



## Teaching global citizenship: A case study in applied linguistics

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## Introduction

Graduate attributes are now a key driver of teaching and learning practices in UK higher education (ESECT 2004). These refer to skills, knowledge and abilities of graduates, which go beyond disciplinary content knowledge or technical expertise, and are intended to prepare students to be active agents of social good both in the workplace and the community. Among the various descriptors of such attributes is that of “global citizenship”. At Oxford Brookes University, the graduate attribute of “global citizenship” is defined as: “Knowledge and skills, showing cross-cultural awareness, and valuing human diversity. The ability to work effectively, and responsibly, in a global context.” Translating such new types of knowledge into teaching materials and activities which encourage deep learning, and so prevent the marker of “global citizen” being subverted and trivialised in today’s increasingly market-oriented universities (Fairclough 1993), raises challenges for colleagues across the subject disciplines.

In order to evaluate how relations between today’s wider society and its human subjects are being articulated via the object of the global citizen in the UK academy this report has three main objectives. First, it aims to define the global citizen as a term located within the discipline of critical applied linguistics which sees language use as constitutive of social practice and power relations in particular historical contexts. Second, it demonstrates practical and critical approaches to teaching and assessing global citizenship in higher education (HE) which prevent its meaning defaulting to empty corporate rhetoric. Third, it aims to develop themes and questions that could be explored further in future research.

To achieve these three objectives, this report will draw on three papers presented by academics working in the discipline of applied linguistics who presented papers at a Higher Education Academy (HEA) seminar held at Oxford Brookes University on 18 May 2012. David Block, from the Institute of Education, presented a paper “Exploring global citizenship: from cosmopolitanism ideal to class politics”. Rachel Wicaksono, from York St John University, presented a paper “Internationalising Talk: A discourse-analytic approach to raising student’s awareness of their construction of (in)competence and (mis)understanding in mixed language” groups. Juliet Henderson, from Oxford Brookes University, presented a paper “Strategies for critiquing global citizenry: undergraduate research as a possible vehicle”. Together, these papers identified key themes and concerns related to the ways global processes condition and mesh with local discourses, texts and practices to produce the contested notion of the global citizen.

## Global citizenship in applied linguistics

From a critical theory of language, the use of the term “global citizen” serves to reproduce or contest existing social practices, relations and interests. As such, the adjective “global” and the noun “citizen” embody the first of the three interdependent dimensions of discourse proposed in Fairclough’s discourse analytical framework (1995). These dimensions, conceptualised in this paper as nested contexts of discourse, are:

1. the text as object of analysis (including, written, oral and visual texts);
2. discourse practice – the means by which the text is (re)produced and received by human subjects;
3. the socio-political practices and conditions which regulate the processes of discourse production and consumption.

The usefulness of this analytical framework is that it makes it possible to model and interpret the three-way interdependence between the actual signs we produce or hear, the texts and identities we constitute from a range of discourses and genres, and wider social regimes of governance that are typically embodied in institutional sites. As such, this framework provides a rich range of analytical perspectives for exploring the patterns and disconnections produced by these interconnections (Janks 1999:49). Questions addressed by Block, Wicaksono and Henderson moved across these three dimensions in their consideration and contextualisation of the term global citizen(ship).

## Overview of an HEA seminar looking at Global Citizenship in Applied Linguistics

### Paper I: Exploring global citizenship: from cosmopolitanism ideal to class politics,

David Block, Institute of Education

Block's approach to interpreting the global citizen began with a look at five of the interrelated English language cultural keywords used to do the ideological work of discursively representing our society at a macro, socio-political level: globalisation, transnationalism, internationalism, internationalisation and cultural cosmopolitanism. We use our interpretations of the meaning of these keywords to constitute and possibly transform our everyday practices inside and outside the academy. Beginning with the omnipresent keyword of 'globalisation', used to denote the rapidly increasing interconnectedness between economic, political, social and cultural phenomena, Block specified some of the tensions inherent in its production as a discourse imbricated with relations of power. These were dialectical tensions between the nation-state and the global, between heterogeneity and homogeneity, between social democracy and neoliberalism, and between traditional and new understandings of identity and citizenship. Such tensions ensure that rapid change is a constant in our 'runaway' worlds of today (Giddens 2002). Globalisation, understood in this sense as a dimension of discourse that is always-already-there, can serve either to augment or reduce power differences and inequality.

