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Examining the Value of Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) in Cultivating Agency-focused, (Inter)Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy: A Story of One Collaborative International Project for English Learners

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Cover Page Footnote

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Examining the Value of Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) in Cultivating Agency-focused, (Inter)Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy: A Story of One Collaborative International Project for English Learners

ZUZANA TOMAŠ, MARGITA VOJTKULAKOVA, NIKOLA LEHOTSKA, AND MARIE SCHOTTIN

Over the past five years, our two institutions, Estabrook Elementary School and Eastern Michigan University (EMU), both in Washtenaw County, Michigan have worked closely together on a collaborative afterschool program. Marie, one of the authors, has been associated with the afterschool program in the capacity of the Estabrook Elementary English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher for several years and her roles involved recruiting students, helping assess the students, shaping the afterschool program curriculum, and assisting in logistics such as arranging for busing, etc. She often refers to her engagement with the afterschool English Learners (ELs) as one of the most meaningful activities in which she is involved at the school: “I love seeing my ELs learning together and supporting one another in a shared space.” Zuzana, an English as a Second Language (ESL)/ Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Associate Professor at EMU frequently spearheads the program from the university side. For her, it is “the most meaningful way of teaching preservice teachers how to work with ELs—what they can get out of a class bound to the university campus can never come close to what they get out of real interactions with ELs and guided reflections on these interactions.” Margita Vojtkulakova and Nikola Lehotska—teachers who came to Michigan from Slovakia in order to pursue graduate degrees in TESOL were instrumental in helping to organize and run two iterations of the afterschool program in 2019 and 2020,

along with other classmates and volunteers. For them, this participation helped with “understanding the local school environment, ESL policies, and connecting with a local EL community” (Margita) and “connecting university course content, including a thesis project on online international exchanges with the classroom reality” (Nikola).

At its conception, this afterschool program was conceived primarily as an opportunity to provide linguistic and cultural enrichment along with remediation for the increasing number of ELs at the elementary school and training ground for preservice teachers pursuing ESL credentials at EMU. Culturally and linguistically relevant practices were enacted through translanguaging practices (see Garcia et al., 2016) such as peer-to-peer clarifications, multilingual dictionary use, or strategic matching of ELs and preservice teachers who spoke students’ home languages (primarily Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, French, Amharic, and Albanian), and increased connections with EL families. ELs’ multilingual abilities and multicultural backgrounds were always affirmed by the participating teachers and preservice teachers positively commented on the value of speaking multiple languages and navigating multiple cultures.

While we and the school staff were already very proud of the afterschool program, we wanted to explore ways of furthering our pedagogy with ELs, following recent calls by Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) scholars (e.g., Paris & Alim, 2017). If the ultimate CSP goals for diverse students are to be able to maintain their cultural practices, while

simultaneously learning how to critique dominant power structures (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 5), ELs need to develop an identity as both multicultural and multilingual local actors and global citizens with a strong sense of agency that allows them to effectively solve problems and take action.

In reflecting on these aspirations, an idea emerged—we decided to bring an international partner into our afterschool program. Capitalizing on Zuzana, Margita, and Nikola’s Slovak background, we approached teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and their 5th grade students in Slovakia to explore possible collaboration. The idea behind this partnership centered on a teacher-facilitated online intercultural exchange (OIE) designed to foster rich growth opportunities for all involved, as will be described in this article. At the most basic level, OIE is conceptualized as an exchange of at least two groups of learners who come from different cultural backgrounds and geographical regions in order to communicate together virtually (Lewis & O’Dowd, 2016) with the goal of furthering 21st century skills, specific subject area content, and/or language competencies. An opportunity for such a positive international exchange prompted us to think about cultural responsiveness more globally. We found ourselves moving beyond thinking about pedagogy in terms of “cultural responsiveness” and toward conceptualizing “intercultural” responsiveness that encompasses both the assets related to one’s immediate cultural background and one’s potential for global citizenship.

To make the afterschool program curriculum “intercultural” responsive, we knew we needed to find ways to authentically engage all learners in global citizenship, which is most organically accomplished through purposeful, authentic projects that cultivate student agency. We began by brainstorming agency-centered projects with opportunities for ELs to engage all their linguistic resources (e.g., through translanguaging) during negotiations of various roles and tasks during the afterschool program and in similar academic tasks (Al Zidjaly, 2009). To this end, we ensured that each of the two iterations of the afterschool program that will be described in this article included the OIE between the U.S. and Slovak elementary schools prioritized (inter)cultural responsiveness while simultaneously attending to the development of literacy and fostering of agency. Specifically, we set the following goals to guide the development and implementation of the OIE between our afterschool program for upper elementary ELs and 5th grade EFL learners in Slovakia:

1. **(Inter)cultural responsiveness (ICR) goal:** Promoting an asset-based view of ELs as multilingual, (inter)cultural individuals and global citizens;
2. **Linguistic responsiveness (LR) goal:** Engaging ELs in meaningful language and literacy development opportunities to further English while honoring and leveraging home language(s);
3. **Agency (A) goal:** Cultivating ELs’ personal and collective agency in both local and global contexts.

