The Power of Collaboration: Learning Language and Culture by Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to present a means for international college students in higher education to apply their academic knowledge and language (Cummins, 2008) to increase their local knowledge of school culture and intercultural competence (Neuliep, 2020) by working with teachers and students in a local K-12 school community. This was accomplished through a co-teaching K-12 program sponsored by a large public university that provides international college students of any major an opportunity to have a cultural and language learning experience through student teaching in a public middle school. The researcher, an ESL major doctoral student, along with a fellow international college graduate student teacher pursuing a degree in food science, was partnered with two middle school teachers, observed an ESL and a science classroom, co-designed new lesson plans, and co-taught a full day of lessons weekly over one semester. These collaborative experiences benefited local students and teachers, as the ESL college students were able to provide linguistic, sensory, cultural, and interactive supports for content matter (Gibbons, 2009), along with innovative ideas and resources funded by grants. As a result, the ESL graduate students had an immersive learning experience on communicating more effectively in a school setting, both academically and interculturally. In conclusion, this collaboration program benefits international college students by developing their language proficiency, broadening their cultural perspective, and achieving their educational goals by teaching local middle school students.

Key words: *Collaboration, intercultural competence, academic language, International (ESL) college students*

Introduction

In the US, the population of international students has exponentially increased within the last decade (Institute of International Education, 2019). This phenomenon might be seen as internationalization of higher education. However, as De Wit (2017) mentioned in nine misconceptions of internationalization, a high number of international students does not guarantee or is not equivalent to internationalization. Still, the argument can be made that the prevalence of international students does matter, as it influences universities to prepare for internationalization. In this way, the increase in international students has brought about a change in higher education. The weight of the responsibility to adapt has not been left to individual foreign students; rather, the increase in international students has led to change initiatives in universities.

Hudzik (2014) uses different vocabulary to define 'higher education internationalization'. Hudzik points out that this term is a more comprehensive, strategic, and embedded institutionalization than 'globalization or international education' which were used in two decades ago. Many universities in the US have developed strategic internationalization plans, including a Midwestern public university. For example, one large public university has implemented the plan, new synergies which involves global leadership to meet the challenges of the future. This university community recognizes diverse global perspectives and promote collaborations.

Previously, it is commonly believed that internationalization only realized through traveling or occurred being abroad. However, the era of the internet and mobility, along with the

The Power of Collaboration

ease of international travel and communication, has lifted time and place restrictions. Thus, internationalization at home as well as abroad is plausible (Knight, 2014; Beelen & Jones, 2015). For instance, the population of international students in the US has been increased and the local (domestic) students have more opportunities to meet culturally and linguistically diverse students and interact with them in their home country, which is a new phenomenon across the world.

Knight describes internationalization at home as college students being able to develop intercultural competence and comprehension, while internationalization abroad encompasses the mobility of students, faculty, and programs. This ideal distinction means that international students in the US can improve their skills and intercultural competence while domestic students in the US can do the same through active interaction with each other. It is not that simple for interaction doesn't occur naturally. Due to the large number of international students on campuses, there are many other factors which affect internationalization. One the one hand, some students who are technically studying abroad are virtually at home when it comes to their social circle and receive their social support for their culture shock and homesickness. For example, a Chinese graduate student may come to the US to study but still work with an advisor from China, have lab mates from China, and roommates from China speaking Chinese most of the time except the lectures in English. On the other hand, other international students actively join in communities and have some chances to meet domestic students.

De Wit, Gacel-Ávila, & Jones (2017) emphasize the role of universities and conclude that the core role of universities needs to be redefined. They argue that universities need to create an environment, with sustainability and equity, for college students to understand the world as a global community and to develop into global citizens. International students should be able to get support systematically from the university level instead of needing to seek help individually.

However, achieving internationalization in higher education is not a goal itself, but means to a goal as De Wit mentioned. Helping college students be prepared for global citizens would be the goal of higher education internationalization.

Many universities have newly developed programs to help international students improve their language proficiency. One such program at Purdue University is a community service opportunity for international college students to collaborate with teachers at a local middle school and experience the local K-12 culture. This program allows international students to play an active and useful role in the local community, to share their knowledge and culture, and improve their language skills and cultural understanding.

