

ABSTRACT

Tosca Killoran, EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING AN INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURE WITH FOREIGN TEACHERS AND Lǎoshī 老师 WITHIN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CONTEXT (Under the direction of Dr. Matt Militello). Department of Educational Leadership, March 2019.

Educators within international school contexts are proponents of equity and believe that they listen to and advocate for the local teaching assistants, aides, and staff. However, issues of power, organizational structures, and lack of sociocultural knowledge and awareness create divides between the foreign teachers and the local teachers in international school settings. This participatory action research project examined ways international schools can take charge of an equity agenda by creating networked innovation communities that are grounded in a paradigm of hope. Findings indicated that tensions exist between local and foreign hired teachers that are derived from equity issues and the use of promising practices such as Community Learning Exchanges and Networked Innovation Communities may work to mitigate these tensions.

EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING AN INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURE WITH
FOREIGN TEACHERS AND LǎOSHĪ 老师 WITHIN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

CONTEXT

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership

East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfilment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

Tosca Killoran

March, 2019

©Copyright 2019
Tosca Killoran

EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING AN INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURE WITH
FOREIGN TEACHERS AND Lǎoshī 老师 WITHIN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

CONTEXT

by

Tosca Killoran

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF DISSERTATION: _____
Matt Militello, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____
David Siegel, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____
Marjorie Ringler, EdD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____
Lynda Tredway, MA

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

Marjorie Ringler, EdD

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL:

Paul Gemperline, PhD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is extended to Dr. Matt Militello and Lynda Tredway for their reimagined vision of educational leadership, limitless support of my learning, and tireless dedication to equity. I thank the first cohort of the ECU EdD programme for the close knit support offered both synchronously and asynchronously. I thank International School Services for allowing the research to take place within LEVEL 5 and with the SIS community. I generously thank the Community Learning Exchange group who was open and willing to engage in moral, sometimes difficult dialogue and work towards greater equity within the community. I am deeply grateful to the co-practitioner researcher team, Erin Madonna and Vivian Wu, for their insights, wisdom, and bravery throughout this project. Particularly, I thank Simon Richard for both his analytical and emotional support during the harder times of finding my own leadership voice throughout this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TITLE.....	i
COPYRIGHT.....	ii
SIGNATURE.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiv
CHAPTER 1: NAMING AND FRAMING THE FOCUS OF PRACTICE.....	1
Focus of Practice (FoP): The Power of Diverse Networked Communities.....	3
FoP Evidence: Right Place, Right Time.....	5
Clarifying the FoP: Fishbone Diagram.....	5
Improvement Goal (AIM).....	6
Purpose of the Study.....	11
Theory of Action (ToA).....	11
Framework for the FoP.....	12
Significance of the Study.....	12
Action Research Design Overview.....	14
Underpinning the Inquiry with Equity-Centered Design.....	15
Entering the Context.....	18
Participatory Action Research Group Participants: CLE.....	19
The Co-Practitioner Research Team.....	19
Engagement of Participants and Co-Researchers.....	20

FoP Research Questions.....	21
Study Limitations.....	21
Creating Diverse Networked Communities.....	22
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	24
The Politics of Change.....	24
International Schools: Organization and Structure.....	28
Brief History and Purpose of International Schools.....	28
Historical Development of the IB.....	29
IB Serves as Cultural Capital for Constituents.....	32
IB as a Global Brand.....	36
IB Quality Assurance.....	37
Building Global Competency as IB’s Main Goal.....	38
Summary.....	40
Impact of Culture.....	44
Clash of Cultures.....	44
Organizational Culture.....	45
Culture Impacts School Climate.....	47
Summary.....	50
A Rejoinder to IB Homogeneity.....	50
Networked Innovation Communities (NICs).....	53
Technology Capacity as a Tool for Equity.....	55
Design for Equity.....	59
Coaches as Equity Leaders.....	60

Summary.....	62
The Power of Disparate Viewpoints.....	63
CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT OF FOP.....	64
The Pilot Study: Thailand.....	64
The Macro Context of China.....	66
The Meso Context of ISS/LEVEL 5.....	67
The Micro Context of the Co-Practitioner Researcher Team.....	70
Erin Madonna.....	70
Vivian Wu (WenWen).....	71
Risks and Benefits for CPR Team and CLE Group.....	72
Context Informs Practice, Which Informs Change.....	73
CHAPTER 4: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH DESIGN.....	75
Research Design: The Dialogue of Change.....	76
Study Population: Change Agents.....	77
CLE Group: Teachers and TAs.....	77
Co-Practitioner Research Partners (CPR Team).....	82
Data Collection.....	82
Interviews.....	84
Observations.....	84
Artifacts.....	85
Data Analysis.....	85
Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations.....	90
Issues of Trustworthiness and Soundness.....	91

Developing a Networked Community.....	92
CHAPTER 5: PAR CYCLE ONE FINDINGS.....	93
Meetings with Leadership.....	93
LEVEL 5 as an Environment to Foster CLE.....	97
Video & Audio Interviews of Teaching Assistants & Discrete-Skill Development Sessions.....	100
Online Communities for Backchat.....	100
Analytic Narrative.....	102
Discovering Emerging Themes.....	104
Voice.....	104
Protecting the Norm.....	112
A Taste of Change.....	120
Reflecting on my Role as a Leader.....	121
Instances of Transfer.....	124
Revisiting the ToA.....	124
CHAPTER 6: PAR CYCLE TWO FINDINGS.....	127
Leadership Actions.....	127
Meetings with Leadership: What is the Metric of Success?.....	129
Meeting with the principal.....	129
CPR Decision: Survey questions and results.....	131
Analysis of survey results.....	132
Unpacking with the principal.....	135
Discrete-Skill Development, CLE and Observations.....	135
Community Learning Exchanges.....	140

Digital Fishbowl.....	140
Context is King when Coding Data.....	142
Design Thinking: Shoved in a Closet.....	149
Equity Signifiers, Nuggets of Good.....	155
Hierarchical Harmony: A Result of Teacher Assistants’ Voice and Isolation...	158
TA Voice.....	158
Protecting the Norm.....	160
Hierarchical Harmony.....	162
Sea Water or See Water?.....	166
The Mimetic Isomorphism of International Schools.....	166
Vignette: Who Bought the Starbucks Cards?.....	167
CHAPTER 7: PAR CYCLE THREE.....	172
Qi Challenge: A Return to the Equity-Centered Design Framework.....	172
Step One: Invite Diverse Co-Creators, Ideate, and Rapid Prototype.....	176
Step Two and Three: Coding for Equity-Signifiers, Reflect and Redesign.....	176
Step Four: Beta Release and Test the Design.....	178
Beta release.....	180
Beta test road bump: Introducing the title of Lǎoshī.....	180
Step Five: Empathize and Reflect.....	183
Step Six: Analyse Data and Reflect on the Qi Challenge.....	184
Limitations.....	190
Hope in the Transfer.....	190
Lighthouse Practitioners (Equity Agents).....	191

Peter’s Reflection.....	193
A Conversation with Holly.....	194
Megan’s Narrative.....	197
The Wakeup Call: Just Desserts.....	198
Return to the Focus of Practice.....	202
CHAPTER 8: EQUITY PEDAGOGY.....	208
Theory of Action, Redux.....	209
Power of Place, Wisdom of People.....	209
Radical Collaboration.....	211
Summary.....	213
Discoveries.....	213
Noticing and Naming the Phenomena.....	215
Tapping into Expat Fragility as a Norming Device.....	216
The Development of Equity Agents.....	216
What I Got Wrong.....	217
Summary.....	218
Big Assertions.....	219
Assertion One.....	219
Assertion Two.....	222
Summary.....	224
From Theory to Practice: Making it Work.....	224
International School Equity Framework.....	225
1. How do we prepare our community for redesign?.....	226

2. How do we implement these changes?.....	226
3. How do we scale and improve?.....	228
4. What resources do we need to make this happen?.....	228
5. What would these changes look like in practice?.....	228
From Framework to Practice.....	229
Summary.....	236
Limitations, Trustworthiness, and Areas for Potential Future Research.....	236
Methodological Limitations.....	238
Sample Size.....	238
Lack of Prior Research Studies on the Topic.....	238
Self-Reported Data.....	238
Limitations of the Researcher.....	239
Longitudinal Effects.....	239
Cultural and Other Types of Bias.....	240
Language Fluency.....	240
A Burgeoning Change.....	241
Developing the Bravery Muscle in Self and Others.....	243
Practice Vulnerability.....	245
Listen and Have Conversations that Matter.....	246
Embrace Discomfort.....	247
Create Community.....	248
Sight the Lighthouses.....	249
Design for Change.....	249

Conclusion.....	250
REFERENCES.....	254
APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	270
APPENDIX B: FISHBONE DIAGRAMS.....	271
APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER FROM INSTITUTION.....	273
APPENDIX D: WEBSITE AND BLOG FOR CLE.....	274
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES...	275
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS – VOICE, VALUES & ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	276
APPENDIX G: ADULT CONSENT FORM.....	277
APPENDIX H: INVITE EMAIL FOR SURVEY.....	280
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (EMAIL).....	281
APPENDIX J: COMPLETED ACTIONS FOR PAR CYCLE TWO: CLE, QI CHALLENGE, AND STAFF MEETING.....	282
APPENDIX K: QI CHALLENGE.....	283

LIST OF TABLES

1. Logic Model for PAR.....	78
2. Research Questions and Data Sources.....	83
3. Completed Actions for PAR Cycle One.....	94
4. Frequency for the Theme of Voice within the CPR Interview.....	106
5. Evidence for the Theme of Voice within PAR Cycle One.....	113
6. Evidence for Theme of Protecting the Norm within PAR Cycle One.....	114
7. Completed Actions for PAR Cycle Two.....	128
8. Timeline/Participant Data for Discrete Skill PD, CLE, and Observations.....	136
9. Data Gathered on Equity of Space across the Entire Early Years and Elementary School.....	151
10. Tally of Teachers and TAs Responses to Poll of Classroom Spaces.....	154
11. Evidence for the Theme of Voice within the Leadership Actions.....	161
12. Evidence for the Theme of Protecting the Norm within the Leadership Actions.....	163
13. Evidence for the Emerging Theme of Hierarchal Harmony within the Leadership Actions.....	165
14. Transfer Themes and Data Sources.....	192
15. ISS Framework for the Future.....	201
16. Example Practices for Action Items on the International School Equity Framework...	230
17. Example Equity Policy for International Schools.....	237

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Fishbone diagram created with the CPR team.....	7
2. Simplified model of the process to create the driver diagram.....	9
3. Simplified driver diagram.....	10
4. Simplified framework/theory for PAR.....	13
5. The equity-centered design framework from the Stanford d.school.....	17
6. Mapping themes.....	26
7. Mapping ideas, themes, and possible literature bins.....	27
8. IB history timeline.....	30
9. Number of IB schools in each IB region.....	31
10. Growth of IB programs, 2010-2017.....	35
11. The IB learner profile.....	41
12. The structure of the GCD.....	42
13. The global competence matrix.....	43
14. Further mapping of a possible framework for the study.....	52
15. Modified future skills for 2020.....	58
16. Attrition of overseas (foreign hired teachers) and local hired teachers.....	69
17. CLE group mapping their journey lines of gifts and capabilities (October 21, 2018)...	86
18. A framework for data analysis (L. Tredway, personal communication, June 18, 2017).....	88
19. Modified Wodak & Meyer model of empirical research.....	89
20. The LEVEL 5 is an agile space for participants to modify for the needs of the CLE...	98
21. CLE group engaged in discrete-skill professional development sessions.....	99

22. CLE group engaged in WeChat backchat.....	101
23. The model of coding analysis.....	103
24. CLE group creating journey lines of gifts and capabilities.....	110
25. List of TA roles and responsibilities shared during the staff meeting.....	116
26. Screenshot of WeChat conversation in which Erin suggests a new leadership model...	118
27. Tweet of strategies discovered in the discrete skill development CLEs.....	125
28. Flow for meetings with leadership section of Chapter 6.....	130
29. Pie charts for participant attendance to CLE versus response rates on survey.....	133
30. Moving forward together, brainstorming for discrete skill sessions for the new year...	139
31. Screenshot of Google document used for the digital fishbowl protocol.....	141
32. Equity factors compiled from the Equity Maps app.....	144
33. Screenshots of data gathered with the Equity Maps app for the digital fishbowl.....	145
34. Mapping roles and responsibilities.....	147
35. Photo of the brainstorm of essential agreements that TAs felt would increase equity within the school.....	148
36. The CLE brainstorm for creating equitable working spaces.....	150
37. Screenshot of photos taken as examples for teachers of TA working spaces.....	152
38. Photo of Anton’s desk space reimaged through an equity lens.....	157
39. WeChat texts of thanks for the Starbucks gift card.....	169
40. Diagram outline of Chapter 7.....	173
41. Co-created CPR equity-centered design framework.....	175
42. Members of the CLE group ideating equity-building experiences on a prototype.....	177
43. The CLE group mapping gaps in the Qi Challenge.....	179

44. Staff meeting in which Vivian, Erin, and Peter introduced the Qi Challenge and CLEs..... 181

45. Qi Challenge 365 forms participant data..... 185

46. Image of Peter, Sandy, and Holly’s co-designed equitable work space..... 195

47. The SOAR analysis for PAR Cycle Three..... 200

48. WeChat backchannel chat with CLE group..... 204

49. Eleven-day analytic data for the hashtag #qichallenge..... 205

50. The flow towards the big assertions through the PAR cycles..... 214

51. The CLE meets at LEVEL5, a shared space for addressing equity issues..... 223

52. International school equity framework..... 227

53. The Leadership Pendulum model: Understanding leadership through specific attributes and traits..... 244

CHAPTER 1: NAMING AND FRAMING THE FOCUS OF PRACTICE

On my first day as a teacher I entered a cramped classroom full of tiny five-year-old Korean students. I was the first non-Korean person they had seen, and they all promptly burst into tears. In a quiet moment following the panicked wailing, I was forced to make a life-defining choice—quit or teach. It took many years, across continents and countries, to hone my practice as an international educator, my commitment to global citizenship, and my skills and attributes of taking-action. Therefore, I celebrate and fiercely defend international education as a stronghold for change, because I have learned through experience, that teachers develop the next generation of youth who will work for a better tomorrow.

Despite this strong stance, I questioned my career path for several years. The questioning was not caused by a desire to return “home,” the loss of my own culture, or from falling out of love with my practice. Instead, it grew from a deep reflective praxis on equity within international school communities. I observed the very wealthy and privileged children in international schools and asked myself, (1) Are we (international school teachers) just teaching the one percent to become more of the one percent? (2) How equitable is it to espouse the dominant norms of our western values? (3) How many other narratives do we infuse within our practice? (4) How equitable is our enclave of high-priced education to the host nations? (5) How equitable are we to the local staff that landscape, take our trash away, or clean our rooms? (6) How equitable are we to the local co-teachers, teaching assistants, aides and staff who earn a fraction of the wage of their international counterparts? Yes, they earn a better wage than they would receive “outside” the international school context, but this parsimonious justification seemed wrong.

Kant argued the equality of men is grounded in a moral context (Mills, 1997), but within international schools, that egalitarianism is typically only possessed by the fiscally mobile. Teachers hired outside the host nation (foreign-hires) often enjoy employment packages that allow: travel, nannies, personal drivers, housing, fitness, professional development, and potential world-wide relocation. Teachers who are hired from the local population (local-hires) do not receive the same benefits; therefore, they are less economically, politically, socially, or culturally mobile. Despite this issue, international schools spend a great deal of time creating mission statements full of slogans and taglines that hint at strong equity agendas. I have found their work is wasteful, as equity does not emerge from ideological fanfare, rather it is revealed through the hard work of developing trust-based relationships, engaging in difficult conversations, embracing areas of ambiguity, reframing truths, discovering opportunities for active listening, providing places for innovation, and creating shared narratives from the diverse stories within school communities (Evans, 2013; Eubanks, Parish, & Smith, 1997; Rigby & Tredway, 2015). Regrettably, over many years and in many school contexts, I have often observed, and contributed to the subliminal *silencing* of others. Silencing occurs in many forms: when the ability to name one's world, the phenomena one experiences, and one's place within space is denied, that person is silenced. Silencing occurs when teachers are nervous to discuss job security, wage disparity, duty allocation, or job satisfaction. Schools can only illuminate the authenticity of the equity they espouse when silence is broken (Guajardo, Guajardo, Janson, & Militello, 2016; Lear, 2008).

Throughout each chapter of this study I reflect on the ways the participants and I developed systems of greater equity in one international school context through this participatory action research (PAR) project. It was my job as a leader to triangulate on understanding by

seeking and using the stories within one specific community (Rigby & Tredway, 2015) and by literally inviting the stranger that worked alongside me into dialogue I accessed the key to better equity. But why stop at one school? International schools span vast cultures, languages, and learning modalities. The rise of globalization and the power of technology to aid communication across the world, has presented not only challenges from the increasing complexity of schools, but also rich opportunities from new hyper-interconnectivity of the international community (Downes, 2012; Hayden, Thompson, & Walker, 2002; J. Nalder, personal communication, May 1, 2017). In the final chapter of this PAR, I discuss how international schools are well-positioned to take on new theories, models, techniques, tools, as well as, coaches, leaders, and consultants to help answer these questions and enact better equity within this complex paradigm.

In this chapter, I outline the through-lines of the research to clarify the focus of practice (FoP), inclusive of the current versus desired state of equity within international schools. I then review evidence from my own experiences and provide the improvement aims of the study. Later, I anchor those improvements in an equity-centered design thinking framework. I explain the ways I was able to use my position and privilege to make change within the context and state the purpose of the study. Next, I explain the theory of action (ToA) and share the logic model my colleagues and I used throughout the PAR. I discuss the theoretical framework that the research team developed for the PAR and an overview of the action research design. I also introduce the research questions and study limitations. I end the chapter with a reflection on my capacity to affect change and the mindfulness needed to lead with courage and hope.

Focus of Practice (FoP): The Power of Diverse Networked Communities

Current international school practice silences the voices and wisdom of local teachers. It provides higher value added in the form of professional development, salary, and holidays to

foreign-hired staff and faculty. Often the cultures, dreams, hopes, skills, and pedagogies of locally-hired faculty are lost within the “machine” of neoliberal management (i.e., collective public education is out; the economic benefits of free-market competition are in) and Western educative design. In this study, the participants and I countered silence by leveraging the local teaching population’s cultures, dreams, hopes, skills, and pedagogies as a voice for innovation within international schools.

The need for this counterbalance became clear during an early iteration of this study. It was a holiday, and while my teacher colleagues posted pictures of themselves drinking champagne while sitting on sun-soaked beaches, I was “feeling sorry for myself” and visited the school hoping to find inspiration in a change of writing venue. While my trip was voluntary, once I arrived, I noticed the local-hired teaching assistants (TAs) and academic assistants (AAs) were onsite in classrooms, tidying, making resources, and working. There was an odd silence in the building despite these teachers being present, so I walked into a classroom to greet my colleagues and abate my curiosity. I inquired why the local teachers were working during the holiday, and was told,

It may be a holiday for you, but it’s not for us. This morning we all had breakfast together in the staff room and the Principal came in specifically to make sure we were “working.” So, rather than continue our conversation on how to best help students, or take time to collaborate on ideas together, we are finding busy-work to do.

The TA waved her hand over the remnants of a display she was creating. “I have a master’s degree in education, you know?” She sighed, “One local teacher just became a judge. It would be nice to be treated like we know what we are doing. It would be nice to have some basic human rights.” I was devastated. Her words were painful to hear because they were like a mirror reflecting my cowardice over decades within international schools. In that moment, I had a chance to make her feel heard, acknowledge the power difference, and give validity to her

naming of the wrong she felt, but I lacked courage. I was not sure what to say, and I felt ashamed of the privilege I held. Worse, I believed myself powerless to help. I mumbled an inauthentic apology and went home. Equity is a *wicked problem* (Rittel & Webber, 1973) or a problem that is difficult to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing parameters of the problem. As such, equity as a wicked problem can only be mitigated by opening spaces for dialogue and creating diverse networked communities that share insights to design, test, and create opportunities for change.

FoP Evidence: Right Place, Right Time

The story shared in the above subsection is one example from years of observations and interactions with locally-hired teachers. During my career as a teacher, digital learning coach, and leader throughout different countries and continents it has become evident that foreign-hired teachers and locally-hired teachers receive differential treatment. This inequity is evidenced through: wage disparity, professional development opportunities, access to coaches, and job expectations. However, there are also covert quiet narratives of inequity in the culture of international schools. Such narratives often describe local teachers as subpar in intellect, not pedagogically enlightened, culturally backward, and thus not *worth* as much as the foreign-hired teachers. I developed the equity stance for this study over an extended period and multiple iterations as I observed and discovered deep motivations for the areas of needed growth within international schools.

Clarifying the FoP: Fishbone Diagram

Initially, my PAR focused on technology and innovation within an international school in Thailand. I did not recognize the equity component for this study until I was faced with barriers within my context that required workarounds. The barriers forced me to step back and view the

context in new and deeper ways. Early ideations of fishbone diagrams are evidence of the reflective flexibility I had to embrace as a leader in this study (see Appendix B). Midway through my research, I relocated to a new job, school, country, and culture. The micro, meso, and macro assets and challenges within the community became evident after I spent significant time within the context. As my co-practitioner researchers (CPRs) and I (collectively, the CPR team) entered PAR Cycle Three, we developed a final fishbone diagram (see Figure 1) to explore the “what” behind the phenomena we were experiencing.

The final iteration of the fishbone diagram represents a clear understanding of the cause of the challenges and the assets that the research team could use to enact change. The challenges and assets existed within the larger organization (macro level), the school (meso level), and the CPR and Community Learning Exchange groups (micro level). The CPR team drafted and edited the fishbone diagram many times throughout each cycle of the PAR and the process was influenced by conversations and interactions. It was a process conducted with people, and not on them.

Improvement Goal (AIM)

As noted in the fishbone diagram, this aim of this study was to address the local teaching population as a potential innovation hub within international schools and prototype new ways to move forward in equity. The improvement goal for this PAR project was to improve equity between national and international employees in an international school setting. To enact change, I leveraged my skills in technology coaching and design thinking to co-facilitate Community Learning Exchanges (CLEs) and endeavoured to build a Networked Learning Community (NLC) to share narratives and develop greater cultural competency. Returning to the example provided in the narrative story in the subsection above, the goal of the study was to flex the bravery

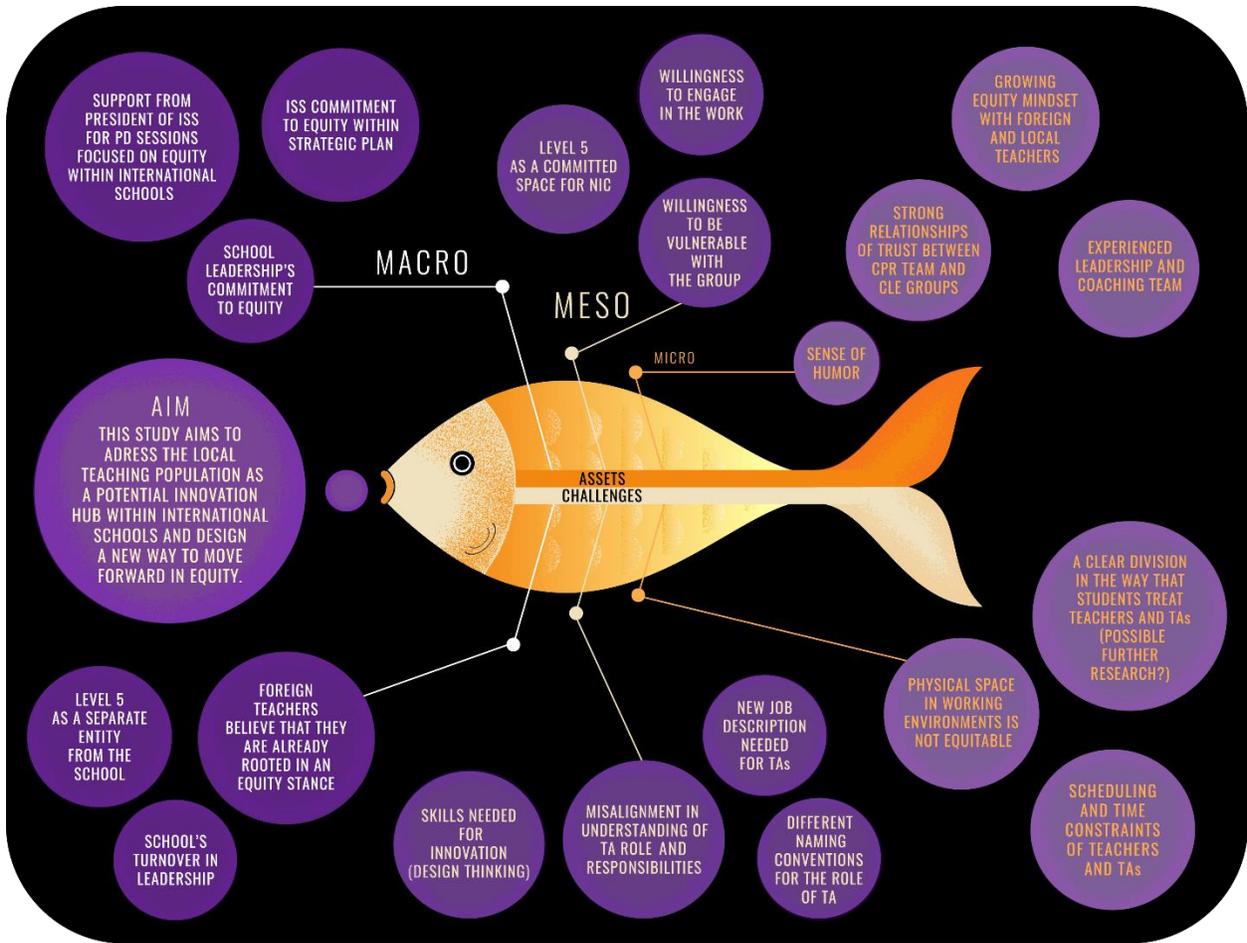


Figure 1. Fishbone diagram created with the CPR team.

muscle of the foreign teachers, by enabling them to reflect on the positions of privilege they hold and bringing together constituents in what Lear (2008) described as the right place, the right time, and with the right intent.

Whereas the fishbone diagram (see Figure 1) shows the CPR team's theories about what caused the effects we observed, the driver diagram shows the team's theories about what changes would result in improvement. By working through the anatomy of the driver diagram I plotted a course of action grounded in theory. I first looked at the AIM of the study and then primary and secondary drivers or inputs such as evidence, experiences, and analyses of situations. These drivers were examined and led to an improvement theory. Figure 2 shows a simplified model of the process I used.

I then worked backward to create a rationale for change by examining the "why" of the AIM and validate the goals as meaningful and justifiable within the context. I then simplified the driver diagram to identify goals that were specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely, and equity focused (SMARTe) based on the logic model for this PAR. Next, I conferred with the CPR team and used the equity-centered framework explained later in this chapter to guide the design process of identifying possible drivers or actions. Figure 3 shows the simplified driver diagram. The diagram includes four main challenges: inequities between local and foreign teachers, misalignment between the understanding of roles and responsibilities, protecting the status quo of school culture and expectations, and reliance on assumptions and misconceptions rather than real and deep relationships of trust. The main drivers were dialogue, reflection and action by the CPR team, and prototyped interventions. The team's goal was to observe a more equitable, networked innovation community through greater use of voice and equal value of ideas (i.e., a holistic shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the TAs). Ideating

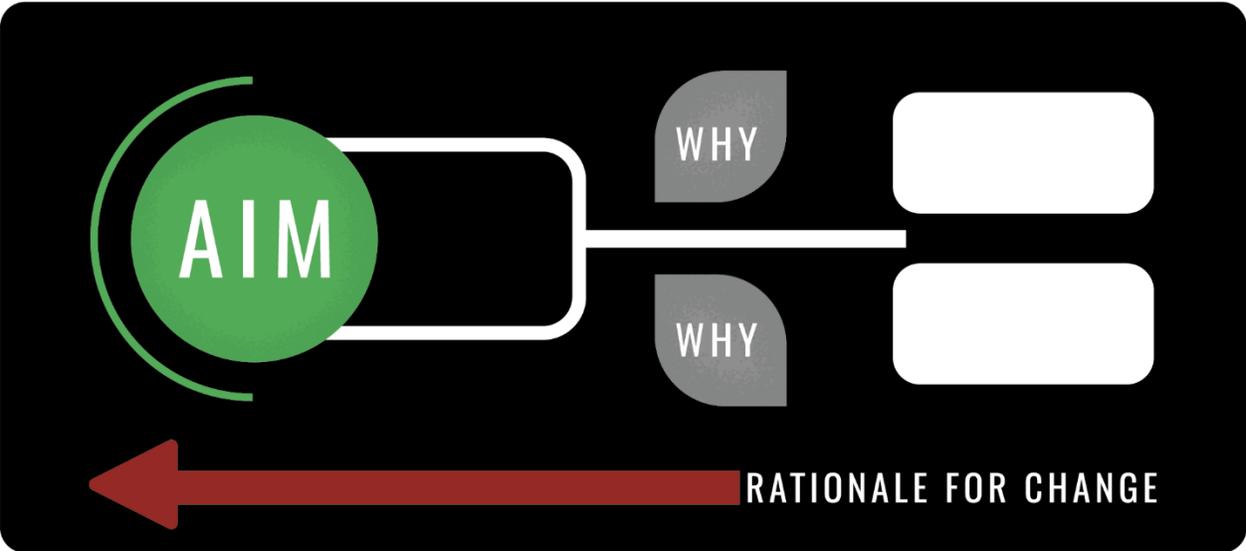
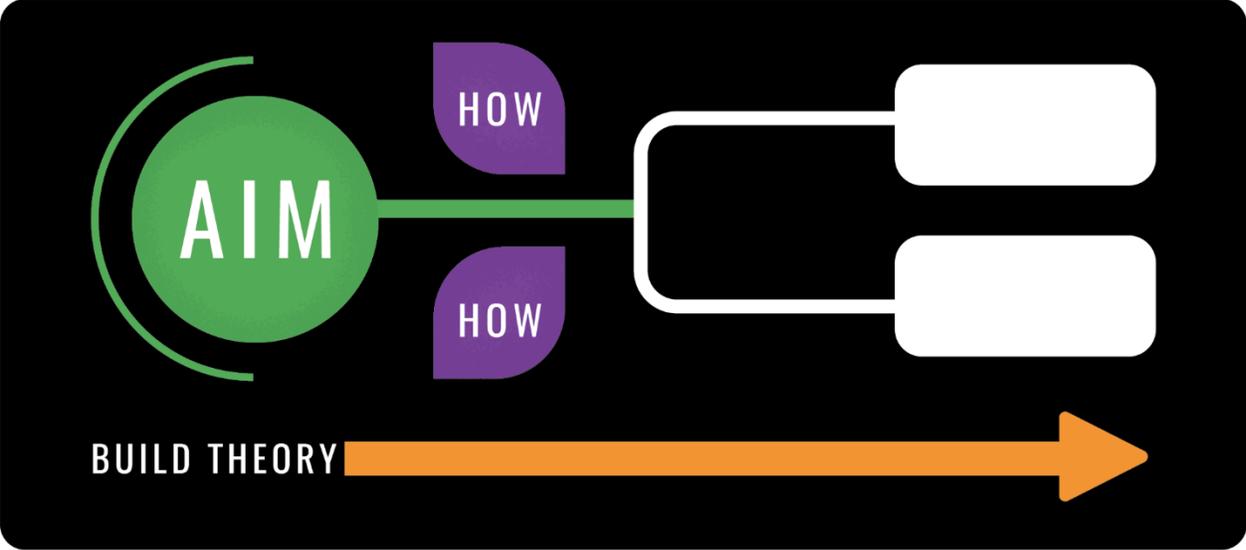


Figure 2. Simplified model of the process to create the driver diagram.

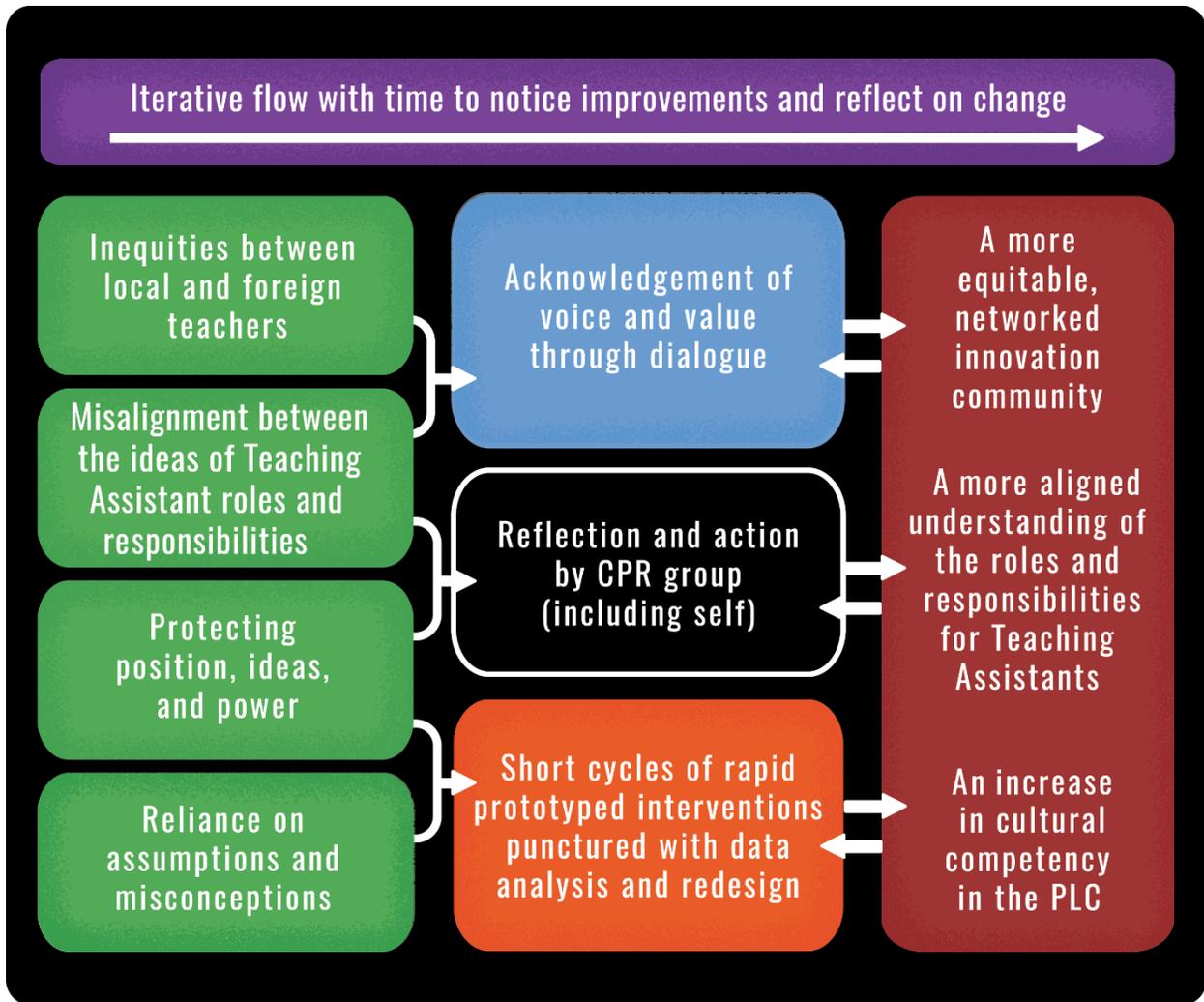


Figure 3. Simplified driver diagram.

the driver diagram took time and required an iterative process of gathering and coding data, noticing patterns or themes, conducting member checks to ensure the themes were legitimate, then creating theories of action.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was grounded in leveraging my position as a coach, my knowledge of technology, and my deep understanding of design-based pedagogies to facilitate a PAR project with the aim of prototyping and testing a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. I began by developing an understanding of myself and others, through community learning exchanges (CLEs), and moved to democratically identified actionable items. Finally, I worked to initiate change within the community to develop reciprocity, diminish marginalization, and create more equitable working environments.

Theory of Action (ToA)

The ToA for this research study posits that if international school community members (e.g., local- and foreign-hired teachers, leadership, etc.) engage in opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, they will reveal a better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community. By engaging in such collective leadership practice, members can initiate robust innovative change within school communities (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). The metrics of success were based on the community's ability to (1) engage in dialogue and reflection to decide actions, (2) work to infuse democracy and diffuse power structures within the group, (3) coach for technology and networked learning that decreased marginalization, and (4) document local strengths to increase reciprocity in the school context (L. Tredway, personal communication, May 24, 2017).

Framework for the FoP

Gutiérrez (2016) discussed the idea of diversity in supporting communities towards greater equity. She argued diversity is not a deficit to communities, it is the essential resource of any robust form of educational reform. Yet, community members within international schools have sought to create an overarching hegemonic narrative that evidences a hypocritical commitment to equity and diversity with the missions, visions, and values touted by institutions. In schools, teachers rush through days focused on students and defer to the narrative penned by the accrediting institutions or the school's leadership. Rather than seeking out risk by listening to disparate voices, sharing difficult stories, and building cultural capacity, which is essential to creating innovative networked communities, the silencing of voices has led to a global equity issue.

To create equitable networked innovation communities, leaders must design opportunities and spaces for people to learn from and with each other. Disparate voices enable new ideas to flourish and communities to create space for radical collaboration. The framework for this PAR (see Figure 4) emerged over time and was a theory that I prototyped, played with, and tested. The framework is Networked Innovation Communities = Equity-Centered Design Thinking + Community Learning Exchanges + Coaching and was used to analyze data. In the final chapter I examine how much power, meaning, and predictability it held. In the next sections I review the significance of the study and the design for the action research.

Significance of the Study

Globally recognized diplomas have become a requisite of international educative norms. In Chapter 2, I explain how this global phenomenon has affected the growth of international schools. In the push toward a globalized curriculum, teachers, coaches, and leaders are

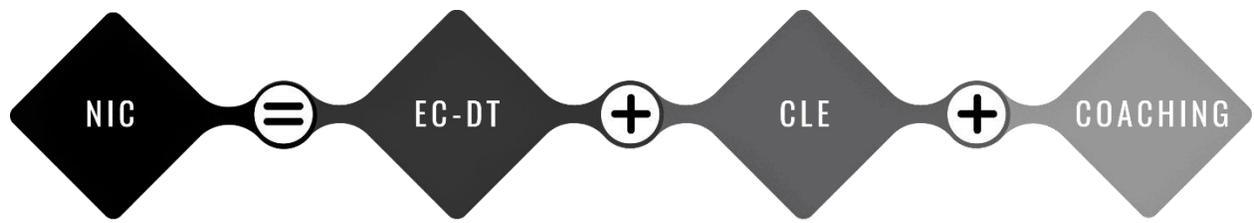


Figure 4. Simplified framework/theory for PAR.

responsible for examining whether school cultures espouse equity or are framed in tokenism by hiding quiet truths. This study adds to the body of research on equity within international school contexts, specifically equity for locally hired faculty. The tools used in the current study added to the body of tech capacity for practitioners within the context and led to reflections by leaders on the overarching systems of equity that exist within international school contexts.

Action Research Design Overview

In later chapters, I examine the themes and theories of the action research design in depth, however within this section, I introduce PAR and design-based research (DBR). I also provide an overview of my philosophical worldview, which contributed to the research design. I then explain how the equity-centered design framework underpinned the inquiry, describe the context inclusive of group participants, myself, the reasons for selection and the methods of engagement. After that I outline the FoP questions and the overarching question driving the research. The section ends with the limitations of the study.

The action research design for this study was created to advocate for social equity and leverage the tools of coaching and design thinking to enact change. As such, I used a distinct blend of PAR and DBR to create the methodology. Both PAR and DBR are underpinned by the collaboration between researchers and practitioners to design, test, and reiterate pragmatic solutions to issues (Brown, 1992; Hunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013). With methods that are grounded in constructivist and transformative worldviews, qualitative research enables researchers to explore complex sociocultural issues (Creswell, 1998). As an inquiry-based International Baccalaureate (IB) educator, my practice has been grounded in constructivist learning. Based in Vygotsky's research on how humans learn through social interactions, open-ended questions, and crafted learning experiences, constructivism also centers learning in the

history of self and defines it as an interactive journey often without end. Situated cognition theory is a theoretical perspective that grounds learning in doing or constructivism, and constructivism has shaped the ways I view learners, teachers and the broader educational community (Abbott, 2008; Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

Nevertheless, I hesitated to design this study as a cognitive apprenticeship grounded in constructivism. Instead, I shifted to a model of research that reflects the equitable exchange of learning that is based in the power of networked communities. As a coach, I was introduced to the ideas of connectivism and the far-reaching nodes through which people learn within the networks they develop (Siemens, 2016). International schools are comprised of foreign teachers and students who often move from location to location and their connection nodes become far reaching as well as culturally and experientially diverse. But what of the local teachers who stay in the same school for decades? Despite being a self-professed change-agent, I had always placed agency in the hands of students and defined my job as developing critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the attitudes of global citizenship to create the next generation of youth and teacher change-agents. However, within that definition, I overlooked the locally-hired teachers entirely. This PAR represents an intertwining of the philosophical worldviews with one that is tied to transforming international school politics, oppression, domination, and power relationships. Those are potent and broad terms, so this study was designed to elevate international schools through the development of a *paradigm of courage* rooted in the voices of the marginalized (Lear, 2008).

Underpinning the Inquiry with Equity-Centered Design

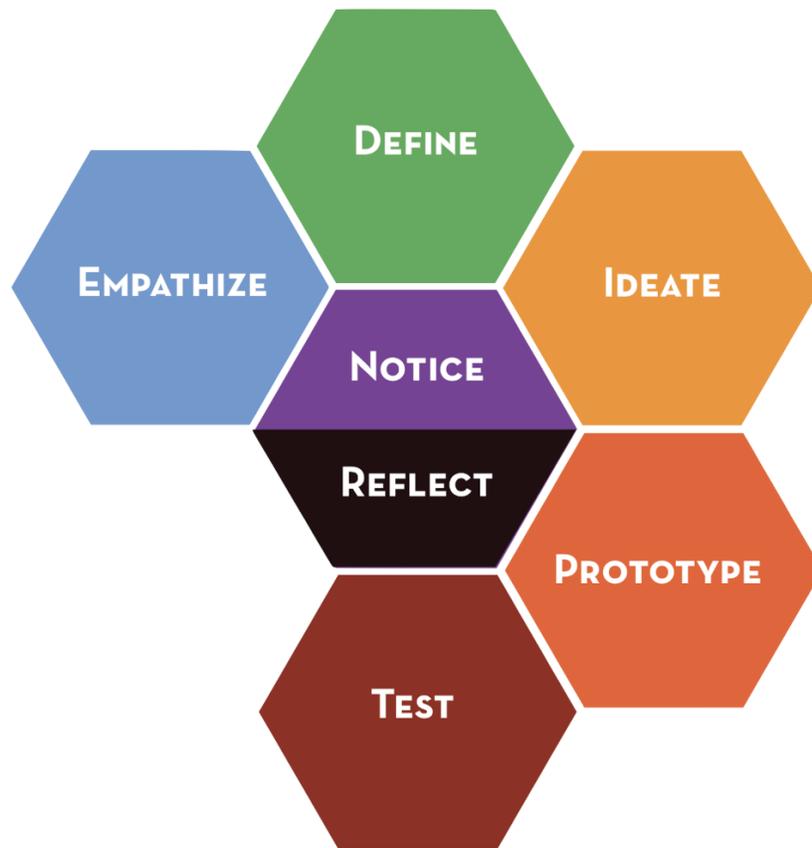
Moving beyond superficial equity to draw out the underlying courage within local and foreign teachers, required me to anchor the desired goals for the PAR/DBR within disciplined

inquiry. The aim of the ECD framework was to develop a shared narrative of hope when designing for the future. The framework introduces two new phases to the original design thinking structure (i.e., empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test; Clifford, 2017)—notice and reflect (see Figure 5). These new phases are iterative like the others; however, the notice phase focuses on self-as-designer: developing an awareness of identity, values, emotions, biases, assumptions, and situatedness by revealing the authentic self. This enables one to enter the context (empathize phase) with humility, curiosity, and courage (d.K12 Lab Network, 2018).

The reflect phase of ECD is public and transparent. It provides intentional time to deeply think about the actions, emotions, insights and impact the process will have on the context:

A sense of urgency can mask hegemonic strategy. Our common discourse of urgency and business-as-usual creates little time for reflection; our pace of life eclipses our awareness. Strategic equity pauses the clock to reflect on our language, ideas, and hunches in the context of a discourse of transformation. Without this moment to think, our brains default to the familiar and the known, making a repeat of past practice likely. Incorporating these discourse checks and pauses after each stage ensures that our ideas remain on the path of achieving equity (Hill, Molitor, & Ortiz, 2016).

Intentional time was essential for the PAR iterative data collection and data analysis discussed in later chapters. Time provided opportunities to share and challenge myths, stories, beliefs, assumptions, and misconceptions. Time provided the space for the acknowledgement of others, the voicing of truths, and of self-discovery. Self-discovery is essential to leadership. Through each cycle of the PAR, I discovered new abilities and attributes I possessed as a research practitioner-designer. I had to communicate deliberately and with efficacy, create engagements and experiences with intention, learn with and from other participants and co-practitioner researchers, become open to radical collaboration and the ideas of disparate viewpoints, and navigate ambiguity in the process, in others, and in myself (see d.K12 Lab Network, 2018). Finally, I discovered that leveraging the local teaching population's cultures,



Note. Adapted from “K12 Lab Equity-Centered Design Deck MASTER” by d.K12 Lab Network, 2018, slide 27. Copyright 2018 by Author.

Figure 5. The equity-centered design framework from the Stanford d.school.

dreams, hopes, skills and pedagogies as a voice for innovation within international schools required significant, thoughtfully crafted, individual, institutional, and structural work. I had to design the design. Throughout this document the diagrams, figures, and tables are color-coded with the phases of the ECD framework, with black and purple often shown as the foundation level of the images. I designed this intentionally, so the equity stance was both mentally and visually at the forefront of the PAR and as a reminder to remain grounded in processes of noticing and reflecting.

Entering the Context

This study was conducted within the start-up educational innovation hub, LEVEL 5. It is situated on the fifth floor of an international school in Shekou, China. LEVEL 5 offers an eclectic range of professional learning events for teachers such as, design thinking, graffiti, change leadership, photography, service learning, and augmented reality. The aim of each event is to scale educational reform. Historically, LEVEL 5 held the administration and leadership offices of the school, but the offices were relocated to the ground floor to make them more accessible to the community. Local Chinese tradition dictates that the top floor of a building cannot house classrooms for students, so the area was reimagined as an innovation hub by International School Services (ISS), the non-profit organization that owns and manages the school. Although part of the family of schools that is managed by ISS, the hub is not directly part of the school. Despite the influx of creativity, discovery, and innovation the hub imbues to the community, the redesign has caused some tension as space is scarce in the densely populated, small school building.

Participatory Action Research Group Participants: CLE

The members who attended the discreet-skill professional development sessions and CLE fluctuated weekly from six to 33 members at a given time. The group met every Monday and included teachers, TAs, members of leadership, and support staff. The ages ranged from early 20s to late 50s and the group composition varied such that foreign teachers were the majority at times, and local teachers were the majority at other times. The CPR team knew that maintaining a consistent attendance prerequisite would lead to high attrition among teachers and TAs. Both teachers and TAs had rotating bus monitor schedules, after-school activities, meetings, and duties to perform that prevented consistent attendance. Therefore, flexibility in designing data gathering experiences became a key skill I developed as a leader.

The Co-Practitioner Research Team

When I first met Erin and Vivian it was evident from their interactions that their relationship was less Teacher/TA and more of a model based on a strong equity stance. I envisioned they would be able to provide a reflective model of positive working equity practice for teachers within the community. Allies were created and the CPR was team formed. Our backgrounds were diverse. As a young teacher, Erin Madonna spent her first decade of teaching at high-needs schools in Delaware, USA. As an international educator, in addition to her duties as a learning specialist, she leads free professional development workshops for teachers. Vivian Wu holds a bachelor's degree of law (social work). She was a social worker for several years before she became an educator. Vivian's Chinese nickname is WenWen, but she chose Vivian when she came to the school because the school norms were that Chinese teachers took English names. She is currently enrolled in a UK university studying for her master's degree in special education (V. Wu, email transcript, December 13, 2017). Since 2000, I have

been an international teacher, coach, and leader in Asia and Europe. I have worked with many TAs, co-teachers, instructional assistants, and aids over my time in schools. Our collective experiences provided a unique perspective on the relationships between foreign and local teachers within international school contexts.

Engagement of Participants and Co-Researchers

Throughout the PAR, the CPR team and CLE group were engaged in various discreet-skill professional development sessions, reflection meetings, interviews, member checks and design thinking challenges. These were documented and reflected on the website the CPR team created for the exchange (see Appendix C). Each cycle was an iterative and pragmatic process in which the design rested entirely on the outcomes of the data gathered and reflected on by various members of the groups. For example, before PAR Cycle Three the CPR group used the vector analysis, SOAR (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results), to ascertain where we stood before moving forward with the study. In contrast to SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), the SOAR model uses appreciative inquiry (AI), and invites members to focus on assets rather than internal weaknesses or perceived threats that might not eventuate. Using this model, we were better able to shift our thinking into a paradigm of courage. SOAR analysis helped us frame new actions within PAR Cycle Three that leveraged the strengths and opportunities to strive for shared aspirations with measurable results. These results are examined in greater depth within Chapter 7. AI was pioneered in the late 1980s as a change management approach that focuses on identifying what is working well, analyzing why it is working well, and then doing more of it. The basic tenet of AI is that an organization will grow toward the direction where people in the organization focus their attention (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). To focus my attention throughout the study, I returned to a set of guiding questions.

FoP Research Questions

The research design helped answer four key questions:

- RQ1. To what extent do school and community norms influence school educators?
- RQ2. What are the realities and assumptions among school faculty regarding roles and responsibilities?
- RQ3. How can better cultural understanding give greater voice and value to nationals?
- RQ4. To what extent can my work with the group be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community?

The exploration of these key questions informed the overarching research question:

How can the relationships between locally-hired and foreign-hired employees in international school settings be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments?

Study Limitations

Through the literature review I conducted for this study, it became clear that human value systems are culture-bound and mostly subconscious. Therefore, the theories and insights contained within this PAR are equally culture-bound and betray my bias. Cautioned by scholars and practitioners (e.g., Aguilar, 2011a; Aguilar, 2011b; Aguilar, 2016; Ahnee-Benham & Napier, 2002; Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014a), I am cognizant that my ideas of leadership and good leadership, teamwork, collaboration, innovation and timekeeping are a result of this bias, as are the ideas of my colleagues who represent the vast array of countries and cultures found in most international schools. Additionally, the limitations extend beyond me to the CPR team and CLE group. My process of becoming aware of the subtle inequity within international schools has taken a long time, and the participants within this study were on their own journeys of readiness

and willingness. They may have been willing to engage in the study, but not ready to make changes, and vice versa.

Creating Diverse Networked Communities

Throughout this chapter I have reflected on my journey as an international educator, explored the complicated nature of equity within international schools, outlined ways in which I have attempted to navigate the designer/leader relationship, and highlighted possibilities for greater equity within the local teaching population. I end this chapter with a short reflection on my own capacity to affect change and the mindfulness needed to lead with courage and hope. Returning to the questions I posed at the beginning of the chapter: (1) How equitable is it to espouse the dominant norms of our western values? (2) How many other narratives do we infuse within our practice? How equitable is our enclave of ridiculously priced education to the host nations we squat within? (3) How equitable are we to the local staff that landscape, take our trash away, or clean our rooms? (4) How equitable are we to the local co-teachers who earn a fraction of the wage of their international counterparts? It is easy to see how international teachers can become overwhelmed with cynicism and mired in the difficulties and complexity of organizational and institutional challenges. Leading with hope and courage is equally difficult and complex, but with much more positive effects for learning communities. I have discovered it requires building a leadership practice grounded in self-awareness of identity, values, emotions, biases, assumptions and power. However, self-awareness is not a solitary nor passive event, it requires participatory action, designed inquiry, time to notice patterns, co-practitioners to ideate solutions, prototyped interventions, tested theories and reflection on changes. It also requires the ability for leaders to be mindful listeners to the voices of those around them; to quiet ourselves and hear the wisdom of others.

In upcoming chapters, I will explain how the themes and subthemes from the literature review helped uncover and ground the theory of action for the PAR. In Chapter 3, I provide a brief overview of the pilot study conducted in Thailand and a more comprehensive view of the context in China. In Chapter 4, I explain the research design, inclusive of population, data collection, and data analysis. Chapters 5 through 7 examine each cycle of the PAR in depth. Chapter 8 is devoted to reflections and recommendations for the field of study. In the next chapter, I present the literature review themes including international schools, impact of culture, and fostering equitable school cultures because these themes were foundational to the creative thinking, courage, and hope the CPR team needed to design solutions to equity problems that were both complex and ambiguous.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

I have taught in international school settings for several decades and thoroughly enjoy working and living in the expatriate environment. The international teaching lifestyle is unique, filled with cultural experiences and oddities that surprise and delight. Parents, colleagues and students live in a *bubbled reality* that only other third-culture adults understand. That bubble is set aside from the local population. I have repeatedly observed teachers and students, who teach and learn the merits of global citizenry and international mindedness, treat local staff and faculty as subordinate in value. This has made me question the very foundation and ethos of international schools. As such, I was forced to examine everything I believe by asking: How can the relationships between national and international employees in international school settings be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable and innovative working environments?

The Politics of Change

In every country I have taught, local teachers are paid less, viewed as having inferior education, and often provided fewer opportunities for advancement or equity within the community. However, the local teachers are often the unrecognized “backbone” of international schools. They offer support, co-teaching, and solutions to persistent problems that happen within classrooms. They hold historical institutional knowledge, knowledge of the cultural norms behind systems that seem frustrating and complex for their foreign counterparts and offer translation services. For these teachers to have greater equity, their ways of knowing must be valued as equal to their counterparts. Enhanced equity for the local teachers results from uncovering unique skills and offering opportunities to nudge them towards practice that can

become institutional knowledge. Empowerment comes from providing voice and a space for local teachers to evidence their wealth of knowledge, skills, and pedagogy.

