



Theoretical Framework and Selection of References



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Think Global!

Global Competence Theoretical Framework and Selection of References

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Definition and discourse

What is Global Competence?

Global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance. Globally competent individuals are aware, curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works. They can use the big ideas, tools, methods, and languages that are central to any discipline (mathematics, literature, history, science, and the arts) to engage the pressing issues of our time. They deploy and develop this expertise as they investigate such issues, recognizing multiple perspectives, communicating their views effectively, and taking action to improve conditions.

(Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011: xiii)

This definition helps us understand how students can begin to work towards global competence, but what might it mean in practice?

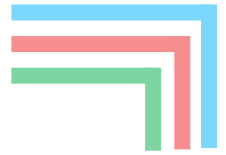
The *Think Global!* project explores how global competence is defined, taught, learned, and measured in the classroom, through international collaboration, and offers a model of professional learning for teachers to support students in developing global competence.

There is no single, agreed-upon definition of global competence, and there are many terms and purposes that overlap, such as ‘education for global citizenship’, ‘global mindedness’, and ‘global education’ (Engel, Rutkowski & Thomson, 2019).

The *Think Global!* project uses the definition outlined in [*Preparing Our Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable World: The OECD PISA Global Competence Framework*](#) (OECD, 2018), in which global competence is described as a ‘multidimensional capacity’. It comprises four interdependent and overlapping dimensions that PISA (2018) argue people need to apply successfully to their everyday life in order to be ‘globally competent’. These dimensions are as follows:

“1. The capacity to examine issues and situations of local, global and cultural significance (e.g. poverty, economic interdependence, migration, inequality, environmental risks, conflicts, cultural differences and stereotypes);





2. The capacity to understand and appreciate different perspectives and world views;
3. The ability to establish positive interactions with people of different national, ethnic, religious, social or cultural backgrounds or gender; and
4. The capacity and disposition to take constructive action toward sustainable development and collective well-being.” (OECD, 2018: 7-8)

The Dimensions of Global Competence (OECD, 2018: 11)



These dimensions are mirrored in the four domains of global competence as defined by the Centre for Global Education at Asia Society, which are to:

- Investigate the world;
- Recognize perspectives;
- Communicate ideas;
- Take action (OECD & Asia Society, 2018).

The term ‘global competence’ aims to bring these overlapping dimensions and domains together as a whole concept.





The skills needed to be globally competent are also often described as ‘21st Century Skills’ , which generally include:

- Cognitive skills: critical thinking, problem-solving and knowledge application, creativity
- Interpersonal skills: communication and collaboration, leadership, global and cross-cultural awareness
- Intrapersonal skills: self-direction, motivation, learning how to learn

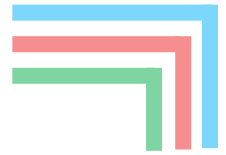
(Asia Society: <https://asiasociety.org/global-cities-education-network/assessing-21st-century-skills-and-competencies-around-world>)

Educating for global competence is not a new idea, and many academics, educators, and others have been advocating for education in global competence for decades. However, in 2018, this education was formalised as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched a new assessment of global competence as part of PISA - a triennial international survey that aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. The member states of the United Nations (UN) had previously adopted the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

Global competence is necessary for achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. The purpose of the 17 SDGs is to “unite the UN countries around a shared agenda focused on reducing poverty and increasing the quality of life in a sustainable way” (OECD and Asia Society, 2018: 11).

Education for sustainable development aims to enable the development of competencies “that empower individuals to reflect on their actions, taking into account their current and future social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts, from a local and a global perspective” UNESCO, 2017: 7).



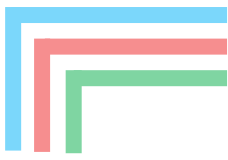


There is general agreement that in order for individuals to become active in working towards sustainability on a personal and global level, they need to develop key competences. These are the specific attributes individuals need for action, and cannot be taught but have to be developed by the learners themselves. This means that teachers need to create appropriate, supportive environments in which students can learn to become global competent citizens.

