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"Experiential Learning" Is What Faculty Makes of It: Creating New Models of Understanding for Experiencing and Interpreting on Faculty-Led Short-Term Study Abroad Programs

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Abstract

Short-term faculty-led study abroad programs have gained in popularity amongst undergraduate students in the United States (IIE 2022). Yet, little research has investigated how educators on these programs perceive experiencing and interpreting, even though they constitute two key modules in experiential learning. Through semi-structured interviews with faculty at Generic University on how they conceive of experiencing and interpreting, the authors conclude that there is little commonality on those concepts. This divergence leads to different experiential learning study abroad programs. The authors place faculty interpreting and experiencing on a spectrum of understanding and demonstrate how that influences the pedagogical design of their study abroad program models. From the faculty members' conceptions, the authors create two program models, which they have coined "Mobile Classroom Model" (MC) and "Home Base Model" (HB). The purpose of this article is to begin a conversation about how scholarship fails to address the lack of universality in the concept of experiential learning.

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Introduction

Study abroad programs for undergraduate students in the United States have increased in popularity over the past three decades, quintupling in the number of participants from 70,000 in the late 1980s to almost 350,000 in the 2018/2019 academic year. According to the 2020 Open- Door-Report, of those students who go abroad 65% have participated in a short-term study abroad program, which the Open-Door Report defines as a program that lasts no longer than eight weeks (IIE 2022; Musto & Gundy, 2018). This article identifies a specific category within the realm of short-term study abroad programs--those which are designed and facilitated by a university educator, who takes students to a foreign country, and teaches their research specialty within the context and the framework of the program. These study abroad programs can exist within a university's larger institutional framework, including a technical and pedagogical support system, or as standalone projects, which then are created and implemented by individual educators.

Faculty-led short-term study-abroad programs (FLP) are part of the ever-growing field of experiential learning classroom design. Undergraduate students benefit from the global exposure, the immersion into new cultures, and the encounters with new people and places, equipping them with global learning skills, which empower them not only professionally for the increasingly globalized economy but also foster self-growth (Davis et al., 2022; Shostaya & Morreale, 2017). Research within the field of FLPs has been devoted to addressing obstacles and challenges faculty and students may encounter on these programs, including logistical, technical, and cultural issues, as well as student learning challenges and outcomes (Iskhakova & Bradly, 2022). Yet, FLPs are not without their critics, particularly in specific implementations of programs (Doerr, 2022). What is being ignored in the scholarly discussions of this large umbrella term of FLPs is that these experiential learning opportunities are not organized and conceptualized by every educator in the same way (Iskhakova & Bradly, 2022). While they all speak of "experiential learning" and the benefits of studying abroad as a means to personal growth and global/cultural education, they do not discuss experiences and reflection, as the

two key elements of the learning cycle, in a comparable fashion (e.g., see McComb et al., 2019; Moak, 2020; Pipitone, 2018). Most of the existing scholarship focuses on educators' own experiences and their own reflections or best practices they take away from their own programs, failing to address FLPs theoretically and conceptually (Iskhakova & Bradly 2022). This article aims to provide an overarching theoretical model to assess study abroad programs based on educators' experiences and understandings of experiential learning, thus providing a more holistic assessment of FLPs.

To address this niche in the scholarship, this article discusses the pedagogical role an educator plays in conceptualizing experiencing and interpreting as part of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This qualitative comparative research shows that educators at institutions of higher education understand these two key concepts differently and implement them in varying ways into their short-term study abroad programs. While educators speak of a 'same' experiential learning tool, they are essentially crafting differing experiences for their undergraduate and graduate student populations. Experiential learning does not employ an all-encompassing terminology, which can be researched and addressed using broad strokes. Through semi-structured interviews conducted with faculty at Generic University, the authors asked educators to reflect on their past experiences as leaders on FLPs. How did they conceive of experiencing and interpreting, and how was that conception reflected in the structure of their study abroad programs? Based on those findings, this article proposes a new dual model structure to differentiate between various classroom designs on FLPs, introducing and developing two specific models, termed the Home Base Model (HB) and the Mobile Classroom Model (MC).

This article will argue that the choice for either an HB or MC model is the primary pedagogical choice educators make while planning their study abroad programs. All subsequent pedagogical choices for the facilitation of experiencing and interpreting are constrained by the chosen classroom model. The initial choice for either one of these models provides possibilities and limitations in terms of how a student will experience the learning environment abroad and how they will reflect on their experiences. This article thus enhances the existing experiential learning cycle by articulating the importance of faculty choices on the program.

This article aims to elevate the role of educators from "simply" being tour guides and facilitators of learning material. Instead, it demonstrates the importance of professors' understanding of experiencing and interpreting in a student's learning process. The new dual model structure illustrates the limitations of thinking about experiential learning in universal broad ways. Thus, this article allows scholars and practitioners alike to take stock of their understandings and methodologies in how they conceive of experiential learning and their practices on FLPs.

