

3 Challenges to Global Citizenship Education

Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism

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Introduction

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a pedagogical project with the power to transform approaches to language learning. It is a normative project that unashamedly references the foundational universal values of the United Nations set out as human rights. It is a politically engaged project that is itself a site of struggle. This chapter explores some of the discourses associated with GCE and engages with some critiques. *Global citizenship* implies a relationship with the contested economic project that is globalization. It also suggests a tension with or even a challenge to *national* citizenship.

Language teachers may be drawn to the global citizenship education movement because they can identify with a project that, by definition, transcends nationalist ideologies and relativizes claims to any linguistic or cultural superiority. As highly competent language learners themselves, language teachers have experienced the emancipation that comes with being able to access new cultures and make new relationships beyond the confines of a single language, often identified with a single nation state. They may easily engage with the humanist project of cosmopolitanism (Starkey, 2007).

When engaging with GCE as a transformative project, language teachers are likely to meet resistance. Nationalism and patriotism are ideologies with emotional power whose proponents may think in stereotypes and use discourses of superiority. Consequently, language teachers need to be both secure in their understandings of the aims and purposes of GCE and confident of their ethical stance as educators of citizens. Adoption of GCE in its cosmopolitan form has the capacity to inspire language teachers, encourage them to question some of the currently prevailing content and practices and offer the relative security that comes from being part of a global movement, legitimized by the United Nations.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003183839-5

Global Education

Global citizenship education (GCE) is one of a cluster of educational movements and initiatives that are essentially based on a vision of education that transcends the national (Rapaport, 2009, 2010; Gaudelli, 2016; Brown, 2016). Its aims, content, and pedagogical approaches overlap with peace education, human rights education, multicultural education and education for sustainable development. These movements are characterized by commitments to equality and social justice. They prioritize respect for human dignity and intend to contribute to the transformation of society. Consequently, they engage explicitly with political issues and campaigns and are often supported by civil society organizations. In other words, teachers and schools participating in these educational programs see themselves as contributing to an agenda that extends far beyond the community in which the school is based. This understanding of GCE may be difficult to implement in contexts where teachers have little agency and where the authorities have little interest in bottom-up political change. The term global citizenship education dates from the turn of the twenty-first century and brings together global education, which became established in the 1980s, and citizenship education, which developed from civic education, itself an integral element of mass public schooling from the late nineteenth century onwards. Global education was a response to the awareness of human interconnectedness across distance that is characteristic of globalization. Citizenship education developed in democratizing contexts, such as the liberalization of previously authoritarian regimes in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and Southern Africa. It was also a response to a perceived loss of legitimacy in established democracies due to insufficient participation in formal democratic processes, particularly by the young (Crick, 2000). Citizenship education is therefore associated with democracy.

Global education was a response to political and academic debates and discourses on globalization in the late twentieth century (Robertson, 1992; Beck, 2000). Public interest was also stimulated by and responded to reports of prestigious international commissions such as the Brundtland report, *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) and the subsequent *Our Global Neighbourhood* (Commission on Global Governance, 1995) leading to the creation of new civil society movements. Global education was closely associated with development education, an initiative promoted by NGOs such as Oxfam, who were keen to foster a community of supporters for their humanitarian and relief work in the Global South (Osler, 1994). It engaged with topical world issues and allied with a pedagogy based on enquiry and active learning (Richardson, 1976; Pike & Selby, 1988). International schools, not driven by a national curriculum since they offer the International Baccalaureate as their main form of accreditation, also

identified global education as an appropriate signifier of their commitment to international mindedness (Brehm & Webster, 2014). Global education has been defined as being:

[B]ased on the principles of co-operation, non-violence, respect for human rights and cultural diversity, democracy and tolerance [and] is characterised by pedagogical approaches based on human rights and a concern for social justice which encourage critical thinking and responsible participation.

(Osler & Vincent, 2002, p. 2)

This definition has been applied by extension to global citizenship education. It emphasizes that human rights and democracy are fundamental to understandings of citizenship (Ibrahim, 2005).

The report of the Global Citizenship Commission (Brown, 2016) promotes this commitment to human rights as essential and powerful knowledge for citizens that supports a global ethic of care. Convened by John Sexton, President of New York University, and chaired by former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown the commission brought together world leading scholars, lawyers and political actors to review the relevance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (United Nations General Assembly, 1948) for the twenty-first century. The Commission argues that the duty to care for others wherever they may be and whatever our relationship to them is the basis of a global ethic. It asserts that:

The idea of global citizenship does not, then, exclude citizenship in a nation or state, or membership in a family or a local community. Indeed, it presupposes that we have significant moral connections at all three levels.

