to interact peacefully, respectfully, and productively with fellow human beings from diverse geographies (Reimers, 2009). Global competencies are developed through an integration of skills and knowledge which reduce the distance between the concepts of personal and professional; local and global; and intellectual and emotional, reflecting the holistic and balanced nature of these competencies.

The global perspective and international awareness that is a valued outcome of globally focused teacher training programs (Merryfield, 2008; Pike, 2000; Walters et al., 2009) is seen to be truly effective when appropriately associated with local context. “Glocalisation” is a term that Goddard (2005) uses to describe the plurality of global education, in recognizing the simultaneous importance of both local and global values when preparing students for life in a more interconnected and culturally heterogeneous world, while maintaining local context and protecting regional culture and values. This balance of the plurality of global education supports the discovery of connections between local and global communities, without losing the understanding of the individual context of each of these communities (Flournoy, 1993). Globalization does not occur outside of the context of the local experience, and it is important to

recognize the importance of each perspective (global and local) independently, but also as a unified concept that is the basis of global education.

International mobility has been shown to be a powerful method for developing global citizens, but the value of “dwelling among diverse groups” has also been shown as an effective way to expose the non-mobile majority of individuals, to multiple cultural perspectives and to expand their worldview beyond their own cultural viewpoint (Killick, 2012). These global encounters of participation in overseas experiences or through membership in another cultural group, lead to the generation of global citizens with expanded perspectives and new global identities. Further to the consideration of the influential nature of overseas experiences, it has been recognised that there should be a level of skepticism when assessing participants’ self-declared transformation through study abroad, and that we cannot assume true learning or development because an individual sincerely claims it (Vande Berg, Paige & Lou, 2012). These are important considerations for a study exploring the impacts of participation in an internationally themed teacher training program on the development of global competencies, and offer context to the prospect that immersion does not necessarily lead to intercultural development.

### **Strategies of Developing Educators’ Global Competency**

Our collective understanding of economics, communication, security, cultural identity, citizenship, and the environment are changing rapidly, and this shift is presenting challenges to our youth, calling on education and those who deliver it, to provide powerful, relevant learning that will prepare today’s youth for the new global reality (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

Although some of the competencies noted already may not be exclusive to only teachers who have participated in globally focused teacher education programs, it has been demonstrated that there are a number of elements of teacher training programs that are important in effectively supporting the development of global educators. It is a combination of many elements that is seen as serving to prepare pre-service teachers to be global educators, with Pike (2008, p.98) noting that, “cross cultural experience, in itself, does not automatically result in intercultural understanding or an enlarged worldview”. Guo (2014) confirms that global citizenship is an approach to life which considers an individual’s global responsibility in everyday local activities and recognizes the importance of global education to prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century realities.

An important relationship to balance in a teacher education program is that between theoretical and practical. Where each is important in the teacher training process, it is clear that theoretical concepts are ineffectual without real world experiences (Johnston et al., 2009), and for theoretical knowledge to truly impact the development of pre-service teachers, it must be grounded in appropriate experiences (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006). This perspective is complemented by Walters et al. (2009) as they address the importance of theoretical knowledge as the basis for a successful international teaching experience. Achieving synergy between these two critical elements of a teacher training program requires careful balance and appropriate delivery of each component. This is a particularly important consideration in the delivery of teacher training that is focused on developing global educators, where the appropriate experiences that would support the development of global competencies are not mainstream and would normally be outside of traditional teacher education models.

In order for theory grounded in practice to be effective in developing globally competent educators, there must also be critical reflection (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Mwebi & Brigham, 2009; Santoro & Allard, 2005). For deeper understanding to occur and for permanent change to take place as a result of participation in international teaching experiences, there must be critical reflection on the experience and its context (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Walters et al., 2009). Without effective critical reflection, there is the risk that the experience is simply practice and does not lead to transformational change or construction of professional identity (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006), or that pre-service teachers will use the experience to justify previously held beliefs about the rest of the world and perpetuate a naive understanding of the differences that exist between countries and cultures around the world (Santoro, 2009). Effective critical reflection may occur at various stages of a teacher education program, but it is important to establish a formal capstone reflection process at the end of the program to ensure integration of experience and learning in a guided process (Walters et al., 2009).

The preparation of globally competent teachers must be based on an integrated approach that recognizes global learning as a component of all aspects of teacher development (NAFSA, 2012). Global competency is not a stand-alone skill that is added to the list of competing skills expected in new teachers.

### **Global Educators' Identity Development**

Teacher identity can be defined as the representation which teachers have of themselves as educators (Gohier, Chevrier & Anadon, 2007). There are many factors that can play a role in identity development, and the identity development of global educators is impacted by many possible influencers. Teachers represent themselves as professionals within a community of

professionals, however this collective representation is greatly influenced by individual and personal factors (Barty, 2004; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). There is a very close tie between personal and professional attributes when pre-service teachers describe themselves as teachers, and a clear interplay between internal (emotional) factors and external (contextual) factors is evident in the descriptions (Barty, 2004; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Because of many dynamic factors, including the impact of globalization, teachers live and work on “shifting social landscapes” (Clandinin, Downey & Huber, 2009, p. 142). The reality of this shifting landscape in which new teachers need to thrive, places an obligation on teacher educators to ensure that they are not perpetuating fixed identities for a fixed landscape in education, but are embracing the dynamic nature of social demographics and ensuring new teachers develop the competencies to flourish professionally and personally.

The development of teacher identity can be viewed as both product and process; as a voyage and a destination. Throughout a teacher’s career there is a dynamic interplay occurring between elements that influence their identity development; both predictable and the unknown. It is the balance and management of the relationship between connection and conflict that is critical in the effective development of teacher identity (Gohier et al., 2007). Connection occurs with the predictable and familiar aspects of teacher identity, those that have been experienced and fit traditional understanding. Conflict can emerge in developing identity in challenging contexts, such as international settings or under conditions that challenge preconceptions about teacher identity. The role of challenge is considered important in provoking identity change and development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). There are risks when teacher identity development takes place in the absence of conflict. If identity development occurs under traditional constructs it can further normalise a teacher identity of conformity (Barty, 2004). It is clear that current

teaching practice is not the same as the past, however many new teachers conceptualize their identity in relation to an idealised “archetype” leading to perpetuation of the professional status quo (Goddard & Foster, 2001). The experiences of individuals through their own schooling and through teacher training programs serve to influence the development of teacher identity, and it is important for teacher education programs to avoid “production” of new teachers in the mold of the traditional identity. Rather, teacher education programs must ensure that pre-service teachers have traditional norms challenged, and explore their own personal and cultural identities and the role these play in the development of their teacher identity (Lindsey, 2004). Pre-service teacher’s should be challenged to “(re)conceptualize” the teaching profession; to reflect on their own experiences and theoretical understandings and to construct a new paradigm of “teacher” (Goddard & Foster, 2001).

The process of becoming a teacher is complex, and should not be limited to specific social constructs, nor can it be tied to individual experience alone. Becoming a teacher involves many dynamic factors and is not restricted to a unitary view of the profession. Pre-service teachers who seek certainty and harmony in the journey to becoming a teacher miss the true nature of developing teacher identity. Pre-service teachers stand to gain more through the process of identity development by embracing the challenges that imperfection and incompleteness play in the teaching profession, then by adhering to the safety of the familiar (Trent, 2010).

Identity development has been studied and written about in many contexts. Although not specific to the teaching profession, the work of Wenger (1998) provides important insights into this broad field of identity development. Personal and professional identity development by

pre-service teachers can be considered in this framework and is a valuable perspective when considering the unique context of this development in a globally themed context.

Wenger (1998) defines identity through several succinct categories that provide an effective framework from which to consider the identity development process among pre-service teachers. He describes identity as something that is lived. It is a dynamic interplay of several factors, not simply a label or category. A teacher is a teacher because of a lifetime of learning and experiences leading to the profession of an educator. They are not a teacher because they have been labeled such because of the job they have.

Identity is a process that incorporates the past and the future into the meaning of the present. Pre-service teacher identity development is profoundly influenced by the lifetime of educational experiences of each individual and rooted in the traditional context of the profession that they learn about, experience and construct. Complementary to this traditionally rooted establishment of teacher identity is the new construct of educator that each pre-service teacher develops as a result of their view of the profession and its changing role as it responds to the changing context of education.

Identity is social as it manifests itself in experiences with a social context. This is a critical consideration in the development of teacher identity, as teaching is a profession with a fundamentally social context. Identity development occurs as a pivot between the individual and the social. In the case of pre-service teachers in a globally themed training program, the international context is the social context that can play a significant role in identity development as a global educator. Experiencing teaching in a global context, both theoretical and in practice, is critical in the establishment of this non-traditional teacher identity. As noted by Lerseth

(2013), pre-service teacher identity development has many complexities and influencers, including fulfilled expectations of what a teacher should be and affirmation of teaching philosophy and practice by a mentor. These elements of pre-service teacher identity development are made more complex when established in global settings with continuous challenges to preconceptions, expectations and understandings of what a teacher should be.

Ultimately, the goal of training teachers to be global educators is to facilitate the development of a professional identity through the layering of events of participation, which permits identity to transcend a simple self-image to the level of a definition of how one operates in a teaching context - in this case, as a global educator. The identity of global educator becomes more firmly established as a result of opportunity for practice and integration of practice at a personal level, further supporting the need for authentic experience. “Most of the researchers saw professional identity as an ongoing process of integration of the ‘personal’ and the ‘professional’ sides of becoming and being a teacher” (Beijaard, Paulien & Verloop, 2004, p. 113).

### **Global Education in Prince Edward Island**

Global education and the impacts of global competencies have been explored in the local context of Prince Edward Island through recent studies, which provides additional context to the significance of this study and the local realities of the teaching profession. In 2008, UNICEF Canada and the Prince Edward Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Desveaux & McAdam-Crisp, 2008) embarked on a needs assessment to explore training needs of teachers in recognition of a recent increase in the number of newcomers to the Province. Training requirements that were highlighted by this study included, raising awareness about the needs of newcomer children and youth, and providing support to teachers in the development of

cultural competencies within the context of global education. The significance of this study in a small jurisdiction like Prince Edward Island illustrates the close interplay between “global” and “local”. This was a study that aimed to increase discussions on how to coordinate global education opportunities, and recognized that professional development and connections to pre-service teacher education programs are critical in addressing the dynamic and increasingly global landscape of education in Prince Edward Island.

Another local level study, that considered teachers’ beliefs about global education in Prince Edward Island, provides additional local context and significance to this study. In 2008, Kandra Kaufield’s Master’s thesis set out to gain insight into teachers’ beliefs about global education. Themes examined in this study include; elementary school teachers’ beliefs about global education and how these beliefs were shaped; what topics teachers currently address in their classrooms that reflect a global perspective; and what are perceived obstacles in implementing global education in the classroom. This study provides a useful reflection on how a primarily rural area, that is not as multicultural as other regions of the country, views global education and its value. Kaufield’s (2008) study revealed an overall positive attitude toward the value of global education, however it noted perceived barriers to effective implementation of this aspect of education. Respondents in the study noted a lack of specific resources, a lack of knowledge about global education, and a lack of space within an elementary curriculum already dense with expected learning outcomes, as barriers to successfully addressing global education in their classrooms. Through the study a number of recommendations emerged, including the enhancement of curriculum development to include global connections, increased professional development for teachers in the area of global education, access to specific global education

resources, and a position within their Provincial Department of Education dedicated to the support of this educational initiative.

The results of the Kaufield (2008) study identify the perspectives of practicing teachers as they address global education. Although attitudes are positive about global education, it is referenced as something extra that needs to be learned, resourced and supported at a provincial level. These are valid responses, and serve as an interesting comparison to the perspectives of the pre-service teachers involved in this study as they gain a global perspective as part of their teacher identity development and as an integral part of their everyday practice as teachers. The consideration of place in the Kaufield (2008) study resonates with the current study as well, as it occurs in a region not often considered in global education research – a region that is relatively rural with limited, yet growing, multiculturalism. The Kaufield study considers reactions of teachers to the new global reality, while this study looks at the development of pre-service teachers to take action and embrace global education as an inherent part of their new profession.

### **Challenges and Issues in Teaching with Global Perspectives**

Although there is confirmation among teachers and pre-service teachers that there is value in bringing a global perspective to their classrooms (Robbins, Francis & Elliot, 2003), there are a number of barriers that teachers cite as impacting their ability to do so, including a lack of clarity of the concept of global education (Reimer & McLean, 2009) and a lack of confidence and competence to translate a positive attitude toward global education into effective classroom practice (Johnston et al., 2009; Robbins et al, 2003; Santoro, 2009). It is the goal of many teacher education programs to address these barriers through appropriate theoretical and experiential opportunities, to better prepare new teachers to be global educators (Pike, 2000;

Rothwell, 2005; Walters et al., 2009). The development of global educators is work that should strive to encourage pre-service teachers to explore their own cultural and personal identity as it is critical for deeper understanding of themselves (Santoro & Allard, 2005) and it should challenge the national constructs of teacher identity (Barty, 2004).

Further to the concept of the social formation of identity as described by Wenger (1998), it is critical to note the profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires formation of a community whose membership can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants. In the context of the identity of a global educator, there is a risk of losing that community of practice. Unlike Math Teachers, for example, where teacher identity may be connected to specific and traditional professional norms and where opportunities to feel part of that community of practice are prevalent, the global educator identity is not formally recognized within the education system, and thus opportunities to engage with a like-minded community are limited. Continued connection to a community of practice with a global focus may become further jeopardized as pre-service teachers move into traditional areas of the teaching profession. The professional identity of global educator is vulnerable, and will easily be lost without a more mainstream development of the community of practice within education.

### **Conclusion**

The literature presented in this review provides confirmation of value in training teachers to be globally competent, and outlines strategies to support the development of these competencies in pre-service teachers. The literature illustrates a relationship between the types of learning and experiences that are necessary to developing global competencies, and the

confidence and desire for new teachers to bring this global perspective to their classrooms.

Further study focused on programs like the Specialization in International Education (University of Prince Edward Island) and its impact on the development of pre-service teachers will allow deeper understanding of how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency and what that means to the development of their identity as global educators.

In this chapter I have outlined a theoretical background and conceptual framework of global educator, together with descriptions of global competency and teacher identity development through citations of scholarly work in this field. In Chapter 3 I shall outline the research methodology used to conduct this study.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

As this study attempted to examine how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency and how they develop global competencies through participation in an internationally focused teacher training program, a qualitative research design was adopted to fulfill this purpose. This chapter presents the rationale for a hermeneutic case study design, an analysis of the study context, the method and process of data collection, participants, the ethical consideration in the study and descriptions of how the data was analysed and interpreted. At the end of the chapter, an analysis of the limitations of this study is also presented.

