

Challenge and Change: Global Citizenship Education in UK Schools

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Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the current situation for global learning in UK schools, focusing on major challenges and changes that are influencing both teaching and learning. As a country with a relatively long history of global citizenship education, teachers in the UK are grappling with difficult questions of how to adapt existing programmes to new policies and priorities, and how to include global learning in increasingly crowded curricula. Drawing on both existing research and primary interview material, this paper highlights and invites discussion on some of the key issues confronting global educators in the UK and beyond.

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Introduction

Learning about the world around us has always been a key purpose of education. Understanding how we fit into that world, and how our own actions can affect and influence the experiences of others, is a founding preoccupation for teachers across the spectrum, from early childhood learning, through to high school and beyond.

In recent decades, as increasing globalisation has shifted and softened the boundaries between people living in diverse countries and communities, ‘understanding the world around us’ has come to involve knowledge not only about our own local neighbourhoods and situations, but also about communities, peoples, ideas, cultures, beliefs and practices far beyond our own national borders.¹ This has extended exponentially the volume and diversity of information that teachers and learners must grapple with, and introduced wholly new ways of thinking about how we understand and fit into this world.

It is in this context that global citizenship education, or global learning, as it is more often called in the UK, has become relevant.² Since the 1970s, concerns within the UK and some other developed countries about the progress and dynamics of globalisation, and about uneven experiences of international development, have prompted education experts, decision-makers and practitioners, to

¹ There is a vast literature on globalisation, its truths, falsehoods, benefits and discontents. It is beyond the scope of this paper to engage critically with that literature; but useful references may be found, for example, at: Keohane, R. and Nye, J. (2000) ‘Globalization: What’s new? What’s not? (And so what?)’, Foreign Policy, Spring; Held, D. et al. (2005) Debating Globalization (Cambridge: Polity Press); Stiglitz, J. (2002) Globalization and its discontents, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc.); and Holton, R. J. (2005) Making Globalization (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan).

² One of the challenges of working in the field of global learning is the diversity of terms used to refer to similar or identical ideas. For an overview of semantic variation, see Bourn, D (2014) “The theory and practice of global learning” *DERC Research paper 11* (London: DERC). In this paper, the common UK term ‘global learning’ will be used synonymously with those other terms, unless otherwise specified.

call for young people to be educated about the different situations in which people across the world live, and to find ways to support those who are less advantaged.³

Consequently, over the past 30 years, a range of different approaches and programmes have been developed and implemented in Britain, some with success and some without. Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to provide a snapshot of the current situation for global learning in the UK, and to point up key areas of challenge and change that teachers are grappling with. Through a combination of literature review, and original interview research, the paper considers issues including motivations and interest of education decision-makers; the difficulties of adapting existing programmes for new circumstances; and the pressures placed on teachers trying to include global learning in ever more crowded and prescriptive curricula. The concluding sections showcase some notable innovations and successes, which may provide inspiration for creating global learning that works for the 21st century, both in Britain and beyond.

Overview of global learning in the UK

Global learning in the UK is often delivered to teachers and students by small-scale, expert, non-government organisations. These organisations, commonly called ‘Development Education Centres’ (DECs) are located across the country, and many are loosely linked through practice-sharing and professional networks.

Think Global (formerly the Development Education Association) is a London-based charity that focuses on global learning;⁴ and one of its functions is to act as the umbrella organisation for these DECs, drawing them together within a network where information, opportunities and ideas can be shared. In practice, this means Think Global has a member group of around 20 DECs, and works with others as an *ad hoc* basis. DEC members receive a regular newsletter, sharing practice developments

³ See, for example, Department for International Development (1998) *Eliminating World Poverty: A challenge for the 21st century* (London: HMSO)

⁴ See the Think Global website: www.think-global.org.uk. A summary of Think Global’s mission and work is provided at Appendix A.

and advertising learning and funding opportunities, and hold an annual conference, where recent experiences and pertinent topics can be discussed.