(Brown, 2016 p. 26)

Moral commitments to each other are reinforced by the interconnectedness that is so clearly evident in the experience of the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic and the extraordinary meteorological events provoked by climate change.

Goods, money, diseases, pollutants, and ideas: all move across the globe more swiftly and sweepingly than ever, whether by ship or by plane, whether in the currents of the oceans and the atmosphere or electronically through the revolutionary media of our time, including, of course, the World Wide Web. Our ecological interconnections – through climate change and global epidemics, for example – require us each to join together to overcome challenges that have an impact on us all, and on the prospects of generations yet unborn.

(Brown, 2016 p. 26)

The Commission took the UDHR as its starting point for exploring the meaning of global citizenship. It notes that Article 29(1) of the UDHR asserts that “everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible”. It concludes that global citizenship requires that “community” refers to the world community that has structures and institutions that may sometimes protect but at other times deny human rights at every level: local, national and global. For educators, one interpretation of a professional duty towards the world community is to ensure that teaching and learning opportunities they organize protect, respect and fulfil human rights. This is developed later in the chapter.

Cosmopolitanism

Reference to the world community or what the UDHR calls the “human family” suggests a perspective that is essentially cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitanism is strongly associated with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) who aimed to develop a society based on perpetual peace. This conceptualized a universal humanity where human beings recognize each other as ends in themselves rather than exploiting others as a means to self-advantage (Wu, 2020). For the Global Citizenship Commission this corresponds to the principle that “no person, however lowly, is to be sacrificed simply for the well-being of others” (Brown, 2016 p. 107).

The UDHR concept of the human family corresponds to many religious traditions that conceptualize human beings as children of one God. Cosmopolitanism encourages a vision of connection to all and any other human beings and this relativizes the salience of a national identity. It is a concept that sits logically as an ethical perspective in a world of globalization and migration. Twenty-first century teachers experience language classes as increasingly cosmopolitan in that students and teachers are likely to have affiliations and feelings of belonging that extend beyond a simple and singular national identity. Language teachers may well understand their moral obligations in terms of this definition:

The cosmopolitan ideal combines a commitment to humanist principles and norms, an assumption of human equality, with a recognition of difference, and indeed a celebration of diversity.

(Kaldor, 2003 p. 19)

The commitment to “humanist principles and norms” is effectively to the UDHR and human rights standards. Celebrating diversity challenges tendencies to cultural assimilation to a national standard or identity that was identified in the early twentieth century by American educationalist John Dewey as tending to erode a cosmopolitan perspective (Dewey [1916] 2002).

Dewey's perception was that the European Renaissance and Enlightenment movements had provided the basis for the development of a consciousness of the interconnectedness of humanity. He considers that this cosmopolitan worldview was prevalent in the nineteenth century until ideologies of nationalism, perhaps inspired by the German nationalism that had strongly developed in his lifetime, refocused the loyalties of the people towards the nation rather than the world.

So far as Europe was concerned, the historic situation identified the movement for a state-supported education with the nationalistic movement in political life – a fact of incalculable significance for subsequent movements. Under the influence of German thought in particular, education became a civic function and the civic function was identified with the realization of the ideal of the national state. The “state” was substituted for humanity; cosmopolitanism gave way to nationalism.

(Dewey, [1916], 2002 p. 108)

Crucially Dewey notes that across Europe education was nationalized at the end of the nineteenth century. The state took control of education from religious and charitable foundations and made it compulsory. The role of teachers was re-defined so that they became agents of a national state. They were expected to show loyalty to the state and promote patriotism. Thus, the educational goal of introducing young people to a humanistic curriculum became subservient to a more instrumental, national curriculum. In Dewey's words: “[T]he ‘state’ was substituted for humanity; cosmopolitanism gave way to nationalism”.

Dewey's analysis helps to explain the role of education in promoting nationalism as a dominant ideology throughout much of the twentieth century. Cosmopolitanism has been presented as unpatriotic and as being in opposition to nationalism. Indeed, at various times, schooling and formal education have played a key role in disseminating visions of citizenship based on nationalist agendas. However, it can be argued that cosmopolitanism relativizes patriotism and nationalism, but it does not set out to replace them. There is a strong argument that in our globalized world “we have no choice but to be cosmopolitans and patriots, which means to fight for the kind of patriotism that is open to universal solidarities against other, more closed kinds” (Taylor, 1996, p. 121).