### **Hermeneutic Case Study**

As this study is situated in the context of the Specialization in International Education (SIE) Program at UPEI a case study approach informed by hermeneutics was adopted as the research methodology to understand students' experiences in the unique context of an internationally-themed teacher training program. A hermeneutic approach was selected to ensure that a broad set of perspectives, unique to the study participants, were used to understand the unique conditions and lived experiences of these pre-service teachers (Guo, 2012). In-depth one-on-one personal interviews were used to gather data on the lived experiences, histories and perspectives of the pre-service teachers involved in this study. Open-ended questions were employed to evoke responses that are rich, descriptive, meaningful, and relevant to each participant. A case study design was used to conduct this research to provide a framework for data collection, analysis and reporting that appropriately considers the nature of the research and

the context within which the data is being collected. Yin (1994) notes that the purpose of a case study is to establish a framework for discussion and debate and, depending on the conditions of the research, it may be exploratory, descriptive and/or explanatory in nature. Case study design, while flexible in nature, provides strategies to ensure the rigour of such studies are in place (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Case studies are designed to ask “how” or “why” questions and are very effective in studying phenomenon in a contextual framework. This study aimed to explore how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency and to understand how those concepts develop within the context of this internationally-themed teacher training program.

The hermeneutic orientation of this study allowed for an interpretive research approach to the collection and analysis of the interview data. Hermeneutics focuses on understanding and interpretation, making it an effective method of inquiry for this study. Guo (2009) notes in her dissertation that, “Modern hermeneutics steps further than simple interpretation of the text. As practiced in social sciences, modern hermeneutics attempts to reveal understanding through text interpretation and involves recognition of sameness, place and belonging.” (p. 56). Hermeneutic theory is engaged with the question of what it means to understand, and is described by Byrne (1998) as a method of textual analysis that is an “artful” (p. 4) form of understanding and a process of exposing hidden meanings. As a tool for textual analysis, hermeneutics recognizes the influence that social, cultural and historic contexts play in interpretation. This study seeks to elicit meaning from participant responses and to gain a deeper understanding through hermeneutic analysis of the interview data.

This research project attempts to address issues of reliability through sound procedures in accordance with case study design. This study was designed with a protocol that guided the interview process, data collection process and the transcription of the data, so that the study could easily be repeated. Yin (1994) recommends approaching the question of reliability with a focus on creating a research process that is very operational, so that another researcher could repeat the procedure and arrive at the same results. This study was developed and implemented with this operational method in mind, but is balanced with the hermeneutic orientation by embracing the humanness of being, as described by Gadamer in Byrne (1998), through the dynamic nature of in-depth interviews and the contextual variables of each individual, their experiences and how they were expressed through the interview data.

It is important to consider that the results of a case study may be generalizable to theoretical propositions but not to populations. The method of generalization in this type of case study is not statistical. Case studies rely on analytic generalizations which strive to make results transferable to, as well as contribute to, a broader theory of a particular phenomenon (Yin, 1994). The case study methodology using a hermeneutic orientation is further supported by Kyburz-Graber (2004) as appropriate for the exploratory analysis of single phenomenon against the backdrop of their context as in this study, by asking how people act, why they do so, and how the observations of these actions can be explained. Case study methodology allows for the human experience to be central, as information is collected within the context of the participant's experience and allows for the storied accounts of research participants to be made, not found (Radley & Chamberlain, 2012).

### **Participant Sampling**

This study was conducted with a small representative group of five pre-service teachers enrolled in the Specialization in International Education within a regular two year Bachelor of Education program. The group of participants represented the gender ratio within the Specialization and included participants who were participating in international teaching placements in different regions of the world during their participation in this study. The program is delivered at the University of Prince Edward Island; a small university set in the city of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island which has been delivering the Specialization in International Education since 1998. This is a small urban area within an island province that is composed primarily of rural communities. The setting for this study is limited to this geographic area, within a population that has limited ethnic diversity and only a recent history of growth in the number of new immigrant families. The study was conducted over a period between February and May 2011. A number of years have passed between the period of data collection and completion of the study. This is the result of the author balancing the demands of career, a young family and the process of completing a graduate thesis. Although several years have gone by since collection of this data, the results of the study remain relevant and the passing of a few years does not influence the interpretation of the results.

Participants in this study were drawn from the student body engaged in the Specialization in International Education (SIE) program completing the second year of study in the two-year Bachelor of Education program in the Faculty of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI). A method of purposeful sampling was used in the selection of participants for this study, as this selection method supports efforts to understand the central phenomenon of the

study (Creswell, 2005). In developing the sample participant group, the initial goal was to have a sample of 10 (ten) participants that would be representative of the gender ratio reflected in the Specialization (4:1, female to male). An effort was also made to ensure that the sample of participants in the study would represent geographical diversity with respect to the intended destination of each of the overseas teaching practicum. The countries identified for the overseas teaching placement for the participants of this study were: China, Kenya, New Zealand, Sweden and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This group of countries represent a range of linguistic, cultural, economic and professional differences that each participant would experience, providing a richer data source to answer the research questions. This sampling method, maximal variation sampling, samples individuals that differ on a specific characteristic. The value of this sampling method is that it ensures that the data gathered is representative of the complexity and diversity of the group being studied and provides deeper insights into the unique experiences presented through geographically distinct overseas experiences.

The sampling method was important for this study as it allowed for a sample of interview participants who represented the gender ratio as well as the diverse international teaching contexts of the students in the Specialization in International Education program. The purpose of choosing representative sampling in this qualitative research was not to generalize students' experiences, rather, it aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences while ensuring the voices of diversified participants are heard and examined in this study. As discussed by Marshall (1996) "sampling [therefore] has to take account not only of the individual's characteristics but also temporal, spatial and situational influences, that is, the context of the study" (p. 524). The gender ratio of this program, the teaching profession in general, and the overseas teaching practicum location of each participant are important

contextual factors for this study. Therefore, all of these factors were considered in the selection of participants to ensure a richness and diversity in the data gathered to explore this study's research question. The teaching profession is one that is predominantly represented by female teachers. The Institute of Education Sciences (USDOE, 2013) identifies that 76% of full and part-time public school teachers in the United States are female. The global perspective reflects this predominance of female representation in the profession as reported by the United Nations (2013) indicating that 69% of the primary teachers in the world are female, with a slightly more balanced ratio at the secondary level with 51% of the world's teachers being female at this level. This ratio is skewed even further (4:1) in the internationally-themed Specialization in International Education program which is the context for this study and supports the need to have the male teacher's voice as it relates to this research question. The perspective differences between male and female teacher's experiences and their perceived roles and identities in the teaching profession has been explored in previous studies (Coulter & McNay, 1993; Jones, 2007), further supporting the importance of having the insights of both genders represented in this study through a representative sample of participants.

### **Participant Recruitment Strategy**

Before engaging in the process of recruiting participants for this study, an ethics application was submitted to the University of Prince Edward Island's Research Ethics Board for approval of the research project, the proposed research procedures, the informed consent form used and the interview questions planned for data collection. Approval was granted in January 2011 (Appendix E).

Participants were recruited to participate in the study through a formal invitation that was delivered to all students enrolled in the SIE program during the 2010-2011 academic year. In early February of 2011, during the regularly scheduled class Education 462 – International Education (a class attended by all participants of the SIE), students were provided with an introduction to this study. With the permission of the course instructor, the class was addressed and provided a brief description of the proposed study and each student was invited to consider participation in the study. The invitation form (Appendix A) was distributed to each student in the class. The form contained additional detail about the study and what would be expected of those who to participate. Students were asked to review the invitation and overview of the study and to indicate their willingness to participate by completing the consent form, or alternatively, submit a blank form if they chose not to participate. This process took place with no one in the room except for the students, ensuring anonymity of respondents and avoiding any sense of obligation to participate in the study. Students were given assurance that their participation in the study was voluntary, that confidentiality throughout the study would be paramount, and that a decision not to participate would have no negative impact on a student's status in their course or the program. Upon completion, each student folded their form to ensure confidentiality of their response, and submitted it to a pre-identified student, who then placed all of the forms into a single large envelope for collection by the researcher. After this process was completed, the students continued with their class. From the class of twenty-six (26) students, eleven (11) students responded to the invitation as willing to participate. From the eleven positive responses to the invitation, a group of 5 was selected, based on the sampling method noted earlier. Four female students and one male student were selected to reflect the gender ratio within the program. The selection of the participants also took into account the proposed location of the

overseas teaching practicum of each respondent, ensuring international experiential diversity among the participants. After consideration of the initial response from students and based on the interview methodology being employed, it was determined that 5 participants was an appropriate sample for this study, rather than the original goal of 10 participants. The results of this study were not intended to be generalized in the statistical sense, so a larger sample size was not required to accomplish the goals of the study. Because the interviews were to be in-depth and conducted twice with each participant, it was determined that 5 participants would provide a rich source of data to answer the research questions posed by this case study.

Several days after receiving the responses to the invitation to participate in the study, each student was contacted by email to confirm their willingness to participate in the study. The email included an Informed Consent Form (Appendix B) for each of the students to print and sign, if they agreed to participate. The signed Informed Consent Forms were collected from each of the five (5) participants during the first interview sessions conducted with each individual.

### **Data Collection**

Semi-structured interview was adopted as the data collection method for this study as interview questions allow for more control over the type of information elicited from the participants of a study. This method also provides the greatest opportunity for understanding of the unique experiences and insights of each participant while generating rich responses available for analysis (Creswell, 2005).

Data were collected for this study through two phases. The structure of the Specialization in International Education program was considered in the establishment of the schedule for each interview phase to ensure participants had completed some of the program-

specific course-work prior to the Phase 1 interview, and that they had completed an overseas teaching practicum prior to the Phase 2 interview. The interviews were conducted primarily on the UPEI campus, to ensure convenience for the participants and to be able to conduct the interviews in a familiar environment that was quiet and free from distraction, an important factor in ensuring an effective interview process (Creswell, 2005). One interview had to be conducted at the Charlottetown Airport, prior to one participant's departure for the overseas teaching practicum, as previously scheduled interview times could not be fulfilled. Initially, the goal was to conduct all interviews in similar locations, however circumstances lead to a need for flexibility and as Yin (1994) points out, case studies occur within real-life contexts, and data collection may have to be conducted in response to the needs and schedule of the participant. This was certainly the case with one interview during Phase 1, and it turned out to be an effective quality interview in spite of the initial perception that the location may be less than ideal.

### **Phase 1 Interview**

Phase one interviews were conducted in early March 2011, a point in the students' studies at which they had completed a portion of the required course-work specific to the SIE program and had also begun some of the pre-departure preparation for their planned overseas teaching practicum. Each interview in Phase 1 was composed of 6 questions (Appendix C) and lasted about 30 minutes. The questions explored each participant's concepts of a global educator, global competencies and the attributes of a globally competent teacher. Additional questions were focused on having participants describe themselves as teaching professionals, identifying their reasons/expectations for pursuing the Specialization and the impact of the internationally oriented curriculum on their perceptions and understanding of global competency.

Each interview was digitally recorded using two audio recording devices (one primary and one back-up) to ensure quality of the recording and ease of file transfer to support data storage and to facilitate future transcription. Brief notes were taken during the interview to identify any specific aspects of a response that may support future analysis.

The first round of interviews provided insight into the initial conceptualizations and perceptions that the participants have about global competency and the impact their program of study has had on them as pre-professionals in education. This series of interviews also established an informed baseline that served as a valuable reference to compare responses from the second interview, after the participants had engaged further into their program; most notably participation in the overseas teaching experience.

### **Phase 2 Interview**

The results of the Phase 1 interviews were given a cursory analysis to allow the iterative process to guide the development of the Phase 2 interview questions (Appendix D). The questions for the Phase 2 interviews were intended to build on the information gathered from the Phase 1 interviews in order to provide a sense of each participant's evolving perspectives and conceptualizations over time, as well as address the research questions posed for this study.

The Phase 2 interview questions explored each participant's impressions of themselves as global educators, their concept of global competencies and the attributes of a globally competent teacher. Additional questions were focused on how participation in the Specialization in International Education program impacted their development as global educators, what sorts of change they experienced; personal and professional, and what the biggest influencers of change were. Each participant was asked the series of questions in a consistent manner, without any ad

hoc questioning within the interviews. However, participants were not discouraged from letting their answers expand into themes beyond the questions and were always encouraged to continue with their thoughts, even if they seemed outside of the scope of the question.

The Phase 2 interviews were conducted shortly after each student returned to Prince Edward Island following their overseas teaching practicum, in the later part of May 2011. As noted, these interviews continued to explore similar themes to those used in the Phase 1 interview process. These interviews were conducted primarily on the UPEI campus, with one participant preferring to meet at an off-site public location for convenience. These interviews were made up of 6 questions, with each question having two components to consider for a response. The Phase 2 interviews each lasted for approximately one hour. The Phase 2 interviews were purposely conducted to be longer and more comprehensive than the Phase 1 interviews to support the objective of eliciting rich interview reactions.

### **Data Maintenance and Management**

The data collected during this study was stored and handled in a secure and safe manner throughout the study, with consideration for protocols that guaranteed anonymity of the participants. The data was collected using digital recording devices. The audio file for each interview was downloaded to a single computer (that of the researcher) and subsequently removed from the recording device. Backup files of each digital recording were maintained on a portable data storage device that was kept in a secure location at all times.

The digital audio files containing the interview data were transferred to a portable audio device to allow the researcher to listen, through earphones, to each interview to allow for review and note taking. This familiarization with each interview in its audio format was valuable for

identifying emerging themes and for considering the tone and content of responses in the true context of the interview. After reviewing each interview in this way several times, the interviews were then transcribed. A service was engaged to transfer the audio data to transcriptions of each interview. The transcription service maintained the safety of the data throughout the process, ensuring the same level of privacy and data security that the researcher used. In consideration of time, resources and expertise, it was deemed appropriate to have the transcription completed by a professional service, rather than the researcher performing this task. Although transcribing may have provided another opportunity for the researcher to gain more intimacy with the data, it was likely to have been a laborious process whose cost would undoubtedly have out-weighed its benefits. The researcher conducted multiple reviews of the audio files as well as multiple readings of the transcribed data to ensure the accuracy of the transcription data. Experiencing the data first-hand in the interview situation, and re-living it through the audio recordings was more authentic than drawing meaning from transcribed text alone. The distance between the author and the text becomes greater when transcribed and there is a risk of it becoming disassociated from the original meaning, as the act of transcription can become a mechanical reproduction process, losing the context, emotion and meaning (Markle, West & Rich, 2011). Transcription of data is a necessary step in data management, however it is important to consider the value and meaning of the data before it is converted to text, that cannot reflect the richness of the spoken response.