Two other keywords that emerge from the dialectical production of globalisation by a range of vested interests are 'transnationalism' and 'internationalism'. For Block, these serve respectively to differentiate (a) a discourse of globalisation as supra-sameness, in which difference is absorbed into interconnectivity at a level which supersedes that of nation-state, and (b) a discourse of globalisation as difference which serves to describe and produce the movement of things, people, goods, etc. between nations. These contradictory dimensions of globalisation are rationalised by university internationalisation strategists under the heading of internationalisation, in ways intended to allow the university to capitalise on globalisation. Block listed familiar manifestations of such HE internationalisation logic:

- given its articulation with dominant discourses of today's western world, internationalisation 'sounds good', ergo it connotes and brings prestige;
- it provides the university with resources of global cultural capital;
- it generates new and much-needed income via (a) funded projects, and (b) international student tuition fees;
- contact and collaboration with fellow academics in universities worldwide serves to develop individual and collective research strengths;
- the education of global/cosmopolitan citizens.

The question of whether these collective internationalisation strategies are translated from HE market-oriented rhetoric into more transformative processes was then addressed through a comparison of cultural cosmopolitanism as an ideal with cultural cosmopolitanism as a new form of class politics. Turning to Held's definition of cultural cosmopolitanism: "... the capacity to mediate between national cultures, communities ... and alternative styles of life. It encompasses the possibility of dialogue with the traditions and discourses of others with the aim of expanding horizons of one's own framework of meaning and prejudice." (Held & McGrew 2002:57-58)

Block used this as an ideal reference point against which to measure its practical success in encouraging individuals to engage with others and intercede in the world. Three studies served to exemplify the lack of a deeper engagement with difference and diversity in the actual practices of those educated to be cosmopolitan citizens. Example one, was superficial, travel-based cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1996) in which the individual looks for a "home plus" engagement with the exotic attractions of faraway places, wanting mainly to find the components of their everyday lifestyles replicated, including accommodation, services, transport and food. Example two, which illustrated a deeper engagement with the "Other" than that of Hannerz's "home plus" was Urry's aesthetic cosmopolitanism (1995) which nevertheless falls short of the high moral ground identified in Held's model since it is premised on a consumption of the "Other" by the affluent. Example three, was a form of resurgent nationalism, identified by Talburt and Stewart (1999:171) in the "closed circuit" nationalist communities of students on study abroad programmes. Unlike their ideal cosmopolitan citizen

namesake, many students are more interested in reproducing hybrids of their own frameworks of meaning and prejudice when abroad, or in local international spaces, than in challenging and enriching their own normative horizons.

For Block, this dissonance between the diversity and democratic ideal the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship suggests, and the social practices it generates and sanctions, is to be attributed to the strong presence of the middle classes in the academy and the dominant discourses of the neoliberal capitalist paradigm. It is the latter that have toppled the university from its role as “*an autonomous institution at the heart of societies ... intellectually independent of all political authority and economically independent of all political authority and economic power*” ([Magna Charta Universitatum](#)) and deflected its purposes to those of servicing the global economy, by producing human capital and workers equipped to fulfil its needs. This makes the concept of the global citizen, genealogically linked to the cosmopolitan citizen, a problematic one, since it raises questions about links between its uses in relation to class and wealth. Does it only serve the interests of the university-attending classes, making them look more globally active and fit-for-economic-purpose than other social groups, so tending to implement and give substance to “us” vs “them” social realities, or does it instead lead to healthier democratic functioning that extends the notion of citizen to include more dialogic relations among strangers? This is a question that concerns all educators, all of whom are aware of the ways the traditional notion of the national “good citizen” (Schudson 1998) are being reconceptualised in education to fit the “truths” of globalisation.