In conversations with local teachers I have heard their frustrations voiced repeatedly, in a way that is quiet and consistent with the hegemony to which they have been forced to acquiesce. This is a wicked problem. Within the walls of international schools, community members seek to create “deliberate diversity” (Newbery, 2014, p. 27), but the piecemeal attempts at equity seem to only reframe the existing cultural patterns and the accepted norms of how international education has always been. For much of the early part of this study I was blind to this inequity or did not want to address it as something I could research; it was an awkward topic. Becoming a more reflective teacher-researcher required creating memos, journaling, and engaging with the literature. I needed to be able to slow down and listen for the unheard voices around me. Regardless of their espoused mission, visions, and values, international schools will remain instruments of piecemeal social change if they continue to preserve their pre-existing hegemonic social and economic order. Until local teachers’ voices, practices, and pedagogies are viewed and shared equally with foreign teachers those systems will remain.

A large part of activating my thinking about the research design to examine this question came from engaging with the literature. Initially, I focused on the keywords of culture, professional learning communities (PLCs), design, and coaching, but through the process of creating memos, tangential themes of globalization, cultural capital, moral dialogue, literal and figurative spaces, time, empathy, branding, transparency, and competency emerged. The memo processes, as shown in Figures 6 and 7, were often iterative, messy and confusing. The messiness of this wicked problem made it perfect for exploration. Liz Duffy, the head of ISS, once told me,

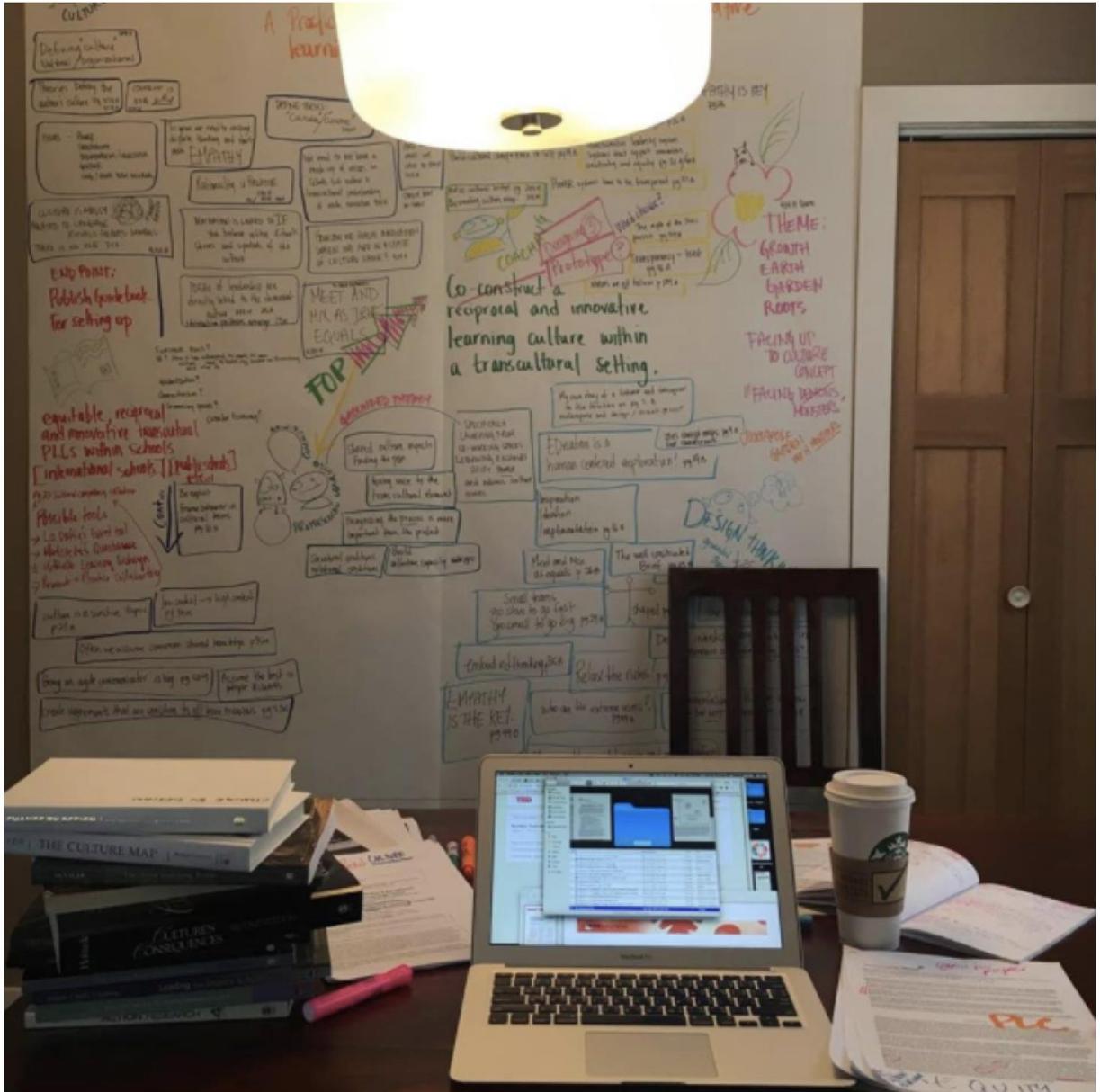


Figure 6. Mapping themes.



Figure 7. Mapping ideas, themes, and possible literature bins.

“If you haven’t looked at an issue and thought, this is too big, too messy, too impossible, you probably haven’t been divergent enough in your thinking” (personal communication, April 8, 2017).

Out of the mess, three topics became the foundation for the research design and development of the structure for the ToA. The three topics are: International schools and the IB, Culture, What I can do to foster equity. From those main topics, I began to play with other ideas and tuned into subsequent subsections that were needed to fully explore the literature on the three main topics. The framework for participatory action used in the current study emerged through my examination of each section of the literature review as a contributing factor to the ToA for this research. I discuss the framework further in the summary of this chapter.

International Schools: Organization and Structure

Brief History and Purpose of International Schools

International schools were created in the early 1920s in response to expatriates’ requests for a consistent education as they moved between locations (Pearce 2013; Wechler, 2017). Historically, ‘international school’ has been interpreted differently across the globe. The simplest definition is that these schools offer a curriculum that is not offered by the host nation’s public-school system. However, as the IB increases in reach within public education systems, globally, that definition is becoming less valid. Teachers within international schools are usually divided into three categories (1) host country nationals, (2) locally hired expatriates and (3) overseas-hire expatriates (Pearce, 2013). For the purpose of this study there are only two categories we explore: host country nationals (local-hired) and expatriates (foreign-hired). Over the last half century, the IB has grown exponentially as the forefront organization of international education

(see Figure 8). As of 2018, there were more than 1 million IB students in over 4,964 schools worldwide (see Figure 9).

As IB schools grow in popularity and expand across international and national school systems, each learning community has an ethical responsibility to examine and reflect on the motivations behind such expansion. If practitioners are engendering universal and culturally branded environments, the local example of the international brand should represent equity of voices, or it may become a form of educational hegemony for teachers and the community wherein the local wisdom is not incorporated in the school design and management (Guajardo et al., 2016).

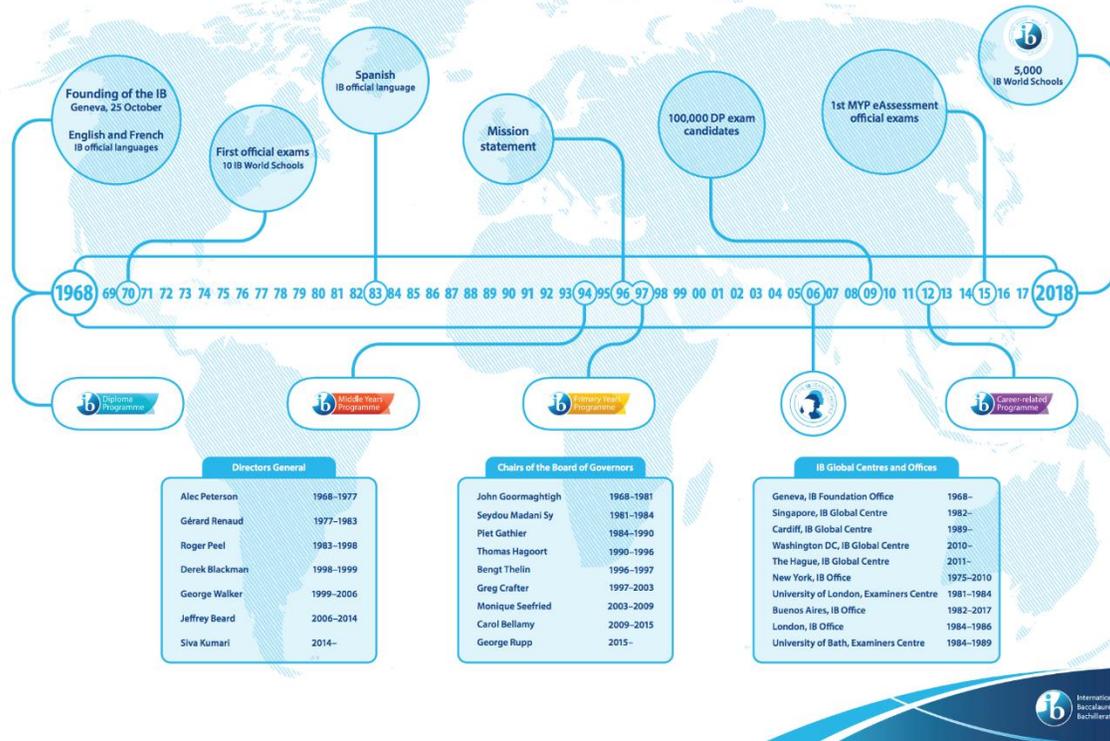
Historical Development of the IB

Understanding the association of the IB brand and power, requires a brief overview of the history of the organization. Generated by a group of travelling middle-class expats with higher education in socially significant jobs, the IB became a fledgling organization in 1963. This group valued their own educational qualifications and was intent on providing their children with a similar caliber of education (Resnik, 2012). At the time, few internationally recognized programs of education spanned the globe (Hayden et al., 2002) and these parents wanted consistency as they relocated around the world. This small, but influential group, grew as globalization of corporations and organizations increased during the 20th century. Soon, the overarching conceptual framework of the IB, with its highly-funded classrooms, resourced campuses, publicized test scores, and international teachers well-versed in best practice became synonymous with elite global education (Doherty, 2009; Pearce, 2013).



A better world through education

50years.ibo.org

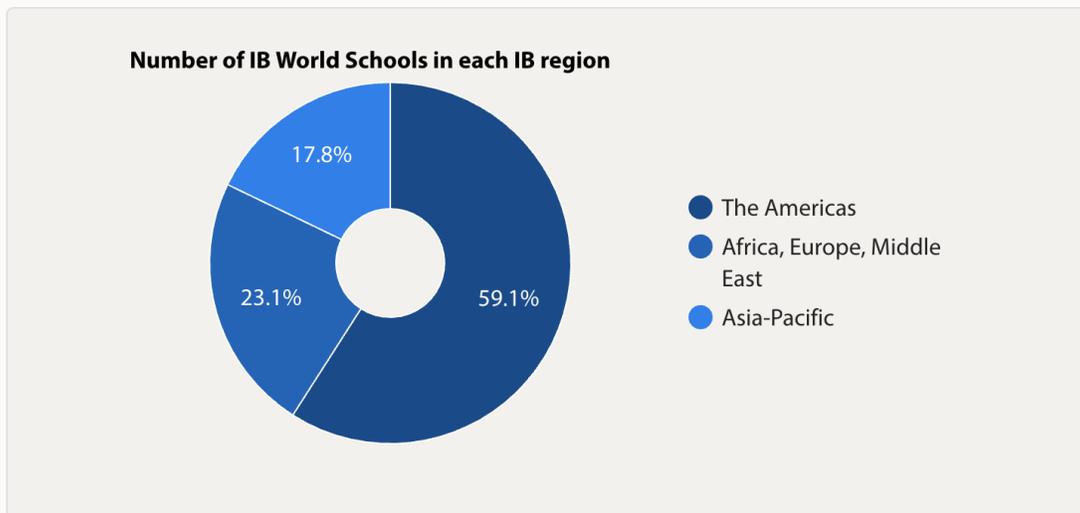


Note. Copyright 2018 by Author. Available at: <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/flyers-and-artworks/poster-ib-timeline-a3-web-en.pdf>. Adapted from "A Better World through Education" by International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018c.

Figure 8. IB history timeline.

Number of schools offering IB programmes

On 7 December 2018, there were 6,453 programmes being offered worldwide, across 4,964 schools in 153 countries.



Note. Copyright 2018 by Author. Available at <http://ibo.org/about-the-ib/facts-and-figures/>. Adapted from “Facts and Figures” by International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018b.

Figure 9. Number of IB schools in each IB region.

IB Serves as Cultural Capital for Constituents

IB professional development opportunities, leadership, and teaching provide insight into the IB brand and how it extends beyond economics to influence all the constituents: administrators, teachers, local support staff, students, and parents. Although not part of their explicit mission statement, the IB brand communicates ideas about society, power, community, needs and self-identity through a rigorous marketing campaign complete with logos, websites, magazines, professional development courses, online communities, blogs, forums, Twitter feeds, and Facebook pages. Thus, the IB is equated with social and cultural capital for the main consumers: parents and students.

The marketing campaign was designed to position the IB, specifically the Diploma Programme, as a rigorous, elite, and reliable way for students to gain university acceptance (Hayden et al., 2002). To this end, the IB publishes test results for graduates each year. Carolyn Adams, Director of Strategy Development and Execution at the IB, explained that this decision regarding the publishing of test results enables students, teachers, and universities to “have confidence in a robust qualification, which offers an internationally benchmarked standard against which to judge success” (IBO, 2013a, para. 5). Critics have noted that the IB sells, “social advantage rather than social justice;” as such, it often acts as a signifier of elite standing when students apply to university (Doherty, 2009; Wylie, 2008).

The IB competes with other international curricula, has been implemented in many public educational settings and is offered to local students as well as internationally mobile students. Recently the expansion of the IB has been primarily in public or national schools. As of 2018, there were 1,822 IB World Schools in the United States (IBO, 2018a). “A growing number of UK schools now offer the IB diploma as an alternative to A-levels. As of 2012 there were 203, of

which 122 were public schools” (Sutcliffe, 2012, para. 8). This is due to UK public schools recognizing IB students as better candidates for higher education entrance.

This expansion is not limited to Europe. In the United States, for example, the growth of IB schools within the public sector has been significant. To help struggling public secondary schools in the United States, the IB curriculum was introduced as an alternative to advanced placement programs, and brand loyalty to the IB was leveraged to entice middle-class students to re-enroll (Mathews & Hill, 2005). In the United Kingdom, former Prime Minister Blair stated the IB would be offered in UK public schools as an alternative the ‘A’ level curriculum (Phillips & Pound, 2003). As a brand, the IB offers safety by the sheer volume of people who associate the IB with social status. From the literature and media reviewed it is evident that the IB brand defines and contributes to a positive and powerful subcultural identity of being elite, distinct, and excellent (Doherty, 2009; Hayden et al., 2002; Sutcliffe, 2012).

However, the normative culture branding that is represented by the IB organization is a neoliberal management concept that has increasingly gained popularity in education institutions. Neoliberalism is a generic term that espouses economic, social, and philosophy theory. It is based on capitalistic strategies such as competition, deregulation, and privatization of social services (Anderson, Mungal, Pinit, & Scott, 2013; Kantor & Lowe, 2016; MacDonald, 2006). The neoliberal approach to education is particularly prevalent in the United States, where charter schools seek increased market share of students who attended traditional public schools. Because the market-driven approach requires that institutions develop recruitment plans and a special identity that appeals to potential customers (parents and students), many schools have branded and marketed themselves similar to their corporate counterparts, blurring the lines between industries and pedagogical communities (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Burbules & Torres, 2000;

Cambridge, 2002; Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Codrington, 2004; Wæraas & Solbakk, 2009).

However, neoliberalism has transcended borders and this phenomenon is not unique to the IB.

Around the world, international schools have integrated and normalized practices from the business world such as performance management, business management, financing and governance (Codrington, 2004; Wæraas & Solbakk, 2009). With this normalization of corporate and industry standards within the educative setting, schools become franchises selling the commodity of education and the brand becomes synonymous with the school culture.

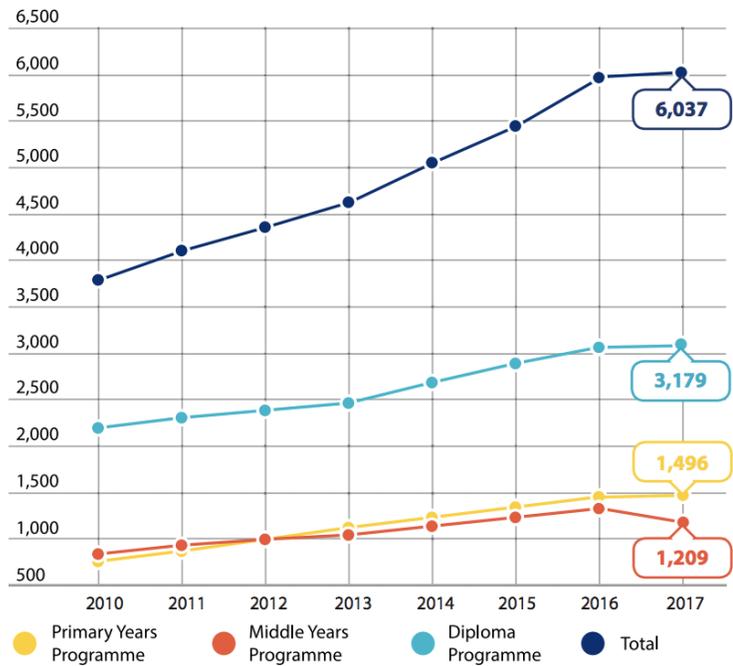
MacDonald (2006) directly addressed what he refers to as a ‘double bottom line,’ or dual focus on both the education and the business of international schools:

Though one would hope schools are ideologically driven, striving to manage their educational programme ahead of all else, those familiar with international schools (especially schools governed by business-oriented boards or owners) might tend to agree...that many schools attempt to articulate a philosophy grounded in the ideal on international education but remain, in reality, quite “market driven.” (p. 201)

MacDonald’s observations express a quandary: Are educators unwittingly furthering the capitalistic objectives of the IB industry or espousing the global competency that is embodied within its ethos? Of course, it is not either/or, but both and with many Asian IB schools owned by local business people the concern about the bottom line is growing. Indeed, the 2016-2017 IB financial review (IBO, 2017b) shows the total comprehensive income for the year was US \$213.5 M. Figure 10 shows the growth of IB programs throughout the world.

In 2012, the IB announced a sub-brand strategy of its corporate identity and documented the process of extensive research of its stakeholders including parents, teachers and staff to investigate the perception of the IB Brand. The researchers concluded that the IB brand was well known and had significant associations of loyalty but needed to raise awareness of the diversity

Number of authorized programmes, worldwide



Does not include European Platform nor MYP Partner Schools

Note. Adapted from “2016-2017 Annual Review” by International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017a, p. 4. Copyright 2017 by Author.

Figure 10. Growth of IB programs, 2010-2017.

of services the brand offered and to market to more diverse audiences. To help in this endeavor in 2015, the IB provided an updated 18-page guideline for using the brand identity, which stated:

The IB brand is not just what we say about our organization, it is what others have to say about us. Communicating consistently at all times ensures our brand messages remain accessible, recognizable and relevant. Conflicting messages lead to confusion so when creating your school communications consider using the values at the heart of our organization as a tool to better communicate what makes us unique. (IBO, 2015, p. 2)

When viewed in public domain discourse, the IB brand is identified with several reoccurring and precise value signifiers. Some of those include internationally-minded, globally-transferable, rigorous, challenging, and globally-recognized (Ferrick, 2013; Rammohan, 2012; U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The IB as a brand is a success story. In the following sections I examine the effects of national and organizational culture on school climate and reference the seminal research of Hofstede (2001) to show the IB culture has collectively sub-programmed those who buy-in with the values it espouses. These values manifest in superficial ways: logos, fonts, color choices, and shared terminology. However, the brand influences many other decisions that are more significant: the missions and visions, the written and taught curricula, the professional development offerings, and the policies and procedures of schools. The IB has moved beyond being “branded” to a unifying culture that is globally ubiquitous.

IB as a Global Brand

The reputation afforded to the IB via cultural capital allows it to be literally purchased by schools around the globe (Cambridge, 2002). This worldwide buy-in and ubiquitous branding amounts to a global cultural franchise. The globalization of economic, cultural, social and educational fields results in a loss of nationalism, distinct culture and national economies with the push toward a state of homogeneity argued as a form of capitalistic imperialism (Anttila-Muilu, 2004; Doherty, 2009; Wylie, 2008). As distinct cultures succumb to the pressures of

market equity, the focus becomes that of business and economics. It follows that in a distinctly globalized field such as international education, corporate branding, identity, management and services provided would increase and as international education gains the signifiers of corporate globalization it moves closer towards the values of a capitalistic market-driven class (Cambridge, 2002).

Schools must adhere to a strict, singular vision with precise and consistent parameters to uphold their identities and engage in the sub-programming of mindsets toward a common organizational culture. As the IB begins to utilize marketing techniques such as sub-branding the individual categories of products and services under the auspice of the centralized brand identity, it reduces space for local schools' interpretation of the brand. The effects of this are that the IB can increase quality assurance in its schools around the world and it ensures schools are driven by what the IB espouses as globally-minded citizenship.

IB Quality Assurance

One direct example of this gradual push toward homogeneity within the IB brand is the phase-out of non-English languages on the corporate logo (Anttila-Muilu, 2004; Cambridge, 2002). This standardization seems counterintuitive to the IB's underlying notion that international-mindedness grows from the celebration of diverse cultures and languages. Homogenization of the IB brand also leads to the question: As the IB becomes more singular in corporate vision will the cultural relativism the IB has espoused be lost in the face of the macrocosm of globalized homogeneity? It a paradox that IB branding, which has its foundations in celebrating the diversity of its stakeholders, may lead to a conformity trap that prevents schools from expressing their unique features within a diverse international context (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2009). The IB is at odds with itself. Until recently, the self-expression of each school

was offered within the context of the brand identity and inherent to the IB brand. The IB provided the scaffolding of a conceptual framework that schools worked within to fill their unique curriculum, agreements, policies, and procedures relative to their societal and cultural needs (Dawn, 2012). If it would like to retain the underpinnings of international-mindedness, cultural relevance, and unique interpretation of its programme by different cultures, the IB's brand identity must be malleable as the IB moves forward. However, it is problematic that a strong, centralized brand leads to greater brand loyalty in stakeholders and thus, an increase in profits.

Building Global Competency as IB's Main Goal

In the preceding paragraphs, I have examined the IB phenomena from its early intentions to its global branding strategy. In the following subsection, I examine the need for global competency within international schools as a rejoinder to homogeneity. Globalization changes communities and norms the human tribe. The systems of colonial and postcolonial hegemony are often touted as the impetus for globalization (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Wylie, 2008). Many researchers have explored the loss of indigenous identities to the spread of western culture (Ahnee-Benham & Napier, 2002; Eubanks et al., 1997; Wylie, 2008). Organizations such as the IB have been questioned as vehicles for the global spread of western values. But globalization can be full of assets; it can beget new theories of learning and new advanced technologies that aid in the betterment of humanity.

Indeed, as most technologies throughout history have been borrowed from, stolen, or inspired by other societies, innovations gained from globalization directly impact the future of humankind (Diamond, 1997). Forward thinkers argue that the fourth industrial revolution, specifically artificial intelligence, robotics, software, and automation, will lead to massive job

loss and displacement (J. Nalder, personal communication, May 1, 2017; Robinson, 2016). In many developing nations that are currently economically insecure, this displacement could have dire consequences. Humans now face challenges and opportunities that require new skills, attitudes and aptitudes not present in the current content and skills in schools. Students need to be able to dream and imagine futures for themselves (J. Nalder, personal communication, May 1, 2017; Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). They need to network across cultures and develop empathy and high emotional intelligence. Students need to embrace the new social contract devoted to a circular economy, service, and socially-minded problem solving (Brown, n.d.). They need to be given opportunities to actively address globally relevant problems to improve the wellbeing of current and future generations. They need to become entrepreneurs to invent new jobs or the intrapreneurs existing industries will need to survive the transition (Brown, 2009; J. Nalder, personal communication, May 1, 2017; Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Most importantly, students need development beyond the superficially constructed matrix of cultural competency found within international schools toward the global competency of real-world learning.

Who will model the attitudes, aptitudes, behaviors, and skills needed in this new paradigm? Who will take on designing spaces for new ways of learning and innovation? Educational leaders are no longer able to silo learning or learning institutions. Instead, they bear responsibility for shifting the systems within schools to respond to the global need for collective capacity. International schools and global organizations have developed frameworks for the skills, attitudes, and attributes that engender a global competent citizen. Organizations such as the IB have embedded the learner profile, which acts as a plumb line that extends through all three programmes as a reference for the dispositions of an internationally-minded learner. Figure

11 indicates the essential profile of an IB learner. The IB does not stand alone in examining the skills, attitudes and attributes of global citizen. The Global Citizen Diploma (GCD) was developed at Yokohama International School in 2011 (GCD, n.d.). Later, the diploma was adopted by several international schools that formed a consortium with the aim of continuing the development of the diploma, collaborating on professional development, and engaging students in international dialogue. The diploma is an additional certification that students can achieve by developing areas of expertise, specific competencies, and core values. Figure 12 is an overview of these components as outlined by the GCD.

Development of the globally-minded learner is not specific to international school contexts. Organizations such as World Savvy have developed programs and master's degree level certification for in-service educators who recognize the need for increased global competency. The global competence matrix shown in Figure 13 was created for the Global Competence Certification Program.

Despite being created at different times and on different continents there are several overlapping components within each framework. Each emphasizes the need for dialogue and discourse across cultures. Aligned with Gutiérrez's (2016) theory, such conversations and actions require a caring, empathetic disposition and encourage practitioners to be agents of equity, service, and action. When viewed as an asset to globalization, diversity can beget new theories of learning and advanced technologies that aid in educational reform.

Summary

The IB was not borne of colonialist or post-colonialist intentions but its growth is grounded in a commitment to universal and globally enforced values (Hayden et al., 2002). Is it impossible for the IB to possess the internationally-minded, empathetic, social, and culturally

IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

<p>INQUIRERS We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGEABLE We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.</p> <p>THINKERS We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.</p> <p>COMMUNICATORS We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.</p> <p>PRINCIPLED We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.</p>	<p>OPEN-MINDED We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.</p> <p>CARING We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.</p> <p>RISK-TAKERS We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.</p> <p>BALANCED We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.</p> <p>REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.</p>
--	---

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalaurat International®
Bachillerato Internacional®

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2013
International Baccalaureate® | Baccalaurat International® | Bachillerato Internacional®

Note. Adapted from “IB Learner Profile” by International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013b. Copyright 2013 by Author. Available at <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/flyers-and-artworks/learner-profile-en.pdf>

Figure 11. The IB learner profile.

STRUCTURE OF THE GLOBAL CITIZEN DIPLOMA:

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Sometimes students transcend their roles as students and participate in the world as adults with paraprofessional expertise.

ADVANCED
ACADEMICS

LEADERSHIP

MULTI-
LINGUALISM

PERSONAL
ACCOMPLISHMENT

COMPETENCIES

In addition to core values, each student has an individual combination of competencies that shape what they contribute to the world.

PUBLIC
COMMUNICATION

WELLNESS

WILDERNESS
ENGAGEMENT

WORK
EXPERIENCE

ACADEMIC
SKILLS

ARTISTIC
EXPRESSION

MANAGEMENT

PERSONAL
GOAL

CORE VALUES

The GCD is built on the foundation of core values of global citizenship that reflect understanding of others, awareness of action and advocacy.

ACADEMICS

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

GLOBAL
UNDERSTANDING

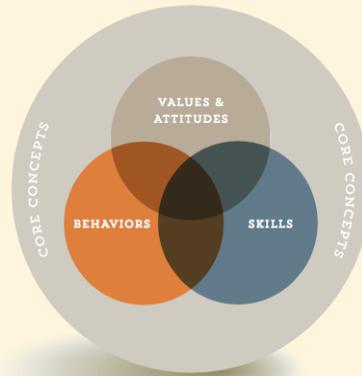
INTER-CULTURAL
COMMUNICATION

Note. Adapted from “The Global Citizen Diploma: The Story is More than Numbers” by Global Citizen Diploma, n.d. Copyright by Author. Available at https://gcdiploma.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/gcd3_onesheetv2_full.pdf

Figure 12. The structure of the GCD.

GLOBAL COMPETENCE MATRIX

Global competence is the disposition and capacity to understand and act on issues of global significance. Globally competent individuals possess and apply the following qualities, characteristics, and abilities to learning about and engaging with the world. Educators who aspire to help students become globally competent must both develop these attributes in themselves and find ways to foster them in students.



CORE CONCEPTS

- World events and global issues are complex and interdependent
- One's own culture and history is key to understanding one's relationship to others
- Multiple conditions fundamentally affect diverse global forces, events, conditions, and issues
- The current world system is shaped by historical forces

VALUES & ATTITUDES

- Openness to new opportunities, ideas and ways of thinking
- Desire to engage with others
- Self-awareness about identity & culture, & sensitivity and respect for differences
- Valuing multiple perspectives
- Comfort with ambiguity & unfamiliar situations
- Reflection on context and meaning of our lives in relationship to something bigger
- Question prevailing assumptions
- Adaptability and the ability to be cognitively nimble
- Empathy
- Humility

SKILLS

- Investigates the world by framing questions, analyzing and synthesizing relevant evidence, and drawing reasonable conclusions that lead to further enquiry
- Recognizes, articulates, and applies an understanding of different perspectives (including his/her own)
- Selects and applies appropriate tools and strategies to communicate and collaborate effectively,
- Listens actively and engages in inclusive dialogue
- Is fluent in 21st century digital technology
- Demonstrates resiliency in new situations
- Applies critical, comparative, and creative thinking and problem solving

BEHAVIORS

- Seeks out and applies an understanding of different perspectives to problem solving and decision making
- Forms opinions based on exploration and evidence
- Commits to the process of continuous learning and reflection
- Adopts shared responsibility and takes cooperative action
- Shares knowledge and encourages discourse
- Translates ideas, concerns, and findings into appropriate and responsible individual or collaborative actions to improve conditions
- Approaches thinking and problem solving collaboratively

This Global Competence matrix was created for the Global Competence Certification Program (GCC). The GCC takes a collaborative approach to determining the core components of global competence and assumes it to be an iterative process, which encourages discourse and challenges assumptions. The GCC program is an online Master's level certificate program for in-service educators, developed by leading experts in global competence education. Learn more at www.globalcompetencecertificate.org

GLOBAL COMPETENCE CERTIFICATE



Note. Received from K. Simon, personal communication, July 21, 2017. Copyright by Global Competence Certificate Program (GCC).

Figure 13. The global competence matrix.

relative ethos it clings to, now that it has grown into a globally recognized and sought-after brand worth millions in financial and cultural capital? Establishing dialogues between cultural groups to create reciprocal relationships of trust requires time, transparency, and space to listen to different narratives. When schools espouse a ubiquitous brand identity and value policies, procedures, and initiatives from that singular identity, it is easy for teachers to defer to the wisdom of the brand and assume all voices align with the collective. Thus, the voices of those who create the policies and procedures that dictate daily life at the school overpower the voices of the dominant culture.

Impact of Culture

In the last section I examined the IB as a global phenomenon that seems daunting in the scope and breadth of its western influence and economic power. Juxtaposed against that power and dominance is the IB's ethos of globally-minded citizens who espouse the values of international-mindedness, empathy, and collaborative discourse. I contend there is a space of hope within that juxtaposition. Rather than an *either/or*, I contend a *yes/and* construct is possible when designing equitable communities of learning. This section includes a definition of the elements of culture, an application of the understanding of culture to organizational culture, an examination of the ways people become aware of bias, and an explanation of how to frame understandings of culture in ways that do not descend into cultural relativism.

Clash of Cultures

International schools are complex cultural constructs. There are messy politics and complex relationships constrained to the brick and mortar of institutions. Understanding how to develop a reciprocal and equitable organizational culture within schools requires developing a clearer understanding of how national identities influence our organizational cultures. For the

purpose of this section, I use Hofstede's (2001) definition: "Culture is defined as collective programming of the mind; it manifests itself not only in values, but in more superficial ways; in symbols, heroes, and rituals" (p. 1). Exploring Hofstede's book made me curious about my personal beliefs about culture. In mapping my understanding, the drawing quickly became an unreadable mess of ideas, notions, feelings, and values, for many of which I could not identify the origin. My map made clear that my value systems are culture-bound and mostly subconscious. Hofstede (2001) and Meyer (2014b) have worked to mitigate the nebulosity of culture mapping by creating simplistic models to help untangle the complexity of culture.

This exercise provided insight that culture is a complicated nuanced and deeply personal construct. For relationships between national and international employees in international school settings to become more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable and innovative working environments, individuals must first identify the nuanced values that define their cultural identity. Further, they need opportunities to listen to the values of others and reflect, together, on how those cultural differences might influence the relationships between them and be the foundation of the organizational culture they develop.

Organizational Culture

As previously mentioned, international schools have specific cultures they wish to foster. International schools seek to sub-program the national cultural mindset for teachers, students, and the community to develop a sense of belonging that transcends their nationalities and unites them under one "umbrella." To accomplish this, international schools use broad concepts such as missions, visions, and values along with logos, typeface, and colors to create a brand and commonality and build loyalty (Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014a). Finding connection can be challenging within international schools that have highly diverse, multi-cultural personnel,

students, and families. The school is often designed to be a cultural representation (e.g., an American school) which is then overlaid with the national location and the multinational audience.

For example, in one of the kindergarten classes I taught, 22 children represented 17 different nationalities. The teacher, TA, and aids were all from different countries. With little common cultural ground, that experience is consistent with prior researchers that showed these cultural mixing grounds are sensitive places requiring open dialogue and the creation of cultural competencies (Ahnee-Benham & Napier, 2002; Green, 2017; Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014b). It was impossible to simply export and exert my theories about leadership, management, and teaching onto the team and expect them to act as docile recipients of my expectations. When I attempted to do that, I created distance and dissonance within the learning community I was attempting to grow.

Distance and dissonance within communities causes the breakdown of effective teams (Aguilar, 2016; Aguilar, 2018; Green, 2017; Meyer, 2014a). During a discussion of the implementation of a new technology, I mentioned that the coaching team would need to think carefully about the methodology before implementing change. I stated the teachers and TAs at our school were unique, but, before I finished my sentence, a male coach from the United States interrupted me and stated, “I hate when people say that. Teachers at this school aren’t special; adult learning theory works on adults, period.” I was deeply shocked and offended. As an educator, I value each of my learners as unique; they each have forces that act on their lives and affect their learning journey. They have distinct personalities, ages, genders; they deal with the stratification of power in their families, access to food, the geography of where they come from,

their sense of sovereignty, and the histories of their families and people. Within my value system, saying that one learning theory would apply to all learners is tantamount to malpractice.

That experience, and my reaction to it was grounded in personal value bias that may be rooted in culture (Shields, 2004; Walker & Riordan, 2010). The United States of America is often classified as being a melting pot where individuals morph into one homogenous nationalistic culture. Canada, however, accepts its identity as a multicultural country. Many Canadians identify as being part of a complex history of cultures. I am third generation Irish-Canadian, but also a dual citizen with the United Kingdom, and a non-resident of my birth country. My identity is complex. Despite my colleague and I being outwardly similar; both technology coaches, from geographically close areas, holding similar political leanings, educated to the same level, and Caucasian, we had other invisible and deeply held biases that were difficult to control. I do not contend that we could not have learned from one another, rather I acknowledge it would have been challenging. Creating space and willingness to engage in purposeful, transparent, moral dialogue to engage differences and cultivate new mindsets requires dedicated and prioritized time (Ahnee-Benham & Napier, 2002; Brown, 2009; Cook-Sather, 2015; Green, 2017; Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014b; Ramos & Schleicher, 2018; Weiss, 1995). In the next section I examine how culture impacts relationships between members of organizations and school climate.

Culture Impacts School Climate

In Thailand, the King's anthem is played at school each morning at precisely 7:20 A. M. Every member of the community stops moving, talking, drinking, and playing and stands to face the flag. Basketballs bounce chased by no one, coffee steams, conversations trail off mid-sentence; life halts. As the last note settles into silence, the hustle and bustle of the school is

returned, the game continues as if nothing happened. When I first moved to Thailand, I felt the ritualized reverence was odd. I am a non-royalist Canadian and had relocated after four years immersed in the extreme egalitarian culture of Germany. However, my previous 10 years in Korea and China gave me some insight into the cultural construct of society in hierarchical cultures. Despite it feeling odd, I knew enough to stop, stand, and never question it. I deferred to the status quo. The rationality of this ritual did not matter; I understood that it differed from mine even though I did not fully understand it.

A visitor who experienced the flag raising might suggest the culture of the school is dominated by the host nation. This exemplifies an issue with perceptions gained from limited understanding of culture. I would caution the visitor to look closer. If one only looks at the raising of the flag on the flagpole, the rush of applause in an assembly for the star athlete, or the mascots that brand the polo shirts of uniforms, they merely see the organizational culture that the school outwardly cultivates. In my experience, the symbols that represent schools can become exclusionary to those who lack the tacit understanding of the dominant culture. This was demonstrated in an early conversation I had with a colleague. While standing on the sports pitch, I noticed a falcon was the mascot. This confused me, as I was certain the falcon was not indigenous to the region. I asked a teacher from New Zealand who had been at the school for over 20 years why the falcon represented the school's teams, and he listed attributes of the birds of prey: fast, strong, and precise. He informed me that the falcon represented the qualities the school valued in its athletes. Later, when I asked a similarly tenured local teacher why the falcon was the mascot, she answered, "I don't know, what's a falcon?" It would be easy for me to characterize her lack of knowledge as a lack of education, inability to communicate explicitly, or

even purposeful apathy toward the school culture. It is much harder to have a dialogue about the symbols that represent athleticism within her culture (Meyer, 2014b; Walker & Riordan, 2010).

A mascot is merely one talisman in a rich visual iconography that marks a pan-cultural narrative within international schools. A pan-cultural narrative is created when an assumed shared culture is enforced based on superficial commonalities or the assigned values from the dominant culture works to bolster the appearance of cohesion and brand identity within schools (Hofstede, 2001; Shields, 2004). Often international schools attempt to provide a superficial nod to cultural differences through the raising of a flag, celebration of international holidays, exploration units that focus on personal histories, or use of mother-tongue books in libraries. These are some ways schools attempt to mitigate the messiness of inter-culturalism.

In schools these events are often diminished as superficial tokens, disparagingly labeled as “flags, food and festivals.” Many international schools state that they have moved beyond this tokenism; they believe their cultural competency is high. The problem occurs when those outward tokens are not replaced with thoughtful and sometimes difficult dialogues about cultural difference but are replaced by one overarching “school culture.” By providing only selective voice to disparate narratives, the less-dominant groups become increasingly invisible. The difficult conversations between colleagues about wage disparity, workload and flow, equity of space, food security, and family values become more silenced, and less transparent. This silencing of difference fosters the unspoken, unwritten, and often hidden myths, assumptions and stereotypes about students, teachers, and the community (Green, 2017; Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014b). I posit all these factors construct the authentic culture of a school.

In a simplistic way, the pan-cultural narrative is an organizational fix. Within international schools, faculty turnover brings a large influx of new teachers from various

countries and causes the cultural landscape to shift constantly. This complicated, layered social reality can lead to “acculturated stress” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 423). By adding universality to the user experience, schools provide stability and a norming of the tribe, which has occurred to some degree through the umbrella organization of the IB.

Summary

The values that people embody are part of the unconscious mind and represent ways of understanding the world that seem completely obvious to the beholder but can be amazing and innovative to others (Sivers, 2015). By establishing reciprocal and innovative learning cultures within the setting of international schools, people can “meet and mix as equals” and discover the “amazingness” of others (Hofstede, 2001, p. 425). The goal is for schools to bolster cultural competence by celebrating and acknowledging the assets and wisdom within cultural differences through transparent, empathetic practices, to raise the capacity of all within the community (Cook-Sather, 2015; Grubb & Tredway, 2010; Meyer, 2014b; Shields, 2004). Viewing relationships through a cultural lens allows people to influence attitudes and behaviors that lead to exciting new ways of thinking and being (Aguilar, 2016; Meyer, 2014a; Walker & Riordan, 2010). This evolution begins at schools through dedicating time to audit the ways culture frames how we operate within international multicultural school settings, engaging in dialogue to discover the amazingness of that diversity, then co-designing for change (Cook-Sather, 2015; Guajardo et al., 2016; Walker & Riordan, 2010).

A Rejoinder to IB Homogeneity

In the previous sections and subsections, I described how individuals are products of distinct cultural values. Those values lead to biases that influence decisions, policies, and procedures as well as the outward appearance of a school culture (Hofstede, 2001; Meyer,

2014b; Shields, 2004). When these biases interact, emotional dissonance occurs. Humans face new challenges that require creating a shared narrative that is grounded in an asset approach rather than a deficit approach mired in myths and stereotypes (Mintrop, 2016; Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). As humans embrace new technologies and contact becomes amplified and on a global scale, it becomes increasingly important to address how the shared narrative can accommodate and celebrate differences as people become more homogenous.

The literature calls for care when creating equitable, reciprocal, and innovative learning communities; several scholars and practitioners have argued transparency, time, and empathy are the keys to building greater equity within organizations such as international schools (Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014b; Shields, 2004; Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Some specifically stated that enabling moral dialogue to explore emergent truths helps overcome cultural bias (Cook-Sather, 2015; Green, 2017; Shields, 2004). Through dialogue, differences become the foundation for innovative growth, the fusion of ideas, and the impetus for change. But what does that look like in practice?

In the following sections, I describe possible systems, strategies, and tools schools can use to engage in reciprocal learning and the reimagining of more equitable learning environments. The sections and subsections outline the development of professional learning communities by engendering learning exchanges and the power of networks which leverage methods and tools as a place and process for rethinking how to address school reform. Two key processes necessary to fully engage in professional learning are design thinking and coaching. The flow of how these elements fit into a framework has been worked and reworked into a model that was tested within the context of the current study. Figure 14 shows one iteration of this framework.

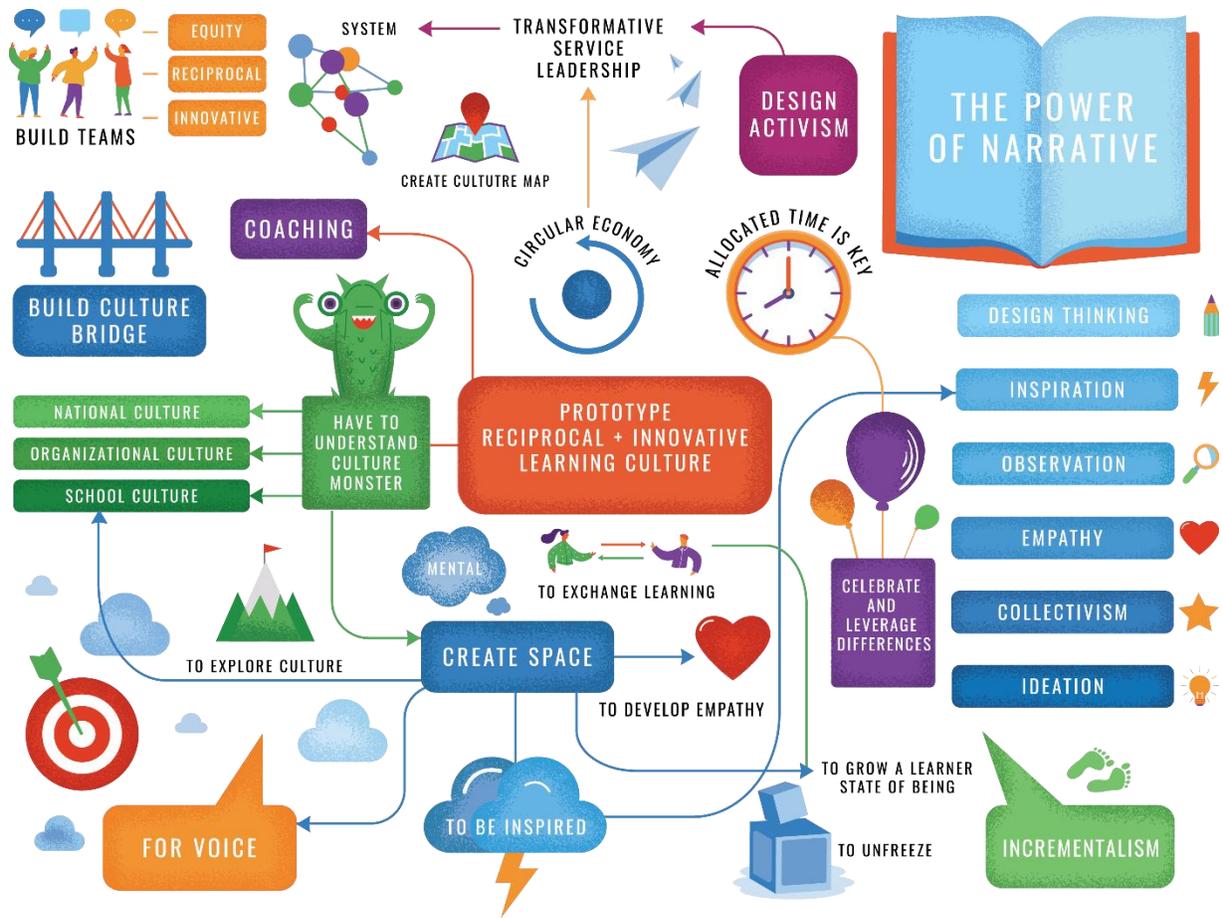


Figure 14. Further mapping of a possible framework for the study.

Networked Innovation Communities (NICs)

Every teacher knows a learner offers their highest point of contribution when they feel safe, valued, and heard. CLEs offer a place where the kind of interaction, continuity, and reciprocity people value in learning is transparent in the structure and the pedagogy (Dewey, 1938; Guajardo et al., 2016). When community members are invited into collaborative exchanges with the presupposition that they bring important knowledge of the local experience, their voices become a tool for reflection, empowerment, action, and equity (Guajardo et al., 2016; Mintrop, 2016). When disparate voices join and leverage distinct viewpoints to contribute to innovation, they are networked.

Current school and community reform efforts often have the following characteristics: (1) ignoring or silencing the people most impacted by change; (2) offering overly-technical processes that rely on identifying needs and deficits instead of building on collective assets; (3) using external consultants and top-down approaches; (4) over-emphasizing economic and career goals of schooling without a balanced perspective of community and citizenship readiness; and (5) failing to consider the sociocultural context of schools and communities (Militello, Rallis, & Goldring, 2009). Many school change initiatives give “lip service,” but no systematic attention, to the fundamental elements of change and reform—joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and shared repertoire. In contrast, CLEs build on community assets, deepen relational trust as a key resource of school reform, and model and use democratic processes as crucial attributes of learning and effective reform efforts (Militello et al., 2009; M. Militello, personal communication, June 2017).

Lave and Wenger (1991) conceived of identities as “long-term, living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice—Thus identity, knowing and social membership entail one another” (p. 53). The three foundational tenets of CLEs are:

- *Joint enterprise* as the meaning or understanding that members of a community have negotiated what they will mutually accomplish.
- *Mutual engagement* requires that members of the community of practice interact with one another regularly to develop new skills, refine old skills, and incorporate new ways of understanding the shared enterprise.
- *Shared repertoire* is the communal capacity created from ongoing reciprocal engagements. This shared repertoire may consist of artifacts, documents, language, vocabulary, routines, technology, and ethos.

Learning exchanges generate leadership from the inside out by engaging intergenerational teams of administrators, youth, teachers, elders, community partners, and family members to deepen and broaden networks. Leadership in the learning exchange lexicon is a function of many, not solely invested in a person or a group of persons. Leadership is collective and relational, not individual and top down. The ToA for this research study posits that if international school community members, such as local- and foreign-hired teachers and leadership, engage in opportunities to share their: values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community will be revealed. As contended in the section above, networked communities draw power through disparate wisdom to solve complex problems (Downes, 2012). By constructing shared artifacts within communities but from different cultures or backgrounds, schools have

access to rich sources of inspiration and creativity (Brown, 2009; Bryk, Gomez, & Grunow, 2011; Guajardo et al., 2016). In this way, CLEs act as small networks that operate as NICs.

Technology Capacity as a Tool for Equity

I began international teaching in Seoul, South Korea in 2000 and the only places to read and send emails to friends and family were smoky, dim-lit gaming rooms. My first mobile phone was a flip phone that had a green-screen reminiscent of the Commodore 64 that graced my Canadian elementary school in the early 1980s. In 2004, Facebook was created, Twitter two years later, and in another two years the first video was posted to YouTube (Greenberg, 2016; Jawed, 2005; Philips, 2007). Rapidly, technology began to alter how I, and others, fundamentally interacted, gathered information, and learned (Downes, 2012; Halverson & Shapiro, 2012).

Currently, the world is firmly within the fourth industrial revolution. The advancements that the fourth industrial revolution has created such as robotics and autonomous transport, artificial intelligence, machine learning, advanced materials, biotechnology, and genomics transform the way humans live, communicate, organize, and work with others (CarTV, 2016; Gaudiosi, 2015; Mitra, 2013; Sutner, 2015). The rapid change in technology means most of these cutting-edge technologies will become mundane or obsolete sooner rather than later. Science fiction continually becomes, science fact.

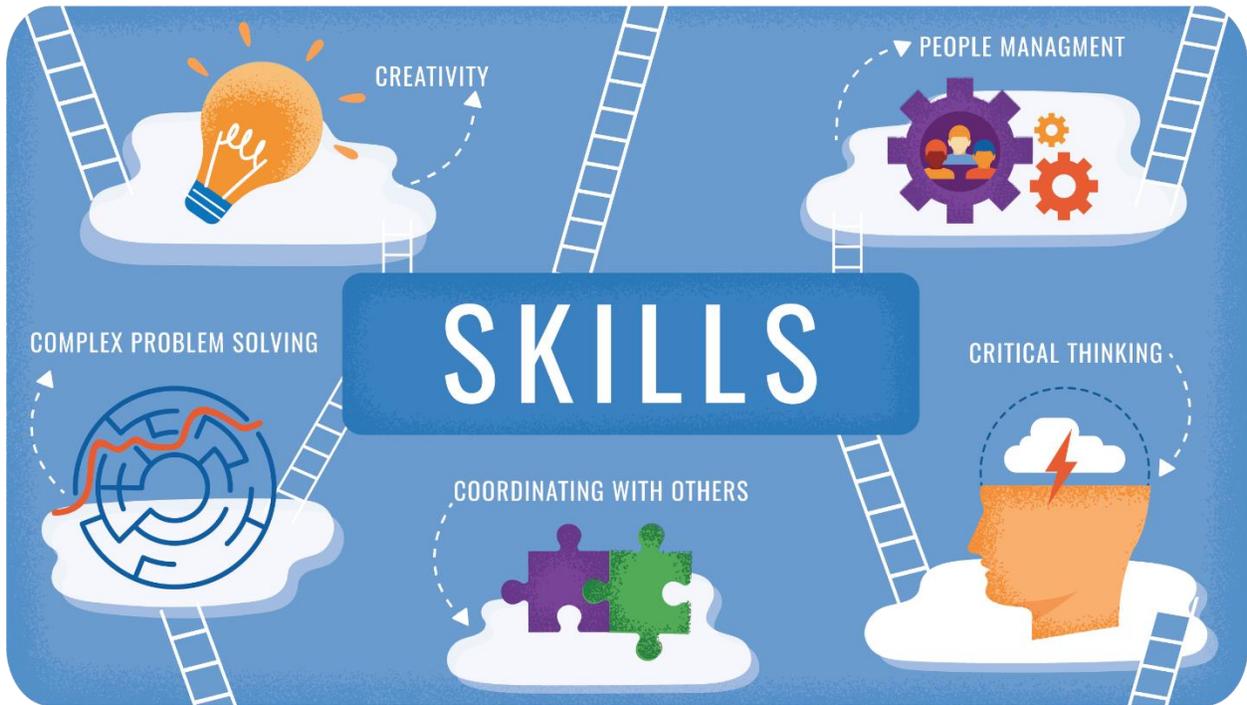
In 2014, I shifted out of the classroom into the role of a digital learning coach (DLC) at a large international school in Thailand. I had the task of supporting 90 teachers and close to 700 elementary students in new technologies. Although I worked regularly with a small percentage of early adopters, I faced questions rooted in worry, fear, and/or silence from most teachers. In coaching meetings, I heard teachers say, “How do I keep up with all of this?” “What do I give up in order to teach this?” “How do I keep my students safe?” Their anxiety was valid:

Anxiety would thus have been an appropriate response of people who were sensitive to the idea that they were living at the horizons of their world. For if a people genuinely are at the historical limit of their way of life, there is precious little they can do to “peek over to the other side.” Precisely because they are about to endure a historical rupture, the detailed texture of life on the other side has to be beyond their ken. (Lear, 2008, p. 76).

Lear (2008) offers readers a model for how the Crow leader, Plenty Coups, navigated the unknown future for his people at the turn of a different century. His future offered choices for despair or hope. Plenty Coup worked to construct a shared narrative with his people of that future and gave it a foundation based in dreams and visions that foreshadowed what was to come. As technology advances, the singularity and birth of artificial intelligence is due (Harris, 2016). Humans face a historical rupture that will require the development of skills, attitudes, and aptitudes that have never been needed. As a DLC, I struggled in the role knowing that despite teachers’ fears and trepidations, technology would only continue its advance (Grey, 2016; Halverson & Shapiro, 2012; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Snitker, 2014). Unlike Plenty Coup, I lost my ability to dream of a future goodness. My visions were littered with the mountain of issues created from international schools’ transient teaching population, the issues of time for instructional or digital coaches to have a measurable impact, the escalating speed of technological advancement, and the sheer volume of what is expected to be accomplished in schools (Knight, n.d.; Todd, 2011). I despaired, but hope is cultivated in the spaces shared by people.