As an additional measure in maintaining the privacy of each of the participants in the study, each was anonymized for the study. The process of anonymizing was based on assigning pseudonyms to each participant considering an educational theme in the selection of the pseudonyms. The pseudonyms assigned were gender-specific, but assigned with no particular

consideration of the characteristics of each individual participant. The pseudonyms assigned were: Aaron (Male-Hebrew; enlightened), Moriah (Female-Hebrew; teacher), Guru (Female-Sanskrit; teacher), Jane (Jane Eyre from Charlotte Bronte's novel) and Jenny (Ms. Honey from Matilda, a Roald Dahl novel).

The data collected during this study (notes and materials) will be shredded within 2 years of completion of the thesis. Electronic and audio data will be maintained for a period of 5 years after the study is completed, and then deleted or destroyed. This data may also inform a larger research project and may be used in a variety of public presentations and written publications.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The role of the researcher in this study was one that reflected him as both external observer and internal member. The interview process placed the researcher outside of the group of participants involved in the study. In this study, the researcher was outside of the community of pre-service teachers being interviewed. That said, as the autobiographical statement outlined in Chapter 1, there was a shared experience between myself and this group of pre-service teachers, creating shared membership in this professional community. An effort was made to balance objective observation and personal insight through the analysis of the data collected. I was also aware of the value that my personal experience and understanding of the program held as it influenced my ability to guide the study and enhanced my prescience in data interpretation.

The participants were informed of my history and shared experience of having participated in the same teacher training program (and Specialization in International Education), however I tried to maintain a balance between researcher-distance and colleague-fraternity in my role as a member of the professional community of global educators. It was important to ensure

that participants would not assume my automatic understanding of their experiences, and that they would fully describe their experiences when responding to questions, but that they were also able to respond to questions with a level of familiarity that would support natural answers that did not require obligatory contextualization to clarify understanding for the uninitiated.

As the researcher, I was aware of my own experiences and perceptions that would guide and support my interpretations of themes and phenomenon. A careful balance of this dual role of insider and outsider was considered throughout the study, and acknowledged as a valued component of the research process, and possible influencer on the outcomes. As is outlined in the autobiographical statement, my own experience participating in the Specialization in International Education program during my Bachelor of Education degree, played a role in my interests in this topic, but also created assumptions that need to be considered as possible influencers to this study. As a graduate of this program and through my experience growing up in this Island community, I have developed opinions and biases as a result of my experience. Having my own experiences and beliefs about how this program impacted me professionally and personally, I had to consider this in the development of my questions, the process by which I gathered data as well as my analysis of the data. In the hermeneutic tradition, as described by Martin Heidegger, a person cannot be separated from the world, and his or her presumptions facilitate the interpretation of texts (Byrne, 1998). Although researcher bias cannot be isolated in this type of study, it is important to recognize that researcher insights and experience provide a rich base from which to develop a study and provide a deeper understanding of the experiences of the study participants that is more authentic and rooted in a shared experience. Byrne (1998) confirmed that through Heidegger's hermeneutic perspective, a researcher's background and preconceptions may "prohibit an objective viewpoint" (p. 5), however it allows one to recognize

shared practice and common meaning within a given context, and to be able to embrace assumptions and interpret experiences within them. Heidegger described a circle of understanding, where interpretation of new experiences and phenomenon occurs in the context of an observers past knowledge, creating enlightenment that supports understanding of future experiences; each new experience builds onto the structure of prior knowledge, reforming that structure in a cycle of continuous enrichment of understanding (von Zweck, Paterson & Pentland, 2008). Gadamer suggested that interpretation of experience is an intersection of a researcher's past experience with the experience of a new phenomenon, creating a fusion of a "past horizon" of understanding with a "present horizon", allowing the researcher to appropriate the new experience into their existing understanding (Byrne, 1998, p. 8). Throughout this study, researcher experience and background were recognized within the methodology, with an acceptance that it was an integral component of the study and of the conclusions that emerged.

The analysis of the interview data collected through this study was conducted with a hermeneutic orientation, using an inductive approach to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies. Thomas (2003) notes that key themes are often obscured, reframed or left invisible because of the preconceptions in the data collection and data analysis procedures imposed by deductive data analysis. In this study, analysis was guided by hermeneutics to ensure that significant themes and underlying meanings emerged from the interview data. Hermeneutics provides an interpretive frame-work for analysing the texts of the interview responses. A hermeneutic orientation of data analysis emphasizes an interpretation of what is said as well as what is omitted in responses, relying on the researcher's lens of analysis to "listen for the silence" that is embedded in language (Byrne, 1998). My own learning

experiences in the SIE program allowed me to recognize not only the multiple perspectives/voices generated from what participants said during the interviews but also the underlying meaning and messages unexpressed by the participants. This case study with hermeneutic orientation allowed me as the researcher to look beyond a single objective truth, and seek deeper meaning (von Zweck et al., 2008).

### **Limitations**

This study offered an opportunity to expand understanding of the experiences of pre-service teachers as they develop global competencies, but it had limitations that should be considered. This study is bound within the time that it was conducted, where only a limited period was available to capture responses from participants during their development as global educators. This study could only be conducted during the period of time in which the case study participants were available to respond to interview questions, and as a Master's thesis, could not be extended into a more longitudinal study. A greater time period over which to explore each participant's development of global competencies, and their reflection on this process may have provided a richer source of data, however it was not feasible to extend the study beyond the time limitations of a teacher training degree program, which is bound by the academic calendar. This limitation could be overcome in future studies through a longitudinal study that was able to track subjects over a longer period of time, to see the continuation of global competency development and maturation post-degree. Long-term identity development would be a very interesting and valuable area to explore in the development of teachers as global educators; however, it is not the subject of this research.

This study is bound by time, but it is also important to note the limitation presented by the overall length of the teacher training program and the finite impact that a two-year teacher education program has on a teacher's development and conceptualization of global competencies. As noted previously, identity development and the maturation of concepts of global competency occur over long periods and through careers and the results of this study may be somewhat limited by the relative brevity of this teacher training program in revealing significant conceptual development on global competencies within the teaching profession.

This study was restricted to interviewing and analysing the experiences of five pre-service teachers engaged in a globally themed teacher education program. A limitation of this method is that there is no opportunity for comparison of these pre-service teachers to their peers who have not participated in the globally themed program with respect to conceptualizations and development of global competencies. This sort of comparison would provide an additional benchmark to gauge the impact of a globally themed teacher training program on the development of global competencies and allow for deeper understanding about a program like the Specialization in International Education and its impact on how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competencies relative to their "globally untrained" peers. This case study was conducted within a single program, and its findings may not apply to other teacher education programs and/or contexts.

The small sample size of participants in this case study presented additional limitations. Although this study was of a small group of students, it sought to gain greater insight into the lived experiences and conceptualizations of pre-service teachers as they move through an internationally focused teacher education program. Due to the small size of the population used

in this study, the conclusions cannot be generalized in the statistical sense, limiting the dependability of conclusions when attempting to apply them to the population at large. Although case study research is often limited by the smaller sample populations studied, impacting the generalizability of findings and conclusions, this type of study does allow readers to draw much deeper connections to the findings, as the conclusions can be considered transferable to similar contexts in the academic field and support understanding of the research phenomenon and guide continued research. The limited number of internationally-themed teacher training programs, and by association, pre-service teachers available to be studied to explore the development of global competencies, poses challenges for future studies. As a sub-speciality in the teacher training realm, research into the development of global competencies may be limited to small sample populations, until such time that training global educators becomes more mainstream within academia and within the profession of teaching.

Every effort was made throughout the study to develop interview questions and an interview process that would facilitate deep responses from participants in order to provide the richest data source possible. Despite these efforts, several of the Phase 1 interviews were shorter than expected thus less profound and limited in the depth of the responses. This limitation was considered in the development of the Phase 2 interview questions, providing a valuable benchmark from which to design the second interview process. As a result of this process, the Phase 2 interview process produced longer sessions that resulted in deeper responses.

### **Summary**

Through Chapter Three, I have described the research design and the theoretical framework that informed this study. I have outlined the methodology used to select participants,

how data were collected through interviews, and the methods used to organize those data in preparation for analysis and interpretation. In the next chapter, Chapter Four, I will report findings of the study through presenting the themes that emerged through data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

As the purposes of this study were to examine how (1) pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency and to (2) identify how their global competencies were developed through participation in a globally focused teacher training program, this chapter presents the findings generated from the semi-structured interviews conducted with five pre-service teachers engaged in the Specialization in International Education (SIE) program within the University of Prince Edward Island Bachelor of Education program. Two interviews were conducted with each participant at two specific phases of the program: the first was conducted in the middle of the program when students were completing course-work specifically focused on aspects of international education, and the second interview was conducted at the end of the SIE program shortly after all participants completed his/her six-week overseas teaching practicum. The interviews with all participants were transcribed and their accuracy was double-checked by the participants. Qualitative data was coded and analysed for emerging themes and meaning. In this chapter, the results of the analysis are presented as major themes based on the data and the objectives of this study.

### **Findings and Discussions**

#### **Pre-Service Teachers' Demographic Information**

The pre-service teachers who participated in this study reflect the gender ratio of the program (four female participants to one male participant) and draw on participants with the intention to participate in overseas practicums in geographically distinct settings. The

participants also represent experiences from regional, and international backgrounds, with participants who grew up on Prince Edward Island, in Nova Scotia and overseas. The participant age range at the time of the study was between 25 years of age and 39 years of age, with the average age being 31 years old. Several of the participants had some previous international experience through personal travel, but none of those experiences were connected to their professional development as teachers.

### **Participants' Reasons for Enrolling in the SIE**

Several of the questions used during the first interview session were designed to gain more insight into participants' motivations for enrolling in the Specialization in International Education as well as their expectations of the program. The questions from the first interview session explored each participant's preconceptions of and current understanding of what it means to be a pre-service teacher engaging in an internationally themed teacher training program. The responses to these questions provide an insight into each student's internalized identity and a benchmark for comparison of the types of responses participants give to similarly themed questions at the end of the study. When participants were asked to provide reasons why they chose to enrol in the Specialization in International Education, they identified a range of motivations with some common themes emerging.

*Peers influence and faculty encouragement.* Two of the study participants identified people who influenced their decision to pursue this program and noted the important role that these individuals had in their decision to enrol in the SIE. One participant identified two close friends who completed the SIE program previously, as strong influences. The experience of those peers resonated with Guru as she remembered watching these friends go through the

preparation and participation, seeing the hard-work and stress that came with it, and recalling the impact that the experience had on each of these former students,

I just remember her preparing for it and doing all the fundraising and doing all that, it was just so stressful sometimes (laughing), and then when she actually went and still, I mean she emailed me last week and it was just like, “remember to write down everything, every sense, everything you taste, everything you see, the colors, the cost of everything” Like, she’s still so passionate about it...watching her do it really inspired me to do it (March 2, 2011).

Jenny was initially interested in the SIE program, but the additional travel cost required to participate in the program made her ponder the decision with second thoughts. Those doubts were seemingly swept away after a conversation with a Faculty member as she remembered, “I had a year of Education under my belt and I was kinda like, “oh, I don’t know”. And then I talked to [name of Faculty member] (laughing) and then it was just like, “I have to do this, I can’t not do this””(March 1, 2011).

The influence of others appears to be a supporting factor in giving participants an external confirmation of the existing internal interest or desire to explore the opportunity of becoming a global educator. Although intrinsically motivated, participants recognized that their decision to pursue this alternative professional pathway was supported by the influence of others. As with any risk-taking venture, there is comfort in having the decision to take action supported by a trusted peer or mentor.

***The component of international travel in SIE.*** All five of the participants referenced an interest or desire to travel, while three of the participants identified previous experiences with

overseas travel as having a significant influence on why they chose to pursue this specific program option within their teacher training program. Each of the participants who referred to this previous experience noted how it influenced their desire to find opportunities for more travel. Moriah noted:

So I finished my undergrad degree and then I travelled. I guess like I've always loved to travel, it was kind of part of what, my family was about. We never, when I was younger, we travelled, but not anywhere extensive. But that kind of travel bug hit me, and then doing my own travelling and then coming back and knowing that I want to teach and I want to, travel and I want to know the world. That's part of why, when I heard about this specialization, I'm like that's what I want to do (March 2, 2011).

In all participants' responses, the interest in travel was stated as an obvious motivation, however Jane did note that the program and the associated experiences were pushing her outside of familiar and comfortable norms, and that this was the very reason she chose to take on this challenge. "I wanted to do something, this is not something within my comfort zone, (laughing) so I kind of wanted to step outside of the box and see a totally, experience a new culture, see a different educational system" (March 1, 2011). Beyond the superficial notion of supporting a desire to travel, each participant seemed to be acknowledging the value in being challenged through the opportunity to live and work overseas, far from the supports of home, as well as an opportunity to learn from and be mentored by a new cultural setting without the safety net of familiarity.

***Desire for international perspectives and cross-cultural understanding.*** All of the participants provided responses that have been broadly themed as; a desire to experience more of

the world and the teaching profession, including an interest in gaining a more global perspective and an understanding of other cultures. Moriah noted her belief that having multiple perspectives was very important, and that, “to be a great teacher, you need to have that world experience.” (March 2, 2011). Many of the participants also noted their motivation to gain professional teaching experience outside of the traditions and norms that they are familiar with and to have experiences that help them better understand the phenomenon of an ever shrinking world and the impact that has in the classroom. Jane identified the importance of having the experiences, but further noted the importance of transforming those experiences into something valuable in her classroom, “and bring that [international experience] back, my experiences back into the classroom” (March 1, 2011). For most participants, it was an interest in gaining new experiences that drew them to the program, and through the program that interest blossomed into a clearer sense of the value of what they had experienced as well as a desire to continue to build on it.

### **Pre-Service Teachers’ Expectations for the SIE Program**

When outlining expectations for the SIE program, many of the participants noted elements very similar to responses to the question which explored motivations for enrolling in the SIE program. Participants had an expectation to gain new perspectives, to develop a better understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and to be forced out of their comfort zones sufficiently to require a re-examination of how they view teaching. While all of the participants expected to develop new teaching skills, many noted that they expected much of the learning to occur outside of the classroom. The majority of the participants of this study clearly expressed a

deeper appreciation for the potential impact of the overseas experience beyond simple transactional development of professional skills.

This awareness of greater learning beyond what would be gained within the professional setting of the classroom is balanced by responses from three students who expected to learn about the education system in the country where they would do their overseas teaching practicum, and to see how teaching occurred in that other country with the opportunity to compare to their home education system. These responses demonstrate an understanding of the more tangible and predictable types of opportunities that the program offers; less about the abstract concept of developing new perspectives and more about identifying an opportunity to observe and compare with another. At this early stage of the program, participants do not have a full appreciation of the personal impact the experience will have on them. They could identify easily measurable changes that the experience may illicit, but were not yet able to conceptualize the meaningful influence that the international experience would have on them personally and professionally.