To extend and nuance his thesis that the global citizen is frequently operationalised as an identity marker for an emerging global, English-speaking middle/upper-class, Block turned to consideration of what the “good citizen” is understood to be in places beyond the Anglophone world. Referencing the Japanese concept of the “international person” (Miyahara 2012) and the “South Korean Asian Global”, Block concluded that both of these, along with their English language counterpart “the global citizen”, are new markers of social distinction which is anything but inclusive. Such arguments alert us to the traces of different discourses present in the higher educational practices and texts used to produce the global citizen. These discourses are, in diminishing hierarchical order, neoliberal, pseudo-cosmopolitan, and radical, ethical cosmopolitan. This competition between prevailing discourses on the global citizen leads to a blurring of the neoliberal and the radical. While this remains the case, education for global citizenship will contribute to problems of inequality and sustainability rather than solve them, since it will bolster the ideologies of a consumer lifestyle and capitalist paradigm not undermine them.

## **Paper 2: Internationalising Talk: A discourse-analytic approach to raising student’s awareness of their construction of (in)competence and (mis)understanding in mixed language, Rachel Wicaksono, York St John University**

Wicaksono shifted the focus from the wider socio-political practices and agendas driving the proliferation of the global citizen within educational discourses to the potentially colonialising subject positions emerging from the interstices of classroom talk and texts. The English language has a history as a vehicle for colonial ideologies used in a range of socio-historical contexts that include the undergraduate classroom of today. It is in this context, and with an end goal of social justice, that Wicaksono has identified a research interest in the ways English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) is (mis)used as a medium of communication between students with different mother tongues.

In relation to Held’s definition of the cosmopolitan citizen cited above, with its ideal aim of overcoming fixed and prejudiced representations of Self and Other, students’ habitual, everyday interactions with others in English tend to reproduce a “them and us” divide between native and non-native speakers premised on assumptions of native speaker superiority. This “nativespeakerness” (Henderson 2011), with its judgement of Englishes other than the “accent free” version as sub-optimal, narrows the borders of legitimate knowledge production. For Wicaksono, as well as being an epistemological concern, such monolithic conceptions of the English language (a) deny the changing and fluid nature of language as the medium of social practices, relations and interests, and (b) preclude the opportunity for native speaker students to understand and converse in the wide variety of Englishes spoken locally and around the world. The question for universities with

internationalisation strategies that include inviting students to develop the transformative perspectives and will to action of the critical global citizen, is to work out practical pedagogical tools that allow students to challenge such western and inner-circle oriented views and use of the English language.

What might such pedagogical tools look like? Identifying intra group diversity as a key area in which students tend to negatively construct difference around national culture, “proficiency in English” ability and motivation, Wicaksono sees the root cause of such judgements as being individual beliefs, thoughts and intentions (2008). Rather than concentrating on changing these individual cognitive responses to difference, Wicaksono proposes a method of encouraging students to investigate both what they accomplish with their utterances and the way they manage the interactions across intra group diversity. She argues that by thinking through the performative dimension of their interactions, students engage in a mutually beneficial, awareness-raising lesson in the exchange value of English as a *lingua franca* that serves to loosen the hold of “nativespeakerness” on narrower perceptions of accent, identity and knowledge. Tutors in all subject areas can use the [“tutorial”](#) in ELF method suggested. Students are first assigned to a group in which they make a recording of a discussion about a topic of their choice. They then individually transcribe this discussion using a notation scheme provided. The transcription is analysed using a set of questions intended to make transparent to students how the ways they speak and respond to the utterances of others serve either to encourage and encode understanding across difference, or instead to reinforce misunderstanding and prejudice.

This deconstructive approach to the tacit assumptions underpinning “nativespeakerness” which allows students to explore their own plus “borderline negotiations of cultural translation” (Bhabha 1994:319) contributes usefully to pedagogies premised on the idea that knowledge is about knowing the person one is, instead of the idea that knowledge is a marketable product. Thus it aligns with Killick’s conceptualisation of global citizenship as a requirement to “extend our notion of the ‘we’ to include ... global others” (Killick 2010:1). Such activities give students a very concrete sense of how their utterances and texts serve to word worlds into existence and hence either reproduce or contest colonialist discourses in local HE contexts.

