

Benefits of Global Simulation in Second Language Acquisition, Intercultural
Development, and French Study Abroad Programs

By

Lance M. Grubb

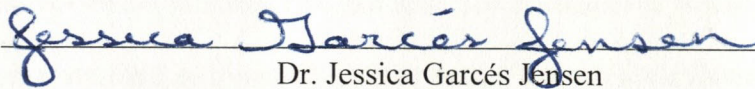
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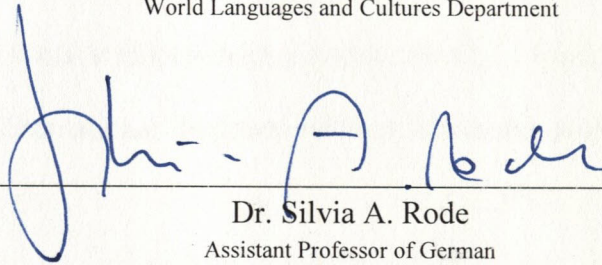
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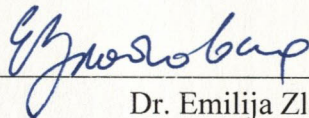
Dr. Jessica Garcés Jensen

Assistant Professor of French
Graduate Faculty, M.A. in Second Language Acquisition, Policy, and Culture
World Languages and Cultures Department



Dr. Silvia A. Rode

Assistant Professor of German
Chair of the World Languages and Cultures Department
Director, M.A. in Second Language Acquisition, Policy, and Culture
World Languages and Culture Department



Dr. Emilija Zlatkovska

Affiliate Assistant Professor of English
Director of Intensive English Program
Center for the International Programs

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ABSTRACT

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Through this three-part qualitative analysis, I explore the structure and benefits of Global Simulation (GS) from scholars around the world, explore how GS contributes to the development of second language acquisition, and assess how the benefits of GS contribute to the development of intercultural competence through study abroad (SA) programs. GS is a pedagogical technique that promotes intercultural competence and second language acquisition while having the advantage of enhancing a learner's study abroad experience. In this research, I explore the structure of GS as it was designed by Debyser (1996) and Yaiche (1996) and present examples of GSs that other scholars in the field of foreign language teaching (FLT). I explore first-hand accounts on the pedagogy and implementation of GS as shared by instructors from the Université de Caen, France, as well as class observations that I conducted in order to gain a better understanding of GS. Finally, I discuss why GS should be implemented in SA programs and further research that could be conducted on the subject.

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INTRODUCTION

Your name is François Lemoine and you are a journalist during the beginning of the French Revolution of 1789. You are alone in a small apartment in the city of Paris. You are hiding and from the *Maréchaussée Royale*¹ who are searching for you are your friends for conspiracy to overthrow the monarchy. Your wife and children have already fled the country to the northern border of Spain, but your coworkers and friends are still trapped. You must find them by writing letters to each other to devise a plan of escape and reunite with your family....

This is the beginning of a French second language course that will continue throughout a semester in a French immersion classroom. The *personnage* (character) that you have created is a part of a pedagogical process called *Global Simulation (GS)*. Global Simulation is described by Francis Debyser (1996) in his book *L'immeuble: Edition augmentée d'une préface de Francis Debyser*.

“Une simulation globale est un protocole ou un scénario cadre qui permet à un groupe d'apprenants pouvant aller jusqu'à une classe entière d'une trentaine d'élèves, de créer un univers de référence- un immeuble, un village, une île, un cirque, un hôtel - de l'animer de personnages en interaction et d'y simuler toutes les fonctions du langage que ce cadre, qui est à la fois un lieu- thème et un univers du discours, est susceptible de requérir.” (p. 4).²

¹ The *Maréchaussée Royale* were at the time, the police force of France who stemmed from the original royal bodyguards of Francis 1st.

²Translation- Global Simulation is a technique or a framework scenario that allows a group of learners, usually a class of thirty students, to create a fictional universe such as an apartment building, village, island, circus, or hotel to then animate it with characters through interaction and simulation while using all functions of language that the location theme and universe is likely to require.

For the purposes of this thesis I have formed my own definition based off the works of Debyser (1996) and Yaiche (1996). I chose these two scholars due to their experience in creating and facilitating GS as well as their work with the BELC (Bureau pour l'enseignement de la langue et de la civilisation françaises à l'étranger- The department of teaching French and French civilization while abroad).

Global Simulation is described as an authentic, interactive and culturally immersive pedagogical technique that allows learners to create a simulated environment such as a village, apartment building, workplace, or town, in which they control their own development in communication, connections, culture, comparisons, and community while learning a foreign language, thus furthering their comprehension in the target language and culture and increasing intercultural competence.

During GS, learners create fictional characters which are culturally authentic to the language of study (i.e. French Language = French speaking people) and assume the roles of these characters throughout the duration of the class. The class is structured in a way to allow students to then collectively co-create a society that is based on learner initiated research of the particular culture being studied. The instructor then tailors language learning to the simulation that the class has invented together. By adding language learning to the simulation, learners gain knowledge about the language and the culture in a structured environment that authentically represents the target culture without being in the host country. GS can also be added to a study abroad (SA) experience. By implementing this pedagogical technique in a SA program, learners cultivate their development of cultural understanding, competence of the target culture, and become global citizens. In the GS, learners use the environment which they have created to address real life situations

and problems that engage learners in meaningful learning because they, as a class, control and co-create their environment.

Through my qualitative research analysis, my aim is to 1) explore the structure and benefits of GS from scholars around the world and from the perspectives of intensive French language instructors in a study abroad classroom at the Université de Caen, 2) to explore how GS aides in the development of second language acquisition and 3) assess how the benefits of GS contribute to the development of intercultural competence through a study abroad experience and why GS should be implemented in study abroad programs.

Many scholars (Bricco, E. & Rossi, M. (2004), Care, J. M. (1993), Debyser, F. (1996), Dicks, J. E., & Le Blanc, B. (2009), Irizarry, A. M. B., & Malaret, L. (2009), Yaiche, (1996)) have discussed the benefits of GS and have provided excellent examples of how to develop and structure the technique. Other studies examine the benefits SA have on learning a second language, improving cultural awareness, and furthering intercultural competence (Black, H. T., & Duhon, D. L. (2006), DeKeyser, R. M. (2007), Engle, L., & Engle, J. (2004), Freed, B. F. (1990), Freed, B. F., Segalowitz, N., & Dewey, D. P. (2004), Kinginger, C. (Ed.). (2013), Paige, R. M., Cohen, A. D., Kappler, B., Chi, J. C., & Lassegard, J. P. (2002)). However, there is little empirical research that discusses the benefits of GS pertaining to SA programs, particularly in French language immersion programs. My purpose is to uncover correlations between GS and SA from scholars around the world, give personal observations from two French immersion classrooms at the Université de Caen, and discuss an interview with the two instructors of these courses. Through this research project I wish to: 1) to discuss my findings of why GS should be

implemented in SA programs and how GS enhances learners overall SA experience, and
2) further the research and development of GS so that professors of many subjects can
integrate GS into their classrooms to further the expansion of multi-cultural communication
and understanding.

METHODOLOGY

By gathering research about GS and foreign language learning (FLL) I analyzed the structure of GS and its benefits to FLL. I have also gathered examples of scholars who have implemented GS into their curriculum. These examples are shown as highlights of the individual studies and are not meant to describe the study in its entirety. After I laid the foundation of understanding for the GS I discussed aspects of the interviews that were conducted with two FLE (français comme langue étrangère - French as a second language) instructors in the Carré International at the Université de Caen, in Normandie, France, who together hold more than twenty years of teaching experience in FLE programs in France, and around the world. The instructors' identities are to remain confidential thus I will be using the pseudonyms, "Instructor A" and "Instructor B." These interviews provided me with first hand professional insights as well as different perspectives on cultural competencies. The individuals who were interviewed as a part of this study, willingly volunteered and received no compensation or incentive of any sort.