Technology is merely a tool; the deeper, value-laden humanistic skills and attitudes must be developed in our communities (Downes, 2012). There are many iterations of these skills but for the purpose of this study, I have highlighted Wagner’s (2008) seven survival skills of the 21st century which are: curiosity and imagination, critical thinking and problem-solving, agility and adaptability, collaboration across networks and leading by influence, effective oral and written

communication, initiative and entrepreneurship, and accessing and analyzing information. Figure 15 is my representation of the top five skills needed by 2020, as listed by the World Economic Forum. These two sources overlap in their taxonomy and are similar to the global competencies considered in earlier sections of this dissertation. But how does one shift from focusing on technology education to the development of hopeful mindsets? I offer that inviting strangers into learning exchanges that scaffold problem-solving through the development of contemporary practice and technology skills draws on the wisdom of disparate narratives and creates innovative networks. Leaders of these networks actively seek weak network ties, or people from very different professions and knowledge sets to tie stronger, or create divergent thinking that jumpstarts innovation (Brown, 2009; Finette, 2017). By leveraging the wisdom of local place and people and using what Finette (April 8, 2017) calls weak ties to tie stronger, communities can face the unknown and design a hopeful future together. In previous chapters I have discussed the disconnect between stated equity ethos and authentic equity practice within international school contexts. Educators in these settings are proponents of equity and believe they listen to and advocate for the local teaching assistants, aides, and staff. However, issues of power, organizational structures, and lack of sociocultural knowledge and awareness create divides between the foreign teachers and the local teachers in international school settings. These divides impact local professionals by limiting the agency they have with leadership, teachers, and students in the international school community. The use of technology was an innovation conduit for this study and predicated the CLE meetings. This PAR project examined ways international schools can use technology skill building to create NICs. In the final chapter I examine how the technology skill development component of this study became less relevant to the other elements of culture, design thinking, coaching and networks.



Note. Adapted from “The 10 Skills You Will Need to Thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution” by A. Grey, 2016. Copyright 2016 by World Economic Forum.

Figure 15. Modified future skills for 2020.

Design for Equity

One model for developing technology skills and the 21st century skills listed in the preceding section is design thinking. Design thinking is a way of thinking that leverages the diversity of culture, ideas, and human experiences to solve complex problems in the world (Brown, 2009; Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Much like the learning exchange, design thinking is a shared humanistic experience that encourages the cross-pollination of disciplines towards a collective ownership of ideas, grounded in the development of empathy for others. Although design is often considered specialized practice, design thinking is something humans perform daily. When I introduce the concept to students in the makerspace, I ask if they have ever crafted a gift for a friend. I prompt them to remember how they thought about what their friend would like, perhaps asked a few questions to get more information, then they made a version of the gift, tested it to see if it worked, then gave it to the friend—hoping for a smile. This child’s play is a simplified process of design thinking: developing empathy through listening, doing research, prototyping a product, testing it out, and sharing with others.

Design thinking is used in a variety of ways within organizations such as international schools. Some schools use design thinking as a tool for children to explore materials, engage with social entrepreneurship, or as a scaffold for making and tinkering, while others use it as tool for building a better learning organization (Martinez & Stager, 2013; Mintrop, 2016; Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Because schools are complex contextual organizations, there will never be a perfect solution to all problems that arise. However, design thinking allows organizations to actively and equitably diagnose problems and create incremental change over time (Brown, 2009; Gwande, 2017; Martinez & Stager, 2013; Spillane, 2011; Spillane, 2013).

Coaches as Equity Leaders

The DLC role was thrust upon schools by the large-scale device buy-in that occurred within education over the last several years. Since the release of the first iPad in 2010 (Apple Inc., 2010), many large international schools have provided each child a device in 1-1 programs. Many teachers shifted out of information and communications technology classrooms and computer labs to take on the role of DLC. Coaches now act as job-embedded professional development professionals who support the ongoing work of educators. DLCs work in different capacities within different institutions. Some primarily focus on basic computing skills. Some have one-on-one check-ins with teachers, while others have longer goal-setting sessions. Some coaches work with teams to view learning experiences through potential tech lenses, some teach film, design thinking, or operate makerspaces. Some design webpages or run social media, and some do all the above. These differing roles and differing time allocations of duties can fluctuate further with changes in leadership or teachers. Each new group has distinct notions of what a digital coach “should” do.

From my experience within the field it became clear that the real issues related to technology were not with the technology skills teachers needed, but in the challenge of shifting cultures of thinking. Therefore, it was not a technical challenge, but an adaptive challenge, or a challenge that “requires us to rethink our deeply held values, beliefs, assumptions, and even our professional identity. Adaptive challenges are complex and addressing them requires patience and time” (Powell & Kusuma-Powell, 2015, p. 66). However, ask any international teacher the single thing they wish they had more of, and the answer is usually time. Gladwell (2008) calculated that skill mastery requires 10,000 hours of focused practice. How many more hours are needed to change institutional thinking? Ten thousand hours is approximately six and a half

years when put into the international 180-day school calendar. For many international teachers, six years seems like a lifetime, and could mean up to three different schools, countries, or continents. The greatest area impacted by teacher turnover is sustainability of instructional change within schools (Edutopia, 2015). If we examine the past to inform the future regarding technology, the landscape will likely be unrecognizable seven years from now. As teachers move from context to context, they have told me they feel like they just cannot keep up. There must be a shift from content and skill driven coaching towards the development of learner states of being (Downes, 2012) for teachers, DLCs, and leaders to be successful. Schools must focus on developing a participatory culture (Borman, Ferger, & Kawakami, 2006; Halverson & Shapiro, 2012), emotional availability, self-learning, goal setting, and an attitude of risk-taking, playful surprise, and delight. All coaching must start with conversations fostered within professional learning communities that nudge teachers into innovative practice (Poglinco et al., 2003). As mentioned, coaching has largely been a response to rapid advancements in technology, but the role may be more powerful as a lever for greater equity within international school contexts. In a system that is affected by the transient nature of international school teaching, time constraints on changing cultures of thinking, and the rapid advance of technology, the local teachers are one segment of the international school population that has the advantage of time and is often overlooked as a rich fund of institutional knowledge (Todd, 2011). Schools can now define the role of coach as equity leader.

Privilege and power are constructs awarded to individuals and are linked to cultural capacity (Aguilar, 2016; Hofstede, 2001). For international schools to develop relationships between national and international employees that are reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable and innovative working environments, leadership must shift beyond

focusing on market values toward a state of service, grounded in empathy, and open to moral dialogue (Aguilar, 2016; Evans, 2013; Shields, 2004).

Despite penning missions and visions that espouse the values of international-mindedness and equity, the organizational systems of international schools largely maintain systems of inequity (Eubanks et al., 1997). As equity advocates, coaches' work to engage in dialogue within gracious space that questions the status quo and nudges thinking toward new schema, while respecting and listening to the narratives of others. This is a shift towards what Eubanks et al. (1997) described as Discourse II. In this dialogue, there is an active component of change to the status quo. Conversations might be difficult or uncomfortable but aim to make the "undiscussables" of the school transparent and acknowledged (Eubanks et al., 1997, p. 162). Coaches embody transformative leadership that endeavors to design systems to support equity without creating blame, guilt, or denial (Aguilar 2016; Eubanks et al., 1997). However, for organizations to build global competency and develop learner states of being, members must first understand themselves as cultural beings in relation to those around them. As explained in the section above, learning exchanges create literal and figurative space to build cultural competence within self and community (Aguilar, 2016; Guajardo et al., 2016). In this way, leaders become coaches for equity.

Summary

To date, the dominant framework for international education has been liberal pluralism with value placed on overt mutual tolerance (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Hayden et al., 2002). In a world with networks that span the globe, interdependence and connectivity are being redefined. Identities reshaped from the flow of cultures in and out of a community increase the difficulty of not capitulating to a dominant narrative directed by organizations. Balancing the inevitability of

a globalized world while honoring and utilizing the wisdom of individual cultural ways of knowing is the main challenge.

International schools must utilize a schema that provides safe opportunities for dissent to be voiced and acknowledge collective responsibility for issues raised if they wish to engender global competencies that enlist all the stakeholders within their organization. Leadership must insist that educational excellence is directly related to equity and the wisdom gained from disparate viewpoints and transcending slogans, logos, and brands (Brown, 2009; Evans, 2013). Figure 4 shows the framework for the study that incorporates elements from the literature review into one cohesive way to move forward. The theory and framework we tested throughout the PAR was NICs = ECD Thinking + CLEs + Coaching. This framework was dissected at various points in the PAR.

The Power of Disparate Viewpoints

Engaging across cultures and challenging dominant value norms adds to discourse that enriches ideas in the search for solutions to problems within international schools. By utilizing tools and strategies such as learning exchanges and design thinking, international schools can scaffold the nebulosity of connectivist learning and networked innovation. For these NICs to be successful, educational leaders must espouse an equity agenda, allot time, and engage in moral, albeit difficult, dialogues to create a new hopeful narrative that helps solve pragmatic problems. In the next chapter I describe my new context, briefly explain the place of the study, expand on my role and struggles as a coach, provide an overview of my journey from practitioner to CPR, and discuss how that journey influenced my equity stance for this study. Finally, I outline my pilot study, and explain how I utilized elements from the FoP Framework to test initial thinking for this PAR.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT OF FOP

At the onset of the PAR Cycle One, I was employed at an international school in Thailand as a DLC. However, mid-study my context, country, and job changed. In this chapter, I outline the pilot study I conducted in Thailand and briefly explain how it informed my research design and methodology, which are described in the Chapter 4. I then provide a description of three contextual fields: macro (China), meso (ISS/LEVEL 5), and micro (CPR team and CLE group) for the new location of this study. I briefly describe the backgrounds of the CPR team, discuss the sociocultural frames that are apparent in the team and state the benefits and risks. Later, I provide a brief history of coaching, an overview of my beliefs as a technology coach, and explain how those beliefs influenced my equity stance for this study. This chapter ends with a brief examination of the politics of change within international schools and the influencers that contribute to change.

The Pilot Study: Thailand

In Chapter 1, I discussed the discomfort, self-questioning, and observations of inequity I made in my teaching, coaching, and leadership roles. To dig into those questions and discover if they were genuine hunches regarding equity and reciprocal learning within the context of international schools, I had to provide opportunities to hear the voices of school constituents. While working at one “top tier” school in Thailand, I invited a small self-selected group of TAs and academic assistants (AAs) to engage in a CLE. The CLE had dual purposes. The first purpose was to increase the baseline competency of the local teachers in education technology pedagogies with the hope of creating a tangential effect of decreasing marginalization. The second purpose was to explore the sociocultural framework by holding informal CLEs focused on cultural differences, roles and responsibilities and the value and voice of local teachers.

We used six periods (45 minutes each) of release over six months to hold innovation explorations, to learn from one another, and explore tools and practices the local teachers usually are unable to access. I hoped this would increase the long-term institutional knowledge of technology at the school and increase equity between local faculty and foreign faculty as the local staff could act as mentors in certain areas of technology such as blogs and social media. I wanted to empower local staff to suggest new modalities of learning (virtual reality, augmented reality, or robotics), help them to be able to better support student learning, and aid in distribution of knowledge and skills by creating informal coaches in the community. Further, I hoped it provided opportunities for local faculty to connect with other professionals using social media to develop a network beyond the school with the aim of enriching and diversifying their practice (Davis, 2015).

Seven Thai teachers joined the informal pilot study. Demographic data for the group was collected using a Google form. The participants were all women and ranged in age from 25–55 years old. Of the participants forty-three percent had a graduate degree, and all the participants had an undergraduate degree. Four of the participants worked at the school for 10-20 years and reported having attended “uncountable” numbers of professional development sessions during follow-up conversations (CLETL memo, 2017).

Initially, I assumed the women in the group would be docile or even recalcitrant during our meetings. I predicted they wanted professional development (PD) or did not understand the premise of the time together and would stop attending. However, during each meeting the women surprised me with their honest, vulnerable, and often critical feedback, insights, and questions. They were funny, teased each other about their divorces, made fun of the oldest teacher amongst them, and literally broke every “rule” for women that I talked about, learned, or

observed in my many years in Asia. The group often shared cultural differences, lamented their lack of equity and commiserated over the amount of pay offered them. Somehow, by being vulnerable and admitting my own assumptions and stereotypes I earned a seat in their council. I felt lucky, but also responsible for enacting change. Then I left.

The Macro Context of China

Shekou, 蛇口 is nestled as an enclave within the larger city of Shenzhen. It is located at the southern tip of Nanshan, Guangdong Province, China, and on clear days, Hong Kong is visible across the Shenzhen Bay. Historically, Shekou was a relatively sleepy fishing village. In 1979, it was earmarked as Shekou Industrial Zone, developed solely by China Merchants Bank. The area went through a boom in the 1980s, as oil companies began to explore the South China Sea for natural resources and became a base for foreign oil platform workers. Shekou gradually became home to most of the expatriate population and their families (JB, personal communication, September 14, 2017). This trend created an opportunity for the international school community to flourish. In turn, the rapid economic advancement brought an influx of technology, start-up, and innovation hubs within the region. Shenzhen was marketed as the Silicon Valley of China. As such, employment opportunities rapidly increased and people who represent the 56 diverse ethnic groups within China flocked to Shekou, drawn by the promise of prosperity (WW, personal communication, September 15, 2018). This flood of multicultural people created a unique environment where it is now rare to find a dish, dialect, or dress that is distinctly claimed for the area. In fact, when I discussed Shekou's history with a locally-born woman close to my age, she reminisced about the white dolphins that used to swim in the bay and commented on the massive physical change and subsequent shift in culture within the area

from the rapid reclamation of land and subsequent development (HZ, personal communication, November 21, 2017).

The Meso Context of ISS/LEVEL 5

Within the greater context, LEVEL 5 is a start-up educational innovation hub offering an eclectic range of professional learning events for teachers aimed at scaling educational reform. LEVEL 5 is situated on the fifth floor of Shekou International School (SIS) which is a coeducational privately-owned school located in the Shekou Industrial Zone of Shenzhen, the People's Republic of China (PRC). As such, participants for this study were pooled from SIS. The school was established in January 1988 by a joint venture group of oil companies. These oil companies (Amoco, Arco, BP, Conoco-Philips, and CACT) were initially responsible for the governance of the school. Soon after the founding of the school, the sponsoring companies contracted ISS to operate the school; however, in 2004-5 the founders signed over SIS to full ISS governance. ISS established a local subsidiary, Academic Information Consulting Shenzhen, Ltd. as the local ownership entity required by Chinese law. SIS is accredited by Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and by the Chinese accreditation board, the National Council of Curriculum and Textbooks (NCCT). SIS has been awarded full WASC accreditation status since 1992 and is the only international school in Shenzhen that is fully accredited by the WASC. SIS is also the only international school in Guangdong Province to also be accredited for the full term by the NCCT. In 2010, SIS was authorized as an IB World School to deliver the IB Diploma Program. It is currently in accreditation process for the IB Primary Years Programme.

Students come from 31 different countries: 21% United States, 20% Korea, 7% Hong Kong, 7% Canada, 7% France, 6% Japan, 4% Germany, United Kingdom 4%. Twenty four percent of the student body comes from countries outside of those listed, all contributing 2% or

less to the overall enrollment. Student citizenship is determined by the “foreign ID” submitted for acceptance. Many children have dual citizenship, including a Chinese passport. SIS employs a staff of 169 people, including seven administrators, 90 credentialed teaching faculty, 44 teacher assistants and 28 full-time support staff. Retention of teachers varies from local to foreign hired faculty with locally hired teachers on average staying much longer than foreign-hired as shown in Figure 16.

The school is led by a leadership team and the faculty consists of over 90 teachers coming from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Guatemala, and China. TAs are distributed by grade level with early learning through grade 3 having one TA per class and shared TAs in the higher-grade levels. The student-staff ratio is well under 10:1. All the staff are certified in their area of assignments, including all specialists.

ISS is a nonprofit organization that has placed more than 40,000 educators around the globe since 1955; started and managed over 100 schools; developed standards-based language curriculum and supported other curricular innovations; connected over 2,000 school supply vendors with schools worldwide, and managed 75 school foundations (JB, personal communication, March 20, 2018). LEVEL 5 is the newest ISS innovation venture. LEVEL5, although part of the family of schools that is managed by ISS is not directly part of Shekou International School. Designed as a large, open, agile space, filled with new technologies such as virtual reality headsets, 3D printers, and a tinkering studio the space itself represents possibilities. As Director of LEVEL 5, I designed innovation experiences for the local public schools, international educators, and entrepreneurial sectors within Shekou and the global

	ISS/Overseas Hired Teachers	Local Hired Teachers	<i>Total</i>	<i>Departing Teachers</i>	<i>E/D Percentage</i>
2010-2011	53	35	88	27	31%
2011-2012	53	36	89	19	21%
2012-2013	65	32	97	13	13%

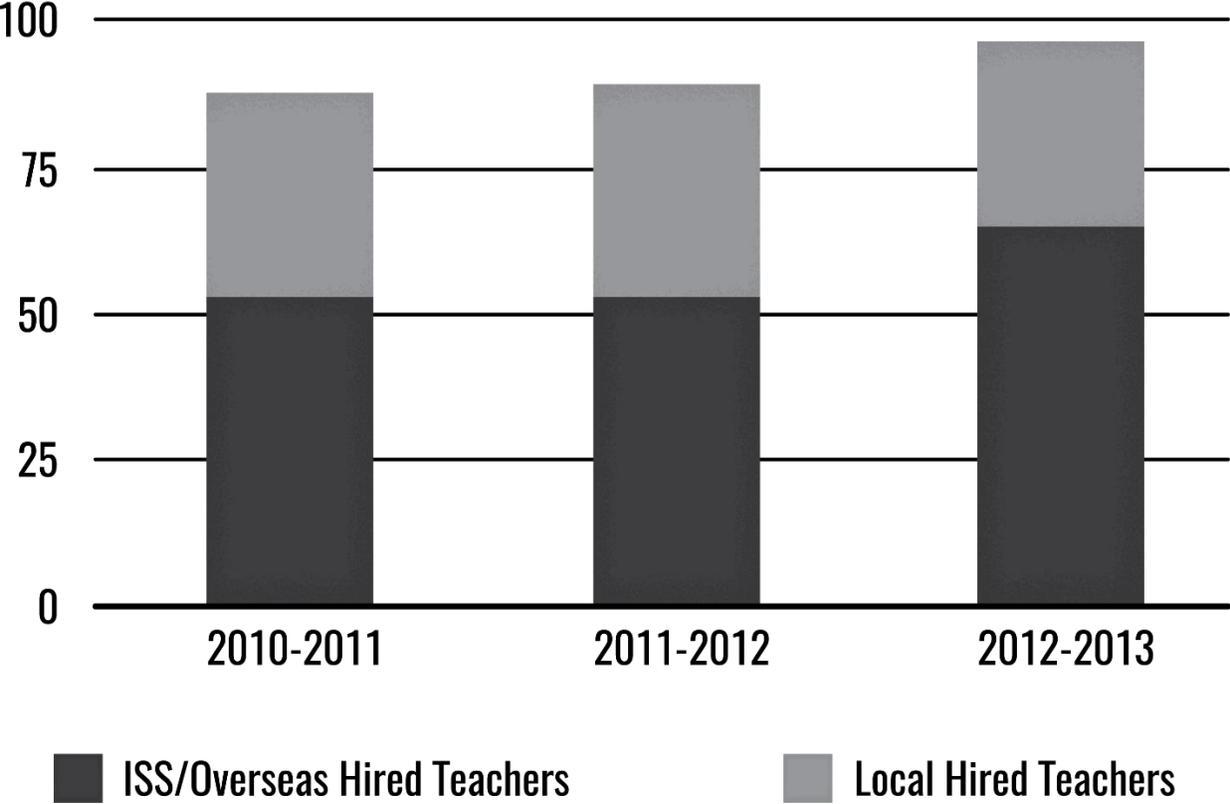


Figure 16. Attrition of overseas (foreign hired teachers) and local hired teachers.

community. ISS granted permission for this study to take place within SIS and LEVEL 5 (see Appendix C).

The Micro Context of the Co-Practitioner Researcher Team

I imagined that developing the CPR team would be awkward and slightly forced. However, when I moved to China one teacher within the community, Erin, consistently reached out and made me feel at home. I found myself having excited conversations in her office regarding pedagogy and equity. She introduced me to Vivian, the TA who worked with her, and through face to face chats, WeChat (web-based text message) conversations, and the more formal protocols of creating *journey lines*, we learned about each other. The individual and collective experiences, as remembered by the CLE group, constitute a story. When creating journey lines, participants use these experiences as motivating forces for change (Dewey, 1938). The journey line themes provide generative knowledge about a subject that can be used to construct a “story of self” and a “story of us,” both of which elevate the collective experience. One WeChat group the CPR team added me to was titled, “family” as we became closer to a family unit than a research team. Through these intense, close conversations it became clear that our observations of equity were varied. From inner-city schools in the United States, Chinese public education, to IB schools worldwide we found similarities and differences in our experiences that intrigued us.

Erin Madonna

As a young teacher Erin chose to spend her first decade of teaching at Title 1 schools in Delaware, USA. Title 1 schools in the United States have the highest number, or high percentages, of children from low-income families and require additional financial help from the government to ensure all children meet challenging state academic standards. These children are

often housing and food at-risk. Erin shared the story of a grade 2 child she taught who looked after a toddler sibling: cooked meals, washed clothing, changed diapers, because mom was in prison and Grandma (the primary caregiver) had cancer and was listless on the couch (EM, personal communication, September 8, 2017). These children had significant crisis situations, and a specialist in learning needs, Erin was there to help them learn the best way she could. In China, half-way across the planet, Erin faced different challenges. On top of her duties as a learning specialist, she consistently led professional development workshops for teachers each Monday. She did this for free and on her own time.

Vivian Wu (WenWen)

Vivian was born and grew up in a tight-relationship housing community, which adhered to a state-owned company, where her father worked as an engineer. She comes from a single-child family. As a young girl, she was encouraged by her parents to pursue college and learn languages. A weekly reward was to be able to watch western movies on Friday nights with her father, she cherished that time as inspiration for her language and western culture acquisition. Vivian's schooling was strict and what she labels as the "old Chinese" way, with an emphasis on rote memorization and recall of facts. This strictness was due to the competitive enrollment in college as China has a large population. Vivian holds a bachelor's degree of law in social work and worked as a social worker for several years before she became an educator. Vivian's Chinese nickname is WenWen, but she chose Vivian when she came to the school because the school norms were that Chinese teachers took English names. Vivian is currently enrolled in an American university studying for her master's degree in special education (V. Wu, email transcript December 13, 2017). As Erin and Vivian's relationship was

less Teacher/TA and more of a co-teaching model that seemed very strong in an equity stance, I invited them to become involved in the PAR as CPRs.

Risks and Benefits for CPR Team and CLE Group

A tangential goal of the PAR was to develop knowledge that could possibly be applied to the international teaching community, public education, and higher education institutes. However, the immediate context and participants were the primary focus of the PAR. As such, the risks and benefits to each member had to be carefully balanced. The interpretative nature of qualitative research means that the published results are only one version of truth, thus, the validity of the findings are judged in relation to the ways the data were analyzed. For the PAR we engaged in deep dialogue, explored cultural norms, discussed hopes, dreams, and fears. That close personal narrative comprises individuals' sense of identity and if they lose control over how their narratives are interpreted, they risk losing control over their identity. To mitigate this effect, respondent validation was used throughout the study to verify our interpretations and coding of the video and audio transcripts. We directly asked, "Is this what you meant?" to develop our empathetic listening ear before moving further through the ECD thinking framework. I posit that CPR and CLE group members directly benefited from participation as they received professional development, usually unavailable to them, that focused on educationally significant information that could be used to influence teaching and learning. They gained access to experimental technologies that improved their status within the school. The PAR also provided a forum for voicing concerns about areas they wanted to change within their work environment. Participants were asked to contribute to a shared online blog (see Appendix D) as a reflection tool; this raised awareness about the power of online networks. I would contend that the CPR team and CLE group also benefited indirectly from participation in the

PAR, by experiencing increased cross-cultural contact, sharing information with other teachers, and gaining personal satisfaction from participating in the research.

Context Informs Practice, Which Informs Change

Before I left Thailand, I worked to use what I learned from the wisdom of CLE group to inform a research design that would honor the equity concerns they raised. The questions that arose were validated by similar questions the CPR group raised in China. These questions provided opportunities to examine the relationships between locally hired and internationally hired teachers in an international school setting to discover ways that international schools can be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments.

I used the conversations with members of the pilot study in Thailand, and the CPR team within China to frame four research questions:

- RQ1. To what extent do school and community norms influence school educators?
- RQ2. What are the realities and assumptions among school faculty regarding roles and responsibilities?
- RQ3. How can better cultural understanding give greater voice and value to nationals?
- RQ4. To what extent can my work with the group be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community?

The pilot study heavily influenced the framework for the study. However, it was through discussions with the CPR team that the ToA was developed for the PAR. The ToA posits if international school community members such as local- and foreign-hired teachers and leadership engaged in opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, then better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community will be revealed.

Previously, I explained the pilot study in Thailand and discussed how it informed the research design and methodology I describe in Chapter 4. The Chinese context in which this study was conducted included three levels, macro (China), meso (ISS/LEVEL 5), and micro (CPR team). I discussed the CPR team and apparent sociocultural frames that were apparent in the groups. I also delineated the benefits and risks for the CPR team. In the next chapter, I introduce the research design for the PAR. I provide an in-depth description of the study population, including the teachers, TAs, and the CPR team. I then explain the data collection tools and analytical procedures. Finally, I consider the ethical and confidentiality issues and discuss the ways we tested the PAR for validity.

CHAPTER 4: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH DESIGN

In the previous chapters, I outlined how themes and a framework for the theory of action were shaped by both a pilot study at a school within Thailand and the review of the literature. The equity stance of the project grounded the research in both constructivist and transformative worldviews, which meant I would be able to explore complex sociocultural issues by utilizing qualitative research (Creswell, 1998). However, the project also included the tools of coaching and design thinking to enact change. As such, I used a distinct blend of PAR and DBR to create the methodology.

Brown (1992), the researcher credited with first developing DBR, noted that DBR is underpinned by the collaboration between researchers and practitioners. The ToA begins with an accurate assessment of the context; is informed by relevant literature, theory, and practice; and is designed specifically to overcome some problem, or create an improvement, in localized practice. Change can be embodied in an activity, a system, a technology or a social intervention. This iterative process provides numerous opportunities for the exchange of expertise across disciplinary as well as cultural boundaries with the potential of increasing human capacity. Interactions between partners reveal crucial practices that lead to insights that could not have been made without the DBR methods and the cross-pollination of ideas (The Design-Based Research Collective, 2003).

Both practitioners and researchers often have trouble differentiating between PAR and DBR because they share many epistemological, ontological, and methodological underpinnings. However, when compared, it is clear the methodologies share the common metaparadigm of pragmatism (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012; Cole, Puroo, Rossi, & Stein, 2005). It is possible the lens of the design thinker is the only distinguishing factor. The prototype phase in design

thinking enables the construction of theories, artifacts, and models for testing, which informs the change activism. It is a collaborative inquiry-action cycle that ends only when the appropriate and ‘best’ design is identified as a solution (Militello et al., 2009). As such, in both PAR and DBR, practitioners and researchers work together to produce pragmatic change in authentic contexts. Despite the blend of the two methodologies for this project, for the purpose of conciseness I will only use PAR to denote the methodology within this paper.

When I moved to China, I took on a new country, job, and organization and employed this blended approach to develop an overview of the ‘lay of the land,’ leverage my skills in design thinking and technology, and utilize my coaching experience to develop relationships of trust to move through each cycle of the PAR. This cyclical, analytical approach enabled me to discover meaning and build theory through an iterative process of investigation, collection, design, testing of theories, and continuous analysis of data. In the following sections, I introduce the research design for the PAR. I explain additional aspects of the study population, including the teachers and TAs as well as the CPR group. I then explain the data collection tools and data analytical processes. I also explain ethical and confidentiality issues and discuss the method I used to test the PAR for validity.

Research Design: The Dialogue of Change

This study was not focused on the efficiency or effectiveness of international schools but rooted in advocacy and social action. Drawing on Freire’s (1970) work on identity and power this research was designed to open dialogue and end ‘a culture of silence.’ I primarily employed PAR with elements of DBR to allow deep understanding of the context and uncover potential spaces to facilitate social change (Hunter et al., 2013). PAR challenges the participants to focus on the journey of self as educators, researchers, and change-makers. The intimacy and trust

needed when being embedded within the context of the PAR provides the opportunity for a deep shift in self and others through dialogue (Hunter et al., 2013).

The success metrics were based on how the community was able to: engage in dialogue and reflection to decide on actions, work to infuse democracy and diffuse power structures within the group, coach for technology, network learning that will decrease marginalization, and document and utilize local capacity and strengths to increase reciprocity in the school context (L. Tredway, personal communication, May, 24, 2017). This PAR was unique as my review of the literature revealed no study within international schools focused on utilizing a framework to increase equity between local- and foreign-hired faculty in international school contexts. Additionally, the analytical cycles of inquiry (see Table 1) revealed critical elements and untold and unforeseen dynamics in the theory of action.

Study Population: Change Agents

The PAR interventions were designed to impact two main groups, the CPR team and CLE group. Beyond that, we hoped to tangentially impact other teachers, students, and parents as the work spread and became a conversation amongst the greater community constituents. The CPR team envisioned the CLE as a container for change. The intention was that the CLE would become a crucible into which members could put the most pressing issue, conflict, culture change, strategic planning process or other dynamic change process. The CLE group became a flexible cohort of change agents and fostered transformation within the larger community.

CLE Group: Teachers and TAs

Despite having lived in Shanghai, China for two years from 2010-12, as a newcomer to this international school, Chinese city, and multicultural community, I worked to establish relationships of trust with both foreign- and local-hired teachers. In my new role of Director of

Table 1

Logic Model for PAR

SMART E Goals and Timeline	Inputs/Activities	Outputs/ Data to be Collected	Outcomes	Broader Systemic Impacts
<i>Cycle One</i>				
<p>RQ: To what extent do school and community norms influence school educators?</p>	<p>Facilitate a research learning exchange (Gracious space as a framework for LE): Culture</p> <p>Observe community norms</p> <p>Provide technology PD as an optional modified exchange to garner trust and provide opportunities for increased equity for local teachers</p>	<p>(Learning Exchange Participants) Experience Blueprint</p> <p>[Moved to Cycle Three with a focus on spaces]</p> <p>(Researcher) Equity Audit</p> <p>Interviews with TAs regarding voice and value, tensions and frustrations added to an informal equity audit.</p> <p>Artifact: Journey lines of Gifts and Capabilities</p> <p>Emails Memos</p>	<p>Co-reflect on the culture conversation to access insights into school culture [Completed with CPR]</p> <p>Create essential agreements and norms of collaboration with co-participant researchers</p> <p>Hear the silent voices</p>	<p>Researcher has greater understanding of the culture she is situated within and the school climate</p>

Table 1 (continued)

SMART E Goals and Timeline	Inputs/Activities	Outputs/ Data to be Collected	Outcomes	Broader Systemic Impacts
<i>Cycle Two Taken on in Cycle One</i>				
RQ What are the realities and assumptions among school faculty regarding roles and responsibilities?	<p>Facilitate research learning exchanges: Roles & responsibilities</p> <p>Conduct teacher/co-teacher and leadership interviews</p> <p>Observe classroom interactions between foreign and locally hired teachers</p> <p>Provide technology PD as an optional modified exchange to garner trust and provide opportunities for increased equity for local teachers.</p>	<p>(Learning exchange participants) Roles & responsibilities protocol</p> <p>Use Sketch notes to document LEs so that participants can agree in real time on the scope and flow of conversation.</p> <p>Video and Audio transcriptions of all meetings (less time consuming and intimidating for local teachers)</p> <p>Observation protocol</p>	<p>Sketch notes: patterns, themes, or points of tension that arise from the dialogue</p> <p>Interview protocol: key themes as well as possible harmony or dissonance with the equity audit</p> <p>Observations: coaching opportunities</p> <p>Coding of the emergent themes from transcripts.</p>	<p>Locally hired teachers develop trust and start to exert greater voice</p> <p>Participants begin to reflect on possible stereotypes and assumptions they hold</p>

Table 1 (continued)

SMART E Goals and Timeline	Inputs/Activities	Outputs/ Data to be Collected	Outcomes	Broader Systemic Impacts
<i>Cycle Three: [Moved to Cycle Two]</i>				
RQ: How can better cultural understanding give greater voice and value to nationals?	<p>Facilitate a research learning exchange: Voice and value [Digital Fishbowl] slide deck</p> <p>Teacher self-reflections</p> <p>Provide technology PD as an optional modified exchange to garner trust and provide opportunities for increased equity for local teachers</p> <p>Phonics (at the request of the TAs) Developed as the behest of TAs— hopefully within this cycle more ownership of the blog and leadership of the sessions will be taken on by the TAs.</p>	<p>(Learning exchange participants) Blog on website</p> <p>Data gathered from APP</p> <p>Document possible actionable change points</p> <p>Use design thinking as a framework</p> <p>Use Socratic seminar and Harkness model as a frame for the dialogue.</p>	<p>Reflections: Themes that come out of the reflections</p> <p>Plan of action for change points</p>	<p>Teachers can recognize and use some tenants of gracious space and LE when conducting their own meetings or with students</p> <p>Teachers can recognize and use some tenants of CLE when conducting their own meetings or with students</p> <p>Teachers can use several forms of technology to augment the work that is happening within their classrooms.</p>

Table 1 (continued)

SMART E Goals and Timeline	Inputs/Activities	Outputs/ Data to be Collected	Outcomes	Broader Systemic Impacts
<i>Cycle Three</i>				
<p>RQ: To what extent can my work with the group be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community? (How can we design spaces for greater equity?)</p>	<p>Learning exchange: Design thinking for agile classroom spaces Provide technology PD as an optional modified exchange to garner trust and provide opportunities for increased equity for local teachers</p>	<p>Experience blueprint Design thinking challenge</p>	<p>Redesigning some willing classrooms for more agile equitable learning spaces</p>	<p>Greater equity for all within the community and examples for other teachers of how to design agile, equitable and inclusive learning spaces for all constituents.</p>

LEVEL 5, I struggled to create democratic relationships built on the tenets of equity and discourse. The teachers and co-teachers at this school were selected for several reasons that pertained to those relationships of trust, access, and a willingness to participate. The study required data collection from three cohorts within the school organization (foreign-hired teachers, local-hired teachers, and leadership). The participants collaborated in three different significant ways: (1) interviews, (2) discreet-skill coaching sessions and (3) CLEs.

Co-Practitioner Research Partners (CPR Team)

Early in my tenure at the new location, I reached out and found two CPRs, Vivian and Erin. Over my first few months I learned about their story. I provided further information about who they are and their background information in earlier chapters.

Other factors including size, location, and accessibility of the site cannot be considered. Within international schools, contexts are often insular. Typically, there is no district or state legislation that governs schools directly. International expatriate teachers are embedded within the site.

Data Collection

This qualitative design allowed for several data collection strategies. The collection strategy could be best categorized as emerging because of the ongoing analysis element of this design (Creswell, 1998). As networked learning draws on the collective capacity of disparate strengths, voices, stories, and ways of knowing to find authentic community problems, the goal of the collection of data was to generate dialogue and collection of artifacts to uncover facts, opinions, and insights (Creswell, 1998; Militello et al., 2009). The primary methods of data collection included interviews, observations, and strategic collection of artifacts that were generated from those interviews and observations. The Table 2 includes an overview of the

Table 2

Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Question (sub-question)	Data Source (Metrics)	Triangulated With...
To what extent do school and community norms influence school educators?	Interviews Video & Audio of CLE and discrete skill development sessions	Follow-up conversations Reflective Memos
What are the realities and assumptions among school faculty regarding roles and responsibilities?	Interviews Observations Video & Audio of CLE and discrete skill development sessions	Follow-up conversations Memos Member checks with CPR Reflective Memos
How can better cultural understanding give greater voice and value to nationals?	Interviews Video & Audio of CLE and discrete skill development sessions	Follow-up conversations Member checks with CPR group Reflective Memos
To what extent can my work with the group be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community?	Interviews Video & Audio of CLE and discrete skill development sessions	Reflective Memos Follow-up conversations

research questions, data sources, and the metrics by which the data sources were triangulated for greater validity and reliability.

Interviews

A multilayered interview strategy was employed in this study. To better understand the cultural impact on individuals and school climate, the strengths and capacities of local teachers, and the view of roles and responsibilities within the community, I interviewed several stakeholders including teachers, TAs, and leadership. The utilization of interviews is part of the design thinking cycle in developing empathy and understanding before designing solutions. This stage allows for in-depth interviews that require additional responses and follow-up questions. The main themes of the interview protocols (see Appendix E and F) included: (a) contextual and demographic characteristics about interviewees and their settings; (b) their individual perceptions and experiences of culture, roles and responsibilities, as well as voice and value; and (c) their ideas for actionable change. Each interview was video recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews were 10-60 minutes in length. The transcribed interviews were then housed in a password protected Google Drive folder, for subsequent analysis.

Observations

School context observations were one aspect of data collection for this work. I used a memo journal to document informal observations to develop empathy and understand the processes and procedures of the school, as well as to really ‘dig-down’ and develop some initial design thinking about the relationships between members of the faculty and staff. To complete these observations, I partook in classroom lessons, had conversations in hallways with TAs and teachers between classrooms, attended staff and leadership meetings, and took notes on the interactions I observed between members of faculty throughout the day.

Artifacts

While PAR and DBR methodologies rely on direct observation and systematic interviewing for data collection, additional data collection methods were important to this work. Returning to what I learned within the pilot study and the tensions that were raised by local teachers, I designed meetings around the completion of several artifacts that helped scaffold conversation and reflection. As an example, anchored in Palmer's (2004) work on creating agile and holistic teams, Figure 17 shows the CLE participants creating a journey line of gifts and capabilities. At first, the exercise seemed forced and awkward, but participants used dialogue to share insights and discuss commonalities, patterns, and trends. This method helped participants understand their colleagues in new ways, gain more rapport, and began opening the possibility of discussing the "undiscussable" culture of the school by comparing the visible end-to-end experience each teacher has. This engagement was the foundation for the more difficult conversation regarding roles and responsibilities for the TAs. It became a powerful storytelling tool that created a picture and enabled participants to view the group through a common lens. Journey lines helped participants build empathy by capturing the current shared experiences and ideating on the future to speculate how we could disrupt or shift the current shared experience toward a new paradigm of greater equity and reciprocal learning.

Data Analysis

The research design was an iterative and responsive process to the participants' data. As such, analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection (Hunter et al., 2013). The power of PAR and DBR data comes from the cycle of planning, actions, collecting data, reflections and designing the next steps with participants. Specifically, the interviews, memos, and artifacts collected were coded based on themes and analyzed through a general content analysis. Specific

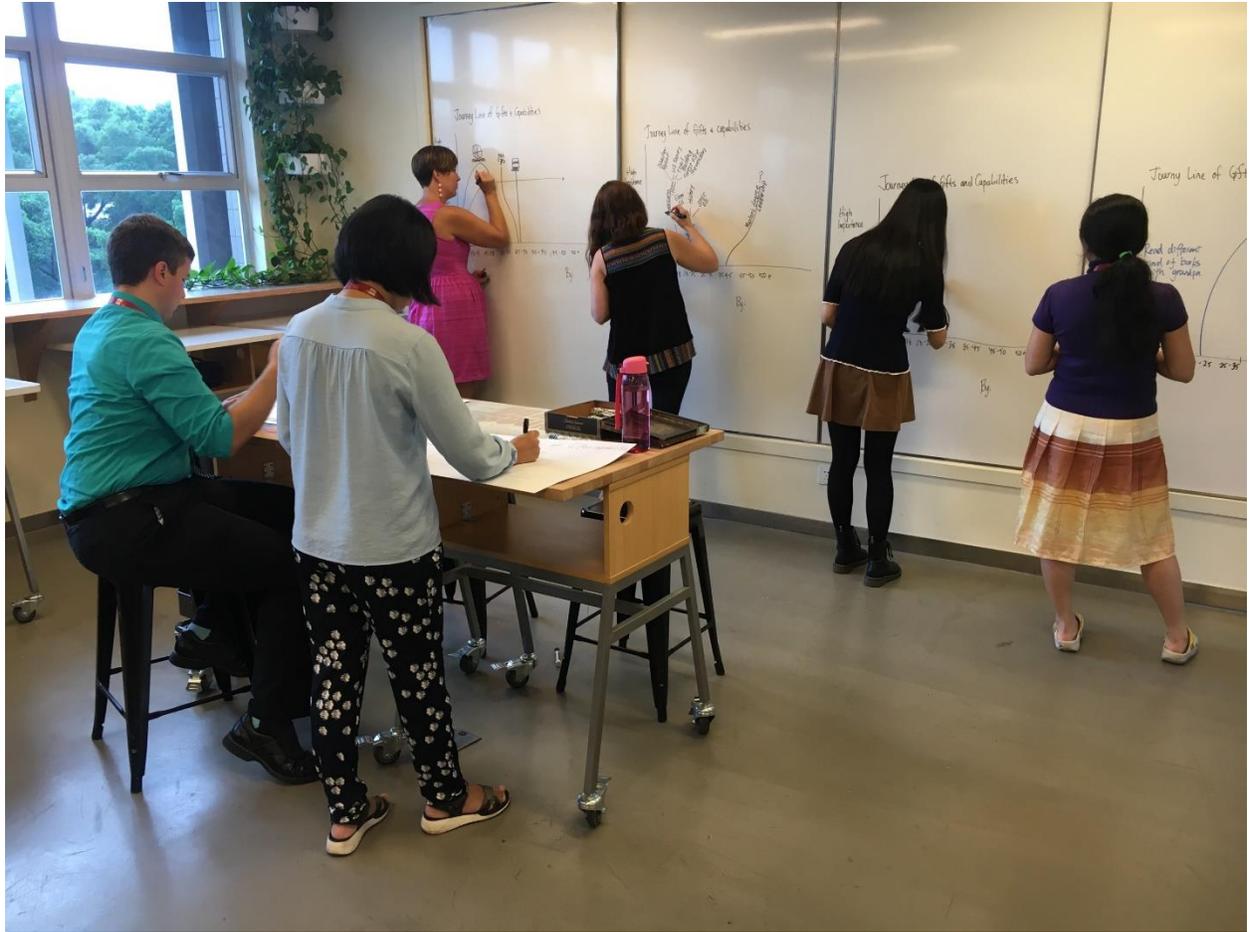


Figure 17. CLE group mapping their journey lines of gifts and capabilities (October 21, 2018).

pattern matching helped me identify emergent themes from the constant comparative analysis of data. This iterative process of data analysis is diagrammed in Figure 18, which shows how specific examples from memos, artifacts and interviews were analyzed to build themes and structures or theories informed ways of understanding those themes, which lead to the design of a testable ToA.

Themes first must be uncovered and categorized before pattern analysis can occur (L. Tredway & M. Militello, personal communication, June, 18, 2017). Creating space that will result in equitable communities willing to play, innovate, and change, requires time and engagement in rich dialogue, but it is easy to get lost in dialogue and story. I relied partly on Wodak and Meyer's (2009) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to triangulate the community analysis of the narrative aspects of this study. I grounded my initial design within several theories then amalgamated the methodologies that would work for this research. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language as a form of social cultural construct. Wodak and Meyer (2009) wrote about the lack of one guiding theoretical viewpoint as one of the hallmarks of CDA, as such, in addition to the discoveries made by the conversations that occurred during the exchange, inspired by their illustration I created a model (see Figure 19), as a guide for analyzing the narrative data.

Guided by Wodak and Meyer's (2009) statement, "The study of discourse triangulates between society/culture/situation, cognition, and discourse/language" (p. 14). I analyzed the 'subtle formal structures' and focused on rhetorical features within the discourse that occurred within interviews and dialogue within the CLE. Then, I analyzed the discourse for indirect meanings, which included vagueness, omissions, hesitations, polarizations or potential hegemonic narratives. I coded for the collective perceptions created by the IB, or school brand,

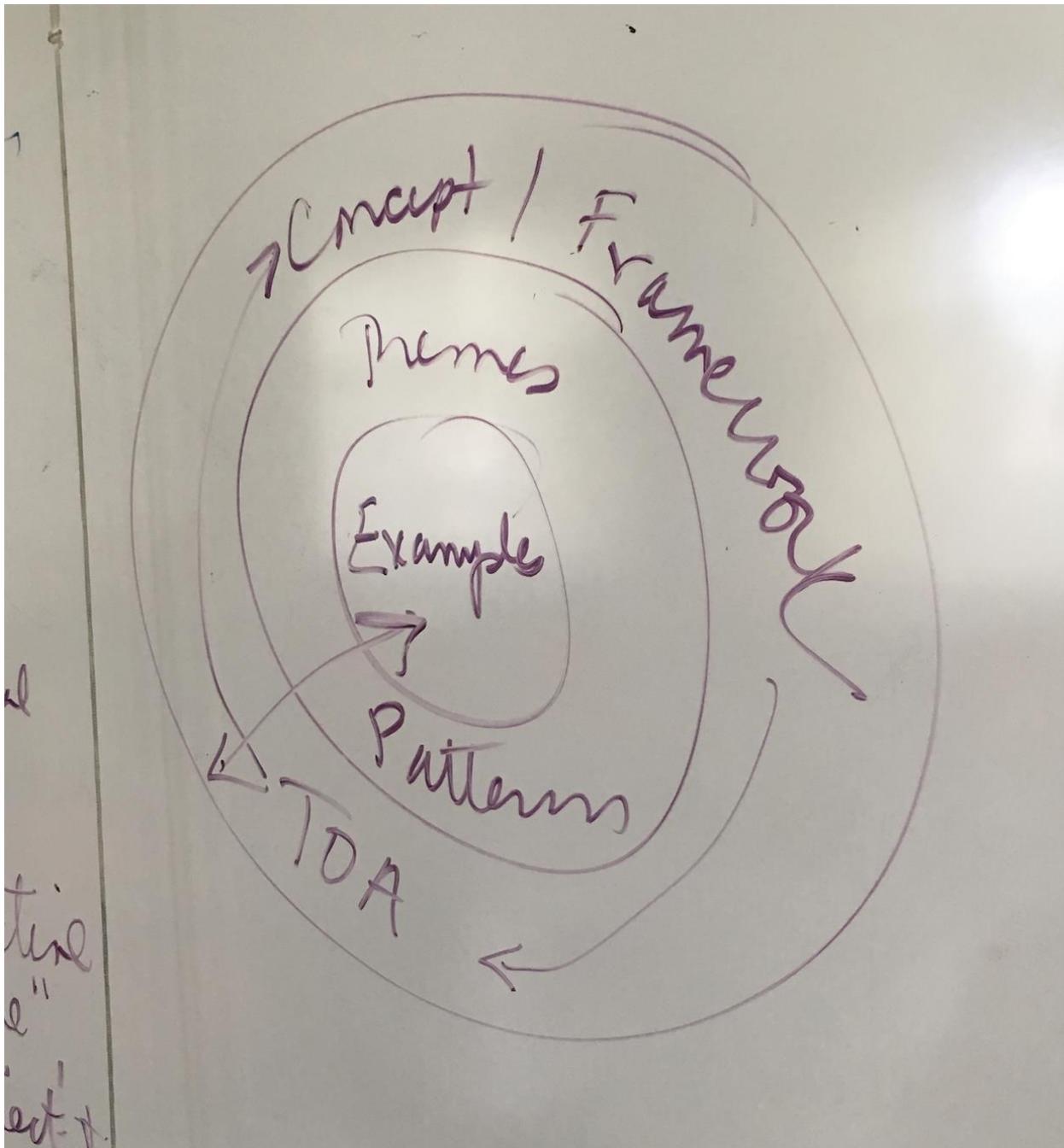


Figure 18. A framework for data analysis (L. Tredway, personal communication, June 18, 2017).



Note. Adapted from “Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology” by R. Wodak & M. Meyer, 2009 in R. Wodak & M. Meyer, *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed., p. 24). Copyright 2009 by Author.

Figure 19. Modified Wodak & Meyer model of empirical research.

and looked for signifiers of how those perceptions affected the knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies espoused by the community. This deep analysis enabled me to create compelling questions that prompted discussion or exploration into areas the community chose to further explore.

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

This school context valued the deprivatization of practice through extensive use of the school-wide adopted hashtag by teachers and TAs on social media. All PAR participants including leadership, teachers, and TAs, were familiar and comfortable with video, audio, and images shared online as an expectation of contemporary practice within the school. Often the CLE experiences were shared online through Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook by active participants through an additional hashtag, #learningexchange. Short videos were created and shared on the website/blog co-propagated by the CPR team and CLE group. Despite digital sharing as a school cultural norm and expectation, the security of the data collected, and the confidentiality of the participants were of the utmost importance in this study. In the few instances participants asked for anonymity, coded pseudonyms were utilized and included in this dissertation. The transcription of interviews and videotapes, field notes, and documents collected were kept in a secure, locked location. Any of the material collected from personnel that was replicated or disseminated was collected with full knowledge and permission of all participants within the study. The school was privy to an executive summary report as well as member checking of the initial findings. When findings or reports were shared with the school, every attempt was made to mask the identity of subjects who indicated to the CPR team they wished to remain anonymous. To conduct the study, I made a formal application to and received approval from the Office of Research and Evaluation as well as the University Committee on Research

Involving Human Subjects (East Carolina University Internal Review Board, IRB). Finally, an ECU IRB consent letter of participation was signed and filed for each participant of the study (see Appendix G for the study's consent forms).

Issues of Trustworthiness and Soundness

Given my intimate involvement with international schools and with the individuals involved in the research threats to validity are clearly applicable to the research design and analysis of the data. However, of the data several procedures were utilized to increase the validity:

- Triangulation, by gathering a variety of types of data such as interviews, memos, observation and artifact collection;
- Quasi-statistics, by using a progressive approach to research, such as the iterative analysis of interviews, observations, and artifacts various levels of statistics were used to inform the qualitative component of the study;
- Collective capacity of the PLC, by inviting colleagues and professionals to review the themes and interpretation of the data to aid in the search for discrepant or unanticipated data and to give feedback on the data collected.

Inherent to the heuristic nature of the collection tools, the data I collected will always remain a matter of interpretation. As there is no quantitative data provided through discourse analysis, the reliability and the validity of my research/findings depended on the force and logic of my arguments, and the actions of the learning community. However, I am cognizant that even with my best interpretations of the data, and the most successful exchange of learning oppositional deconstructive readings and counter-interpretations could be explored. Interviews, observations and artifacts were used to generalize from the community feelings regarding the

national values held by individuals and to explore authentic organizational culture. They were used to assess practices and opportunities for equity. This method of data gathering unearthed sensitive values and biases that individuals initially felt unable to voice.

Developing a Networked Community

Throughout the chapter I have described how the research methodology and data collection tools provided opportunities for teachers who felt voiceless to exercise greater agency in how they shared their ideas and concerns. The methodological design also fulfilled the essential elements of PAR by ensuring (1) the participants were part of the data analysis; (2) the design for change came from diverse participants; and (3) a ToA was tested (Brown, 1992; Hunter et al., 2013). In the next chapter I share specific insights and themes from data analysis of the PAR Cycle One data.

CHAPTER 5: PAR CYCLE ONE FINDINGS

Informed by my time in Thailand, I knew that as I relocated to a new context, job, school, and organization it was imperative to adopt a case for incrementalism. I did not make any large shifts or implement grand designs during PAR Cycle One. To develop a ‘lay of the land,’ I leveraged my skills in design thinking and technology and utilized my coaching experience to develop relationships of trust. Table 3 shows the actions that contributed to the analytical approach and allowed for the discovery of meaning and theory building through the iterative process of investigation, collection, design, testing of theories, and continuous analysis of data. In this chapter I briefly introduce an outline of each component of the process of PAR Cycle One to contextualize the data gathered from the actions listed in the table. I then provide an analytic narrative for each of the emergent themes from the data and provide evidence and vignettes for each theme. At the end of the chapter, I discuss the framework that I developed based on the themes.

Meetings with Leadership

Given the response to my pilot study in Thailand, I approached my new position in China in a heightened state of awareness and with caution. Despite my cautious approach, I observed similarities between my old and new contexts within the first few weeks at my new location. I met with the acting head of school (HoS) to pitch my PAR and build rapport. Since we both were new in the school, we shared stories of our travels and our growing unrest regarding equity within international schools. He spoke of his success increasing equity with TAs in other Asian school contexts. I felt the meeting was a positive step toward the type of leadership support I envisioned within international schools. The acting HoS was excited by the research, agreed with the premise, and was onboard.

Table 3

Completed Actions for PAR Cycle One

Meetings with Leadership	Video Interviews	Audio Interviews	CPR Meetings Emails	Discrete Skill Sessions in LEVEL 5	Learning Exchanges in LEVEL 5	WeChat Conversation	Meetings with EdD mentors
Head of School	Demographic and 'get to know you' interviews with TAs	Follow-up interview with H, regarding Fung Shui	Email from Vivian re: spaces	Working memory	Establishing gracious space & journey line of gifts and capabilities slide deck/ agenda Artifact: Journey line	Learning Exchange Group	Skype with Matt
Senior Leadership Team	Video meeting with Erin and Vivian as a model for equitable practice	Follow-up meeting with C, regarding the school's official meeting for TAs re: Roles and Responsibilities	Email with Erin re: reflections on meetings	Complex to clear	Roles and responsibilities	Exclusive Learning Exchange Group (for Chinese and local teachers only)	Meeting with Matt and Lynda
ELE staff meeting				Introduction to online website shared blog	Creation of website/blog community	Personal conversations with Erin and Vivian	

Table 3 (continued)

Meetings with Leadership	Video Interviews	Audio Interviews	CPR Meetings Emails	Discrete Skill Sessions in LEVEL 5	Learning Exchanges in LEVEL 5	WeChat Conversation	Meetings with EdD mentors
Principal				Visual learning tools			Memo from Matt
Meeting with ISS Dick Moore Re: Schools with models of economic equity				Phonics & language discrete skill co-creating a path forward for upskilling			Memos from Lynda

In the spirit of transparency, the HoS invited me into a senior leadership team (SLT) within a few weeks of our initial meeting. This meeting included the HoS, principals, curriculum coordinators, and section directors. I was seeking the informal blessing from the team to move forward with the study. My presentation seemed to be met with positivity and several members of the SLT were verbally engaged and supportive. The next day, I was approached by a member of the SLT and told that there was a tremendous amount of tension and discussion amongst the leadership team after I left the meeting. My colleague stated there was confusion about my role at the school, the role I played in helping teachers, and my potential work with TAs. There were some distinct micro-politics that I was unaware of, and through my offer to: develop a community of learners, coach for innovative tech use, and create professional development sessions, it was clear I had made people feel protective of their jobs, their relationships to power, and their control over what was happening with regard to an equity stance at the school.