Dewey recognized that cosmopolitanism is a learned perspective. Education can develop the capacity of people to identify with fellow human beings irrespective of national boundaries and thus encourage concern for strangers (Appiah, 2006, 2018). However, the promotion of cosmopolitan perspectives ceased to be a function of education when formal national education systems instead focused on promoting a concept of citizenship restricted to an unthinking and patriotic adherence to the nation state. It may not be surprising that governments wish to define

citizenship in their own terms as nationality, but the nationalization of citizenship is a political act that excludes many residents of nation-states who do not meet legal requirements for this status. The education of the national citizen relies on promoting “national boundaries as morally salient”. It constrains learners’ perspectives by irrationally glorifying and naturalizing nationhood as defined by borders that are essentially “an accident of history” (Nussbaum & Cohen, 1996, p. 11).

Cosmopolitanism is profoundly democratic in the sense that its commitment to equality of respect enables the inclusion of many views and experiences. In relativizing the significance of national identities, cosmopolitanism supports the development of horizontal people-to-people relationships that do not require the consideration of interlocutors as essentialized representatives of a nation. A cosmopolitan perspective invites the reimagination of nations and communities, including schools and universities, as cosmopolitan. In other words, it recognizes that there are many different ways of being British, German or Chinese.

One theorization of globalization and cosmopolitanism introduces a further concept of *cosmopolitanization*. This is defined as “*internal* globalization, globalization *from within* the national societies” (Beck, 2002, p. 17). If globalization means that local and global are no longer points on a spectrum but rather intertwined and interconnected concepts, then people can recognize issues of global concern such as climate change or wars that provoke migrations as part of everyday local experiences for which a national identity has little explanatory power. An understanding of and commitment to a global ethic and norms, particularly human rights, can help to frame understandings of and reactions to everyday events that have global causes and consequences. This analysis challenges the use of the word “foreign” in TEFL and EFL. The continued use of the term *foreign* language provides historical continuity, but in doing so links to imperial and colonialist pasts with their built-in inequalities and hierarchies of respect.

Language education was an essential part of a nationalist and colonialist agenda and organizations such as the *Alliance française*, the British Council and subsequently Goethe, Cervantes and Confucius Institutes were set up to promote an idea of language study as a means to accessing a culture or *civilization* that is implicitly superior (Starkey, 2011). The *Alliance française* was founded in 1884 to spread the use of the French language in the colonies and elsewhere overseas. It continues to recruit and train teachers to run classes or provide tuition and it organizes conferences and supports the production of teaching material. It has a strong institutional position in the teaching of French as a foreign language and has been influential in helping to define the cultural content of language courses. The British Council was set up in the 1930s and has also been very influential in language teaching. There is thus a continuous link between language teaching from the colonial era to the present day. It may still be possible to discern a slightly colonial flavor in the way

that national cultural institutions are inclined to present their national cultures, through language and literature, in a broadly positive, uncritical light (Starkey & Hassan, 2000). Moreover, in the case of the French and British organizations at least, advertising for their courses tends to feature capital cities prominently and may still draw on stereotypes of a bygone culture; bowler hats and rolled umbrellas signify Britain and glamorous women in swimsuits drinking cocktails evoke France.

Citizenship Education

Citizenship education developed from civic education. Whereas the education movements and initiatives associated with global education were notable for their failure to become integrated into the formal school curriculum, civic education was promoted and prioritized by national and state education authorities with curriculum time allocated and textbooks issued (Rapoport, 2009; Parker, 2018). Civic education is often a top-down highly normative school subject which encourages conformity, obedience and passivity through a static representation of society; achieves social control through acceptance of existing power structures; and promotes an uncritical patriotism.

There are few references to the term “citizenship education” in the academic literature before the 1980s. While the Ancient Greeks saw citizenship education as explicitly political, concerned with enabling the citizen to participate and to work towards the realization of a just society, it is arguable that traditional civics programs such as those in schools in France or the USA were largely concerned with the status quo. They did little to encourage students to look critically at society, increase social awareness, or promote social action in favor of a more just society (Giroux, 1980).

Citizenship education developed in the final years of the twentieth century as an alternative, more dynamic, critical and inclusive approach than was available with civic education. These developments coincided with the period of democratization of nation states previously under military, communist, or apartheid control (1974–1994) (Huntington, 1991). The transition from authoritarian to democratic constitutions in states across the world, including many European and Latin American countries, provided the opportunity to reconsider the role of education in building societies of citizens able to operate and sustain vibrant democratic systems. Scholars contributed both theory and empirical evidence that helped to operationalize new citizenship education programs at this time (Heater, 1990; McLaughlin, 1992; Hahn, 1998; Parker, Ninomiya, & Cogan, 1999; Audigier, 2000, Osler, 2000).