After the perspectives of the instructors were given, I analyzed aspects of classroom observations in the Carré International at the Université de Caen in Normandie, France, in reference to the structure of GS and types of activities that offered authentic materials and experiences. These observations were conducted with the permission of the Université de Caen, University of Southern Indiana, and the Institutional Review Board. I did not interact with the class in any way to ensure that the authentic GS experience was not compromised. Each of these classrooms consisted of international students from more than fifteen countries around the world who were studying abroad. These students were at a *BI+* level

as is described by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* by the Council of Europe (2002).

I then formed a qualitative analysis from the compilation of my investigations and posed certain questions about SA programs to evaluate whether or not GS provides cultural benefits to these programs. These conclusions are based on my research, observations, my own professional experience in SA advising, and my own teaching experience. Finally, I discussed the limitations to the project and proposed further research options to consider on the subject.

I chose to conduct this research because of its non-traditional approach to language learning and its focus on cross-cultural communication, cultural immersion and awareness. By completing this three-part qualitative analysis, I have helped to further develop research about GS, FLL, and SA that offers a combined perspective from many scholars and researchers specifically to French language immersion programs and why GS should be integrated into such programs to increase the cultural immersion and the language proficiency of its students. This perspective will add to academia in hopes to expand GS further into other foreign language classrooms as well as into multiple disciplines and subject areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to properly expand on the research of GS, SLA, and SA, I must first present and review the academic literature that has already been completed in the field of study. This literature provides a basis for the study as well as the reasons behind continuing the research. For this thesis, I have divided the review of literature into three parts each corresponding to a specific area of study as it pertains to my thesis.

Global Simulation

Global Simulation (GS) is a pedagogical technique that allows learners of a foreign language to create a simulated environment and avatars that are culturally authentic to promote cultural awareness and language development. This technique was created by Frenchman, Debyser (1996) and developed further by Yaiche (1996) (see both works for a historical breakdown of the technique). Though this technique was originally created for French Language instruction, it was quickly modified to meet the needs of many other languages and classrooms due to its unique structure and ability to provide a culturally and linguistically immersive classroom setting. The environment with which GS is created is often represented as an apartment building, hotel, island, village, or city, which reflects the host culture as accurately as possible. The avatars are learner created and reflect the host culture as well creating a simulated role-playing course.

Many scholars have conducted research on GS's that have been conducted both in language courses abroad and domestic. These examples of GS can be used as

demonstrations of its structure based on the originals by the founders (Debyser 1996, Yaich 1996) as well as provide variations and show the adaptability of the technique to meet the learners' needs. For this research, I have reviewed GS's by the following scholars to obtain several perspectives. Mills & Péron (2009) conducted research through GS and its effect on writing self-efficacy and self-beliefs where learners created bi-weekly writing samples that were assessed to track their language progression. Scholars Dick & Le Blanc (2009) conducted a GS that was based on using drama to encourage positive attitudes and increasing motivation in French second language classrooms. By conducting this research in grades 9 and 10, this is one example of how GS can be implemented in the preliminary stages of language learning and its unique design of a voyage rather than a specific location offers a creative adaptation of the technique. Other scholars such as, Caré (1993), Dupuy (2006), Irizarry & Malaret (2009), Lehuen & Kitlinska (2006), Levine (2004), and Levine, Eppelsheimer, Kuzay, Moti, & Wilby, (2004), have all conducted and attested to the importance and benefits of GS on language development, intercultural competency, and cultural awareness. Through the review of these examples, I have evaluated and identified the advantages and disadvantages of using this framework to enhance a learner's FLL and continued the research on why GS should be incorporated into SA programs.

Pedagogy of GS

From the studies and analysis conducted by scholars Lightbown & Spada (2006), Rozati (2014), Swain (1985), Willis (1996), Willis & Willis (2008), and Wilson & Devereux (2014), I have explored the works on SLA of Dekeyser, Krashen, Piaget, and

Vygotsky, that have provided me with the understanding needed to evaluate the enhancement that GS can bring to SLA. Through learning about concepts such as *Input Hypothesis*, *Scaffolded Assistance*, *Peer Scaffolding*, *Task-Based Instruction*, *Sociocultural Theory*, and the *Zone of Proximal Development*, I have been able to critique the structure and use of GS in immersion classrooms as well as FLL and FLT. From the works of, Allen & Dupuy (2006), DeKeyser (2007), Freed (1995), and Freed, Segalowitz, & Dewey (2004), I have explored many perspectives on SLA and SA and how their correlation can enhance a learner's language skills and how the ACTFL (2012) standards of communication and communities can be easily facilitated through SA. These scholars also provide me with the research on different types of pedagogy such as, *task-based*, and *project-based instruction*, where learners complete a set of projects that build their foundation of the target language.

By better understanding the important benefits that GS offers SLA, scholars have the opportunity to further research other implications of the technique and provide more opportunities for their learners to become proficient in the target language. Scholars such as, Dupuy (2006), Kinginger (2008) Levine, Eppelsheimer, Kuzay, Moti, & Wilby (2004), Magnin (2002), and Murray, Grant, Howarth, & Leigh (2008) have specifically considered the pedagogy of GS and how the technique effects FLL. From these examples and case studies, I have analyzed which aspects of GS promote communicative competence, fluency, and a deeper understanding of the language. By understanding these aspects, I can better evaluate the use of GS and provide examples of how its technique benefits FLL.

GS and Study Abroad

SA is the opportunity for learners to engage in academic coursework in a different country and while doing so build upon their understanding of the world. To understand the cultural effects of GS and SA, I researched scholars, Black & Duhon (2006), Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard (2002), Rexeisen, Anderson, Lawton, & Hubbard (2008), Salibury, An, & Pascarella (2013), whose diverse perspectives offered me the material needed to better analysis the cultural connections of SA and how GS can help foster those connections. Through understanding the assessments of scholars Deardorff (2006) and McKinnon (2012), I gained intelligence as to why intercultural competence is developed through SA, and I was able to support my analysis that GS aids in the development of intercultural competence. In order to evaluate SA programs and the implications that GS can have on them, I researched scholar Santos (2014) whose evaluation of SA programs offered valuable insight on criteria by which to evaluate SA programs in the realm of culture and language. Finally, with the works of Goldoni (2013) and Goodman (2009), I was able to combine all areas of research and formulate by argument that GS fosters cultural and linguistic development, leading to the creation of global citizens.

With the literature reviewed, I see that still further research should be conducted to better understand the need for GS in FLL and SA programs. With the combined knowledge that I have acquired through the scholars before me, I will attest to the effectiveness of GS in FLL and SA programs as well as highlight the wisdom that lies within its ability to motivate learners to create using free expression and to aid them in developing themselves culturally. Further research is also needed to validate why GS should be implemented in

SA programs to enhance intercultural competence and how the technique will help to enhance a learner's overall SA experience.

ANALYSIS

Global Simulation:

Before I begin the analysis of my research and content areas, I must first provide definitions that will enable the reader to better comprehend the subject. The first definition is *Global Simulation*, which I have already provided in the introduction, but I wish to define the two words separately as they pertain to this research. These definitions will act as a basis for my own definitions.

Global per Merriam-Webster³ dictionary is defined as,

→ of, relating to, or applying to a whole (such as a mathematical function or a computer program): universal a *global* search of a file

Simulation per Merriam-Webster⁴ dictionary is defined as,

→ examination of a problem often not subject to direct experimentation by means of a simulating device

For the purposes of this research, *Global* means: A cultural awareness of the target culture that is abundant with authentic materials and resources which allow for the opportunity for real life experiences. *Simulation*, means: a learner created universe based on the target culture using authentic materials and resources to act out real life experiences in an immersive environment.

Student-Centered Learning - per The Glossary of Education Reform⁵ is defined

³ See Merriam-Webster (2017), for further definitions on global.

⁴ See Merriam-Webster (2017), for the further definitions of simulation.

⁵ See Abbott (2014), for more information about student-centered learning from the Glossary of Education Reform.

as,

→ refers to a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students.