The purpose of this study is to present this means for ESL college students in higher education to apply their academic knowledge and *academic language* (Cummins, 1979; 1981a; 2008) while increasing their local knowledge of K-12 school culture and their *intercultural competence.* Cummins' two terms such as social language called basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and academic language called cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) are crucial for students' academic success. It is not uncommon to have an intercultural classroom at a university and for international students to need to adjust to a US campus (Neuliep, 2020). Through the experience of working together, international college students, local K-12 teachers, and middle school students increased their cultural understanding of each other and what it means to be part of an internationalized campus and a globalized community.

Issues and Challenges that Motivated the Research

In the 21st century, the international student population in higher education in the US has increased dramatically (IIE, 2019). While universities have prepared programs to meet the needs

of this international population, international graduate students still face challenges when it comes to teaching both native English-speaking students and international students or working solely as a research assistant (Akanwa, 2015).

One problem is that, due to the high population of international students and professors, it is far too easy for international graduate students to immerse themselves in social groups made up primarily of people from their own country, leading them to have fewer opportunities to interact or communicate with local domestic students or students from countries other than their own (Trice, 2003). Many international college students live with students from their home country or those that have the same first language (L1) or home language; unless these students make the effort to make friends outside this bubble or to participate in extra-curricular activities or student organizations, they tend to primarily hang out with same L1 students. This behavior is typical when it comes to studying abroad (Atkinson, 2011). Then, while international students are abroad, they may still feel like they are in their home country due to lack of interaction with local students and lack of opportunities to directly experience local culture. In addition, the structure of most language and culture programs further reinforces the tendency for international students to interact only with other international students. This research tapped into this issue, show how both international students and domestic students can develop intercultural competence and contribute to the field.

Foreign students were used interchangeably with international students; however, international students are more neutral term. Foreign students were gaining an unintentional negative connotation in academic fields such as second language studies and international education (Hann, 2009). Foreign students who are non-native speakers need to learn English as a second language were distinguished from the domestic students who are native English speakers.

In this reason, the term English as a Second Language (ESL) has been stigmatized as foreign students are not good at English in deficit model. Recently, the language and culture of international students started to be recognized as asset and resources to share, not to be ignored or to be fixed as problems (Wright, 2017).

Another topic is learning by teaching (Aslan 2015). The issue is that many graduate student programs focus on research and do not have mandatory practicums for teaching, and if they do, they involve working in a university setting with college students, made up of either domestic students, international students, or a mix of both. In addition, most international graduate students have not had prior teaching experience, contributing to the difficulty in dealing with diverse students' needs and an unfamiliar school culture while trying to adapt to a new environment. In contrast, graduate students whose focus is on research assistantships or writing dissertations have greatest challenges in developing their oral English proficiency (Akanwa 2015). For instance, during the time I participated in the ESL program for graduate students at a large public university, the teaching practicum was not mandatory for ESL students, whose focus is more on the theoretical background of ESL than teaching. Unless a graduate program is in the field of education, this is not uncommon.

Thus, I as a participant researcher was fascinated to learn of a special community a large public university offered for teaching practicum. I first heard about it from a visiting international scholar who decided to join the program while doing a postdoc at the university. She was a great writer and researcher, but her oral English proficiency was not fluent. She shared details with me of the challenging but rewarding experience she had teaching middle school students and working with teachers in a K-12 school setting. This program was just what I had been looking for, so I gladly joined and started my study to examine how teachers and students

The Power of Collaboration

interact in a local K-12 school setting and to better understand the local community culture. In my report, participant researcher perspective allows me to research, observe, and take part in the rituals, interactions, and activities of the group (Musante & DeWalt, 2010)

Local Context

The research involved the partnership of two educational institutions, a large, public university, and a local middle school in the Midwest. A large public university offers the Graduate School GK-12 Program as part of their curriculum. This GK-12 program was developed over a decade ago. The program was started in the College of Science and was initially open only for science major students. At first, only science students had opportunities to work with middle school teachers; however, it has been expanded to include any interested graduate student, post-doc, or visiting scholar in different disciplines. GK-12 fellows can even earn either college credit for participating in this practicum course or receive a certificate for voluntary work. A teacher representative from the middle school has worked with Purdue on this program since it was started, and she has recruited volunteer teachers to participate in the program as well. Once the first meeting is held to match up GK-12 fellows with middle school teachers, the practicum structure consists primarily of one-on-one co-teaching and workshops with other participants.