Literature Review

The concept of experiential learning has been firmly grounded in pedagogy literature for over a century. Challenging the traditional monotony of information transmission from the educator to the student, Dewey (2007) advocated for a learning environment in which students were exposed to experiences which would encourage the creation of knowledge in an active manner. Dewey argued that this experiential learning environment paired with practices created by the instructor were at the core of the students' learning process. Be it good or bad, the learning process relies heavily on the preparation and the intentions of the educator in the way they construct experiences. He rightfully highlighted that not all experiences are equal. Rather, an experience must be constructed in a way that allows a student to not just take in the discussed class concepts but to grow personally and create the ability to form knowledge that will be useful to them in future applications (Dewey, 2007; Roberts, 2003).

Defining "experiential learning" as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience," and "knowledge" as "the combination of grasping and transforming experience," (Kolb, 2014) has become widely adopted across higher education campuses in the United States. Kolb & Kolb (2005) provide their cyclical model for experiential learning: A student will have an experience (1), then they reflect on that experience (2), they will conceptualize the experience, meaning articulating what they can take away from it (3), and lastly, they will attempt to apply the concept in a new setting or a new experience (4) - thus perpetuating the cycle. With each iteration of the cycle, their learning becomes more complicated as experiences and reflections build on one another (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kolb, 2014). This theoretical learning cycle "has been widely used and adapted in the design and conduct of countless educational programs", according to Kolb (2014).

Educators today practice in divergent ways the facilitation of experiential learning in educational settings (Wurdinger & Carlson 2010). Different approaches can be transformed into specific classroom activities in higher education institutions--both at the undergraduate and graduate level--which actively involve students and allow them to take on a formative role in their learning environment inside and outside the traditional classroom setting. This can include independent research projects, guest speakers, internships, visits to practical sites of learning (i.e., laboratories, museums, etc.), or serving in community-based organizations (Georgia State University, 2019; Northeastern University, 2020).

Amongst those activities outlined by Wurdinger and Carlson (2010) are also long-term and short-term study abroad programs, which literally transport the students from the four walls of a traditional classroom into the real world. These forms of experiential learning impact a student's learning outcome for the better. For instance, FLPs have been demonstrated to have measurable improvement for leadership outcomes (Davis et al., 2022). Other FLP research has shown that these experiences improve students' broadening of their global perspectives. (McPherson et al., 2022; Whatley et al., 2021). And yet other FLP research has illustrated that global exposure can increase students' cultural abilities, knowledge, and competencies to an extent (Cressy, 2021; Iskhahova et al., 2022; Niehaus & Nyunt, 2022; Shostya & Morreale, 2017). Generally, then, FLPs are perceived to provide an environment for "high impact' learning, providing vast amounts of experiences and lesson within a short period of time (1-8 weeks), which allows students even in such a compressed time to experience personal growth in their cultural awareness, their critical thinking, and their sense of self (Kuh, 2008; Luxton et al., 2022).

Nonetheless, echoing Dewey's critique of misguided experiences and unintended consequences in the reflections period of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb & Kolb, 2005), Augilar and Gingerich (2002) argue that "while study abroad usually involves some form of active learning, this does not always lead to experiential learning as some programs do not allow students critical time for interaction and reflection." The necessary steps and critical junctures, as outlined by Kolb and Kolb (2005), might not always be fulfilled, and met in a shortened stay: experiencing and reflecting may not occur at all, may not occur in the way an educator has set up the experience (Augilar & Gingerich, 2002), or may occur after the program has already ended. While a long-term study-

abroad program, usually conducted by themselves or in a small group, forces a student to fully immerse themselves in the environment, an FLP may prevent a student from fully immersing and experiencing the culture as intended due to the short amount of time. Ultimately, experiencing a high volume of new experiences in a short amount of time, in a new environment, can undermine student reflection and the learning process itself (Augilar & Gingerich, 2002; Shostya & Morreale, 2017).

Scholarship on FLPs has discussed concerns that arise on these programs which inhibit or limit the experiential learning process for its students. The intensive focus on cultural aspects of study abroad programs, for instance, has shown that improvements in that realm are not clear cut (Iskahova & Bradly 2021; Iskhahova et al., 2022). Other criticism points out that although universities are expanding their offerings to respond to the need of preparing students for an ever-evolving globalized world, the short-sighted travel opportunity can perpetuate "hierarchies of power and colonialism" (Pipitone, 2018, p. 55) or even "academic voyeurism" (Moak, 2020, p. 1) and narrate an experience that is closer to tourism rather than scholarship, while simultaneously ignoring the nuances of historical socio-economic conditions. Other risks include the "glorification of immersion," pursuing an artificial form of immersion, or insisting on the importance of students' personal growth. This creates a difficult balance to strike, as a study-abroad program at its core is about a student's ability to adapt and grow to a new world (Pipitone, 2018). Roholt and Fischer (2013) provide a framework of decolonizing pedagogy, which aims to expose students in global education settings to the power dynamics and hierarchies colonization has caused throughout the world. They argue that instructors are critical in these types of experiential learning settings to instruct and reflect with students on how to listen and engage with local people and sights (Roholt & Fischer, 2013). These concerns are even more significant in the global south and in post-colonial environments. In these geographical contexts explicit racial tensions between the students, the host countries and natives, and their area of study can emerge (Pulsifer et al., 2020).