Task-Based Language Teaching - is defined as,

→ Task-based language teaching (TBLT), is a pedagogical technique that focuses language use and learning through authentic everyday life tasks in the target language (Hall, 2016).

Immersion - per Merriam-Webster⁶ dictionary is defined as,

→ instruction based on extensive exposure to surroundings or conditions that are native or pertinent to the object of study; *especially*: foreign language instruction in which only the language being taught is used.

As was mentioned in the introduction, Global Simulation (GS) was developed by a Frenchman named Francis Debyser in 1986 (Debyser, 1996) which he presented to the *BELC* (le Bureau pour l'enseignement de la langue et de la civilisation françaises à l'étranger- The department of teaching french and french civilisation while abroad). During the years that led to the creation of this technique, Debyser (1996) mentions a shift in language teaching and learning. He describes this shift from the more scholarly and

⁶ See Merriam-Webster (2017), for the further definitions of immersion.

systematic technique, to one that is more student-centered and focused on letting the learners take control of their own learning. Debyser cites from another article which he wrote in 1970, “La mort du manuel et le déclin de l’illusion méthodologique” (Debyser, 1996). This translates to, “The end of the textbook and the decline of the illusion methodology.” One could see this as meaning that language learning and teaching was turning away from the “sage on the stage” type of mentality and moving toward a more open and creative environment in which instructors and learners alike, experienced learning together. He then establishes four ideals that GS offers to language learning (Debyser 1996):

- “une recentration sur l’enseigné” - a focus on who is being taught (student centered)
- “des méthodes plus actives” - more active methods
- “le développement de l’expression libre et de la créativité” - the development of free expression and creativity
- “la mise en place d’une véritable compétence de communication” - the organization of true proficiency in communication.

What does each of these ideals mean in the context of GS? Understanding these four concepts will allow us to better understand the foundation of GS and its goal to providing a more complete learning experience. By focusing on the learner as an individual and understanding what the learner needs, instructors can better accommodate and facilitate the target material. Scholar Glenn Levine, speaks to the student-centered approach that is offered by GS in her article *Global Simulation: A Student-Centered, Task Based Format for Intermediate Foreign Language Courses* (2004). She states, “Lastly, and

perhaps most importantly, rather than imposing constraints on different learners to conform to the course, the course format itself accommodates the variety of interests, personality types, and learning styles in any given group of learners” (Levine, 2004, p. 27). This approach opens the door to endless possibilities to the amount of activities and exercises that are available to the instructor. With these possibilities, the instructors can tailor the GS to meet the needs of their students whether a visual, auditory, or kinetic learner. For example, learners co-create a village or hotel in which to live. Visual learners can create a map of the village or the floor plan of a hotel to visualize where each member of the community is living. Kinetic learners can act out real-life scenarios, and finally, auditory learners can listen to the conversations of others and the role-playing scenarios.

GS allows for the opportunity for more active methods in the classroom as well. Scholars Joseph E. Dick and Barbara Le Blanc speak to the interaction that increases when implementing GS in their article, *Using Drama for Learning to Foster Positive Attitudes and Increase Motivation: Global Simulation in French Second Language Classes* (2009). By implementing drama into their classrooms, they were able to see firsthand how GS affected their learners. They state that drama, “involves action, reaction and interaction to create meaningful individual and group experiences. These experiences lend naturally to the incorporation of cooperative learning principles, such as positive interdependence, where the group succeeds only when each person succeeds...” (Dick & Le Blanc, 2009, p.10). Since the learners are forced to interact with one another, the course itself naturally becomes more active. Learners are constantly creating and producing language in authentic experiences which improves their interpersonal skills.

GS gives students the opportunity to create authentic speech and offers the ability to create authentic experiences that become natural to students. Mills & Péron (2009) conducted research in foreign language writing and looked into the quality of writing and motivation to write through using GS. “Through context, students’ creativity, self-expression, and enthusiasm may be enhanced for both writing and language learning” (Mills & Péron, 2009, p. 3). They wanted the GS to enhance competence in creative writing and free expression. Jean-Marc Caré (1993) developed different simulations and worked with both the created of GS, Francis Debyser (1996) and Francis Yaiche (1996), when developing these creations and while working with the BELC. In his article *Le Village*, Caré explains the process of developing a GS as well as some key factors about learners’ involvement. He conveys that the framework of GS needs three essentials:

“1) invention de l’environnement, 2) invention des identités fictives; 3) animation d’événements ou d’incidents.” (Caré 1993, p. 51).

This translations to, “1) the invention of the environment, 2) the invention of fictional identities, (avatar⁷- for the purposes of this thesis, avatar is defined as a fictional identity that a learner embodies during the GS); 3) acting out events and situations.” These three factors offer students the opportunity to use their creativity to invent a new environment and identity, and the freedom of expression in authentic scenarios.

The fourth and final ideal is the competence of communication. GS offers, “opportunities for interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communication, both oral...and written” (Dupuy, 2005, p. 5), Dupuy then goes on to discuss how GS drives

⁷ See Merriam Webster (2017), for the definition of avatar.

communicative exchanges that enable learners to have authentic experiences within the simulation. She also states that GS, “promotes the use of language for real communication in a real cultural context and helps students achieve the goals of communicative and cultural competence.” (Dupuy, 2005, p. 24). By participating in role playing and authentic scenarios based on the target culture, learners experience a level of communication that is comparable to that of a real-life experience. The learners are engaging in collaborative work that is facilitated through problem solving tasks such as, designing a village or creating a festival and deciding the logistics together. This is how the learners develop a strong communicative competence that is not just about communication, but cultural competence as well.

Now that a basis for GS is established, I wish to discuss the steps in structuring the GS and examples from scholars who have implemented their own simulations. The basis for this structure is taken from the works of Debyser (1996) and Yaiche (1996) in their works, *L'immeuble* and *Les Simulations Globales: mode d'emploi*. In this work, the authors have given developed different structures of GS and have explained their description and facilitation. Below is the description of the example *Le village*. Each example is based on the same principles but if modified to meet the needs of the individual classes.

Le village (Yaiche, 1996)

Phase 1: “Etablir le lieu et le milieu”- Establishing a location

The establishment of the location is facilitated by the instructor but chosen by the students. This location is the foundation of the entire GS and should be chosen wisely.

Depending on the language being studied and the culture of observation, the GS will vary greatly and this may be difficult for learners to decide. Yaiche (1996) provides us with four options (p. 28) that should be taken into consideration when establishing the location:

- “Désignation du site en pointant au hasard un village sur la carte de France ou remue-méninges ou débat de groupe”
 - ◆ Designating a site by randomly pointing to a village on the french map or having a group discussion about the location they wish to choose.
- “Etablissement de relief grâce à la technique du carré de 64 cases”
 - ◆ The use of the 64-square technique.⁸
- “Expression orale de groupe”
 - ◆ Group discussion and choice.
- “Capacité à argumenter sur les avantages et les inconvénients du site”
 - ◆ The ability to debate the advantages and disadvantages of the location.

These are suggestions that help the instructor facilitate the decision of the location. Regardless of the way that the location is chosen, it is important that the students are talking about the choice. By dividing the students into groups, it allows them to work together in order to decide what type of location would best fit for the class as a whole. Each group can create a list of advantages and disadvantages to discuss with the rest of the class. This

⁸ See the 64-square technique – http://www.collectifalpha.be/IMG/pdf/Simulations_globales.pdf

offers the learners the chance to be in control of their own learning and will enable them to conduct cultural research and analysis of the area which they have chosen. By debating in class, it offers the learners the chance to develop their language skills as well by being able to form an argument. Once each group has debated their location, the class as a whole should vote for the location. This is also a crucial part of language learning that is a stepping stone in their foundation of free expression.