One of the responses about expectations for the SIE program that was shared by three of the participants was a strong sense that they were coming with few or no expectations, and that they felt that they were completely open to the learning and experiences ahead of them. Moriah (March 2011) summarized it by saying, “What I really want to do in this experience is go into it with absolutely no expectations, but no judgements, no, you know, biases, no nothing”. This was echoed by Guru (March 2, 2011), “I don’t have any expectations. I’m just preparing for an emotional rollercoaster, but an amazing experience.” Aaron confirmed this same sentiment with reference to the time that was already spent in the program and with an eye to the remaining

components of the program not yet completed, “Uh, for the program, I came with a clean slate. You could say, just willing to take whatever, whatever came with the program” (March 4, 2011). This statement of entering the program with no expectations may have been genuinely conveyed; however, it seems to reflect a level of naivety. Expectations and preconceived concepts are difficult to completely set aside, particularly when entering into new experiences. These statements represent an intention to be open and to not be ruled by expectations; however, this objective may be a romantic notion that reflects a lack of consideration of the role that preconceptions play in how people manage and integrate new experiences. This concept of entering the program with no expectations or preconceptions is further explored in this study as some participants faced the inevitable realization that they did in fact carry many expectations and had to confront them, as the profound impact of the experiences made them impossible to ignore any longer.

The majority of the participants in this study attempted to balance their knowledge and experience gained through the program courses/curriculum with an effort and belief that they could engage in the overseas teaching practicum unencumbered with preconceived notions. Guru said, “by the time I actually was about to get on the plane and go, because of the courses and the work that prepared us, my objective (for the international practicum) became, open-minded and to learn as much as I can.” (March 2, 2011).

### **Pre-Service Teachers’ Conceptualizations of Global Competency**

During the first interview sessions, participants were asked, through the first three (3) interview questions, to list the attributes of a globally competent teacher and to describe what it means to be globally competent as well as what it means to be a global educator. This initial line

of questioning was developed to understand how pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency. There were a number of common themes that emerged from the participants' early responses, giving insight into their initial perceptions and beliefs about global competency, and an indication of how these understandings evolved over the period of the study and their progress through their program.

***Global awareness.*** Through the early explorations of participants' conceptualizations of global competency, each of the participants identified global awareness as the starting point and a critical aspect of developing global competency. The general theme of awareness appeared in all of the responses to questions that elicited descriptions of a global educator, with some of the responses connecting awareness to more specific attributes. Global awareness was described as "knowing what is going on in the world" (Aaron, March 4, 2011) and being "in touch with the surroundings and what's happening globally" (Jenny, March 1, 2011); "when I think of a global educator, I just think of kind of anything in general as I would expect from any teacher I guess, or educator, is awareness, open-mindedness" (Moriah, March 2, 2011). This concept of awareness is reflective of a new level of understanding, and appreciation of what is going on in the world as well as a growing appreciation for the level of impact each individual can have on that broader world. In their early responses, participants reference the attribute of awareness as something that a global educator would have, but not directly identifying it within themselves. This is a predictable response to a question reflecting on the early concept of global educator, as it demonstrates the participants' early notions of themselves and their professional identity. They have not fully internalized this attribute, and do not completely perceive themselves as global educators at this stage of their training, but have categorized awareness as important and are reflective on its value.

*Multiple perspectives.* A characteristic that came up in many responses, either as a specifically named attribute or in the context of describing a globally competent educator, was perspective. The concept of perspective was overtly mentioned, “When I think of a global educator, I think of someone that can look at things from various perspectives” (Moriah, March 2, 2011), and in some cases more subtly referenced in the context of a self-awareness, “Also, I think of, like, um, we talked a lot about this in one of our courses about, being aware of the privilege that you have as being part of a dominant culture, and how that effects people in that culture” (Moriah, March 2, 2011).

Through responses to several of the interview questions, many of the participants described growth in awareness and development of multiple perspectives through their participation in the program, and particularly as a result of their overseas teaching experience. Jane noted it in saying, “I probably look at things differently now, than I would have had I just stayed here. Global competency is just having the awareness that there’s always going to be different cultures, different backgrounds in a classroom” (May 11, 2011). Guru reflected on this new perspective as well, observing, “So, from this day forward, I will hopefully always choose to, to deal where what’s going on in the world and being able to bring that global perspective back into my classroom” (May 11, 2011).

Through the course of the study, noted changes develop from one phase to the next, with early responses capturing the motivation and excitement of participants, and the use of language that was learned during the course-work of the Specialization in International Education. These early responses are intellectual and rational in nature. As the study progresses, participant responses reflect a growing awareness of how much more can be learned and the emotional

impact of the overseas experience. Participants are beginning to transform knowledge into real understanding. These later responses reflect emotion and comprehension.

*Appreciation of an interconnected world.* Understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness and interdependency of the world was another attribute identified by participants as being important for a global educator, particularly the impact on the development of multiple perspectives. Moriah viewed herself as a global educator, and was able to describe it in terms of what she thought is the important role of a global educator, “I think there’s a huge importance, for our students to learn about the world and what’s going on in the world, how we’re interconnected to some degree, or inter-related” (March 2, 2011). Jenny also felt that her experiences helped her gain perspective and confirm her appreciation of global interconnectedness. “It just kind of gives you that other perspective of a different culture, different system, different way of living, and it kind of helps you see how other stuff happens in the world and how we’re all connected” (May 20, 2011). Through their experience within the SIE program, including the overseas teaching experience, participants identify the development of multiple perspectives and an ability to see themselves within a larger global community as important attributes for global educators. Without stating it explicitly, participants are beginning to identify more fully with the title of global educator. Participants are starting to use their own experiences as a basis for referring to what makes a teacher a global educator. The importance of the experiences offered by the program and the role it plays in guiding these pre-service teachers toward a new perspective on their profession is evident, particularly when comparing insights at the end of the study to the responses from the early stages of the study.

As participants explore their concepts of global competency, they critically reflect on their perspectives and the growth that has occurred to make room for multiple perspectives.

Aaron was clear that he had to be aware of his position and perspective:

I also know when my position, like my beliefs or my understanding of what's going around, so knowing exactly, what I feel or think about what's going around and then sharing that with others. But, the educator part, is the important aspect, I guess. Because then, you've got to be careful, or, I think, I have to be careful not to push my views on what's going around and allow people to kind of develop their own, with the information provided (March 4, 2011).

Aaron also sees awareness as being global in scope, but as important, awareness of self, "Global competency, would be, being aware, but not only being aware, but also being aware that you are aware of your position" (March 4, 2011). This reflection is an important insight into a pre-service teacher's evolving understanding of what it means to have a global perspective, how it influences one's teaching and the importance of being aware of personal bias and how it impacts expectations and preconceptions. The effect that this growing perspective can have on individuals needs to be recognized at both a professional and personal level. Both are impacted and each influences the other, creating an ongoing feedback process that guides behaviour, and becomes a significant part of what makes these young professionals the teachers they are now, and will become in the future.

***Commitment to active citizenship.*** The early identity development of these pre-service teachers is further reflected in noted commitments to grow, foster and develop global awareness. This commitment is seen as an important attribute of a global educator and vital in the

development of global competencies. This theme emerged from the participants' responses to questions related to how they would describe a global educator and what they conceptualize as definitions of global competency. Guru notes, "Dedication of being up to date with what's going on in the world, but, I think that people who are able to bring global perspective into their classroom, or people who, well personality-wise, really care" (March 2, 2011), while Moriah commented that global competency is "bringing the world into your classroom in the sense that you're taking those moments to teach students, even at a young age, about what it means to be a part of the world" (March 2, 2011).

Dedication and commitment to continuous development is often referenced in close context to the theme of awareness. Awareness is a critical starting point towards the development of global competency, as recognized by the participants. However, from responses during the first interview most participants discuss global awareness as an attribute that has an impact on global competency, but only if there is also a dedication to staying current and continuing to nurture that awareness. Participants also note that awareness is limited unless there is a commitment to sharing that awareness in the classroom in an appropriate and effective way. These pre-service teachers are at the beginning of their teaching careers and understand that there is still much to learn, and that they need to be committed to the long-term development of their global awareness and to bringing that to their future classrooms. There is a position being taken by the participants of this study; that awareness without action is fruitless.

As participants reflected on their experiences and responded to questions, there was a notable commitment to action and an overt intention to continue developing global competencies professionally and personally. Moriah identified this in her comment, "Second thing is, I guess

just, that responsibility, I keep on going back to that. That responsibility that I have now in order to become more globally educated” (May 11, 2011). Moriah’s comment resonates as an obligation to continue to learn and develop; a commitment to continue to build on the experiences and learning already gained because there is a conviction that it is important and that it is a lifelong process.

Although the commitment to action was identified in a professional context, it was clear through many of the participants’ responses that there was significant personal development and growth and a realization that much of the learning that took place through the overseas practicum was about self, and not about teaching and procedure. Guru summarized it this way, “ I don’t know, it’s kind of like, deep and emotional, but I didn’t go to Kenya and learn all these new strategies about teaching. It was something more, and it was something a lot deeper” (May 11, 2011). Similarly, Jane noted the importance of her experience and its impact as a real and raw opportunity;

Classroom teaching is one thing. You can get a lot out of classroom teaching. But, I think personal experience is much more, um, prepares you much more as a global teacher. Being there firsthand, seeing things firsthand, talking to the kids, getting, actual feedback, rather than just listening to someone that, you know; [if] you’re not really experiencing it, you’re just, kind of, hearing...Their side of it. So, to actually experience it yourself and be able to develop your own views and your own opinions; I think, is the best experience a person can get (May 11, 2011).

Still at a stage of processing and understanding the impacts of their recent experiences overseas, participants reveal an understanding that this is a professional beginning and a

commitment to continue to embrace and grow the professional and personal attributes that are inherent parts of a global educator.

***Other attributes.*** Some other descriptive terms that participants noted in their response to questions relating to the attributes of a globally competent teacher included attributes such as sensitivity, compassion, approachability, motivation and leadership skills. These attributes were not specifically associated to aspects of being a global educator however they did consistently appear in responses. The participants identified these attributes without specific context, however it is clear these are attributes that they value and see as important attributes for any educator to have, “I guess when I think of a global educator, I just think of kind of anything in general as I would expect from any teacher or educator” (Moriah, March 2, 2011). These responses appear to frame the foundations that respondents identify for any educator. The conceptual identity of global educator is being constructed from the familiar and valued attributes that participants would associate with any good teacher. These sorts of general attributes become the scaffolding for constructing this new teacher identity.

### **The Meaning of Global Educator for Pre-Service Teachers**

***Risk taking.*** All five participants in this study believe that a globally competent educator should be willing to take risks and must learn to be “comfortable with being uncomfortable” (Jenny, March 1, 2011 and Guru, March 2, 2011). Each participant noted that a globally competent educator should be willing to take risks in their teaching, to push their comfort zone into new areas that may make them uncomfortable. This risk was identified as taking action, to use global understandings to influence teaching in a real way, and to take the initiative to act and

incite action among students to help them understand their global influence. Moriah noted that this action must take on a deeper meaning and not simply be a perfunctory nod to the exotic.

So, I think, not just in like bringing food or the way people dress for their traditions and stuff like that. It's bringing in the issues and bringing in those things that need to be discussed so that we can kind of make change (March 2, 2011).

This idea that cultural understanding has to move beyond the celebration of dance, dining and dress illustrates participant acceptance that the role of global educator is to go deeper and to move beyond superficial understanding to effect true learning. This notion of being comfortable with operating outside of familiar norms further strengthens the developing concept of global educator as being an identity that sits outside of conventional teaching, and requires a willingness to redefine what an educator is and to embrace new paradigms of teacher and teaching.

*Connecting classroom with real life situations.* A willingness to take risks and stretch comfort zones was also associated with a value placed on gaining new experiences. Three of the participants specifically noted the limited amount of exposure throughout their school years with cultural diversity or environments that could be considered international in nature. Guru noted a realization that her perspective may have been limited by where she grew up. "I travelled a lot and I really started getting hit in the face with what was going on outside of little old PEI or East Coast Canada" (March 2, 2011). Coming from a small community which did not present many opportunities for experiencing cultural diversity, Jenny reflected on the importance of new experiences, "growing up in PEI very sheltered, there are certain things that we can close our eyes to, and I think just being open to seeing different things and being, maybe having that

discomfort, but being OK with it” (March 1, 2011). The lack of experience and exposure to places and cultures outside of the familiar is precisely what motivated some participants to pursue the SIE program. Jane saw the SIE program as the perfect opportunity to gain international experience, “growing up in PEI, I felt that I wasn’t exposed to a lot. So, part of what I wanted to do as a teacher is I wanted to get those experiences that I didn’t have growing up” (March 1, 2011). The comments that participants shared relating their relatively sheltered (internationally speaking) up-bringing reflect a number of possible beliefs and changes in perception. Although there is a tone of linking the notion of sheltered with ignorance, I think each of these individuals are aware of a bigger world out there, and are aware that it means breaking from their geographical realities to experience and learn from it. Also, in reflecting on their own history, and their motivation to stretch their experiences beyond those available during their own school days, participants are demonstrating a growing global perspective. This reflection also reveals an understanding that, in spite of a sheltered upbringing or perhaps because of it, it is imperative for them to develop global competencies to be effective teachers in the new global reality that their future classrooms reflect and define.

Participants noted that experiencing “it” (something international) was important, and referenced how personal experiences were an important part of a globally competent teacher’s repertoire. Guru clarified further, stating that this type of international experience is not necessarily measured in the quantity of countries one has visited, but the quality of experience:

[to be] globally competent, I don’t believe that you necessarily had to have, been to every country in the entire world and see everything, but I do believe that, taking a risk at

some point and to go outside of your comfort zone so you are actually able to experience that and kind of encourage that (May 11, 2011).

This comment points to the belief that individuals need to be prepared to allow for an international experience to have a deep and meaningful impact, not for it to be a passive experience of visiting another country or observing a new cultural situation. Preparation and facilitation of quality experiences is valued over the total volume of experiences gained.

***Transform Learning.*** As in the first series of interviews, the second interview phase contained questions that sought to explore each participant's concept of global competency and how they would describe a global educator. In this second series of interviews, participants were asked to explore the question from a more reflective position by describing themselves as global educators.

When challenged with the question of, "Would you describe yourself as a Global Educator?" there was a unanimous sentiment, with each participant identifying with this designation. Although each participant gave a confirmation of identifying with the concept of global educator, there is a tone of qualification in the responses. This qualification is rooted in an understanding that this professional identity is a journey rather than a destination; a beginning rather than an end. Guru described herself as a global educator, noting "I've thought about this a lot since I got home. Um, yes and no, because I think that, I think that being a global educator is a, it's a day to day, it's a lifelong thing" (May 11, 2011). Jane also identified herself as a global educator, stating, "I think I would describe myself as a global educator, just because, um, experiencing another culture opens your eyes to things you never would have looked at just being in the same community" (May 11, 2011). Jenny had a similar perspective in her

consideration of herself as a global educator stating, “I kind of take it as a willingness to go out and learn about the issues, not necessarily being the know-it-all teacher, but being willing to explore things with your students and, teach them along the way as you all learn together” (May 20, 2011). Being a global educator is described in terms of a process rather than a product. Participants see themselves as having to remain aware and current, and to understand their position as educators as it guides how they would effectively bring global awareness and perspective into their classrooms. Responses continue to reflect the participant’s struggle to define and integrate the identity of global educator. The recent overseas experiences and self-reflection about becoming a global educator continue to chafe against the traditional paradigms on which teacher identity is established and resolving how this new teacher identity is supposed to look and feel.