Additional obstacles on short-term study abroad programs are, for instance, ever-developing social-group dynamics, which can impact the learning environment. Also, the increase in technological distractions and the constant ability to stay connected can inhibit the immersion experience of a student in their study abroad environment (McComb et al., 2019). Further, the size of the

study group can impact learning and immersion outcomes. Whatley et al. (2021) have shown that groups that are too big prevent students from feeling connected to one another and their educator, highlighting the importance of faculty guidance and input on FLPs. Lastly, preconceived notions of the students about the places visited on the program can influence the way a student approaches their learning experiences abroad (Whatley et al., 2021).

Some of these issues - no matter how much planning has been done - are simply out of the educator's hands. Nonetheless, it is still up to them to create a cohesive and holistic environment which acknowledges the importance of cultural immersion, the respect a local culture deserves, and any potential toxic social dynamics which can impact the learning environment (Anderson et al., 2016). Several recent studies on FLPs highlight the importance of course design and the impact faculty have on a program, its experiential learning methods, and its outcomes. This includes the obstacles created by the length of study abroad programs (Strange & Gibson, 2017), the number of students in a program (McBride, 2020; Whatley et al., 2021), the group dynamics amongst the students, as well as the relationship with the professor (Abualrub et al., 2013; Ritz, 2011; Roholt & Fisher, 2013; Shostya & Morreale, 2017; Whatley et al., 2021), and the cultural implications related to a study abroad program, meaning the exposure to new cultures, the reassessing of one's own perceptions, and the deescalating of (racial or nativist) tensions (Anderson et al., 2016; Cressy, 2021; Luetkemeyer & Jordan, 2021; Niehaus & Nyunt, 2022; Whatley et al., 2021).

Looking specifically at the literature on student outcome and student learning, we see it is abundant, discussing steps and practices educators can take to improve the student learning experience to account for certain shortcomings of FLPs and emphasize desired learning outcomes more concretely (Below et al., 2022; Doerr, 2022; Moak, 2020; Roholt & Fisher, 2013; Sachau et al., 2010). Sachau et al. (2010) provide a concrete step-by-step guide for faculty on how to prepare study abroad programs, what to attend to, and how to ensure a successful learning experience for the students, highlighting the educator's role in shaping the learning experience for their students.

Several authors speak to the importance of reflection in student learning during short-term study abroad programs. Roholt and Fisher (2013), for example, advise their readers to embrace unexpected moments of study abroad programs. They refer to unexpected answers or use of terminology on their own

study abroad programs with American students in the Netherlands and South Africa. Here, the authors advance "critical reflection", which not only asks students to respond to situations instinctively, but rather, to question and challenge their own beliefs based on the experiences they had on the study abroad program as part of their reflection. Such an approach to reflecting, which embraces the uncomfortable or unexpected, improves student learning (Roholt & Fisher, 2013).

More recent work in the field on FLPs echoes the importance of including reflection as a part of their design. Whatley et al. (2022), for example, emphasized specifically the need for creating spaces for reflection as part of a positive learning experience. Reflection can improve key direct and indirect learning outcomes of short-term study abroad programs, which have been touted as crucial selling points for students to participate in FLPs. Cressy (2021) argues that guided reflection by educators can enhance intercultural development among students. And McPherson et al. (2022) illustrate how experience and reflection work together to achieve learning outcomes for students in their global advancements.

Generally, though, when assessing the current scholarship, FLP research focuses on individual issues and provides targeted solutions based on individual study abroad cases, which the authors have previously led and/or experienced, failing to offer generalizable findings. A review of selected case studies depicts programs taken to different locations, offered for different periods of time and to varying student groups (undergraduate, graduate, and major). These case studies show that structurally some were organized independently by faculty and others organized with ties to local university or government partners. Some programs were directly connected to semester-long, on-campus preparations while others existed as stand-alone journeys. Some asked their student participants to conduct independent research, while other programs primarily organized meetings for students to take in a local culture or industry and to reflect later. This article will revisit these case studies later in the findings sections.

The wide variety in structure and organization amongst different FLPs means that when the literature discusses ways to improve them logistically and pedagogically, it does not account for the reality of operationalizing experiential learning. It is a testament to the creativity and commitment of faculty members

that there is a diversity of experiential learning in the field of short-term study abroad programs. Nonetheless, it seems useful to unpack the glaring amalgamation of various understandings, and specifically to examine what it means for faculty to experience and interpret on short-term study abroad programs.