The introduction of compulsory citizenship education in England at the turn of the twenty-first century attracted some international attention because it was then one of the largest unitary education systems in the world. The initiative was based on a report on education for citizenship and

democracy (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1998), prepared by an advisory committee chaired by political philosopher Bernard Crick, whose longstanding commitment to political education influenced his work on citizenship education (Crick & Lister, 1978). The publication of the Crick Report stimulated a flurry of scholarly articles and conferences, and the education ministry in England moved to support the training of teachers of citizenship and the introduction of citizenship education into all schools in 2002 (Jerome, 2012).

The way that citizenship education was conceptualized and implemented in England was challenged by scholars who argued that the citizenship curriculum was too closely tied to political education based on national institutions and insufficiently cosmopolitan. Research with local children at school in a city in England revealed the extent of their consciousness of family ties to and identification with communities and cultures across the world. Framing citizenship education in national terms risked denying the realities of children whose families had migrated. Migrants were often framed as a political problem to be addressed, consequently implying that they were less worthy citizens. Education for cosmopolitan citizenship frames diversity as an advantage in a democratic society and ensures that minoritized students are an asset rather than a liability (Osler & Starkey, 2003, 2018).

Global Citizenship Education

Global education as a coalition of grassroots and activist-led educational initiatives took advantage of the curriculum space and legitimacy accorded to citizenship education and rebranded itself as global citizenship education (Oxfam, 2006). GCE has since gained traction with inter-governmental organizations including UNESCO, whose guidance and materials are disseminated to teachers across the world (UNESCO, 2014, 2015). UNESCO is the arm of the United Nations that was set up to promote, through education and science, peace, human rights, care for heritage and the environment.

In the twenty-first century one of UNESCO's major contributions has been drawing up and disseminating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) supported by all UN member states since 2015. These evolved from the earlier Agenda 21 (1992) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000). Of particular interest to educators is SDG 4 on quality education and, in particular, SDG 4.7 on the curriculum, which reads as follows:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation

of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Nation states are the prime duty holders in respect of this universal goal. They have made a commitment that a sustainable future for the world's population involves, indeed depends on, education. It requires a variety of forms of social studies including human rights, gender equality and peace, all of which are associated with Global Citizenship Education (Akkari & Maleq, 2020).

As an example of how this is enacted in practice, an NGO inspired by the UN children's program, UNICEF Canada, promotes a Global Classroom program that aims to educate and promote action on social justice, humanitarian issues and human rights with a focus on the rights of all children. The Global Classroom program encourages democratic pedagogy (Howe & Covell, 2005) and defined as "creating a space where children's rights are modelled, upheld and respected and the learners are active participants in the classroom" (Guo 2011: p. 21). Guidance for schools includes a practical guide for Global Citizenship and a further guide on incorporating a children's rights approach in schools (Guo 2011; MacDonald, Plum & Pashby, 2012).

The Canadian global citizenship guidance promotes a pedagogy based on head, heart and hand. Teachers are encouraged to help students develop intellectual curiosity (head) and help them to engage emotionally with their inquiry activating a sense of compassion, responsibility and social justice (heart). Such projects should also include opportunities to take action (hand). The guidance makes the parallel with learning theory, attributed to Rousseau and Pestalozzi, based on a cycle of learning that moves from exploring to responding to taking action. A parallel pedagogical movement in Europe models the cooperative learning approach developed by Freinet (Jerome and Starkey, 2021).

UNESCO advocates a similar approach as the underlying conceptual driver for global citizenship education. In this case the terms are *cognitive* (knowledge, understanding, critical thinking and awareness of interconnectedness); *socio-emotional* ("a sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity"); and *behavioral* (acting effectively and responsibly "for a more peaceful and sustainable world") (UNESCO 2016 p. 8).