### **The Role of the SIE Program in Developing Globally Competent Teachers**

Participants were asked, in the first interview sessions, to identify reasons they chose to enrol in the SIE program and to describe expectations that they had about the learning and experience that they would gain through their participation in the program. During the second interview session, participants were asked to describe how participation in the program facilitated their development as global educators and what factors had the most profound impact on their development. At the time of the second interview, participants were at the end of their teacher training program and had just returned from their overseas teaching practicum, so it served as a great opportunity for each participant to reflect on their own development in becoming global educators and the role they felt the program played in that development.

*Curriculum as a space for developing global perspective and open-mindedness.*

Program course work was identified explicitly by three of the participants as being valuable in creating a foundation for further learning and experience, as well as a key to developing a global perspective and developing critical thinking skills. Guru described the coursework as important for expanding her knowledge:

What was great about the program was the courses that we were required to take, with the international program, forced us to also learn a little bit about the other cultures and the other areas that other students were going in the SIE Program” (May 11, 2011).

She also felt that the coursework opened her perspective and forced deeper critical thinking. “It was through the courses and through the work at SIE that I actually started to really understand why it’s important to take a different perspective and to start questioning things and dig deeper” (May 11, 2011).

Aaron shared a very similar opinion of the impact that the coursework had on his development,

We touched a lot of topics that I wasn’t really aware of and some I didn’t really spend too much thinking about, right? So, it made me stop and really look at them and see what my views were, or just learn about, different aspects of what’s going on in the world. So it definitely opened my eyes and made me think critically about, not just the issues, but like I said before, um, where I fit in (March 4, 2011).

Jenny also felt that the coursework helped her develop a new perspective and basis for further learning,

In terms of what we had to do before we left, the courses, obviously the two international [ones] were really helpful. Especially for me as a person who doesn't normally get super-involved in global issues and politics and all that. So it kind of brought things into my focus, that weren't there before (May 20, 2011).

Participants make an early acknowledgement that the courses they have completed help establish an academic foundation as well as a genuine openness to see things in their classroom and in the world around them, in a new way. Although not identified as creating a monumental shift in any particular belief or perspective, participants reflect an understanding that the coursework forced them to re-examine and reconsider how they interpret the world and how it will influence their on-going development as teachers.

*The SIE as a professional learning community.* One theme noted was a realization by several of the participants that a significant portion of the learning that took place through the program was influenced or facilitated by interactions with their peers and through the experience of others. This level of social learning seemed to connect to the shared experience of others enrolled in the Specialization in International Education and was expressed like a professional peer group. Jane noted the importance of the relationships developed through the program and how those relationships could become valuable professional resources in her teaching career. “And especially having relationships with people who went other places...if we're doing something on Africa or, if I can pull that in, I can call up my friends and say, ‘What was this like’” (May 11, 2011). Jane was showing a growing identity with a community of like-minded educators with shared experience.

The idea of a professional peer group that consider themselves global educators was not something rooted in any previous concept that the participants had about the teaching profession.

Guru noted in her response:

When I think back to whenever I was in high school, or even it was really in my undergrad at UPEI that I really started to be aware of, that I really got this eagerness to learn about different cultures and different parts of the world and different people and really have a different perspective. So, I guess looking back now, I never really had somebody who, was a globally competent educator, who really brought in another perspective (March 1, 2011).

In spite of that lack of a role model, Guru began to see herself developing as a global educator and also the importance of collaboration within a professional group.

Jane noted her lack of international experience as a possible deficiency within the program, but attempted to address this by drawing on the experiences of her peers:

I think the SIE Program itself prepared me, because there were some people that have travelled in the group before. So, just hearing their experiences [and] some things for me to be aware of that maybe I wouldn't have been aware of, and actually doing the program and experiencing it for myself. I just think it's an excellent program (May 11, 2011).

The notion of a learning community of global educators was developing organically through the supports and shared experiences that each participant was gaining from and to which they contributed.

*The SIE as a community of critical inquiry.* Beyond a community of like-minded educators, the SIE program also generated a community of critical inquiry. Relationship development through the program was suggested by three of the participants' responses as an important factor in their growth as global educators. Participants cited the opportunity to share knowledge with peers (students) as well as with Faculty as significant in their development. Moriah identified a strong positive impact of the experiences and knowledge of others on her own development;

We're lucky in that, in the program the professors are very worldly. So, they've been to certain places. And, sharing their personal experiences and stuff have also helped us, even students that are sitting next to me in those courses like, where they've been and what they've done. So that sharing of knowledge has made me more aware of things (May 11, 2011).

Jenny also felt that relationships played a role in her development, by having opportunities to share;

The relationships with other people in the classroom. The friends that I made; I think that really brought that more into my focus as well. So, definitely the people, the courses, SIE meetings, talking about different places that people were going, kind of getting that perspective (March 1, 2011).

Jane echoed these sentiments by noting that learning from her peers was an important aspect in facilitating her development as a global educator;

I think the SIE Program itself prepared me, because there were some people that have travelled in the group before. So, just hearing their experiences outside of Canada and the United States, some things for me to be aware of that maybe I wouldn't have been aware of if I wasn't in the program (March 1, 2011).

The decision to participate in the Specialization in International Education may not have been an easy one for all participants. It is clear that the influence of peers and mentors (like Faculty members) played a role in supporting some participants' decisions to take this risk. Beyond this, it also appears that shared experience and shared understanding helps support this form of learning and the subsequent valuation of the experience. Students were able to more fully engage in the exchange of ideas, experiences and feelings about what it means to be a global educator and how international experiences can influence and shape perspective as a result of having a peer group that was going through the same personal and professional development process.

### **The Impact of International Experiential Teaching/Learning**

The impact of the overseas teaching practicum stood out among all participants as a significant contributor to their development as global educators. By all accounts, the experience was something profound for each participant, with each individual identifying unique aspects of their experience which had the greatest influence.

*Challenge preconceptions.* Several of the participants, upon reflection on their overseas experience, were still in a phase of assessing and assimilating its impacts even after several weeks of being home. Aaron described the impact of his experience, but was still evaluating it, with some of his reflections coming out in the interview process, "Um, the practicum, especially

the last one, uh, was a huge impact, I guess. Um, I'm still kind of going through it and trying to figure out how positive or how negative the influence was" (May 18, 2011). The interview process lead Aaron to further reveal that, despite his initial belief that he had entered into the program and the practicum with limited expectations and preconceptions, he was struck with a very different reality when he began his practicum:

I don't know to what extent, if it was the culture shock or something that I learned there, I guess I'm going to be dipping into another question. It was when I was going over, I remember you asked me if I had any preconceptions or any expectations, going in, and I was really quick to answer that I didn't. 'Cuz you know; I was going with an open mind. Not expecting anything and, and so on. But, once I was there, I started realizing all the preconceptions and all the expectations that I had that I didn't know I had. Yeah, they just started surfacing and I'm like, where is this coming from? Like being disappointed about things that were happening. Like, why am I disappointed? What was I expecting? That was different. So I wasn't going as clean-slate as I thought I would (May 18, 2011).

This is a significant realization and learning moment for one participant, and is likely reflective of something that many of the participants were experiencing; a continued un-packing of the personal and professional impacts of the experience. Significant change took place, and what one reflective individual thought they knew about themselves, was being challenged by new perspective and a deeper insight into self and others.

Several participants were struck by the realization that in-spite of their belief on the contrary; they came into their overseas teaching practicum with preconceptions and expectations

that impacted their experience. Most notably, was Aaron's realization of how his preconceptions seemed to pose a barrier to him having the type of experience he believed he would have;

Letting go of your beliefs was like the, biggest challenge, I guess, both personally and professionally. So, personally, the biggest challenge would be chipping away my preconceptions and my stereotypes to really immerse in the, in the culture, to really take the culture on its own (May 18, 2011).

Others had a less profound realization of preconceptions, but still acknowledged entering the overseas practicum with emotions and expectations that were very new. Jane noted, "I was a little apprehensive going down because, like I said, I've never travelled. But, like, just, I wouldn't trade that experience for anything" (May 11, 2011). Similarly, Guru addressed the difficulty to really prepare for or recreate the international experience, and that this is part of the value in having it. "I don't think anything can ever really prepare you for what you actually experience firsthand once you're there. So that was definitely, but it was all positive" (May 11, 2011).

Preconceptions and expectations are natural, and acknowledging their presence and the challenge to control or direct them is an important realization for participants, and this self-awareness will support richer and deeper international experiences. Through the realization that stereotypes and preconceptions can impact our actions, this experience also begins to provide foundational training in developing cross-cultural communication skills. An important global competency, cross-cultural communication skills are often developed when individuals are placed in situations where they have to navigate unknown cues, ambiguous messages and unfamiliar communication norms and still establish effective exchanges. Some of the

participants' experiences with having to acknowledge and address their preconceptions are early steps in developing cross-cultural communication skills.

*Development of critical thinking skills and understanding of diversity.* During the second interview sessions, participants were also asked questions related to the personal and professional changes they experienced as a result of participating in the SIE program. This question was posed to the students at a time when they had completed all of the requirements of the program and could respond with a more holistic sense of the impact that the program had on them. Participants were also asked to identify the most significant factors that influenced any change that they experienced.

There were themes that emerged from the responses of the participants as they reflected on changes they experienced and the influencing factors that caused the changes. Several of the participants were still processing their experiences, and working through some of the unresolved feelings and reflections. Again, Aaron in particular was attempting to come to terms with the internal struggle he was having in relation to his overseas experience;

Somewhere in the middle of the practicum, I came to the realization that a lot of the learning that was happening there wasn't about, (pause) I was going over thinking I'm going to learn about the culture and about how the students learn and how they interact in their own environment. That was my idea, my notion, I guess, my understanding. But, being there, a lot of the learning that I did was about myself. And it was like tearing down that wall, I guess, that I brought with me. [That] was the, the biggest challenge, I guess, personally. And even when I look back at some of the experiences, I'm still

tearing down some of those barriers to see the reason behind. To see the logic behind what I saw and what I experienced (May 18, 2011).

Aaron had experiences inside and outside of the classroom that challenged and changed him personally and professionally, and he was surprised with them, even as he continued to process them, “So, personally, the biggest challenge, would be chipping away my preconceptions and my stereotypes, to really take the culture on its own. Then, chipping away the really bad experiences so that they don’t affect the rest of my perception of the culture, I guess” (May 18, 2011).

As participants explored how the SIE program and the recent overseas experience impacted them, further insights into growing self-awareness emerged. Two participants reflected on a confirmed sense of home, and a change in how that is balanced with their continued interest in seeing more of the world. Jenny captured this feeling in her response;

I definitely got a very good appreciation for home. In teaching the students about Canada, and how great it is, et cetera, that was nice. I think I, kind of, already had that, but I think it just kind of made it more obvious. I love where I live and love living at home and seeing that I could live in Sweden or I could live somewhere else and be happy. I did start to get homesick after the first month, but I’m not used to being away from home for very long periods of time. I do like to travel, obviously. But I like to come home (May 20, 2011).

Jane also had a similar reflection of her confirmed appreciation for home as a result of this experience, and a realization of what she may have taken for granted;

So, I got to appreciate more of, um, just my family, and what I have and just realize that I am truly blessed to have what I have, and live where I live. Yeah that's a big one, for sure. You just take it for granted, I think, where you live (May 11, 2011).

This personal impact to each of the participants reflects a deeper recognition of the influence the overseas experience had on them. They were not passively participating in the overseas practicum, but were personally engaged enough to uncover this confirmation of a sense of home, and who they are because of where they come from, as well as a realization of what they might take for granted about this defining aspect of their identities.

Participants noted a professional change in their role as educators, in their confidence, critical thinking skills, and ability to seek out deeper understanding of their interactions with the world around them. Many of these were tabled in a professional context, however there was some element of personal change imbedded in the responses.

Moriah identified being able to share cultural insights with students by helping see beyond the superficial identities of another culture and move toward a deeper understanding of what is going on around the world, "They're just like us. It's just that they've had struggles and they have different things and they have stuff to share. So personally, it's like, I feel that need to educate people about what's out there" (May 11, 2011). Moriah also noted her open-mindedness, and her sense that a change had occurred in the depth of how open she is now as well as an obligation to help others be more open;

I would like to think I was open-minded before, but I think I am more so now. I almost feel that I need to advocate a little bit too, for people; for them and their country and their

culture, because you see them in a different light than what's portrayed to everybody else (May 11, 2011).

Guru identified the importance of questioning deeper and critical thinking in the classroom:

I think it's important that we teach our students to question things and to go deeper and don't just take what you see for what it is. It's important that you create your own thoughts and that you create your own opinions. And that, obviously, evolves through critical thinking. So, as an educator, that would be my role to be able to bring a lot of critical thinking into my classroom, so that my students are capable and feel confident to do that (May 11, 2011).

Jenny also had some critical reflections on her perspective of her home education system as she experienced a new system. She realized the educational and social influences that the system has on day-to-day teaching, and began to question the norms she holds as a result of the exposure to an education system in another country.

*Developing multiple and critical perspectives.* In some instances, participants noted other deep experiences, where it was difficult to untie their emotions from specific factors of the practicum. Guru compared the experience to a previous international experience she had had. She felt that her new perspective allowed her to have a much deeper experience during her international practicum,

[previously] I was closed-minded and I was thinking, Okay, here I am, this Canadian girl in the middle of Spain. I didn't want to let go of that. I wanted to experience it, but not as

much as I could. So, I guess having firsthand been in Kenya definitely gave me the opportunity to dive feet-first right into actually being in that other perspective and understand that culture. For six weeks I saw the world in a different lens, that was completely different from what I've lived my life, my whole life. So I think that, for me, was a very emotional process and leaving was very difficult (May 11, 2011).

This emotional impact speaks to the personal change that has occurred as a result of this professional experience, and further demonstrates how intertwined the personal and professional are for this overseas experience and perhaps for the teaching profession in general.

*Deepened self-awareness as an educator.* Jane referenced her experience through the program and with the overseas teaching practicum as an opportunity to develop her awareness of others and their perspectives, as well as an awareness of herself. "Everybody should try and teach outside their country at some point. Or outside where they grew up just to get a different perspective. The more perspectives that you have as a teacher, the better. You just need that self-awareness" (May 11, 2011). Jane also expressed how she valued the overseas teaching experience as a true context learning opportunity within the classroom and beyond it.