These first few meetings indicated I would need to find a teacher equity agent if I was going to be able to hear the voices of the local teachers and directly connect with the TAs. As with Thailand, the micro-politics evident within the school forced me to be cautious and discretionary, but they also acted as validation for the study. Based on my observations over many years of teaching in international school contexts I hypothesized that, across continents, international schools found it difficult to engage in questions of equity between local- and foreign-hired teachers, my new context verified that my hunch was correct, so I had to figure out why, and how to change it.

LEVEL 5 as an Environment to Foster CLE

LEVEL 5, was designed as an agile learning space and innovation platform for educators, school leaders, and the wider community. Figure 20 is a snapshot of the agile environment. As director of the space, I designed an eclectic selection of professional development (PD) opportunities and creative experiences aimed at scaling education reform in schools. My goal was to make the space increasingly accessible; thus, LEVEL 5 offered a 50% discount for TAs to encourage enrolment in PD. I created a range of events across four areas of effect: agile learning environments, contemporary & digital pedagogies, activating communities, and change leadership.

In PAR Cycle One, the CPR team held two significant hour-long CLEs. These exchanges were co-planned and created from CPR feedback and brainstorming. These CLEs were designed to be opportunities for TAs to share their ideas, values, and insights to build a Networked Innovation Community. Later in the chapter I explain how the failures and successes of these exchanges contributed to emerging themes.

CLEs support ambitious, equitable, and durable schooling outcomes that prepare teachers and youth as workers, citizens, family, and community members. In addition, the CPR team facilitated a modified CLE through discrete-skill development sessions each Monday. Figure 21 shows one moment during these PD sessions where Chinese teachers brainstormed science skills for students within their classrooms. We invited: teachers, TAs, and leadership to act as facilitators and share practices, strategies, and tools. In this way, I envisioned that LEVEL 5 would act as a conduit towards equity by creating a neutral, shared space for exchange.



Figure 20. The LEVEL 5 is an agile space for participants to modify for the needs of the CLE.



Figure 21. CLE group engaged in discrete-skill professional development sessions.

Video & Audio Interviews of Teaching Assistants & Discrete-Skill Development Sessions

Erin and Vivian both assumed the role of CPR with professionalism and dedication. Our first action was to interview TAs who were willing to engage in the study to chat about their demographics, jobs, family, and cultural identities. As Erin and Vivian had a longer, more established relationship of trust with the TAs, they led the video interviews. The videos were later transcribed verbatim and coded. Additionally, we continued with Erin and Vivian's Monday evening discrete skill development sessions.

These sessions were documented online through a shared blog on which we encouraged the contributions and reflections from all participants. I leveraged my digital learning coach background to augment those sessions with coaching for the use of specific tech tools that could be utilized alongside the strategies Erin provided for diverse learning needs. After each interview, meeting, session, or workshop, the CPR team engaged in conversations to identify themes, look for patterns, review observations, and share feelings. These debrief meetings would often prompt follow-up audio interviews during which we were looking for evidence of our hunches and emerging theories.

Online Communities for Backchat

In China, the main mode of communication between parents, students, teachers, schools, and friends has become the WeChat application. Erin, Vivian, and I discussed leveraging the App to collect data on individual voice, and the ways cross-cultural groups build relationships. As charted in the section above, in addition to the general "Learning Exchange" WeChat group, we created an "Exclusive Learning Exchange" WeChat group that only included the CPRs and the local teachers. Figure 22 shows into how the backchat was used to develop relationships of trust, friendship, and good will between participants.

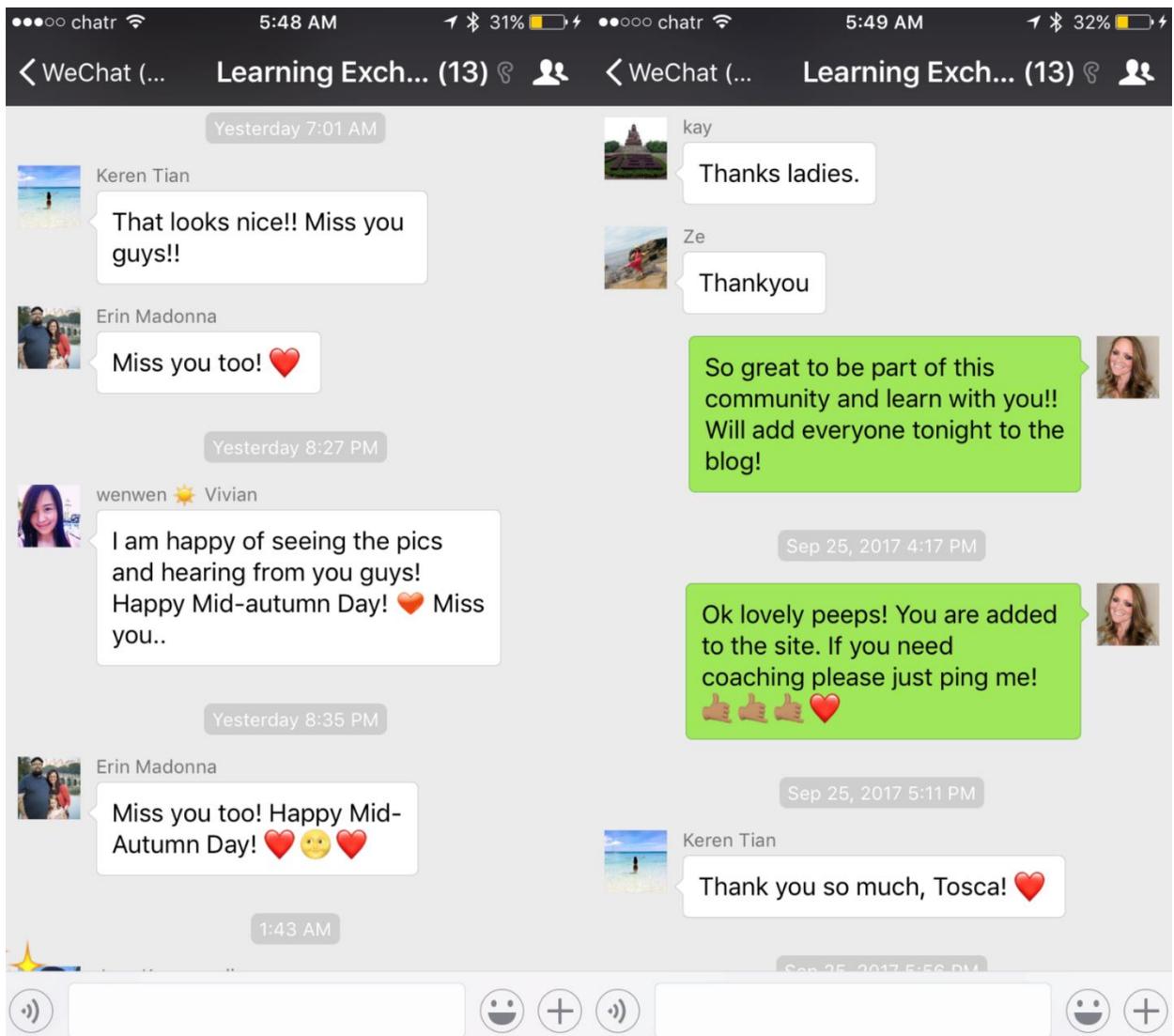


Figure 22. CLE group engaged in WeChat backchat.

The CPR team noticed that, within the general WeChat group, the Chinese teachers stopped participating in the conversation, which made us sensitive to dominant power norms. When we ask for a reason, one Chinese teacher stated, “Too many teachers in the group. They talk lots, so we don’t need to” (SG, personal communication, September 15, 2018). A separate group for TAs may have seemed like overt segregation, and paradoxical to our intended outcome, but we felt we ran the risk of conforming to dominant hegemonic narratives if we did not take the initial step of building strong affinity groups. We hypothesized that back chatter, emojis, jokes, check-ins and the very powerful translation component of WeChat would help us build personal, authentic relationships between the CPR team and the local teachers.

Analytic Narrative

The equity stance of this study grounded the research in both constructivist and transformative worldviews which enabled a deep dive into socio-cultural phenomena. This study was rooted in the equity advocacy of Freire (1970) and was designed to open dialogue and provide greater voice to the non-dominant people within this school. PAR Cycle One was focused on developing intimacy and trust amongst participants to provide the opportunity for rich conversations; and it was successful. The dialogue gathered was extensive, over 60,000 words contained in numerous video and audio interviews, meetings, emails, learning exchanges, and conversations were transcribed and coded to find patterns and emerging themes as well as closely related subthemes. A model for this iterative process of data analysis is diagrammed in Figure 23, which shows how specific examples from memos, artifacts, and interviews were analyzed to inform themes. Frameworks or theories informed ways of understanding those themes, which lead to the design of a ToA that was tested in this cycle of the PAR.

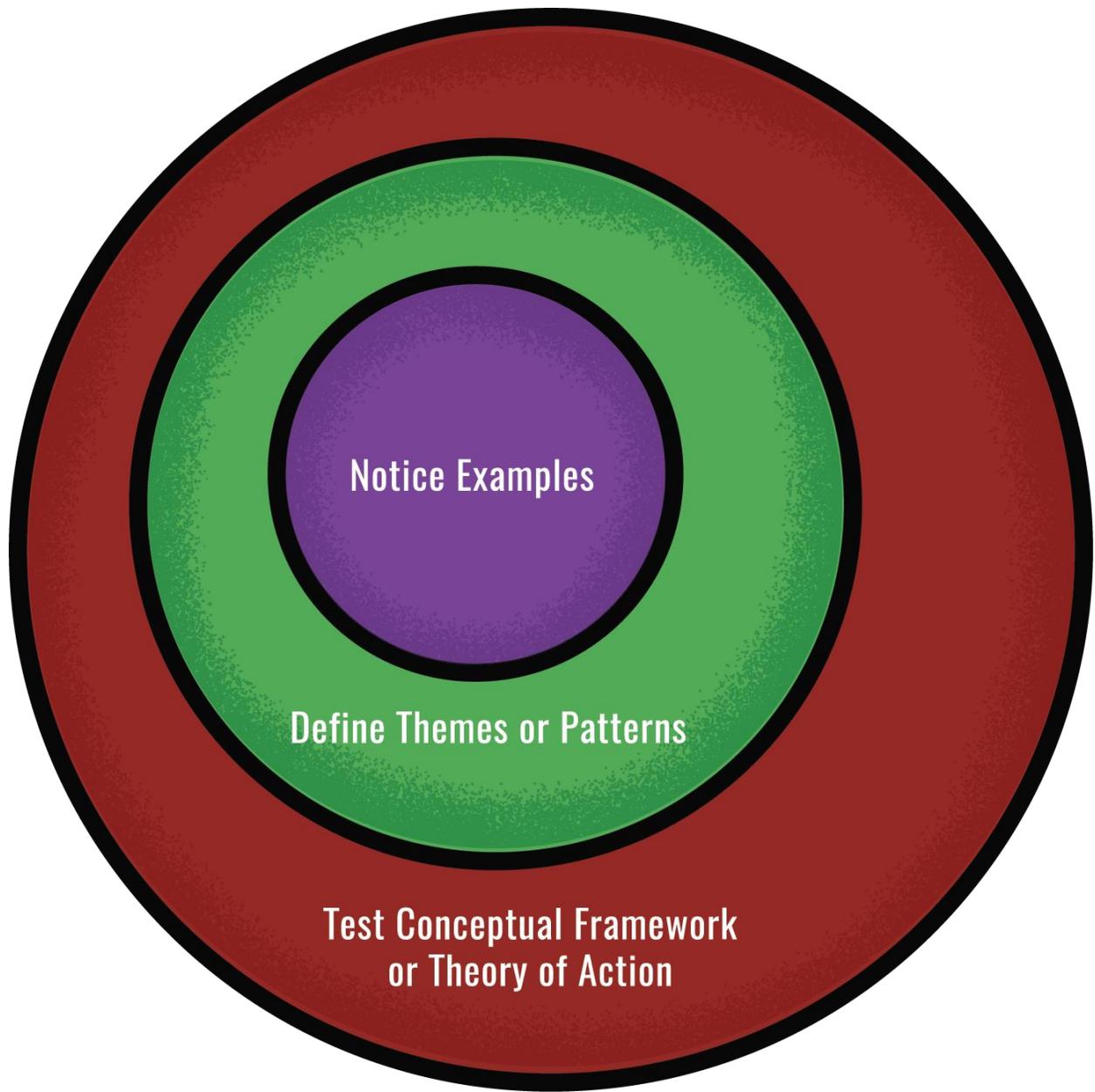


Figure 23. The model of coding analysis.

Despite the seemingly simple model, the process was time consuming, iterative, intuitive in parts, and very complex. As the transcripts were read and reread the initial coding structures became a tiresome burden. I struggled to match the words on the page into the preconceived codes that I generated, because they simply would not fit. This caused a tremendous amount of cognitive dissonance, anxiety, and confusion. I took a step away from the data and “listened” to the text to mitigate this stress. Rather than jam the words into the code, I worked to be present enough in the process to let the data codes become evident and later build themes.

Discovering Emerging Themes

As themes emerged from the coding of text, I was left grappling with how best to present the emotive nuances contained within the narrative. Lave and Wengers’ (1991) theory of situated learning explained my internal struggle with focusing on the coding of words, which felt like a separation of the learning happening and the social situation in which it was occurring. As such, I turned to Miles and Huberman (1994) who outline a structure for using vignettes to situate learning within a sociocultural construct. The outline is simply to share, “the context, your hopes, who was involved, what you did, what happened as a result, what the impact was, why this happened, and other comments such as expectations for the future, or predictions” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 81). Using this outline as a conceptual scaffold, I was able to provide rich portraits of PAR Cycle One that incorporated the complexity of the context, the views of the participants, and emergent theories (Creswell, 1998).

Voice

“Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection.”

—Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970

The foundation of PAR Cycle One was dialogue. The work itself is an effort to create safe spaces for sharing, to understand the words spoken, to hear the silences, to feel the truth in those conversations. That truth is framed by the participants having the ability to name their own world, the phenomena they experience, and their place within that space (Freire, 1970). When we listen, we humanize others, but also humanize ourselves, as we learn to exchange rather than deposit ideas into others. But listening is hard. When we give others the power to name their world it changes the balance that we are comfortable with and that is deeply recessed in the bias of our cultural unconscious. Scattered throughout the transcripts from the dialogue gathered in video and audio interviews, meetings, emails, learning exchanges, and conversations were phrases such as, “speaking for us” “She really want to speak for us.” “We never met a teacher [who is] is standing [on] our side and talk for us.” “But that guy didn’t want to talk for us” (AllTA October 23, 2017; CTA, October 20, 2017) which made me consider who was speaking for whom, and if there was a silencing of voice happening. One comment resonated as a flag of *voicelessness* or the dehumanization of a person who works in a very human job,

Teacher assistant is kind of a job to help to follow and to communicate, I mean there’s not too much communicate with the students and the teachers so most times it’s follow. Follow the strategies, follow the rules. Um, in some of, in some other side, it make you feel you cannot find yourself... You sometimes, sometimes you kind of you feel, you lost. You get lost. But you need always talk to yourself come back. Come back and that is... that is your job. You need to try your best. (TA Interview, October 23, 2017)

This statement led me to consider the types of dehumanization and taming of other’s voices in which I engaged. Another example of dominant voice is shown in Table 4, this data was pulled from a one-hour interview between Erin, Vivian, and me. Because the interview was about their working relationship as an example of an equitable Teacher/TA model, both Erin and Vivian should have dominated the conversation equally by answering questions and providing

Table 4

Frequency for the Theme of Voice within the CPR Interview

Event	Count
Total word spoken during interview	11,211
Total words spoken by Tosca & Erin	9,926
Total words spoken by Vivian	1,429
One-Word affirmatives that included: yeah, Mm-hmm, Ah, Okay, Yes, or Right by Vivian	144
Times that Vivian was interrupted, or sentences were finished by Tosca and Erin	36

insights. It was not until I read the transcript a third time that the disparity of voice became clear to me.

On further analysis, I noticed the number of times Erin and I actively removed or limited Vivian's ability to name her world and the phenomena she experienced within it as we interrupted her flow, finished her sentences, or framed her thoughts for her. Remember, these conversations were between the three of us who are CPRs. We own the self-view of agents of change, sensitive humans, who are reflective about our own practice of providing voice and value to others. Despite our best intentions the dominant culture still acts to impose our voice on, or for, others—and this can only lead to misconceptions, assumptions and barriers for equitable working relationships. How could we have failed so profoundly when we knew so much?

After the data was coded and analysed, I conducted a member check to ensure I interpreted the collected data correctly. I shared the chapter findings and we held a CPR meeting to unpack the data and ensure it was valid. The member check was an emotional meeting for Erin, Vivian, and me. After the meeting they reflected on the data findings in a short email memo. Vivian's reflection denoted the fact that our naming and framing of her reality was normal for her:

Hello ladies,

When I first saw the data analysis, I was not surprised at the result. Partly because that I am used to the conversation pattern at work, and I do not feel offended because of the relationship between Erin & Tosca and I. Partly because of the topic we were talking about, I assume they have better language to speak for me and I trust them of understanding what I meant. In another word, I do not mind being interrupted by them because I know they respect and value me, but I hope I will not be interrupted in the future. Awesome work, equity warriors! (V. Wu, personal communication, December 11, 2018)

Erin’s reflection denoted a moment of clarity that she and I both shared verbally in the meeting. We discussed the unnamed feeling we both had. This feeling was a mix of shame, disappointment, knowing, privilege, and of hope. Erin wrote,

My member check of the data pulled for our CPR meeting was tough to read, but really valuable. I know that my heart of hearts values and respects Vivian’s voice and thoughts equal to Tosca’s, but I still engage in microaggressions, demonstrating the residual effects of my privileged position as a White woman, or maybe also as a result of my more global culture of American aggressiveness. I think the data that shocked me the most was that we interrupted Vivian 36 times. At the same time that I hit the floor with a huge measure of shame and despair, my gut knew it was accurate. I find myself rushing in to finish her sentences and I am unsure of where the need to “prop up” her language comes from. She is perfectly able to eloquently explain her own thinking. I am disappointed in myself for not giving her the room and time to voice in her own way. I recognize that I interrupt everyone to a certain degree because of the need to jockey my ideas into the middle of conversation, although, I certainly don’t do this as frequently with Tosca...or she is more forceful in maintaining control of her portion of the conversation and I acquiesce more readily when communicating with her. Either way, it is a discrepancy that I am not comfortable/satisfied with. The positive result of the data is that I am now able to move forward, feeling the full weight of the more well-rounded perspective, and adjust my practice to better communicate respect and equitable sharing in my communication with Vivian. (E. Madonna, personal communication, March 6, 2018).

This unconscious inability to provide the room and time to voice in her own way was not just found within the CPR Group. Through data analysis the other types of silencing became evident. The following vignette unpacks the CLE for PAR Cycle One which focused on Gracious Space and the creation of Journey Lines of Gifts & Capabilities. This vignette offers insight into the physical silencing of the non-dominant culture by the introduction of hierarchal power dynamics.

Vignette: Gracious Space and the Creation of Journey Lines of Gifts & Capabilities

After several weeks of developing rapport with the local teachers through professional development sessions on Mondays, personal interviews, and WeChat conversations, the CPR team felt it was time for our first Learning Exchange. We invited the core group of Chinese TAs who regularly attended the Monday sessions and a list of western teachers we thought would be open to an introductory conversation about gracious space, as well as comfortable mapping their journey lines of gifts and capabilities. I facilitated the exchange and set up an agile learning space that was well organized and prepped with

snacks, drinks, writing surfaces to suit learning styles, and a culturally inclusive slide deck to frame the LE flow. We started by exploring the elements of gracious space and co-creating a definition that would work for our context. We then moved on to discuss how each person has a rich life story. Taking the time to hear those stories increases the appreciation for what individuals have gone through and how their experiences have shaped their responses to different situations. As a group is forming, it is also important for everyone to feel seen and be heard. Creating time for the group to do this I explained would increase the ability of the group to trust each other and to understand the gifts and talents that are available to the whole team. Even in settings where people worked together for some time, this activity is likely to increase the level of understanding in the group.

By creating a networked community, we hoped to draw on the power of disparate wisdom to solve complex problems. By constructing shared artifacts, within communities but from different cultures or backgrounds such as the journey line of gifts and capabilities we anticipated generating deeper understanding and empathy towards team members by the sharing of their specific assets. We hoped that the journey lines (see Figure 24), when shared, would become the “story of us” and become a “story of collective knowledge or action” about a topic. We were looking to continue the rich conversations that had been generated out of the other sessions but to harness or funnel that conversation into building a shared narrative.

After this CLE Erin created the following memo:

As I reflect on the last two weeks of Learning Exchange conversations, I am struck by the different tones of the two meetings. The prior week, we had a really rich and open conversation with the core group of women (local staff). This week, we had a larger group, including one administrator and Western teachers who have not previously attended. This week, the core group of women were very quiet during whole group conversation points. Why?

- Culturally/historically, do women speak more freely when men are not present?
- Was the presence of an administrator the element which made it difficult for the women to speak up?
- What impacts free expression the most? Gender balance? Hierarchical relationships? School culture? Body language?

My gut says that it was the presence of the administrator. His body language was one of observer, rather than active participant. He sat behind the group, at an elevated desk and did not contribute any comments to the shared conversation. He did participate in the journey line activity, but then did not engage in conversation with other participants about their journey lines (during the gallery walk). The tone of the meeting felt more formal with his presence. I also feel that body language made a difference. If we threw



Figure 24. CLE group creating journey lines of gifts and capabilities.

the same group of people together but had everyone in beanbags and on couches in a close, tight circle, the tone may have felt more relaxed.”

The CPR team discussed reconnecting and rebuilding trust that might have been damaged, to put the power back in the hands of the Chinese teachers and agreed on two actions: the creation of an exclusive WeChat group for TAs only and inviting the TAs or local hires to the next learning exchange. Although the segregation of TAs from western teachers seems counter intuitive for building wisdom across cultures, Erin, Vivian, and I reflected that we first needed to build an open community of trust with the Chinese teachers before asking them to place themselves in vulnerable situations in front of those with greater power and voice.

It is important to note, I describe the member of leadership who joined the CLE as open, honest, laidback, kind, caring, and ethical. I have seen him joke around and be totally accessible to teachers around him. I would not describe his leadership style as top-down, dominant, or inequitable. After the CLE, Erin sent me a short email reflection on the meeting dynamic and the follow-up meeting leadership engaged regarding the CLE.

I told him that we found it really interesting that there was so much less talking this week than last, and he jumped right on it. He said, “I hate that that happens...I hate my job sometimes.” He said that he is very aware of the way talking will stop when admin enters the room. I mentioned that if he came again, maybe he could think about adjusting his body language to come sit on the couches or floor. I told him we had learned a little about hierarchical relationships and how seating can reflect the power of the individual. He responded, “I could be the liberal one who sits on the floor and tries to change it, but they (the Chinese women) wouldn’t want that. They wouldn’t like it.” I just found it interesting and wanted to share it. (E. Madonna, personal communication, October 18, 2017)

Reminded of my previous reflections on the dangers of reading between the lines and not clarifying assumptions, we decided to try to find evidence for this claim. Would the Chinese teachers indeed not like it if a member of leadership sat on the floor? During follow-up conversations we asked three Chinese teachers if this was the case and they laughed and said, “Not at all!” “That would be great.” “It would be a bit weird, but good.” Clearly, a phenomenon was occurring that required further research. I dug throughout the transcripts looking for evidence of the subtle microaggressions of: words spoken, silences, interruptions, and

interjections. Table 5 denotes instances where the examples were evident throughout the action cycle that led to the theme of voice.

Often within the actions taken for the PAR several themes would become evident within one conversation. The complexity and nuances of dialogue are valuable for demonstrating the duality of meaning within one action. For example, when we silence the voice of others Freire contends that we engage in dehumanizing aggression. However, this action begs the question, why? And it is the why that leads us to the next theme of protecting the norm.

Protecting the Norm

I contend that most educators do not self-identify as dehumanizing aggressors, but rather as socially-minded individuals who are advocates for equity and justice. Most of their actions are based on the cultural and school norms around them and therefore, they may be acting with good intentions but failing in equity or cultural sensitivity. Unconsciously, they may act to protect their income, their job status, their workflow, their power dynamic, their job description, and their voice. And through those subtle actions they become the aggressors.

In economics, protectionism is the policy of restraining trade between countries through methods such as tariffs on imported goods, restrictive quotas, and a variety of other government regulations to preserve or protect the domestic economy. Culturally, countries such as Canada and France engage in cultural protectionism in to retain their dominant cultural norms. In previous chapters, I have not only established international schools as affluent economic corporate entities, but also as hegemonic cultural establishments. Within school norms a version of cultural protectionism is evident in two ways: expat intentions, and “othering.” Table 6 shows the number of times protecting the norm was evidenced within the coding of the transcripts.

Table 5

Evidence for the Theme of Voice within PAR Cycle One

Source	Count
Meetings with Leadership	1
Video Interviews	–
Audio Interviews	3
CPR Meetings Emails	3
Discrete-Skill Sessions	–
Learning Exchanges	3
WeChat Conversations	2
Meetings with EdD mentors	1

Table 6

Evidence for Theme of Protecting the Norm within PAR Cycle One

Source	Count
Meetings with Leadership	9
Video Interviews	–
Audio Interviews	–
CPR Meetings Emails	2
Discrete-Skill Sessions	–
Learning Exchanges	3
WeChat Conversations	1
Meetings with EdD mentors	–

The following vignette unpacks an elementary staff meeting in which the roles and responsibilities of the TAs were addressed. The leadership role for organizing the TAs professional development is held by a foreign teacher, and it seemed the meeting leader tried to say nice things and acknowledge the importance of their role in the short time. Upon a quick, cursory view of the meeting video I could not understand what the TAs shared about how embarrassing the meeting was. In the video, it seemed clear the leader acted with good intention. Still, follow-up conversations with four TAs uncovered that the meeting made them feel “disrespected,” “uncomfortable,” and “awkward.” (CLE TAs only October 23, 2017) I had to revisit the transcripts to discover the disconnect.

Vignette: Staff Meeting—The Role and Responsibilities of Teaching Assistants

The elementary school called a meeting to establish norms around the “use of TAs” (see Figure 25). The teaching assistants were in a separate staff meeting. The western leader in charge of the professional development for TAs led the meeting. In the middle of the meeting the Chinese teachers were led down and entered the foreign teachers’ staff meeting where they were seated, and their roles and responsibilities were outlined as per the school handbook. After the four-minute interjection the Chinese staff were led to return to their own meeting in another room. The following is a short selection of the transcript from the meeting.

“Hey, guys. Thank you, um, so much for giving me the first few minutes. Um, this is gonna be really quick and easy. I wanted to have the whole staff because I feel like this is a message that needs to be the whole ES, including the TAs and us. Um, they are an important and vital piece our...in our community [hesitation]. I just want to stress that, okay? Um, without us, our school would literally fall apart [slip of pronoun]. Your classes would fall apart. Okay? (applause)

So overall, um, I want to talk about the roles of the teachers, the TAs, and how to maximize them. Um, some of you guys are amazing. Most of us are all amazing, [phrasing] but some of us have come from schools where we’ve never had a TA. Where we don’t know what to do with them. They’re just like another person, [phrasing] and it feels like creating more work for them. Okay? All right. So, all right. (laughter)

So, their roles. All right. So, first of all, um, it is vital that you have them in the classroom as much as possible, okay? We all have those extra copies. We all have those things, but their roles are within your classroom, to read and write with all your students. Don’t just

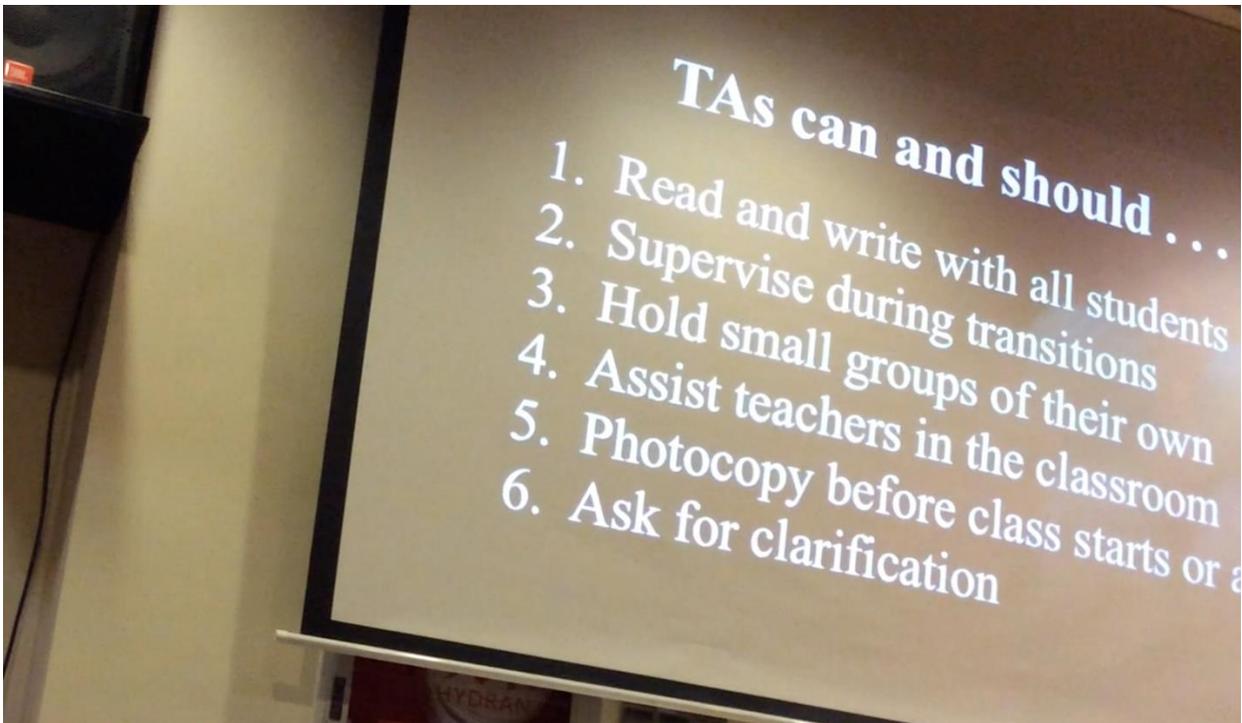


Figure 25. List of TA roles and responsibilities shared during the staff meeting.

put the needy, helpful kids with them. Because what's gonna...The problem is, the kids are gonna notice that. And they're gonna see that you're [slip of pronoun] just working with, just that one child.

So, it's building the respect and the, the, um, [hesitation] the ability to have all the, the children working with the TAs. And the teachers. Supervise during transitions, that's their job as well. Hold small groups of their own, that should be happening within the classrooms as well. Assist teachers in the classroom, photocopy before class starts or after. Okay? Their job, when they're supposed to be in your classroom is to stay in the class as much as possible. They're not out to do copies. It's okay if they do that extra work. I mean, come on. [phrasing]"

Reflections on the meeting from Chinese teachers during the second CLE on roles and responsibilities:

"I feel...I think, I should feel happy that {the teacher}, her intention of doing these, she wants to build an equal relationship with her teachers and TAs. It was uneven. But I didn't feel happy about it. Um, I think I feel that I was, we were, treated like, um, disadvantaged people. Her intention was good but the approaches to do this was not making me feel comfortable about this. I don't feel I'm being treated respectfully."

"Um. Embarrassing, sitting there, and then—then {the teacher} said, 'Oh, really thank you guys.' You know, I will feel like so fake." (laughs)

"Yeah. So, it's, eh, just embarrassing. I was, I—I didn't listen. I don't want to hear it. I don't want look, just staying, sitting there." (covers face)

ToA: We discussed possibilities for future actions. Erin suggested a new leadership model in a WeChat conversation (see Figure 26).

After several reads of the transcripts and coding the text in a variety of ways suddenly the 24 times the pronouns (they, their, and them) were used in the short four-minute meeting became apparent. Returning to Wodak and Meyer's (2009) model those pronouns became the 'subtle formal structures' within the discourse. The sheer volume of the use of othering pronouns reads as if the TAs were not in the room, or at least were clearly set apart. The examination of the discourse and specifically the focused, selected information regarding pronoun use gave rise to the interpretation that the TAs felt "othered" and that subliminal microaggression led to tension.

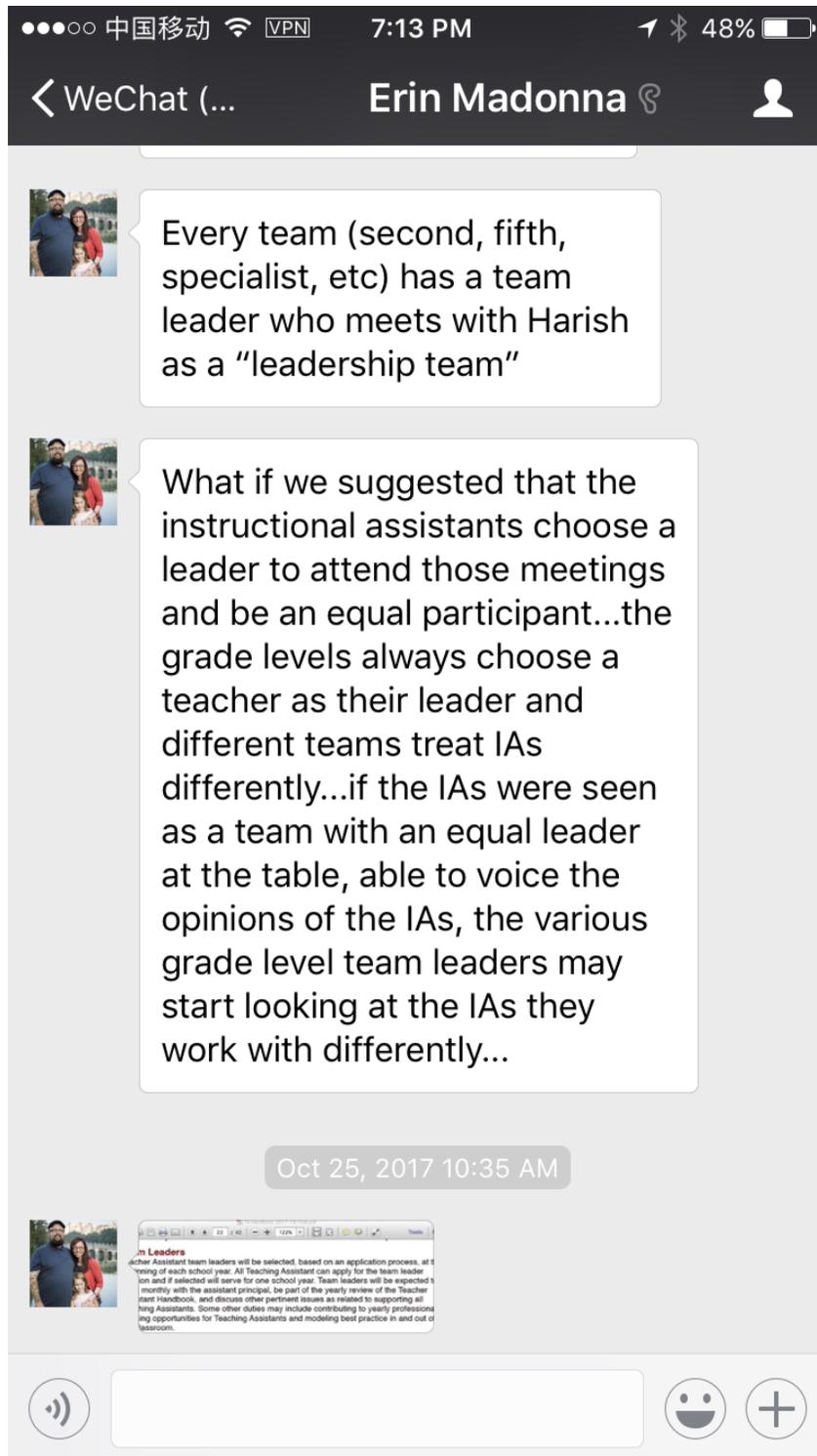


Figure 26. Screenshot of WeChat conversation in which Erin suggests a new leadership model.

Microaggressions are small, intentional or unintentional verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negativity towards the non-dominant culture (Sue, 2010). I began the second CLE with opportunities for the TAs to unpack how the meeting made them feel to examine the claim that the TAs felt othered. The TAs reflected:

We can all feel the purpose of [Member of Leadership] is very good. She, she wanted to do something to help. But some help put us in a very awkward position. Like, awkward. As it's like, like, "Where does this come from?" Kind of feeling. Yeah. It's weird. But we all know it's like. Like you walk into another culture. It's not your cultural background...it's not Chinese culture.

Yeah, she's really good for us. In that she thinks she wants speak of that importance. Speak to all the TA's. Make sure, for example, we're not uncomfortable with something. Because it really happens. Not me, but it's really someone, "Is that teacher treated like a...this is my cup, will you get it for me?" She really wants to speak for us. Yeah. Um, but, um. But, one thing is, um, the awkward part is in the staff meeting and then we've been told that we need to go down. And then walk in, see that there's something on the projector, and then walk out in the few minutes, just make us uncomfortable. Because we don't know what this meeting is for. We just know that, "Okay, we are there, and then we get walked down, and then for this one." It just feel, "What?" (Meeting with TAs October 23, 2017).

Their feedback led to a deeper understanding of cultural differences and potential areas in which the CPR team could coach for inclusive language and terminology when conducting staff meetings. Still, I was stuck pondering the strong feelings that this meeting elicited in the TAs. I analyzed the discourse for allusions, vagueness, omissions, or potential hegemonic narratives. When the transcripts were coded it was clear the staff meeting regarding the roles and responsibilities of the TAs implied that foreign teachers ultimately possessed ownership of the TAs' duties. This was implied by their title, Teaching Assistant, within the job description, from teachers referring to them as, "my TA," and within in the transcribed statements, "We don't know what to do with them. They are just like another person, and it feels like creating more work for them." "They're only assigned to you guys." "They should be maximized in your room as much as possible" (Staff Meeting, Oct 18, 2018). When teachers feel closely connected to

their job as an extension of their identity, the ownership of duty can feel like ownership of being, and no one wants to be owned. So why would good, well-intentioned people act this way? The answer is in protecting the cultural norm.

As discussed in the review of the literature international schools as organizations have specific cultures they wish to protect. A strong cultural identity translates as social capital and economic success. Schools believe their cultural competency is high, and their organizational protectionism becomes evident when they provide only selective voice to disparate narratives. Leaders, and teachers become extensions of that school culture protecting their economic status, work load, and positions of power. Difficult conversations between colleagues about wage disparity, workload and flow, equity of space, and roles and responsibilities are replaced with quiet ennui and acquiescent behaviors.

Throughout this chapter I have outlined how data gathered from meetings with Leadership, CPR Meetings, video and audio interviews of TAs and CLEs, and online communities for backchat contributed to an analytic narrative that led to the discovery of emerging themes of voice and protecting the norm. In the next section, I review the implications of these discoveries on new theories, transfer to new practice within the community, and my growth as a leader.

A Taste of Change

In previous sections I have provided significant vignettes to situate learning within a sociocultural construct. By using vignettes as a conceptual scaffold, I was able to provide rich, complex narratives of the CLE group. However, in this section I focus on my own growth as a leader by (1) outlining ways my thinking was challenged and the areas that needed further

exploration, (2) celebrating the ways in which the work of the CLE transferred to teacher practice, and (3) revisiting the ToA to frame a way forward in the PAR.

Reflecting on my Role as a Leader

Throughout PAR Cycle One I struggled with the extent to which my work with the group could be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community. Especially after the transcripts showed despite my best intentions to: create a setting for open dialogue, tease out issues, co-formulate ideas, invite the ideas of outsiders, act in humility, and learn in public, I still failed to give second language learners a chance to fully voice their doubts, hopes, and fears. Instead, I dominated the conversation, named phenomena for others, and “painted my view of the world over the participant’s canvas of experience.” I was forced to return to Freire’s questions,

How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own? How can I dialogue if I regard myself as a case apart from others—mere “its” in whom I cannot recognize the other “I”s? How can I dialogue if I am closed to and even offended by the contribution of others? (p. 90)

Some failures are caused because language and cultural barriers force expats to “read between the lines” for context and meaning when discussing ideas, issues, and developing relationships of trust within schools. As I actively ‘listened’ while I read the transcripts during the data analysis, I realized how much of my communication relied on reading between the lines. The communications strategies of gestures, facial expressions, pauses, slower speech, and using easier vocabulary all play a huge part in cross-cultural, second language communication. I successfully communicate within my host nations, so my assumption has been that I am successful in reading between the lines. However, the transcripts contain overwhelming evidence that I rarely clarified through paraphrasing, or by asking direct questions to check for understanding and gather specific feedback that my assumptions were correct. This realization

led to an existential crisis: if I failed this poorly, how could I expect to help others succeed on this journey?

Perhaps the most significant epiphany was in a debrief meeting with Vivian and Erin.

After a long conversation Vivian stated,

You know, Tosca, this is our job, and yeah, okay, we don't have equity in this room, in this space, but when we're out there we have perfect equity, like, we are the majority, we're...this is our country, we speak our language. (V. Wu, January 2018)

Vivian's statement, a simple description of the phenomena that she experiences, seemed so obvious but it was a jolt to my understanding of the focus of practice for this study. I had been espousing a narrative of dehumanizing aggression by the dominant western paradigm in each country that I have lived within, but the truth is westerners are not truly dominant. We have enclave populations, we look different, we have fewer language skills, less local knowledge, in every way we are technically subordinate. We merely act dominant because we have embraced the social and racial contracts that outline paradigms of privilege and power, and these follow us wherever we go (Mills, 2010). When we protect ourselves from "the other," we consciously or unconsciously place people within a hierarchal band. It is important to note the demarcation of "us" and "them" relates to our existence within the sociopolitical framework. This othering is a social ontology rather than a biological ontology (Mills, 2010) and within each country, culture, or organization we are placed within a specific hierarchy. Those lines are created based on political and economic desires. For example, within international schools, "othering" becomes a system in which organizations find financial success. Categorization places teachers into positions of power and voice, it influences wage, professional development opportunities, travel options, and upward mobility within roles and responsibilities. In turn, these affect constituents' efficacy and self-worth.

Vivian stated something different than I named for her. I stole her voice by telling her what her view of her world was, missing the nuanced particulars of engaging in the kind of dialogue Freire outlines. This did not mean that the equity stance underpinning the PAR was null, but it did help me reframe the ways I approached the research questions. Together the CPR team reflected on past conversations where teachers and leaders described the education of locals in dismissive terms and demeaned the teaching pedagogies of host nations. A leader who was interviewed spoke of creating scholarships at a previous school for local teachers to attend American universities to obtain “real” education (HS meeting, September 5, 2017). When further questioned, it became clear that the enrolment rate for those programs was low, as the tuition was nearly unattainable by local teacher’s wages. This reminded the CPR group of social reproduction theory and appeared as a lip-service to creating systems of equity because it remained completely outside of the realities of the sociopolitical frame. Acknowledging this helped us refocus our efforts on the importance of the reciprocal elements of the research question: How can the relationships between locally hired and internationally hired employees in international school settings be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments? Vivian’s statement and the CPR model helped me philosophically shift the heavy burden of actionable change from something I had to bear on my own to a shared reciprocal relationship. This simple shift put me into the cognitive space of the non-dominant learner and helped me make my own practice more equitable by shifting into greater distributed leadership and drawing on the wisdom of those within the CLE to create plans for transformation within the school.

Instances of Transfer

Some small satellite successes occurred when teachers who joined the CLEs utilized elements they were exposed to within their own classroom practice. One teacher used the journey line of gifts and capabilities to tune into expert groups when creating her classroom mini-makerspace. This same teacher used barrier games immediately after the CLE with her students and tweeted the experience to her professional learning network. Figure 27 shows a tweet that indicates the immediate impact the CLEs had on teacher practice.

This grassroots activism of customizing and transferring practices learned through the CLE to the larger learning community is exactly what the CPR team hoped would happen when creating a Networked Innovative Community. It was clear teachers and TAs were willing to explore the strategies, tools, and practices they learned within the CLE.

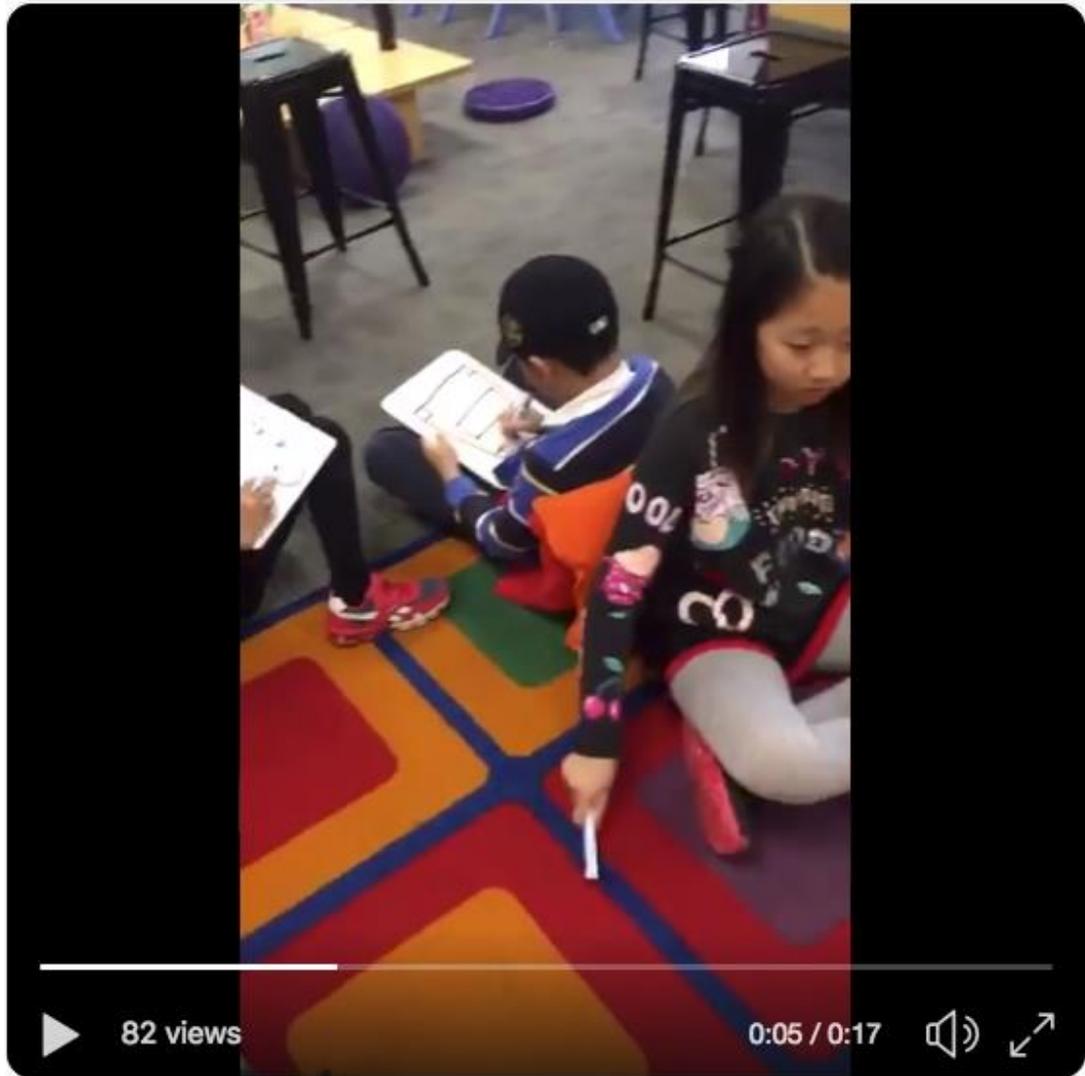
Revisiting the ToA

The ToA for this PAR research study posits that when international school community members such as local- and foreign-hired teachers and leadership engage with opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, a better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community will be revealed. This requires a complex balance between the sharing of individual identities and constructing a shared narrative. After all, identities are nuanced relationships between people and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). By putting this knowledge into practice, the CPR team revisited ways to strengthen the “joint” aspect of joint enterprise and encourage the democratic *deprivatization* of practice through the sharing of artifacts, documents, language, vocabulary, routines, technology, and ethos.



Megan Kummerlin @megankummerlin · 21 Nov 2017

Improving our specific language in our home languages with a barrier game. Thanks @ToscaKilloran and @mrsmadonnay1 for the idea, they loved it. #sisrocks #learningexchange



1 5

Figure 27. Tweet of strategies discovered in the discrete skill development CLEs.

In earlier chapters I outlined the success metrics as the PLC's ability to: engage in dialogue, infuse democracy, diffuse power structures, coach for technology, create networked learning, and utilize local capacity to increase reciprocity. PAR Cycle One created conditions conducive to a joint enterprise. We created a shared repertoire of artifacts, documents, technology tools, and experiences documented on a website and within WeChat communities and worked together to uncover actions that would increase equity within the school. In the next chapter I explain how PAR Cycle Two continued this enterprise. I discuss the impact of meetings with leadership on the CLE actions, how data collection and analysis led to a stronger understanding of the themes, and how ECD helped the CPR team to foster hope and shift the CLE solidly toward a networked innovation community.

CHAPTER 6: PAR CYCLE TWO FINDINGS

For PAR Cycle Two, I introduced new pedagogies such as the digital fishbowl to the CLE to draw out additional data on the identified themes of voice and protecting the norm and determine if new themes emerged from data collected. In this chapter, I explain the leadership actions the team used, including meetings with the principal and surveys (see Table 7). I also explain how data gathered outside of the CLE served as a pressurizing agent to move the PAR away from the incrementalism we adhered to in Cycle One and how follow-up meetings with the principal shifted our design. I then summarize the discrete-skill sessions, CPR meetings, and equity observations of the school community. Next, I describe the impact of the digital fishbowl and explain the importance of context when coding data. After that, I summarize the design thinking experience and explain how it transferred into the classrooms. Then, I recall the themes from previous chapters: voice and protecting the norm and add the emergent theme of hierarchal harmony. Later I demonstrate how international schools, as organizations, are mimetic isomorphic institutions with the difficulties inherent to change leadership in cross-cultural contexts. Finally, I conclude the chapter with an explanation of new ideas that I developed based on this cycle as well as the ways the PAR fostered hope.

Leadership Actions

In this section, I unpack each leadership action taken within PAR Cycle Two, provide deeper context for the data gathered and contribute narrative vignettes and other evidence for the existing and newly emergent themes. The main findings were: (1) the idea of voice is culturally laden, and constituents of schools require designed experiences to ensure equity of voice; (2) broader organizational systems influence human behaviors and protect school norms; and (3)

Table 7

Completed Actions for PAR Cycle Two

Meetings with Leadership	Video Interviews	Audio Interviews	CPR Meetings Emails	Discrete Skill Sessions in LEVEL 5	Learning Exchanges in LEVEL 5	WeChat Conversation	Meetings with EdD mentors
Elementary School Principal	Interview with Anton	Interview with Dan	Email from Vivian re: spaces	CMB 1/1/18	Digital Fishbowl 12/12/17	Learning Exchange Group	Meeting with Matt and Lynda (partially video recorded and transcribed) 2/26/18
	Interview with Shirley		Email with Erin re: reflections on meetings	ORF 1/15/18	Design thinking: Setting the stage for design 2/12/18	Exclusive Learning Exchange Group (for Chinese and local teachers only)	Online communication
			Email from Erin re: Action items	Forward together 1/29/18 & 02.08.2018	Design thinking II: Equitable space 3/5/18	Personal conversations with Erin and Vivian	
				Brains! 2/5/18	Matt & Lynda Meet the CPR team 2/26/18		

cultural constructs of hierarchy and maintaining hierarchal harmony are barriers to equality and creating innovative communities.

Meetings with Leadership: What is the Metric of Success?

In this section I breakdown the impact that one meeting with the principal had on PAR Cycle Two. I describe how I met with the school principal, conducted a member check with the CPR group, developed a survey to gather metrics of success, analysed the data, and debriefed the results with the principal. Finally, I explain the impact of the meetings on my leadership actions. The flow for this subsection is provided in Figure 28.

Meeting with the principal. During a meeting with the elementary principal we discussed the PAR and potential areas for future action such as the equity of physical spaces, better representation within leadership meetings, and the title change of the TAs to 老师 or Lǎoshī. I shared that the Chinese TAs stated this title literally translates as “teacher” and is an honorific term (V. Wu, personal communication, December 12, 2017). In contrast, the TAs felt teacher assistant (TA), teaching assistant (TA), academic assistant (AA) or instructional assistant (IA) denote negative hierarchy and are problematic in Chinese culture. The principal explained that early in the year the TA title had been changed formally to IA. I shared that, during the CLEs, the TAs explained that the school community regularly interchanged the three titles and the lack of consistency caused tensions. The change of name was important to the local teachers because they believed it better communicated a sense of their teaching capacity. We reviewed other cursory findings from PAR Cycle One. Finally, the principal interjected and inquired, “Yes, but what is the metric of success?” (HK, memo, February 9, 2018) I was initially confused; the discrete-skill sessions and CLEs were provided free of charge, after school, and open to all



Figure 28. Flow for meetings with leadership section of Chapter 6.

teachers and TAs. Why would the TAs need to prove they were using what they learned? Teachers were not expected to prove fidelity when they returned from expensive school-paid professional development sessions; why should this be different?

For clarity I explained the PAR definition of success as members engaged in dialogue and reflection to decide on actions, equitably. I explained that we worked to diffuse power structures within the group, coached for technology to decrease marginalization, and finally utilized local capacity to increase reciprocity in the school context (L. Tredway, personal communication, May 24, 2017). The principal elaborated, “Yes, but how do we know that the TAs are using what you teach them in classrooms?” This made me question whether the school felt threatened by the processes and the fact we were filling a professional learning gap that had never been provided for the TAs. Further, it made me question whether the school leadership viewed the equity component of the PAR as less significant than the ‘hard skills’ of technology, pedagogies, and resources. I also worried there may be backchat among upper leadership about the PAR that had not yet reached the CPR team. Admittedly, these thoughts arose with a powerful set of personal assumptions, but I was hesitant to engage deficit thinking regarding the motives of the principal. I left the meeting and immediately conducted a member check with the CPR team.

CPR Decision: Survey questions and results. The CPR group concurred that the possibility of external pressure for metrics was high and discussed ways of providing evidence in the language we believed would leadership would find satisfactory. Therefore, we designed a short survey for the teachers and TAs to complete regarding the CLEs they attended. An email (see Appendix H) was sent to 33 participants of the CLE with the request for participation.