Think Global is itself a provider of global learning training, with special expertise in delivery of on-line and virtual courses. This is a vital specialism, allowing those who are located in remote or rural communities to access global learning at the same standard and with the same content as those in more accessible and urban communities.⁵

More commonly, however, global learning is delivered through face-to-face interaction and learning between teachers and expert trainers. This may include seminar sessions lasting from a couple of hours to one or two days; workshops where groups of teachers collaborate under the guidance of a moderator or facilitator to discuss global learning issues, activities and classroom applications.

Occasionally, global learning is delivered directly to pupils; but more often, the focus within global learning training on building the long-term capacity of teachers means that teachers are the recipients of training.

The range of programmes and topics in global learning available to teachers in Britain is vast, although there are several particularly popular courses in which many teachers take part. *Philosophy for Children*, and the *Global Teacher Award*, are amongst two of the most popular; further details of which are available from providers.⁶ There are, however, common approaches in many global learning courses. Emphasis on learning to 'think critically', to consider a range of perspectives and viewpoints, and to make connections between different topics and arguments, is always an important aspect of global learning in Britain. Content knowledge also plays a part, for example, knowledge of development facts and figures; but the key to UK approaches to global learning is to place these facts and figures within a critical framework.

⁵ For details of Think Global's training for teachers, see <http://think-global.org.uk/our-work/schools-teachers/training-and-resources/>.

⁶ For example, further information on the Global Teacher Award is available at: <http://www.globalteacheraward.eu/>.

Funding for global learning is, like many other aspects of education programmes in Britain, subject to variations in Government priority and policy preferences. In its early days, global learning was often supported by Government funding directly to training providers. More recently, however, shifting Government policy emphasis and funding structures has meant financing of global education relies more heavily on funds raised from diverse sources including donor organisations and even businesses.

There is, however, one large and important Government-funded programme which aims to provide global learning to at least 50 percent of the UK's schools. The *Global Learning Programme* (GLP) in which Think Global is a consortium partner, is funded by the Department for International Development, and provides a range of financial support and practical resources for schools and teachers to build their global learning capacity.⁷ With funding of around £18 million over five years (2012-2017) the GLP represents a very substantial Government commitment to building teacher and student competence and confidence with global issues.

Overall, global learning in the UK is well-established, and can claim many innovations and instances of leadership. However, the sector is also now at something of a cross-roads, where the competing interests of 'new' policy ideas and priorities; funding limitations; teacher capacity and work pressure; and changing community demands and beliefs are all combining to create a dynamic but somewhat uncertain environment in which global learning must find its 21st century identity. By drawing on the direct observations and experiences of those working 'at the coal face' of the sector, the following sections of this paper investigate and present some of the key challenges and issues which British teachers are grappling with, and point to some encouraging possibilities for the future.

⁷ See the Global Learning Programme (England) website at: <https://globaldimension.org.uk/glp>.

Method

Understanding something about a topic as complicated as global learning is the type of task that lends itself ideally to a case study approach. Within the social sciences there are heated and ongoing debates about the most appropriate form of research method of different questions and projects, but there is also a broad consensus that case studies are useful where 'how' questions are concerned; and where behaviours can be observed, but not manipulated.⁸ In this paper, the question in essence is 'how does global learning work in the UK?'; and while we can observe how global learning is practiced, we cannot manipulate it as part of this study. Consequently, a small scale case study approach is both convenient and appropriate.

This case study is based on depth-interviews with two fully trained, qualified and experienced teachers, who are also experts in global learning. Ms Amy West and Ms Lisa Taner have worked as advisors with the Global Learning Programme, and have extensive knowledge and experience of the reality of classroom life. Semi-structured interviews with both teachers were conducted according to a basic question guide.⁹ The discussions covered key global learning issues British teachers are facing in the classroom today, which were selected for focus on the basis of existing literature and report evidence that these are common and recurring concerns.

While the limitations of case studies in terms of extrapolation and generalisation are well known,¹⁰ the following findings and comments are nonetheless useful as evidence-based indications of general themes; and provide a solid basis for further discussion and comparison.

Challenge and Change: Key issues for teachers

The interviews highlighted key global learning issues for teachers across four domains: first, the challenge of securing decision-makers' attention; second, the challenges of negotiating a fractured

⁸See, for example, Yin, R. K. (2009) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (California: SAGE Publications Inc.) p. 18; and Hancke, B. (2009) *Intelligent Research Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

⁹ A copy of the question guide is provided for reference at Appendix B.