To explore the research question of how participation in an internationally focused teacher training program, like the Specialization in International Education, facilitates development of global competency, the study asked each participant to describe themselves as a teaching professional at this stage of their training and career development.

No specific theme emerged from the responses that each of the participants provided in describing themselves as educators. They used a variety of descriptors that one might expect in response to this sort of question, such as; compassionate, honest, excited, dedicated,

hardworking, and passionate. These were certainly appropriate answers, however not keys to deeper insight into their professional identities. As addressed earlier, the participants are still constructing the identity of global educator and thus must rely on their current knowledge and concept of an effective educator as the scaffolding for this new identity. Two of the participants make specific reference to their perception of their own position within the continuum of developing as global educators, and that was to say that they were globally aware, implying that they were at the beginning stages of this professional identity. “I wouldn’t say that I’m globally competent, but I would say that I am globally aware” (Moriah, May 11, 2011). “I’m very, I want to say globally aware, but that is not necessarily true. ‘Cuz, you know, I’m globally aware to an extent” (Aaron, May 18, 2011). These responses reveal participant self-awareness, that they are forging a new teacher identity that does not match their established and traditional archetype of teacher. It has been demonstrated in the literature that teacher identity development is referenced to an archetype that is established in childhood and often perpetuated through teacher education programs (Goddard & Foster, 2000; Clandin, 2009). The concept of being a global educator has not completely crystalized for these participants, as they are only in the early stages of considering the skills, attributes and knowledge that define this teacher identity, and can only begin to consider this concept against the existing traditional paradigm.

It was the responses of two individuals that were a little more revealing as to the current perception these students held regarding themselves as teachers. In the first case, Jenny identified herself as apprehensive. She went on to further clarify this label by describing how her perception of teaching was changing as she moved through the course-work within the program and how her paradigm of a teacher was being challenged; “I think that I can stand up and teach math, but now it’s something completely different that I wasn’t aware of. It’s

interesting how it has gone from that, to a whole new perspective on what being a teacher is” (May 20, 2011). In the second case, Jane describes herself as a lifelong learner, further defining this in the context of her teaching by saying, “You just can’t go in and teach year after year the same things. I think you have to adapt to your students and the environment and just continually learn different methods” (May 11, 2011). This response further reflects a theme that came from participants in relation to the idea of not being the teacher of the past and referencing an understanding that they are teachers of the future in what is a changing and increasingly dynamic and responsive profession.

*Authentic opportunities for developing culturally responsive pedagogy.* Each participant had observations of their overseas teaching practicums that helped them describe their experiences. Many of the observations were articulated as comparisons that challenged how they viewed education or their own paradigms of teaching. Jenny spoke about her experience teaching in Sweden, noting similarities and differences to her Canadian experiences. “Yeah, so that obviously influences the whole perspective thing. Um, yeah, it was just great to live in a different country for a while and, kind of, see how they do things and see the similarities and differences between Canada and Sweden” (May 20, 2011). Reflections like this initially appear superficial in nature, as they address the most basic compare and contrast of the new against the familiar. What is more notable is the recognition that perspective is being influenced, and that the participant acknowledges the opportunity to have norms challenged.

Similarly, Guru observed things about herself and where she completed her overseas teaching practicum that forced some comparative reflection;

I guess what I learned is that, first of all, I learned that we live in a world here where we're bombarded with these resources and this technology and this and that and it's so overwhelming that you can't even keep up. And I feel like I'm outdated because I don't even know how to properly use a SMART Board. I think what I learned in Kenya is that, a great teacher isn't a great teacher because you know how to work resources really well. A great teacher is someone who's loving and who's genuine, who actually cares about their students and who takes the time to make a difference. I didn't go to Kenya and learn, all these new strategies about teaching. It's not what I learned. It was something more...and it was something a lot deeper (May 11, 2011).

Moriah reflected on the common elements of education that she observed, but was also struck by particular aspects of the way teaching took place in the Maori community in New Zealand, where she completed her overseas teaching practicum. She initially drew some comparisons stating, "Learning of, what do they do, what do they do different? And what is it that I can bring from there into my classroom?"(May 11, 2011), but ventured deeper into her reflections of the experience and how she was impacted by the leadership and vision demonstrated by her school principal. It was a deep influence and helped summarize much of what the overseas experience had taught her.

Observations of teaching and learning in a new country and with new perspective offer participants an opportunity to balance an established understanding of the teaching profession with a new global influence. Comparison and consideration of another system gives pre-service teachers an opportunity to integrate the new experience, and begin to balance the new global insights with the established, locally gained, understanding.

*Enhanced understanding of global education.* Although all of the results that were gathered through this study were spontaneous and unanticipated, there were a number of themes that emerged through participant responses that were particularly unexpected. These themes have been addressed in this section of the results because they are expressed by several of the respondents and they do not fall within a grouping of responses that the researcher considered when developing the questions, or are predicted by the literature. The unexpected themes were recorded during the second interview session.

One theme that arose which certainly opened a greater understanding of the global education experience, initially appeared paradoxical in nature. Several of the participants made direct reference to the idea that it was not necessary to have travelled to develop global competencies. This unsolicited statement came at a time when each of the participants had just returned from what they described as monumental experiences in their lives. This seemed an unusual thing for participants to mention in the same breath that they were articulating the impact and value of the overseas experience. Jenny made reference as she spoke about becoming a global educator, saying;

But being willing to explore things with your students and, kind of, teach them along the way, um, as you all learn together, kind of thing. Travel experience, I think, is a good attribute for a teacher to have. I don't consider it extremely necessary, but I think it's a good thing to have (May 20, 2011).

Similarly, when Guru described aspects of global competency, she referenced the value of more than travel;

I think that to be globally competent, you don't have to necessarily have travelled the entire world to know everything. I think that it just takes somebody who's motivated and who's willing to keep up with what's going on in the world and to bring that into their classroom, so that they're able to be confident in doing so. And I do definitely believe that travelling and having experienced different cultures can definitely add to that (May 11, 2011).

Moriah, upon reflection of how the travel influenced her, creating a desire to experience more, notes: "I feel more of a need to travel as well, because, not that we can't learn about the world from where you are" (May 11, 2011). Although the participants seem to be presenting a paradox with their statements, they are realizing and expressing the importance of the development of global competencies in any context, not only in overseas settings. The value of the overseas experience is not lost on the participants, but they are reflecting a growing insight and understanding that there are many factors and many contexts that can support the development of global competencies, both structured and unstructured.

Through these clear references to travel not being necessary in the process of becoming a global educator, it appears that participants were realizing that their journey to becoming globally competent educators was not predicated on an overseas experience alone, that their development as global educators was based on a lot more than a trip to a foreign land. Although the participants may not have been making the statement as clearly as Pike (2000), they seemed to be echoing his belief that, "cross cultural experience, in itself, does not automatically result in intercultural understanding or an enlarged worldview" (p. 98).

### Summary

Through data analysis and interpretation this study has revealed important insights into the journey that pre-service teachers embark on through their participation in an internationally themed teacher training program. Notable transitions of the participants' perspectives become evident through the program and the course of this study. In particular, participants' understanding of becoming a global educator, as they move from offering broad definitions of global competency, such as awareness and open mindedness, to more clear statements of personal and professional exploration and development, and the impact it will have in their development as teaching professionals.

Findings of this study also revealed the importance of perceptions and preconceptions in a pre-service teacher's development as a global educator, as participants move from providing responses guided by knowledge and beliefs built on preconceived educational paradigms, to responses guided by experience and profound shifts in perspective and self-realization.

As expected, participants' early responses reflected a hesitation and reluctance to identify themselves as globally competent, however there was a progressive shift toward embracing the identity of global educator after a meaningful and well-structured international experience in the program. While recognizing that the identity of a global educator would take time, effort, nurturing and a commitment to developing it as fully as possible, the critical role that a well-designed teacher preparation program plays in creating the space for teacher's professional growth is clearly revealed in this study.

Through Chapter Four, I have reported findings of the study by presenting the data gathered and an analysis of themes that emerged through this process. In the next chapter, I will

present conclusions drawn from the findings, and offer recommendations for applying discoveries of the findings and conclusions to other related circumstances.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to examine how a cohort of pre-service teachers conceptualize global competency, how their concept of global competencies develops through participation in the Specialization in International Education (SIE) program, and to explore what the development of these competencies means to pre-service teachers. This study was conducted to gain greater insights into the personal and professional development of pre-service teachers through a teacher training program that is globally focused. Although not a mainstream or traditional competency addressed in most teacher training programs, global competency is an area that deserves greater consideration and understanding in light of the undeniable phenomenon of an increasingly interconnected world that is injecting the demands of globalization into the local contexts of teachers and their students.

The profound issues that people face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including climate change, national security and public health, have a global dimension. For much of the world, information technology ensures that news from every corner of the globe can instantly be consumed by the rest of the world. There is a new reality in which people and nations are becoming more interdependent. This growing global interdependence creates a new landscape, where students must be capable to solve problems on a global scale within the context of their own local conditions. From an educational perspective, it is critical that schools and their teachers be equipped to prepare students to be competent in this globally reality (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

## Conclusions

### Conceptualizing Global Competency Involves Multiple Periods of Praxis

As pre-service teachers move through the SIE program, begin to encounter theory related to global competencies, and begin to prepare for an overseas experience, their conceptualizations are quite plastic and still being molded through each new piece of information and each new relevant experience. Early in the study, a number of themes emerged related to the participants' conceptualizations of global competencies. These themes can be categorized as; global awareness, multiple perspectives, appreciation of an interconnected world, and commitment to active citizenship. These conceptualizations of global competency are in line with the conceptual framework that was used to ground this study. The results of this study support this framework, and the findings in the literature (Delvin-Foltz, 2010; Merryfield, 1994, 2008; Pike, 2000; Santoro, 2009; Zhao, 2010) that were used to develop this framework.

Participants in the study defined global educator, aligning additional attributes with the overall framework. Themes related to the attributes of a global educator included; risk taker, connecting the real world to the classroom, and continuous transformation of learning. These attributes identified by the study participants also connect to the characteristics outlined in the conceptual framework; risk taker = confidence and self-efficacy; connecting real world to the classroom = greater global knowledge; continuous transformation of learning = increase in cultural competency and adaptability.

Along the continuum of conceptualizing global competencies, the study reveals that early conceptualizations by pre-service teachers, those that have not yet been internalized, remain imprecise definitions. These early conceptualizations of global competencies are valued

by pre-service teachers, but not articulated in definitive terms. The pre-service teachers in the study can name and start to identify with the global competencies that have been established as the conceptual framework for this study. It seems that, by the nature of self-identifying to participate in the Specialization in International Education, these pre-service teachers entered this program with precursor conceptual understandings that served as a foundation. In the early stages of participation in the study, participants are primarily focused on intellectually engaging with the concepts of global competency. This is an effective starting point, but as outlined in the literature (Flourny, 1993), the real impacts come as a result of addressing global competencies at an intellectual, personal, professional and emotional level. As participants progress through the program and gain experiences that support and confirm the theoretical knowledge, conceptualizations of global competency become clear and more richly described. There is a period of praxis or multiple periods of praxis, where participants begin to apply theory to practice; the value of combining both is clearly noted in the literature (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Walters et al., 2009) and supported by the results of this study.

As pre-service teachers move through the program and have more time and opportunity to reflect on their learning and experiences, there is a transformation of theoretical knowledge and experience into deeper understanding. As noted by Dooly and Villanueva (2006), without critical reflection, an experience is simply practice that does not lead to any transformational change. As the program progresses, particularly at the stage of participation in the overseas experience, there is a notable increase in perspective and a deepening appreciation of cultural diversity and the influence of globalization on themselves and the teaching profession, as they articulate their conceptualization of global educator.

This pathway of broadening mindfulness also influences self-awareness, awareness of others and the important interrelationships that can occur on local and global scales. As described in the literature, this growth occurs as a result of connection, conflict and reflection (Dooly and Villanueva, 2006; Gohier et al., 2007; Walters et al., 2009). This study confirms the importance of the challenge presented by an overseas experience and the benefits that come from facing that sort of challenge (personally and professionally), but also demonstrates what an important phase in professional development these pre-service teachers are entering as the program draws to an end. Participants pronounce that they must remain committed to the concept of being a global educator and that they must stay connected to this developing identity and ongoing cultivation of global competencies within themselves and their future students.

### **Becoming Global Educator Requires Progressive Guidance**

An important consideration in supporting the adoption of personal and professional long-term commitment to the identity of global educator is instilling a dedication to active global citizenship. This study confirms that pre-service teachers need to be guided toward a deeper pledge to professional development beyond simply gaining pedagogical skills. It must be a commitment to gaining perspective and a conviction to act, understanding that actions can have local and global impacts. As noted by Guo (2014), “Global citizenry requires awareness and action consistent with a broad understanding of humanity, the planet and the impact of our decisions on both” (p. 2). Through this study, participants identify awareness, action, and understanding of their impact locally and globally. Their concept of global citizenship is growing and being internalized as they reflect on their identity as a global educator. Teacher training programs need to demonstrate and model what global citizenship means and provide

pre-service teachers the opportunity to explore their concept of citizenship, beyond local boundaries. Through curriculum and experience, as demonstrated through the SIE program, pre-service teachers can begin to gain awareness of their position as global citizens. This awareness needs to be grounded in professional teaching identities, emulated by peers and mentors, to ensure pre-service teachers bring that understanding and commitment to action in their classrooms (Cantalini-Williams et. al, 2014).

The concept of global educator, as described by participants of this study, reflects several attributes that are not unique to this specialized focus and demonstrate that this concept is distinct yet not separate or polarized from other teacher identities. This is an important consideration in establishing the process by which pre-service teachers develop professional skills and professional identities; they need progressive guidance in establishing a new concept of educator through learning and practice as it is constructed on previously established concepts of educator. This concept of global educator need not replace or compete for a space with traditional identities, but as described by Goddard and Foster (2001), needs to be conceptualized as a foundational perspective that challenges traditional teacher identities and serves as a fresh model on which other professional competencies can be grounded.

Through the relatively brief period of this study, students compressed a significant amount of learning and experience as they prepared for the teaching profession. Through this type of program, it has been demonstrated (Barty, 2004) that students must challenge the paradigms of teaching that they hold, and allow an integration of new global insights within the context of local understanding. Through this process, pre-service teachers are forging a new teacher identity that has limited history or context for them. The pre-service teachers involved in

this study are pioneers in establishing the identity of “global educator” and determining the role of global competencies in their future teaching, all without clear role-models or archetypes of this type of educator or teaching professional. The findings of this study reflect the struggle that participants experience in resolving their identity as global educator, as they attempt to combine it with the existing identity they hold, or as they try to deconstruct their concept of teacher and rebuild it with this developing conceptualization of global competency. The intellectual and experiential opportunities gained through the SIE program has equipped these pre-service teachers with the skills to conceptualize and begin to integrate global competencies into their own developing identity of global educator.