The purpose of experiential learning opportunities, such as FLPs, is to create knowledge and to facilitate personal growth in students. Thus, there should be a genuine conversation about the impact of the faculty's role in this process, based on how they perceive experiencing and interpreting. As shown above, the literature does give credit and power to educators in shaping the program and its outcomes, but it does not ask what impacts a faculty member's choice to create the type of program they have created in the first place. This article addresses this shortcoming in the literature's understanding of what practitioners conceive of when they discuss "experiential learning." This article builds on the existing scholarship, illustrating more clearly what faculty members mean when they speak of experiential learning and its components. This in turn builds a model of understanding that will provide scholars with the ability to assess individual FLPs in a much more comparable fashion and see the concept of "experiential learning" in a universal manner.

This article will introduce a newly developed dual model structure, coined the Home Base Model (HB) and the Mobile Classroom Model (MC). These findings will illustrate how a faculty member's perception of experiencing and reflecting, the two key components of experiential learning, affect their choice for constructing either one of the models for their short-term study abroad program.

Methodology

To conduct this research the authors identified all the educators at Generic University who had conducted or were going to conduct a FLP in the following summer semester (2020). Identified faculty members were emailed with a personalized message explaining the purpose of the request. The authors requested faculty members reflect on their own previous study abroad programs, focusing on how they incorporated the tenets of experiential learning. In in-person interviews, the authors asked them to reflect in a semi-structured manner on their past experiences on FLPs, including their understanding of experiencing and interpreting, and how their conception continuously affect

the way they structure their short-term study abroad programs (see Appendix for list of questions). Those interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes. The authors took contemporaneous notes, and each interview was recorded and transcribed into text. Additionally, those recordings were reviewed by the authors and all quotations in the article are represented in that faculty member's own exact words.

Generic University has created a program entitled *Study Abroad Program*, which are faculty-led short-term study abroad sessions offered during the university's summer terms. The experiential learning study abroad program was initiated in 1991. A generic example program offered at the university includes the following: The program will have a duration of five weeks. During that time, students are enrolled in two college courses, earning 8 credits. Students work directly with faculty for six to eight hours a day, five days a week in a high impact learning environment. Courses are either an adaptation of already existing courses offered at Generic University during the regular spring and fall semesters, or they are newly created based on the research interests of the faculty. During the Summer 2020 term, seventy FLPs were planned to take place in over 30 countries around the world.[1] All major research fields were represented, though most of the FLPs were from the social sciences and humanities.

The university's *Study Abroad Administration* (SAA) facilitates the creation and execution of these programs for faculty. That facilitation includes assistance with proposals, budgets, health, and safety, debriefs, and course revisions. The SAA details specific mandates for the programs: cultural activities and site visits must be present on the schedule to avoid simply having traditional classroom activities in a different country; pre-departure meetings are demanded so students and faculty can form social bonds and cohesion. The SAA also encourages and provides the necessary resources for faculty to engage in debriefing sessions on the program for the students. The SAA does refrain from directly interfering or advising on syllabi or pedagogical questions. Importantly, the SAA does not send representatives on the programs themselves. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide a meaningful program in

[1] Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all FLPs were cancelled by Generic University and the Study Abroad Administration. Approximately half these programs were transformed into virtual learning experiences.

which the presented experiences lead to positive learning outcomes. The professor becomes the sole bearer of learning principles and norms (Respondent 7[2]).

Since the Generic University community of FLP faculty is relatively small, our initial participants were able to recommend and connect us to further interviewees, allowing us to gather a larger set of responses. Due to the program's name, its intricate structure, and the ability to easily identify interview participants by naming places, regions, and research fields, this article has abstained from describing any specific FLP programs to protect the identity of the participants. However, these programs occurred in urban and more rural locations in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. The insights of this article are not solely derived from any location or style, and findings should be generalizable. Additionally, for the newly created model, this article has incorporated and applied descriptions of FLPs previously published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. This inclusion serves a dual purpose: (1) increasing the number of cases to bolster the model, and (2) applying these case studies to the model to amplify findings and model applicability to a larger audience.[3]

Findings

Type of Model	Home Based (HB)	Mobile Classroom (MC)
Structural Attributes	1. Usually partnered with a university and/or one physical location 2. Often uses classroom facilities 3. Schedules are routinized	1. Uses multiple locations in different towns/countries 2. Rarely uses traditional classrooms 3. Schedules are unique and less routinized
Experiencing	Facilitated approach towards in-country experiences	Immersion approach toward in-country experience
Interpreting	Faculty led approach towards reflection	Personal approach towards reflection

TABLE (1): BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HOME BASE AND MOBILE CLASSROOM MODELS

Faculty-led short-term study abroad programs (FLPs) can be roughly categorized along a spectrum of a Home Base Model (HB) to Mobile Classroom Model (MC). Faculty make this significant choice which impacts the way they then structure how students experience and interpret on these study-abroad programs. When educators lead FLPs multiple times, rarely do they travel back and forth between these two models. Their initial choice, which becomes

[2] For background research, the authors interviewed a staff person from Generic University's SAA.
[3] This research received IRB approval.

solidified over time, not only structures and shapes the students' experiential learning, but seemingly also reinforces the faculty's perception of experiential learning. None of the interviewees remarked on making significant structural changes to their program's pedagogical model after an initial trial.