With these goals driving instruction of the Michigan and Slovak ELs, both the 2019 and 2020 OIEs succeeded in creating empowering, educational micro-experiences that helped shape these students’ developing identities as agentive, self-efficacious, global citizens capable of making positive contributions to their local and global communities. In the sections that follow, we describe how (inter)cultural responsiveness, along with linguistic responsiveness and agency, were enacted during two recent OIE iterations of which we are particularly proud. We found these experiences especially powerful because they centered ELs’ agency through linguistically and (inter)culturally responsive approaches, and transpired during extraordinary sociopolitical times. Specifically, the 2019 program was unique due to intense, anti-immigrant sentiments experienced in the state of Michigan and the U.S. at large (e.g., family separations at the Mexico-U.S. border, frequent ICE raids aimed at deporting undocumented immigrants). The 2020 program was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Being able to engage with ELs through this innovative program during these difficult times was one of the most meaningful professional experiences in our teaching careers. (For more general information about the program and its structure, see Appendix 1. For the program overviews see Appendices 2 and 4).

Enacting Agency-Focused, (Inter)Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy in Practice

Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) in 2019: Teaching International Peers about My School and Community. In line with CSP and our emphasis on (inter)cultural capacity and agency, we designed the 2019 afterschool program around the idea that Michigan-based ELs need opportunities for positive self-identification as multilingual and multicultural global citizens who were, at that particular point in time, rooted in *their* school and community regardless of their or their

parents’ histories or immigration status. Emphasizing the concept of *belonging* was particularly important to us during the 2019 program given the difficult sociopolitical events that year, as mentioned earlier. To help us cultivate a sense of belonging amidst such difficult times, along with other language, literacy, (inter)cultural, and agency-related goals, we based the program on the idea that ELs are capable of teaching others about their community and supporting peers’ English language learning—an idea that was also embraced by Monika and her 5th grade ELs in Slovakia.

To create conditions for agency, we presented the OIE experience to the ELs in Michigan through the lens of an advantage that they had in terms of opportunities to use English and access to an English speaking community that other students (i.e., Slovak EFL learners with limited English instruction) lacked—an asset-oriented framing not typically experienced by ELs throughout a typical instructional day. ELs in the afterschool program were told that they were expected to teach Slovak EFL learners about their life in the U.S. and to act as expert editors and help Slovak EFL students with their writing. These goals are captured in the Table 1.

Our Slovak partner embraced the three above goals as we found a way to cleverly present the intercultural collaboration as an empowering opportunity for the Slovak students, too. By reframing what is typically viewed as a disadvantage in English education in Slovakia—excessive focus on grammar teaching—through the lens of an advantage, the Slovak 5th graders felt empowered to help their Michigan peers edit their writing. After all, they were told, because their English language education focused on grammar, unlike education in the U.S., the students were in a great position to help improve Michigan ELs’s writing.

So, how did this international, asset-based “scheming”

work in practice? After each group of ELs took and described photographs of their school community spaces (e.g., classrooms, playgrounds, cafeteria, etc.), they shared their writing with their peers who provided suggestions on their writing pieces. Subsequently, teachers guided their respective students through evaluating peer feedback and making revisions. The voice of all ELs was valued and their writing served as an opportunity to encourage further discussions about language and culture. For instance, after reading Amina’s writing about her favorite activities in Michigan, Katarina, a Slovak learner, expressed her surprise at the fact that girls in the U.S. schools participate in sports activities (e.g., Girls on the Run) alongside their teachers. Katarina correctly picked up on a subtle cultural difference—in more hierarchical societies that maintain a greater distance between students and teachers, participating in activities together is not common. A Michigan-based EL, Yousef, noticed that Slovak learners write “funny Ts that looked more like Fs.” Indeed, this was another good observation and a reminder to Slovak EFL learners that they needed to make certain changes to make their cursive writing in English more legible to their English-speaking peers.

As students read one another’s writing, they were guided to provide feedback that their peers could use to improve their writing. Preservice teachers guided them to balance suggestions for revisions (mostly about adding descriptive adjectives and details—“I want to know more about what they do after school.”) with positive comments (“I like how much they told us about their school.” “I like the hard words they used in the writing.”). Through this experience and an authentic audience of international peers, ELs learned about the importance of revising work, editing, and peer review firsthand. They also learned that writing can be informed

Table 1
2019 OIE Visual Organizer of Goals

Linguistic Responsiveness	(Inter)cultural Responsiveness	Agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Developing vocabulary for descriptive and informative writing · Practicing revising and editing skills · Providing peer feedback and evaluating peer review · Leveraging first language to develop English through translanguaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Promoting diverse voices and gaining intercultural experiences · Deepening pride in ELs’ multilingualism and multiculturalism · Developing a sense of belonging in the local culture, alongside any additional affiliations, including global citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Developing identity as a member of a global learning community (serving as an asset to international peers) · Gaining self-confidence and self-efficacy in one’s ability to use English

and improved by peer work, rather than simply output to be corrected by the teacher. Both groups of ELs felt empowered by sharing their expertise on their own community.