The 17 UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

1. **No Poverty** – End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. **Zero Hunger** – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. **Good Health and Well-Being** – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. **Quality Education** – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. **Gender Equality** – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. **Clean Water and Sanitation** – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. **Affordable and Clean Energy** – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and clean energy for all
8. **Decent Work and Economic Growth** – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. **Reduced Inequalities** – Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. **Sustainable Cities and Communities** – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. **Responsible Consumption and Production** – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. **Climate Action** – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. **Life below Water** – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. **Life on Land** – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. **Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. **Partnerships for the Goals** – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Source: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainabledevelopment-goals>



Why Learn Global Competence?

The reason for teaching global competence centres on the need to ensure children and young people are fully prepared for the future. This preparation should take into consideration the following aspects of the students' future lives:

- employability in the global economy;
- living cooperatively in multicultural communities;
- having effective skills of communication; and
- the ability to learn with a range of media.

All of which are necessary for achieving the UNESCO SDGs, outlined above (OECD & Asia Society, 2018).

Boix Mansella and Jackson (2011) argue that increased globalisation requires a new style of learning and skills development to ensure young people are ready to tackle the challenges that globalisation presents, and enjoy the benefits of becoming global citizens. These skills include, for example, the ability for active participation, multilingualism, and intercultural sophistication, critical enquiry skills, and creative, innovative approaches.

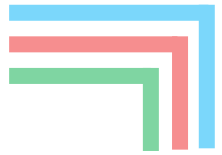
The Afterschool Alliance explain the possible benefits of global competence as follows:

“Through language learning, knowledge about the world, cultural understanding and the ability to examine situations from a range of perspectives, students gain access to their own rich cultural, literary, and historical traditions, as well as those of others” (Afterschool Alliance, 2010: 1).

Limitations and Challenges

The range of terminology used to describe what is meant by global competence, and indeed the term itself, raises difficulties in interpreting exactly what teachers should be doing in the classroom in order to support their students to develop '21st century skills'. Sälzer and Roczen (2018) discuss the multitude of terms and overlapping definitions and objectives, stemming from different theories, that can confuse and lessen the impact of ideas about 'global competence'. For example, 'intercultural competence' and 'global citizenship'. This range of terms can in turn lead to difficulties in assessment of the skills, knowledge, and aptitudes of global competence since the focus and objectives of the different theoretical approaches may differ.

It is important to recognise the limitations to the OECD definition and to the current frameworks on global competence, particularly with regards issues of representation. It is argued (by, for example, Europe-wide Global Education Congress (2002; Grotlüschen, 2018; Sälzer & Roczen, 2018) that the PISA Framework for global competence reflects a neo-liberalism that is culturally biased towards white, Western, 'scientific' discourse. The focus on the Sustainable Development Goals in particular reflects a European perspective on what



can be considered ‘globally responsible’ behaviour and does not take into consideration issues of culture, socio-economic status, geography, or political situations in many countries.

Curriculum

Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies

The following section considers what global competence looks like in the classroom – how students experience lessons that teach global competence, what skills, and knowledge, they need to develop global competence, and the classroom activities that might help them with this development.

Education for global competence requires “Clear and manageable learning goals. This means engaging all educators to reflect on teaching topics that are globally significant, the types of skills that foster a deeper understanding of the world and facilitate respectful interactions in multicultural contexts, and the attitudes and values that drive autonomous learning and inspire responsible action.” (OECD, 2018: 13)

The following is the OECD General Description of the content knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values that individuals need in order to become globally competent:

Knowledge about the world and other cultures

Global issues are those that affect all individuals regardless of their nation or social group, e.g. pollution

Intercultural issues (situations) arise from the interaction of people with different cultural backgrounds.