We presented the survey as an opportunity for teachers and TAs to notice and reflect on the instances they demonstrated leadership and action within their classrooms and teams. As shown in Figure 29, the discrepancy in survey response rates between foreign teachers and the local TAs was notable; despite more TAs attending the CLEs, more foreign teachers responded to the survey. Only eight of the 33 CLE participants responded.

Analysis of survey results. Despite having lived in Asia for well over a decade, I often forget the nuances of the host culture I live within. As we coded the results of the survey, Vivian reminded us that in Chinese culture the notion of Guanxi, 关系, describes the influence of social networks or the relationships between people. It is an important tenet of Chinese life. Foreigners, often over-simplify or confuse this term as the concept of “face” (e.g., people lose face or save face). While foreigners typically associate face with pride or loss of pride, in Chinese culture Guanxi is about the importance of associating oneself in relation to hierarchical harmony. With this reminder, Erin, Vivian, and I discussed possible explanations for the low response rate on the survey by the Chinese teachers:

- The English items listed could be daunting for Chinese teachers to engage with and admitting that they do not know or remember the pedagogies, resources, or technologies listed may disrupt harmony.
- Admitting that they have not used the pedagogies, resources, or technologies may make the Chinese teachers lose face, or make it look like they do not appreciate the time invested in their professional development.

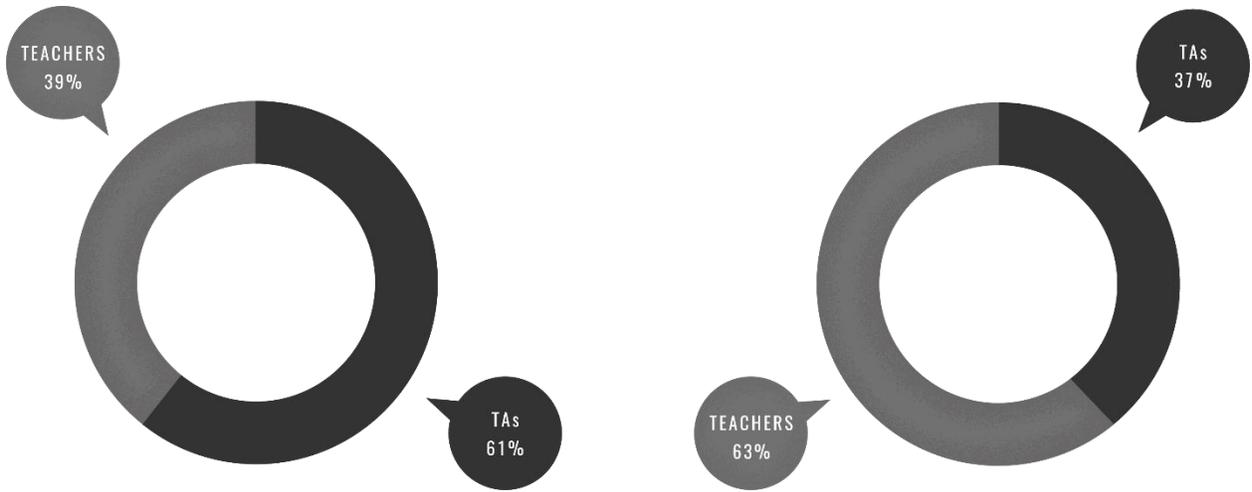


Figure 29. Pie charts for participant attendance to CLE versus response rates on survey.

- Admitting that they have not been able to use the pedagogies, resources, or technologies may make the teachers they work with seem inequitable and this would potentially put strain on the working relationship and disrupt harmony.
- The Chinese teachers may still not trust how the data collected will be used. This is linked to a later discussion regarding voice and hierarchy within dimensions of organizational theory.

Despite the response rate by the participants, the comments received did provide insights to the metrics of success that I initially outlined for the PAR. One teacher expressed,

It has really helped me look at school and education as a whole through a more probing lens, which now has me asking myself how am I making learning accessible to all? Before my thinking was narrowed and focused on learning that includes the environment and instruction, of course I built community in my classroom, but there were a lot of inequities I wasn't even aware of and misconceptions I didn't know I had. The Learning Exchange has broadened my education umbrella. I am more aware of cultural barriers, inequity in school cultures/classrooms, and learning difficulties. I think it is a constant journey to keep all of this awareness at the forefront in my planning, instruction, conferences, and interactions (Anonymous respondent, survey, February 13, 2018).

One teaching assistant stated,

First, I'm impressed by the idea of equity in international school as I think that is both important and beneficial to students and community. Besides that, is helpful to develop empathy and human within kids. Second, I like the strategies, apps, information, and ideas shared by Learning Exchanges meeting, I find them inspiring and helpful. (Anonymous respondent, survey, February 13, 2018)

Another respondent shared: "It is so useful, all the resources like the treasure for me. Thank you for all your hard work and share with me" (Anonymous respondent, survey, February 13, 2018).

Although the surveys were a pressurized response to the needs of leadership to legitimize the work and did not help me collect the data I anticipated, the responses were evidence that teachers and TAs were engaged in dialogue and reflection to decide actions and had considered power structures within the group. The respondents embraced the coaching of technology and

networked learning and reflected on ways to decrease marginalization. The CPR team considered this a success.

Unpacking with the principal. During an informal meeting with the elementary principal, I shared findings from the survey. Specifically, I focused on one teacher comment submitted, “I feel that (the school) doesn’t support cooperative teaching or equality between staff of different nationalities, so I can make changes within my class, but my concern is that in other classes there will be no significant change” (Anonymous respondent, survey, February 13, 2018). At that point, the principal explained that was exactly the kind of the data he desired because he wanted to empower TAs to use what they were learning within the CLEs for student benefit, and he envisioned the process as a booster of TA efficacy within teaching teams. He explained that if the TAs did not feel they were able to use the pedagogies, technology, or resources there was a larger systemic issue about status within classrooms. He stated the comment indicated there was more work to do regarding the relationships between the teachers and TAs.

Discrete-Skill Development, CLE and Observations

In this section I describe the CLE’s digital fishbowl and design thinking engagements and share the analysis from the associated data and the themes: voice, protecting the norm, and hierarchal harmony. Given the length of this section and number of elements related to the ideation and prototyping of new interventions for the PAR, Table 8, shows an overview of the timeline. The Monday professional development sessions continued throughout this cycle. However, we wanted to be more intentional about how we translated our reflections from PAR Cycle One into action and how we incorporated the CLE group ideas. We achieved this by including voice and choice in the organization of the CLE discrete-skill development sessions.

Table 8

Timeline/Participant Data for Discrete Skill PD, CLE, and Observations

Event	Date	Participants	Evidence Gathered	Outputs	Analysis of Data Led to...
CLE (Digital fishbowl)	12/12/17	n (teachers) = 6 n (TAs) = 9 n (CPR) = 3	Google slide deck Equity map data Google doc Video Photos	Equity map Google doc Rich discussion Coding of Video Transcription	Greater evidence for theme: Voice Teachers' understanding of how to use DF and Equity Maps in their own classrooms
136 Brainstorming session (Moving forward, essential agreements, roles and responsibilities)	02/08/2018	n (teachers) = 8 n (TAs) = 8 n (CPR) = 3	Photos Video Transcription Artifacts	TAs voicing their actual roles and responsibilities TAs voicing what an equitable space would look like to them	Ideation of PAR Cycle Three document for equity Ideation for Design thinking I challenge (Basics)
Observations of classroom spaces	02/08/2018	n (teachers) = 0 n (TAs) = 0 n (CPR) = 3	Photos of Spaces Follow-up Analysis of photos using Rubric		Ideation for design thinking challenge II (teacher/TAs spaces)

Table 8 (continued)

Event	Date	Participants	Evidence Gathered	Outputs	Analysis of Data Led to...
Discrete skill session (Design thinking I: The basics)	02/12/2018?	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 5 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 5 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Google slide deck	Prototypes of an intervention for a teacher with a learning need Teachers understanding how to use DT within their own classrooms	
Meeting with Matt and Lynda	02/27/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 0 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 0 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Video Transcript	Coding of video transcript	Consolidation of emerging theme: Hierarchal harmony
CLE (Design thinking II: Equity of space, imagining new desks)	03/05/18	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 6 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 5 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Google slide deck	Informal poll Photos Video Transcription Artifacts	
CLE (Design thinking: rapid prototyping teacher and TA desks)	03/12/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 1 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 5 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Google slide deck		

Figure 30 shows the process of ideation for crowdsourcing specific needs, interests, and learning goals. Initially, the room was totally silent. To mitigate the silence and enhance TA voice, we suggested a system where group members could spend two minutes during each CLE to share a pedagogical highlight, or success stories about a learning goal or a technology tool.

During our CPR debrief meeting Erin, Vivian and I hypothesized the short time and easily accessed information would encourage the Chinese national teachers to share more within the exchange. We were wrong. The TAs brought nuanced comments to the CPR team's attention and helped us develop a greater understanding about why no one was stepping up to share within the CLE. One such comment was made by a TA after a discrete-skill development session. Given the data that emerged from PAR Cycle One, Erin, Vivian, and I carefully designed the learning experiences to be largely learner-driven. However, in one CLE when the group was very quiet and time was limited, I took over and controlled the verbal space. At the end of the session, I apologized for talking so much and a TA stated, "That's ok, we are your students, you are supposed to talk lots, you are above, the expert" (TA, memo, December 2, 2018). This comment made me uncomfortable because it indicated the TAs did not yet view the CLE as a space of equity. Instead, there was an expectation that knowledge would be given rather than exchanged; and there remained a significant difference in hierarchal expectations between the Chinese and foreign teachers.

Each of the discrete-skill sessions were documented online through a shared blog. During our first cycle, we hypothesized the TAs were not contributing to the blog because we still needed to develop trust. But the continued non-participation led me to change that hypothesis and propose non-participation was a complex phenomenon related to the hierarchical structures of both the school and the host culture. This is discussed in the section on organizational theory.



Figure 30. Moving forward together, brainstorming for discrete skill sessions for the new year.

Community Learning Exchanges

As indicated in Table 8, we held three hour-long CLEs during this cycle. These exchanges were co-planned and created based on CPR feedback and brainstorming. The first exchange for PAR Cycle Two was a digital fishbowl. The second and third exchanges for the cycle were on design thinking and designing new physical spaces for the TAs. Later in the chapter, I explain how the failures and successes of these exchanges contributed to evidence of claims made within Chapter 5 and the three themes. First, I explain the learning exchanges and significant findings that arose from the digital fishbowl event.

Digital Fishbowl

The digital fishbowl protocol was used as a structure for democratic discussion with an emphasis on equal representation of voice. The group was arranged in a set of concentric circles, such that the inner circle of selected teachers and TAs participated in a conversation and the outer circle of teachers and TAs listened and took notes that were compiled in a digital Google document. The inner circle of TAs and teachers were specifically invited because the CPR team, felt they were confident enough to express opinions. We specifically selected teachers who would be less likely to dominate the discussion. The experience was guided by Freire's (1970) quote shown in Figure 31, "Human beings are not built in silence, but in work, in work in action reflection;" the quote was translated to Chinese (p. 68) for the event. Participants were asked to answer the focus group questions proposed in the early stages of the PAR. The questions included:

1. In what ways do you feel valued in this community?
2. What would you describe as the assets you bring to your team?
3. What are the hopes and dreams you have for yourself and your school?

WELCOME to the 3rd and Final Learning Exchange for 2017! We appreciate your thoughts and ideas. This is a digital fishbowl which means those INSIDE the bowl discuss out loud the topics moderated by Tosca and those outside the bowl will listen and contribute to this document. Please just add your thoughts, questions, ideas and comments on others ideas within this document. This gives us the opportunity to have more equitable voice heard.

Today we will frame the conversation around the following quote:
"Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection." -Freire

In Chinese:

人类社会不是在沉默中建立的，而是在沟通中，工作中，交流互动中建成。

Tosca Killoran

Please free-flow add your thoughts, ideas, comments to the document. You are anonymous as you entered the doc with the link. No one will know it is you that has added to the document. You do not need to add your name to your comment.

Figure 31. Screenshot of Google document used for the digital fishbowl protocol.

The participants on the outside of the fishbowl contributed ideas, thoughts, and comments to an open Google doc.

Several significant statements were made within the Google document. Erin, Vivian, and I contemplated the ways these statements contributed to the pool of evidence for the three themes. Participants wrote:

- Part of the inequity between the TA staff and teachers is that in general the Caucasian teachers are valued the most culturally. The Chinese culture & many cultures around the world look up to Caucasians & they get more respect and the benefit of the doubt beyond other cultures.
- Thanks for engaging us, “Engage to grow”—I miss feeling challenged to grow – people are cordial and diplomatic and maybe they are afraid to challenge others—it could be because some are close friends and co-workers too. Not sure. Everybody is busy, is what we hear the most.
- Our TAs are highly qualified!!! Some other more qualified than teachers!!

Perhaps most telling was a simple question that was asked midway through the Google doc. “Are we ready for diversity? Inclusion? In our workplace?” As a moderator, I poised this question from the document to the inner circle of the fishbowl. There was uncomfortable silence and the answers indicated that both the teachers and TAs had trouble voicing disappointment or uncertainty. To maintain harmony, one participant simply answered, “Things are getting better.” (TA, digital fishbowl video, December 12, 2017)

Context is King when Coding Data

Beyond the Google document and videotaped conversation, the CPR team wanted to collect data that we could immediately share with the participants. We felt this would have a

twofold effect. First, participants would have a technology tool to take back to their classrooms and use immediately; this helped us mitigate potential pressure from the school's leadership. Second, the participants may have had insights about the data beyond what Erin, Vivian or I could assess. The app used for the data collection was called Equity Maps. Figure 32 shows the data pulled from the app. This app allowed us to track conversations real-time and included a breakdown of the session into equity factors as show in Figure 33.

The data indicated the foreign teachers spoke significantly more than the Chinese teachers. For example, participant Anton was recorded speaking twenty-two times. Yet, while this may lead to the assumption that the foreign teachers dominated and controlled the flow of discussion, that is only partially correct. After analyzing the video of this session, it became clear that “context is king” when coding data. Upon close examination, 10 of Anton's interactions were specifically offered to expand the TAs' ideas, pose questions to TAs, direct the conversation back to an equity stance, and use his privilege to shed light on the TAs training, skill, and academic knowledge. Anton's questions indicated he supports more equitable participation of Chinese TAs:

- You say you feel valued when you help the children; do you feel valued when you are helping other adults?
- The TAs need champions. Many TAs are more qualified than I am, and they should be given jobs that are respectful of their training.

However, Anton's contributions did not explain the lack of contribution from the Chinese teachers. After all, the TAs were specifically chosen because they were outspoken in video, audio, and other CLEs about their ideas, worries, hopes, and insights. I considered the phenomena of silence or nonparticipation was more complex than I understood and made a note

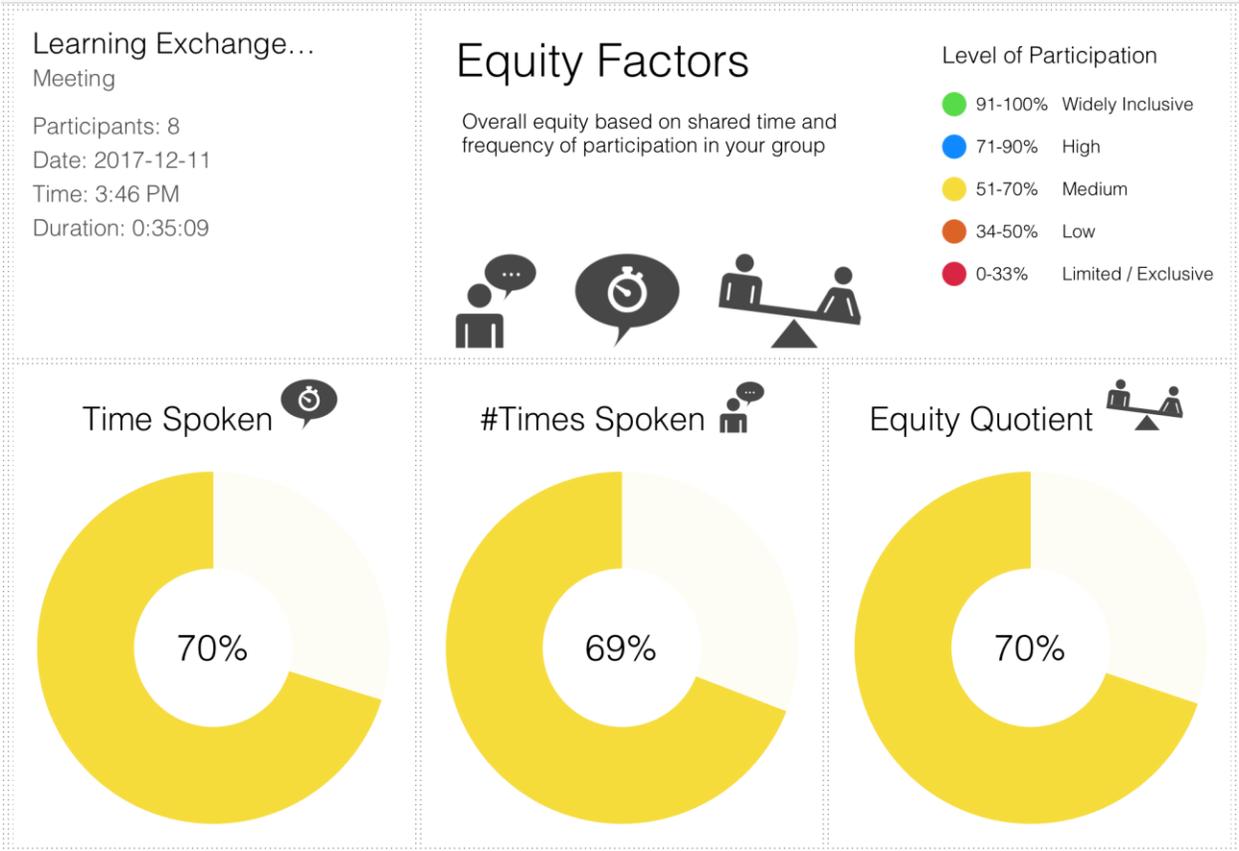


Figure 32. Equity factors compiled from the Equity Maps app.

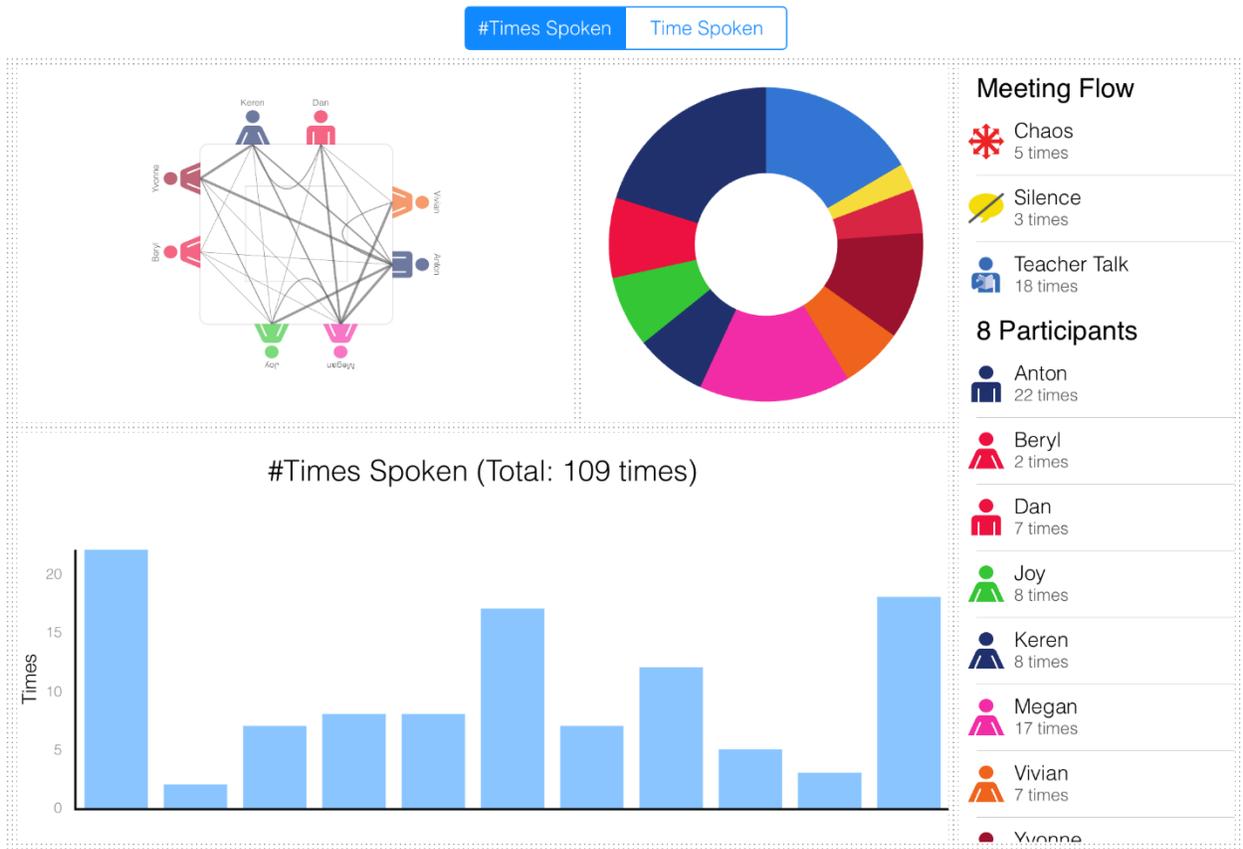


Figure 33. Screenshots of data gathered with the Equity Maps app for the digital fishbowl.

to investigate it further. In the interim, to action Anton's ideas of championing the TAs, in the next meeting, we invited TAs to stay and map their roles and responsibilities.

Although we gathered data on this topic in both a CLE and the staff meeting during PAR Cycle One, we were keen to learn if the community followed the directions from the staff meeting and TAs were functioning at their highest point of contribution to support student learning. Figure 34 shows the TAs ($n = 9$) scribing their roles and responsibilities on the white boards starting with the things they did most in a typical day. Seven of nine TAs listed their highest responsibilities as photocopying, laminating, checking homework, transportation of students from one class to another and recess duty. All TAs stated their roles were largely or entirely determined by the teacher. Five of nine TAs said they worked in small groups with children but in less capacity than the logistical and clerical duties.

The CPR team then invited the TAs to create an essential agreement based on what they felt was important within an equity stance in the school. Figure 35 shows the crowdsourced agreements the TAs felt would provide greater equity and voice in their positions. During the conversation TAs indicated they felt there was inequity within their teams. By listing what they wanted in the agreements the Chinese TAs told us what they felt was lacking within the school culture for equity. This view of the context of the data collection was a strong reminder of the foundations of CLEs. CLEs are a humanistic endeavour. Leadership is collective and relational, not individual and top-down. By focusing on relational trust, dialogue, and reciprocal learning as indispensable prerequisites of effective change, CLEs amplify and accomplish a balanced set of academic, social-emotional, and civic outcomes (LT, personal communication, May 24, 2017).



Figure 34. Mapping roles and responsibilities.

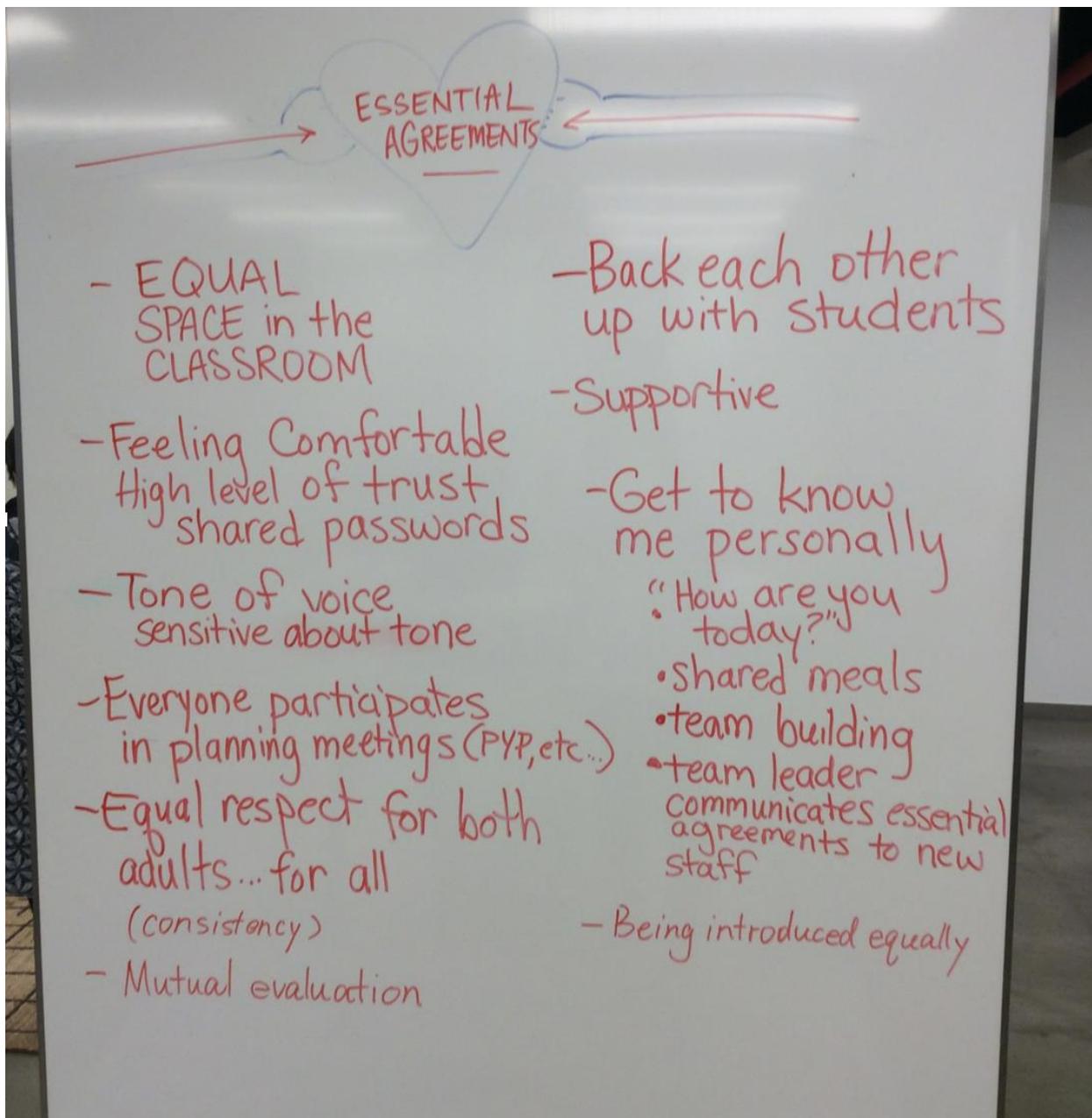


Figure 35. Photo of the brainstorm of essential agreements that TAs felt would increase equity within the school.

Design Thinking: Shoved in a Closet

Throughout the PAR, the TAs continued to engage in small, informal conversations about the inequity of space within the classrooms. To further verify this claim, Erin and Vivian went to every classroom and documented the working space of all teachers and TAs. We collated the images and started a discussion at the following CLE regarding space. Figure 36 shows the process. First, we scaffolded the potentially difficult conversation by brainstorming what teachers spent time on, we then looked through the images of the TA and teacher spaces as a group. Together, the CLE group took note of what we noticed about the working spaces. Teachers and TAs noticed the spaces were cramped and small, there was a lack of private space, and often TAs were within storage or passageway areas with poor lighting and air flow. The CLE then brainstormed what we needed as teachers to be happy and healthy as educators within an equitable space. Finally, we assessed the working spaces around the school using a simplified co-created rubric from our brainstorm sessions.

The data for the CLE assessment of TA and teacher space collected is shown in Table 9. It was clear that no team was working in equity across the entire grade or subject area. On a meta-level, the data indicated a systemic lack of equity philosophy or guiding parameters for team leaders to follow. The equity of working space was simply left up to the discretion of the teacher and the relationship they have to the TA within their classroom. A small sample of the photo documentation is represented in Figure 37. The photos were of TAs workspaces in closets, equipped with children's sized chairs, shoved under window ledges, or placed in hallways. The CPR team agreed to address this equity issue by facilitating a learning exchange on design thinking, to allow participants to reimagine learning spaces through the lens of equity. We

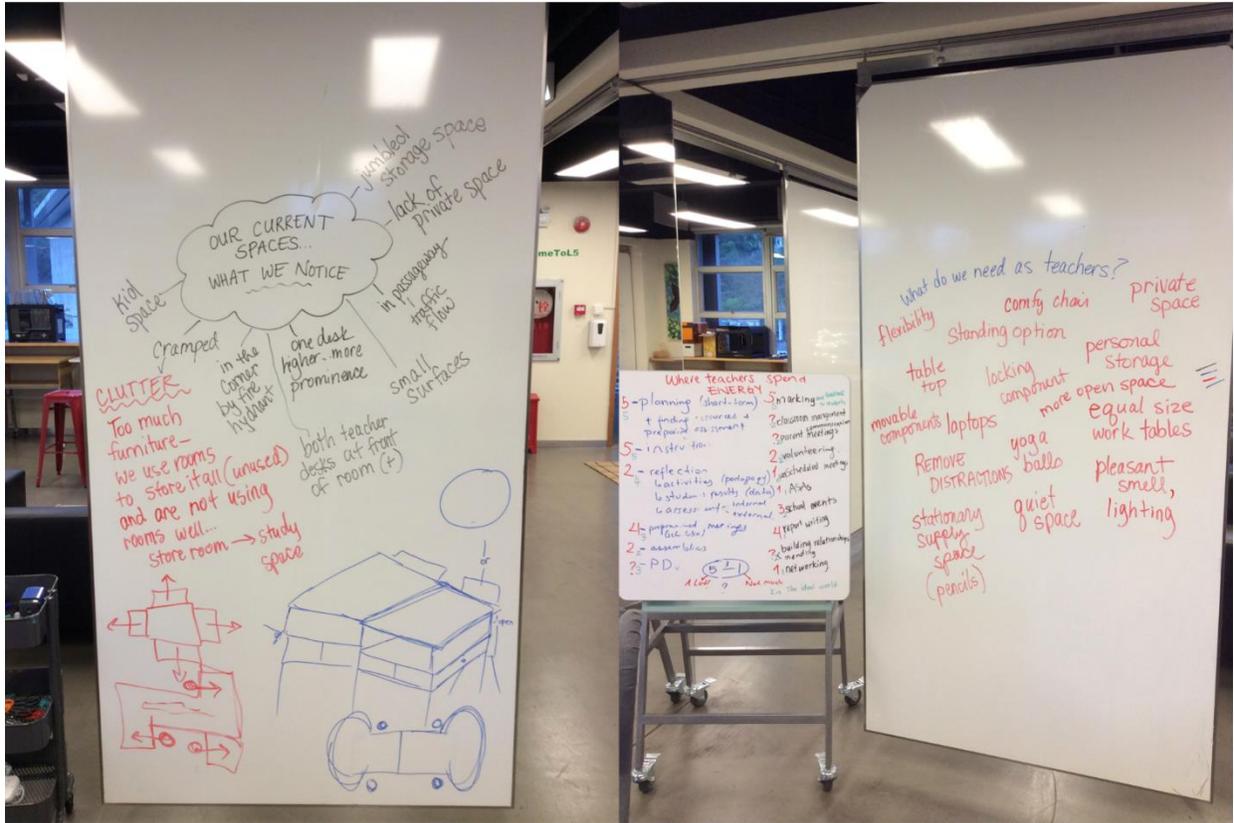


Figure 36. The CLE brainstorm for creating equitable working spaces.

Table 9

Data Gathered on Equity of Space across the Entire Early Years and Elementary School

	Equity Status			
	Not Equitable	Minimally equitable	Partially Equitable	Equitable
Definition	Either no space within the learning environment, inappropriate furniture, or sharing a space with students	Different style of furniture and unequal ownership of space	Different style of furniture or unequal ownership of space	Same style of furniture, equal ownership of space
Count and Area	1 Library 1 Art 1 Learning Support 1 First Grade 3 Third Grade 3 Fifth Grade	3 Kindergarten 2 Second Grade	1 French 1 Chinese 1 Kindergarten 1 Learning Support 3 First Grade 1 Fourth Grade	1 PE 1 Music 1 Learning Support 1 EAL 2 Second Grade 1 Fourth Grade



Figure 37. Screenshot of photos taken as examples for teachers of TA working spaces.

predicted that most teachers, would not like the suggestion of rearranging the classrooms, so we started small, with a design thinking challenge focused on redesigning the teacher's desk.

To triangulate the data, including complaints and photo documentation, we ran a *hands-up poll* at the beginning of the session to obtain a baseline of teachers' and TAs' feelings about their working spaces (see Table 10). At the time, I was surprised and disappointed that nearly all the TAs said they were happy with their spaces after receiving so many complaints about the equity of spaces in the prior session. This made me concerned about a language disconnect, so I reframed the question by simplifying the wording. The numbers changed slightly, but the TAs still polled as mostly happy within their work spaces.

I expressed my confusion about the poll results. Initially, I was intrigued the teachers showed more dissatisfaction with their work stations than the TAs. The teachers had desks and adult-sized chairs in actual rooms but were not hesitant to voice their discontent. The disconnect between what we learned in quiet conversations from TAs, and what was being shared within the meeting was profound. After watching the video repeatedly through a variety of lenses, I noticed several interesting points. In the video, Anton questioned the TAs in their votes. He waited nearly ten minutes before quietly expressing his concern with the outcome of the poll. He asks, "Can I ask a question of the room? I am just surprised no one said: 'I wish I wasn't in a cupboard'" (AM, DTVideo, December 11, 2017). One TA stated, "The school doesn't have enough spaces."

As the room gradually descended into uncomfortable silence, the tension for TAs became clear. This was "eye-opening" for the western participants, many of whom were uncomfortable about being confronted with the inequity of the spaces within the school. Nonetheless, the group completed the design thinking session and prototyped several possible equity desk solutions. I

Table 10

Tally of Teachers and TAs Responses to Poll of Classroom Spaces

Group	Likert Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Original Wording				
	My desk and workspace are totally terrible!				My desk and workspace are totally awesome!
Teachers	–	1	1	3	–
TAs	–	1	1	1	4
	Reworded				
	My working space is uncomfortable. It does not meet my needs physically, emotionally, & professionally.				My working space is comfortable. It meets my needs physically, emotionally, & professionally.
Teachers	–	2	3	–	–
TAs	–	–	2	4	1

believe the results of the poll and subsequent exchanges are rooted in behaviors consistent with the emergent theme of hierarchical harmony, which is closely linked to the notion of voice in a Chinese context. This theme is further developed in later sections of this chapter.

Equity Signifiers, Nuggets of Good

After identifying, observing and listening to inequities over months, I found it difficult to avoid becoming mired in deficit thinking. During their visit to LEVEL 5, Matt and Lynda encouraged the CPR team to dig deeper to find “nuggets of good,” the places where there were positives (Matt and Lynda, visit video, February 26, 2018). After discussion with the CPR team, we identified the nuggets could be found in the anomalies or outlier teaching teams. Earlier within the digital fishbowl protocol, and again in the desk design thinking challenge, we identified Anton as an outlier for actively using his privilege to be an equity warrior. But what specifically made the relationships in his team work? I coded video and audio interviews to listen for the assets in the teaching relationships. The following vignette is an excerpt from a conversation with Anton:

Vignette: Conversation with Anton

Anton: Um, so last year in grade 3 there were three classrooms and an office space, and it was also a storage space and it was also the photocopying room. So, it's quite small, it's maybe only five by three meters. And the two teaching assistants were in that space with the photocopier, and the books—And everything else and it was quite small. And, this year, because there's a third teaching assistant, they wil-...they wanted to move the photocopier out. They also had, em, their reservations that it was unhealthy. To have the photocopying, the toner smell, or fumes... inside there. They asked me as the incoming team leader if they could move it. So, I contacted the IT Department, they put some cabling in so that they could move it outside. Um, and I think for them that was quite a big thing because I don't think they had the confidence last year to ask the previous team leader because I think, regardless of having an extra team member, they would have wanted it outside anyway. Just for the smell of it. Ah, so that made a positive start to the year. However, I still see it as the three of them are in a cupboard. And other people are in classrooms. So, I don't think that's equitable at all. It's just a small improvement.

Tosca: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Anton: And so also last year I asked them what they, where they would like to sit in the classrooms, what they would like. And they had a particular table that they'd liked, which is kind of a trapezium shaped table. Em, so we ordered them. So, now every classroom now has one of those tables. And, but I have noticed that most of the TAs still prefer to go to that small office, that small cupboard than to sit in the same room with the teacher on their own desk. I appreciate that the trapezium table is still a different style to a teacher's desk. In physical space it is lower. I'm not completely comfortable with that. I have tried to change it but when I told the teaching assistants that I'm leaving this year. I said that one of my goals, or my main goal is to work with them so that they can achieve something and that we can put it in place so that next year—It remains in place when I'm not here. So, I created an area of my classroom where they have a desk where they have a set of drawers, they have keys where they can lock the drawers. So, they have their own things in there. And I said, "We can use this in any way that you like." But it's been a few, couple of months now, and they haven't used it at all. So, I'm not sure what else to do in that situation.

Tosca: Right, so there might be something there that we need to maybe dig into a little bit more in a conversation with them. (AM, video, March 20, 2018)

Perhaps of greatest note was Anton's ability to action his ideas immediately. He did not wait for permission to be an equity agent; he simply used his position as team leader to make changes and model the behaviors he would like to see in his team. These small, but significant, actions to remedy space issues and ensure that co-teachers are treated as partners in the classroom sent a signal to the co-teachers. This was evidenced in an email he sent me directly after our design thinking challenge on the inequity of working spaces around the school.

Hi,

Keren and I worked on improving the equity of our working space after school today. We did it together. Photo attached [see Figure 38]. Just the beginning. What I am actually thinking is that I'd like a space for both of us to work at the same time, without so much floor space being taken up. I have ideas.

Have a good evening. (AM, email communication, March 20, 2018)



Figure 38. Photo of Anton's desk space reimagined through an equity lens.

The conversations, interviews and video recordings indicated Anton's nuggets of good, and these became the equity signifiers of recognizing and identifying privilege and power, engaging in constructionist listening, creating community agreements, taking time for self-reflection and self-inquiry, creating alliances across and within difference and engaging in ECD. I used these equity signifiers to frame the final cycle of the PAR.

Hierarchical Harmony: A Result of Teacher Assistants' Voice and Isolation

Thus far, I have unpacked each leadership action taken within PAR Cycle Two, provided in-depth context for the data we collected, and provided an analytic narrative, evidence, and vignettes where appropriate. In this section, I highlight themes to make and examine claims within the existing literature. I revisit the themes of voice and protecting the norm. In earlier chapters I contended the power of voice and voicelessness is critical to humanizing and dehumanizing those in the community of learning. For the purpose of this PAR I have also applied cultural protectionism that occurs in countries such as Canada and France to retain their dominant cultural norms. Within this section I discuss how additional findings validate and challenge those themes.

TA Voice

The foundation of the PAR process is dialogue. The work itself is the ongoing effort to create safe spaces for conversation, to understand words spoken, to hear silences, and to search for truth in sharing voice. Truth is framed by the participants' ability to name their own world, the phenomena they experience, and their place within that space (Freire, 1970). The goal of this PAR was to authorize the TA voices as a way of co-constructing humane spaces for teaching and learning. As teachers facilitate spaces for collaboration and used power to authorize co-construction, it changes the balance of relationships toward equity. I envisioned deep

understanding of privilege and the ability to use it to empower people as an outcome of this PAR. However, as I journeyed through this cycle, I had to admit that perhaps I was on a “fool’s errand.” Although voice is a key theme within the research, the action of giving, releasing, or empowering people to use their voice becomes null when framed within a different cultural context.

Having a voice in the west is intricately linked to the politics of democracy. It is a cornerstone to the legal constitutions, and social contracts of western countries. In the West, people use voice as a “personal quality, as a right, as a leadership trait, and as art” (Li, 2012, p. 277). As organizations, schools, mirror cultural norms and are great socializing agents. Within contemporary western classrooms students are expected to speak up, suggest ideas, question teachers, and voice their truths. This was illustrated by the societal admiration and respect for the Parkland High School students in the United States of America who used strong voices to demand gun control after a mass murder at their school. As activists, these students used their voice to fight against the government and institutions they exist within.

This PAR did not take place in America. Instead, this PAR’s context was a complex enclave of international and national teachers within the host nation of China. In China, Confucian ideals are the ultimate measure of morality and morality is contained in the actions of a person, not in their words (Li, 2012). When morality is tallied in deeds, actions supersede words. As such, the societal behavioral norm is to be cautious about the weight of words, choice of words, and how words will be used for or against the speaker. For the Chinese, a measured choice is made based on the relationship between oneself and the audience, no matter how big or small. Hierarchical relationships of are linked to voice, as Chinese speakers may defer to humility or silence to maintain harmony within their relationships (Li, 2012). The CLE

represented a myriad of unknown relationships and different of hierarchies. With so much unknown between speaker and listener the TAs likely encountered an incredible social burden each time they were asked to use their voice.

Table 11 documents instances the theme of voice was coded within the leadership actions (nine occasions). Throughout this PAR there were many instances of non-participation, a self-silencing of voice that frustrated me. The cause of this silence eluded me until I learned more about Chinese institutions and behavioral norms within those institutions. Still, I wanted to know if Li was right, so I asked my Chinese CPR, Vivian if the Confucian maxims outlined by Li were still followed in modern Chinese culture. Vivian stated, “I think so, maybe. But things are slowly changing. We can speak up in places like the learning exchange more.” When I asked if she would question her mother or father or the male head of school she frowned slightly and shook her head, “No, I don’t think so.” Vivian’s statements are indicators that despite changing times, influences from other cultures, and changing societal expectations, the behavioral norms developed within the institutions remain strong and invisible.

Protecting the Norm

Previously, I have claimed most educators do not self-identify as dehumanizing aggressors but rather as socially-minded individuals who are advocates for equity and justice. Most actions are based on cultural and school norms. Unconsciously, teachers may act to protect their income, their job status, their work flow, their power dynamic, their job description, and their voice, which can be diminished in the hierarchies in which they exist. In the vignette shared in the first section of this chapter, ‘what is the metric of success?’ It is clear the principal had good intentions but was likely also protecting himself from higher organizational questioning. The data collected from the survey indicated a complex form of protecting the norm. The TAs

Table 11

Evidence for the Theme of Voice within the Leadership Actions

Source	Count
Meetings with Leadership & Survey	1
Video Interviews	1
Audio Interviews	–
CPR Meetings Emails	–
Discrete-Skill Sessions	1
Learning Exchanges	5
WeChat Conversations	–
Meetings with EdD mentors	1

were attempting to protect *Guanxi*, the harmony of their working relationships, and the status of the teachers with whom they work. The survey provided insight into the inner working of Chinese culture.

To unpack this theme further, I relied on Li (2012) to gain a better understanding of the context of Chinese employer-employee relationships. In China, Li states that loyalty is the most important virtue. It is unethical to question or betray the organization that employs you. Additionally, within the Confucian tradition, respect for teachers is often demonstrated through the behaviors of “obedience, docility, and lack of critical thinking” (Li, 2012, p. 51). The respect for the teacher is high because the learner is in a state of unknowing, the teacher on the other hand is not an equal but a moral and intellectual guide, that is in the state of knowing. Table 12 indicates the number of times the theme of protecting the norm was coded within the leadership actions (nine occasions).

Hierarchical Harmony

Hofstede (2001) developed the term, “power distance” and defined this distance as the extent to which people are willing to accept the unequal distribution of power. In the west, egalitarian culture asks leaders to work within a team, while in China the hierarchy separates a leader from the workers (Meyer, 2014a). As I have briefly explained, Confucian edict dictates that societal harmony created by knowing one’s place and performing the behaviors of the institutionalized hierarchy (Li, 2012; Meyer, 2014a). This relationship is viewed as aggressively authoritarian in the west but is a reciprocal obligation of leader and worker. Nonetheless, a having a written understanding of the behavioral norms within institutions of east and west does not mitigate the difficulty of navigating these differences in real life. One of the best examples of

Table 12

Evidence for the Theme of Protecting the Norm within the Leadership Actions

Source	Count
Meetings with Leadership & Survey	4
Video Interviews	1
Audio Interviews	—
CPR Meetings Emails	—
Discrete Skill Sessions	1
Learning Exchanges	3
WeChat Conversations	—
Meetings with EdD mentors	—

Chinese hosts trying to help build cultural capacity is illustrated in an email from Vivian to the CPR team.

Hi ladies,

After our conversation this morning, I did some thinking during recess duty that might contribute to our learning exchange.

I think you both have already heard about the concept “Harmony” has a GREAT status in China, which you can find prevailing examples like “Fengshui” works for harmony, Chinese family’s emphasis harmony as the top family-shared philosophy, government values it and put it in a position to guide policies. And this concept is passing down through thousands of years to present, which is rooted in Chinese minds. Harmony stands for steady/stable status, no matter which generation it is, majority of Chinese does not appreciate “change.” So, I was thinking, in our school, some Chinese staff may come across disrespected and unfulfilled feelings at work, but those emotional negatives are not worthy enough to break the harmony/balance. Overall, they appreciate the job and how they are able to balance the job and family time/spare time for several years. Any trouble they could make to themselves or others can be counted as a “change,” this can probably explain the “silent seconds” in the videos.

I think it is good to realize the obstacles in the process earlier than later, and we can be cautious about it and work out solutions. I am more than happy to share my limited knowledge and hope it will help. Talk to me when you have more concerns in this or other issues.

Have a good day!

Vivian (personal communication, October 9, 2017)

Throughout both PAR Cycle One and Two, the CPR team exchanged emails with reflections, ideas, insights and possible future actions. Early in the PAR, Vivian sent an email in response to our disappointment with the silence of CLE members during meetings. In the light of the data gathered from the survey. I returned to this email several times and realized had listened more carefully to what Vivian had been telling us, we may have framed the survey differently, pushed back against leadership on the metrics for success, or at least found a way to be more respectful towards the Chinese notion of hierarchal harmony. Table 13 indicates the number of times the theme of hierarchal harmony was coded within the leadership actions. It occurred much

Table 13

Evidence for the Emerging Theme of Hierarchal Harmony within the Leadership Actions

Source	Count
Meetings with Leadership & Survey	3
Video Interviews	2
Audio Interviews	1
CPR Meetings Emails	1
Discrete Skill Sessions	1
Learning Exchanges	4
WeChat Conversations	1
Meetings with EdD mentors	2

more frequently than the other two themes (fifteen occasions). In the section above, I highlighted and synthesised data against claims within the existing literature. In the next section, I examine those claims using organizational theory, to frame a way forward within in the PAR.

Sea Water or See Water?

There are these two young fish swimming along, and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says, “Morning, boys, how’s the water?” And the two, young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes, “What the hell is water?”

—David Foster Wallace

Institutions drive behavior. Aristotle said people are born into a community, with all its traditions, habits, and rules. But it is the meta-institutions that have power over behaviors. Institutions provide an invisible mental map to navigate predictable patterns of behaviors. These patterns help people feel comfortable, safe, and connected to our community (Palazzo & Hoffrage, 2018). Behaviors within organizations and communities are what people see and experience, but the institutions with their complex norms and values legitimizes behavioral choices.

The Mimetic Isomorphism of International Schools

International schools are in a boom, and innovation is their hottest buzzword. They strive to be on the cutting edge, or a step ahead into the uncertain future; they want to win new parents, fuel new learning, and make more money, but schools tend to be incredibly similar (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, 1991). While the percentage of schools specifically serving only expatriate students has declined significantly over the past decade, the overall international school market continues to expand at the rate of about seven percent a year (Duffy, 2016). To capture this

market, the IB uses robust evangelizing techniques and there is a gradual push towards homogeneity within schools as more and more adopt their norms. In international schools, mimicry can lead to a conformity trap that stifles innovative practice by demanding similar rather than contrasting creative thinking norms.

This is evident as the school for this PAR shifted from an organization based on American standards of practice to the IB. In a mental simulation, this appears to be a school adopting a new curriculum, but in reality, it is a massive institutional pivot towards a far more egalitarian, inquiry-based schema. This pivot comes with new practices, new language, new protocols, new agreements, new leadership organizational charts, new positions, new ways of mapping learning, new assessments. This shift places the school in a sea of uncertainty and leaves the administration grasping at models of schools they know have been successful. Additionally, throughout the PAR cycle micro-hierarchical issues were evidenced in the placement of TAs workstations, the size of desks, the titles or naming conventions of jobs, the expectations of TAs, gift giving, the small looks passed between one another before answering questions, pregnant pauses, and uncomfortable silences. It was clear that despite the lofty goals of the IB and ISS, this school retained the complex hierarchical structures of the people within it.

Vignette: Who Bought the Starbucks Cards?

This vignette is a concrete example of the invisible institutional norms that guide behaviors and beliefs within International schools. In China, before large holidays such as Chinese New Year, people exchange a red packet for good luck and prosperity for the coming year. The red packet or envelope contains money, and there are a variety of rules about exchanging red packets based on age, marital status, and relationship to the giver or receiver. I do not understand all the nuances of these cultural norms. However, I knew as we ended the

semester and left the school for the winter and Chinese New Year holidays, it was important to show gratitude to the CLE participants within their cultural expectations.

At the time, I did not know that we could send a red packet through the app WeChat, so instead I went to Starbucks and purchased a gift card for each member of the exchange. I admitted that Vivian would have greater sensitivity in handling the cultural nuances of the exchange. It was clear the cards, and more importantly, the gesture was appreciated. A group called LE Thanks showed up on WeChat and our inboxes were flooded with emojis of love. Figure 39 contains a sample of those texts from CLE participants.

However, just before leaving for our holiday, Vivian told me one of the participants asked, “Who bought the Starbucks cards?” Vivian told the participant that it was the CPR group. The TA clarified, “So the leadership, the school didn’t buy them for us?” Vivian told her that we had acted independently as a token of thanks. At first glance, this interaction could have been overlooked, but Vivian explained the comment co-occurred with a feeling of disappointment that the cards had not been given by someone in the school’s leadership hierarchy. Vivian, Erin and I discussed that if the school had purchased the cards, the Learning Exchange would have been legitimized. Further, this analysis provided additional insight about the reason we encountered non-participation, silences, or unanswered questions throughout the PAR cycle. The TAs were waiting for the hierarchal structure within the school organization to sanction our PAR, and until then we were viewed as outside the institutional norms.

The paradox is that true conformity to expected hierarchy is impossible within international schools. In my experience, international schools lack predictable patterns because the context changes constantly. Messy politics and dynamic relationships are hidden within the brick and mortar of international schools. Foreign teachers’ turnover rapidly, leadership shifts,

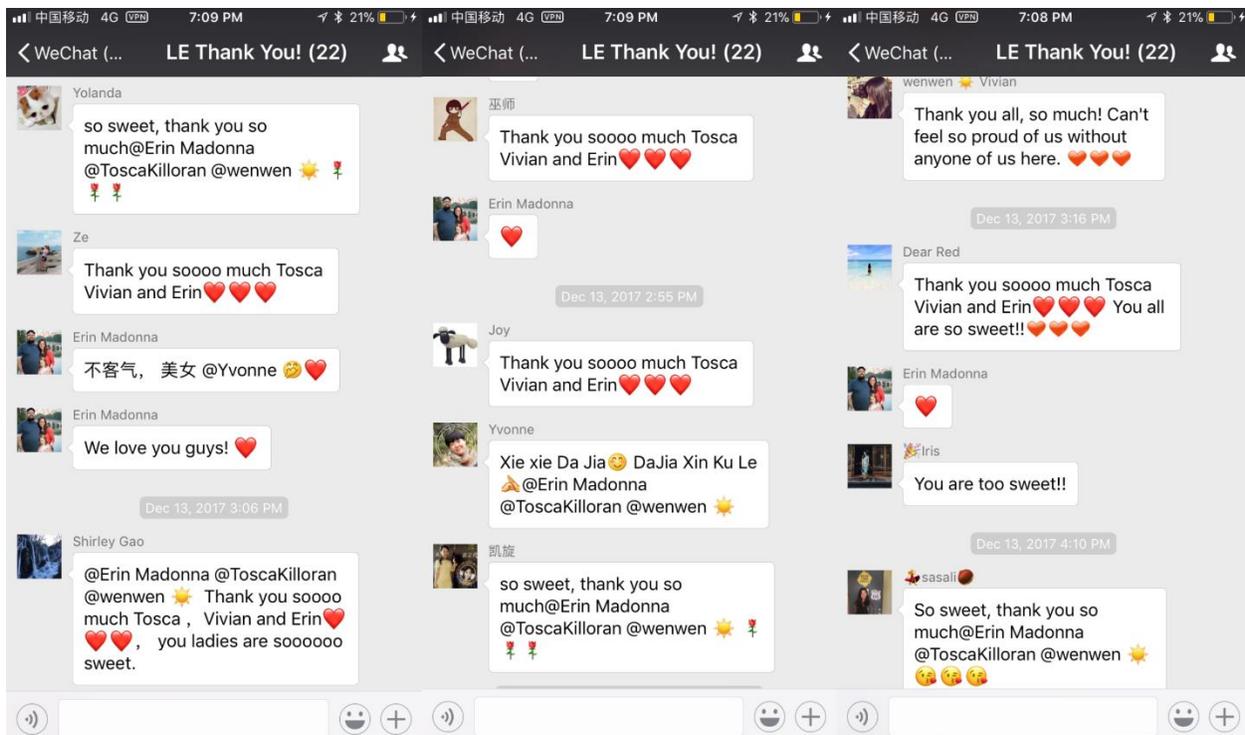


Figure 39. WeChat texts of thanks for the Starbucks gift card.

new pedagogies, and technologies are introduced, then forgotten. Additionally, there is a complex milieu of expat, national, and third cultures thrown together. How is it possible to locate a secure context or cultural norm amidst such instability?

To mitigate this unrest, international schools attempt to narrow their reality by creating institutional behavioral norms outlined by missions, visions, values. The norms are set within curricula and professional development. Schools use this to develop a unifying sense of belonging, increase their legitimacy within the global network of schools, and decrease uncertainty within parent communities. But with this narrowed focus has inherent risks: as innovation stagnates, systemic inequity grows.