Contesting and Questioning GCE

Whilst global citizenship, has found widespread endorsement and global citizenship education (GCE) has been taken up enthusiastically by teachers and many education authorities across the world (UNESCO, 2015; Tarozzi & Torres, 2016; Gaudelli, 2016), GCE also has its critics. At a macro level, cosmopolitanism, based on the model of liberal democracy

implicit in the framing of GCE as founded in UN standards, challenges powerful discourses of state nationalism and its more exclusive and violent version ethnonationalism. Regimes based on ethnonationalism such as, historically, Nazi Germany and those Balkan state regimes that conducted so-called ethnic cleansing during the post-Yugoslav wars of 1991–1999 have used extreme violence to subdue or eliminate opponents. The UDHR arose from an intention to counter “barbarous acts” such as those perpetrated during the Second World War. Cosmopolitanism has been described as the antidote to ethnonationalism (Sen, 2006).

Authoritarian nationalist regimes deny the legitimacy of such cosmopolitan perspectives based on commitments to protect, respect and fulfill all human rights. Singapore’s leaders have invoked what they call Asian values to justify limiting freedoms. The leadership of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) discourages talk of universal values, preferring definitions of human rights with Chinese characteristics. Both regimes insist on the priority of a national perspective that denies one of the core tenets of a culture of human rights namely that these rights are indivisible and interdependent. In these cases, the regimes prioritize security and economic and social rights over political freedoms. However, there is objectively no set of specifically Asian or Chinese values. Several major Asian countries including India, South Korea, Japan, Pakistan and Bangladesh have multiparty democracies and are committed, to a greater or lesser extent, to respecting the whole range of human rights. Taiwan is an example of liberal democracy with Chinese characteristics.

The denial of the legitimacy of cosmopolitan perspectives in order to protect a national interest identified with a particular political administration is in tension with a widespread understanding by peoples and movements across the world that human rights have functional universality (Donnelly, 2007). This means that struggles framed in terms of human rights draw on a global ethic so that, as Malcolm X expressed it: “[A]nybody anywhere on this earth can become your ally” (Clark, 1992 p. 175).

Other critiques of GCE come from within the academy. Scholars identify three discourses associated with GCE that have very different ideological roots (Pashby et al, 2020). First, global citizenship can be readily aligned with *neoliberal* economic frameworks that stress competition and markets, often presented in terms of maximizing choices. This is intended to justify deregulation and the privatization of public enterprises as well as offering tax-cuts that lead to reductions in welfare benefits and diminished public services. A regime of meeting targets is presented as the means to improve quality (Unterhalter, 2019). In this way GCE can be promoted in terms of an elite cosmopolitanism that encourages language learning and cultural exchanges as a means to enhance personal social capital in a competitive employment market. This perspective is explicitly promoted in the case of Japan (Smith, 2021). A second discursive approach to GCE is characterized as *liberal*, emphasizing rights

and freedoms, individual development and contributions to the public good. A third orientation is *critical* GCE. This emphasizes social justice, multiculturalism, critical awareness of global power asymmetries and the transformative power of education. One variant of this approach has been called Critical Democratic Cosmopolitanism (Camicia and Franklin, 2011). This envisages GCE as a process of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1996) whereby the aim is for global or cosmopolitan citizens to engage directly with and learn from others in different situations but engaging in similar struggles.

Another variant of GCE is critical humanism (Andreotti, 2014). This particularly questions the colonial mentalities that continue to influence ways of thinking about the environment and the interactions of human beings with each other and with the natural world. It encourages frames of reference beyond nation-states, including indigenous communities and their cultures. In particular, this approach recognizes a persistent colonial imaginary as a threat to addressing the climate emergency and promoting sustainable development. It is unfortunate that some national institutions, as in the examples above, continue to promote language learning using stereotypes and thereby fail to address the colonial imaginary.

Language Teaching and Education for Cosmopolitan Citizenship

Education for cosmopolitan citizenship is grounded in theories of cosmopolitanism and human rights, whereas there is no parallel theory that corresponds to global in the phrase global citizenship. However, global citizenship education can be conceptualized in terms of cosmopolitanism; this may appeal to language teachers since language teaching and learning have aims that go beyond the merely instrumental. Language learning, even for business purposes, is part of a humanistic education that encourages intercultural communication based on equality. However, without an explicit human rights frame of reference, comparisons between cultures, both within the learning group and between the learners and the target culture may be the occasion for stereotypes, racist or sexist comments or jokes and derogatory remarks (Osler & Starkey, 2005). These contradict the spirit of human rights, which is to be respectful of others. Stereotyping also negates the aims of education in general and of language learning in particular since it distorts, simplifies and denies complexity thereby closing curiosity and enquiry. A knowledge and understanding of human rights equips teachers and learners to engage with other cultures on the basis of equality of dignity.