Utilizing Kolb and Kolb's (2005) experiential learning cycle, educators emphasize experiencing and interpreting as the two first steps in a student's experiential learning. Experiences on FLPs allow the educator and the students to break out of the passive environment of the traditional classroom and engage with new material in a hands-on manner. On its own, an experience exists just as an event. Following it up with a debrief allows students to internalize the experience, categorize it, and appropriately "file" it away. This two-step process of the first half of the experiential learning cycle provides the foundation which allows a student to apply the stored-away information to a new situation and subsequently produce new knowledge. The intensity and quantity of experiencing and interpreting varies on FLPs, which shapes and forms, therefore, subcategories of experiential learning on programs abroad.

Evidence for the Home Base Model (HB)

This article's created term, the Home Base Model (HB), typically involves a dominant university partner in the host country visited. These types of partnerships with foreign universities have varying levels of formality. Some programs are designed to be integrated into the partner university's summer curriculum, meaning students take local classes facilitated by local university professors. Other times, the partnership means simply that a university rents out dorms and classroom space, with the faculty leader hosting all lectures. Key to the HB is that a city or a campus is designated as the home base, which serves as a permanent point of orientation for the students to return to and to meet with their faculty and other classmates.

> The program was 24 days long. Participants included 22 teaching candidates majoring in elementary education (n =20) or world languages (n = 2) at Southmont University (also a pseudonym) which is a large state university in the southeastern region of the United States. The South Africa study abroad experience primarily took place in the Cape Town area. The participants stayed at a host university. (Byker & Xu, 2019, p. 108)

The idea here is to transport the traditional university classroom to a different, foreign location while maintaining a familiar structure and framework for the students. Most of the time, HB programs have a clear and rigorous itinerary, which includes predominately classroom hours, guided site visits, and guest lectures. The students mostly engage in a few hours of outside activities. Rarely does this involve day trips or overnight stays to other locations.

Experiences in HBs are facilitated and guided to provide students with a neat overview of important sites, structures, and relevant stakeholders in a particular country and in relation to their field of study.

> […], the course includes numerous in country activities such as in class lectures, team active learning exercises, tours of historical sites (e.g., Coliseum) and industrial organizations (e.g., Policlinico Umberto I), […] (McComb et al., 144).
>
> During the one-week immersion in Rome, Purdue and Sapienza students participate in a mix of lectures, team active learning activities, and classroom discussions that underscore the primary principles being taught in the program (McComb et al., 151)
>
> Participants stayed at a host university and their experience included visits to different historical sites such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, and Tiananmen Square. The experiences also included 25 hours of observation and teaching at four schools, daily debrief sessions, and lectures from Chinese professors about Chinese culture and K 12 education in China. (Byker & Xu, 2019, p. 108)

When FLPs are part of a university's semester-long course, which prepares the student for a foreign country, the HB can also present itself in the following way: "As part of their time in Kenya, students worked in teams to complete service-learning projects that provide a service to the Maasai community, primarily working at Tumaini Academy, while also informing their own learning" (Moak, 2020, p. 5). There may not be a clear university partner or a specifically designated classroom for the students, but the location of their stay and their activities are centralized and focused on one specific location.

As for the reasons for choosing an HB style for their FLPs, an interviewee elaborated,

> I'd say it's largely it's a pedagogical and logistics thing. Sure. And there are tradeoffs to both. I like having the home base because it creates you know, you create accountability, you create a learning environment. They are used to being on campus, it's nice that we have the benefit of a campus to be there at (Respondent 1).

Another instructor described their approach as "this program is kind of taking that to heart that we want this to be an experiential process, but we don't just want to dive in for five weeks and not ever come up for air" (Respondent 2). Among faculty members who chose HB for their programs, there is a view that the best way to facilitate experiencing is not to simply dive into a new environment. The pedagogy used is to create a sense of routine for the students, which includes constantly cycling back and forth from the classroom to the experiences, and then back to the classroom. This means, in practical terms, that the students' morning contains several hours of traditional classroom time, and in the afternoon, they travel to engage in an experience. This routine allows for those experiences to be more easily included into the familiar course structure.

Another interviewee discussed the benefits of tying FLPs to a local university, arguing it allows for their own student group to interact frequently and in a structured manner with local peers from the local university. Some programs aim to amplify this cultural exchange by creating international study programs and classes, in which students from two countries can participate together and learn from one another (McComb et al., 2019). Even if the local students merely operate as hosts in a foreign country, one interviewee highlighted the social importance of including them in the program structure:

> Okay, we actually go up [Asian Mountain], or go up to the midway point with the bus for it and then [Asian University] has a traditional seminar house or like a traditional [...] guest house, it's a big it's a big retreat in the woods. And we have a retreat for three days together in the woods with our students. And there's 30 of their [Asian University] students join us, our faculty, their faculty, our TA, their TAs, we three meals a day, the students are in rooms live on the floor and to [...] mats that's like very crucial. And, and it's all about just getting to know each other. (Respondent 1)