The curriculum should pay attention to the following four knowledge domains:

- Culture and intercultural relations (e.g. languages, arts, traditions)
- Socio-economic development and independence (i.e. study of development patterns of different regions of the world, with a focus on links between societies and economies)
- Environmental sustainability (i.e. understanding the complex systems and policies surrounding the demand for and use of natural resources)
- Global institutions, conflicts, and human rights (with a focus on institutions that support peaceful relationships between people and the respect of fundamental human rights)

(OECD, 2018: 12-13)





Skills to understand the world and take action

Global competence builds on specific cognitive, communication, and socio-emotional skills, such as the ability to:

- Reason with information
 - Communicate effectively and respectfully
 - Understand issues/situations from the perspective of others
- Conflict management and resolution through listening and seeking common solutions
 - Adapt thinking and behaviours to the prevailing cultural environment or to novel situations and contexts that might present new demands or challenges

(OECD, 2018: 13-15)

Attitudes of openness, respect for people from different cultural backgrounds and global mindedness

This openness includes “sensitivity toward, curiosity about and willingness to engage with other people and other perspectives on the world (Byram, 2009; Council of Europe, 2016)” (OECD, 2018: 17)

Respect in this context is defined as, “positive regard and esteem for someone or something based on the judgement that they have intrinsic worth” (OECD, 2018: 17)

OECD take the definition of global mindedness from Hett, cited in Hansen (2010) as, worldview in which one sees oneself as connected to the world community and feels a sense of responsibility for its members” (OECE, 2018: 17)

The Asia Society advocate integrating international knowledge and skills into each subject across the curriculum, to support students in learning to be globally competent. The organisation argues that while there will be a multitude of different methods, there are common approaches across all curriculum areas. These include:

- Motivating students through engaging, relevant content;
- Combining a focus on deep content knowledge with reasoning skills and analysis of multiple perspectives;
- Exploring cultural universals and common themes as well as deepening appreciation of cultural differences and diversity;
- Demonstrating interconnectedness—connecting the local to the global and the past to the future; using purposeful inquiry into large questions;
- Using primary sources from the United States and other countries;



- Emphasizing interaction with people in other parts of the world as part and parcel of the learning process; and
- Placing a strong value on the ability to communicate across cultures and in languages other than English (Asia Society, 2008: 24).

For more information on models of good practice in curriculum subjects, see *Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World* (Asia Society and OECD, 2018) at the following link:

<https://asiasociety.org/education/teaching-global-competence-rapidly-changing-world#:~:text=A%20new%20publication%20from%20both,guidance%20and%20examples%20of%20how>

The UNESCO document *Education for Sustainable Development Goals* (2017) outlines the specific learning objectives for all 17 SDGs. Each of these are described in the document for the cognitive (knowledge and skills), socio-emotional (social and self-reflective) and behavioural (action) domains. The document also includes suggested topics and pedagogical approaches.

It can be found here: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444>

Classroom Activities

Research into classroom practice has found a range of specific classroom activities to be effective in supporting students to achieve the SDGs and work towards becoming globally competent young people. Below are some examples with links to further reading and resources.

To gain global competence, students need to:

- be actively engaged in their learning;
- have the time and opportunity to reflect;
- cultivate their curiosity and ability to think critically;
- be able to use what they learn to conceptualise possible solutions to complex problems;
- be confident in expressing their ideas;
- be willing to consider the ideas of others;
- learn to collaborate with peers from different backgrounds and different nations.

(OECD & Asia Society, 2018: 23)



Various student-centred pedagogies can help students to develop critical thinking concerning global issues, respectful communication, conflict management skills, perspective taking and adaptability.

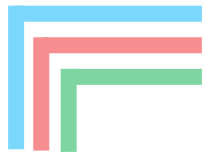
The World Economic Forum (2020) *Education 4.0 Framework* advocates for personalised and self-paced learning; accessible and inclusive learning; problem-based and collaborative learning; lifelong and student-driven learning.

Research into schools in Sweden found that democratised classrooms, where students (as young as four) share power with teachers in designing the day-to-day curriculum can support students to develop 21st century competencies. However, the Swedish system does not encounter poverty and the socio-educational disadvantage that brings. The social context is already different from most systems, globally (Nordgren, 2006). Of course there are pedagogical and Professional Learning implications for this approach, particularly in countries whose political systems do not match that of Sweden.