The location is not just a pinpoint on the map however, it is a chance for the learners to explore their creativity in their language ability. Learners research the locations history, name, myths, historical landmarks such as a castle, and other cultural attributes to the area. If the location is created entirely, the learners have the opportunity to research cultural names and meanings when making their choice. Creating a map of the location is another aspect to the GS that is essential to its stability. This is a task based project that will allow for the artistically inclined to develop. With this project, the instructor may ask for volunteers to create the map and to ensure that the entire class is involved, each learner should purpose certain aspects that they wish to see in the location, such as a fountain, a bike trail, or community garden. This map should be detailed with the houses or apartments in which the avatars live, if the GS should allow for it.

Phase 2: “Etablir les identités fictives” - Establishing their identities (avatar)

When learners are creating their avatars, it is important to keep their identities as cultural authentic as possible while still allowing for the learner’s creativity to be seen. The facilitator can provide materials such as, list of names, both first and last, vocabulary about physical and cognitive descriptions, and other important cultural information depending on

the area of interest. Yaiche (1996) offers a table of percentages (p. 29) that suggest the percentage of male versus female, nationalities, and ages. Due to the accessibility of information online, learners can take control of this part of their learning by conducting research about names and other identifiable characteristics when inventing their avatars. Diversity among the group will allow for more dynamic and cultural conversations, thus the facilitator should recommend that the students choose identities that represent this.

These descriptions are the perfect opportunity for the learners to write in the target language. Learners start with their name and they take into consideration their age when choosing a name. The learners will research popular names of the time period in which their avatar was born and this will help them to begin their foundation of cultural competence. The learners make their avatars as complex as they wish which may include, a birth date and location of birth, nationality, family status and history, socioeconomic status, and cultural beliefs. By writing a descriptive essay or identity portrait, learners explore their writing capabilities in the target language and continue to build upon the avatar development. This is an excellent opportunity for the instructor to assess their writing abilities and their cultural competence. Once the learners have completed this writing activity, the instructor may ask them to present their avatar aloud in class which offers the opportunity for instructors to assess the students' oral skills.

A more complex aspect of the avatar is their profession. This is often the time when a learner's creativity blossoms and they are even more motivated to participate in the simulation. Yaiche (1996) discusses three types of professions (p. 29) that the instructor can facilitate into the simulation.

→ “Professions essentielles - boulanger, épicier, responsable du culte, instituteur, gendarme ou garde-champêtre, facteur, agriculteur, vigneron, patron de café, médecin”

◆ Necessary professions - baker, market clerk, religious leader, elementary school teacher, police officer, mailman, farmer, wine farmer, restaurant manager, doctor.

→ “Professions secondaires - patron d’hôtel, pharmacien, pêcheur, éleveur, vétérinaire, maçon, menuisier ou croque-mort, coiffeur, garagiste, mécanicien”

◆ Secondary professions - hotel manager, pharmacist, fisherman, livestock farmer, veterinarian, mason, carpenter, hair dresser, auto mechanic.

→ “Professions annexes - artiste (musicien, sculpteur, peintre, acteur, etc.), chauffeur de taxi et/ou ambulancier, écrivain, pâtissier, quincaillier, droguiste, cordonnier, électricien, plombier, avocat ou notaire ou juge, bonne d’enfants ou femme de ménage, boucher, charcutier, employé de l’administration ou de l’EDF (ou SNCF), chômeur, voyant(e), moniteur de sports, entraîneur de l’équipe locale, commerçant (en dehors de l’alimentation), apprenti (mécano), savant, industriel, charpentier, couvreur, rentier, enseignant suppléant, etc.”

◆ Annex professions - artist (musician, sculptor, painter, actor etc.), chauffeur, taxi driver, ambulance driver, writer, pastry chef,

blacksmith, hardware shop worker, coach, electrician, plumber, lawyer, notary, judge, nanny or maid, butcher, employee of EDF (or SNCF), unemployed, local trainer, trader (outside food), apprentice (mechanic), scientist, industrialist, roofer, annuitant, alternate teacher, etc.

Why is it important to have a variety of professions in the GS? Depending on the numbers of learners in the class, the instructor will want to help facilitate that the group is diverse in many ways, professions being one of them. Professions are often slightly different depending on the culture being studied and some cultures contain professions that are completely unique to any other culture. This will allow for the learners to conduct research on their profession in the target language which will help to create connections between the target language and other subject areas, furthering their knowledge of vocabulary in the target language. Yaiche (1996) adds another aspect of creativity that provides a learner with even more opportunity to express their creativity. He describes a scenario where a learner could create a *fausse identité* (p. 29) (false identity) and depending on the simulation, the other learners must discover their true identity. This adds another layer of development that could be introduced to a learner who needs a more rigorous curriculum as well. This would provide that learner with a more advanced and complex avatar which will lead to more production in the language and further self-fulfillment.

Once an avatar is created in writing, the learners may create a visual portrait of their avatars physical identity, whether it be through a piece of artwork or finding a model in a magazine article. This will add to the real-life aspect of the simulation and offer others who

are more visual learners to understand the descriptions of others. It is ideal as well, to have the learners create personal identification cards for their avatars and that these I.D. cards be authentic to the culture being studied. For example, if the GS is in France, the avatars should have I.D. cards that represent an authentic French I.D. card. This could be a project for the learners themselves to discover and facilitate to others, or the instructor could provide the material needed. These cards will help others in the class to memorize their new identity as well as aid the instructor to assess the learner's character development.

Phase 3: "Interactions"- Interactions (Donner vie au lieu) (Give life to the environment/location)

Yaiche (1996) describes, "Cette troisième phase - qui est ici en fait le prolongement de la première puisqu'il s'agit de continuer la construction du milieu - va se faire à partir de jeux de rôle, réunion-débats, rencontres, négociation, études de cas, récits etc."⁹

The third phase is made to expand the first two phases further, in order to build the construction of the GS. These interactions consist of role playing games, group debates, meetings, negotiations, and further opportunities to bring authentic experiences to the GS. These interactions must be in *character* in order to make the activities as authentic as possible. Even when deciding where to put a particular building for example, the learners must use their avatars personality when debating and negotiating its location. The learners must further develop their location at this point as well, making it more detailed and more authentic to the culture of study. The learners must decide what they would like to have in

⁹ Translation: The third phase is the extension of the first phase since it's the continuation of the location construction. It consists of participating in role-playing, debates, introduction to others, negotiations, case studies, story-telling, etc."

their village, such as farming land, cathedrals, cafes, shopping centers, a city hall, schools, both primary and secondary, universities, train and bus stations, cemeteries, airports, etc. Learners must take into consideration their professions as well. If a learners' avatar is an opera singer, there must be an opera in the village or close by in the next city, for example.

The instructor can facilitate these discussions and negotiations through learners' prompts. For example, the instructor could start the class by asking learners what is in a usual village, city, or town, and this will spark a brainstorming session that will allow for the development of vocabulary as well as furthering their capability to discuss topics in the target language. In regard to a French SA program, the instructor could encourage learners to set the GS in the region where they are studying. This could then encourage learners to go out into their local community and discover the lay of the land to develop their own perspective of what a typical French village or town looks like both aesthetically and geographically. The learners could interview locals about family names and the history of the region in order to further the development of their avatars. The instructor could then use these experiences to create extension activities such as job shadowing with local businesses which could in turn enrich their avatars even more. All of this could lead to a more culturally immersive SA experience that is completely unique from any other.

Phase 4: Traces écrits -

In phase four, Yaiche (1996) provides fifteen examples of writing prompts and activities that an instructor can integrate into the GS to promote authentic experiences and language learning. I wish to highlight just one that I believe is a great opportunity for students who are studying abroad (SA) to complete. This activity is the creation of a

dépliant touristique, (Yaiche, 1996) tourist pamphlet. This is a great opportunity to have the learners discover more about the culture they are studying and they will lead them to further creative expression. For SA learners, this could be an opportunity to further discover the city in which they are studying and living to understand more about the target culture. This will then lead to more cultural competence. Learners look at their fictional city and discover what makes their location unique to others surrounding it and why others should come to visit. Yaiche (1996) describes the criteria (p. 35) when creating this activity:

- “Présentant les curiosités (châteaux, monuments, lieux à visiter, les spécialités du pays, les fêtes et manifestations à ne pas manquer)”
 - ◆ Present the tourist attractions such as castles, monuments, places to visit, specialties of the area, festivals or parades that the tourists should not miss.
- “Faisant état des heures d’ouverture des commerces, administration, lieu de culte”
 - ◆ Make sure to give the hours of operations for shopping, museums and administration buildings, as well as religious sites.
- “Présentant des publicités locales (pour l’hôtel ou l’entreprise, par exemple) ou passent des petites annonces”
 - ◆ Create advertisements for the locations that could be given to hotels and businesses for example, as well as flyers.