Further to the perspective that being a global educator is not a mainstream option and not fully reflected in the supports and recognition within the profession, participants in this study clearly identify their belief that committing to the identity of global educator means embracing the notion of, comfortable with being uncomfortable. There is no safe and familiar pathway to this concept of global educator. Participants see themselves as risk-takers in both the choice to pursue an international-themed teacher training program and in the choice to adopt the identity of global educator. These pre-service teachers are realizing that they are doing something different and special within the profession and understand that the commitment goes beyond a label and requires action beyond a simple nod to the exotic (Santoro & Allard, 2005).

In making commitments of “who” they will be as teachers, participants in this study are clear about their convictions, perhaps more so than might be expected from the average pre-service teacher, in their self-declared affiliation with the identity of global educator. They are making a pledge to continue to develop global competencies and to reflect that knowledge and

experience in their future classrooms; to have a more open perspective and commitment to continue learning and staying current as well as involving students in that learning at both a local and a global level. This overt statement reflects a professional commitment that has a theme of civic responsibility that goes beyond professional and national boundaries. The conceptualization of becoming global citizens, and what that means personally and professionally is becoming more clearly articulated near the end of the program.

Insight into participants' expectations for the Specialization in International Education program can be categorized under two areas; those that are evident and recognized and those that were unexpected and not fully acknowledged. The study reveals that participants were able to outline professional learning expectations that they held prior to their overseas experience, including the expectation of gaining new perspective, developing a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of the world as well as observing new practical teaching strategies and educational models. What participants could not clearly articulate as expectations for the program were the inevitable transformative impacts of the overseas experience. Although there was an understanding by many of the participants that they may learn more "outside of the classroom", beyond what the professional setting of the practicum might impart, they did not have a full appreciation for how fundamental that experience would be in growing their global competencies and cultural awareness. This seems to be an important catalyst, this realization of how vivid and impactful the overseas experience was beyond any preconceived expectation, in deepening the development of a teacher identity grounded in global competencies.

### **Developing Educators' Global Competency through International Teacher Education**

The program components of foundational theory and international practice are important in the development of globally competent teachers as each addresses important areas of learning and skills development. It is important to recognize that the development of global competencies occurs through a reflective and unique way for each participant. When it comes to assessing the impact of participation in the program, it is clear that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The synergy between theory, experience, reflection and peer interaction is what leads to effective development of global competencies, and the program has created this synergy by its structure and delivery. However, restricted by the conventions of post-secondary program delivery and the need to address the outcomes expected of traditional teacher-training programs, a program like the SIE program needs to consider the importance of creating the synergy which leads to effective development of global competencies, and it should not become fossilized in a static delivery model. This synergy seems to effectively occur through the learning and structured experiences delivered in the teacher training program, in concert with the less formal factors of reflection and peer interaction. These are important elements that run throughout the program, supporting deeper conceptual development global education.

The SIE program creates an opportunity to gain and develop knowledge and to subsequently have complementary experiences facilitate a transformation of knowledge into understanding. The development of these competencies, in most cases, is occurring in the absence of clear role-models or existing professional paradigms, further confirming the importance of a well-structured program that integrates theory, practice, reflection and peer interaction. The importance of peers in this process cannot be understated, as this interaction

creates the first stages of developing a community of like-minded practitioners. This community can move with pre-service teachers, from being grounded in a context of learning and development to a period of acting through professional practice.

The international travel component of the Specialization in International Education (SIE) program presents a motivating factor for some participants while creating a new and unfamiliar challenge for others. Throughout this study, it is demonstrated that each participant experiences a combination of excitement and trepidation when considering the international travel component of the SIE. Many participants are drawn to the SIE program because of the opportunity for an overseas teaching experience within a structured learning opportunity. This opportunity offers a means to rationalize a desire to travel and to experience other parts of the world through a legitimate and facilitated educational program.

The opportunity for an overseas teaching experience seemed the crown jewel of the SIE program; the highpoint of participation, and a significant goal and motivator for participants. With that in mind, it was interesting to hear the statements by several participants that they believed that travel and extensive overseas experience was not seen as necessary in becoming a globally competent teacher. Participants reflected an understanding that an international experience is an extremely valuable learning and development opportunity and can be transformative personally and professionally, but also that a global educator is not measured by the number of stamps in their passport, but by what they chose to do with the learning and experiences they have had and their ongoing application and development of global competencies within their classrooms. This belief demonstrates an understanding among study participants, that global competencies are not only something available to frequent travelers, but

can be and should be skills and perspectives held by any educator. The development of global competencies can be enhanced through an overseas experience and the associated challenges that lead to considerable personal and professional growth, however participants identified an important understanding that the integration of global perspectives and competencies into classroom teaching can be part of any local context, regardless of teacher's previous background or experience. The overseas experience should not be the culmination of a program of study, or the final reward of the program, but an experience that further deepens and integrates each participant's conceptualization of global competencies, serving as a springboard for future experience, professional applications and ongoing development.

As discussed through the results of this study, the international experiential teaching practicum played a considerable role in the development of globally competent teachers. Some of the most profound learning occurs through the resolution of conflict, through situations that challenge perceptions and understanding of norms (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Gohier et al., 2007). In analysing the responses of the study participants, the study reveals that the overseas experience was not only an opportunity to develop teaching skills in an international context, it was, more importantly, an experience that put the familiar in an unfamiliar context, leading to real introspection, reflection and challenged perceptions. It is also important to consider the timing of the final set of interviews, considering their recent return from the overseas experience. Interviewing participants immediately after their return may illicit emotionally based claims of transformation and deep learning that cannot be fully confirmed (Killick, 2012). The richness of the responses during the second interview provided valuable insights that guided the conclusions of this study, however it is important to recognize that the experience is very fresh at this stage, and that any learning and change experienced may not yet be fully appreciated.

The overseas experience is certainly an intense and significant influencer, providing an opportunity to challenge perspectives and paradigms. As noted by Pike (2008), there is no questioning the value of overseas experience as a catalyst for deeper understanding and greater self-reflection, but is not in itself the basis for intercultural and global understanding.

### **Identity Formation and Development as a Global Educator**

Regardless of background or age, participants in this study reveal that their previous experiences with education and the paradigms that they hold about the profession and education in general, are rooted in traditional models, making their decision to explore a non-traditional pathway like International Education, an intrepid and forward-thinking one and one that is not necessarily guided by familiar sign-posts. As noted by Lerseth (2013), pre-service teacher identity development has many complexities, including fulfilled expectations of what a teacher should be and affirmation of teaching philosophy and practice by a mentor. Preparing pre-service teachers to become global educators requires a breakdown of many long-held paradigms of what a teacher is, and they should be challenged to reconceptualise, through learning and practice, the teaching profession and its theoretical constructs (Goddard & Foster, 2001).

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for Teacher Education Programs**

*Reflective practice.* Participation in this study provided an opportunity for participants to reflect and explore their feelings and understanding of their experience within the SIE program, and in particular the overseas experience. It has been demonstrated in the literature (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Mwebi & Brigham, 2009; Santoro & Allard, 2005) that critical reflection is

imperative in creating a synergy between the theoretical and practical development of global competencies. The reflective practice is also important for the study of self, as participants make personal discoveries through the experience of unique exposure to teaching, places and people. This tie between personal and professional is highlighted in the literature (Barty, 2004; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Gohier et al., 2007) as a critical aspect of identity development

A recommendation for teacher training programs is to create extensive formal opportunities for individuals and groups to participate in structured reflective practice upon return from their international experiences. This is a critical component in supporting students in solidifying their understanding of the learning that has taken place and the competencies developed through the experience, and is important in reflecting that each individual is part of a growing community of global educators; peers with similar experience and outlook on their entry into the teaching profession and experiences that have molded a teacher identity that is unique, but not solitary. In addition to the recommendation of a formal opportunity to reflect and debrief the overseas experience, it is recommended that the international experience be considered formative, and not scheduled as a capstone to the teacher training program. Although the overseas experience is both administratively and pedagogically more apt to be identified as a final phase of a teacher training program, the literature (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006; Walters et al., 2009) and this study demonstrate the value of a structured opportunity to share and reflect experiences with peers and instructors and to allow further integration of the experience with the other learning that has occurred through the course of the program.

It would be beneficial for participants, in an international-themed teacher training program, to have guided opportunities for goal setting and exploring and discussing expectations

with peers and mentors prior to participating in an overseas practicum. In order to raise self-awareness and to more fully prepare pre-service teachers for the benefits and impact of the overseas teaching experience, a process should be implemented into the training that assists participants in revealing what expectations and preconceptions do exist, to note that it is important to recognize preconceptions and that it is perfectly normal to hold them. Expectations and preconceptions should be explored to understand how they might influence the journey through the SIE program, and explorations of defining “self” are important in broadening perspective and establishing a deeper sense of cultural identity (Bates, 2008; Santoro, 2009), a crucial preparation in creating awareness about other cultural identities (Johnston et. al, 2009; Beyerbach & London, 2008).

Teacher training programs need to consider this continuum of conceptualization, not as a linear process of gaining knowledge through lecture and reading, and then putting it into practice through an overseas teaching practicum, but as a complex and non-sequential process where pre-service teachers move fluidly between practice and knowledge as they integrate each into a developing conceptual framework of global educator.

*Global experiences without international travel.* A notable discovery by participants was that more than quantity of international experiences or geographic location of an experience, the quality and significance of the international experience is what had the greatest influence on each of them, both personally and professionally. Further to this discovery, participants also noted a belief that overseas travel is not necessarily essential to become a global educator. This is a valuable observation for giving insight into ways that global competency development may be integrated into teacher training programs, even if participating in an overseas practicum

(albeit highly valued) is restrictive. Quality learning experiences, with a global theme, may be available locally and offer a similar opportunity for growth and perspective development as provided by an overseas experience, but not be as cost prohibitive, or logistically restrictive. Centering global competency development in both international and local contexts could offer teacher training programs the opportunity to deliver globally-oriented teaching experience to more pre-service teachers, without the restrictions created by financial, geographical or personal barriers. Globally-oriented education experiences can be established in local contexts through schools and other organizations, providing practicum opportunities that mirror some of the features of an overseas practicum, without the investment or perceived risk and cost of an overseas experience. With considered planning, these local globally-oriented experiences could challenge conformity and traditional teaching contexts, like an overseas experience does, drawing a greater focus on the globalized nature of teaching, within the local context.

### **Recommendations for Teacher Educators**

*Model global competency.* Although all of the participants in this study identified intrinsic motivations and genuine interest in pursuing the development of global competencies through the Specialization in International Education, it was clear that the decision to engage in this non-traditional stream of the teaching profession was influenced and supported by peers and mentors who were able to provide validation and confirmation of the value of pursuing such an experience. Teacher educators need to model global competencies and ensure that pre-service teachers are exposed to mentors and peers, who are global educators and who can exemplify global competencies, throughout a teacher training program.

Pre-service teachers who make the choice to pursue a program like the SIE, come with confidence and self-efficacy, but it is participation in the program that has been shown to significantly influence the development of these competencies (Pike, 2000; Santoro, 2009; Walters et al., 2009), making the importance of positive influencers critical in initiating this opportunity for competency development. It is important to foster positive influence by introducing effective role-models at many levels to help legitimize and to normalize the teacher identity of global educator as it's seemingly fringe nature may still be a barrier for prospective pre-service teachers to embrace it, even for those with an intrinsic interest and sufficient confidence to make the commitment. Teacher training programs should invest in recognising effective teacher educators who are role-models of global competencies. Teacher training programs and the teaching profession in general would benefit from having the opportunity to learn from other professionals who have gained and who use global competencies in their daily work. These professional role-models need not be only classroom teachers, but could be professionals within the broad education field and beyond. In the absence of a rich source of global educators as role models, it would be valuable to draw on the experiences and influence of other globally-minded professionals to assist in the development of, and affirmation of the value of global competencies in the teaching profession.

### **Recommendations for Institutions and Teacher Certification Bodies**

International educational endeavors have long been used to create international opportunities and have served as a platform for addressing international challenges. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the push for a globalized education agenda can be seen as an extension of this tradition, with a more broadly viewed understanding of global interconnectivity. This change reflects a

conceptual shift from international to global; from the idea of going away to experience “it”, to recognizing that “it” is part of your community and that you are part of “it”.

Recognition of the value of global competencies within the teaching profession is something that should be promoted beyond the grassroots actions of trailblazing teachers and teacher training programs, to becoming recognized by teacher certification bodies and teachers’ federations as a fundamental skill-set, imperative for today’s classrooms. An important part of professionalizing global competencies in teaching would be to have teacher training programs and teachers’ federations hold up real examples and champions of this teacher identity and normalize it within the profession (pre-professional and current professional). Although a break from the traditional and familiar, there needs to be a commitment to operating beyond the traditional paradigms of teacher education and to seeking an identity that breaks with convention, encouraging the profession to embrace this concept of globally competent teachers.

In the absence of valued recognition of global competencies by teacher licensure agencies, there is a risk that pre-service teachers will remain unaware of the importance of these competencies for success in their profession and not seek this type of training. Even for those pre-service teachers who do seek out internationalized teacher training programs, the lack of professional recognition may lead to a loss of momentum post-matriculation, leading them to revert to a more traditional identity of educator and abandoning the identity of global educator.

Teacher licensing agencies need to consider questions such as; what ways do internationally themed teacher training programs better prepare teachers to address issues of globalization, and what data is necessary to measure the impact of internationalizing teacher education on student achievement (NAFSA, 2012). Global competency standards need to be

established in the teaching profession to guide certification and teacher training expectations. Recognition needs to become instituted in a more formal way within the profession, so that the identity of being a global educator moves from a status of marginal specialization, to acknowledgment that global competencies in teaching are critical in preparing students for constructive global engagement.

Globalization is not a temporary consideration that is peripheral to the teaching profession. It intersects all aspects of life and highlights the notion that education needs to take notice that the rest of the world matters (Britzman, 2000). Global competencies do not only address the needs of a culturally diverse classroom; they are essential for any teacher shepherding students through the global realities of their own lives and to effectively guide them toward success in an increasingly interconnected world within global and local contexts. There are models in education that teacher certification bodies can consider. One initiative is focused on creating an inventory of important competencies for professionals working in international education at the post-secondary level (NAFSA, 2015). This initiative endeavours to professionalize the concepts of global competencies and demonstrates the opportunity for similar recognition by policy makers within the teaching profession.

Teaching is a profession that is focused on the future, and the future is a globalised and interconnected world. The teaching profession and the standards that guide professional certification need to consider globalization and the importance of training globally competent teachers and recognizing that competency in their professional certification.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study has opened up questions about how pre-service teachers conceptualize and develop global competencies through a teacher training program. As outlined previously, there are limitations to this study that open up consideration for future research and opportunities to expand on the findings of this study.