### **Paper 3: Strategies for critiquing global citizenry: undergraduate research as a possible vehicle, Juliet Henderson, Oxford Brookes University**

To counteract the shift from the role of the university as a public good, to that of an institution actively engaged in producing students with the knowledge needed to service the needs of the global economy, Henderson argued for the use of the graduate attribute of global citizenship as a tool for engaging students in actively resisting changing ideals in the HE sector.

With reference to the Oxford Brookes University definition of the [graduate attribute of global citizenship](#) Henderson’s main focus in the paper was to address the question: “How can we involve HE students in recognising their role as future global citizens through constructively aligned teaching and assessment?”. Such recognition requires students to realise that like the academics that teach them (a) their creativity, bodies, cognition and affect are implicated in new capitalist subjective technologies of global governance which require them to translate hegemonic global discourses into local contexts in their everyday identity practices and relations (De Bary 2010:7), and (b) they can either choose to conform to homogenising narratives of the global, or to work towards alternatives. However, it remains the responsibility of the academic educator to design teaching and learning practices which encourage students to dissociate neoliberal discourses of the global citizen, which tend towards eradication of difference and evasion of truth, from ethical and transformative discourses of the global citizen which work instead to dissolve the silencing of the other, or “good citizen”, and give life back to the critical status of the word and the social practices it generates.

As an HE intercultural educator in the subject discipline of applied linguistics responsible for the production of soft technologies of governance in teaching and assessment materials, Henderson set out the educator principles and assumptions which contextualised a four-step method for designing courses. These educator principles and assumptions are outlined in the table below:

Intercultural educator principles	Intercultural educator assumptions
<p>To work actively to prevent the subverting and trivialisation of education in the name of corporate horizons.</p> <p>Praxis of openness in learning and teaching that is grounded in the ethics of personal development and personal responsibility.</p> <p>Transparency in the teaching of the ideologies we use to 'hail' our students as subject global citizens.</p>	<p>Cultural and social knowledges and identity positions are mediated through language. Our social interactions contain the opportunity to increase or reduce power differences and social inequality (Jadhav 2011).</p> <p>(University) context is a useful and intuitive device for understanding how the interrelated workings of knowledge, language and action produce our social worlds.</p>

Henderson then elaborated on the course design intended to serve as a “thinking device” (Gee 2005) that would allow students to question their understanding of identity from a decentred position and so achieve (a) reflexive understanding of the identity marker “global citizen”, and (b) intellectual and experiential understanding of intercultural identity as a form of social practice. Both of these goals linked directly to one of the key indicators of global citizenship at Oxford Brookes University, namely: “a cross-cultural capability beginning with an awareness of our own culture and perspectives”. They also incarnate the principles and practices of deep learning, which is associated with the ability to think holistically, independently and use critical analytical skills (Warburton 2003). In both cases, Henderson expressed full awareness of the need to avoid naïve interpretations of causal links between teaching approaches and their impact on student learning.

Since Henderson’s aim is to teach and assess the dimension of global citizenship related to “an awareness of own culture and perspective”, course instruction and assessment should make it possible for students to test the pre-interpretations they bring to their accounts of the nature of cultural identity and so see them in a new light. A number of conceptual and practical tools are required to enable students to effectively conduct such a test: a clearly-defined context for the test; a theoretically and experientially informed conceptualisation of cultural identity; assessment design which situates students as “citizens” who participate in self-governance, rather than subjects who do not (Karlberg 2008:310), and which invites them to pay attention to underlying meaning; and data which allows students to become concretely aware of how they and other students negotiate a legitimate intercultural student identity in the nested contexts of global citizenship.

In her undergraduate course in intercultural communication two central models of cultural identity are introduced to students. These conceptualise it as: (a) an inherited resource which we engage with creatively and dynamically in different contexts (Holliday *et al.* 2004); and (b) as the culturally-indexed manner of negotiating social relations, or “rapport” through language use (Spencer-Oatey 2000). These two models serve the purpose of scaffolding the connections between micro relations of language in context and macro relations of our social worlds (Pennycook 2001:5). They thus offer students a framework for recognising how the ways they think and talk in a university context are patterned by the wider social context, but also posit how through action and commitment they can intervene to slowly change the discourses that shape us all.