Participating GK-12 fellows need to complete the following: First, they are required to attend regular training workshops provided by the program. Second, GK-12 fellows are required to spend one full academic day a week for 10 weeks in a classroom working with a mainstream teacher at the partnering middle school. If they cannot stay for an entire school day, they may split their time into two days per week to complete their hours. Third, GK-12 fellows are required to develop a standards-based lesson plan aligned with their own research theme and

implement it. While they are preparing the lesson and hands-on activities, they may apply for a service-learning grant from the university to support the classroom. Finally, at the end of the program, GK-12 fellows must submit their finalized lesson plan, weekly reflections, and a final essay reflecting on their experiences at the middle school. During the time of this research, the GK-12 program director was a professor in a science department; the program director, along with a graduate student coordinator, held the workshops, monitored the fellows' teaching at the middle school, and collected the lesson plans and reflective essays.

Table 1. Roles of Graduate Students (Pre-scholars) in the GK-12 Program

Roles at the University	Roles at the Middle School
Apply for the GK-12 Program	Partner with middle school teachers
Participate in regular workshops	Spend one full day per week in the classroom
Apply for a service learning (research) grant	Assist the mainstream teachers
Submit the lesson plan	Create a lesson plan based on their own research
Submit the weekly reflections	Send the lesson to the partner teacher
Attend final meeting and survey	Deliver the lesson for middle school students

I, the researcher, did this program twice and it was interesting to witness a change in participant demographics in the program as it also reflects a part of internationalized campus. When I first join the program, the program coordinator and most participants were domestic students. However, the second time I participated in the program, the program coordinator and most participants were international students. The director at the time of this writing is a native English speaking science professor who is not from the US.

The Power of Collaboration

Research Questions

Three research questions were addressed in this study:

1) How can international students improve their language proficiency and experience other cultures through this program?

2) What kind of academic competence and social-cultural competence do college students get through this co-teaching program?

Research Methods and Theoretical Approach

Data Collection Procedures

This study is a single case study with qualitative data. Data was collected over two academic semesters, throughout the Fall 2016 and Fall 2017 semesters, as I, the researcher, participated in this program twice. Date collection included classroom observation notes, reflection journals, lesson plans, teaching reflections, meeting observation notes, and a survey completed by the middle school students after the lessons were delivered.

In the Fall 2016 semester, I, as a Ph.D. student in ESL, worked with a mainstream teacher and 7th grade students in an English Language Arts classroom, and in the Fall 2017 semester, I worked with two mainstream teachers at a local middle school along with another graduate student, as we were both assigned the same classrooms. The program director was the same both times, but the first program coordinator was a domestic science major graduate student and the second an international technology education graduate student. There were seven and 10 diverse graduate student participants respectively in the program with majors in a variety of colleges, including science, engineering, education, and liberal arts.

During each semester I participated, I took notes and submitted my reflection journals to the coordinator once a week. The coordinator sent it back to me with comments. After consulting with the mainstream teacher whom I was paired with, I wrote the lesson plan and sent it to the mainstream teacher and to the coordinator via email. I got feedback from both the mainstream teachers and the other participants in the program. After approval from the mainstream teacher, I revised the lesson and prepared it to be delivered. The coordinator visited the classroom to observe on each participant's teaching day and later provided his notes. He also recorded some parts of the lessons and took some photos. Some of the middle school students' work was preserved via photos. The week after I gave the lesson, I distributed a paper copy of a short questionnaire I had prepared and collected the students' responses with help from the mainstream teacher. In the last meeting workshop at a university, the co-teaching program college student participants also filled out a short questionnaire about the program and celebrated their successful completion.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data I collected in 2016 and 2017 was analyzed as a single qualitative case study. NVivo 12, a software tool, was used to analyze and code the whole files. Data included my reflection journals, lesson plan preparation process, emails, meeting notes, personal communications with the mainstream teachers, and the survey of the middle school students. The survey questions were evaluated by the main teachers. Students' responses were analyzed using a quantitative data analysis in Qualtrics; the rest of the data was analyzed using categorized coding schemes (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

The data was reviewed several times to look for patterns and revisited the research questions to identify themes to provide answers. I used the method of narrative analysis for observations and

notes and the method of discourse analysis for personal communications in a typical school environment.