A key observation made when analyzing the educators' choices on the experience spectrum is how they view and discuss the students' workload and

potential overload. There are significant opinions about student work, such as, “the idea is they're kind of getting a little bit of time to really dive in really have this experiential and reflection process, but not necessarily get overloaded by it” (Respondent 2). Also, “my role [as faculty leader] first is to keep you safe. Okay, then healthy, and then to have a positive learning environment” (Respondent 1). These instructors believe that experiencing can be best facilitated by being very conscious of overload. They structure the classroom and experience sections carefully and with a focus on maintaining a feasible workload and a not-overwhelming daily schedule. This includes ending a day’s work either at 4pm or 5pm after some lecture time and some site experiences. The educator chooses to ensure that students do not become physically and mentally exhausted. They acknowledge that within the cycle of experiential learning, “too much experiencing” can cause burnout and counteract the whole purpose of experiential learning.

When it comes to the interpreting portion of the experiential learning cycle, educators who chose the HB tend to emulate their approach to facilitating experiences by handling the interpretation aspect. They focus on a guided approach to reflecting and interpreting experiences. One instructor emphasized the importance of creating spaces for reflection, “debriefing after the event, I want to create some things again, using sort of using slack, using shared communication, post some questions to have them pre- and post-process things, doing some low stakes reflection… and thinking about it as one way that I can at least give them the tools to do that.” (Respondent 2)

Some others in the HB will limit the amount of time spent on collectively discussing and interpreting experiences. They will debrief occasionally and without a set schedule, only after designed experiences One interviewee described this debrief after one of their powerful experiences,

> Right, then we'll have a debrief. Okay. So, what do we see today? How did we read last night? You know, what you know, [inaudible], what do you notice? Procedures? So, having a debrief, but it's based on then combining, they've read about it right on the night before we go there, plus the experience of being there on the site. (Respondent 3)

Faculty members pick specific days and specific locations to elicit a debrief. By using the active debrief occasionally, in a classroom or the field, educators potentially reinforce particular experiences as being more impactful than

others. The emphasis on reflection is less than the importance of the experience itself. The faculty members are intentional in the moments that they choose to emphasize. Students while experiencing each event are given specific instances to reflect upon, which are transformed into teaching moments. Often the faculty members give a specific prompt or guiding questions to assist the students with their reflection. The faculty members view their role as leading the students down the reflective path of their choosing.

Evidence for the Mobile Classroom Model (MC)

This article's second created term, the Mobile Classroom Model (MC), is quite different in its approach. In the MC, the educator chooses to minimize the classroom as much as possible. The design of the MC is logistically completely different from the HB. Classroom lectures, for instance, take place in museums, in government offices, in conversation with practitioners, and at sites where meaningful events have occurred. The MC keeps students and educators more on the move and in the field. These types of programs generally do not stay for their entirety in one city, but rather, they move around the country or even multiple countries to gather as much exposure as possible. One faculty leader described this model, "just the whole idea of spending, you know, hours a day into classroom. So, if we are in a classroom for an hour or two over the day that that, for me is like a pretty long time" (Respondent 3). Students will be spending as much time as possible experiencing, and that constant immersion is not designed for regular periodic breaks for interpreting.

As some of the interviewees elaborated,

> No, I'm not doing that. I do not want to be, right, what's the point of going to a classroom in a foreign country, just the whole idea of spending, you know, hours a day into classroom. So, if we're in a classroom for an hour or two over the day that that, for me is like a pretty long time. So, what I really try to do is make sure the students are prepared right for the realities of you know, it's hot in [Asian Country], it's humid in [Asian Country]. (Respondent 3)

> But so, when I take the students there, I don't want them to be stuck in their hotel rooms. So, we are out there either okay in a classroom but like really being lectured by local politicians, activists, social movement, people, refugees, ordinary locals,

> whatever, it could be the neighbor who's going to talk about their experience, but it's all the locals. (Respondent 4)

In MC models educators understand experience as immersion, which becomes the goal when creating their FLP structure. Rather than trying to elicit a certain understanding, or a unified and collective experience, the experiences on the program become extremely personal to the individual student. Particular site visits or activities are specifically designed for this individualistic experience. One example is the goals set out by one interviewee focused on immersion: "they could just be there, which is already good, but still, I'm trying to hit as many boxes to be sure, they should be able to walk around to touch, they should be able to go and look at the documents. They should be able to speak; they should be able to be confronted with a particular emotional experience" (Respondent 5).

Rather than a guided or facilitated experience, the purpose is to allow for every student the opportunity to experience it for themselves to the degree they chose to experience it:

> The way I look at the [...] and study abroad in experiential education means that... My task is not to elicit a particular experience. Nothing in my program ....is set out in a way that I seek everyone to fall into a particular experience. I look at my program as wanting to [inaudible] create an environment within which any experience is possible, and as a collective, we then travel through it, you know, as sort of in alignment.