Some examples of classroom activities that support the development of global competence are as follows:

- **Structured debates:** a specific format of class discussion that is increasingly used in secondary and higher education as a way to raise students' awareness about global and intercultural issues, and to let them practice their communication and argumentation skills.
- Tiven et al (2018) advocate **global digital exchange** – connecting students with their peers around the world, online. The aim is to learn from one another and acquire global competence by, for example, creating and sharing online content in e-classroom discussion boards for other students to access and respond/reply
- **Organised discussion:** Students can voice their differences, biases and culturally determined beliefs through organised discussions in the classroom
- Holmes (2019) argues that **reading a range of literature** can support students in developing greater understanding of multicultural perspectives, based on a US study that used Young Adult Literature in the Social Studies classroom
- **Learning from current events**
- **Learning from play**
- Boix Mansilla (2016) advocates **Global Thinking Routines** and the embedding of opportunities for global competence in the culture of the classroom. See also Boix Mansilla V & Jackson A (2011) *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World* for more information: <https://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>





- **Service learning** (organised, community-based activity) can help students to develop multiple global skills through real-world experience. This requires learners to participate in organised activities that are based on what has been learnt in the classroom and that benefit their communities. After the activities, learners are required to reflect critically on their service experience to gain further understanding of course content, and enhance their sense of role in society with regard to civic, social, economic and political issues (OECD, 2018: 16).
- **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** is considered to be an important tool in developing global competence. Bel (2010) argues that PBL is a
“key strategy for creating independent thinkers and learners. Children solve real-world problems by designing their own inquiries, planning their learning, organizing their research, and implementing a multitude of learning strategies. Students flourish under this child-driven, motivating approach to learning and gain valuable skills that will build a strong foundation for their future in our global economy” (Bel, 2010: 39).

PBL is generally carried out in groups, and requires students to work together on an authentic, real-world project. Group-based co-operative project work can improve reasoning and collaborative skills.

The Center for Global Education uses the SAGE framework for PBL, as follows:

Student choice – to decide on the project, which allows students to take ownership of the project

Authentic experiences – that are modelled on how such a project might take place in the real world

Global significance – students should be given the opportunity to work on projects that allow them to apply what they have learned through disciplinary studies to real-life issues that impact globally

Exhibit to a real audience – students should have the opportunity to show their work and explain it to an audience, thereby shifting to higher level knowledge and encouraging meaningful feedback

Research into teaching of GlobalEd in middle school in the USA found that technology-rich PBL can support the development of problem-solving and communication skills in particular, provided the curriculum is designed appropriately (Johnson et al, 2011).

Example: Researchers in the USA carried out Digital Participatory Research (DPR) with two school groups – one in the USA, and one in Jamaica - in order to investigate ‘glocal’ issues. These are issues that can be seen at both a local and a global level. Student-led photography enquiry into issues locally, followed by reflective activities and cross-school dialogue led to



student engagement in a range of globally significant topics. The researchers stated that, “The cases presented in this research demonstrates how DPR helps adolescents develop global competency. The students were able to examine local issues while also understanding that many of these concerns also exist around the world” (Mathews, 2016: 23).

Further examples of each of these types of classroom activities can be found in the OECD & Asia Society (2018) document: <https://asiasociety.org/education/teaching-global-competence-rapidly-changing-world>

The AfterSchool Alliance also offer some useful resources for supporting global competence in after school programmes:

https://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_global_41.pdf

Progression

“How will we know students are making progress? Global competence– centered assessments do the following: focus on global competence; are ongoing; offer informative feedback; can be conducted by multiple stakeholders” (Boix Mansilla and Jackson, 2011: 66).

OECD and Asia Society (2018) *Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World* [<https://asiasociety.org/education/teaching-global-competence-rapidly-changing-world>] describes the PISA assessment and what it is designed to measure, and outlines teaching methods that are relevant to developing students’ global competence, with examples.