Results and Discussion

In this study, I participated the program as a participant researcher and a participant observer (Musante & DeWalt, 2010) and could describe the findings from my reflections and observations through two semesters. Based on research context and data, the reflections on collaboration with middle school teachers and students and observation experiences on working with college student are presented. The findings and discussion would be presented, and two research questions would be answered based on the data analysis.

1) How can this program help international students to improve their language proficiency and experience other cultures?

International students who participated in this program had the opportunity to improve their language proficiency through regular real-life practice in a K-12 school setting. Depending on the audience, they also had the opportunity to develop their academic language (Cummins, 1981). Additionally, they gained intercultural competence through new cultural experiences and by sharing their own experiences.

Active language users: just keep talking. In my experience, international college students who are more focused on writing research papers have fewer opportunities to speak in English in social and academic contexts. In contrast, before, during, and after this program, participants are required to use all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Program participants had many opportunities to experience different genres of language. School settings can be defined as workplaces with multiple genres of spoken and written language. According to Koester (2006)'s workplace spoken language genres, college students

were supposed to use *unidirectional* (lecturing, service encounters, procedural and directive, discourse, and reporting), *collaborative* (arrangement, decision-making, discussion, evaluating, and liminal talk), and *non-transactional* (office gossip and small talk) spoken language (pp. 33-34). In addition, college students are required to use a variety of written genres, such as emails, technical reports, progress reports/updates, reflections, schedules, lesson plans, observation notes, and activity directions. This is relevant as the GK-12 program participants experienced a variety of different genres that were used in a specific fluid context, not just in linguistic static text (Flowerdew, 2011). Program participants were socializing while receiving written feedback on their writing (Tim, 2020), and they experienced "co-learning" through co-teaching.

Students who did not feel confident about their spoken or written English were still able to participate meaningfully in the community, as there were no grammar-focused evaluations on English accuracy but on English fluency for communication. Rather, the regular workshops for teaching were held on campus and in the workshops, college students could focus on talking a lot using academic language and discuss how to speak differently by changing the audiences from other college students to middle school students. There was a strong emphasis on peer review, peer support, constructive criticism, and collaboration in a safe and unintimidating learning space in both a university and a middle school setting.

Program workshops: A flipped classroom. Although the workshops were set up as a kind of flipped classroom, program participants needed to read and learn the materials prior to attending. Schoology, a social networking service and online learning environment, was used as platform to share materials and assignments. At the workshop, program participants did not have to listen to a long lecture, but rather participated in active discussions with each other, asked questions and received responses, engaged in activities, and checked in about their progress in

the program. During the workshops, participants were required to give oral presentations, engage in discussions, and verbalize their opinions to fellow participants. They also needed to read emails and other materials such as Power Point slides and other interactive home assignments before and after the workshops. Additionally, each workshop ended with social conversation over dinner and menu was selected by participants.

Workshop meetings provided a variety of different speaking and listening opportunities, with fun activities such as "body relax," (physical movement) a game called "Icebreaker," a riddle-based Bingo game, jokes, dramatization, magic tricks, and role playing, all of which effectively promote oral language development for ELL students (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017, p. 179). Meetings started with a warm-up which first emphasized social language, i.e., Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills, and then moved on to academic language, i.e., Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (Cummins, 1981a).

The workshops also provided GK-12 program participants with a foundational background in teaching and gave them the opportunity to discuss how to apply these in the middle school classroom. The following topics were discussed: "What are learning objectives?" "Absorb-Do-Connect model" (Horton, 2012, p.12), "How to use a 5E-instructional model" (Atkin & Karplus, 1962; Tayler et al., 2007), "What is a lesson plan?" and "How to create effective lesson plans."

At the end of each meeting, participants had dinner together and talked freely in a relaxed environment. Over the course of the three workshops, international students got to know each other, shared their concerns, supported each other, and prepared for teaching.

In the middle school, program fellows also had many opportunities to practice their English skills. They needed to listen to the mainstream teachers, make comments, and receive

oral feedback from teachers and students. They had one-on-one communications with the mainstream teachers who were partnered with them, either via email or orally during breaks or lunch time. In addition, program fellows wrote reflection journals and lesson plans, got feedback, and then revised them in English.