This type of activity offers another level of culture to the GS. Creating tourist attractions and explaining the meaning behind them, invokes critical thinking and cultural analysis aspects to GS. Learners could create a festival for example as a part of their city's customs. This could be a festival of music, dance, art, sports, etc. By creating this festival, learners discuss the reason behind the festival, whether it be a historical event or something that a king from the fourteenth century created. They can then discuss when and where the festival will take place, why a certain date is chosen or why the location is chosen. The possibilities seem endless, but the point is that they are creating a culture based on the target culture and language.

Phase 5: Evenements et incidents - Events and incidents

The fifth and final phase of the construction and development of the GS is that which will finalize the foundation of this task-based and communicative pedagogical technique. Yaiche (1996) offers many examples of incidents and events that provide learners with authentic communication and real-life experiences. He explains that these events and incidents can be both oral and written and each have the capacity to invoke creativity and imagination in the learner's second language. Some of these activities include: creating love stories where the learners write a novel together, political elections for the inhabitants of the fictional city where learners run for mayor or city council, a crime happens in the city such as a break-in, or finally, a medical emergency breaks-out in the city and the inhabitants must find a way to cure it.

One such activity could be that the learners hold a neighborhood association meeting because one of the avatars believes that someone else is stealing from them. The

learners must come together to discuss what is happening, is someone really stealing from the neighbor or is the neighbor making false accusations. The neighbor who is convinced that someone is stealing can accuse others in the group of the crime and then they can defend themselves and provide alibis. If the group has a lawyer, judge, detective, or police officer, they could take part in the interrogations of others. All of this would be a role-playing game that the instructor would help to facilitate, but often in GS the learners take control of the class very quickly as it should be, and the learners develop their own interactive activities.

Using the learners SA program/experience to create activities is an effortless way to incorporate authentic materials into the classroom. For example, if the region in which the learners are studying holds a fresh market every week, the instructor could ask the learners to attend this market to learn about local produce and possible local products that are sold such as candy or wine. The instructor could even facilitate meetings with certain members of the market to explain to the learners where their products come from and this could further facilitate enrichment in their SA experience because they are being exposed to real-life situations.

This description of GS is just one of many and the technique has developed and changed over time, but it still holds the same foundation of creating a communicative and student-centered environment that promotes authentic cultural experiences. Scholar Dupuy (2005) conducted an analysis of the *L'immeuble* by Debyser (1996). She states, "While *L'immeuble* workbook includes some targeted quality input that can help students fulfill the various tasks included in the GS project by presenting useful models for learner later

production, the input provided does certainly not meet Krashen (1983)'s criteria of "quantity" necessary for students to develop communicative competence and cultural literacy." (p. 16). She goes on to describe that since the GS project may not meet the quantity criteria, the instructor must search for other resources that will add to the GS to provide even more cultural exposure and integrated language (Dupuy 2005). These other resources may include, websites, books, videos, and other cultural media to expose the learners to even more of the target culture. The use of blogs by French authors would be another great authentic resource for learners to research as well. These could provide them with specific topic research such as food or fashion blogs and offer exposure to everyday language in an informal and formal register.

Many scholars have since used the technique of GS to develop their own creative masterpieces to further enhance language learning in their classrooms. Dicks & Le Blanc (2009) developed and implemented GS in many French language classrooms as a part of their study to see if using drama and GS would foster positive attitudes and increase motivation among students. They used the production of a voyage, a final destination, and an itinerary as their GS to promote language learning (Dicks & Le Blanc, 2009). They concluded, "Results indicate that there were improvements in the learning environments, including an increased level of motivation on the part of the learners involved" (p.33).

Scholars Michelson & Dupuy (2014) used GS as an approach to develop multiliteracies in intermediate French courses. They sought to further their learners' capacity to read, write, and speak in the target language and to be able to use these skills to promote competence in communication. They concluded that, "Overall, the GS carried

out through a multiliteracies-, genre-based approach appears to provide an effective context for promoting FL (foreign language) literacy development” (p.43).

Mills & Péron (2009) conducted research about GS and the effects of the technique on writing self-beliefs among college intermediate French students. They conducted research over the course of a semester where students were creating bi-weekly writing activities while going through a GS. They concluded, “This study revealed that this global simulation curriculum positively influenced intermediate-level students’ writing beliefs; namely their writing self-concept, writing anxiety, and writing self-efficacy in a variety of domains, through the development of a collective community and the creation of contextualized assignments” (p. 22) The researchers will be able to track the learner's ability to write as well as their willingness to write through this study and learners reported that the GS helped them to develop their writing in the target language. If this study had been conducted in a SA program, the use of writing assignments where learners interact with specific locations, such as places of worship, local cafés and restaurants, museums, or parks in the region where they are studying to enhance their writing in the target language as well as immerse themselves in the local culture.

Pedagogy of GS and Instructor's Perspectives:

The structure of GS has been provided and examples of its use are plentiful, but what are the linguistic and pedagogical benefits to this technique? What makes it different from a traditional foreign language (FL) classroom and how do learners' language skills benefit from having participated in the GS? By building on the works of Levine (2004), Michelson & Dupuy (2014) Mills & Péron (2009) and from the perspectives of two French second language instructors from the Université de Caen, I explore GS from a pedagogical approach from their research studies on task-based learning, developing multiliteracies, and writing self-beliefs.

What level in language development should GS be implemented in and is GS a content-based course where learners are focusing on a particular skill during the duration of the semester, session, etc.? From the studies of Levine (2004), Michelson & Dupuy (2014) Mills & Péron (2009), GS was implemented in their courses at an *intermediate level* or higher according to the ACTFL (2012). Caré (1993), Debyser (1996), and Yaiche (1996), have suggested that the GS can be modified for learners who are in the beginning stages of language learning but the GS would be implemented about fifty percent of the class time. Mills & Péron (2009) implemented a GS in an intermediate course and implemented weekly writing exercises in addition to the GS. The instructors at the Université de Caen, who were interviewed for this research, conducted a GS at the *B1+* (Council of Europe, 2002) level, which is comparable to the *advanced mid* level of ACTFL (2012). The instructor's goal for their learners was to be able to communicate easily in the

language and through GS the instructors created activities to help facilitate active communication among the learners. Learners must have a foundation of the target language in order to create conversations and scenarios on the spot that involve critical thinking and analytical skills. This is not to say that GS cannot be implemented at a lower level of language learning, but that it must then be accompanied by other content based courses or implemented as an extra component to the class. For example, from the observations I made from the two GS classes at the Université de Caen in the Carré International, I noticed that the learners were already able to use most grammatical structures such as the conditional tense to be polite. The learners were then asked to telephone a neighbor and leave them a voicemail using the conditional tense to inquire about an event that could happen later. This GS was structured this way because it was not a content course, but a course that was designed for learners to use what they had learned from grammar courses to create authentic experiences.

It is possible however, to make the GS more content based? Scholars Michelson & Dupuy (2014) attest to using GS as the main form of instruction. When creating lesson plans however, they pulled from other sources that are content based to teach grammatical structures of the language and then use them in the GS. Levine (2004) speaks to using outside resources as well to accompany the GS and gives two examples of how to integrate explicit grammar instruction into the GS without taking away from the GS environment. She says, “GS format is an ideal context for a great deal of focus-on-form or consciousness-raising instruction that does not interfere with classroom discourse (...) This sort of instruction can be considered responsive rather than programmatic or proactive” (p. 32).