One interviewee defines full immersion as follows: "It's really like taking them out of the classroom to the actual subtleties of life and teach them to use their own lens critically to look at different realities at different parts of the world." (Respondent 4) This understanding of immersion is that the faculty's understanding of experiential learning is really to dive into that experience as fully as possible. As one instructor argued, "I have a principle, when we are spending only a month in a totally different socio-political context, climate [and] geography. The less time they spend indoors, especially on their own in their hotel rooms, reading and writing, the better" (Respondent 3). In MC FLPs, students spend as much time as possible experiencing and that constant immersion is not designed for regular periodic breaks for interpreting.

Understanding experiences as immersion, meaning an intensive day-to-day schedule, shapes the way interpreting is structured by these types of faculty

members. Instructors who understand experiencing as immersion seem to rely on external tools to help solidify the interpreting portion. This is mainly done through scheduled assignments and an assigned final project for the students. Final projects are a way for students to demonstrate both their different interests and passions and how they have academically reflected on the concepts learned and chosen to apply them to their own research. It allows for faculty to check in at the end of a program to see how much learning has occurred. This desire for independent research is highlighted, for example, here: "Students were also required to complete two ethnographic exercises, one in each country. These exercises included extensive, focused participant observation with the objective of increasing students' observational skills and fostering an intentional focus on everyday life" (Moak, 2020, p. 54).

Some faculty members choose their assignment to be specifically reflective papers throughout their FLP. These papers are not designed to test the academic course requirements in terms of factual knowledge, but rather, they are assigned to create the reflection necessary for the interpreting part of the learning cycle. One instructor described their approach,

> I do writing, [it] is writing intensive because the whole point of this, of a study abroad program [name deleted to maintain the integrity of the review process], is to experience it and reflect upon it and process it. Make sense of it. Raise questions about it, draw some conclusions about it. But also draw conclusions about yourself (Respondent 6).

Reflections elicited through these types of papers are deeply personal, as they neither have a particular instructed angle nor is there a requirement to discuss something as part of the group. The process of reflecting becomes, therefore, more meaningful than the actual product created. Faculty members who chose this model feel the students should be immersed in these new experiences and drawing deeply personal conclusions, rather than necessarily connecting those concepts back to the academic components.

Discussion

Based on the findings, this article believes that there is a structural spectrum within which educators conduct FLPs. The ends of that spectrum are represented by the HB and the MC. Discussing the concepts of experiencing and interpreting, the two key components in the experiential learning cycle, with

the interviewees illustrated that there are different pedagogical preferences for structuring their programs. These different structures lead faculty toward divergent understandings of experiencing and interpreting, which ultimately create different learning environments for students embarking on study abroad.

Preferences by faculty members, shaped by the way they conceive of experiencing and interpreting, as well as their relationship to the subject matter taught, impact a key choice they make in their structure of the FLP. This choice subsequently creates boundaries and limitations to the students' experiential learning and knowledge creation. Therefore, FLPs are not a uniform concept. These programs are constrained by the choices of faculty members as well as external factors. This article will not evaluate the choices by faculty and determine if the HB or the MC leads to better educational outcomes, but rather identifies the existing distinctions between different programs.

The rise of FLPs amongst United States undergraduate students highlights the need for further study of the classic experiential learning cycle. Future research needs to first start with a typology of these programs, such as separating them into the HB and MC model. Faculty chose these models as a reflection of how they understand teaching and student learning. This research has determined that the category FLP or experiential learning study abroad program is insufficient to describe what is in fact happening. There are different types of experiential learning models. Therefore, this typology should be embraced by the wider scholarship to better pursue future research.

Model Typology

Future Research Potential	Home Based (HB)	Mobile Classroom (MC)
Student Learning Outcome	1. Topic proficiency 2. Material Retention 3. Network Building	1. Transformational Growth 2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 3. Creating Global Citizens
Assignments & Assessments	1. Language Attainment (Respondent 6) 2. Community Building (Respondent 2) 3. Service Learning (Respondent 1)	1. Ethnography (Respondent 4) 2. Personal Reflective Writing (Respondent 4, Respondent 5) 3. Independent Student Research (Respondent 3; Barkin, 2016, pp. 28-29)
Logistics	1. Safety and health 2. Familiarity with environment 3. Routinized learning environment	1. In-group community 2. Dynamic accommodations

TABLE (2): FUTURE RESEARCH POTENTIAL USING HOME BASE AND MOBILE CLASSROOM MODELS

Separating the various types of FLPs will allow future research to be more targeted, and to eventually develop a genuine comparative analysis. Recommendations coming out of this research will become, therefore, more specialized and tailored to their specific type of FLPs.

There are three specific avenues for further research that we believe would be aided by this typology. These areas are Student Learning Outcomes, Assignments and Assessments, and Logistical Circumstances. Because the MC and the HB flow from the educators' understanding of experiencing and interpreting, the learning outcomes are naturally different under each model. A comparative analysis will illustrate the benefits of each model over the other. Keeping in mind that each FLP is unique, by differentiating by model, future research can provide educators with more guidance in designing their own program. Educators should then bring their own pedagogical understanding of experiential learning toward designing their own course.