For their first three weeks at the middle school, program fellows were primarily required to use their listening skills. As time went on, they needed to use their speaking skills more frequently while co-teaching for a full school day, about 7.5 hours. This time commitment is a salient feature of this program, as international college students are not usually exposed to English for extended periods of time on a daily basis. In contrast, ELL students in K-12 are regularly exposed to English during the school day. College students were experiencing the same amount of time of long school day and listened to the repeated lessons in several different periods.

Program fellows primarily exercised their academic English while observing classes, assisting main teachers, and co-teaching; fellows had opportunities to practice their social English during casual chats with students and teachers during breaks or lunch time. Perhaps less importantly, since most college students are already familiar with different genres of written communication, they also got to practice their academic and social reading and writing skills through journaling and email correspondence.

Through participation in this program, international college students had ample opportunities to use different language modes, both oral and written English and formal and informal language, in a university as well as a middle school setting. They were regularly required to speak on specific teaching-related topics and given corrective feedback but did not have to worry about being graded (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017). In this way, they were able to

improve their oral communication skills. By the definition of Krashen (1982), this program provided a low-affective filter area for international college students, where they could learn in an emotional safe space. In addition, the context-embedded context (Cummins, 1980) of the middle school environment allowed the international program fellows to learn language rapidly (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017, p.22).

Active culture learners: Intercultural competence. The demographics of the participants in the program was more diverse in 2017 than in 2016. Of the 10 participants in 2017, there were four students from China, two from India, two from Korea, one from Turkey, and one from the US. Of the seven participants in 2016, there were three from the US, two from China, and two from Korea. The coordinator in 2016 was an US American domestic graduate student who received his K-12 education in the US, and the coordinator in 2017 was a Chinese international graduate student who received his K-12 education in China. Both years, the teachers at the partnered middle school were all L1 English speakers. More ESL international college students received benefits from this program.

Teacher Training. Teaching training took place based on a needs analysis of the program participants, curriculum support, and financial support. Before the first training workshop, program fellows were asked to share their anticipated concerns and read Power Point materials via email communication. Then during the first workshop, they were introduced to details about the program, the middle school, and the K-12 students. A representative teacher from the middle school attended the first workshop to explain the logistics. She addressed several important topics: weather check, test schedule, office visit, how to reschedule a visit to the middle school, how to email and communicate with the middle school teachers, and the dress code (business casual). It was interesting for me to learn there is a dress code for teachers in

middle schools, as there was no specific dress code for teaching at a university setting. It seems like that there are more rules for teachers at middle schools. There were 27 questions and concerns brought up by the 10 participants, and all were discussed in the first workshop. They could be categorized into three themes: K-12 school culture, teaching work, and program inquiries.

K-12 school culture questions. Although program participants received basic information on the program, they had many inquiries about working in a public middle school. For instance, they inquired about the class size, lesson times, what classroom they would be in, and what partner teachers would they have.

Cultural Difference

School setting   K-12 School culture vs. University culture

Teachers   Teacher at a middle school vs. TA/RA at a university

Language   Domestic vs. International

Content   Different subjects: English Language Arts (ELA), Science, and English as a Second Language (ESL)

Academic Language   Language use in each classroom

Teaching work concerns. Program participants had the most questions (13 total) about teaching, mostly concerns about how to teach middle school students. Since program fellows were already familiar with working and learning at the university level, they wanted to know how to scaffold or differentiate their teaching for younger students. Their concerns included: what to teach, how to teach, how in depth they can teach, what are lesson plans and can they get a sample, how to interact with students, what strategies they can use, how they can implement their research in teaching, what their roles are, how to draw students' interest and attention,

research possibilities, how to deal with cultural differences in classrooms, and what are the rules and expectations of the mainstream teachers.

Program inquires. Students also had technical questions regarding the reflection journal due date, what to do when needing to reschedule their visit to the middle school, how to collaborate with teachers inside and/or outside of the classroom, how to do classroom management, getting course credit, and program particularization.

Table 2. Language & Culture Learning at Workshops

	Workshop Agenda
Oral Language	• Engagement Activities: Oral language practice
Academic Language	• Learning Objectives/ Lesson Plan: K-12 / Assessment & Evaluation / Teaching Rehearsal
Culture	• Middle school logistics • Talk with Dinner
Writing	• Weekly reflection Journal / Lesson plan

2) What kind of academic competence and social-cultural competence do college students get through this co-teaching program?