The pedagogy associated with language learning provides many opportunities to develop citizenship skills as well as familiarize learners with key concepts associated with democracy. In many respects communicative methodology is, in itself, democratic. The skills developed in

language classes are thus directly transferable to citizenship education. In particular, the language class is a site where education for dialogue is especially developed including skills such as the ability to listen, to reformulate the words of another the better to understand them, to put a different point of view, to produce a valid argument, to concede the strengths of someone else's position or perspective.

In the communicative language classroom learners are often required to speak and discuss in pairs and groups, having the freedom to express their own opinions and develop ideas and new ways of thinking. This contribution to the overall project of democratic citizenship can also be recognized and developed. Since discussion and debate require working with others, taking part in public discourse and working to resolve conflicts, language teaching can contribute substantially to capacities for action and social competencies (Osler & Starkey, 2015).

As an example of a cosmopolitan project developing skills of citizenship and language simultaneously, a school in London provided the opportunity for children learning Spanish to campaign for Latin American migrant workers' rights in their borough. Over the year, students researched human rights abuses in Spanish-speaking countries, as well as looking into the issues faced by the Latin American community in Newham, their local area of London. They created a campaign around their chosen cause that involved students working together to produce bilingual campaign material such as a pitch, a campaign leaflet, a campaign letter, memes, a website and an online petition. They worked with locally based NGOs such as Redlines and the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS). The project culminated in a Human Rights Day of Action during which the students launched their campaigns at targeted locations across London. They had to engage with members of the public to inform and persuade, deliver campaign letters to key stakeholders and perform a media stunt, all of which involved the use of advanced English and Spanish oracy skills (School 21, 2020).

Adopting a human rights approach to language teaching provides a sound framework within which controversial issues can be examined. Debate is conducted showing respect for persons, particularly other interlocutors, as the essential dignity of human beings is acknowledged. Disparaging remarks about individuals or groups who are not present is also inappropriate behavior and therefore unacceptable. However, if respect for human rights is regarded as a standard, judgements can be made about the words or actions of individuals, governments or cultural groups. In this way uncritical cultural relativism can be avoided. This perspective needs to be made explicit to the learners from the start and one way of addressing this is the study of human rights instruments in the target language. Such a study enables students to link the various topics they study to wider issues of human rights and is likely to prove more interesting and popular than the daily life and routines content that is often mandated by examination syllabuses.

Whether the context is pair work, group work or discussions involving the whole class, teachers taking a human rights position introduce ground rules. This can help to ensure that expressions of opinion and conflicts of views are productive and not destructive. Examples of such ground rules include:

- Where a discussion is chaired, the authority of the chair is respected;
- Even heated debates must be conducted in polite language;
- Discriminatory remarks, particularly racist, sexist and homophobic discourse and expressions are totally unacceptable at any time;
- Participants show respect when commenting on and describing people portrayed in visuals or texts;
- All involved have the responsibility to challenge stereotypes;
- A respectful tone is required at all times.

It goes without saying that teachers are party to these agreements and will not use sarcasm, irony and disparaging judgements.

A move away from closed and true/false questions in reading and listening comprehension, to open-ended questions where opinions are genuinely sought and discussed can also invigorate language classes. When language teachers create a communication gap to provide for a more meaningful task, they encourage students to explore their differences of opinions as well as merely exchange information. Questioning by the language teacher and questions printed in textbooks may focus on language structures rather than on the truth. The linguistic exploitation of the course material may counteract its socio-cultural objectives. Logically, the linguistic and cultural dimensions reinforce each other rather than one undermining the other.

Given the observance of ground rules and a climate of open debate with respect for other speakers, it is very much in the interests of the language teacher to promote controversy in the classroom. In debating issues that are meaningful to themselves and about which there are genuine differences of view, learners develop their linguistic fluency as they focus on the content of the debate rather than on the form of the language they are using.

Conclusion

This chapter encourages language teachers to recognize their capacity to contribute to Sustainable Development Goals. This is often framed in terms of promoting Global Citizenship Education. When GCE is defined in terms of cosmopolitan perspectives based on commitments to human rights it can be considered as education for cosmopolitan citizenship. Such education challenges notions of citizenship as uniquely associated with a singular national identity. However, it recognizes the cultural roots of formalized language learning as possibly perpetuating colonial

imaginaries that may inhibit productive intercultural communication. A human rights perspective is cosmopolitan in focusing on similarities between human beings rather than on differences. This way of looking at the world can and should have an impact on the conduct and content of language education. Language learning can be reframed as cosmopolitan and as an intercultural rather than an international experience.

Acknowledgments

This chapter contains material previously published in the following sources:

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