Formal Assessment

The PISA assessment for global competence has two parts: a cognitive assessment and a student questionnaire.

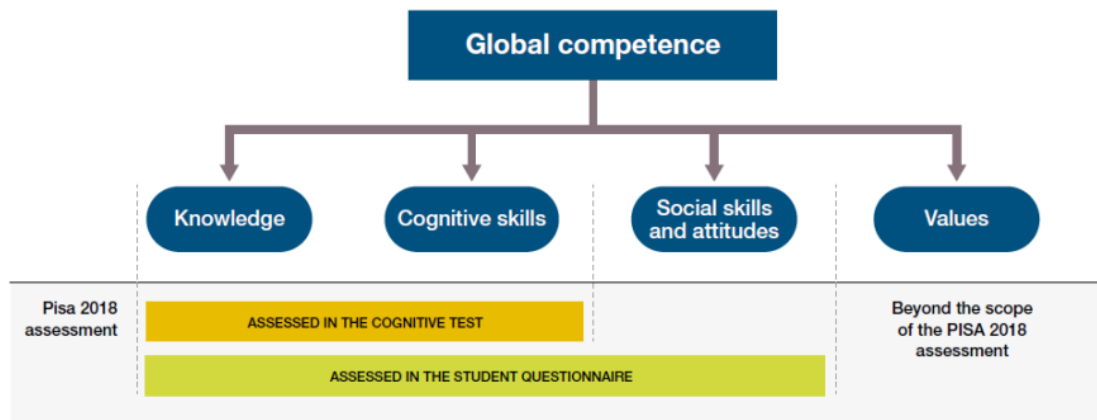
The cognitive assessment aims to assess how well students can use their knowledge and experience of global issues to understand, reason, and analyse specific case studies.

The questionnaire aims to elicit information about students’ attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills. Students are asked to report on their knowledge of particular global issues such as poverty, migration, or climate change. The questionnaire also focuses attitudes by asking questions that aim to find out students’ interest in and respect for other cultures.





The PISA approach to assessing global competence



(OECD, 2018: 22)

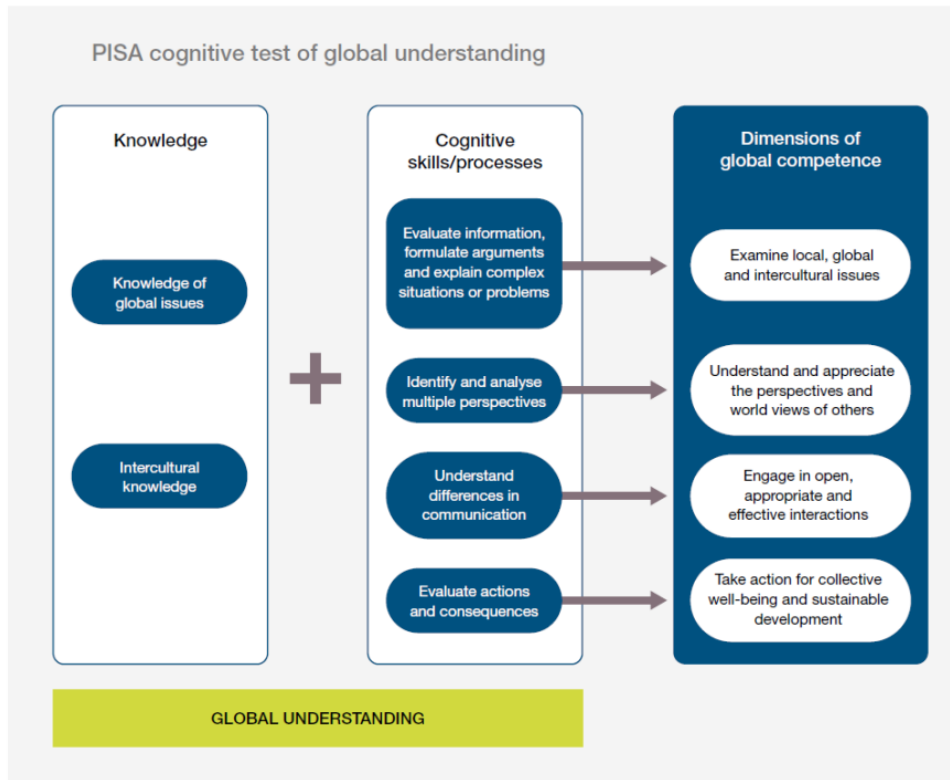
For analytical and assessment purposes, this framework distinguishes four, interrelated cognitive processes that globally students need to use in order to fully understand global or intercultural issues and situations:

1. The capacity to evaluate information, formulate arguments and explain complex situations and problems by using and connecting evidence, identifying biases and gaps in information and managing conflicting arguments.
2. The capacity to identify and analyse multiple perspectives and world views, positioning and connecting their own and others' perspectives on the world.
3. The capacity to understand differences in communication, recognising the importance of socially-appropriate communication conventions and adapting communication to the demands of diverse cultural contexts.
4. The capacity to evaluate actions and consequences by identifying and comparing different courses of action and weighing these actions against one another on the basis of short- and long-term

(OECD, 2018: 25)



The relationship between the cognitive test of global understanding and the dimensions of global competence:



(OECD, 2018: 26)

For more information on the PISA assessment of Global Competence, see the framework at: <https://www.oecd.org/education/Global-competency-for-an-inclusive-world.pdf>

Classroom-Based Formative Assessment

As global competence has multiple dimensions, and the emphasis is on how students respond to and act on the knowledge and skills they develop, formative assessment is more important than summative in the classroom. The rubrics designed by PISA will not reveal the students' progress towards developing global competence. Therefore it is the job of the classroom teacher to build opportunities for formative assessment in global competence into the curriculum.

OECD and Asia Society (2018) *Teaching for Global Competence in a Rapidly Changing World* [<https://asiasociety.org/education/teaching-global-competence-rapidly-changing-world>] offers some useful case study examples of how this can be achieved in specific curriculum subjects. There are also detailed examples of how global competence can be taught and assessed through interdisciplinary approaches.

The following is useful in breaking down the aspects of student learning into different domains, in order to cross-refer assessment methodologies. Although it references global citizenship, this is equally relevant to global competence through the focus on the SGDs.

Global citizenship domains and learning objectives from the UNESCO (2017) *Education for Sustainable Development Goals Learning Objectives*

Cognitive Domain	Socio-emotional Domain	Behavioural Domain
1. Local, national, and global systems and structures. 2. Issues affecting interaction and connectedness of communities at local, national, and global levels. 3. Underlying assumptions and power dynamics.	4. Different levels of identity. 5. Different communities that people belong to and how these are connected. 6. Difference and respect for diversity	7. Actions that can be taken individually and collectively. 8. Ethically responsible behaviour. 9. Getting engaged and taking action.

(Brookings Institute UNESCO & GEFI-NAG, 2017)

The following link to an extended report includes detailed information on specific assessment tools for each of these domains: http://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/global_20170411_measuring-global-citizenship.pdf

Challenges for assessment of global competence:

- Difficulties in selecting what should be assessed from the extensive list of competencies;
- Distinguishing ‘correct’ from ‘incorrect’ responses for a given competency (n.b. and surely this is value-laden); difficulties in therefore creating transparency and replicability;
- Western bias and intercultural comparability – conceptualisations of global competence have mainly been studied/constructed in a ‘Western’ context and are therefore culturally biased.

This, in turn, creates challenges in using scenarios for assessment that are not stereotypical representations, and in setting clear expectations for socially desirable responses that are not culturally biased. Assessment therefore needs to be transparent and replicable (Sälzer & Roczen, 2018).





Pedagogies and Professional Learning

Pedagogies

In order to support students to become globally competent, teachers need to create safe classroom cultures where students can express themselves, speculate, question, and debate respectfully. In this culture, the teacher acts as a facilitator, offering challenge and support, while modelling the values of global competence, such as equality, respect, dignity, and diversity.