She gives examples of adding specific grammatical tenses into the GS much like that of the two instructors from the Université de Caen and Mills & Péron (2009), by having the students focus on a particular language skill while creating an avatar or writing assignment. Another aspect of integrating more content into the GS is vocabulary. This is not to say that vocabulary is explicitly taught during the class time but rather the learners take vocabulary learning into their own hands in and outside of class. For example, if one learner's avatar is an engineer that works for the water company of the city that they have created, that learner in particular will need the resources to learn specific vocabulary in order to properly participate in the GS. This is where the instructor can act as a resource or guide to learners rather than an instructor by helping them find resources such as dictionaries or being the resource themselves to help the learner to further their language development.

What goals and preparation are needed for the instructor to effectively begin the GS? When creating a GS Levine (2004) suggests that clear pedagogical goals be set forth in order to maintain a firm grounding from which to build the GS. Since GS lends itself to understanding culture and building cultural competence, culture and linguistic goals must be the priority and help to foster global perspectives. Like most second language curriculums, GS should be grounded upon the four major skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Levine (2004) for example, set forth two cultural goals in her GS for German foreign language classrooms. First that learners understand and appreciate German popular culture and build upon the Germanic culture examples found in the textbook, and second to understand youth subcultures and slang terms (Levine, 2004). She then organized

one linguistic goal to follow which was to “help learners progress in verbal interaction skills to the point that they can ask questions, express opinions, debate specific points, narrate appropriately in different contexts, etc.” (Levine, 2004, p. 32) With these goals in place, she was able to structure the GS to the needs of her learners and facilitate the interaction of the GS more effectively. This idea was echoed in the interviews that were conducted for (my) this project on GS. The two instructors were in agreement that the GS must be structurally sound and specific goals must be created and shared with the learners so that they may be kept accountable for their own learning. Prof A elaborated on the Carré Internationals (Université de Caen, FLE curriculum) development of GS over the ten years that they had been teaching, saying that in the beginning of the GS, it is important to explain what a GS is to the learners and how it will help them develop their language skills. Instructor B echoed Instructor A and said that the course should be described as “ludique,” et “créative” meaning playful and creative, so that learners know that they should make the most out of the GS.

In what ways does GS enhance or challenge a learners’ second language acquisition and what linguistic theories support these claims? Evidence has been shown that GS has the potential to be a communicative friendly approach to FLL and that its use of interactive activities can help advance a learner’s speaking skills. Levine (2004), speaks to the reason why GS was developed in the German Department at the University of California, Irvine in her article, *Global Simulation: A Student-Centered, Task-Based Format for Intermediate Foreign Language Courses*. She says, “To meet the challenge of facilitating not only cultural literacy but also the acquisition of communicative competence in ways that

accommodate dynamic and varied learner interest and learning styles, an alternative format to mainstream second-year university curricula was developed in the German Department at the University of California, Irvine. This course format is called global simulation (GS),” (p. 27). This testifies that GS has the capability to not only promote cultural literacy but to meet the *American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages* (ACTFL, 2012) standards of communication, and differentiates learner’s specific needs rather than trying to squeeze every learner into the same mold, in one technique. GS is based on many second language acquisition pedagogies as well by giving learners the opportunity to have meaningful and authentic interactions while learning how to develop the ability to negotiate meaning in the target language and through these interactions, learners may participate in *peer scaffolding*¹⁰ (Levine, 2004).

Scholars Lightbown & Spada (2006) in their book *How Languages are Learned*, analyze the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as developed by Vygotsky, a well-known psychologist and for his work with second language acquisition. Lightbown & Spada explain the ZPD as a time frame in which learners can complete certain language criteria by themselves and with others (2006). The ZPD is structured as follows: what the learner can do on their own, what the learner can do with the help of another learner, and what the learner can do with someone who is superior to them in the target language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). During GS, learners are constantly interacting and discovering what they are capable of doing and producing in the target language. With

¹⁰ See Wilson, K., & Devereux, L. (2014), on page 2, for more information about scaffolding and second language acquisition.

activities such as role playing, learners work with one another to build the scaffolding for their language. This is where the term *peer scaffolding* comes into play. The learners are using each other to build on their language capacity. This is not to say that learners cannot build upon each other's learning in other types of second language classrooms or that the ZPD is not present, but to show that GS is an effective means of helping learners develop their second language foundation.

Benefits of GS can be seen when looking into second language classrooms that rely mainly on the *Audiolingual Method* as developed by language theorists who studied the works of behaviorist B.F. Skinner (see, Lightbown & Spada, 2006). In this particular approach, language learning is based on repetition and memorization which is one of many aspects that lead to a proficient language speaker. *Automaticity* in language acquisition is described as, the progression of language speech production that becomes more natural as the learner engages in communication in the target language (Hartsuiker & Moors, 2016). *Automaticity* is created when using drills and memorization without which learners struggle to create natural and authentic conversations (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). GS can provide learners with memorization and repetition but it does not focus on drills and call and response techniques. However, GS does provide the opportunity for *automaticity* of conversations and critical thinking. When learners are constantly using their oral skills with other learners to create authentic scenarios, they are developing skills that promote fluency.

Through works on *multiliteracies* (Michelson & Dupuy, 2014) described by Michelson & Dupuy (2014) as the use of language meaning and form as well as the various modes (i.e. audio and visual) with which language is presented. They use GS to promote

multiliteracies. Kalantiz & Cope (2005) speak to the four aspects to multiliteracies that promote language development: “Experiencing, Conceptualizing, Analyzing, and Applying.” (as cited in Michelson & Dupuy, 2014, p. 24). In reference to GS, learners *experience* culturally authentic scenarios and instances that promote meaningful learning, learners *conceptualize* those real-life experiences through task-based and project based instruction, learners *analyze* both culture and language when creating avatars and other writing assignments, and finally learners *apply* language structure and culture that they have learned in role playing. It can be concluded then, that through GS, learners could develop multiliteracies which will allow learners to analyze their own learning about culture and language as well as further their understanding of the language learning process (Michelson & Dupuy, 2014).

The final aspects to the pedagogical technique and theory that I wish to discuss are the *input hypothesis* (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) and the *interaction hypothesis* (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The input hypothesis states that the amount of target language a learner must be exposed to will affect the proficiency and fluency. In GS, learners are exposed to the immersive nature of the technique but the only superior level speaker in the room is the instructor with whom the learners do not extensively interact. Learners interact much more with others of their same level of proficiency. GS could also be validated by this hypothesis because the learners are being exposed to the language and outside resources in the immersive environment of the GS. GS could be validated as well by the *interaction hypothesis* (Lightbown & Spada, 2006), which seeks to involve learners in real life situations of simulations that will give the learners the opportunity to negotiate meaning

of language. By negotiating meaning, asking questions, and through repeating conversation, learners develop a high form of thinking and learning. This is done through these interactions and engaging activities with an interlocutor (another learner who is at the same level, a slightly higher level, or the instructor) which help to improve the learner's social skills in the target language.

These linguistic theories help to further the reasoning as to why GS is a creditable pedagogical technique. GS engages learners in a type of language learning that is both enjoyable and offers fun interactions that make them forget that they are even learning. These interactions are also culturally authentic and provide real-life scenarios to learners who may not have the opportunity to experience such events outside of the classroom. GS offers a communicative and immersive environment that promotes creativity and free expression that helps to promote automaticity in the target language as well as the potential for higher level thinking and the analysis of language and culture.

Though GS offers an immersive environment inside the confines of the classroom, once the learners leave, they are no longer exposed to that immersive environment. This is assuming that the GS is being conducted in the learners' own culture and in their own country where they do not have the opportunity to engage in the target language at all times. Even if the GS was implemented in an immersive college environment, the class time is limited. For example, at the University of Southern Indiana, French language courses meet either three times a week in fifty minute increments or twice a week for ninety minutes. This would certainly limit the amount of target language exposure. If, however, the GS is being conducted as a part of a SA program or experience, the learners would be exposed

to an immersive setting at all times. The instructors could then assign out of class activities, such as conversation circles with other natives, that would help to enrich the learners' SA experience and further add to the amount of target language exposure. This would give learners opportunities to use the language in real-life settings and give them the opportunity to re-create these situations inside the GS.