¹⁰ Yin, R. K., op. Cit. pp14-16.

and diffuse funding environment; third, the challenges of ensuring global learning resources do not (consciously or unconsciously) display a Western or 'global north' content bias; and fourth, the challenges of fitting global learning into a crowded and prescriptive curriculum, which focuses on assessment and grading. Each domain is described in more detail below.

School Policy and Leadership

School leaders hold a substantial burden of responsibility, both within their schools, and the broader school and local communities. In January 2015, the Government released *National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers*,¹¹ which make explicit the range of obligations and requirements headteachers need to meet:

“Headteachers occupy an influential position in society and shape the teaching profession. They are lead professionals and significant role models within the communities they serve. The values and ambitions of headteachers determine the achievements of schools. They are accountable for the education of current and future generations of children... They secure a climate for the exemplary behaviour of pupils. They set standards and expectations for high academic standards within and beyond their own schools, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain. Headteachers, together with those responsible for governance, are guardians of the nation’s schools.”

In this context, it is not surprising that research shows headteachers and other school leaders in the UK often struggle to manage all their obligations and professional tasks, particularly where changes in the broader school systems policy are shifting more administrative autonomy and responsibility onto schools rather than local authorities or regional governments.¹² For example, a recent study by the National College for School Leadership found that a clear majority of headteachers and senior

¹¹ Department for Education (2015) *National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers*

¹² UK Government policy from 2010 to 2015 explicitly stated the aim of “...creat(ing) a more autonomous and diverse school system that offers parents choice...” See Department for Education at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-academies-and-free-schools/2010-to-2015-government-policy-academies-and-free-schools>. Accessed 24 September 2015.

leaders in the UK feel they spend too much time on administration and management, and not enough time on leadership of teaching and learning.¹³

Successful implementation of global learning within a school does require engagement and commitment from school leaders and the senior leadership team. The *Global Learning Programme* emphasises this, providing specific guidance for school leaders in both primary and secondary schools explaining the benefits of global learning, and giving practical tips on how to support global learning across the whole school.¹⁴

However, within the context described above, in which school leaders struggle with administrative responsibilities at the expense of teaching and learning support, it is not surprising that the interviews highlighted a difficulty with engaging and holding school leaders' attention in relation to global learning. When asked how school leaders tend to approach global learning, both interviewees reported that levels of support are highly variable, and that while some are supportive of the general idea, they "...rarely work proactively to understand it, prioritise it, or make it a major feature of school life and learning."¹⁵

Key reasons for this lack of attention included other pressures and priorities associated with running a school; but also a lack of understanding about the core concepts of global learning, priority concerns with passing school inspections and ensuring learning programmes fulfil curriculum requirements, and in one or two cases, philosophical objection to the inclusion of 'non-core' learning activities in a school programme (that is, activities that are not directly related to language, mathematics and science learning). A lack of reliable and concise information about global learning was also a problem for school leaders.

¹³ National College for School Leadership (2012) *Review of the School Leadership Landscape*, p. 10, available at http://www.ioe.ac.uk/Review_of_School_Leadership_landscape_2012_Dec.pdf, accessed 9 September 2015.

¹⁴ Global Learning Programme, *SLT Packs*, available at <https://globaldimension.org.uk/glp/page/10547>, accessed 9 September 2015.

¹⁵ Interview with Lisa Taner, 4 September 2015.

Funding

Financial support for any education programme is critical to its uptake and success 'on the ground'. As in most countries, education in the UK is seen as a core financial and policy responsibility for the Government.¹⁶ Funding for global learning, as a relatively well-established phenomenon, has moved through various stages related to different Government policies and preferences. After a slow start, funding support increased through the 1990s to what Bourn calls a 'high point of engagement and support' in the mid-2000s.¹⁷ During this period, there was substantial support for many NGOs and smaller organisations working on diverse aspects of global learning. More recently, Government funding has been drawn towards a more centralised position, in which most support is available through the Global Learning Programme (GLP).