Co-teaching training at the middle school. All the international participants spent their K-12 years in their home country. Thus, they were not familiar with the culture of a US public middle school. Through this intensive 10-week experience teaching at a middle school, they got to know the community and learned how to teach middle school students, including some ELL students. As an example, I have reported the following findings from my case study of both semesters in the program.

Phase I: Adapting to a New Cultural Environment as an Observer & Assistant Teacher

       Cultural Differences. College students learned as an apprentice from the expert teachers how to adjust cultural difference between university and middle school through either explicit teaching from main teachers or careful observations. When college students prepared for their teaching materials, they revised the content to fit for the proper target audience in middle school. In ELA class, samples of grammar exercises about adjectives and nouns from a university writing center were revised and used. For instance, the word like "drunk" (he was drunk) in a sentence was omitted due to inappropriate for middle school age students. The vague pronouns such as 'he/she' in the sentence were changed into students' real names to draw their interests (e.g., He measured the floor → Tom measured the floor). While college students worked more as observers in the ELA class, they assisted the main science teacher more actively in the science class. In the science class, safety issue and classroom management are more important especially when students do the experiments in the class. For example, each student received one goggle and learned the safety rules. College students move around and monitor if each group of students are focusing on doing experiments, how they are managing it and reminded them of collaborative work and report.

       Unlike college students' typically flexible course schedules, the middle school started early at 7:30 am and ended at 3:30 pm every day. Class size was about 17-23 students, whereas college students have class sizes that can vary from less than 10 to several hundred students. Thus, college students shared their physical exhaustion after this practice and admiration for the K-12 teachers.

       Challenges in Classroom Management. A surprising finding was that teaching K-12 students is not only about teaching content itself but also about classroom management.

Classroom management plays an important role in a public middle school as teachers have different students in each period and each period created a different atmosphere. Some periods in science classes were easy for teachers to discipline students; however, other periods in the science class were difficult to manage the classroom.

The international program participants adapting to this new workplace faced many challenges. First, there were students who did not behave well in the classroom. The main teachers generally had good control over these students. But the program participants as student teachers sometimes did not know what to do if they met these cases. We learned that it is not a good idea to try to solve any issues among students but to instead inform the main teacher and have the teacher deal with it. The main classroom teacher has the main authority over the students. The program participants needed to be aware of the basic rules of the specific classroom they were working in, as teachers have different teaching styles and rules. If the program fellows did not communicate well with the main teacher, there might be tension between them. As time went on, participants could gain authority over students, which helped them successfully deliver their lesson later.

Academic interactions with teachers. The ELA teacher, Ms. Amy I worked with was stricter than the second science teacher, Ms. Carol I worked with in the following year. The stricter teacher made it easy for me to manage the classroom. However, she did not request any help from me at first. Rather, she passively accepted my offer when I volunteered to help with grading, to pass the materials, and to teach together. She seemed very cautious, as this was her first time participating in the GK-12 program and working with a college student. On the other hand, the second Science teacher I worked with, who had been the liaison with the university for 10 years, was an expert on training novice teachers. She actively suggested that my colleague,

the program participant cohort 1 and I, paired with, participate in her teaching from the start. Thus, we had frequent opportunities to talk and lead some parts of her lessons and be involved with her instructions and experiments.

   Social interactions with teachers. The best part of the day with my first ELA teacher, Ms. Amy occurred during lunch time. She packed her lunch, as had two other teachers. I had no idea what to do at my lunch time, so I joined them, and we ate lunch together while chatting. I got a taste of the life of middle school teachers, and we became friends. I got to know the main teachers better personally, such as their favorite snack or tv show, and saw the difficulties they had amid a teacher shortage and the reality of relationships between administration and parents and students. Unlike my first ELA teacher, Ms. Amy, the new teacher, Ms. Carol just drank a cup of coffee or had a snack rather than eat lunch. As participants, we could observe and learn how other teachers spend lunch time. So, the second time I joined in the program, I sat in the middle school cafeteria with my colleague at lunch time. This led us to have a chance to take a look at cafeteria at a middle school and watch how middle school students are doing in other places. Sometimes, we brought our lunch from the cafeteria and ate it with the main teacher, Ms. Carol together in the classroom. We could get to know each other more in detail by asking questions including personal questions. I learned that she is from Europe, is very interested in sports, and visited Korea one time. Other English speakers praised her British accent, but she doesn't take it as a compliment. It was interesting to see that she felt the same way I do even if she is an English native speaker. Other times, we ate in the cafeteria just talking to each other while watching other students eating. This time, I could ask my cohort, a science college student about his background in China, and build our collegial relationship. For example, science graduate student had a hard time learning students' names in the classroom and I gave him some