GS and Study Abroad

There are many terms to describe when learners travel to another country and take academic courses at a secondary or collegiate level (i.e. Study Away, Education Abroad, etc.) and for the purposes of this thesis, the term *study abroad* (SA) will meet that definition. SA is the opportunity for learners to experience a different culture, academic school system. While developing *intercultural competence*¹¹ which is defined by Deardorff (2006) as, “the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions” (p. 248). Though this may seem simple enough, it is quite difficult to achieve considering language barriers, norms and customs that may be interpreted differently, as well as values and belief systems that are much different from the learners’ own culture. How then, do learners develop a set of skills needed to achieve intercultural competence, what are the skills needed, and how does GS through SA help them to achieve this? After conducting this research and analyzing the articles from all of the scholars listed in the references, I have formulated four skills/stages that lead to intercultural competence: observation, experience, reflection, and awareness.

Observation involves the following without interacting with the culture or people in anyway: listening, viewing, and seeing. It is as if the learners are watching a film. They see and hear everything that is happening whether or not they understand the context, without having any interaction. Observations are not enough to fully understand another

¹¹ See Deardorff, D. K. (2006), for more information about intercultural competence.

culture but by experiencing it first-hand, one develops a deeper understanding and appreciation for it. Experience involves every aspect of observation while adding the senses of smell and touch. The experience is the interaction that the learner partakes in with the natives of the culture of study. One way to achieve this experience is through SA and most SA programs last longer than a month, such as a semester or full academic year. The longer the SA program, the more exposure to the target culture. This is not to say that there are no other ways or timeframes of experiencing other cultures, but for the purposes of this research, SA is one of the most effective means to experiencing another culture.

Reflection takes place in two different stages, once after observing and before experience, and the second after the experience. Reflecting on observations is just one level of understanding that a learner can achieve through SA. For example, sitting at a café in Paris just watching people in everyday real-life experiences unfold before them, offers one aspect of understanding of how people greet each other and one can tell by the greeting if they are family, friends, or colleagues. Learners may be simply placing judgements and formulating questions based on their prior knowledge of the host culture and language. Reflection after experience gives the learner the opportunity to have their questions answered, build upon their understanding of the culture, and assess their own native culture. Finally, the last stage is awareness. Awareness, as it pertains to this research, means having the knowledge and perceptions of other cultures, acknowledging the similarities and differences, and adapting one's behavior and attitude to be respectful and open minded of others. Awareness is also an ongoing process. Learners may become interculturally competent with their own culture and the host culture, but they will continue to develop

their competency through the continuation of other SA programs, vacations, and encounters with others of diverse background.

The process of intercultural competence is meant to be one of understanding and respect for all peoples. Through becoming interculturally competent learner's attitudes and behaviors will change to become inviting, nonjudgmental, and open to all people whether domestic or abroad. Through SA learners can achieve intercultural competence at a much faster rate than simply reading a book or watching a documentary. Through SA, learners add another piece of cultural understanding to their lives. They begin to understand more and more about the world and reflect on their own culture as well due to the opportunity to converse with natives and ask questions regarding the learner's own customs and norms. For example, an American may ask why French friends and families kiss each other on the cheek twice. A French person may ask the American why they hug friends and family. They each are using what they have observed, what they have experienced about each culture to answer a question. Once the question is answered they may then reflect on that particular aspect of culture to develop a better awareness of the host culture. With the competence of greetings, the next time a French friend comes up to them and leans forward with their face turned to one side, the American will not just stand there looking at them with a confused expression.

The basis for SA has been given but why do learners choose to study abroad? Is it to gain a new perspective, engage in another person's lifestyle, learn a new language, build cultural relations, experience a new way of life? Of all of the reasons to study abroad, many learners choose to embark on an adventure to learn another language or to perfect their

language abilities. Through the communication of language, the comprehension of culture can be better understood. In most SA language courses, learners are exposed to different aspects of learning such as an immersive language environment. Learners may have been exposed to immersive classrooms where the instructor is always speaking in the target language but scholars show that immersive environments while studying abroad may contribute to more developed language proficiency, fluency (depending on the definition, see. Freed et al., 2004), cultural awareness, and intercultural competence (Allen & Dupuy, 2013, Black & Duhon, 2006, Dekeyser, 2007, Engle & Engle, 2004, Freed et al., 2004, Johns & Thompson, 2010, Rexeisen et al., 2008, Tanaka & Ellis, 2003).

This begs the question of what is the difference between a SA immersive classroom and an immersive classroom back home? Many SA programs are hosting learners from every part of the globe who bring their own language and culture with them which can help to make a language classroom diverse. With such diversity in one classroom, learners often result to the common language and culture present in order to communicate with one another. This creates a total immersion setting that is not often possible with traditional immersion classrooms even if the instructor is speaking the target language at all times and is monitoring the learner's use of the target language. Eventually, due to miscommunication and the inability to understand a certain phrase or vocabulary word, the learners will resort to their native language to communicate. This is not to say that learners will always speak in their native language while in the second language classroom, but they will use it from time to time because it is much easier and timely than searching for a definition in a dictionary.

During the research I conducted at the Université de Caen, I had the opportunity to observe two French immersion GS classes where learners from around the world came to study French as a foreign language. There were more than fifteen different nationalities represented in each class and each brought diverse cultural perspectives to the environment in which they created their GS. Due to the diverse nature of the two classes, the GSs were very different and completely original (from those presented by founders Debyser (1996) and Yaiche (1996)) which is one of the opportunities that the technique offers learners of second language and while both classes were participating in a GS, the instructors for each course were different and each instructor facilitated and maintained their classroom differently which could have led to the GS being developed in even more diverse ways.

How does GS help create an environment that nurtures the development of intercultural competence based on the four skills/stages? Since GS offers real-life experiences through the acting out of scenarios and role playing, such as dinner parties, communicating with neighbors, conducting researching, attending a board or city council meeting etc., learners have the opportunity to experience cultural situations. The GS helps them to understand how these situations could play out giving them the tools they need to survive during their SA experience. For example, during the GS learners could role play opening a bank account and having transactions with tellers and personal of the bank. After having this experience in the target language, the learners will be better prepared for the authentic experience should they need to do so during the duration of SA. The instructor can help to facilitate the understanding of certain cultural situations as well, such as a dinner party. Dinner parties in France for example, have an interesting structure depending on

where one is in the country. In Normandy for example, the guest always arrives between fifteen and twenty minutes after the time that they were given. It is also customary for the guest to bring a gift to the host and this gift often complements an aspect of the meal, be it wine, bread, cheese, etc. The guest may offer the host flowers depending on the time of year but the guest should never offer chrysanthemums as they are a funeral flower in France. By facilitating a dinner party between the learners' avatars, they learn and play out these experiences so that they are better familiar with the culture and understand the reasoning behind them. This experience helps them to then reflect on the cultural situation and become aware of it and the consequences of arriving empty handed to a dinner party.

During one of my classroom observations, one class was learning how to create and leave a voicemail using a French cell phone. It was a bit outdated as an activity but communicative all the same. The learners were paired off and they were to remain in character while presenting to the class. With their backs to one another, they simulated a phone conversation between the two avatars. This activity was used to help them understand the French phone number system and area codes for the country. As each group presented, I observed that the first learner was reading a message that was their voicemail recorded voice and the second learner was leaving a message. The instructor gave them both certain criteria when creating the recorded voicemail, such as, clear name and phone number, reason for calling, and when would be the time to return the call. Some learners did an excellent job articulating the message and reciting the French phone number correctly, while others resorted to the way that phone numbers were recited from their own country. For instance, one learner from the U.S. said their phone number with each number

separating which is different from the French way of grouping numbers by two. When the instructor made the observation known to the learner, they explained that it was a subtle cultural difference. The instructor had never known of the American way, and was happy to have learned something. It can be concluded that GS through a SA program offers learning for the instructor as well. Instructors always learn from their learners but because of the nature of GS, instructors become more interculturally competent as well which will provide them with further experience and awareness that they can then teach to the next group of learners.