In addition to individual writing tasks in which ELs practiced descriptive vocabulary and specific grammatical constructions about their daily lives or favorite activities (see Appendix 2 for the program organizer and Appendix 3 for a sample lesson plan), ELs were also introduced to multimodal composing. ELs appeared to enjoy experimenting with multimodality through tasks that engaged them in taking and describing school photos or making 3D representations of their collaborative writing, such as clay-based dioramas of students' favorite places in Southeast Michigan.

In summary, the 2019 afterschool program succeeded in cultivating the three ideals we aspire to when working with ELs. In terms of linguistically responsive pedagogy, ELs were producing informational and descriptive writing for a real audience, responding to peers' writing, practicing revising and editing, and experimenting with multimodal writing. Even more uniquely, the OIE enacted the principles of (inter)culturally-responsive pedagogy in ways that also fostered learners' agency. Contrasting their common EL identity representations as "outsiders" or "newcomers," this program, through collaboration with an international partner, encouraged the immigrant ELs, to see themselves as "locals" in an American community. Many of these ELs were, likely for the first time, asked by international peers to describe *their* country, state, and community, which meant the U.S. rather than a country their parents had chosen to leave.

Through representing their school and local community in this online collaboration, ELs had opportunities to see themselves as experts capable of enriching the work of others—the students became a resource to empower others and to be empowered (Musil, 2006). The ability to make *choices* in multiple activities (e.g., taking pictures, creating multimodal projects, choosing a topic to talk about) and negotiating revisions with home-based and international peers are also great examples of student agency, ELs were able to showcase their multimodal representations of their descriptive writing about their favorite community-based places and received certificates in recognition of their participation in the program—both sources of great pride and a sense of accomplishment for the participating ELs. The Slovak EFL learners found the exchange tasks meaningful; Monika, the participating Slovak teacher, shared that her students seemed more motivated, always asking "if the Michigan kids

responded to them or sent another video." They also thrived on engaging tasks, especially video production, frequently asking if they could make additional videos. Both the Michigan and Slovak ELs also engaged in translanguaging throughout the program and enjoyed learning how to say "hello" in different languages represented in the OIE.

Online Intercultural Exchange (OIE) in 2020: Creating Community Changemakers

The 2020 program built on the strengths of the 2019 program; given the successfully piloted OIE, we included the online exchange component again. This time, we experimented with using a virtual, collaborative platform called eTwinning. eTwinning is a popular platform that connects European teachers with colleagues across Europe. Together, teachers collaborate on OIEs in partnerships of two or more classrooms that pursue and display projects on the online platform.

Central to the 2020 program was furthering ELs' literacy skills and agency through expanding their capacity to act as *changemakers* in their communities. To accomplish this, we drew upon the Design for Change's (DFC) youth empowerment movement, specifically their FEEL-IMAGINE- DO- SHARE (FIDS) framework (<https://www.dfcworld.com/SITE>). The framework guides students to empathize with community issues (feel), envision solutions (imagine), create an action plan (do), and disseminate the successes (share). By implementing this framework, we promoted a view of our students as self-efficacious changemakers capable of contributing positively to social justice and environmental issues in their communities. Our aim was to increase students' agency by developing their ability to recognize a collective need for action, understand various possibilities for action, take action, and take control over the impact of the action (Shapiro et al., 2016). These aspirations were formulated as goals in Table 2.

To make these goals relatable to young learners in Michigan, we approached them through the topic of helping animals. As we developed this topic and built knowledge about resources in our community, the Michigan ELs in the afterschool program decided to create an awareness campaign about pet welfare and collect financial and material donations for a local Humane Society. Students were guided to work toward a meaningful action, discussing the project's purpose with their class along with their international peers.

Table 2
2020 OIE Visual Organizer of Goals

Linguistic Responsiveness	(Inter)cultural Responsiveness	Agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Practicing communicative functions necessary for local grassroots advocacy and effective international communication along with development of genre knowledge · Leveraging first language to develop English through translanguaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Recognizing that people from all cultures can be assets to their communities · Supporting and providing feedback on international partners' processes in pursuing a community project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Developing identity as confident, self-efficacious agents of change · Learning about global youth changemakers

Similarly, our international partner, the Slovak 5th grade ELs, developed and organized a SWAP market—an event where students could exchange unwanted items—in order to have opportunities for economically disadvantaged families to purchase affordable items while simultaneously limiting the negative impact on the environment. Like the Michigan ELs, the Slovak EFL learners self-initiated this project idea, made all major decisions about how they wanted to help and chose to participate in a particular task force group that was best aligned with their strengths and interests. Katka, their teacher, stated that she was “amazed at how seriously students took the SWAP market project. They were very nervous when giving their presentation at their school assembly and so proud at what they were able to accomplish.”