tips how to pronounce their names with vowels and stress. We could recognize our different cultures, learn the values, and understand each other better and work more effectively.

Phase II: Joining the Community as a Co-Teacher

The best part of this program for participants is that we were not just learning but also contributing and feeling connected to the community. One misconception about international students or ESL students is that they are always "receivers" of knowledge as learners of a new language and culture. But this co-teaching experience in a real-life setting has shown that international students can also be providers of knowledge, giving of their time, sharing their cultures, while simultaneously expanding their horizons and networking (see Table 3). Students consistently showed their interest in other cultures. For instance, they asked me if I know K-Pop, BTS, Korean pop singer or K-Drama, and how he can write his name in Korean. Middle school students talked to me that they think "bilingual is a cool thing". Many students asked about North Korea, not from political way but out of curiosity by asking if I ever visited North Korea. It was surprisingly interesting to find out that some English-only students are learning Korean and their willingness to have international teachers. The survey result support this as 74% of students were satisfied with the student teachers' (college students) lessons.

Table 3. Three level mutual learning/ support and advocacy of ESL College students
(See Appendix 1 for details)

	Individual	Institutional (University)	Community (Middle School)
Language	Limited language use	Balanced language use	English for specific purpose

Socio-Culture	Limited networking	Well-rounded networking	Expanding networking: Local community member

Implications for Policy, Practice, and Future Research

The following are some suggestions regarding the GK-12 co-teaching program. Because participants need to commit at least one full day a week over a whole semester to complete this program, some interested graduate students cannot join the program due to the time it requires. Although the long duration of the program benefits participants greatly in achieving their language goals, other opportunities of shorter duration might allow more participants to join the program. For example, graduate students could be given the opportunity to provide two or three invited lectures or shadow a teacher in the middle school for a shorter period of time.

When matching up teachers with program participants, fellows are generally placed in the classes that are most similar to their majors. However, my experience suggests that ESL students need more support in content classes. Thus, more ESL fellows should be placed in ESL classrooms to promote their English literacy or in other disciplines selected to expand their learning of language and culture.

The teacher training program for participants in this program is very effective. However, to improve communication between K-12 teachers and program participants, it would be helpful to also offer the partnered middle school teachers a workshop on how to work with ESL graduate students.

A service-learning grant is used to purchase any instructional materials for the lessons that program fellows prepare with their main teachers. There might be other options such as

monetary funding to provide incentives to K-12 teachers to recruit more participants from K-12 schools.

My future research plans include using a practicum course in an undergraduate and graduate-level ESL program as a co-teaching opportunity. Placement will be flexibly set up and graduate students will be assigned an ESL classroom or a STEM classroom that includes ELL students. The purpose is to investigate how college students in STEM or education can beneficially work with ESL students in STEM classrooms, not just in ELA or ESL classrooms.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Appendix

Appendix A.

Three level mutual learning/ support and advocacy of ESL College students in details

	Individual	Institutional (University)	Community (Middle School)
Language	Limited language use as international graduate students: -academic language learner. -writing/reading focused.	Balanced language use: -Four language skills (focused talking /speaking) -discussion.	English for specific purpose: -Academic language teacher -Social language learner -Instructional language user

	-non-linguistic work (lab work)	-colloquial & academic conversation -a variety of new genres	
Socio-Culture	-limited networking: one department member.	-well rounded networking: member across multi-disciplines (e.g., science, engineering, liberal arts, education)	Expanding networking: Local community member -K-12 classroom culture -teacher's culture -students' culture (classroom management, reward, disciplines) -coworker as a professional -learn American culture -share their L1 language & home culture (e.g., Korean language, Chinese, K-Pop culture, BTS, North Korea, university) -university culture