International school teachers and TAs are less like the fish in Wallace's quote in the beginning of this section and more like goldfish in a bag of freshwater, bobbing in the ocean. The goldfish are confined within their context, existing within a greater context, yet both contexts are invisible to them. The sea influences the direction of the bag, and the bag floats out into the sea. Like the goldfish, humans' context is generally so close we are unable to see it because we are immersed within it. When looking for the institutional behavioral norms and the organizations within those norms and hierarchies, it is easy to become confused about which body of water a person is in. In this situation people are forced to ask, "what the hell is water?"

Throughout this section, I have provided examples of how mimetic isomorphism impacts organization of international schools. I have reviewed the ways layers of institutions, organizations, cultures, and hierarchies impact constituents within schools. In the next section, I discuss how this knowledge has affected my leadership choices, reflections, and further investigation, as well as my actions as an agent for equity within international schools. The ToA posits that if international school community members such as local and foreign hired teachers,

staff, parents, and leadership engaged in opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, then better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community emerge. In the next chapter I describe PAR Cycle Three and use narrative analysis to tell the story of the data, the participants, and the enacted change.

CHAPTER 7: PAR CYCLE THREE

The significant action taken by the CPR and CLE group in PAR Cycle Three was to prototype a gamified challenge that would be used at the start of the new school year with the intent of both inspiring innovative collaboration and building stronger relationships between the foreign and local teachers. The action was specifically chosen and designed by the CLE participants. Through the process of creating and analysing the results of the challenge, three significant transfer themes emerged: Empowered Voice, Disrupting Norms, and Disrupting Hierarchy.

Throughout this chapter, I explain the main leadership actions we engaged in, as outlined in Appendix J. First, I unpack each step the CLE group took to co-create a team building challenge including remodelling the ECD thinking framework (discussed in Chapter 1) and reflect on the ways the CLE group created a networked innovation community. Figure 40 provides a visual diagram for each section included in this chapter.

Within this chapter, I outline the impacts of the team building challenge (Qi Challenge) and summarize how the experience transferred into teacher and leadership practice. The transfer themes are exemplified within three specific vignettes. Later, I discuss the need for larger systemic organizational changes and examine the possible impact this PAR may have on school policy. I conclude the chapter with an examination of my original research question and explanation of how the ToA has led to deeper understanding of that question.

Qi Challenge: A Return to the Equity-Centered Design Framework

In this section, I unpack the significant leadership actions taken within PAR Cycle Three and provide deeper context to the data gathered by engaging in analyses for the evidence provided. The CLE group knew that to “start the year off right” they wanted to focus on a

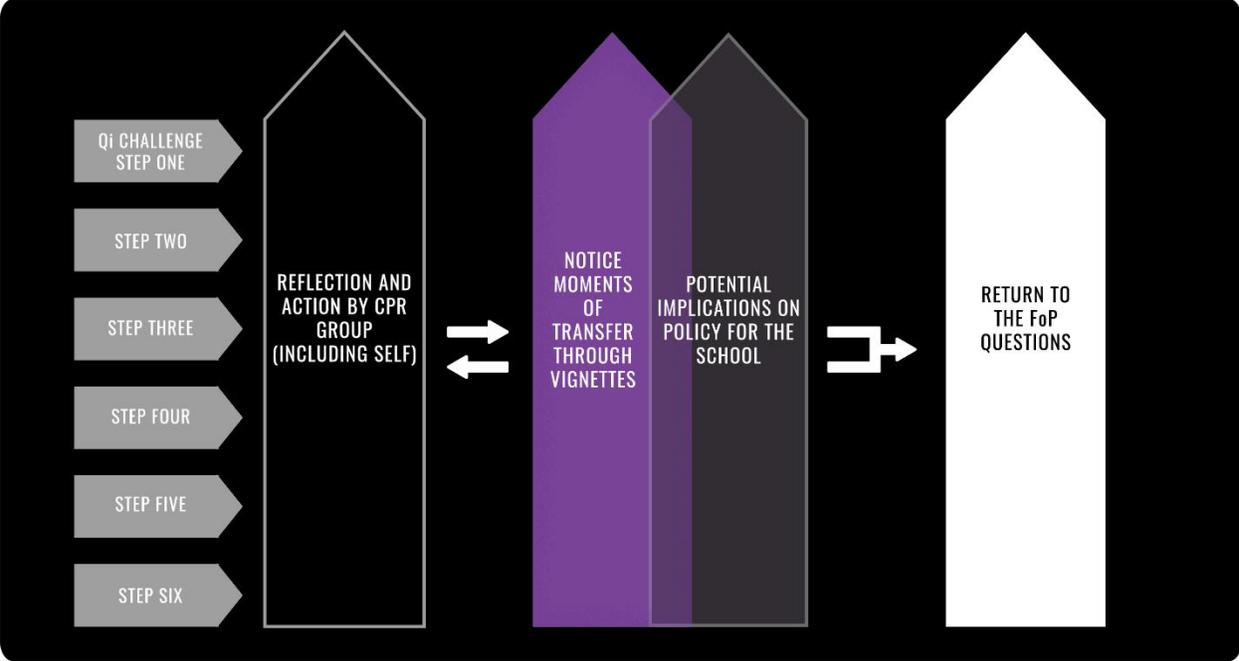


Figure 40. Diagram outline of Chapter 7.

leadership action based on relationship building. Indeed, relationships are at the core of the CLE axioms, and being able to build relationships of trust is foundational to fostering great teams within international schools (Guajardo et al., 2016). However, building relationships takes effort and time. The CLE group recognized that teachers felt that they had very little time to spare, so they decided to create a simple and fun challenge full of short tasks for teachers, co-teachers, Chinese Lǎoshī, TAs, and others within the community to engage in at the start of the school year. The intent was to inspire innovative collaboration and build stronger relationships between the foreign and local teachers. Before the CPR team embarked on the design sprint for the challenge, we modified the Stanford d.school ECD framework outlined in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. The framework lists the phases of the design process as empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test, notice and reflect (Clifford, 2017). However, inspired by Creative Reaction Lab's (2018) Equity Centered Community Design Field Guide, the CPR team wanted to rework the framework by creating a modified model with the added phase of: invite diverse co-creators. I suggested that notice, reflect, and the FoP should drive the design cycle. Figure 41 is a model of the new co-created framework, which incorporates the aspects the CPR team felt were intrinsic to designing for equity.

This PAR was designed to include three iterative cycles. Through each cycle, the CLE built empathy for the community's needs, developed relationships, and defined tension points we wanted to address. I explain each additional step of the co-created CPR ECD framework used during PAR Cycle Three in the subsequent subsections.

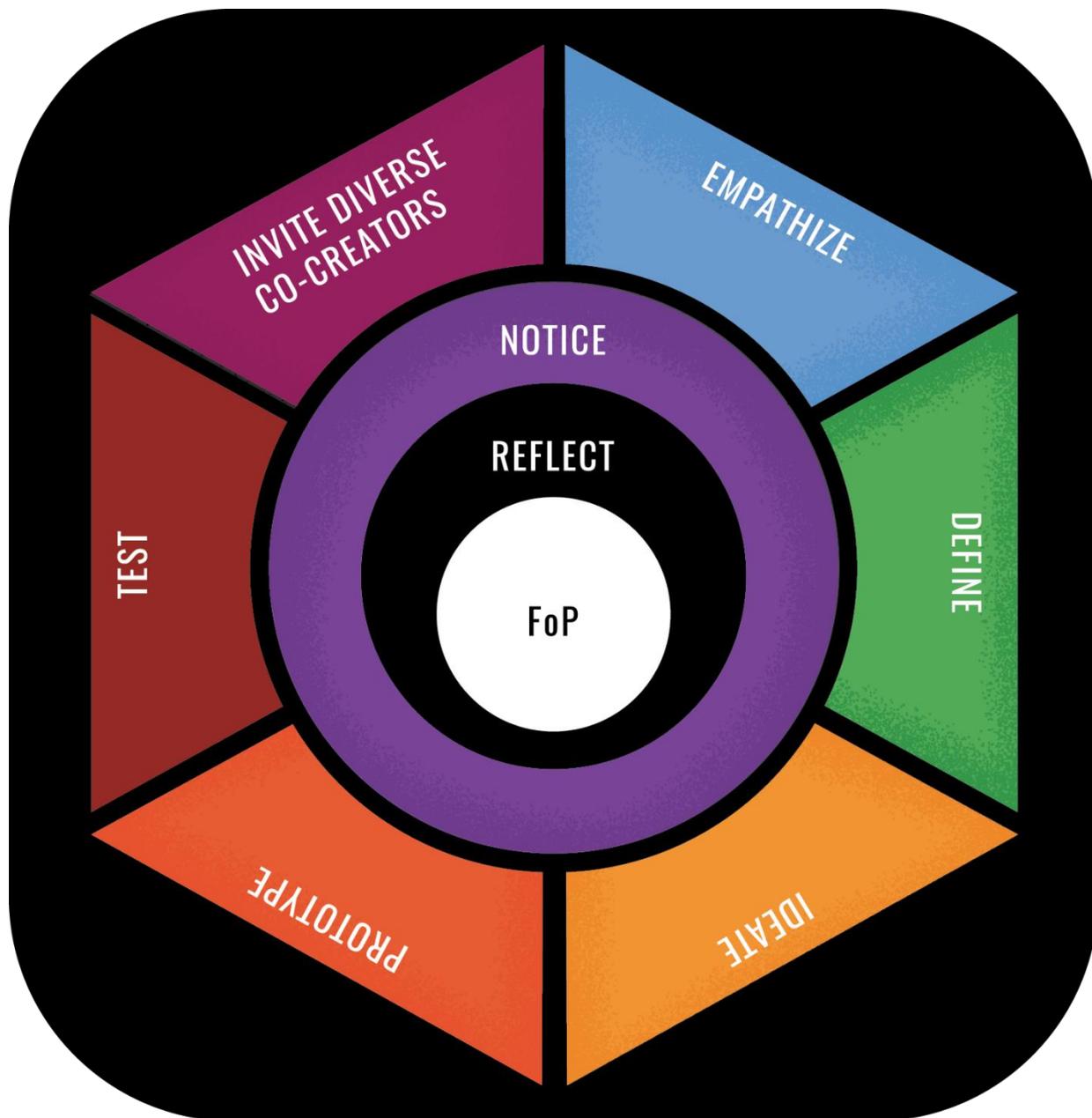


Figure 41. Co-created CPR equity-centered design framework.

Step One: Invite Diverse Co-Creators, Ideate, and Rapid Prototype

Using the CPR-created ECD framework during the first step of PAR Cycle Three, the CLE group brainstormed tasks that teachers, TAs, and Lǎoshī could complete to build relationships of trust. The CLE group worked in teams of two or three with mixed cultural groupings to gather ideas. Figure 42 shows members of the CLE group ideating equity building experiences on a prototype calendar. The ideas for engagements came directly from equity issues previously raised during PAR Cycle One and Two, but also included fun and silly tasks to develop rapport. The lighter tasks included engagements such as: share your most embarrassing moment in life, have a WeChat sticker battle, and arrange a grade-level potluck lunch. More serious tasks that the CLE group believed would help teachers build bravery, self-reflection, and constructivist listening capacity included tasks such as reflecting on the equity of space usage in the classroom, discussing awkward stereotypes and misconceptions, and exploring ways respect is shown in each culture.

Step Two and Three: Coding for Equity-Signifiers, Reflect and Redesign

After the CLE group ideas were gathered on the calendar prototype, the second step of the design process was left to me. I analyzed the documents to code for the equity signifiers we had defined in PAR Cycle Two. These signifiers included: recognize and identify privilege and power, engage in constructionist listening, create community agreements, take time for self-reflection and self-inquiry, create alliances across and within difference and engage in equity-centered design.

The third stage of the process was to return the coded document to the CLE group, n (teachers) = 4, n (TAs) = 4, n (CPR) = 3, for a member check. In this check, we ensured that I



Figure 42. Members of the CLE group ideating equity-building experiences on a prototype.

coded the CLE ideas correctly, then we plotted where the tasks fit as a group (beginning, middle or end of the challenge) and acknowledged gaps in our design. Figure 43 shows this process.

Step Four: Beta Release and Test the Design

I then placed the collated and coded challenge into a prototype document (see Appendix K). The number seven (七) in Mandarin sounds like the English word “even” (齊, pinyin: qí), and the Chinese teachers in the CLE group stated it was a good number to represent the building of equitable relationships. As such, the CLE group titled this equity building experience, 齊 #qichallenge for team building. To gain data on participation in the study and gather feedback on whether participants felt the Qi Challenge helped them build better relationships across cultures we transferred the tasks into an Office 365 form. Each day, teachers were emailed an invitation link to a short task specifically designed for the foreign teacher, Lǎoshī, or TA to complete. They were to collaboratively finish and individually reflect on the task they completed the previous day. The reflection was a simple five-star Likert-type rating.

★ = not helpful to team building

★ ★ = somewhat helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ = I am not sure if this was helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ ★ = helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ = super helpful to team building

Teams were encouraged to share their experience on social media using the hashtag, #qichallenge. The challenge was gamified and teams that completed the entire seven weeks (35 challenges) received an Equity Agent Certificate and a gift certificate for a meal to share, as well as the knowledge that they worked toward building cultural capacity and stronger relationships within the team.



Figure 43. The CLE group mapping gaps in the Qi Challenge.

Beta release. To minimize disruption to the school’s regular instruction programme, the CPR team requested 10 minutes of the first elementary staff meeting of the year to introduce the Qi Challenge to faculty. Figure 44 shows CPR team member, Vivian, leading the staff introduction to the CLE including what the exchange entailed for participants and the benefits she had experienced. Having Vivian lead a staff meeting for foreign teachers and local teachers was a powerful message of equity and an empowering moment for her own leadership journey. Not only did the CPR team step forward to introduce the Qi Challenge to staff, but a few team members within the CLE offered to pre-play the challenge to prove to staff that it was fun, quick, and beneficial to their working team. The CPR team used their pre-completed tasks as examples to market the equity-building experience with teachers.

Beta test road bump: Introducing the title of Lǎoshī. Throughout the same staff meeting discussed in the previous sub-section, the CLE group and CPR team referred to the TAs as Lǎoshī or “teacher” in Chinese. This was in direct response to the Chinese teaching assistants’ requesting their title be changed from teaching assistant (TA) to Lǎoshī during prior CLE events. They repeatedly stated during PAR Cycle One and Two CLE meetings that Lǎoshī would be more honorific than the title of assistant, which is complicated in the hierarchy of Chinese culture. They explained that “assistant” was detrimental to their ability to secure future employment and did not fully embody the skill and work they completed within their job description. Regarding a title change Vivian stated, “I think it is important. First, it shows respect by using the host country language to address local staff. Second, it gives the school community an idea that TAs should be respected as teachers” (V. Wu, personal communication, September 4, 2018).



Figure 44. Staff meeting in which Vivian, Erin, and Peter introduced the Qi Challenge and CLEs.

I took a moment to introduce this idea to teachers during the staff meeting and explained why we were using the term *Lǎoshī* during our short presentation. However, even a simple shift in title proved complicated. After the staff meeting, several foreign teachers approached us and questioned how this change would affect the Chinese language teachers described as “real teachers,” or the non-Chinese Filipino teaching assistants. Some teachers said the TAs felt equitable in the norms already established in their classroom, and a title change would draw attention to their difference. People voiced worry and concern, and the concern was not alleviated until we explicitly confirmed the shift was not a “must do” but a “may do.” After the meeting Erin reflected,

The greatest outcome of the CLE is that it has motivated people to speak up about their feelings. We have heard a ton of feedback, not all positive, and from people who have previously remained quiet. For instance, the title change conversation has allowed for dissent and honesty, and we are learning more about the shades of equity in our community from people’s reactions. (E. Madonna, personal communication, September 3, 2018)

Megan, the Assistant Principal (an active participant in the CLE) was a classroom teacher during PAR Cycle One and moved into a leadership position by the time PAR Cycle Three began. I asked her to reflect via a short questionnaire on her views as a teacher and leader on the *Lǎoshī* title change:

As a teacher, it made sense to me to have equitable names. I firmly believe that all adults deserve the same respect no matter their position, so to change a name to signify respect just makes sense. However, in practice the implications are a bit different. For example, after writing a few emails referring to “*Lǎoshī*” I was met with some valid and interesting feedback, the teacher of one team spoke for the TAs and stated that within her team the TAs didn’t want to go by *Lǎoshī* because they felt it highlighted differences. I think what it comes down to is that the person needs to feel respected. We can change the title they go by, but if our beliefs and actions don’t change when interacting then the change in title is meaningless. If students watch their classroom teachers order a TA around, then they are going to do the same thing or think it is okay regardless of if they are called *Lǎoshī* or not. The change needs to come from common beliefs and the value of everyone as professionals. (M. Kuemmerlin, personal communication, September 4, 2018)

From this experience it became clear that the organizational norm around teacher titles was strong, and the teachers' reactions to a title shift within the school still silenced the voice of others by speaking for them. Thus, the shift replicated the system that they were comfortable with through language and titles and became fragile when confronted with biases and behaviors. This example was also a powerful reminder to not assume even small shifts would be an easy win as a leader. I learned that for systemic change to occur, incremental and co-designed prototypes need to be introduced slowly and coached into fruition to be tested within the community at the right place, and the right time.

Step Five: Empathize and Reflect

The CPR team met often to conduct member-checks to triangulate our hunches, data collection, coding, and data analysis. But we often met for another reason. As participatory action researchers, we were hands-on in the work that was being done and at times had to confront our own biases, behaviors, and beliefs through conversations, memos, and reflections. Often those became emotionally charged sessions. After one reflective check-in Erin wrote,

One of the most interesting outcomes for me personally is a deeper understanding of the emotions that accompany change. When working to push an organization forward towards greater equity, fear and uncertainty are your constant bedfellows. Deciding to continue on the path to change is dependent upon one's moral commitment to improving the lives of everyone in the organization. Giving up isn't an option when you can see people struggling. (E. Madonna, personal communication, September 3, 2018)

To counter fear and uncertainty with joy and hope we worked to frame our research in terms of the assets and dreams of the local community. This enabled us to celebrate each shift that we observed. Erin's reflection of celebrating change was captured in a reflective member check questionnaire:

Greater awareness is absolutely blossoming within our community. Leadership has reached out to have conversations with us about future decisions and plans. The head of school has inquired about our work and has actively listened to the points of action we

have raised. There are equity-focused professional learning opportunities facilitated by TAs, teachers and members of senior leadership within the organization. Teachers are using the language of equity more frequently. People are sharing more openly about challenges they face in the workplace. Awareness is growing. (E. Madonna, personal communication, September 3, 2018)

These reflections were invaluable to our approach toward new iterations of the design and the agendas we created for further CLE meetings. The CPR team empathized with one another while doing the difficult work of designing for equity.

Step Six: Analyse Data and Reflect on the Qi Challenge

On day 35 I collated and analyzed the Qi Challenge data. This analysis offered several insights into the emerging transfer themes as well as how to frame future CLE meetings. Figure 45 outlined the data gathered from the Qi Challenge which was reduced to 26 tasks from the originally designed 35 due to the category 10 Typhoon, Mangkhut, which ripped through the region and impacted teachers, TAs, and the greater community. The Qi Challenge was emailed to teachers and TAs ($n = 110$) within the primary and early years schools. Twenty-five percent of invited faculty participated and the disparity between teachers ($n = 11$) and TAs ($n = 16$) indicated teachers were either less engaged with the tasks than TAs or did not fill in the required forms for data collection.

It is prudent to clarify the rating system for the tasks. Individual members reflected on each task by given a rating out of five stars. The rating system was, ★ = not helpful to team building, ★ ★ = somewhat helpful to team building, ★ ★ ★ = I am not sure if this was helpful to team building, ★ ★ ★ ★ = helpful to team building, and ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ = super helpful to team building. The three main findings were:

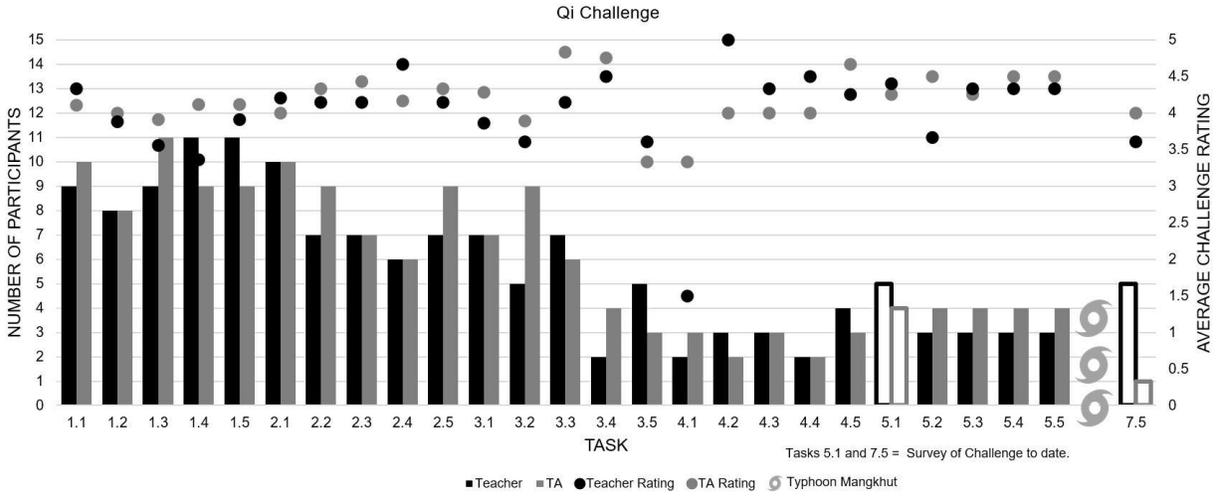


Figure 45. Qi Challenge 365 forms participant data.

First, fragility impacts equity-building in schools. After collating and analyzing the data, a rating disparity became evident between cultures. For example, task 1.4 was specifically designed by CLE group members to provide more visible equity between teachers and TAs to the larger community of parents, students, and school visitors. The task: post a photo and bio of every member of the team on the classroom door for parents and the community to see and celebrate, was rated helpful to team building by TAs (4.13) versus the teachers' rating of 3.36 (uncertain if the task builds team relationships). Similarly, task 3.1 was designed from the essential agreements for equity created during PAR Cycle Two, around the tone and ways in which teachers spoke to TAs regarding their roles and responsibilities. The task: discuss preferred cultural differences in how to set tasks for the week. "Do you like a list, an inbox, to be told verbally? What makes you feel comfortable when being asked to do something?" was rated by TAs as helpful to team equity building at 4.29. However, it was rated by teachers as the lowest team builder (3.86) for the entire challenge. Task 5.2 was also notable: share a positive insight you have learned about the Lǎoshī, TA or teacher you work with to a different colleague you work with. TAs rated this very helpful whereas the teachers remained uncertain of the task's efficacy. The CPR team inferred these tasks were rated low by teachers because they forced teachers into slightly uncomfortable situations by disrupting hierarchies.

I posit the Qi Challenge challenged the solidarity teachers found within adherence to school cultural norms because it forced participants to ask themselves questions about the tacit agreements made within the international school community on voice and hierarchies. Recall this was evident in PAR Cycle Two when teachers were confronted with the inequity of physical classroom space and became uncomfortably silent within the CLE meeting. In PAR Cycle Three the Qi Challenge task 1.2 was specifically designed by the CLE group to address the issue of

equitable space across the school. The task invited teams to examine ways the classroom setting supported the kind of interactions they valued and the ways in which teachers, Lǎoshī (or TAs) and student spaces were equitable. The TAs rated this task as helpful to team building and the teachers rated the task as uncertain.

Teacher discomfort was actualized by withdrawing voice from the PAR Cycle One CLE meeting and later in PAR Cycle Three withdrawing participation from the challenge. In this way, discomfort, became both cause and effect of unequal institutional power. A teacher's withdrawal from the Qi Challenge effectively forced the TA's withdrawal and was a clear indicator of the power relationships that percolated through the teaching community as cultural norms. DiAngelo (2011), discussed how insulated environments create comfortable norms and simultaneously lower the ability of members to tolerate self-reflection or disruptions to the norm. When confronted with the stress of questioning norms, values, biases, and behaviors defensive moves such as avoidance, anger, argumentation, fear, and guilt are triggered (DiAngelo, 2011). This uncomfortable state of being is labelled fragile. Fragility enables silence, and silence protects the norms of hierarchy, voice, and value within international schools.

Second, the value of equity-building tasks is culturally tied. Within the Qi Challenge generally, teachers rated tasks higher that were already within the logistical framework of the TAs responsibilities (goal setting, classroom management, parent communication). In contrast, TAs rated tasks that focused on relationship building with the team (WeChat sticker battle, sharing an embarrassing moment, creating a shared music playlist for the classroom, share a selfie on social media, organizing a pot-luck dinner) higher. This was clearly exemplified by task 3.3 which invited teams to laugh together and tell a funny story from their childhood. This task was rated at 4.83 and was the highest of all activities for the TAs. However, the teachers rated it

much lower at 4.14. Additionally, this task triggered a large and sustained drop off in teacher participation. Several teachers throughout the Qi Challenge had commented that the challenge needed more ‘real’ tasks, indicating that they thought the relationship building tasks were less important, and perhaps a waste of their time.

It was interesting to uncover that despite the co-design of the tasks by the multicultural CLE groups, none of the tasks was ranked equally beneficial by both cultures. The closest rating was also the one that had interesting contrasting narrative data. Task 3.4 was thoughtfully designed by the CLE group to read: Let’s get real. Share some privileges you enjoy (position, age, gender, family, language, socioeconomics, education). Use sentence stems “I’ve been lucky to...” From the rating and mid-challenge survey comments confecting data was pulled. One teacher commented,

There were some tasks that I believe need to be looked at again due to cultural misunderstandings. For instance, when discussing privileges, I tried to get deep with it and discuss my race, gender, upbringing, socioeconomic class, etc. I don’t think such things are really discussed in China because the TAs seemed uncomfortable and totally ignored that aspect of themselves. Rather, they just talked about their families, which I thought was an avoidance of talking about different privileges we hold (Anonymous respondent, survey, September 20, 2018).

This comment was interesting as the rating data showed the task was rated at the top-end of helpful to team building by both cultures and indicated a higher value-add for some tasks over others. The cultural value-add disconnect was also evident when one TA commented she wanted more relationship building tasks. She wrote,

That’s [the Qi Challenge] a chance for me and the teacher to sit down and talk to know each other more, that’s good for the team building except few questions are boring and no helpful. I hope there are more questions to help us to hang out or go for a short trip to build our friendship (Anonymous respondent, survey, September 20, 2018).

The CPR group discussed how the challenge, although cross-culturally co-designed, may still have been designed without the CLE group understanding the importance of the suggestions by

the other culture. The CLE Chinese TAs specifically designed fun get-to-know-you engagements to develop rapport. However, these engagements were overall rated much lower by teachers. That rating coupled with comments from teachers throughout the challenge on time constraints and busy schedules the CPR team hypothesized that teachers felt these types of tasks were less valuable to equity-building in their classrooms. This cultural disconnect returned the CPR team to an earlier discussion of the literature. Recall my examination of the organizational culture that international schools outwardly cultivate Chapter Two. I stated the determiners of importance can become exclusionary and culturally biased, rendering the voice and value of local teachers invalid. Regarding the Qi Challenge, Chinese teachers valued questions less disruptive to hierarchy, while teachers valued questions that fit within role norms. In Chapter 2, I explained a pan-cultural narrative is created when an assumed shared culture, based on superficial commonalities is enforced, or the assigned values from the dominant culture works to bolster the norms within schools. Even with great intentions, by overlooking or dismissing the equity team-building engagements that the TAs valued, inequitable norms were perpetuated by teachers.

The third significant finding was that consistent participation in the CLE created resilient equity agents. Participants who were consistent CLE group members finished the Qi Challenge with their teams and rated the tasks as four and above (helpful to team building). This positive rating stood out to the CPR team and we discussed the ways the possible resilience was created through ongoing CLE participation. The CPR team theorised that participants who regularly attended the CLE were primed in the language and work of equity and understood the benefit of developing stronger cross-cultural relationships for their community inclusive of students, parents, and teachers.

Limitations

There were several limitations of PAR Cycle Three. First the data was collected when a devastating typhoon hit the region, so lowered participation could be attributed to that event. Teachers also referenced early burn-out, schedule changes, and natural rhythm of the school day as factors contributing to decreased participation. One teacher commented, “We started to burn out after three weeks because work picked up speed. We also had become more comfortable with each other, so conversation was happening more naturally anyway.” Another teacher wrote,

The biggest thing is finding time to do the Qi Challenges. We went from having 2 hours a day of shared planning time to 40 minutes a day of shared planning time. And with having ASAs and committee/staff meetings after school, it doesn't leave a lot of time to get together to plan or even talk (Anonymous respondent, survey, September 10, 2018).

Despite these negatives there were specific teams who reached out and provided positive feedback. One teacher wrote the team an email:

Happy Monday! Just wanted to thank you again for the encouragement to take a few minutes every morning for teaching partners to sit down and pay attention to one another. Our game night Friday night was fantastic, teachers and TAs played games, shared stories, and enjoyed food and beverages from 4:00 - 9:00!! That's some good together time! :). (LK, personal email communication, August 27, 2018)

Most importantly we found the teams that finished the Qi Challenge were ones in which one or more of the team members consistently attended CLE sessions every Monday. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss how these findings helped us gauge the efficacy of the PAR theory of action. In the next section, I explore how the Qi Challenge influenced teacher practice, provided opportunities for equitable voice, disrupted norms, and disrupted hierarchal norms within the classroom.

Hope in the Transfer

In the preceding section, I outlined each step of the equity centered design framework, the data gathered at each stage of the process and what insights that data provided for the CLE.

In this section, I discuss how three significant themes (equitable voice, disrupting norms, and disrupting hierarchy) emerged through the process of creating the challenge, analysing the results of the challenge, and noticing transfer within teachers' practice. These new transfer themes fit with the PAR Cycle One and Two themes of voice, protecting the norm, and hierarchy harmony. This section highlights three significant reflective vignettes by CLE group constituents. These reflections provide evidence of the transfer themes in teacher pedagogy and practice. However, before we examine the vignettes, I briefly discuss why these teachers were identified as lighthouse practitioners or equity agents.

Lighthouse Practitioners (Equity Agents)

I have discussed in previous chapters that schools are fundamentally shaped by culture, values, deeply held beliefs, and the norms created by organizational members. Many of these norms are subconscious. Therefore, change requires being on the "look-out" for lighthouse practitioners who subvert the norm. Lighthouses are teachers whose practice and pedagogies shine through bias and inequitable behaviors in order create a path towards equity. MacDonald (1996) named these look-out moments "sightings." For this PAR, I have named these moments transfer. In the following section, I provide evidence for three transfer themes: equitable voice, disrupting norms, and disrupting hierarchy. The evidence gathered for these themes were taken from coded reflections, interviews, and questionnaires conducted with five CLE constituents, (teacher, member of leadership, Lǎoshī, learning specialist TA, learning specialist teacher). The transfer themes that emerged were coded from these reflections and tabled in Table 14. The following three vignettes within this section are excerpts taken from reflections, interviews, and questionnaires. The vignettes highlight moments of; finding equitable voice, disrupting the status

Table 14

Transfer Themes and Data Sources

Source	Themes		
	Equitable Voice	Disrupting Norms	Disrupting Hierarchy
Holly (Grade 5 Lǎoshī)	11	7	15
Peter (Grade 5 Teacher)	5	5	4
Erin (Learning Specialist)	29	9	10
Vivian (TA Learning Specialist)	6	3	3
Megan (Assistant Principal)	5	1	2
Total	56	25	34

quo, and the bringing together constituents in what Lear (2008) states as the right place, the right time, and with the right intent.

Peter's Reflection

As an active member of the CLE group each week, Peter worked with his colleagues to develop equitable voice over the course of PAR Cycle One and Two. For PAR Cycle Three, Peter and Holly collaborated on the creation of the Qi Challenge and offered to take on the tasks early to: have fun, build a good start to the year, and collect inspiring examples for the staff when the challenge was introduced. Part of this team's strength was the clear value they placed on learning in public and the deprivatization of practice.

Vignette: Peter's Reflection

As a seasoned teacher working in North Carolina I have always believed in a strong equity agenda. When I first became an international educator, I honestly thought I understood equity in its entirety. However, when I moved to China, I was confronted with how insular my understandings of culture and equity were.

Through the Community Learning Exchanges offered at LEVEL 5 I was able to identify and feel proud of the equity practices that had crossed over into my teaching within China, but at the same time the CLEs made me identify norms within the school that were not so equitable. For example, during one Community Learning Exchange we discussed school-wide work areas for TAs and teachers. I knew I had a large teacher desk, that I basically never used, and a kidney-shaped table that was used for group work and reading center. The Lǎoshī (or TAs), Sandy and Holly had nothing in my room. Literally. That was the case for all fifth-grade classrooms. The Lǎoshī work space was in a make shift area that was the size of a storage closet. This was unacceptable. I realized that because I was more equitable than some, I thought it justified why I wasn't being equitable in everything. I was uncomfortable with this reflection but embraced it. I realized there was more work for me to do.

As part of the Community Learning Exchange, we took this uncomfortable realization about inequity of space and later turned it into one of the Qi Challenge tasks. We set the challenge as a fun and non-threatening way of getting teachers to notice the inequity in the school norm of dividing up space. Approaching the challenge with the team, I asked Sandy and Holly what they would want and need to really make a space comfortable for them. At first, they seemed really hesitant. My inference was that they didn't want to rock the boat or seem like they were complaining. After reassuring them that I wouldn't be

offended and that I would appreciate them being honest, they asked (and yes, it was posed as a question) if maybe they could have a desk.

When the desk arrived, Sandy was so apologetic telling me how much space it took up and that it wasn't necessary. I reassured her that I was comfortable with the desk being exactly the same as mine. Then, it happened. After about a day of it being in the classroom and realizing that it wasn't going to be taken away, and that it wasn't going to get in my or anyone's way, they embraced it. Both Holly and Sandy told me how much they enjoyed having a spot to sit and work when not with students. They started coming up with ideas on their own on how they could pull students needing assistance to their desk space to help.

My big epiphany moment came when I invited them to put picture frames of our family and friends on our desks. Seeing them smile, make plans, get excited about a piece of space that teachers often take for granted made me realize that something so insignificant and normal to teachers can be a powerful catalyst for change. This change was seen in the positive dynamic of not only the team but the students in the classroom.

The physical integration of Sandy and Holly into the classroom [see Figure 46] had a ripple effect. It impacted the students' interactions and attitudes towards the Lǎoshī. Simply co-creating an equitable space and discussing and co-creating plans with them (rather than telling them what they need to do) has set clear expectations for students of the respect Sandy and Holly deserve.

Peter's reflection indicates the positive benefit of disrupting hierarchy within the classroom, the efficacy of relationship building, and the tangential benefit to students within the classroom to develop new norms of equitable behaviors. In the next vignette, Peter's colleague discusses her relationship with Peter and the impact a redesign of their classroom space had on her efficacy within the classroom.

A Conversation with Holly

As an active member of the CLE group, Holly often offered hard-hitting insights and feedback to the CPR team. For PAR Cycle Three Holly and Peter pre-emptively completed Qi Challenge tasks in order to set an example for others and to get teachers and TAs excited to take on the challenge. In a lengthy reflective interview with Holly I asked her for her insights on how



Mr. Peter Damroth

@PDamroth

Following



Codesigned equitable work space with
[@Sandy0730Deng](#) & [@hhou011](#).
#5Bteachingteam is excited for 2018-2019!
#SISrocks #ISSedu



7:44 AM - 25 Aug 2018

1 Retweet 8 Likes



Figure 46. Image of Peter, Sandy, and Holly's co-designed equitable work space.

her working relationships with teachers have changed over time and the impact of redesigning equitable spaces. The following vignette is an excerpt from that interview.

Vignette: Interview with Holly

Tosca: One of the things that we did this year in the Learning Exchange was to look at spaces around the school, and the equity of space for Lǎoshī and teachers. We added the space issue to the Qi Challenge, so I wanted to ask what your space was like before with other teaching relationships? How were those working spaces? How did you feel in those spaces?

Holly: Um, before it's, it's more like a teacher's is the only teacher. We're, our working space is uh, outside the classroom. So, there is not good communication. And we work with students but it's just a small part of our time. And for the area and the classroom, to be honest in my mind, that's not mine... It's someone else's.

Tosca: So, you're always a guest in that space?

Holly: Sometimes as a guest. Sometimes even not a guest. Visitor.

Tosca: So then, what has shifted in your thinking from the CLE about working spaces?

Holly: From my mind everyone is concerned and now pays attention on how to work closer, how to work more reasonable, and that's, that is quite a useful and effective thing.
Tosca: Do you mean that you feel like this year the teachers and TAs are more aware of equity and being more equitable about space, but also work load, and the ways in which you work together...so you feel there's a heightened awareness?

Holly: Yes, that's true. And also, we have our area in the classroom actually. We have our chairs and tables, which is make you feel, um, you can naturally come in and you can suddenly find the spot that belongs to you. And you can have the area to do what you want to do.

Tosca: Do you think that change of space has also changed your relationship with Peter?

Holly: Yeah. Yes. With Peter it is very comfortable and...and you have that feeling of worth. That you can talk to Peter. And you can ask about things. So, that will make you feel relaxed and then you will, you will try your best to make the class and learning better for the students.

Throughout the entire interview it became evident that Holly knew that Peter viewed her as an equal. There was no overt hierarchy between them, in fact a tight friendship as well as collegial relationship had formed. She shared that they spent time outside of school together, at

the opera, getting ice cream, going to galleries. Holly's interview was evidence for the transfer theme of disrupting hierarchies, the efficacy of relationship building when creating a space for equitable voice, and the disruption of organizational norms by the redesign of classroom space. In the following vignette the focus shifts to leadership and the role of leadership in shaping equitable norms.

Megan's Narrative

Nearing the end of PAR Cycle Three, I invited Megan to answer a short questionnaire. Over the course of the PAR, Megan had moved from a teacher to a leadership position (Elementary Vice-Principal) and I was particularly interested in her insights as she would be the new direct supervisor of the TAs and therefore would impact the way the school moved forward in equity.

Vignette: Megan's Questionnaire Responses

What are some things you have learned from the CLE from the lens of a teacher and then as a leader?

As a teacher I learned a lot about the experiences of the TAs I worked with directly. I learned what they feel comfortable doing and what their goals are. I learned some early years discrete skills that I hadn't learned before. I love CLE because it allowed everyone to let their guard down and be real, which in turn, built relationships of trust.

As a leader, I'm still learning. I am looking at things from more perspectives and trying to understand where everyone is coming from and where they want to go. I make a conscience effort to support the TAs and CLE because I know people are watching what I do. I feel more responsibility to make real change in policies and school culture, because I'm invested in the TAs and the CLE. I am learning to not share my opinion/ideas as much because I want to listen first and let people share. I think the concerns go deeper than we understand, because we as foreign hires don't have to think about some of the constant inequities teaching assistants and/or local hires deal with both in reality and perception.

What does a move towards greater equity look like for you?

I see it more as a co-teaching relationship and the school investing in the TAs' professional growth. Building capacity in the TAs for the to move up in their teaching

careers, whether at this school, or another school. We need to develop transparent policies, job descriptions, and guidelines shared throughout the school. Also, having clarity in TAs roles and having them involved in more of the actions toward our school goals would move us towards greater equity.

Each of these vignettes provide narrative insight into how the PAR countered silence by leveraging the CLE group's collective cultures, dreams, hopes, skills and pedagogies as a voice for innovation within this international school. Through this process it was clear that good leadership invests time and space for dialogue. Through dialogue diverse networked communities can share insights and design, test, and create opportunities for change.

The Wakeup Call: Just Desserts

The preceding section highlighted moments of lighthouse practice that led to change within the community. However, lighthouse practices and pedagogies are ephemeral unless they are noticed, documented, tested, reflected on, and shared with the entire community. Systemic change occurs when there are structures around teacher-generated lighthouse practices. Within the context of China “policy” became a topic that the CPR team was forced to address even though most international schools avoid institutionalization or policy creation from individual teacher practice. In conversations with the CLE group members policy was often mentioned as an option for enacting systemic change. Within PAR Cycle Three, teachers ($n = 5$) mentioned policy nine times in the reflections and interviews as a strategy to ensure more equitable practice within the school. The importance of policy creation for Chinese teachers was exemplified within an interview with one TA:

TA: Mm, I don't know about the future. Um, in my view, um, it's very good way, it's a very sweet way to make people feel good [the CLE]. But the Community Learning Exchange is, 'til now what I can see, it's only a part job. It seems like a, I have a meal, but there's just dessert. Sometimes you can take dessert, sometimes, uh, maybe today I don't. So, it's kind of like dessert feeling now. Take it or leave it. But the sweet feeling masks real problems.

Tosca: Ok, so what do we need to do so that there's real change in the organization?

TA: I don't know what the exactly way. Maybe it's about the school and about the high management. What are their ideas? So, I think not only you guys and the Community Learning Exchange but what the equity policy is for the development of the school.

When I analyzed this interview, I heard the grassroots methodology we espoused was not creating the changes the CLE participants hoped for, but it set a chain of events in motion. Long after PAR Cycle Three was finished, the CLE and its actions would continue to affect the school community. The CPR team regrouped to design future iterations of the CLE that could work to influence policy within the school. I invited the CPR team, along with Megan (an ally in leadership), to complete the SOAR vector analysis to ascertain where we stood before we moved forward with the new iteration of CLE (see Figure 47). SOAR enabled us to enjoy the conversation and look for assets within the community.

The SOAR analysis helped the CPR team gain clarity of purpose for future CLE policy reform actions. The three main actions were:

1. Contribute to clear job descriptions and policies for different Lǎoshī groups who hold different job expectations.
2. Contribute to a policy of direct representation of local hires on the school's advisory committee (without a foreign intermediate).
3. Contribute to draft policies that aid in vertically aligned communication.

These CLE actions align with the ISS's strategic priority to create diverse, co-created communities. The actions were selected to create the structure around teacher-generated lighthouse practices that enable systemic change. Table 15 shows one component of the ISS organizational framework for the future created by ISS President, Liz Duffy (2016). This framework outlines the strategic priority for a new model of the organization. By aligning future

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <p>What have we already achieved in this process?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness and bringing equity and learning partnerships to the forefront of people’s mind 2. Open conversations, collaborative nature of meetings 3. Development of relationships with our staff members, between local and foreign hires 4. Discovery of inequitable norms within the school 5. Leadership involvement in CLE 	<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <p>Where do we have room to grow in this process?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More diverse constituent participation. Currently only a small representation of the school attends CLE 2. TAs become facilitators at PL events (Teach Meet, ACAMIS, etc.) 3. Flexible organizational systems that could allow for change 4. Policy of direct representation of local hires on the school’s advisory committee without a foreign intermediate
<p style="text-align: center;">Aspirations</p> <p>Where do we imagine we could be in a year in this process?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear job descriptions and policies for different Lǎoshī groups who hold different job expectations 2. Have a TA liaison/leader to represent Lǎoshī at Team Leader meetings 3. Expectations that Lǎoshī will be included in PYP planning and team meetings 4. Some Lǎoshī may choose to use discreet strategies they have learned from CLE to teach in the classroom 5. Policies that aid in vertical communication so that relationships are built over time 	<p style="text-align: center;">Results</p> <p>What are the measurable results that will tell us we’ve achieved our vision of the future?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transparent policies/guidelines regarding TAs 2. A culture shift in teaching and learning equity at the school 3. Students’ learning experience is enhanced due to stronger relationships and respect among TAs and teachers 4. Survey for both teachers and Lǎoshī to self-evaluate mindset and action in place 5. Decisions being made to include all voices more frequently and authentically will indicate a giant leap forward 6. Leaders seek out the perspective of our Lǎoshī and TAs on a regular basis

Figure 47. The SOAR analysis for PAR Cycle Three.

Table 15

ISS Framework for the Future

Historic ISS	Emerging ISS	Strategic Priorities
Isolated School Enclaves	Interconnected Educational Communities	Diverse Co-Created Communities
Closed Homogenous Club	Diverse Open Networks & Strategic Partnerships	Diverse Co-Created Communities
Old Power-Consuming Services	New Power—Co-Producing & Co-Ownning Services	Diverse Co-Created Communities

school policy under the strategic priorities of the parent organization, the CLE group theorized we would have greater leverage to create systemic and long-term change within the school.

In this section, I have discussed the data collected for PAR Cycle Three and outline three specific vignettes that contributed to the transfer themes of equitable voice, disrupting norms, and disrupting hierarchy. In the next section, I return to the FoP and the research questions, then gauge the efficacy of the ToA the CPR team tested through this PAR.

Return to the Focus of Practice

In the last section, I discuss the data collected for PAR Cycle Three and shared three specific vignettes that contributed to the transfer themes of equitable voice, disrupting norms, and disrupting hierarchy. Now, I return to the FoP and the ToA. Earlier I argued when international school community members such as local and foreign-hired teachers and leadership, engaged in opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, a better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community emerges. The metrics of success were based on the teachers' and TAs' ability to engage in dialogue and reflection to decide on actions, work to infuse democracy, diffuse power structures within the group, coach for technology, and create a networked innovation community. These collective leadership practices lead to innovative change within schools (Spillane & Coldren, 2011).

Several frameworks emerged over the period of this PAR to address this argument. One specifically became the ToA that I prototyped, played with, and studied. When simplified for this PAR, the basic ToA framework (see Figure 4) is $NICs = ECD \text{ Thinking} + CLEs + \text{Coaching}$. When the CPR group reflected on this framework to examine how much power, meaning, and

predictability it held, we noticed that if any one component was missing the change we were seeking was not sustained.

For example, the CLE group collectively wanted to create a solution to a variety of problems they defined within CLE discussions. Through ECD, the CLE group created the Qi Challenge as a conduit to create a more sustainable networked innovation community. To create a network of innovation, the CPR group chose to use the digital tools the community already used to communicate. Invitations to participate in the Qi Challenge were sent to 110 teachers and TAs, but only seven teachers and TAs participated consistently throughout the challenge. Over a 26-day period, Twitter was largely used by foreign teachers ($n = 8$) to deprivatize practice and share engagements with the larger international school context. However, this decreased substantially at week 4, where only one teacher continued sharing each task on Twitter. On the other hand, WeChat was mostly used by Lǎoshī ($n = 17$) for backchat channels to share resources, photos, words of encouragement and reminders for meetings. This backchat continued after CLE meetings and over holidays and weekends. As such, these channels became different expressions of the CLE network. Figure 48 shows the WeChat backchannel chat for the CLE and offers insight into the positive messages of affirmation offered by members of the community.

On the other hand, the Twitter chat analytics pulled from 11 of the 26 days for the challenge (see Figure 49), indicate the large number of worldwide accounts reached and global impressions made. However, even with this increased global reach, the personal connections of the backend WeChat were lacking. Notable, the main contributors to the Twitter hashtag #qiChallenge were existing active CLE group members and the WeChat group exclusively consisted of the CLE members who signed onto the private group.

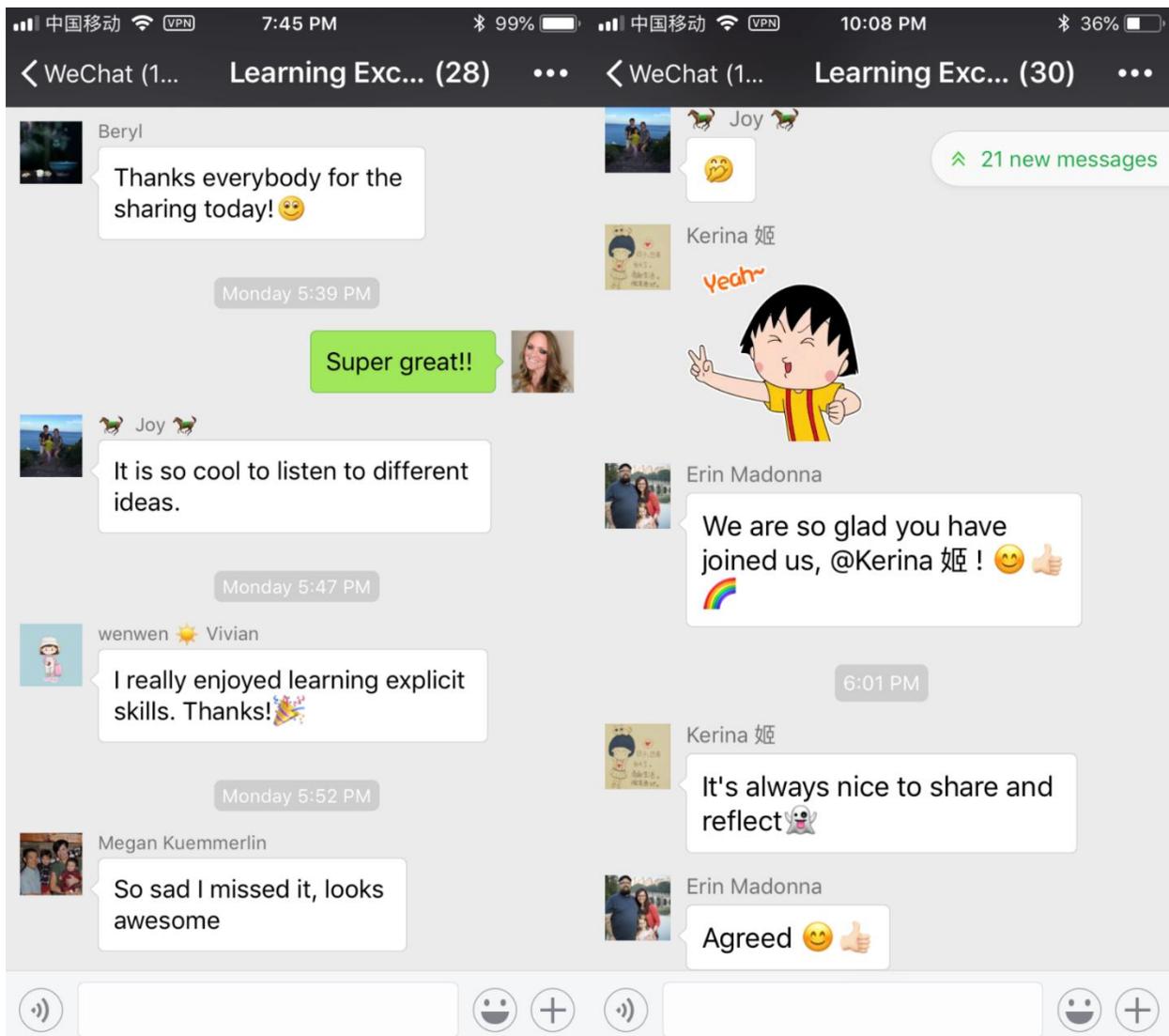


Figure 48. WeChat backchannel chat with CLE group.

#qiChallenge

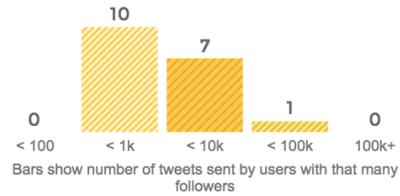
ESTIMATED REACH

EXPOSURE

35,803

ACCOUNTS REACHED

78,840 IMPRESSIONS



ACTIVITY

18

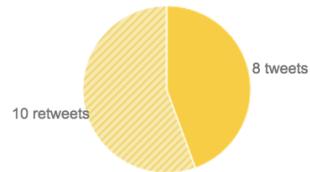
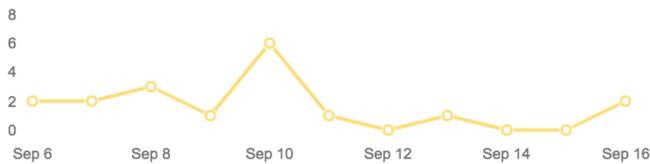
TWEETS

4

CONTRIBUTORS

11

DAYS



TOP CONTRIBUTORS

MOST RETWEETED TWEETS

43.3k IMPRESSIONS	@ToscaKilloran Follow 6,191 followers
7 RETWEETS	@PDamroth Follow 161 followers
6 MENTIONS	@ToscaKilloran Follow 6,191 followers

2	Doink Tweets @DoinkTweets 7 days ago RT @PDamroth: Day 15 of #qichallenge Green screen movie making fun with @DoinkTweets #SISrocks @Sandy0730Deng... twitter.com/i/web/status/1...
2	Mr. Peter Damroth @PDamroth 9 days ago Day 17 of #qichallenge During 5B's morning meeting today, @Sandy0730Deng and I did a cross-cultural examination of... twitter.com/i/web/status/1...
1	Mr. Peter Damroth @PDamroth 8 days ago Day 19 of #qichallenge Friendly WeChat message from the entire 5B teaching team @Sandy0730Deng @hhou011... twitter.com/i/web/status/1...

Figure 49. Eleven-day analytic data for the hashtag #qichallenge.

In sum, even a well-established CLE group working from an ECD framework to create diverse co-created team building experiences did not produce sustained and systemic change within the school. This is because the CPR team overlooked one essential element from the ToA framework. During the beta release of the Qi Challenge the CPR and CLE group introduced the concept to teachers in ten minutes. However, the CLE group consistently met every Monday over a year for discreet-skill and cultural capacity coaching. In those meetings, participants not only learned new pedagogies of equity and skills for technology but dug deep into organizational norms, voice and values, and roles and responsibilities. We spent significant time developing relationships of trust, creating gracious space, understanding journey lines, and asking difficult questions of one another. I believe the CLE primed participants as equity agents. We knew why the school needed the Qi Challenge. However, we did not invest in significant coaching time for the teachers and TAs that were not yet members of the CLE for PAR Cycle Three and the introduction of the Qi Challenge. The CLE group hypothesized that the fun nature of the challenge would force self-reflection on harder equity issues, biases, and behavioral norms within the organization by proxy. I suggest that when teachers or TAs were forced to reflect on hierarchies, norms, values, behaviors that made them uncomfortable they lacked the resilience of the CLE group, and dropped out. As such, the test of the Qi Challenge failed, but it did provide insights to help us empathize with teachers and TAs and to redesign the tasks and protocols surrounding the challenge, which is the main purpose of ECD. Vivian expressed this hopeful future best,

The CLEs showed our school community that learning together is way better than learning alone. I think teachers and leaders who have attended CLE regularly have shifted their thinking. Some of them came from a status of not aware of keeping equity in mind, to raising the topic in their daily work. I hope it will spread widely and become conventional in this community. We will know that we have made real change in the school when students, parents, teachers, and leadership are not cautious, or worried about

equity, but when it becomes a norm of the school. (V. Wu, personal communication, September 4, 2018).