In the context of the U.S. afterschool program, language and literacy-focused instruction was realized through reading and discussing mentor texts on the topic of animal rescue, responding to texts and videos with the use of sentence



Michigan ELs asking questions during a field trip to a local Humane Society

stems and graphic organizers, multiple vocabulary practice opportunities, and question preparation tasks designed to scaffold the subsequent field trip to the Humane Society. Additionally, Michigan and Slovak students regularly engaged in intercultural communication, updating a shared table with information on progress of their community projects and reflecting on their own and their international peers' project progress. The explicit focus on language and communication helped ensure that the students felt prepared and confident in advocating for their selected cause.

To further foster (inter)cultural and linguistic responsiveness in our lessons, we exposed our afterschool program ELs to inspiring youth around the world, which we accomplished through reading and responding to short readings (e.g., *The Boy Who Saves Camels*), DFC project videos, and our collaboration with the Slovak students. “*The Boy Who Saves Camels*” video included examples of translanguaging to which Arabic-speaking Michigan ELs responded enthusiastically, reporting that they understood and were even able to read several words in the video. The DFC project videos and collaboration with the EFL learners in Slovakia were also particularly powerful as they exposed ELs to children-led, community-impacting projects from around the world, thus enhancing the agentive, linguistic and (inter)cultural responsiveness in our instruction. Both the Michigan and Slovak ELs were guided toward the realization that no matter the cultural background, anyone can take concrete steps and positively influence their community.

One powerful example illustrates well how this meaning-focused, collaborative OIE promoted students' agency. After students worked in their tasks groups, they made a list of supplies they would need to make animal toys for the shelter. Carlos, a Michigan EL, showed true resourcefulness and

exercised his agency when he proposed checking with the school's custodian whether she would be willing to put aside toilet paper rolls for the project. He was able to walk up to the custodian and confidently "negotiate the deal." Carlos had not been identified as a leader in a grouping activity by Marie, his ESL teacher, prior to this task and she was pleased to see his investment in the project and ability to speak up. The example shows how students engaged agency through internalizing the project's intention and pursuing its purpose while interacting and negotiating with peers and other stakeholders in and outside the classroom.

To visualize how the three components—linguistic responsiveness, (inter)cultural responsiveness, and agency—were implemented in this OIE, we include a graphic organizer of the 8-session afterschool program 2020 in Appendix 4. We also include a lesson plan for session 4 in Appendix 5. The session's main focus was to put students' ideas into concrete steps of action, hence highlighting the agency component. Students first separated themselves into task force groups based on their strengths and interests where they brainstormed their action plans. In regard to (inter)cultural responsiveness, students were encouraged to use various resources for translation and translanguaging and relate to global youth through engaging with reading, multimedia, and exchange-related educational experiences and tasks.

To enhance linguistic responsiveness, ELs engaged in a variety of language-focused activities. Among the most valuable in the program were scaffolded questions designed to prepare students to confidently ask questions during the *Questions & Answers* session at the end of the field trip. Indeed, students were praised highly by the Humane Society staff for their confidence and agency related to asking questions about the presentation delivered by the shelter employee. Another helpful linguistic scaffold was a language-focused rehearsal activity prior to group presentations, which gave ELs opportunities to practice their public speaking skills, relying first on useful formulaic expressions, before they had to give their mid-project presentations about their action plans. And while the Michigan ELs did not have an opportunity to present their final project due to the school closure caused by COVID-19, we believe that through linguistically and culturally responsive ways as well as our intercultural framing, ELs were encouraged to utilize their agency as both local members and global citizens. Furthermore, the implementation of these pedagogical practices led to more confident and engaged young learners

who were open to developing problem-solving skills necessary in the 21st century educational context.

Recommendations for Educators

Setting up OIEs and successfully integrating them in the afterschool programs or general school curriculum can take time. However, once established, partners can share tasks and otherwise work to make these kinds of collaborations manageable. In terms of logistics, educators collaborating with European partners may enjoy exploring projects posted on the eTwinning platform (www.etwinning.net/en/pub/get-inspired.htm) mentioned in our description of the 2020 OIE. Educators based in North America who are interested in setting up an OIE project can draw upon the iEarn platform (<https://www.iearn.org/>). Similar to eTwinning, this platform brings together thousands of educators from over 140 countries where participating teachers can choose pre-designed projects, integrate them in their classrooms, and enter international forums to share the progress and outcomes of their work.

Teachers wishing to foster student agency through similar collaborative OIEs can explore the above-described platforms independently to identify possible partners. Another option is to reach out to organizations for ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers, such as TESOL International Association (www.tesol.org) or MITESOL, its Michigan affiliate (www.mitesol.org). Specifically, TESOL discussion boards (e.g., Nonnative English Speaker Teachers Interest Section, English as a Foreign Language Interest Section, etc.) or MITESOL discussion boards and social media websites could be helpful. Alternatively, searching for English teaching associations in specific countries of interest can also be a viable starting point, or simply talking to local EL families who can help with establishing contacts in international contexts with which they may have maintained connections.