As this study has a temporal constraint, and limitations to follow the progressive development of global competencies in a group of preservice teachers as they enter their profession, a recommended future study would be one with a longitudinal focus. Further research could be focused on how pre-service teachers transition to a professional setting and how they continue to nurture and grow the global competencies they have begun to develop. A longitudinal study that follows several pre-service teachers engaged in an internationally themed teacher training program, through to early professional experiences and ongoing development as educators, would be valuable in revealing the impact and evolution of global competencies on individuals and the larger professional community. Understanding the professional pathways that participants follow, and the extent to which global competencies influence both personal and professional choices, activities and behaviour, would be very valuable in gaining insight into the impact of the teacher training program and the proliferation of global competencies into the profession. This type of longitudinal study may offer insights into the types of supports and professional development that would assist an individual's ongoing growth as a global educator.

This study was limited in its ability to offer a comparison of the conceptualization of global competencies between preservice teachers engaged in a globally focused teacher education program with those of preservice teachers engaged in a more traditional teacher

training program. The University of Prince Edward Island Bachelor of Education program does have both, preservice teachers enrolled in a Specialization in International Education, and those who are not. The opportunity for a comparison on how these two groups conceptualize global competencies over the course of their program of study would provide a valuable insight into the impact and relative effectiveness of the specialized program, as well as insights into perceived value of global competencies by a broader group of pre-service teachers. This sort of parallel study could also reveal more specific detail about what type of student chooses the Specialization in International Education, and what future programming changes might allow for a more comprehensive focus on developing global competencies in all preservice teachers, without the need for self-selection into an internationally-focused stream.

As a case study with a small sample size of participants, this study may be limited in the generalizability of the conclusions. Although the case study model does allow for deeper connections to the findings and there is transferability of conclusions to similar contexts, there may be value in conducting a similar study on a larger group of pre-service teachers to capture more data related to the research questions. A larger study would require more resources to conduct, but the larger amount of data gathered may lead to more clear generalizability of the results.

This study, like most, attempts to answer research questions to contribute to the collective understanding of particular fields and phenomenon, but there is always room for future research to complement and advance on the findings and conclusions of the previous study. A single study cannot answer all of the questions, and should always lead to more.

### **Reflection on My Learning Journey through this Study**

As would be expected, over the course of this study I have gained a deeper and re-framed view and understanding of global competencies and their role in the development of pre-service teachers. Upon reflection on my journey through this process, I realize that there has been a broader scope of learning and growth, outside of the content of this particular study.

In conducting this study and having to learn at each stage how to appropriately and effectively manage the research process, I have developed a deeper understanding of educational research. Through the research process, I gained new insights and understanding for how to design, implement and report an educational research study. This was a journey that challenged me and required me to reflect and refocus on many occasions, as the process unfolded and lead me to consider and re-consider each step. Maintaining the stamina and commitment to the research process, particularly through periods when momentum would wane and the context of the study would temporary lose focus, was a challenge. The process followed a non-linear pathway. The experience moved me through a journey where I advanced through the research process, but invariably would find myself revisiting information and reanalyzing data, albeit with a new perspective that helped guide the study toward its inevitable conclusion. Even the idea of concluding the study felt incomplete, as I had to balance the need to complete, with questions about alternate routes the study might have taken and missed observations that may have impacted the conclusions. These are important reflections that further confirm for me that the context and process of the study had a greater impact on me than I (the researcher) had on the outcome of the study.

Conducting this research study has contributed to my personal and professional growth, in a number of ways. In most professions, there are rarely absolutes about the “right way” to do a job, and it is important to realize that continual inquiry, reflection and renewal are critical in guiding effective professional development. The research process has confirmed for me that there is value in applying the principles learned through that process to my profession and ongoing development in the work I do. This has been a journey that has impacted me personally as well. The research process has challenged me, rewarded me and given me an opportunity to reflect on the transferable skills gained through this experience, and has made me realize what I am capable of. I have also developed an appreciation for the broader nature of research methodologies and the types of studies that can be conducted in the education field. Coming from a scientific background in my undergraduate studies, I had a limited sense of how research can be conducted and the results interpreted and applied, but through the process of conducting this study, I see a greater range of research models and recognizable methodologies to conduct research to answer questions that arise in the education field.

Reflecting on the specific content and conclusions of the study has also had an impact on me. I believe I have gained a greater understanding of the concept of global competency and a realization of the importance of these skills for all people. Some jobs come with an international label, and it may seem that these are the positions in society that would exclusively require global competencies; however, as a result of this study I more fully appreciate that most jobs (teachers, and beyond) are part of a new global context that require everyone to be equipped with global competencies. There is a rich history of identifying how international experience can augment the skills of various professionals, but the new global reality is revealing that everyone needs to have global perspective, global understanding and a sense of global responsibility

(personally and professionally) to effectively participate and contribute to society. My own profession, although set in a local context, is influenced and impacted by global interconnectedness. I realize that my interactions with the students with whom I work, the co-workers with whom I collaborate, and the information that I have to manage and assess, all have a global context and all require me to have developed global competencies and perspectives to effectively fulfill the requirements of my professional role.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This study provides greater insight into the perspectives and expectations that pre-service teachers have in relation to their development as global educators, and how they conceptualize global competencies. Grounded in traditional teacher identities, pre-service teachers need to have guided opportunities to deconstruct existing paradigms of what an educator is in order to fully integrate the developing concept of global educator. This deconstruction of traditional models can be further facilitated with the introduction of new role models in the form of peers and current professionals who demonstrate global competencies. These peer and role model interactions are valuable as guide posts along the developmental journey, and can serve as valuable confirmations to support the conceptualization of global competencies and assimilation of these competencies into a developing teacher identity.

Although open-minded and believing to be objective about each experience (unencumbered by preconceptions), pre-service teachers in this study were faced with the realization that expectations and preconceptions do exist and that they need to be recognized in advance of and during the program to be aware of the influence that they have on learning and to address them in the context of these new experiences. There is a Chinese proverb that states,

“we see what is behind our eyes”. It is recognition of this lens of prior experience and understanding, and how it guides integration and acceptance of new experiences that is critical in preparing pre-service teachers for the development opportunity presented through an internationally-themed teacher training program. Expectations and preconceptions need to be explored and considered in advance of a significant experiential learning opportunity like an overseas teaching practicum. The overseas practicum presents an opportunity for a real experience that leads to real understanding, beyond generalizations, and can support reframing preconceptions about others, about places, about professional paradigms and about self.

Likened to drinking from a fire hose, the international practicum can be so intense in its influence on participants that it is difficult for them to fully reflect on and realize all they have experienced. The significance of the international practicum blurs the lines between professional and personal impacts. This coupling of personal and professional influence is a natural part of the overseas practicum and is also a reflection of the teaching profession itself, where the lines between personal and professional can be difficult to define. It is the intensity of this practical experience that makes it such an important influencer and critical in opening participants up to new perspectives and new understandings of themselves and the world around them. As quoted by the recent winner of the Times Higher Education Most Innovative Teacher of the Year award, Dr. Momodou Sallah, “You learn not only with your head but also with your heart; students learn about cultural competencies, about teamwork and about organisational skills in a very practical and vivid way” (Times Higher Education, January, 2016). This is further confirmation of the value and importance that a structured overseas experience has on supporting the development of global competencies, and how intrinsically tied the practical and affective elements are in this process.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Invitation to Participate

#### ***Invitation to Participate in the research study, "Preparing pre-service teachers to be global educators: A case study"***

Dear potential participant,

This is an invitation to participate in research being conducted by Master of Education student, Darcy McCardle under the supervision of Assistant Professor, Dr. Linyuan Guo and Dean of Education, Dr. Tim Goddard at the University of Prince Edward Island.

This study will explore the impact of participating in the Specialization in International Education program on developing global competencies in pre-service teachers and will generate new insights into the experiences of pre-service teachers enrolled in such a globally themed teacher education program.

Participation in the study involves participation in two interview sessions and one focus group session. The interviews should take approximately 30 minutes to complete, and it is expected that the focus group session will take approximately 30 minutes as well.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participating in the study at any point. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the study, so that your identity is not associated with any of the data or results of the study. Only the researchers will have access to these data.

If you chose to participate in the study and are identified as a participant, you will be asked to read and sign an Informed Consent Form. If you have any concerns during or after the

participation in this study, you are encouraged to discuss these at any time with the researcher, or contact the University of Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board (Lynn MacPhee at [lmacphee@upei.ca](mailto:lmacphee@upei.ca)) .

Your participation in this study allows you to engage in research that will expand our understanding of the development of pre-service teachers as they become global educators, and provide an opportunity for a formal reflection process for your own experience in this program. This type of reflection has been identified as a critical component in successfully implementing these international experiences into the personal and professional identities of participants (Walters. et al., 2009).

Please indicate your willingness to participate in this study by printing your name below, and providing your contact information for follow-up.

Thank you for your time and consideration in participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Darcy McCardle

Master of Education Student

University of Prince Edward Island

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Name

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Email

**Appendix B: Informed Consent Form****Date:****Study Name:** Preparing pre-service teachers to be global educators: A case study**Researchers:** Darcy McCardle (Master of Education candidate)

Telephone: 566-0634

Email: dmccardle@upei.ca

**Sponsors:** Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island**Purpose of the Research:**

To investigate to what extent participation in the Specialization in International Education impacts pre-service teachers' development as global educators.

**What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:**

The research will take place at the University of Prince Edward Island campus, and you will be asked to participate in a focus group and in interviews to share your insights, understandings and experiences related to becoming a global educator through your enrolment as a pre-service teacher in the UPEI Specialization in International Education. Your participation will include two individual interviews, and a focus group session with up to 5 of your peers. Each of these three sessions will take between a half of an hour and one hour in length to complete, and will be conducted over the course of the Winter 2011 semester. The first interview will be planned for January 2011, the focus group in April 2011 and the final interview upon your return from your overseas teaching placement (May 2011).

The interviews and focus group will be audio taped and subsequently transcribed. Some of your responses may be quoted verbatim in the final report of this study, with the appropriate pseudonym associated to protect anonymity.

The data collected in this study may also inform a larger research project and may be used in a variety of public presentations and written publications.

**Who Can Participate:**

Participants were selected for this study through an open invitation to all students currently enrolled in the Specialization in International Education program. From the group of respondents who indicated a willingness to participate, a group of 5 participants was selected as a sample representative of the gender ration of the current program, and with a goal to represent geographical diversity based on the location of the planned overseas placements identified by each participant.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

**Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:**

Participation in this study may provide greater insight into the process that you, as a pre-service teachers go through as you develop into a global educator. You have an opportunity to contribute to this area of research and to support a deeper understanding of the impact of internationally focused teacher education programs on the development of pre-service teachers. Also, your participation in this research project may expose you to the process and methods used in educational research, adding to your own research skills.

You will have an opportunity to share your experiences and to become a part of this important research, and to have the benefit of formal opportunities to reflect on your experiences in the Specialization in International Education, which has been shown to be a critical component in ensuring that participants understand the impact of their international experience and associated

learning, and begin to implement that into who they are as people and as teachers (Walters. et al., 2009).

**Report of Results:**

Upon completion of this study, and subsequent thesis defense by the principal investigator, you will be informed of the availability of the final document so that you may see the results of the study. During the course of the research project, you will be asked to review transcripts of your interview and focus group participation to verify the accuracy of the information captured.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with the University of Prince Edward Island either now, or in the future.

**Withdrawal from the Study:**

You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, the University of Prince Edward Island, or any other group associated with this project.

**Confidentiality:**

All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility and only research staff will have access to this information. Your anonymity will be maintained throughout the study, and your identity will not be associated to any of the data or reports, with pseudonyms used in reporting the data. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

### Questions About the Research?

If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Darcy McCardle (contact information above) at any time. This research has been reviewed by the University's Research Ethics Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact Lynn MacPhee at 902-620-5104 or [lmacphee@upei.ca](mailto:lmacphee@upei.ca). A copy of the signed consent form will be provided to you.

### Legal Rights and Signatures:

I \_\_\_\_\_ consent to participate in \_\_\_\_ *Preparing pre-service teachers to be global educators: A case study* \_\_\_\_ conducted by *Darcy McCardle*. I have understood the nature of the project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent to:

- Participate in the research study
- Allow audio recordings of the interview and focus group sessions
- Allow the use of my direct quotes in the research report
- Allow the use of this data in future studies

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Participant

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator

### **Appendix C: First Interview Protocol**

**March 2011**

The interview began with a reintroduction to the purpose and focus of the study, as well as reconfirmation of the confidentiality and anonymity that would be maintained throughout the study. The interviewee had the opportunity to review the consent form they signed and the rights that they had as a participant in the study.

The interviewer noted that the interview would be recorded and that the interviewer may take notes occasionally during the interview.

Questions:

1. What words would you use to describe a global educator?
2. What would be your definition of global competency?
3. What do you think are the attributes of a globally competent teacher?
4. As a pre-service teacher, what words would you use to describe yourself as a teaching professional?
5. What would you identify as the reason(s) that you chose to enroll in the Specialization in International Education program?
6. What are your expectations of the SIE in preparing you as a global educator? What do you hope to learn and experience through this program?

## **Appendix D: Second Interview Protocol**

**May 2011**

The interview began with a reintroduction to the purpose and focus of the study, as well as reconfirmation of the confidentiality and anonymity that would be maintained throughout the study. The interviewee had the opportunity to review the consent form they signed and the rights that they had as a participant in the study.

The interviewer noted that the interview would be recorded and that the interviewer may take notes occasionally during the interview.

1. Would you describe yourself as a Global Educator? How would you define yourself as a Global Educator?
2. How would you define global competency? What are the attributes of a globally competent teacher?
3. How do you feel that participation in this program has facilitated your development of global competencies? How do you feel the international practicum experience contributed to your development of global competencies?
4. How has participation in this program impacted your development as a global educator? What factors had the greatest impact on your development?
5. Do you feel that you have experienced a change A) professionally and B) personally, as a result of your participation in this program? Can you identify these what these changes are?
6. What would you identify as the three most significant factors that influenced the changes you experienced A) professionally and B) personally?

## Appendix E: Copy of Ethics Approval



550 University Avenue  
Charlottetown  
Prince Edward Island  
Canada C1A 4P3

January 4, 2011

Darcy McCardle  
Faculty of Education

Dear Mr. McCardle,

Re: REB Ref # 6004002

**“Preparing Pre-Service Teacher to be Global Educators.”**

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that the proposal has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to the ORD prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to ORD not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal form can be downloaded from the ORD website [http://www.upei.ca/research/reb\\_forms](http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms)

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

*Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.*

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

Lori Weeks, Ph.D.  
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board

cc. Dr. Linyuan Guo