In the next and final chapter, I discuss how the theory of action, supported by extant literature, was enacted through the PAR cycles to test the ToA. I provide an overall analysis of the PAR including what worked or did not, what was important, and the implications for the creating more equitable communities within the international school contexts. I then discuss how my findings fit with broader policy, practice, and research, including the necessity of PAR for this process. Finally, I reflect on my leadership journey, and how the PAR process has changed me as a leader.

CHAPTER 8: EQUITY PEDAGOGY

Throughout this study I have discussed an equity disconnect between foreign (expatriate hires) and locally hired Chinese teachers, teaching assistants, and aids within international schools. Foreign educators in these settings are often proponents of equity and believe that they listen to and advocate for the local teaching assistants, aides, and staff. This project revealed issues of power, organizational structures, and lack of sociocultural knowledge and awareness create divides between the foreign and local professionals in international school settings. These divides have a negative impact on the local professionals and limits the impact they can have on the leadership, teachers, and students in international school communities.

Over several years this PAR aimed to prototype and test a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. This project aimed to address the local teaching population as a spark for innovation and as a hub that would prototype new ways to move forward in equity. The improvement goal for this project was to improve equity between national and international employees in an international school setting. To make this happen, I leveraged my skills in technology coaching and design thinking to co-facilitate CLEs and build NICs with the intent to share narratives and develop greater cultural competency.

In this final chapter, I revisit my original ToA. Specifically, I analyze the ToA by re-examining the findings vis-à-vis the extant literature. I discuss how context influenced the parameters of the study, and how the use of radical collaboration within NICs led to discoveries and two big assertions. I then outline a new model to help scaffold equity practice within international schools and focus on shifting from theory to practice by offering a few practical solutions for making it work via the use of ECD thinking, policy, and protocols. I discuss possible policies and protocols for international schools to adopt and highlight some areas for

future research. I also provide an overall analysis of the PAR project including: what worked or did not, what was important, and limitations to the project, as well as offer a possible contribution to international school contexts for creating more equitable communities. This includes how PAR was inherently necessary for this process and why international schools and their leaders are ripe to take on new theories, models, techniques, tools. I then examine my own leadership change and provide a personal reflection on how leaders can move toward greater equity practice.

Theory of Action, Redux

In this section I examine how the power of place and wisdom of people, within this context, impacted the project. I discuss how the use of radical collaboration lead to moments of radical hope, and the discoveries that were made within those collaborations. I end this section with the main assertions that (1) colonizing behaviors and beliefs create tensions between foreign and local teachers and (2) promising practices such as CLEs may work to mitigate tensions. Throughout this project I have examined ways in which culture (national and school) develops structural and cognitive biases of the tribalism variety. I have explained how this study worked to notice the divide between "them" and "us" or "the foreign" and "the familiar." In the next section I explore how less than bridging that divide or requiring one group or the other to assimilate into either space, the CLE created a third space where teachers and TAs migrated and leveraged the wisdom of each constituent.

Power of Place, Wisdom of People

This work has impacted, and was impacted by, the context of the study (Guajardo et al., 2016). The project began as a response from a pilot study with a small group of teaching assistants that were part of my school community in Thailand. In that context, TAs and AAs

initially stated that they were fearful to give interviews or ask questions, as they felt their jobs were at stake. This was a stark contrast to the democratic inclusion espoused in the school literature, during staff meetings, and within the international teaching community pipeline. It became clear that there was an expectation that my research would not disrupt status quo, and I was being pressured to accept the narrative of equity the school believed it embodied. I moved to a new context and relocated from Thailand to China.

In China, equity allies were identified, and the CPR team formed. Three different women came together to form a collegial, yet close team. The team was comprised of Erin Madonna, Vivian Wu, and myself. Since 2000, I have been an international teacher, coach, and leader in Asia and Europe. I have worked with many teaching assistants, co-teachers, instructional assistants and aids over my time in schools. Vivian Wu holds a bachelor's degree of law. She was a social worker for several years before she became an educator. Vivian's work is to support students as a learning specialist. She works with students in high needs areas to support their social, emotional, and academic growth. As a young teacher Erin Madonna spent her first decade of teaching at high needs schools in Delaware, USA. As an international educator in addition to her duties as a learning specialist, consultant for schools on high needs learners, and workshop facilitator, she led ongoing free professional development workshops each Monday specifically focused on reaching the needs of diverse learners for the local teachers within the PAR context. As a CPR team, we met often to discuss findings, understand data, and ideate possible solutions. Each of our distinct backgrounds and collective experiences provided a unique perspective on the relationships between foreign and local teachers within international school contexts.

Our CPR team vision was to create a safe place for local teachers to voice ideas, share celebrations, and engage in dissent. I negotiated with Erin to create two strands under the canopy

label of CLE and vary the Monday meetings Erin had been hosting for local teachers. One strand, the discreet skill development sessions focused on areas in which the teachers wanted professional learning opportunities such as supporting language instruction, identifying and engaging children with high needs, behavior management, and educational technology. The second strand emphasized the hard work of equity in which we, as a group, developed bravery by discussing misconceptions and assumptions around cultures, roles, responsibilities, voices and values that existed within the community. The CLE quickly grew in number and interest. We constructed and tested physical and digital networks that extended beyond school walls to create relationships of deep trust. Collaborative cultures were created between local teachers, foreign teachers, leadership, coaches and specialists. Relationships were placed at the center of these cultures.

The project was grounded in leveraging my position as a coach, my knowledge of technology, and my deep understanding of design-based pedagogies to facilitate a PAR project that aimed to prototype and test a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. It was the specific synergy that came from the right people, in the right place, at the right time, with the right amount of ability and willingness that led to the success of this PAR. In the next section, I unpack how those elements came together, collaboratively, to action change within the school context. I explain how radical collaboration fostered NICs within this PAR and where it was supported within the literature.

Radical Collaboration

“Courage is the measure of our heartfelt participation with life, with another, with a community, a work; a future”

—David Whyte

Courage through exemplar can spark change in communities. Early in this paper I discussed how Lear (2008) offers insight into cultural collapse, through the exemplary history of the Crow people, and his insightful interpretation of their struggle for survival. Lear discussed transcending known cultural erasure attempts, such as xenophobia or assimilation, using creative adaptation grounded in radical hope. I posit that within international schools, radical hope (i.e., hope despite an unknown future) helps members of the community anticipate a positive future even though they may not yet hold the right tools, concepts, and resources to create that future. The CLE operated as an exemplar by building a third space in which the community was invited to be flexible in their thinking, open-minded when confronted with new ideas, beliefs, and values, and creatively adaptive to the unknown whilst celebrating and owning the known. In schools' teachers often collaborate, but within this PAR, learning from and with each other despite different cultures and value systems required the use of radical collaboration (Tamm, 2015) or the development of specific skills that promoted supportive, equitable, resilient environments to implement an innovative educative community. Within the CLE, moments of radical collaboration, such as co-creating the Qi Challenge, led to skill development such as, flexible thinking and negotiation within the group about the importance of certain aspects of relationships, roles, responsibilities, voice and values. Difficult conversations within the CLE such as the conversations regarding the division of classroom space, adherence to titles, and use of respectful discourse, all forced the group to re-examine their beliefs and values to co-create new school norms. I found that change became inevitable when members were within that space of flexible creative adaptation. By drawing focus to the normally undiscussed topics around equity, I found that dialogue began to take place and larger systemic conversations were held. An important question remains for this study of who will pick up the mantle for this work once the

core CPR team has moved on to new locations. Despite this unknown future, in this context when people were heard and their narratives shared, teachers stated they had increased hope for greater equity within the community. This was a form of radical hope.

Summary

Looking back, it was clear that radical hope was created through the radical collaboration between disparate cultures. Those disparate cultures held specific wisdom that, when combined, became uniquely innovative. The placement of several disparate cultures within one governing body of an international school was the unique power of place. In the next section, I discuss the discoveries and assertions gathered from those moments of radical collaboration within the CLE.

Discoveries

Throughout the PAR I addressed four main questions and each cycle yielded deeper understandings of the research questions:

- RQ1. To what extent do school and community norms influence school educators?
- RQ2. What are the realities and assumptions among school faculty regarding roles and responsibilities?
- RQ3. How can better cultural understanding give greater voice and value to nationals?
- RQ4. To what extent can my work with the group be a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community?

The purpose of this section is to revisit the research questions and disclose the following discoveries: (1) expat fragility impacts equity building in schools, (2) the value of equity tasks is culturally tied, (3) consistent participation in the CLE created more resilient equity agents, and (4) lighthouse practitioners can become beacons of change. Figure 50 depicts the model of this process of discovery from noticed themes to big assertions. In the following subsections, I

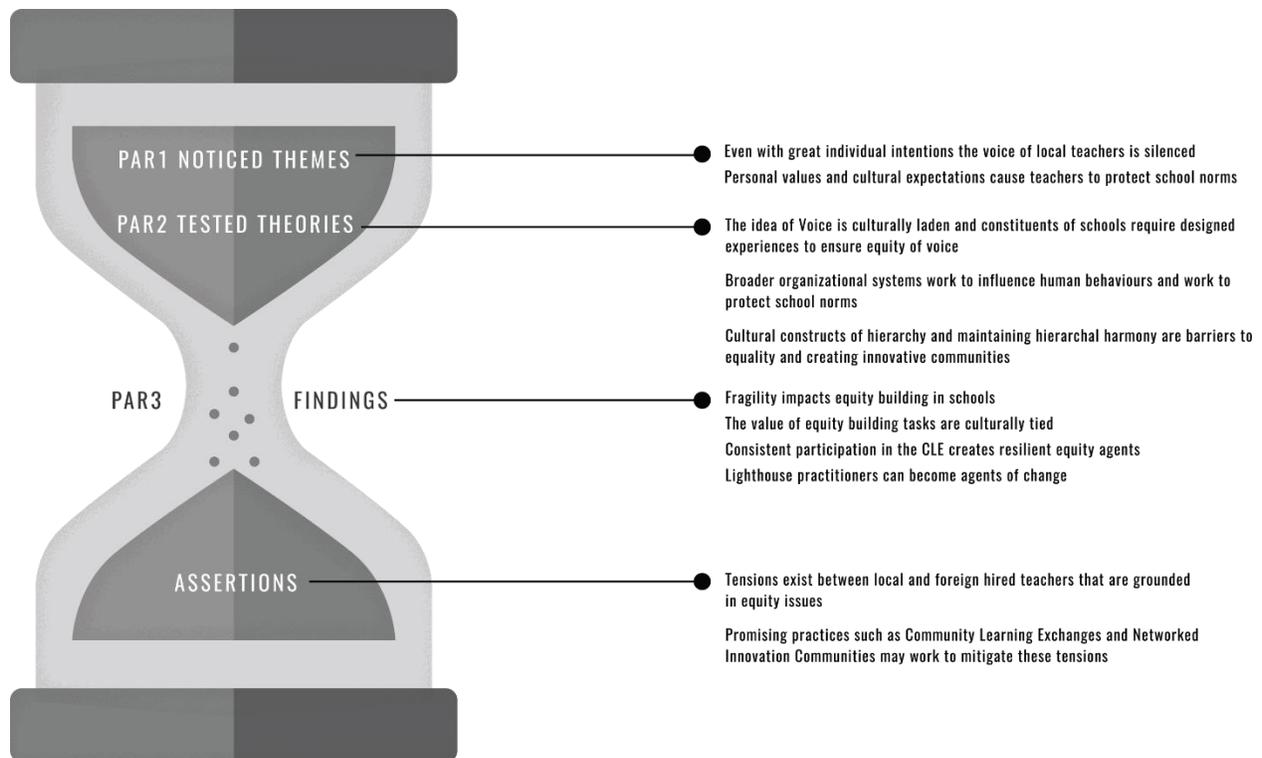


Figure 50. The flow towards the big assertions through the PAR cycles.

unpack this process further by discussing the steps taken over the course of the PAR, noticing and naming the phenomena, tapping into fragility as a norming device, the development of equity agents, and finally the discoveries of what I got wrong within the ToA.

Noticing and Naming the Phenomena

The PAR process started with a very wide scope and I noticed and reflected on phenomena happening within the data. Initially, I noticed that despite the good intentions of the foreign teachers, the voices of local teachers were often silenced. A prominent example of this was in a staff meeting in which the TAs responsibilities were outlined for the entire faculty. The feedback from TAs was that they felt uncomfortable and that the efforts of the lead teacher were disingenuous. The TAs stated they felt they had no voice in the meeting, the roles that were outlined, and the way they were integrated into the school day. They felt they had been spoken for. This silencing led to quiet but profound tension between the two groups. I also noticed that personal beliefs and values related to job title, higher education status, and understanding of contemporary pedagogies led to a protection of school norms. To test those notions, I worked with teachers and TAs to create opportunities for the TAs to share their backgrounds, ideas, teaching pedagogies as well as hopes, values, and dreams. Despite these opportunities, I found that even when leadership, teachers, and policies aligned with an equity agenda there were covert cultural norms, both personal and school, that influenced educators to operate in a diminished equity capacity. One example the CLE encountered was the resistance to the title change to 老师 or Lǎoshī. I gathered data from the team who complained about the title change and indicated they firmly believed their team was equitable and a title change would be confusing and unnecessary. However, follow-up interviews with the TAs revealed that this was the team in which high tension/disempowerment was recorded within the Chinese staff.

This PAR also uncovered a disconnect between teachers, TAs, and the organizational systems of the school. New teachers arrived at the school and imposed their ideas of what collaboration, learning, and leading looked like. Leadership shifted and reassigned roles and responsibilities within the school. Policy documents were old and did not reflect titles, roles, or responsibilities. TAs had historical understandings of their position and many did not agree or stated they were exhausted with continual shifts in school culture. As the changes were not democratic or communicated effectively, the shared knowledge of roles and responsibilities was deeply flawed and led to tension between foreign and local teachers.

Tapping Into Expat Fragility as a Norming Device

I discovered that expat fragility impacts the ability to engage in discourse that may threaten school norms. The CLE co-creation of experiences (such as the Qi Challenge) through radical collaboration was for naught as the greater community did not understand the value of each task to each culture; the why behind the what. I found that providing time for exchange of wisdom of people and place through systemic and on-going coaching provided observable and documented changes in the value of local teachers' voice. However, due to push-back (as a response to expat fragility) on several action items the CLE attempted throughout this PAR, the value of local teacher voice was largely contained within the CLE and did not diffuse into the culture of the school. In later sections I further unpack the concept of expat fragility as a norming device.

The Development of Equity Agents

I discovered that CLE group members who consistently participated in the CLE had more resilience in the form of hope, courage, and commitment than those who did not attend or infrequently attended. Moreover, those members became lighthouse practitioners who became

beacons of change for the greater school community. These individuals shared their practice openly, reflected on inequities they observed, and consistently invited new teachers to join the CLE.

What I Got Wrong

The way in which the ToA did not serve the PAR is notable. During the initial cycles of this PAR I assumed that what I found would reconcile with the literature and would provide evidence that technology upskilling would lead to greater voice and value for local teachers working within international school contexts. Soon the reality of the PAR showed that there was not a strong cohesive parallel with some aspects of the literature. Grounded in my work as a digital learning coach, my hypothesis over-relied on technology as the impetus for equity building. The CPR team found it was not in the tech professional learning where real and dynamic shifts happened for members of the CLE, but rather in the discourse within the CLE meetings including the quiet one-on-one interactions between meetings; the WeChat network back-chatter, the individual moments bonding over gifts and food, and the moments taken to chat about family and friends.

I assumed that technology-skill development would mean a greater increase in equity for local teachers who would have the power of historical knowledge for technology growth within the school when new foreign teachers entered the classroom. I envisioned the TAs would act as coaches to the foreign teachers and change would tangentially influence the power norms within the school. Given the opportunity again, I would focus on literature within professional learning communities, and equity-centered practice. However, the initial focus on technology was the proverbial carrot to bring teachers into the CLE. It was successful in that capacity but quickly

was not needed as the school TA population began to share ideas, beliefs, and concerns and make a pathway towards change.

Summary

The ToA for this research study posits that if international school community members (e.g., local and foreign-hired teachers, leadership, etc.) engage in opportunities to share their values and culture, insights on education, and ideas for change, they will reveal a better understanding of authentic issues and potential actionable change for the community. By engaging in such collective leadership practice, members can initiate robust innovative change within school communities (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). The metrics of success were based on the community's ability to (1) engage in dialogue and reflection to decide actions, (2) work to infuse democracy and diffuse power structures within the group, (3) coach for technology and networked learning that decreased marginalization, and (4) document local strengths to increase reciprocity in the school context (L. Tredway, personal communication, May, 24, 2017). In this project, CLE's collaborative discussions revealed equity issues such as equitable representation, value of voice, tensions around title, and inequitable space usage. What I got wrong was the use of technology as the impetus for equity change. My assumption was that coaching for new educative technology skills would level the professional playing field. The reality was that many of the TAs were already technologically competent but unable to use their knowledge within the classroom due to larger systemic issues. I also posited that the CLE would spark democratic diffusion of power, and it did among the foreign teachers. I was stumped by the Chinese teachers' willingness to defer to my leadership repeatedly throughout the project. This process required a more substantial time frame to understand cultural nuance and shift my understanding

of how the CLE group perceived and defined power. Anchored in the ToA, the work with the CPR team and CLE group revealed two main assertions, which I explain in the next section.

Big Assertions

In PAR Cycle Three I extrapolated four main findings from the data and developed two main assertions from those findings. Assertion one is grounded in naming the reality this PAR has revealed. Assertion two is grounded in a paradigm of hope and a potential path to creating a new reality within international schools. Each is described/examined next and framed as presenting a wicked problem and discussing a hopeful solution.

Assertion One

Work such as this PAR set the conditions to discover that colonizing behaviors and beliefs created tensions between foreign and local teachers in this context. The tensions observed between local- and foreign-hired teachers are grounded in equity issues. I have avoided naming the tensions I encountered as racism within this PAR because I was not sure if that was the right word for the tensions I observed. Indeed, “ignorance is bliss” and people can be biased without understanding that what they are doing is harmful to the greater community. The CLE highlighted those gaps in knowledge and shifted group members into a space of co-constructed understanding. The tensions I encountered were complex and it cannot be ignored that within international schools there is a history of colonial bias, a system that reinforces unequal distribution of resources for school constituents. Because Whites built the foundations of international schools and continue to dominate their growth, White interests are inherently embedded in the foundation and spread of globalized educative norms and while individual expat teachers (both Whites and people of color) may profess strong antiracist sentiment, the truth is they still benefit from the cosigning of the international-school-specific racial contract (Mills,

2010). Individual persons of color (PoC) can be heads of school, and occasionally a PoC is hired as a classroom teacher within a more progressive international school, but most decision-makers within the institution are White. This means foreign teachers are set apart and benefit from higher wages, more professional development, and more travel opportunities than their local counterparts.

International schools often reduce the conversation around racism to a simple equation of racists are bad and non-racists are good. In the mind of many international teachers, racism and being a good human are mutually exclusive. International teachers are often unaware of their role in the racial contract and profess that if schools are against racism the organizational system simply cannot be biased. This PAR showed that when foreign teachers and leaders were questioned about overt inequity (e.g., the vast wage disparity between local and foreign hired teachers) there was a litany of reasons, including but not limited to the geographical location as a hardship, local teachers have less quality education, and local teachers only expect a living wage. When examined carefully, each of these reasons become an excuse for profiling and judgment of the local culture. Although it is uncomfortable, this outlook is inherently racially motivated. It is in that space of discomfort that expat fragility becomes evident. The high wire of individual prejudice and a system of unequal, institutionalized racial power is a hard-balancing act for many teachers. No one wants to be part of a system that is inequitable. Expat fragility was evident in the distress and guilt Erin and I felt when confronted with the data that showed we consistently spoke over and for Vivian. Later, it was evident in the quiet shame that filled the room during the CLE when we examined the inequitable use of space in the school through photographic evidence. The CPR team and CLE group's willingness to engage in that discomfort however, does not mitigate that international teachers are socialized by the accrediting institutions to

believe they are superior in their brand of education. That superiority undersigns an old construction of educative norms grounded in a White agenda. Consciously or unconsciously international teachers hold a sense of entitlement for their higher education universities, their positions, their wage, their style of teaching, their pedagogical philosophies, their ways of community building, and their cultural values. Being questioned or challenged on these aspects of our educative norms is an affront to who teachers are fundamentally.

Being challenged forces us to ask if we are actually good people. Nothing could be more unsettling to a person's sense of self. Thus, I found teachers become highly fragile in conversations that question international educative norms. I have named this fragility, "expat fragility." This fragility is similar to the White fragility that DiAngelo (2011, 2015) discusses, but it is specific to expatriate teaching. Upon hearing the world named and framed by local teachers' voices, expatriate teachers' ideas highlight expatriate privilege and the allowances made for educative norms in a foreigner's favor. This causes discomfort and protection of the current school norms. In this PAR that fragility was evident from the onset. When initiating the pilot study in Thailand, the school principal and curriculum coordinator pushed back against the research claiming it was a non-issue from the onset. The informal CLE meetings with the Thai TAs and AAs evidenced a different narrative than that of the school leadership and I was met with an outward display from leaders of behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and dismissal. Later, this fragility was evident when foreign teachers pushed back against retitling the local Chinese teachers from teaching assistants to 老师 or Lǎoshī. The teachers spoke for the TAs, and when the CPR team invited the teachers or TAs into the CLE to explain and model for other teams how their relationships functioned so highly, both parties declined. Each of these instances were examples of expat fragility silencing the voice of others. Silencing, in turn, functions to

reinforce international school norms. The silence and keen awareness of inequity, on both ends of the polarity, enables forced smiles and cordiality while quietly breeding resentment and breaking down communities.

Assertion Two

As a result of this study I found that promising practices such as CLEs may work to mitigate the afore mentioned tensions. Early in the PAR, I discussed the ways culture works to norm the tribe. Tribalism works to create an “us” versus “them” mentality. The belief that teachers will assimilate seamlessly into another tribe is a delusion. Rather than forced assimilation into either space, the CLE created a third space where teachers and TAs migrated. The CLE was powerful because it was a thoughtfully designed space for people from each tribe to come together, share personal narratives, dreams, hopes, frustrations, and possible positive futures (see Figure 51). This third space was a space of hope and sanctuary. It became a space in which one tribe was not valued over another and where one culture did not dominate another. Rather, it was one in which participants recognized that equity was an issue and hopeful solutions existed through collaboration.

This PAR uncovered that TAs in this context had become strangers in their own land. The foreign teachers owned the cognitive, educative, dialogical, and physical spaces of the school. By creating a new space where TAs were able to share their ideas, beliefs, and culture they were able to reclaim a portion of those cognitive, educative, dialogical, and physical spaces in a bid to build resilient, equitable NICs. This PAR demonstrated that promising practices such as the CLE may work to mitigate tensions between foreign and local teachers by leveraging the voice and wisdom of local teachers to break free of the “conformity trap” of international schools and create innovative actionable change.



Figure 51. The CLE meets at LEVEL5, a shared space for addressing equity issues.

Summary

Assertion one outlines what I have previously stated as a wicked problem, however assertion two offers a possible remedy for this issue. The solution was generated from the work of the CLE in collaborative environments to construct a new hopeful future. Although I have observed it at many international schools, this problem is contextually bound. I selected PAR as the research approach for this study because it allowed me to engage the community in ideating and testing possible solutions to mutually agreed upon issues. The open, dialogic, and interactive approach, which emphasized reciprocity, trust, and collective action made it possible to erase the barrier between the researcher and the researched (Hunter et al., 2013). The prolonged weekly engagement with participants and radical collaboration led to innovative solutions to seemingly overwhelming and complex issues such as colonialism and expat fragility.

Each school has a unique community, culture, and context. From this PAR I have found that the community is the main driver of change (Guajardo et al., 2008; Guajardo et al., 2016; San Pedro, & Kinloch, 2017). In the next section, I introduce the meta-model framework I created as a scaffold for the international school to build an equitable learning community. This model systemizes the process of change of the PAR. The PAR has made me firm believer that power comes from being a coach, a designer, and a facilitator *with* rather than *for* those in the learning community.

From Theory to Practice: Making it Work

“At the heart of school transformation on any scale is determining why a change is necessary. We have found that it is critical to drive change from a place that is deeply connected to the individual community.”

—EDSurge (Kaplan, 2016)

The focus of this PAR was changing the systems and actions that perpetuate inequity. As international schools pursue innovative transformation, many are taking risks and experimenting with redesigning school models. Changes, large or small, can impact one classroom or an entire school. With each change, a set of questions should guide the redesign process. In this section I examine the guiding questions that lead to school transformation then unpack actions that support those questions. Finally, I provide specific examples of practice.

International School Equity Framework

When the CPR group reflected on the ToA to examine how much power, meaning, and predictability it held, we noticed that if any one component was missing the change we were seeking to establish was not sustained. Without design grounded in equity we experienced change that was only a repetition of the existing systems in which we participated. Without the radical collaboration of the CLE, we lacked the equity of disparate voice. Without coaching, our models and protocols were not sustained. It was only when these three were fostered that an NIC began to flourish. Although the model I constructed was valid for the purpose of the study, was not expansive enough to account for the complexities we encountered during each cycle of the PAR. Moving toward greater equity within international schools requires a framework expansive enough to scaffold the creation of NICs. After all, every school wants to be innovative but what does that really mean? Innovation is context-bound, to learners, teachers, resources, parent community, and the readiness and willingness for change.

Due to these factors, I struggled to find the best way to create a model that could be replicated and used in various contexts. I started by mapping each significant factor on the learning journey of this PAR that contributed to success. To help give better shape to these success factors, I did extensive research on change models that existed for schools seeking to

transform aspects of their community. Inspired by EDSurge’s report on the service providers supporting schools and districts in the United States through school redesign (Kaplan, 2016), I ideated and redesigned their model to create a new meta-framework for international schools seeking to enact NICs (see Figure 52). International schools are complex places, with an endless collection of components that affect each period, day, semester and year. As leadership make changes, administrators and educators find themselves asking many questions along the way about the elements of school that impact them.

The meta-model consists of one central question that grounds change in *why*. It asks, why do we want to create an equitable NIC? According to EdSurge, the essential questions that practitioners ask when initiating change work to expound on the central driving “why” (Kaplan, 2016). These questions create the hub of the model. The five driving questions are surrounded by eleven action points that support the specific questions practitioners ask. Next, I explain the five questions and their actionable points in greater detail.

1. How do we prepare our community for redesign? Redesign is only possible if the school constituents buy into the change. School leaders must assess the readiness and willingness for change before embarking on redesign. One promising practice to tease out tensions, develop resilience, and prepare teachers for change is the development of CLEs. In these spaces all community members coalesce and give value to disparate voices to find ways to create or support equitable, innovative redesign.

2. How do we implement these changes? Schools desire sustainable change practice. Ongoing coaching may help change to become systemic (ingrained in the culture of a school). Coaches can help lead change initiatives and have their finger on the pulse of realities within the school. Leaders must create spaces to acknowledge voice and value through dialogue to create a

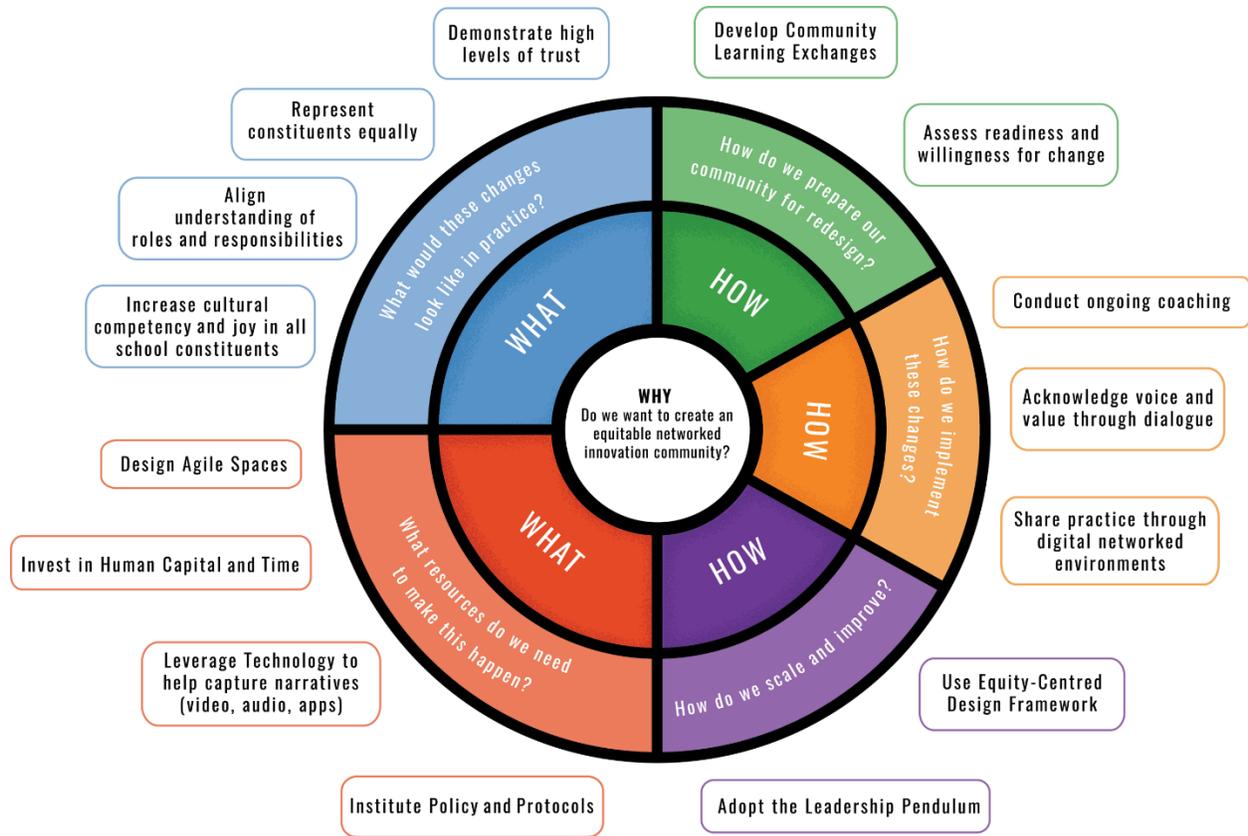


Figure 52. International school equity framework.

diverse pool of innovative ideas. Last, practice needs to be deprivatized or taken out of the micro environment and shared through digital networked environments to the larger educative community. This sharing of practice leads to new discourse, the fostering of ideas, potential challenging of beliefs, and the growth of NICs.

3. How do we scale and improve? As school redesign takes shape, other issues, areas of amelioration, and tensions may surface. Grounding redesign in processes such as ECD Thinking frameworks ensure that schools (1) adopt diverse co-creators into the process, and (2) create a mindfully iterative, systematic process for school redesign. The other way school leaders can scale and improve change is to start with change within themselves. Providing a reflective framework may help leaders ensure they are mitigating tribalism, working to disrupt norms, and grounding practice in joy.

4. What resources do we need to make this happen? For school redesign toward equitable NICs, leaders must integrate co-created policy and protocols to scaffold and hold members accountable. Technology is an essential conduit for the sharing of ideas, dissemination of equity practice, documentation of narratives, and creation of community norms. Investing in the wisdom of people within the community and designing agile spaces for people to come together and co-create based on need is essential to consciously redesigning for change.

5. What would these changes look like in practice? Often schools ask how they will know when a change has taken root in the community. Redesign towards NICs would include an increase in cultural competency and joy in all school constituents. Practitioners within the school would have an aligned, community-wide understanding of roles and responsibilities and equal representation of voice. Most importantly the community would demonstrate high levels of trust toward each member of the faculty and staff.

Throughout this PAR it became clear that one of the major distinguishing factors in redesign work is the level and scale at which it is happening. The CLE group found that school change did not mean rebuilding a school from the ground up, in fact it was the schoolwide QiChallenge that had the least impact on equity building within this community. In many cases the greatest impact occurred when piloting something small in one or a few classrooms. From these phenomena, an intriguing question was raised: *how will the results of this project inform new (innovative) practice?* In the next section, I examine examples and possibilities for practice using the meta-model as a guide.

From Framework to Practice

Without some unpacking, the meta-model could be interpreted as a set of feel-good catch phrases, which is exactly what I want schools to deviate from. The goal of the model is to help create rich experiences between people that spark change by deepening relationships of trust and enhancing dialogue. Table 16 provides an overview of possible practices aligned with the action points for the model. To scaffold the practices, I have further unpacked two action items—Design Agile Space and Institute Policy and Protocols—with specific examples of possible practice for schools. In the next section, I provide an example of an actionable change process for an international school. Notably, these processes are conducted with, not for, constituents and are contextually bound to the wisdom of people and power of place.

An item from the model that directly impacts teachers, TAs, and students is shared working and learning space. Anchor the importance of equity practice within schools by intentionally formalizing the co-creation process for the development of shared learning spaces. By engaging the entire community in a co-creation experience to revise static classroom spaces, schools can unearth new ideas for agile design. Useful strategies include: (1)

Table 16

Example Practices for Action Items on the International School Equity Framework

Action Item	Engagement
Vision	Map the work with design thinking
Demonstrate high levels of trust	Enter conversations with the positive presupposition that each member of the team is operating at their highest point of contribution
Represent constituents equally	Create policy and procedures that ensure equal representation of constituents within the organizational structure of the school
Align understanding of roles and responsibilities	Create clear and co-created roles and responsibilities that align with the vision of equity within the school
Increase cultural competency and joy in all school constituents	Design interactions between constituents to support an equitable and joyful experience at the school
Design agile space	Help teachers and schools reimagine learning spaces (where learning happens, what it looks like, who owns the space)
Invest in human capital and time	Identify lighthouse practitioners and design time in the schedule for practitioners to develop close relationships of trust

Table 16 (continued)

Action Item	Engagement
Leverage technology	Use technology as an entrance point for professional learning and to capture the narratives of the community
Institute policy and protocols	Design a plan to influence policies and protocols within the international school
Develop community learning exchanges	Bring constituents together to ideate and co-design action plans for community needs
Assess readiness and willingness for change	Assess the current school constituents for readiness and willingness to create change
Conduct ongoing coaching	Provide professional learning opportunities to school leaders, teachers, and support teachers that range from pedagogical, technological, and curricula
Acknowledge voice and value through dialogue	Bridge cultural gaps by providing opportunities for disparate ideas, wisdom, and voices to be shared within the community
Share practice through digital networked environments	Use new and existing digital communication networks that deprivatize practice and build community

Table 16 (continued)

Action Item	Engagement
Use the equity-centered design framework	Co-design for change using equity frameworks
Adopt the leadership pendulum	Reflect on leadership practice to self-assess along the journey

Interviewing diverse constituents about their dreams and gripes to garner empathy (see Lee, 2017); (2) Uncovering new possibilities by developing and asking, how might we? Use questions that amplify the good, explore opposites, and challenge the status quo (d.school, n.d.); (3) Synthesizing ideas using *affinity diagrams* (Dam & Siang 2018), a method which organizes large amounts of data into themes based on their relationships; (4) Develop STAR (situation, task, action, result) proposals to assist participants with generating and pitching comprehensive proposals; (5) Leveraging mapping tools such as the *future wheels* (Glenn & Gordon 2009) to determine the potential impact of a decision; (6) Sharing a synthesis of the radical collaborative design with all stakeholders and inviting them to participate in a continuous feedback loop; (7) Actively using social media platforms to share ideas with industry experts and other schools. Use hashtags such as #agilespaces #edreform #designthinking #designsprint #makered #makerspaces #learningexchanges to share ideas and gather feedback. This will continue to attract a range of valuable ideas from people all over the world.

Although there are many items in the model that could be unpacked with examples for practice, the item that was consistently raised throughout this PAR, and one I believe at the heart of many equity issues, is that of policy and protocol. Despite best intentions, international schools fail to be equitable; therefore, an equity agenda backed by clear and supported policy documentation is necessary. However, I have observed that many international schools have an ad hoc system of policy creation. Often teachers are put on a committee and a policy is drafted, only to be redrafted when new leadership flows into the school. Teachers are often unsure of exact policies and enacted policies are loosely adhered by all constituents within the community. Schools often skirt legislation in Asia Pacific, as such the term ‘policy’ is viewed skeptically by most international educators. For example, international schools in Korea were legally unable to

accept any Korean nationals. As such, I often had Korean national students who held Costa Rican, Belizean, or Tanzanian passports although they had never left their home country. These students were technically not Korean, but in actuality, fully Korean. The parents knew it, the school knew it, and I knew it. Schools work around the laws—or laws do not exist. The policies that schools do create often focus entirely on policy or rules, without a rationale or clear procedures for teachers to follow. This leaves policy accountability largely up to each individual school, and many teachers within international education are happy with the reduced bureaucracy compared to public education in their countries of origin.

Guided by UNESCO's (2017) accountability in education, I have outlined my own leadership beliefs regarding policy creation within international education.

1. Everyone has a role to play in improving education. Grassroots empowerment is necessary to hear the concerns and solutions of local communities, but leadership is ultimately accountable. Accountability by governments, organizations, institutions, and accrediting bodies must be writ in policies and protocols. Schools need a credible plan to ensure equity accountability as well as clear targets and lines of responsibility through transparent means. Policy processes must be open to broad and meaningful consultation and the transparency of information is vital to make accountability work.
2. Voice. People's capacity to demand transparency and scrutinize operations is essential for developing and expressing informed views that hold schools accountable. Everyone's voice is valid.
3. Market competition hurts us all. Market-oriented policies only benefit the fiscally mobile. Leadership and management need to become more decentralized and

grounded in equity agendas. Decentralization requires leaders to focus on the CLE axioms of communication, cooperation, and coalition-building.

4. International Actors. International foreign teachers are responsible for conducting negotiations transparently and ensuring diverse voices are heard and represented in agreement.

As a leader these guiding beliefs will underpin my own policy creation within the future schools that employ me. While it is powerful to create an individual ethos behind equitable policies and protocols, my PAR clearly solidified that institutionalized accrediting global brands (such as the IB) are not doing enough to ensure equity practice within each of its accredited schools.

International schools need explicit equity policy by accrediting institutions. It is not good enough for the IB to cower behind the narrative that it simply provides a conceptual framework for schools to flourish as unique entities. As a global brand that espouses global mindedness and the learner profile, the IB has an ethical responsibility to do more than scratch the surface when looking for equity factors in preauthorization and authorization visits. After all, the IB is the lighthouse the entire educative world currently looks toward. They have a heavy burden to ensure schools do not dismiss extreme wage disparity as providing a livable wage. It is the IB's burden to ensure that culture is not represented by flags, foods, and festivals. It is also their burden to hold up a rigorous standard of inclusion, voice, and agency for all members of the learning community. UNESCO (2017) states that accountability starts with governments, organizations, institutions, and accrediting bodies. As such, is it not time we rethought equity within international schools entirely and demanded more from the accrediting institutions we hold in high regard? To narrow these broad band statements into more clearly defined policies, international schools should write collaborative policies with all constituents who are embedded

in the organizational structures of the school and transcend the transient nature of expatriate teachers and leadership. Policies for equity could be as shown in Table 17.

Summary

International schools state that they strive to be equitable and inclusive communities, rich with diversity, protecting the human rights of all persons, and based upon understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of every person. They state that they seek to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that all students and employees enjoy the opportunity to participate in the full range of activities as they see fit and to achieve their full potential as members of the school community. Policies penned may work to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the adverse effects of any tensions that exist in the complex reality of international schools and better align international schools' equity ethos and practice. Policies specifically grounded in equity will proactively seek to increase equity of voice amongst community members. In the next section, I discuss potential areas for future research and where this research may be conducted to examine additional questions that were raised within the context of this PAR.

Limitations, Trustworthiness, and Areas for Potential Future Research

Although it offers new insights for the fields of leadership and school reform, this PAR did have several limitations. Through the course of this research, certain patterns emerged that could not be address. In this section, I have compiled the patterns that became complexities and areas for potential future research. This PAR enabled me to successfully explore my hunches regarding equity practice and examine cultural nuances through the participatory research design and iterative process of continuously raising new questions. At times, focusing on the scope of this specific research became difficult as the CPR team wanted to be highly responsive to each

Table 17

Example Equity Policy for International Schools

Policy Statement	Rationale	Policy
<p>[Insert name of international school] wishes to foster and promote teaching and learning in its widest and richest sense in accordance with a strong and innovative equity agenda. [Insert name of international school] supports the principles of equity of voice for all members of its faculty including foreign and locally hired teachers. This is consistent with the essential characteristics of [Insert name of international school]’s mission, vision, and values. This equity policy is designed to support the principle that all constituents within the school have merit, voice, and value-add to innovative change within our school.</p>	<p>As a school that values innovation as an educational cornerstone, we recognize that innovation is sparked from the wisdom of disparate people and the power of place. International schools are strongholds of thinking drawn from global perspectives. As a school, we want to leverage that stronghold of power to bring together all school constituents to create educative change. This policy creates a document for equity within international schools and seeks to create reciprocal relationships, diminish marginalization, and create more equitable working environments for local and expatriate faculty and staff.</p>	<p>[Insert name of international school] will always endeavour to promote an equity agenda through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultancy of diverse, representative constituents of the community when creating policy and procedures. Procedures and programs will be monitored and evaluated against transparent objectives. • The co-creation and design of agile space that is equitable for all adults and students within the community. • The allowance of specific time within the school schedule for teachers to engage in open dialogue to build cultural capacity. • The addressing of the effects of past discriminatory practices within the general community, particularly in respect of disadvantaged groups within the school community. • The adoption of policies, procedures, and programs consistent with an equity agenda, such as Community Learning Exchanges. • The creation of accountability or teacher assessment toward adherence to such policies.

new issue raised to garner trust with the local teachers. The following subsections outline these questions within the limitations of the PAR.

Methodological Limitations

Sample Size

The data sample for this project was dictated by the PAR. Though representing the entire cohort of CLE participants' in an international school, it was relatively small. This was due to the voluntary nature of the study within a location of over 100 teachers and 50 TAs spread over 1.5 kilometers, and three campuses. Even with a relatively small sample size, the CLE offered the opportunity for a variety of participants to have prolonged engagement over two years and contribute to the PAR.

Lack of Prior Research Studies on the Topic

The literature for this PAR was largely pulled from a variety of tangential resources such as design thinking and coaching. There were no published studies specifically on the relationships between local and foreign teachers within international school settings. PAR was used as a methodology so I could be a participant in the development of relationships of trust. Thus, despite this limitation, the study fills a gap in the literature and establishes new research on the relationships between foreign and local teachers within international schools.

Self-Reported Data

Data gathered for this PAR was largely self-reported in the form of interviews, focus groups, or questionnaires and as such it cannot be independently verified. Therefore, a limitation of the data collected for this PAR is that it may contain several potential sources of bias. These sources include (1) selective memory, (2) attribution—the act of attributing positive events and outcomes to one's own agency but attributing negative events and outcomes to external forces,

and (3) exaggeration—the act of representing outcomes or embellishing events. The data pulled for this PAR were from persistent observations, video and audio interviews, surveys, focus groups and artifacts. Nonetheless, these biases were not readily apparent in the triangulation of data through member checks and peer debriefing.

Limitations of the Researcher

Longitudinal Effects

The transient nature of international schools leads to an overturn of foreign faculty every few years. As such, the research was limited to the two-year contract I had at the school. This time limitation could point to the need for longitudinal research on two main areas: (1) how equity practices impact students. If students are at the core of everything we do in education, a comparative longitudinal analysis within two well established international schools with foreign and local teachers that focuses on the impact of greater equity within international schools on students' global citizenship, international mindedness, and the core competencies outlined in Chapter 2 would ground this work in student achievement. Although this study briefly reflected on the impact of equity work on student behavior it was not a fully realized research question; (2) How to develop the CLE that is co-owned but operated by local teachers so that it outlives the short contracts of foreign teachers. CLEs run the risk of becoming one-offs or the passion project of teachers who are invested in an equity agenda. While many school leaders have a solid vision of the change they want to see on the ground, others struggle to define it and their visions often do not account for the diverse needs of the community. How do schools design sustained time blocks for constituents to meet and co-construct the vision for change in schools? A participatory research project within an international school already in the noticing phase of equity reform may be ripe for exploration of such questions with a community of learners.

Cultural and Other Types of Bias

Through the literature review I conducted for this study, it became clear that human value systems are culture-bound and mostly subconscious. Therefore, the theories and insights contained within this PAR are equally culture-bound and betray my bias. I am cognizant that my ideas of leadership and good leadership, teamwork, collaboration, innovation, and timekeeping are a result of this bias, as are the ideas of my colleagues who represent the vast array of countries and cultures found in most international schools. Additionally, the limitations extend beyond me to the CPR team and CLE group. My process of becoming aware of the subtle inequity within international schools has taken a long time and the participants within this study were on their own journeys of readiness and willingness. They may have been willing to engage in the study, but not ready to make changes, and vice versa.

Language Fluency

Despite having Chinese teachers competent in English, the nuances of culture are largely lost if you do not fluently speak the language. Despite having lived in Asia for well over a decade, I often forget the nuances of the host culture I live within. This limitation was evident when coding data in interviews as I noticed much of my “understanding” or communication relied on me filling in the gaps of understanding, using gestures, or acting out meanings. Much was lost in translation. To mitigate this language/culture divide I asked clarifying questions, reformed sentences, asked for drawings and various data collection methods. Peer debriefing and member checks were conducted regularly to ensure I had correctly collected the participants’ ideas and voice.

I assert that my qualitative findings from PAR are a first step toward comprehending the ways aspiring leaders engage with and make sense of an equity agenda within international

schools and call for more expansive investigations moving forward. This methodology was sound and appropriate as it removed the barriers between researcher and participant and was relevant and timely for the local setting (Herr & Anderson, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The triangulation of data created credible findings. The pilot study in Thailand and PAR in China established that this study could be modified and replicated in another context.

In this section, I have provided an overview of the limitations of the project, possible future research, and trustworthiness. In the next section, I discuss the power of narrative on shaping my leadership growth, the model I developed to scaffold equity grounded leadership practice, and finally conclude this PAR by returning to Freire and his impact on my leadership development.

A Burgeoning Change

“I’ve noticed that the more empathy I have, the less annoying other people are.”

—Alan Alda

Using an equity lens to review the complexities discussed throughout this dissertation, I was forced to ask myself impossible questions: *Why is there such a gap between international schools’ intention and behavior? Whose narrative are schools following? Can schools remap behavioral and cultural norms?* The implications of these questions for the PAR were profound.

Sharot (2017) discussed four factors that determine whether someone will change their beliefs: (1) the old belief, (2) the confidence in that old belief, (3) the new piece of data, and (4) the confidence in that piece of data. The further away the piece of data is from what a person already believes, the less likely it is to change their belief (Dewey, 1938). On average, as an individual navigates life, they make choices based on the beliefs they have developed from prior knowledge or data, whether valid or invalid. However, if a person develops a false belief or

skewed outlook, it also means that it is difficult to change that belief, even when faced with new data (Sharot, 2012). Knowing institutions have a stronghold on behavior, culture influences values, organizations breed systemic inequity, and new data does not always change minds, how do leaders possibly motivate change in people? It seems like an impossible task.

Sharot (2012) humorously posits that leaders can motivate people by eliciting fear, but I know international schools generally do not like fear-mongering, so the second option is through fostering hope. Hope is challenging to generate without high levels of trust, and trust is built through empathetic listening. I posit the only way around the myriad of cultural, organizational, and institutional blockades that have been discussed in this project is through the conscious and purposeful design of hope within schools. This means that designed incremental moments of hope are critical to sustained belief change.

A path toward hope was mapped within the early work that we embarked on when setting up this PAR. By sharing our journey lines and personal stories, we invested in the power of narrative and stamped out the initial trail toward change. The CPR team looked to the work of Regev, Honey and Hasson (2013) who have explored the power of shared narrative in groups. This research indicated when one person listens to another person's story, the activity in the two brains synchronize. First, a listener follows the story, but soon the brain waves of the listener become predictive. History has shown the power of story, from Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy, Barak Obama and other great orators. People believe in those speakers because they are drawn into their story. Knowing now that the Chinese deprioritize talk, it will be important for the international school community to sync our stories in new and unexpected ways. The interesting thing about Regev, Honey and Hasson's work is that in addition to language and hearing, narrative impacts the emotional regions of brains. These regions are important for

theory of mind, or a person's ability to think about what other people are thinking. This simple method of sharing stories can shift a person's state of mind, influence their beliefs, and challenge their false beliefs. The data for PAR Cycle Two indicates we gave up too early and failed at syncing the CLE group's personal stories. Although we built very tenuous trust, we did not spend enough time cognitively syncing, and by rushing ahead we encountered questions such as, "What are the metrics of success?" and "Who bought the Starbucks cards?" as discovered in earlier chapters.

PAR was inherently necessary for this project. Without my ability to be a participant as well as designer, coach, researcher, and friend, collaborative sync simply would not have happened. In the next section, I discuss the leadership model I created for myself through this PAR. I believe it is not good enough for leaders within international schools to state that relationships are critical, and individuals must only take time to develop those relationships. Schools must actively design opportunities for developing empathy, constructivist listening, story sharing, building hope, and mapping pathways to liberation. PAR Cycle Two ended with a reflection on the extent to which my work with the group served as a conduit to establish a more equitable and innovative community. My reflections show it was the moments of noticing and naming within the CLE that created opportunities to disrupt systems of inequity (within myself and others) and enabled greater reciprocal dialogue to take place (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008).

Developing the Bravery Muscle in Self and Others

From my experiences throughout the PAR and the ECU programme, I have developed the leadership pendulum as a model for my learning journey (see Figure 53). Informed by the literature, the data gathered throughout the PAR, and my memoed reflections, each oscillation of

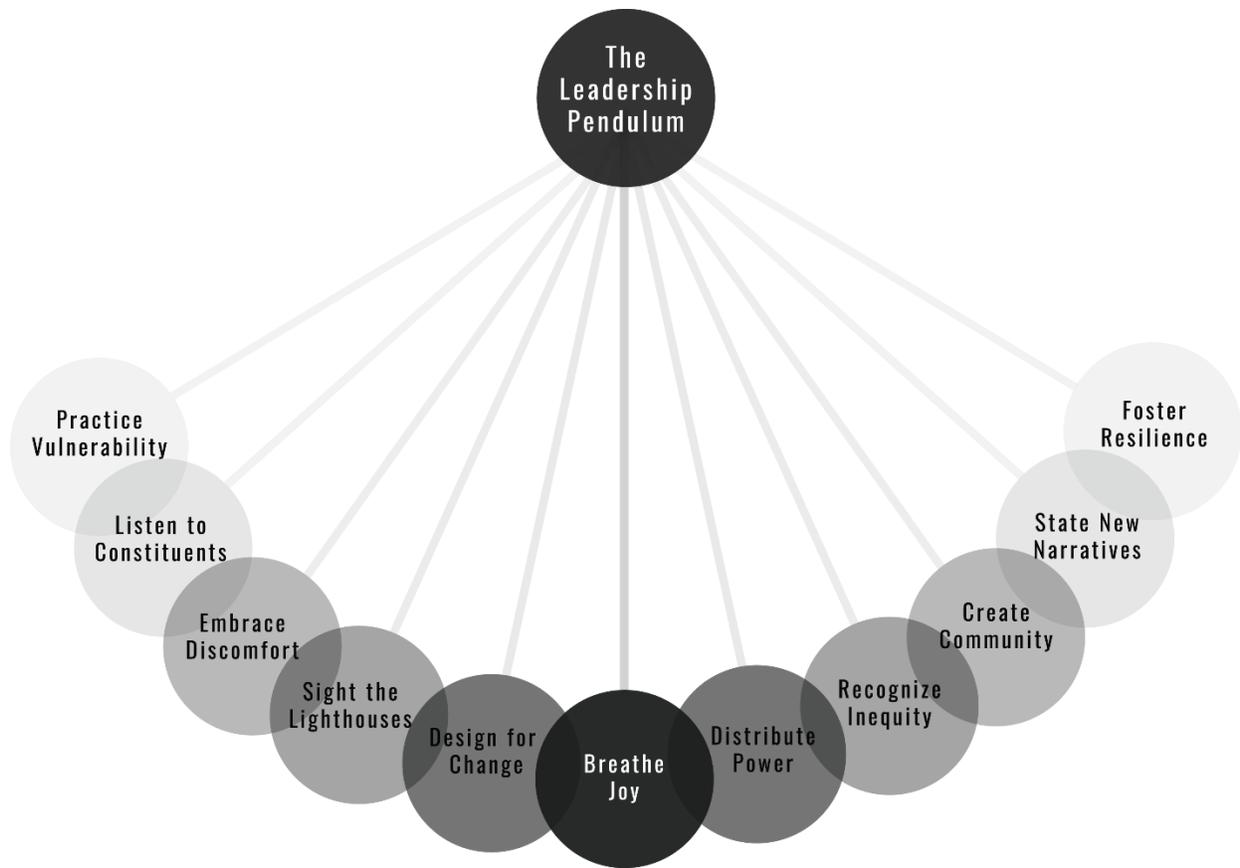


Figure 53. The Leadership Pendulum model: Understanding leadership through specific attributes and traits.

the pendulum weight is an aspect of my journey. As I went through each cycle of the PAR, I reflected on the ways I had changed as a leader and the moments that led to those changes, then I named the practice that underpinned that change. I chose a pendulum to represent this journey as it connects with the changing nature of leadership within international schools. Similar to change within schools the weight of gravity causes the pendulum to remain immobilized. In schools we are weighted with curricula, standards, professional learning, reading, writing, numeracy programs, new technology innovations—the list is long. Like a pendulum, schools require a force for energy transfer. For schools this can be a leader who embraces purposeful movement through each attribute to help teams embrace change. The pendulum is change movement that can be measured despite its constant motion. A leader examines the current situation through each "lens" rather than simply wildly swinging within peril. Friction and tensions within relationships and team dynamics can cause the leadership pendulum to slow down, so to move fluidly requires breathing joy into each swing of potential change. In the next section, I briefly unpack a selection of the points on the leadership pendulum.

Practice Vulnerability

The commitment to telling our leadership story and growth is the component that keeps us humble, in self-reflective awareness. Aguilar (2018) describes this process as a “path towards wholeness and connection” (p. 39). Indeed, the process of the PAR was one grounded in vulnerability. Often, I had to admit ignorance, apologize for mistakes, and make public my own learning journey. For the Chinese teachers, my vulnerability was both yin and yang or good and bad. Being open with the teachers helped them trust that I placed myself in a position of being a life-long learner. However, it also made them uncomfortable with how to interact with me as I held a traditional position of respected hierarchy within the school. It made them question how to

treat me with respect, to listen to my ideas, to even show up for the CLE. Vulnerability within my culture is an attribute helpful to self-reflection, but within a Chinese context my vulnerability became a loaded cultural dilemma. Within the PAR, I often shared back data that was collected on my own biases, misconceptions, and assumptions. I wrote blogs, shared in the CLE, and consistently put myself in the stance of a learner. This was documented during one CLE meeting in which I was interviewed by the group of TAs and Erin to find out more about me, and why I was doing this research:

Erin: Can you tell us why you're doing this? Why you're doing the Learning Exchange?