Teachers interested in including an agency-focused component in their OIEs may find it useful to connect with local non-profit organizations or nearby institutions of higher education interested in community-engaged work. Teachers can also consider joining an international movement such as DFC (www.dfcworld.com) that includes a growing number of the U.S.-based projects. If embarking on a large-scale, community-based project sounds overwhelming, we recommend working with a colleague or a small group of colleagues on a grade-wide, or even school-wide project.

Getting inspiration from projects implemented by educators in other states or countries may also make starting a project easier than developing an original project. To justify these kinds of projects to school administrators, educators may wish to turn to Place-based Pedagogy and Social Justice Pedagogy for guiding principles that frame their instruction and provide rationale for educating ELs with empowering, agency-focused, community-bound approaches.

If intercultural online collaborations or community-focused projects are not realistic or appropriate in certain contexts, teachers can consider other (inter)culturally and linguistically responsive ways of engaging ELs' development of language, literacy, and agency. One such way is through developing ELs' storytelling, whether oral (e.g., Nykiel-Herbert, 2010) or written in both English and students' home language(s) (e.g., Cummins & Early, 2011; Cummins et al., 2015). Alternatively, ELs can engage in critical multimedia projects in which they practice academic and literacy skills focused on the analysis around cultural representations. Bigelow et al. (2017) report on one such summer program for high school ELs that engaged them in using available languages to "negotiat[e] issues of representation and voice" (p. 195) as they worked on a multimedia culture project and utilized social media to reflect on each other's posting of images and commentary. Finally, an idea worth pursuing involves participatory action research that would engage OIE participants in collaborating on research projects around learning and teaching identities, language development, learning strategies, global citizenship, agency, and other topics relevant to both groups of participants.

Concluding Thoughts

Our OIE succeeded in creating an enriching educational space for ELs to engage in literacy practices in (inter)culturally responsive ways that pushed their linguistic development and provided them with opportunities to exercise their personal and collective agency. As per the report by EL staff at the school, "EL students at Estabrook really enjoyed the OIE aspect of our afterschool program! At the beginning of the school year, they keep asking when it will start and at the end of the program, they express that they are sorry it is over. For students to love staying after school 2+ hours engaged in academic content, says a lot about their enthusiasm." Similar accounts were provided by both Slovak EFL teachers whose learners expressed genuine enthusiasm about English

instruction and voluntarily spent considerable out-of-school time on the exchange projects. While the nature and length of the OIE doesn't warrant immediate academic gains as measured in formal assessments, we believe these empowering, educational micro-experiences significantly contribute to ELs' developing identities as agentive, self-efficacious, global citizens capable of making positive contributions to their local and global communities. It is, after all, these youths who possess unique linguistic and (inter)cultural flexibility that "ideally positions them for success in a diversifying, globalizing world" (Alim & Paris, 2015, p. 80), much in contrast to many of their peers whose monolingualism might, increasingly, be viewed as the real deficit.

We hope that sharing our OIE experience with enacting agency-focused (inter)culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in our context can inform other enrichment or instructional programs. Developing successful OIEs assumes willingness to embrace student agency, which, in turn, assumes a willingness to decenter our positionalities as experts, exploring instead our professional roles as sensitive mediators, thinking partners, fellow citizens, international collaborators, and youth allies. Shifting our teaching toward democratized, empowering, intercultural approaches helps draw out and cultivate a sense of mutuality between ELs from different contexts and commitment to global citizenship while allowing ourselves as their educators to experience more satisfying approaches to working with these diverse youths.

In addition to reflecting on positionality in our work with ELs, our most important takeaway from the program is the importance of centering our students' agency beyond fostering pride in their diversity. Expanding cultural responsiveness to include an intercultural component focused on collective, community-focused problem solving is ultimately what best communicates that our ELs are not only capable, but well-positioned to go on to participate in solving global problems and pursuing educational or career paths that bring them in contact with international communities.

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Nikola Lehotska is a graduate of University of Matej Bel in Slovakia and is currently pursuing MA in TESOL at Eastern Michigan University. She taught English at an elementary school via “Teach for Slovakia” program. She is currently conducting thesis research that examines the impact of online intercultural exchanges for English teachers in Slovakia.



Marie Schottin is an ESL teacher at Estabrook Elementary School. She is a certified SIOP trainer and has presented at TESOL and district professional development conferences. She is currently completing her MA in TESOL at Eastern Michigan University. Her professional interests are in effective elementary EL education and providing general education teachers with training and useful strategies for working with their ESL students.

Appendix 1: General Background about the Afterschool Program

Purpose of the program: To provide additional opportunities for ELs to engage with English language and literacy and with their peers in (inter)culturally, linguistically, and agentive ways.