The first category for additional research is Student Learning Outcomes. The authors have identified some possible advantages of each model. The major advantage of the HB model is the integration of the traditional classroom and the experiential learning cycle. For that reason, topic proficiency and topic retention could be benefits gained from the HB. Another advantage of the HB is the connection to a particular location. That location is often a university or specific neighborhood. Thus, the HB model lends itself better towards building specific, localized networks. These networks can stem from within the university structure or within that local community (Respondent 1 and 4).

The MC has its own possible comparative advantages. One outcome specifically identified by the interviewees is the concept of transformational growth (Respondent 4,5, and 6). The process of the mobile classroom allows for a diversity of experiences in different locations. Rather than having those experiences focused on a particular topic or community, the experiences are firmly targeted at the student's own understanding of self. Similarly, the MC lends itself toward focusing that diversity of experiences toward the learning goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and global citizenship. As students move between different locations, this model could more easily connect students with those specific goals. It is different to live in a community for a short period of time than to experience that community through tales spun by a guest speaker.

The second category for additional research is Assignments and Assessments. In the interviews, educators who ran an HB expressed value in the traditional classroom format for specific subject areas. One interviewee offered, for instance, language attainment as best implemented by a routine of classroom and experiential learning. Another benefit of the HB for assignments is its firm connection to a specific location. For assignments that are directly connected to community building or service learning, these could be best implemented by this model.

Educators using the MC tend to understand experiencing and interpreting through immersion and deeply personal reflection. The approaches to these two concepts lend themselves directly toward an ethnographic assignment, independent research projects, and personal reflective writing plans. The MC could be the more appropriate model if faculty are considering these sorts of assignments for their students on a future program.

Finally, there are Logistic Conditions that are different for each model. For the HB, being in one location ties the program directly into that location's resources and services. One advantage is that it requires less organizational structure to provide health and safety resources if the entire program is located in the same location. The routinized schedule can also be easier to plan for, and the familiarity with the environment can lead to students taking a more independent time management route. The MC has its own advantages when it comes to logistical aspects, such as the sense of community on the program. The on-the-move schedule, meaning the lack of creating localized bonds and routines, benefits in-group cohesion, brought on by the conditions of having to rely more heavily on the student group. Another benefit is that it allows a group to temporarily visit a place with sub-par accommodation. Rather than fully committing to a location, this allows the program to experience an environment with limited resources before switching to another location. For example, if a program wanted to experience a very rural location, particularly one that had experienced a natural disaster, it may not be feasible to commit to that location for 5-8 weeks.

The discussion here highlighting individual components of programs serves as a first step into a broader line of research that can be focused once the model structure is incorporated as an additional variable. Results originating

from these more tailored research avenues could be of interest to educators, administrators, and other university stakeholders as they plan to implement different types of FLPs in their various institutions of higher education. They could also serve as an informational tool to students as they may consider whether to embark on a FLPs.

Conclusion

In the literature on FLPs, programs are often grouped together with no differentiation based upon their operational structure. The structures of FLPs exist on a spectrum, but the two ends of the spectrum can be clearly identified and named. This article termed those models the Home Base Model (HB) and the Mobile Classroom Model (MC). Their chief structural difference is in how these program models treat their abroad accommodations and physical space of learning/experiencing. HB programs rely on a limited number of locations and are often paired with a partner institution. This is different from MCs which encompass several different locations, and often incorporate moving around a country or region frequently throughout the short stay.

From the interviews with FLP educators, the decision to pick a model flow from how faculty understand the experiential learning cycle. As they are designing their pedagogy, they make different choices based on how they understand experiencing and how they understand interpreting. Each of these choices are specific for each faculty member and tailored for their FLP. But taken together they are making implicit claims about different understandings of those concepts. Faculty members who understand experiencing as facilitation and interpretation as faculty-led often chose the HB. While faculty who understand experiencing as immersion and interpreting as deeply personal tend to pick the MC. The future research on FLPs should first start with a structural typology, initially differentiating between Home Base Model FLPs and Mobile Classroom Model FLPs. These programs are structurally different and should be treated as such. By differentiating between models, future research will be much more targeted and effective for faculty to apply to their own courses.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

1) Can you tell us some basics about your study abroad program [name deleted to maintain the
integrity of the review process]?
a. Location?
b. Duration?
c. Student participants (amount, majors, etc)?
d. How many iterations of trip have you done before?
e. TA/PA relationship?

2) What does a regular schedule look like?
a. Excursion?
b. Connection to local university?
c. Connection to educators on site?
d. Assignments given?

3) What motivated you to create a study abroad program [name deleted to maintain the integrity
of the review process]?

4) What benefits do you see for the learning experience of students?
a. Current discussions in the field?
b. Scholars vs. tourists?
c. Impact of immersion?
d. The glorification of globalization?
e. Hierarchy/colonialism, choice of language, socio-economic issues?

5) How do you foster a learning process in this unique learning environment?
a. Experiencing vs. interpreting?
b. Perception of experiences?
c. Immersion vs. distance from classroom/classmates?
d. Notable moments where something worked/did not work?