The anti-essentialist and critical focus developed in these theorisations of culture and cultural identity is then applied and experienced by students through a research assignment. The process for conducting the research and the outline of the research paper are clearly scaffolded in the assignment brief and assessment criteria. To assess their reflexive knowledge of intercultural identity, students conduct ethnographic style interviews in small peer-groups to provide interview transcript data that is coded for key themes apt to inform a response to the research paper title: “Seeing me, seeing you: An investigation into students’ cultural identity and intercultural engagement in a 21<sup>st</sup> century higher education context”. The first step towards gaining new reflexive knowledge about their own engagement in a discourse of global citizenship is made via their close reading of the interview data, their interpretation of key themes and patterns linked to the production of intercultural identity in the micro-contexts of their talk, and the validation of their interpretation by other

group interview members. The themes they identify may contest or concord with themes and concepts in the course-related literature, or propose new ones. The next step, this time towards producing new knowledge, is to consider how the issues arising from their findings relate to the everyday diversity and plurality both in HE and today's globalising world. Students' research papers must also include a justification of the use of an ethnographic style research method, and a recognition of its limitations.

Henderson's four-step method for a course design that constructively aligns teaching and assessment which invites students to recognise their role as future global citizens, at least from the perspective of their cross-cultural capability, can thus be schematised as follows:

1. break down the assessment criteria to include knowledges and skills apt to foster critical global citizens;
2. open up the assessment design to the student voice (student as producer not consumer);
3. map out the research methods and process for gaining new knowledge about global identity as an emergent property of everyday talk and relations;
4. clearly scaffold the different parts of the written assignment to ensure students recognise the interrelationship between the three nested contexts of global citizenship discourse.

## Conclusion

This report has identified a number of key issues facing HE applied linguistics' staff and students who wish to teach, to learn and to apply what it means to be a future global citizen. These can be summarised as five interrelated questions:

- in what ways can the dominance of fixed inner circle English in the academy be reduced by an insistence on the development of more hybrid cultural and linguistic identities in course design and assessment?
- how can we use the cultural and linguistic wealth of our multilingual students in such ways that we allow all students to understand that inner circle English and its class values are not inherently superior to hybrid varieties of English and more cosmopolitan and radical values?
- in what ways can we alert our students to the traces of different discourses and ideologies in today's ever more multimodal texts and practices, including our own, so that they can explore the on-going imperative of speaking and writing back to power?
- how can we collaborate with students to transform and redesign our local and global social worlds for the benefit of all rather than the elite few?
- by what means can we demonstrate to our students that our theories of discourse, power and identity are not simply add-ons to their everyday practices, but vital tools for constructing a present and future social justice?

The research presented by the three speakers at this HEA seminar provided a case study of the complexity of "global citizenship" as a graduate identity marker seen from the perspectives of ideology, discourse, concept, practice and pedagogy. It was agreed that the complexity of ways in which the discursive construct of global citizen in HE can be used to structure and re-imagine our social and mental realities, justified the use of diverse research methods. Both reason and affect are implicated in our culturally-inflected understanding of the personal and social value of global citizenship capital, and our commitment to it as a force for driving change. Research into the construct of global citizenship in UK HE has only recently begun. As sketched out in the seminar, a central focus of current research involves ethnographic and critical discourse analysis approaches to investigating how global citizenship can be discursively and cognitively communicated in constructive alignment of teaching and assessment. Whether the loose affiliation of identity characteristics that global citizenship currently represents in HE can be developed into more coherent transformative disciplinary identities will need to be addressed in future research.

To sum up, global citizenship is a flawed concept if it does not address who is excluded as well as who is included. Block's paper clearly highlights the dominant vested interests struggling for ownership of the cultural capital stakes of a "global citizen" and shows how this can render it unintelligible as a sign that can play a part in the production of a more sustainable and just world order. If staff and students in the discipline of applied



linguistics are willing to take seriously the notion of global citizenship as a productive resource of diversity in our collective and institutional practices, then they already possess the critical conceptual tools to shift and guide practice away from attempts to fix its meaning and box it in.

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