Collaboration: Collaboration has been built on the partnership between Estabrook Elementary and two Slovak Elementary schools and the EMU's TESOL program, which has included teachers and students fully participating in the program. From the university perspective, this partnership was facilitated by integration of service-learning (SL) pedagogy that provided a way for preservice teachers to attain several of the course goals through a meaningful participation in the afterschool program. This mutually beneficial, community-university approach to preservice teacher education has been shown to be effective in advancing education for university students, faculty and other higher education stakeholders, and community-based ELs (e.g., Fitts & Gross, 2012; Macknish et al., 2018; Tomáš et al., 2020).

Participants

- **ELs in Michigan:** The targeted grades for ELs participating in the afterschool program were 4th and 5th grade students because this group represented the greatest number of ELs per grade level in the school. These students ranged from emergent multilinguals, tested at WIDA 1 or lower to advanced multilinguals, assessed at WIDA 3 or higher. The students spoke a variety of first languages (L1s), including Spanish, French, Amharic, Albanian, Swahili, and Arabic.
- **ELs in Slovakia:** To match the targeted Michigan ELs, the Slovak students were 4th and 5th graders. In general, these students had studied English as a foreign language for 2-5 years. Their English proficiency as per CEFR ranged from PRE-A1-A1+.
- **University students:** Participating preservice teachers have been predominantly white females in their early 20s, enrolled in education and foreign language majors. A majority of the university students had experienced limited interactions with ELs prior to participating in the afterschool program, with some exceptions of students who had participated in international university exchanges, Study Abroad programs, or TaLK internships in Korea. In addition to ELs and preservice teachers, a TESOL faculty member and two Estabrook Elementary teachers were always on site to help facilitate the program as needed.

Program format: The afterschool program typically consists of 8-12 sessions offered twice weekly after the instructional day ends (see Appendix 2 and 4 for session overviews). During the hour between the end of the school day and the beginning of the afterschool program, ELs are guided through computer-based tasks or participate in the Science Olympiad, Girls on the Run and other programs. The school provides a light dinner for the participating ELs and the collaborating university partner has covered the cost of bussing, thanks to a multi-year grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education.

Program outcomes: Over the years, our collaborative afterschool program has yielded some positive outcomes in terms of ELs' English language development, especially as it relates to specific, target vocabulary learning (see Macknish et. al., 2018) and well-attended, with little attrition from either the pool of ELs or the university students. The end-of-the-program feedback has typically suggested that ELs appreciate the program activities, interactions with the university students, and the final celebration of learning that provides ELs with an opportunity to display and share their work with family members. Students enjoy taking any final projects home and they receive a bound binder highlighting the best work of every EL in the program along with any photos taken during the lessons or program activities. University students also walk away from the experience feeling enriched, typically reporting improved understanding of theory and practice connections, deepened commitment to work with and advocacy for ELs, and appreciation for gaining practical professional experience that distinguishes them on the job market.

Appendix 2: Afterschool Program 2019: Connecting Cultures: Introduction to My Community and School	
2019 Afterschool Program Lesson Breakdown	
Codes: LR: Linguistic Responsiveness, (I)CR: Intercultural Responsiveness, A: Agency	
Lesson 1: Introduction to the unit. Brainstorm writing ideas to share with international peers	Lesson 2: Create a multimodal description of the school, discuss video from learners in international partner school
LR: Introduce descriptive vocabulary (I)CR: Create a world map with students' past or present affiliations, introducing the international partner A: Discuss why and how ELs can assist their Slovak peers during the international project	LR: Focus on the language of descriptive writing (There is/ There are, present tense) (I)CR: View/discuss introductory video from Slovak learners A: Examine options for creating a video for Slovak ELs about ELs' American school and community
Lesson 3: Share and compare writing with students from the international partner school	Lesson 4: Improve writing with revising and editing techniques, give peer feedback
LR: Practice informational writing, compare/contrast modes (I)CR: Discuss the value of diverse voices A: Examine what it means to be an asset to international peers	LR: Introduce key vocabulary for giving feedback (sentence frames) (I)CR: Relate to others' cultural experiences, exploring own identity A: Give feedback to Slovak ELs on their texts
Lesson 5: Polish writing, including multimodal component	Lesson 6: Final showcase/celebration with families/guests
LR: Revise, edit, polish, prepare an oral presentation (I)CR: Translanguage during creating of multimodal projects A: Create projects for a real audience	LR: Practice public speaking skills (I)CR: Use English and L1s to present multimodal texts, reflect on the experience with working with an international partner A: Present projects to a real audience