Unfortunately, not all SA French language programs are like the one at the Université de Caen. Not all programs use GS or use it to its full potential. Black & Duhon (2006) cite the *Institute for the International Education of Students (IES)* for their criteria in evaluating SA programs. These programs are evaluated by four academic criteria: “(a) student learning environment, (b) student learning and the development of intercultural competence, (c) resources for academic and student support, and (d) program administration development.” (p. 140). In evaluating SA programs, each university or institution creates their own performance goals in supporting the academic and social development of their incoming international students and there are many ways to promote the four academic criteria listed. GS offers the ability for learners to create their own learning environment making learning more meaningful and student-centered while aiding learners in the development of intercultural competence. Two of the four criteria are met just by implementing this pedagogical technique into FLL. The other two criteria are based more on the administrative aspects of SA programs and being able to conduct and facilitate

a GS requires much commitment from the institution and the instructors, without whom, the GS could not be successful.

Synita Dinora Santos (2014) from North Carolina State University, concluded in *A Comprehensive Model for Developing and Evaluating Study Abroad Programs in Counselor Education*, that “The purpose of the study abroad program and the quality of the international relationship will be determining for the program's success.” (p. 346). If the purpose of the SA program is to facilitate a better understanding of intercultural competence and promote learning in a culturally authentic environment, then GS is a creditable technique that will further the academic and intercultural knowledge of the learners. The two instructors from the Université de Caen, attested to the cultural development that GS brings to the SA experience for their learners. They spoke to the importance of understanding the French culture, particularly in the region that the learners chose to learn from through the GS. The instructors agreed, “ce n’est pas quelque chose qu’on peut perdre...Il nous faut le double... trois heures hebdomadaire, ou plus.¹²” which means that GS is an aspect of their curriculum that they cannot lose and they need to double the amount of time to dedicate to GS. From our conversation, they concluded that GS is an aspect that makes a SA program that is superior to the rest because GS gives learners the ability to learn about the target culture and to share each other's culture in the process.

The GS course that is conducted by the instructors at the Université de Caen are student-centered as I have stated and the instructors allow the learners to decide where the

¹² Translation – It (GS) is not something that we can afford to lose. We need double the amount of time (to dedicate to GS) ... three hours a week or more.

GS will be fictionally located. This location is usually located somewhere in France which is the target culture but is not often located in the Normandy region where the university is located. If the location was placed in the region such as the city of Caen where the university is located, learners could take advantage of being able learn more about the region and implement what they have learned outside of the classroom to the GS itself. By doing this the learners are breaking down the walls of the classroom and turning their environment into a much bigger immersive classroom where they control their learning. This has the capability of enhancing the SA experience because the learners are able to live out real-life experiences and benefit from the immersive setting.

The instructor could suggest activities that help incorporate real-life situations into the GS to help create a more immersive environment. Such activities could include having learners co-create specific situations that they have experienced together outside of the classroom. For example, learners could take a trip to the local theatre and see an opera. After they have experienced this real-life situation, they can re-create the situation with the personalities of their avatars in a fictional setting and implement grammatical aspects that they are learning to present to others in the GS. Two or three learners could create other details that may not of happen in real-life that could further the storyline of the GS, such as while at the opera, the learners snuck backstage and met the cast and were then invited to participate in a scene the next night. This situation could be presented orally or used as a creative writing assignment or both thus enhancing not only the learners SA experience, but the experience of other learners in the GS. This idea requires learners to experience the target culture and language first hand and immerses themselves further it. This is how the

GS should be conducted in order to provide an experience that is truly immersive and culturally enriching.

The technique of GS should be implemented in the IEP (Intensive English Program) at the University of Southern Indiana as well to enhance our learners SA experience. By requesting that the learners incorporate themselves into the community and explore the area the Tri-State area, they will better understand the target culture of the mid-west and improve their language skills by interacting with locals. Through the Center for International Programs on campus, learners have the opportunity to participate in conversation circles where they talk to locals to improve their English. This is one way that the IEP integrates communicative activities into its curriculum. If GS were to become a part of the curriculum, learners would create avatars with professions. The learners could then find locals in the community with the same professions to interview them about their daily lives and to give learners perspectives about the professions cultures. The instructors could help facilitate internships or short work studies with those professionals as a part of the GS requirements thus further enriching the learners' intercultural competence and SA experience.

It can be concluded that if GS is a part of a SA program, the GS will aid learners, 1) in developing a better cultural understanding for the host culture, 2) aid in the practice of everyday real-life situations or, 3) promote an immersive language environment, 4) allow for the enhancement of SA programs through experiencing local culture, and 5) attribute to the development of intercultural competence due to the interactions between learners and the process of creating and understanding a culturally authentic environment.

CONCLUSION

Through conducting this research, I have met my goals of exploring the world of GS and its benefits to second language acquisition, culture, and the realm of SA. Through the implementations of the scholars shown, others can now expand of the development and structure of GS when implementing and creating their own. By understanding the benefits that GS brings to culture, language instructors, SA advisors, and institutions of education can understand the need for further cultural development. Cultural development is the goal of GS and it culture is the foundation to its creation. Learners dive beneath the tip of the iceberg when engaging in the GS to find the reasons behind customs, norms, and behaviors of the host culture. By understanding the benefits that GS provides for second language acquisition, language instructors can increase their learners' ability to communicate effectively using authentic situations and scenarios. Through GS, learners can develop a higher automaticity through free expression and creativity in the target language. GS also promotes critical thinking and analytical skills of the host language that learners may be lacking. Finally, by understanding the benefits that GS provide for SA, learners can develop their intercultural competence and increase their understanding of the host culture through the real-life experiences and interactions with fellow learners and natives.

GS has its disadvantages as well such as the time needed to properly develop a fictitious universe and the amount of commitment and facilitation needed from the instructor. From the instructors as the Université de Caen, it was conveyed the GS needed

to be implemented in longer time frames and more frequently in order to obtain the desired effect due to the amount of control that is given to the learners themselves. This could also be seen as a disadvantage because if the learners are not motivated to take the reins of the class development, the instructor must find ways to motivate them which could lead to dysfunctionality among the learners in turn leading to a poorly developed GS. The group work and project based form that GS requires could also be seen as a disadvantage to some learners whose learning styles do not flourish in such environments, which could lead to a learner secluding themselves from the class. It is also important to mention that not all learners possess the attitude or personality need to function appropriately in GS. If learners are not driven to learn the language and culture of the host country, they will have a more challenging time benefiting from the GS in ways that others might and if they are not self-motivated to complete their school work, they will not benefit from further language and cultural understanding. Despite the limitations above, I have shown many advantages of GS and they should be seen to surpass the disadvantages.

This research was conducted based on the scholars found in the references, perspectives from instructors of GS and the researcher's own personal perspectives and experience with FLL, GS, and SA, therefore, further research, experiences, publications, and discussions should still be had to increase the understanding of GS in the realm of second language acquisition, culture, and SA. Further research may include, but is not limited to:

- The Affective Filter Hypothesis as developed by Krashen (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) and the advantages and disadvantages that GS could implicate

- The Critical Period Hypothesis as discussed in Lightbown & Spada (2006), and the effectiveness of GS as it pertains to certain age groups.
- The assessment of culturally understanding before and after the GS as it pertains to learners in SA programs.

By extending the research of GS through these possible paths, scholars around the world will help to surpass the limitations of this research and continue to advance the academic, linguistic, and cultural advancement of GS. “GS is a well-developed pedagogical framework and continues to be retooled to respond to calls for new directions in FL (foreign language) education.” (Michelson & Dupuy, 2014, p. 23). Through learning a foreign language, we become more culturally aware of the world. From that awareness and exposure to GS, we become interculturally competent, and from that competency, we create global citizens of our learners.

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