This can be achieved through a number of pedagogical approaches, many of which are already familiar to teachers. However, it is important to note that teachers may need professional learning (PL) opportunities to develop the shift from an instructional, didactic approach to a more open, student-centred classroom model. There are also implications for school leadership in ensuring a school culture that support and enhances the opportunities for global competence education.

Based on an analysis of the PISA framework for global competence, Bamber et al (2018) discuss the implications for implementing transformative education, in terms of the pedagogies and skills required of teachers. The authors argue that,

Practitioners must develop creative and innovative strategies to overcome the constraints of institutional assessment mechanisms and move beyond individual assessment. They must facilitate and assess cooperative learning and forms of knowing, being and doing that emerge through working collaboratively. Formative, as opposed to summative, informal alongside formal, assessment which nurtures the learners' ongoing becoming should be employed

(Bamber et al, 2018: 225).

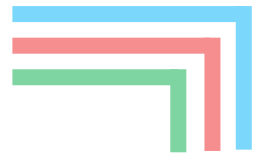
In summary, Bamber et al (2018) argue for formative assessment that is both informal and formal in order to understand how students are progressing. This approach will require a considerable paradigm shift in some classroom and school cultures.

Therefore, it is important to understand what this means in practice, and what teachers need to be able to do in order to support students in developing 21st century skills of global competence.

Signature Pedagogies of Global Competence

Tichnor-Wagner et al (2016) carried out a systematic review of the literature on K-12 teacher training and global education, and identified 12 core elements that they argue globally competent teachers demonstrate.

These are divided into dispositions, knowledge, and skills, and are as follows:



Dispositions

- Empathy and valuing multiple perspectives
- Commitment to equity worldwide

Knowledge

- Global conditions and current events
- The ways the world is interconnected and interdependent
- Experiential understanding of multiple cultures
- Intercultural communication

Skills

- Communicating in multiple languages
- Creating a classroom environment that values diversity and global engagement
- Providing content-aligned investigations of the world
- Facilitating intercultural conversations
- Facilitating intercultural partnerships
- Assessing students' global competencies

(from Tichnor-Wagner et al, 2016)

Through the research, Tichnor-Wagner et al (2016) found that the teachers all demonstrated the same core signature pedagogies throughout her/his regular teaching. The three signature pedagogies evident across all subject areas were:

1. intentional integration of global topics and multiple perspectives into and across the standard curriculum;
2. Ongoing authentic engagement with global issues; and
3. Connecting teachers' global experiences, students' global experiences, and the curriculum (Tichnor-Wagner et al, 2016: 12).

Teachers will need to be able to support the development of what Boix Mansilla (2016) refers to as “thinking dispositions”, which enable students to inquire about and consider multiple perspectives on a topic, critically engage, and discuss these respectfully. This, in turn, will require teachers to facilitate rich discussions and support emotional literacy in her/his students

Implications for Professional Learning

“What topics matter most when educating for global competence? Globally significant topics demonstrate the following qualities: deep engagement; clear local and global connections; visible global significance; robust disciplinary and interdisciplinary grounding” (Boix Mansilla and Jackson, 2011: 57)

PBL is useful, especially when technology-rich, but must be well-designed with appropriate integration of technology and opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary activities that enable critical thinking (Johnson, Boyer & Brown, 2011).

In order to ensure schools are able to provide opportunities for students to develop global competence, it is essential that teachers are appropriately skilled and resourced. The Asia Society (2008) recommends recruiting teachers with an international background in the first instance. However, this is not always possible, and professional learning and opportunities for teachers to engage in international dialogue are therefore key to ensuring teachers are skilled in the pedagogies required for 21st century education (Asia Society, 2008).

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This logo is the result of a collaborative competition of the students from the three partner schools, Pembroke Dock Community School, Institut Viladomat and GO! Unescoschool Koekelberg.

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