Appendix 3: Afterschool Program 2019: Sample Lesson Plan Outline: Lesson 2 (60 min. long)
<p>Topic: Creating multimodal descriptions of the school places</p> <p>Lesson plan context: After an introductory video from Slovak ELs, Michigan ELs discuss similarities and differences between their school and the Slovak school while simultaneously relating and extending linguistic and cultural references to their experience with language (e.g., How do you say “Hello” in your language?). Students then collaboratively work together to create a multimodal description of their school that they will share with Slovak ELs.</p>
<p>Linguistic Responsiveness (LR) - Language Objectives: Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and express differences and similarities using sentence frames (see Tasks 1, 2, and 3). 2. Use the introductory phrase referring to a source “Based on X” (see Tasks 1 and 2). 3. Describe places around the school using sentence frames (see Tasks 3 and 4). <p>(Inter)Cultural Responsiveness ((I)CR) - Students are encouraged to translanguage, especially when they cannot think of a specific word in English. Students are challenged to recollect the Slovak expression for “hello” and share greetings in other languages with which they are familiar.</p> <p>Agency (A) - Students participate in self-pacing, student-centered tasks, which require them to make their own decisions (e.g., deciding on how to frame and describe school photos). Students are encouraged to share language that other students may not know.</p>

Appendix 3: Afterschool Program 2019: Sample Lesson Plan Outline: Lesson 2 (60 min. long)

Into the Lesson (10 min.)

Materials: A PPT presentation with a short introductory video and photos from Slovak students

Task 1: Relating to a video from Slovak students - Students watch an introductory video from Slovak students and note what they have in common. Teacher models. Think-pair-share strategy is used. Students are given a sentence frame:

Based on the video, we are similar in that we both _____. Teacher asks if students remember how the Slovak students said “hello” in Slovak in the video and encourages other ways of saying hello in languages in which ELs have proficiencies.

Task 2: Comparing schools and communities - Students are presented with descriptions and photos of Slovak school and community. In groups, they discuss similarities and differences with the use of the provided sentence frames:

- Based on the PowerPoint presentation, we are similar in that we both...
- Based on the PowerPoint presentation, we are different because....
- Based on the PowerPoint presentation, Slovak and American schools are similar in that they both....
- Based on the video, we are different because/in that in Slovakia they do X while in Michigan we do Y.

Students brainstorm places of the school to be presented to Slovak Ss. Each group of students is assigned one/more places to take pictures of (e.g., outside of the school, a library, a classroom, an office+other staff offices, gym, cafeteria & lunchroom).

Through the Lesson (45 min.)

Materials: a phone/tablet for taking pictures of school

Task 3: Taking pictures of places around the school (20 min.) - In groups, students are sent on “a mission” to take pictures of an assigned place in the school with Scavenger Hunt-like tasks that engage learners taking a photo while demonstrating an activity done in the particular place (e.g., student/students pretending to eat lunch in the school cafeteria).

Task 4: Describing the photos and sharing written descriptions (25 min.) - In groups, students choose 3-5 photos from the previous task that will be included in the final PowerPoint for Slovak students. Students describe each picture with the minimum of three sentences. Sentence frames are provided (e.g. This is _____. We (students) _____ here. There is/are _____. Teacher models and supports learners, especially newcomers throughout the activity: “This is a gym. We play games like soccer and basketball here. There is a nest, a rope, and other gym equipment.” Teacher encourages students to translanguage if they can’t think of a specific word like “rope” in English. Each group shares the chosen photo and description with the teacher.

Beyond the Lesson (5 min.)

Task 5: Exit ticket - Individually or in pairs, students choose two school places and compare/contrast them. A sentence frame and a model are provided. Teacher monitors production and allows students to share in small groups after everyone has written their sentence. Students are encouraged to translanguage if they can’t think of an English word.

_____ (place 1) and _____ (place 2) are similar/different _____. They are similar/different in that they _____.

Note about differentiation: More advanced ELs can be encouraged to produce longer descriptions. ELs with recent educational experience in other cultures can also be encouraged to compare and contrast the Michigan schools with the schools they have attended elsewhere.

Appendix 4: Afterschool Program 2020: Creating Community Changemakers	
2020 Afterschool Program Lesson Breakdown	
Codes: LR: Linguistic Responsiveness, (I)CR: Intercultural Responsiveness, A: Agency	
Lesson 1: Introductions and presenting the project idea to students	Lesson 2: FEELing the problem and creating questions for the Humane Society workers
LR: Reading a mentor text “The Boy Who Saves Camels,” creating mind maps and defining a “hero” (I)CR: Watching an introductory video from the Slovak students, recording Introduction to Slovak peers & Slovakia, analyzing multilingual video “The Boy Who Saves Camels” A: Using an inspiring story of a young boy who saved camels as a segue to the topic of children as changemakers	LR: Reading a mentor text “Rescuing Entangled Whales,” preparing interview questions for the Humane Society workers (I)CR: Discussing the “FEEL” part of the Slovak students, creating multicultural groups for activities A: Introducing the FIDS Google Doc + reporting on Feel
Lesson 3: Field trip follow-up and coming up with the idea of how to help the Humane Society	Lesson 4: Creating action plans in three task force groups - poster group, digital group, crafts group
LR: Reflecting and Thank you note writing (I)CR: Providing feedback to the Slovak students on their “IMAGINE” part A: Participating in the field trip to the Humane Society, reporting on Imagine, thinking about ways to help the HS	LR: competing in the Vocabulary quiz, filling out an Action Plan Graphic organizer, presenting task force’s action plans to others (I)CR: Using Lis to contribute in each task force, multicultural grouping A: Reporting on “DO”, choosing a task force, presenting action plans to the class
Lesson 5: Proceeding with their action plan - creating posters, and videos to raise awareness and making toys for animals in the shelter	Lesson 6: Proceeding with their action plan - creating posters, and videos to raise awareness and making toys for animals in the shelter
LR: Creating a poster, preparing a YouTube speech, working on toy instructions (I)CR: Translanguaging when making posters and videos A: Giving feedback to Slovak students on their project - FIDS Google Doc	LR: Creating a poster, preparing a YouTube speech, working on toy instructions (I)CR: Translanguaging when making posters and videos A: Finishing the posters, videos, toys, distributing the posters around school and neighborhood, uploading videos to the school’s website, bringing toys to the Humane Society
Lesson 7: Preparing the presentation for parents/guest speaker/Slovak classroom	Lesson 8: Celebration with parents and guest speaker from the Humane Society
LR: Script-writing and preparing notes for presentation (I)CR: Reflecting on the experience, preparing invitations to parents for the final celebration A: Reporting on Share, giving feedback to Slovak students, practicing presentations for parents	LR: Creating Memory Scrapbook (I)CR: Using Lis when presenting A: Celebrating with parents students’ successes