Tosca: I thought maybe I'd share this story with all of you. I went overseas and I was teaching and working with co-teacher practitioners. Some schools use the title teaching assistant, teacher assistant, instructional assistant, co-teacher—there are many titles. As a new teacher, when I first lived in China, I had a TA. Thinking back on it, I treated her really poorly, but I didn't realize it at the time. I had never had a co-teacher before and I really didn't treat her like an equal. I treated her like a personal assistant, or what we used to call a secretary. One day I wrote something on the board, and I made a small error. She pointed it out in front of the students. It's not that big of a deal, right? But I was embarrassed and later told her off. Quite harshly. At that time, I didn't understand that mistakes are great to model for learners, as learning opportunities. Over time I started to notice the ways in which the western teachers marginalized the local teachers, including me. It took even longer for me to have the courage to start to address it. So, now I am addressing it (TA CLE, October 23, 2018).

Breaking out of the Chinese cultural assumption of leader as ultimate knowledge holder, this short dialogue shows that I was willing to engage in uncomfortable dialogue about the ways I had contributed to the marginalization of TAs, my growth as a leader, and my vision for the future.

Listen and Have Conversations that Matter

Time is often called the educator's nemesis but Grubb and Tredway (2010) insist that great leaders take the time to design for listening to constituents. I knew that listening was the bedrock of good coaching, but this experience built on that foundation. By instilling norms,

creating agendas, and developing protocols and processes focused on equity practice, I was able to engage in constructivist listening and broaden my perspectives. During PAR Cycle One, we took time to interview individual TAs and ask about their families, their education, as well as their feelings regarding their roles and responsibilities at the school. These were videoed but informal conversations that helped the Chinese TAs get to know us as people interested in them as people, rather than as research subjects. An excerpt of a conversation with a specific Chinese TA reflecting on her role within the school is included here:

Erin: If you were creating the role of TA...so, if you were in charge of deciding what a teaching assistant or an instructional assistant did, what kinds of activities would you want that to, to encapsulate? Or what would you want teaching assistants to do?

TA: Mm, I think for our school the campus is open. It's, uh, it's not closed. The campus is in different buildings far away from one another. So, most of our teaching assistant job is to transport children. We just do the transition for safety. I want to help more with my teachers to support their hard work, in how to teach the kids. Actually, oh, I think a teaching assistant is not really involved in teaching, because that, that should be the plan for the teachers to do, but we can support our teachers. In their way. How they want (TA Interview, September 21, 2018).

During this conversation the distinct shift in the TA's belief regarding the role of TA from teacher to personal assistant mid-conversation gave insight into possible misconceptions and assumptions potentially held by both teachers and TAs regarding roles and responsibilities. The CLE for this PAR focused on hearing the voice of the local teachers and co-creating a better, clearer understanding of those roles and responsibilities.

Embrace Discomfort

“Sameness and difference are a matter of context and point of view, change and continuity, often two sides of the same coin. We can only make sense of the relationship between change and constancy by thinking of them in layers, on flowing under or over or within the

other, at different levels of abstraction: superficial change within profound continuity, and superficial continuity within profound change.”

—Bateson, 1994

Within the leadership context, becoming mindful of the complexity of international education is essential. Bateson beautifully unpacks the complexity of self and relationship to institution, as well as self and others. We could not appreciate the light if it did not exist in the context of darkness. As participatory action researchers, we were hands-on in the work that was being done and at times had to confront our own biases, behaviors, and beliefs through conversations, memos, and reflections. Discomfort was a recurring theme during this PAR. The CPR team, CLE group, leaders, teachers and TAs all felt discomfort at some point. CPR team member Erin Madonna reflected on this state:

One of the most interesting outcomes for me personally is a deeper understanding of the emotions that accompany change. When working to push an organization forward towards greater equity, fear and uncertainty are your constant bedfellows. Deciding to continue on the path to change is dependent upon one’s moral commitment to improving the lives of everyone in the organization. Giving up isn’t an option when you can see people struggling. (E. Madonna, personal communication, September 3, 2018)

Doing the work of CLE is hard, and it was harder to know what to fight for as a leader and what to let go of. I am still learning how to, as Bateson (1994) states, *flow from both sides of the same coin*. I am learning that change and continuity exist only as a response of the other; thus, the joy or discomfort that either of those states brings are neither bad or good- they just are. Although I engage in the discomfort, I am still learning to embrace it.

Create Community

Building relationships of trust are foundational to great teams within international schools. However, building relationships takes effort and time. Take a moment to reflect on the framework on which this PAR design is set. The framework combined several different theories,

but the primary drivers were the CLE Axioms. These axioms are: learning and leadership are dynamic social processes, conversations are critical and central to pedagogical processes, the people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns, crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational process, and hope and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 27). As a leader the only way I found success building authentic relationships of trust was by grounding my own leadership practice within these axioms.

Sight the Lighthouses

McDonald (1996) implores leaders to look for the ironic moments in our practice, the dissonance between what we believe and what we do as moments to awaken change. Although I agree with McDonald that these sightings can lead to greater self-awareness and shifts in practice, there is another kind of sighting that I think is more powerful and asset driven. The lighthouse is the beacon of light when we have lost hope or are trying to find our way in a sea of change. Within schools I see these beacons as the innovators, the equity agents, the leaders amongst us who light the way from the rocks of inequity and the policies of injustice. Throughout the PAR it became evident that if we wanted the CLE to become sustainable, we needed to find other leaders to help see themselves as lighthouses for others. These teachers showed that modelling behaviors they wanted to see may inspire others to make changes in the equity of space within their own classrooms.

Design for Change

A recurring reflection during this PAR has been that great leaders believe all members of the organization, school, and community have the right capacities and the responsibility to learn and lead (Lambert, Zimmerman, & Gardner, 2016). However, I have discovered that distributed

leadership does not just organically spring forth. Through the PAR I have learned that it takes thoughtful, collaborative, and innovative processes, designed with communities and coached into fruition for change to be sustained. As a designer I had to cleverly design for distributed models of engagement and equity of voice. This had two outcomes: (1) I was forced to step back from a position of power and control to facilitate the CLE as a shared space for innovative ideas to flourish, and (2) the CLE claimed ownership of the research, verbally. This was evidenced when the CPR team used the *royal* 'we' when discussing the design of the project, leadership members inserted themselves into Monday's meetings, and CLE participants asked each other, rather than me, when the next meeting would take place. Without the distinct construct of the PAR I believe this shared ownership and invisibility of power as a research designer would not have been possible.

Conclusion

“At the point of encounter there are neither utter ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only people who are attempting, together, to learn more than they now know.”

—Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970

International schools have favored branding under larger educational organizations (e.g., IB) to build social capital, develop clout under a recognised and respected global brand, and to ensure quality of programmes, but this global branding has come at the cost of the voice and wisdom of local teachers. This PAR exemplifies how elevating the conversation to focus on large opportunities, assets, wisdom, and disparate ideas helps to shift thinking about difficult and seemingly impossible equity change into areas for possible innovation. Admittedly, the hope-focused conversations of this PAR can seem far removed from the realities of fast-paced schools,

but this PAR suggests that the CLE creates a safe space for individuals to converge on common ground of possibility and acts as a motivator in the collective commitment to innovative change.

Throughout this PAR, I have discovered that embodying the missions, visions, and values espoused by international schools requires great sacrifice. Foreign teachers would lose their local helper assistant, the tangential benefits of power, and ultimately some of their compensation; however, this study confirmed that there is hope in that reality. The two are not mutually exclusive. Inequity and hope can coexist.

Despite culture being a complicated, nuanced, and deeply personal construct, when teachers identified the specific values that define their cultural identity, they were better able to design opportunities to listen to the values of others and reflect, together, on how those cultural differences might influence their relationships and serve as the foundation of the organizational culture they develop. It took dedicated time to “hold up a mirror” to ourselves to create space and willingness to engage in purposeful, transparent, moral dialogue to engage differences and cultivate new mindsets; ultimately, to become champions of equity with one another. This shift enabled national and international employees in this international school setting to develop more reciprocal relationships, diminish marginalization, and create more equitable and innovative working environments. While we did not fully realize equity in this school, we moved closer to it and have hope that the progress will continue. International schools need positive ways to redesign the future of equitable education and this PAR offers one possibility.

Throughout this PAR I have made clear that transformative change is possible, but not comfortable. On a macro level, it was uncomfortable to move jobs, schools, contexts, and countries to continue the research. On a meso level, it was uncomfortable to design the research, receive push-back and experience fragility from teachers and leaders in both contexts, and to

create agendas, learning experiences, and inspirations each Monday without fail. On a micro level, it was uncomfortable to become vulnerable in the PAR process, to recognize my own privilege and power, to experience pain that came with hearing stories of inequity, and to realize that I could not change everything. As a leader I have learned that, in those moments, being vulnerable and open to the possibility of personal pain may not be a perfect modality for elevating equity, but sometimes it is good enough.

Attending to the relationships that form the foundation for ongoing change is perhaps the most significant resource consideration for those who seek international school transformation. For this to happen, the first relationship leaders must attend to is that of the self. At the conclusion of the PAR I was drawn back to the seemingly prophetic words of Freire (1970). The relevance of Freire's work to this PAR has been consistent throughout each cycle and guided the words I ascribed to my tension, fear, and hope as I realized my own part in a colonized cultural existence.

On the other hand, dialogue cannot exist without humility...How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own? How can I dialogue if I regard myself as a case apart from others—mere “it's” in whom I cannot recognize the other “I's”? (Freire, 1970, p. 90)

The second and third relationships leaders to which must attend are the organization and the community. The authentic experiences I had—both uncomfortable and filled with joy—and relationships I developed—to self and organization, and self and community—throughout this PAR create ecologies of knowing that wove together into a new understanding of self and others (Guajardo et al., 2016). The process of the PAR challenged me to become a more humanist leader and made clear that it would be impossible to help my organization or community without actively looking inward first. Through this process, it became clear that the purpose of

international school transformation was not indoctrination of others, but rather to innovate alongside my team to liberate ourselves, together, into a new and more equitable reality.

REFERENCES

- Abbot, J. (2008, January 31). *Let me 'do' and I understand: Cognitive apprenticeship* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnbmLHgQWqQ>
- Aguilar, E. (2011a). Five things to consider before becoming an instructional coach [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/instructional-coach-job-consider-elena-aguilar>
- Aguilar, E. (2011b). Four conditions essential for instructional coaching to work [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/four-conditions-instructional-coaching-elena-aguilar>
- Aguilar, E. (2016). *The art of coaching teams: Building resilient communities that transform schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Aguilar, E. (2018). *Onward: Cultivating emotional resilience in educators*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp. 38-43
- Ahnee-Benham, M. K. P., & Napier, L. A. (2002). An alternative perspective of educational leadership for change: Reflections on Native/Indigenous ways of knowing. In K. Leithwood, P. Hallinger, G. C. Furman, K. Riley, J. MacBeath, P. Gronn, & B. Mulford (Eds.), *Second international handbook of educational leadership and administration* (pp. 133-166). New York, NY: Springer Science + Business Media.
- Albert, S., & Wheeten, D. A. (1985). Organizational identity. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior: An annual series of analytical essays and critical reviews* (pp. 263-295). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

- Anderson, G. L., Mungal, A., Pinit, M., Scott, J., & Thomson, P. (2013). Policy, equity, and diversity in global context: Educational leadership after the welfare state. In L. C. Tillman & J. J. Scheurich (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational leadership and equity and diversity* (pp. 43-61). New York, NY: Routledge, Chapman, & Hall.
- Anderson, T., & Shattuck, J. (2012). Design-based research: A decade of progress in educational research? *Educational Researcher*, *41*(1), 16-25. doi:10.3102/0013189X11428813
- Anttila-Muilu, S. (2004). Globalized education: The international baccalaureate. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, *13*(4), 364-369.
- Apple, Inc. (2010). Apple launches iPad [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2010/01/27Apple-Launches-iPad.html>
- Borman, J., Feger, S., & Kawakami, N. (2006). *Instructional coaching: Key themes from the literature*. Retrieved from https://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/sites/brown.edu.academics.education-alliance/files/publications/TL_Coaching_Lit_Review.pdf
- Bateson, M.C. (1994) *Peripheral Visions*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Brown, A. L. (1992). Design experiments: Theoretical and methodological challenges in creating complex interventions in classroom settings. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *2*(2), 141-178. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327809jls0202_2
- Brown, T. (2009). *Change by design: How design thinking transforms organizations and inspires innovation*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Brown, T. (n.d.). The circular design guide. Retrieved from <https://www.circulardesignguide.com/>

- Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L., & Grunow, A. (2011). *Getting ideas into action: Building networked improvement communities in education*. Retrieved from https://www.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/bryk-gomez_building-nics-education.pdf
- Burbules, N. C., & Torres, C. A. (Eds.). (2000). *Globalization and education: Critical perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cambridge, J. (2002). Global product branding and international education. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 1(2), 227-243. doi:10.1177/147524002764248158
- Cambridge, J., & Thompson, J. (2004). Internationalism and globalization as contexts for international education. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education*, 34(2), 162-175. doi:10.1080/0305792042000213994
- CarTV. (2016, November 17). *2016 Audi smart factory—Future of Audi production* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqCbYd8O8MU>
- Christensen, C. M., Horn, M. B., & Johnson, C. W. (2008). *Disrupting class: How disruptive innovation will change the way the world learns*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Clifford, D. (2017). *Equity-centered design framework*. Retrieved from <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/equity-centered-design-framework>
- Codrington, S. (2004). Applying the concept of ‘best practice’ to international schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 3(2), 173-188. doi:10.1177/1475240904044386

- Cole, R., Purao, S., Rossi, M., & Sein, M. K. (2005). *Being proactive: Where action research meets design research*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Twenty Sixth International Conference on Information Systems, Las Vegas, NV. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.83.956&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Cook-Sather, A. (2015). Dialogue across differences of position, perspective, and identity: Reflective practice in/on a student-faculty pedagogical partnership program. *Teachers College Record*, 117(2), 1-29. Retrieved from http://repository.brynmawr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1032&context=edu_pubs
- Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 1, 129-169.
- Creative Reaction Labs. (2018). *Equity-centered community design field guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.creativereactionlab.com/eccd-field-guide/>
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dam, R., & Siang, T. (2018, November). *Affinity diagrams: Learn how to cluster and bundle ideas and facts*. Retrieved from <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/affinity-diagrams-learn-how-to-cluster-and-bundle-ideas-and-facts>
- Davis, V. (2015). *Modern professional learning: Connecting PLCs with PLNs* [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/modern-professional-learning-plc-pln-vicki-davis>
- Dawn. (2012). *International baccalaureate: A step forward in education?* Retrieved from <http://beta.dawn.com/news/767355/international-baccalaureate>

- The Design-Based Research Collective. (2003). Design-based research: An emerging paradigm for educational inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 32(1), 5-8.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Touchstone.
- Diamond, J. (1997). *Guns, germs, and steel: The fates of human societies*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.
- DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3(3), 54-70.
- DiAngelo, R. (2015, April 10). White America's racial illiteracy: Why our national conversation is poisoned from the start. *Salon*. Retrieved from https://www.salon.com/2015/04/10/white_americas_racial_illiteracy_why_our_national_conversation_is_poisoned_from_the_start_partner/
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48(147), 60.
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1991). Introduction. In W.W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.) *The new institutionalism in organization analysis* (pp. 1-38). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Doherty, C. (2009). The appeal of the international baccalaureate in Australia's educational market: A curriculum of choice for mobile futures. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 30(1), 73-89. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01596300802643108>
- Downes, S. (2012). *Connectivism and connective knowledge*. Retrieved from <http://www.downes.ca/post/58207>
- Duffy, L. (2016). *A framework for the future*. International Schools Services (ISS). Retrieved from <https://www.iss.edu/who-we-are/about>

- d.school Project Fellows. (n.d.). *“How might we” questions*. Retrieved from <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/how-might-we-questions>
- EdSurge. (2016, August). *Supporting schools to transform teaching and learning: An in-depth report on the service providers supporting schools and districts through school model redesign*. Retrieved from https://d3e7x39d4i7wbe.cloudfront.net/uploads/pdf/file/10/edsurge_supporting_schools_to_transform_teaching_and_learning_2016_abbreviated.pdf
- Edutopia. (2015). Instructional coaching: Driving meaningful tech integration [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/practice/instructional-coaching-driving-meaningful-tech-integration>
- Eubanks, E., Parish, R., & Smith, D. (1997). Changing the discourse in schools. In P. M. Hall (Ed.), *Race, ethnicity, and multiculturalism policy and practice* (151-167). New York, NY: Garland Publishing.
- Evans, A. E. (2013). Educational leaders as policy actors and equity advocates. In L. C. Tillman & J. J. Scheurich (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational leadership for equity and diversity* (pp. 459-475). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ferrick, T. (2013). *Philly schools losing political battle*. Retrieved from <http://axisphilly.org/article/philly-schools-are-losing-the-political-battle/>
- Finette, P. (2017). *Weak ties tie stronger*. Retrieved from <https://read.theheretic.org/weak-ties-tie-stronger-2a6e5b6a366a>
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

- Gaudiosi, J. (2015, October 16). How this med school is using virtual reality to teach students. *Fortune*. Retrieved from <http://fortune.com/2015/10/16/western-university-is-using-virtual-reality-to-teach/>
- Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers: The story of success* [Kindle edition]. New York, NY: Little Brown and Company.
- Glenn, J. C., & Gordon, T. J. (Eds.). (2009). *Futures research methodology version 3.0*. City, State: The Millennium Project. Retrieved from <http://107.22.164.43/millennium/FRM-V3.html>
- Global Citizen Diploma. (n.d.). *The global citizen diploma: The story is more than numbers*. Retrieved from https://gcdiploma.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/gcd3_onesheetv2_full.pdf
- Green, T. L. (2017). Community-based equity audits: A practical approach for educational leaders to support equitable community-school improvements. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 53(1), 3-39. doi:10.1177/0013161X16672513
- Greenberg, J. (2016, March). On its 10th birthday, a short history of Twitter in tweets. *Wired*. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com/2016/03/10th-birthday-short-history-twitter-tweets/>
- Grey, A. (2016). *The 10 skills you will need to thrive in the fourth industrial revolution*. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-10-skills-you-need-to-thrive-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>
- Grubb, D., & Tredway, L. (2010). *Leading from the inside out: Expanded roles for teachers in equitable schools*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Guajardo, M., Guajardo, F., & Casaperalta, E. (2008). Transformative education: Chronicling a pedagogy for social change. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 39(1), 3-22.

- Guajardo, M. A., Guajardo, F., Janson, C., & Militello, M. (2016). *Reframing community partnerships in education: Uniting the power of place and wisdom of people*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Gutiérrez, K. D. (2016). Designing resilient ecologies: Social design experiments and a new social imagination. *Educational Researcher*, 45(3), 187-196.
- Gwande, A. (2017, January 23). The heroism of incremental care. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/23/the-heroism-of-incremental-care>
- Halverson, R., & Shapiro, R. B. (2012). *Technologies for education and technologies for learners: How information technologies are (and should be) changing schools*. Retrieved from http://wcer.wisc.edu/docs/working-papers/Working_Paper_No_2012_06.pdf
- Harris, S. (2016, October). Can we build AI without losing control over it? *TED Talk* [Video file] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nt3edWLgIg>
- Hayden, M., Thompson, J., & Walker, G. (Eds.). (2002). *International education in practice: Dimensions for national and international schools*. London, United Kingdom: Kogan Page.
- Herr, K., & Anderson, G. (2014). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hill, C., Molitor, M., & Ortiz, C. (2016, November 15). *Racism and inequity are products of design. They can be redesigned*. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/equity-design/racism-and-inequity-are-products-of-design-they-can-be-redesigned-12188363cc6a>
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hunter, L., Emerald, E., & Martin, G. (2013). *Participatory activist research in the globalised world: Social change through the cultural professions*. New York, NY: Springer.

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2013a, July 7). *2013 Diploma programme results released*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.ibo.org/blog/2013/07/16/2013-diploma-programme-results-released/>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2013b). *IB learner profile*.

<https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/flyers-and-artworks/learner-profile-en.pdf>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2015). *Brand guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibo.org/digital-toolkit/>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2017a). *2016-2017 annual review*.

<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/9faa0cd4d3eb4c4ab5f239f7342d4547/annual-review-2016-2017-en.pdf>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2017b). *2016-2017 financial review*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/9faa0cd4d3eb4c4ab5f239f7342d4547/financial-overview-2016-2017.pdf>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2018a). *Country: United States*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibo.org/country/US/>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2018b). *Facts and figures*. Retrieved from <http://ibo.org/about-the-ib/facts-and-figures/>

International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO]. (2018c). *IB history timeline*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/flyers-and-artworks/poster-ib-timeline-a3-web-en.pdf>

- jawed. (2005, April 23). *Me at the zoo* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNQXAC9IVRw>
- d.K12 Lab Network. (2018). *K12 Lab equity-centered design deck MASTER* [Google slide deck]. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1S-7fZojfgGs3M3T110vaXZFztRvjmMdkCjJ4UiIQ5i0/edit#slide=id.g1f13b8acbf_0_459
- Kaplan, M. (Ed.). (2016). *The complex world of school redesign: The building blocks and the builders*. Retrieved from <https://www.edsurge.com/research/guides/the-complex-world-of-school-redesign-the-building-blocks-and-the-builders#Stories-of-Change>
- Kantor, H., & Lowe, R. (2016). Educationalizing the welfare state and privatizing education: The evolution of social policy since the New Deal. In W. J. Mathis & T. M. Trujillo (Eds.), *Learning from the federal market-based reforms: Lessons for ESSA* (pp. 37-59). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Knight, J. (n.d.). *Instructional coaching: Eight factors for realizing better classroom teaching through support, feedback, and intensive, individualized professional learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=9584>
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Lambert, L., Zimmerman, D., & Gardner, M. (2016). *Leadership capacity: Pathways to educational wisdom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Li, J. (2012). *Cultural foundations of learning: East meets West*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Lear, J. (2008). *Radical hope: Ethics in the face of cultural devastation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Lee, J. (2017, June 14). *10 creativity challenges to exercise your creative confidence constraint drives creativity*. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/constraint-drives-creativity/10-creativity-challenges-to-exercise-your-creative-confidence-ff6f19ba4241>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- MacDonald, J. P. (1996). *Redesigning school: Lessons for the 21st century*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- MacDonald, J. (2006). The international school industry: Examining international schools through an economic lens. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 5(2), 191-213.
- Martinez, S. L., & Stager, G. S. (2013). *Invent to learn: Making, tinkering, and engineering in the classroom*. Torrance, CA: Constructing Modern Knowledge Press.
- Mathews, J., & Hill, I. (2005). *Supertest: How the International Baccalaureate can strengthen our schools*. Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company.
- Meyer, E. (2014a). *The culture map: Breaking through the invisible boundaries of global business*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.
- Meyer, E. (2014b). *The culture map: Decoding how people think, lead, and get things done across cultures*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Militello, M., Rallis, S. F., & Goldring, E. B. (2009). *Leading with inquiry and action: How principals improve teaching and learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Mills, C. W. (1997). *The racial contract*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Mills, C. W. (2010). Does race exist? *The University of King's College lecture series*
"Conceptions of Race in Philosophy, Literature and Art" [Video file]. Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epAv6Q6da_o
- Mintrop, R. (2016). *Design-based school improvement: A practical guide for education leaders*.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A
framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, 108(6), 1017-1054.
- Mitra, S. (2013). *Build a school in the cloud* [Video file]. Retrieved from
https://www.ted.com/talks/sugata_mitra_build_a_school_in_the_cloud
- Newbery, C. (2014). The continuing quest for inclusion. *IB World*, 70, 24-28. Retrieved from
<http://www.ibo.org/ib-world-archive/september-2014-issue-70/the-continuing-quest-for-inclusion/>
- Palmer, P. (2004). *A hidden wholeness: The journey toward an undivided life* (pp. 6-9). San
Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Palazzo, G., & Hoffrage, U. (2018). *The power of institutions* [Online lecture]. University of
Lausanne. Retrieved from <https://www.coursera.org/learn/unethical-decision-making/lecture/kXWWP/6-2-the-power-of-institutions>
- Pearce, R. (Ed.). (2013). *International education and schools: Moving beyond the first 40 years*.
Broadway, NY: Bloomsbury.
- Philips, S. (2007, July 25). A brief history of Facebook. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2007/jul/25/media.newmedia>
- Phillips, G., & Pound, T. (2003). *The baccalaureate: A model for curriculum reform*. London,
United Kingdom: Routledge.

- Poglinco, S. M., Bach, A. J., Hovde, K., Rosenblum, S., Saunders, M., & Supovitz, J. A. (2003). *The heart of the matter: The coaching model in America's choice schools*. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1044&context=cpre_researchreports
- Powell, W., & Kusuma-Powell, O. (2015). Overcoming resistance to new ideas. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 96(8), 66-69.
- Rammohan, Y. (2012). *International baccalaureate program*. Retrieved from <http://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2012/06/13/international-baccalaureate-program>
- Ramos, G., & Schleicher, A. (2018). *Global competency for an inclusive world*. Retrieved from www.oecd.org/edu
- Regev, M., Honey, U., & Hasson, U. (2013). Modality-selective and modality-invariant neural responses to spoken and written narratives. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 33(40), 15978-15988.
- Resnik, L. B. (2012). The denationalization of education and the expansion of the International Baccalaureate. *Comparative Education Review*, 56(2), 248-269.
- Rigby, J. G., & Tredway, L. (2015). Actions matter: How school leaders enact equity principles. In M. Khalifa, N. W. Arnold, A. F. Osanloo, & C. M. Grant, (Eds.), *Handbook of urban educational leadership* (pp. 329-346). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Rittel, H., & Webber., M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning, *Policy Sciences*, 4, pp. 155–169. [Reprinted in Cross, N. (Ed.). (1984). *Developments in design methodology* (pp. 135–144). Chichester: Wiley & Sons]

- Robinson, A. (2016, December 29). I'm a GP: Will a robot take my job in 2017? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/dec/29/im-a-gp-will-a-robot-take-my-job-in-2017>
- San Pedro, T., & Kinloch, V. (2017). Toward projects in humanization: Research on co-creating and sustaining dialogic relationships. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54(1S), 373S-394S. <http://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216671210>
- Sharot, T., (2012, February). The optimism bias. *TED Talk* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/tali_sharot_the_optimism_bias
- Sharot, T. (2017). *The influential mind*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co.
- Shields, C. M. (2004). Dialogic leadership for social justice: Overcoming pathologies of silence. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(1), 109-132.
- Siemens, G. (2016, July 20). Adaptive learners, not adaptive learning [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <http://www.elearnspace.org/blog/2016/07/20/adaptive-learners-not-adaptive-learning/>
- Sivers, D. (2015). *Anything you want: 40 lessons for a new kind of entrepreneur*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House.
- Snitker, J. (2014). *Why digital learning is here to stay*. Retrieved from <https://elearningindustry.com/why-digital-learning-is-here-to-stay>
- Spillane, J. P., (2013). Diagnosing and designing for schoolhouse practice: Educational administration and instructional improvement. In H. J. Malone (Ed.), *Leading education change: Global issues, challenges and lessons on whole-system reform* (pp. 37-41). New York, NY: Teachers College Press

- Spillane, J. P., & Coldren, A. F. (2011). *Diagnosis and design for school improvement: Using a distributed perspective to lead and manage change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sue, D. W. (2010). Microaggressions, marginality and oppression. In D. W. Sue (Ed.), *Microaggressions and marginality* (p. 22). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Sutcliffe, J. (2012). How George Green's schools brought the international baccalaureate to the east end. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/how-george-greens-school-brought-the-international-baccalaureate-to-the-east-end-7805017.html>
- Sutner, S. (2015). *Tech futurist talks Apple Watch, IoT in healthcare*. Retrieved from <http://internetofthingsagenda.techtarget.com/feature/Tech-futurist-talks-Apple-Watch-IoT-in-healthcare>
- Tamm, J. (2015). Cultivating collaboration: Don't be so defensive! *TEDx Talk* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjSTNv4gyMM>
- Todd, T. (2011). Teachers can step up. *IBWorld Magazine*, 61, 20.
- UNESCO. (2017). *Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments* (Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8). Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259338>
- U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Choices for high school: IB and AP*. Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21984.htm>
- Wæraas, A., & Solbakk, M. N. (2009). Defining the essence of a university: Lessons from higher education branding. *Higher Education*, 57(4), 449-462.

- Wagner, T. (2008). *Even our “best” schools are failing to prepare students for 21st-century careers and citizenship*. Retrieved from <http://www.tonywagner.com/244>
- Walker, A., & Riordan, G. (2010). Leading collective capacity in culturally diverse schools. *School Leadership & Management*, 30(1), 51-63.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13632430903509766>
- Wechler, A. (2017, June 5). The international school surge: Increased demand for a “western” education around the world has reshaped whom these institutions serve. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/06/the-international-school-surge/528792/>
- Weiss, C. H. (1995). The four ‘Is’ of school reform: How interests, ideology, information, and intuition affect teachers and principals. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(4), 571-593.
<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.65.4.05530845t676w50h>
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). Critical discourse analysis: History, agenda, theory and methodology. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods for critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 1-33). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Wylie, M. (2008) Internationalizing curriculum: Framing theory and practice in international schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 7(1), 5-9.

APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board
4N-64 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** ·
www.ecu.edu/ORIC/irb

Notification of Continuing Review Approval: Expedited

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Tosca Killoran](#)
CC: [Matthew Militello](#)
Date: 8/8/2018
Re: [CR00007110](#)
[UMCIRB 17-001473](#)
EQUITY AGENTS

The continuing review of your expedited study was approved. Approval of the study and any consent form(s) is for the period of 8/8/2018 to 8/7/2019. This research study is eligible for review under expedited category #6&7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this study no more than minimal risk.

Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The Investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

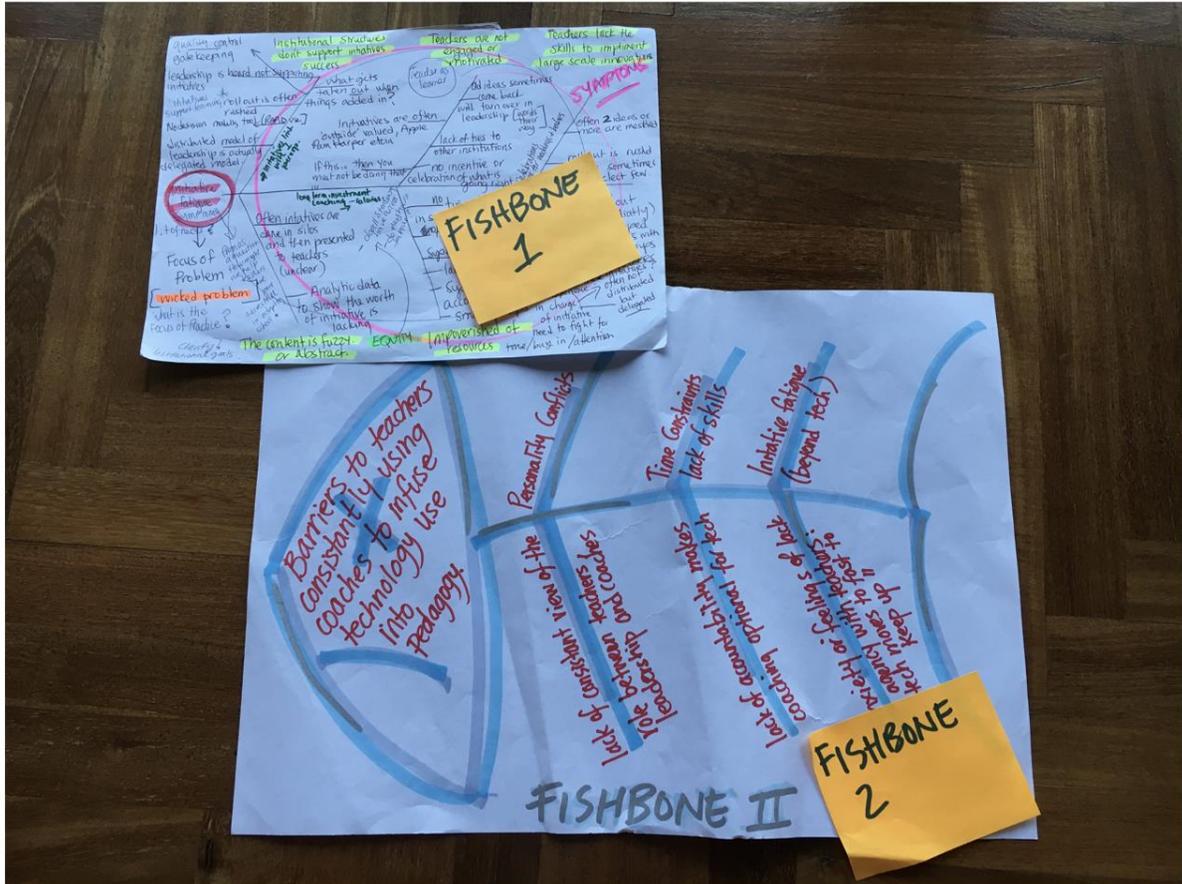
Approved consent documents with the IRB approval date stamped on the document should be used to consent participants (consent documents with the IRB approval date stamp are found under the Documents tab in the study workspace).

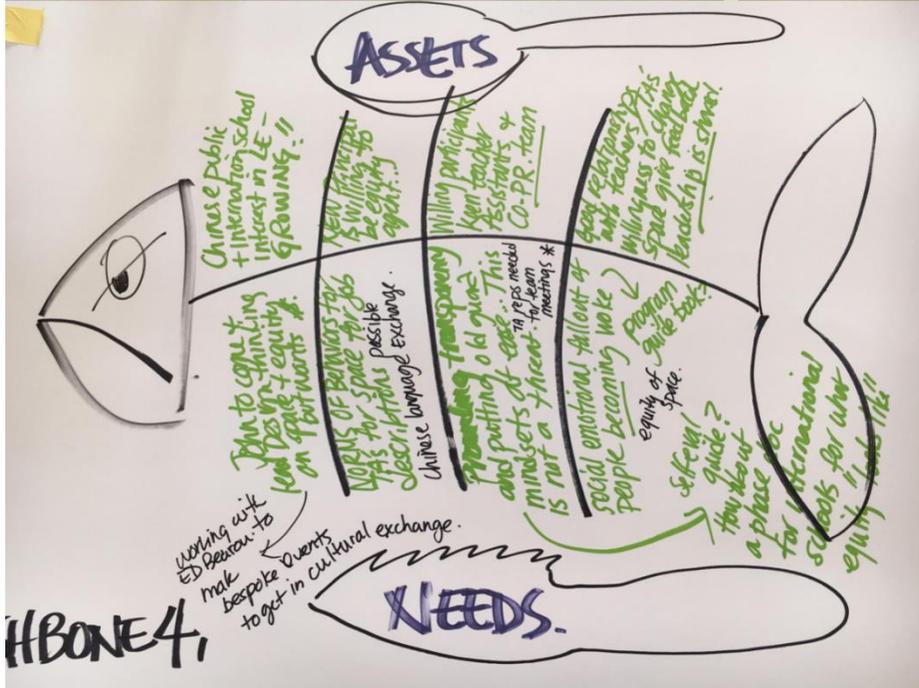
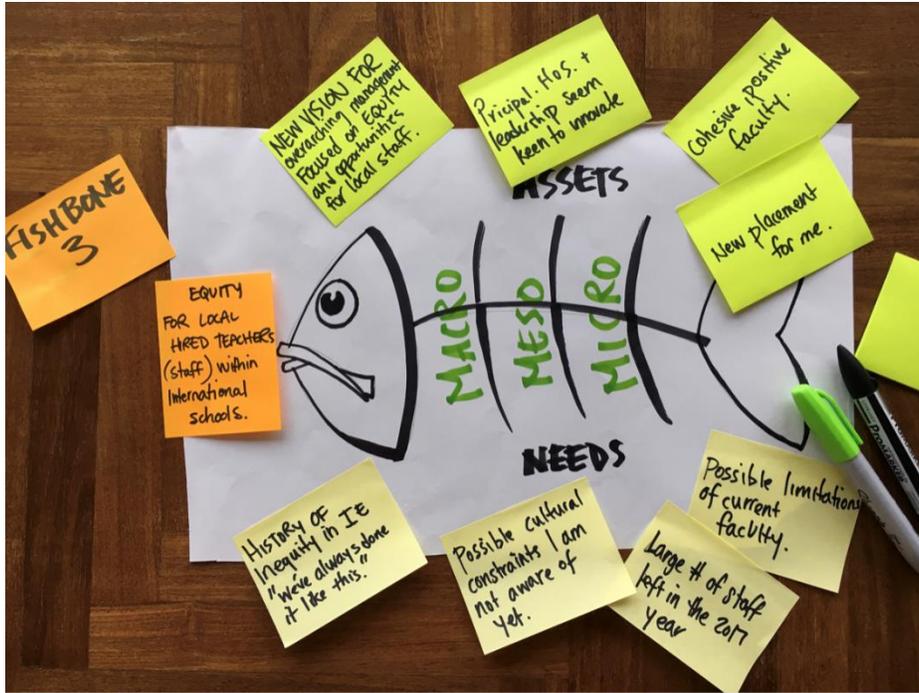
The approval includes the following items:

Document	Description
Killoran, T. AdultConsentForm ECUeD(0.02)	Consent Forms
Killoran, T. FG Protocol ECUeD Proposal(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
Killoran.T. ECUeD Proposal(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

APPENDIX B: FISHBONE DIAGRAMS





APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER FROM INSTITUTION



May 22, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

International Schools Services (ISS) recognizes the benefits of participating in relevant, well-designed research studies proposed by qualified individuals. Approval for conducting such studies is based primarily on the extent to which substantial benefits can be shown for ISS and its mission to create and support world-class schools across the globe that educate students to be thoughtful, imaginative leaders.

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of ISS's **approval** to conduct Tosca Killoran's dissertation study titled "**A Design Guide to Prototyping Reciprocal and Innovative Learning Cultures within International School Contexts**" with participants in our schools. We understand that, as an iterative action-based research design, the title and the scope of the research may change. We also give permission to utilize Level 5, a creativity and innovation studio, to collect data and conduct interviews for Tosca Killoran's dissertation project.

The project meets all of our guidelines, procedures, and safeguards for conducting research within our organization. Moreover, there is ample space for Tosca Killoran to conduct her study, and her project will not interfere with any functions of ISS schools. Finally, the following conditions must be met, as agreed upon by the researcher and ISS:

- Participant data only includes information captured from the stated data collection strategies.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Participants can choose to leave the study without penalty at any time.
- Any issues with participation in the study are reported to the school administration in a timely manner.
- An executive summary of the findings is shared with ISS and the school administration once the study is complete.

In addition to these conditions, the study must follow all of the East Carolina University IRB guidelines.

We are excited to support this important work.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Elizabeth A. Duffy'.

Elizabeth A. Duffy
President

APPENDIX D: WEBSITE AND BLOG FOR CLE



APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community Learning Exchange (CLE) Protocol: Roles and Responsibilities

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to meet with me today. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this focus group interview and will limit the time to one hour. My name is Tosca Killoran. I will serve as the moderator for the interview. I am conducting research as a graduate student at East Carolina University. The interview is part of a study to on equity in international school contexts. Specifically, I will try to address the question How can the relationships between locally hired and internationally hired employees in international school settings be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments? The purpose of the research project is to facilitate a participatory action research project that aims to prototype, and test, a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. The project will start with understanding self and others, through learning exchanges, and move to democratically identified actionable items, and finally work to act and initiate changes within the community in order to develop reciprocity, diminish marginalization and lead to more equitable working environments.

Disclosures:

Your participation in the study is voluntary. It is your decision whether or not to participate and you may elect to stop participating in the interview at any time. The interview will be digitally recorded in order to capture a comprehensive record of our conversation. All information collected will be kept confidential. Any information collected during the session that may identify any participant will only be disclosed with your prior permission. A coding system will be used in the management and analysis of the focus group data with no names or school identifiers associated with any of the recorded discussion. The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured and informal format. Several questions will be asked about both the individual knowledge and skills gained and the organization practices used. It is our hope that everyone will contribute to the conversation. The interview will last approximately one hour.

Interview Questions:

TURN RECORDER ON AND STATE THE FOLLOWING:

“This is Tosca Killoran, interviewing (School’s Name) on (Date) for the Roles and responsibilities portion of the of Practice Study.

CLE Group:

To begin the conversation, please introduce yourself and describe your role on the team and involvement in implementing the program at your school. Start with first person to the right and continue left till all participants have introduced themselves.

Questions:

Question #1 – What would you describe is your main role at this school?

Question #2 – What would you describe as your responsibilities within that role?

Question #3 – Do you feel that your role is equitable or of equal value to all teachers?

Question #4 – In what ways do you collaborate with your team?

Question #5 – What adjustments do you think could be made to your role and responsibilities, if any?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS – VOICE, VALUES & ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community Learning Exchange (CLE) Protocol: Voice and Value

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to meet with me today. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this CLE group interview and will limit the time to one hour. My name is Tosca Killoran. I will serve as the moderator for the interview. I am conducting research as a graduate student at East Carolina University. The interview is part of a study to on equity in international school contexts. Specifically, I will try to address the question How can the relationships between locally hired and internationally hired employees in international school settings be more reciprocal, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments? The purpose of the research project is to facilitate a participatory action research project that aims to prototype, and test, a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. The project will start with understanding self and others, through learning exchanges, and move to democratically identified actionable items, and finally work to act to initiate changes within the community in order to develop reciprocity, diminish marginalization and lead to more equitable working environments.

Disclosures:

Your participation in the study is voluntary. It is your decision whether or not to participate and you may elect to stop participating in the interview at any time.

The interview will be digitally recorded in order to capture a comprehensive record of our conversation. All information collected will be kept confidential. Any information collected during the session that may identify any participant will only be disclosed with your prior permission. A coding system will be used in the management and analysis of the focus group data with no names or school identifiers associated with any of the recorded discussion.

The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured and informal format. Several questions will be asked about both the individual knowledge and skills gained, and the organization practices used. It is our hope that everyone will contribute to the conversation. The interview will last approximately one hour.

Interview Questions:

TURN RECORDER ON AND STATE THE FOLLOWING:

“This is Tosca Killoran, interviewing (School’s Name) on (Date) for the Voice and Value portion of the of Practice Study.

CLE Group:

To begin the conversation, please introduce yourself and describe your role on the team and involvement in implementing the program at your school. Start with first person to the right and continue left till all participants have introduced themselves.

Questions:

Question #1 – In what ways do you feel valued in this community?

Question #2 – What would you describe as the assets you bring to your team?

Question #3 – What are your hopes and dreams for yourself?

Question #4 – In what ways do you collaborate with your team?

Question #5 – What adjustments do you think could be made to your role and responsibilities, if any?

APPENDIX G: ADULT CONSENT FORM

Study ID:UMCIRB 17-001473 Date Approved: 8/31/2017 Expiration Date: 8/30/2018

EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING EQUITABLE AND INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURES WITH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EDUCATORS

East Carolina
University



Informed Consent to Participate in Research Information to Consider Before Taking Part in Research That Has No More Than Minimal Risk

Title of Research Study: EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING EQUITABLE AND INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURES WITH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EDUCATORS

Principal Investigator: Tosca Killoran under the guidance of Dr. Matthew Militello
Dr. Militello: Institution, Department or Division: College of Education
Address: 220 Ragsdale, ECU, Greenville, NC 27858
Telephone #: (919) 518.4008

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

The purpose of this study is to prototype and test a reciprocal, equitable, and innovative learning culture within an international school context. The project will start with understanding self and others through focus group meetings, and move to democratically identified actionable items, and finally work to take action to initiate changes within the community in order to develop reciprocity, diminish marginalization, and lead to more equitable working environments.

You are being invited to participate because you are either (a) a teacher at the participating school, (b) a leader at the participating school or (c) a locally hired staff member at the participating school.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?

There are no known reasons for why you should not participate in this research study.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?

You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research will be conducted at your school. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is approximately 60 minutes.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to participate in one or more interviews and focus groups meetings. Interviews and focus groups will be audio/video recorded. If you want to participate in an interview but do not want to be audio recorded, the interviewer will turn off the audio recorder. If you want to participate in a focus group but do not want to be video recorded, you will be able to sit out of field of view of the video camera and still be audio recorded. Survey, interview, and focus group questions will focus on the leadership of teaching and learning as it relates to culture, roles and responsibilities, voice and value given to teachers within international schools.

What might I experience if I take part in the research?

Date: _____

1 of 3

EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING EQUITABLE AND INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURES WITH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EDUCATORS

We do not know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. We do not know if you will benefit from taking part in this study. There may not be any personal benefit to you but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?

We will not be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Will it cost me to take part in this research?

It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?

ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates human research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the North Carolina Department of Health, and the Office for Human Research Protections.
- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify you.

How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?

The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the data collection and data analysis process. Consent forms and data from interviews and focus groups meetings will be maintained in a secure, locked location and will be stored for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

What if I decide I do not want to continue in this research?

You can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if you stop and you will not be criticized. You will not lose any benefits that you normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator Tosca Killoran at ToscaKilloran@gmail.com

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director of the ORIC at 252-744-1971.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?

The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.

Date: _____

2 of 3

EQUITY AGENTS: CREATING EQUITABLE AND INNOVATIVE LEARNING CULTURES WITH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EDUCATORS

- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

Participant's Name (PRINT)	Signature	Date
-----------------------------------	------------------	-------------

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT)	Signature	Date
---	------------------	-------------

Date: _____

3 of 3

APPENDIX H: INVITE EMAIL FOR SURVEY



Erin Madonna
Tue 2/13, 1:41 PM

Reply all |

Hello, Wonderful People!

We need to collect some mid-year data on how the work we are doing in Learning Exchanges is translating to application within the classroom...is our work impacting teaching practices? To do this, we need your help!

Below is the link to a quick survey. Your participation is hugely helpful as the more data we collect, the better we are able to adjust our practice and share our findings with leadership. As always, the data you provide will remain anonymous. We will not connect your name to any of the information we share.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. We appreciate all the energy and time you have put into our collaboration and hope that, with this data, we can make clear our wins and areas for growth.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=9XauyCMbQEKgPmI5hKQU3b-W28DSP9NAINLJGFWAijM1UN0ROTE4zOVIIVDg0QU9RUTRLTE9ONzNYNy4u>



Fill | Learning Exchange Check-In

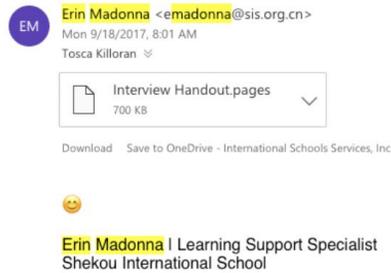
forms.office.com

We are collecting some data on the impact of Learning Exchanges. Please take a moment to share your thoughts with us. Thank you!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

♥ Vivian, Tosca, and Erin

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (EMAIL)



[Thank you, so much, for participating in our interview. Look over the questions below to familiarize yourself with what we will be asking you tomorrow. If there are any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, please just let us know before we start the interview. We are so excited to talk with you!

Your interview is scheduled for _____ at _____. We will meet at LEVEL5.

- What is your name? If you have a Chinese and an English name, please tell us both.
- How old are you?
- Where were you born and where is your hometown?
- How long have you worked at SIS?
- Have you worked at other international schools? If so, which one and for how long?
- What is your level of education? If you went to University, what did you study? Which school did you attend?
- Have you traveled abroad? Where?
- Do you have children? Do you live with extended family (parents or grandparents?)
- Share something about yourself? What do you love to do in your free time? What brings you joy? What are you interested in? This does not need to be work related.
- What special skills do you have that could contribute to the work you do with students and teachers at SIS?
- Do you feel fulfilled at work? Valued and respected? Do you want to be more involved in supporting students and collaborating with teachers?
- When do you feel proud of yourself?
- What was your last job?
- If you have children, do you see any connections/differences between parenting and working with students at SIS? Can you explain?
- What do you love about your work? What frustrates you about your work?
- Share something unique about you that we don't know.

**APPENDIX J: COMPLETED ACTIONS FOR PAR CYCLE TWO: CLE, QI
CHALLENGE, AND STAFF MEETING**

	Date	Participants	Evidence Gathered	Outputs	Analysis of Data Led to...
WeChat Conversation	03/29/18	CPR	Partner Check	Idea for relationship building challenge or game	CLE
CLE (Ideation for Team Building Challenge)	04/2/18	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 2 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 8 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Video Photos	Calendar of ideas for 5min challenges to build teams Rich discussion	Greater evidence for theme of Voice
Liz Duffy LEVEL5 Event: Designing Schools for Equity	02/21-22/18	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 3 <i>n</i> (Chinese public-school teachers) = 7 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 0 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 2	Photos Video Artifacts	Action plans for designing equity in a variety of school settings	Ways in which to approach upcoming CLEs
Coding Data From Ideation CLE	04/30/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 0 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 0 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 1	Codes of categories for challenge	New document for review by CLE group	Reviewed Document
CLE Prototype Team Building Challenge	05/07/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 4 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 4 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Photos Video Artifacts	White board brainstorm to fill gaps Coded document	Prototyped Challenge
Permission from Leadership for short staff meeting session	????		Email WeChat conversations		
Creation of Qi Challenge for Team Building on Office 365 Forms	08/04/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = ? <i>n</i> (TAs) = ? <i>n</i> (CPR) = 1	365 Forms	Email Forms	Data for Qi Challenge analysis
Early Learning & Elementary Staff meeting unroll of Qi Challenge	08/10/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = ? <i>n</i> (TAs) = ? <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3	Google slide deck Photos	Information and hype from teachers	
CLE Return initial get together	03/12/2018	<i>n</i> (teachers) = 9 <i>n</i> (TAs) = 8 <i>n</i> (CPR) = 3 <i>n</i> (leadership) = 2	Google slide deck Photos	Reconnecting community	Design for first CLE: Discreet-skill session
Data collection, collation, and analysis from Qi Challenge	Ongoing				

APPENDIX K: QI CHALLENGE

Community Learning Exchange 7-Week Qi Challenge

Building relationships of trust are foundational to great teams within international schools. However, building relationships takes effort and time. The Community Learning Exchange Group at SIS recognizes that teachers have very little time to spare and so created a simple and fun challenge for teachers, co-teachers, Chinese Lǎoshī, TAs and others within the community to engage in. This challenge helps teams to; foster constructionist listening, create community agreements, recognize privilege and power, engage in self-reflection, forge alliances, and produce equity-centered design.

So, Why Qi?

The number 7 (七) in **Mandarin** sounds like “even” (齊, pinyin: qí), so it is a good number for relationships. As such, the Community Learning Exchange Group have created the 齊 #qichallenge for team building.

How it works:

Each day you will be emailed a short 5 -7 min task specifically designed for the foreign teacher and Chinese Lǎoshī, or TA. Your task is to complete the challenge together and reflect on the task that you completed the previous day. The reflection is a ★ 5-star rating.

★ = not helpful to team building

★ ★ = somewhat helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ = I am not sure if this was helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ ★ = helpful to team building

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ = super helpful to team building

The outcome:

The teams that complete the entire 7 weeks (35 challenges) will receive Equity Agent certificates and a gift certificate for a meal to share together, as well as the knowledge that they have worked towards building cultural capacity and stronger relationships within the team.

Learn more:

The Community Learning Exchange meets once a week to build cultural capacity, learn tech tools, discover inclusive strategies and provide free professional development. You can learn more about what we do within the Community Learning Exchange by visiting our website: <https://www.learningexchanges.org/>.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Learn each other's name or nickname in heritage language. Don't forget to high 5 at the end of the first challenge day! 16 responses	Post a photo and bio of every member of the team on the classroom door for parents and the community to see and celebrate.	Ensure that all members of the team have admin privileges to digital tools and apps (e.g. laptops and Seesaw).	Look around the room you teach and work in. Discuss: How are teacher, Lǎoshī and student spaces equitable?	Take a selfie with the teaching team and post it on social media using the hashtag #qfchallenge
Week 2	Join the Community Learning Exchange to learn new tech tools and build cultural capacity.	Share one fact about your higher education with your colleague.	DITCH THE RULES, instead Create community Agreements. Use the blog to help http://www.education.ca/blog/ditch-the-rules	Share your deal breaker or pet peeve with one another.	Arrange a grade-level potluck lunch.
Week 3	Discuss preferred cultural differences in how to set tasks for the week.	Have a WeChat sticker battle.	Tell a funny story from your childhood.	Share privileges you enjoy (position, age, gender, family, language, socio-economics, education) Use sentence stems. "I've been lucky to..."	Make a green screen music video together. Share with students.
Week 4	Interview one another about likes. Buy something on TaoBao to get to know each other likes and dislikes.	Perform a skit for students modelling talking to elders respectfully from both cultures.	Set 2 short term goals with each other to achieve before winter break.	Send a WeChat group message from Lǎoshī, TA, and teacher to parents.	Create a music playlist for different learning experiences within the classroom.
Week 5	Fill in survey for this challenge. Each participant fills in this survey by themselves.	Post an insight you have learned about the Lǎoshī, TA or teacher you work with on social media.	Search about each other's culture on the internet. Pick a stereotype or misconceptions to discuss.	Spend 10 mins in dynamic mindfulness with one another.	Share your most embarrassing moment in life.
Week 6	Take each other out for a meal (teacher hosts, Lǎoshī, TA hosts)	Review the format of lessons: Do we want to sit in a large circle to be able to face each other and share stories? Do we want to be at round tables to support small group discussion, what does sitting above others say about power within the classroom? Who sits on the floor? What does this mean for each culture? Review and reflect.	As a team, take time to review the physical space of classrooms through an equity lens.	Bring a snack from your culture and share what it is and where to buy it in your town or city.	Find a time in your schedules to have an entire team planning meeting, inclusive of teachers, TAs, and Lǎoshī.
Week 7	Create an opportunity for Lǎoshī, or TAs to teach components of lessons.	Invite partner to watch your favorite movie.	Create and edit class blog together.	Walk and Talk- go for a stroll and reflect on the last month together.	Fill in survey for this challenge together.