Appendix 5: Afterschool Program 2020: Sample Lesson Plan Outline: Lesson 4 (75 min. long)

Topic: Creating Action Plans in Three Task Force Groups

Lesson plan context: This lesson followed three lessons that built a foundation for the topic of children as changemakers through the use of mentor texts and DFC materials, and interaction with the Slovak partners. This lesson followed a field trip to Humane Society, with the goal of moving from building a foundation in the topic, to having an actual experience, and to preparing an action plan for the collection of financial/material donations and creation of an awareness campaign.

Linguistic Responsiveness (LR) - Language Objectives: Students will be able to:

1. Use infinitives in action plans (e.g., collect toilet paper rolls, create campaign title, etc.)
2. Express FUTURE (e.g., we're going to create posters, we'll need to collect towels, etc.)
3. Use transition words when presenting their action plans (e.g., at first, next, after, last, etc.)

(Inter)Cultural Responsiveness ((I)CR) - Students are encouraged to translanguage, especially in the part where they are revising the vocabulary from the field trip. Students read through Slovak students' action plans, compare it with theirs, and provide feedback. Students also share their action plans with the Slovak partners.

Agency (A) - Students participate in tasks in which they make their own decisions (e.g., selecting a task force based on their interests, creating an action plan, choosing a role they want to take upon during task 3. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experience and share what they have learnt.

Into the Lesson (20 min.)

Materials: A PowerPoint with quiz questions, Letters (A, B, C, D) stuck to different walls, questionnaire

Task 1: Kinesthetic quiz about Humane Society Field Trip - Students are in groups. Teacher asks questions about information presented during the field trip to the Humane Society using visual support on a PPT presentation. Some of the questions are dedicated to revising the key vocabulary from the previous lessons and the field trip (“hero,” “rescue,” “stray,” “changemakers,” “awareness campaign”). The quiz is kinesthetic—after the question and the possible options are read out, one designated member of the team walks to the wall with the appropriate answer (A, B, C, D). After designated students return to their seats, the teacher actively encourages translanguageing here—the teacher asks students how they say the words in their first languages.

Task 2: What are your interests and strengths? - Students receive a questionnaire with 6 questions. Their task is to answer yes/no/maybe and count what group received the most answers with yes. The students make their final decision after they hear the “mission” of each task force group. After the presentation of approximate duties of each group, students reflect individually which task force they will join: Poster group, digital group, or crafts group

Through the Lesson (45 min.)

Materials: An Action Graphic Organizer

Task 3: Creating an Action Plan - Teacher relates the action plan to a house building metaphor: “When we want to build a house, we don’t call the construction company right away. We have to have a plan for the house at first. That’s what we need when we want to change something—we need an action plan.” Students in their groups assign roles to each other (time keeper, writer, presenter, photographer). After, in their task force groups students will create an action plan with the support of a graphic organizer. The graphic organizer contains key areas students need to think about.

Task 4: Presenting their Action Plans - Students come back together and present their action plans to the other two task forces. The students had an opportunity to rehearse the presentations in their task force.

Appendix 5: Afterschool Program 2020: Sample Lesson Plan Outline: Lesson 4 (75 min. long)

Beyond the Lesson (10 min.)

Task 5: 3-2-1 Reflection - Students at first reflect individually answering 3 questions: What 3 things have you learned about the problem? What 2 things have you learned about your classmates? What 1 thing have you learned about yourself? After students are encouraged to share out loud with the whole class.

Task 6: Updating Slovak partners on the DFC's DO stage - Teacher accesses the commonly shared document and together with students read over the action plan of their Slovak partners. They discuss it and provide feedback. After, three student-volunteers update the document with their action plans so Slovak students are informed of the Michigan students' progress.