Alongside the GLP, Government also provides funding for related activities which, although not in themselves 'global learning', do fit within the broad parameters of an international outlook for schools. Notable here is the British Council's *Connecting Classrooms* programme, which provides grants for schools in the UK to collaborate with 'partner' schools in other countries. The activities of partnership can vary, but often include teacher exchange visits, and shared professional development activities.¹⁸

Whether or not this (largely centralised) funding framework makes a difference to the quality, scale or content of global learning is difficult to say, as little evidence is available in either direction.

However, interviewees indicated it is likely that there is a direct relationship between funding

¹⁶ Recent moves to academisation and privatisation of schools may represent a preference amongst some decision-makers to try and shift the burden of funding from the public to the private sectors. However, opinion polling shows that the UK public continue to place high importance on the Government's responsibility for education. See, for example, Ipsos MORI's survey finding that a clear majority of respondents believe local authorities remain best placed to run and be responsible for schools. Ipsos MORI (2010) *Who should run state schools?* Available at <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/2579/Who-should-run-state-schools.aspx>, accessed 9 September 2015.

¹⁷ Bourn, D. (2015) 'From Development Education to Global Learning: Changing agendas and possibilities', *Policy and Practice: A development education review* (20), available online at <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue20-focus1?page=show>. Accessed 9 September 2015.

¹⁸ For more information, see British Council, *Connecting Classrooms* website, available at <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/connecting-classrooms>, accessed 9 September 2015.

structures and global learning delivery and outcomes. In particular, Amy West explained that “The macro funding picture is directly reflected in the micro action picture. Small fragmented grants lead to small fragmented projects, which are not sustainable and which have limited depth of outcomes; and which also tend to result in duplication because of a lack of continuity over time.”¹⁹ The benefits of a large programme like the GLP, however, include the ‘status’ that comes with size and Government-badging, which make it more appealing and prominent for school leaders. This suggests it is worthwhile considering the sustainability and coordination of funding when developing long-term global learning programmes.

One other interesting question in relation to funding is whether teachers, who are ultimately in the front line of global learning delivery, are aware of and understand funding structures and implications. Both interviewees think that UK teachers are not aware of funding issues, but that as global learning becomes more familiar through the GLP, it may be that advocacy from teachers for certain types of funding and support may increase; an interesting area for future study and policy development.

Content

Few would argue against ‘content’ as a topic of primary concern for education policy and practice. Indeed, there is a vast literature stretching back to classical times that discusses what should and should not be included in the content of an education programme.²⁰ Global learning, however, provides distinct challenges in terms of appropriate content, first because the relevant topic areas are broad and complex; second because they deal with contemporary phenomena which are

¹⁹ Interview with Amy West, 7 September 2015.

²⁰ In *The Republic*, for example, Plato (or perhaps Socrates, speaking ‘through’ Plato) provides an extended discussion of the knowledge and skills that are worthwhile having, and what should be the goals of education. A digital copy of *The Republic* is available from the MIT ‘Internet Classics Archive’, at <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html>. Accessed 9 September 2015.

constantly in flux; and third because they often deal with moral judgements and subjectivities that can be open to interpretation and disagreement.²¹

Indeed, a key question for examining how global learning is practiced in the UK is how these subjectivities and moral judgements are managed. As noted above, the overarching conceptual framework for global learning in this country requires placing varied and complex topics inside a 'critical thinking' framework, in which priority is given to acknowledging and weighing up alternate and often disparate points on view on a single issue. How well teachers cope with such a challenge, and what it means in a classroom situation, is important to consider.

Both interviewees acknowledged the importance of this question for the quality and overall success of global learning, but felt that it remains one of the key areas of difficulty for teachers. As Amy West explained, teacher training does not encourage teachers to embrace openness to uncertainty and ambiguity. The authority of a teacher (even in a constructivist learning environment) is underpinned by the understanding that a teacher has more or better knowledge and understanding about an issue than those being taught. The learner looks to the teacher for guidance, if not precisely for information.²² Consequently, global learning, with its focus on alternative viewpoints and ambiguous value-positions, can be difficult for teachers to embrace and understand.

This may in part account for the findings of Think Global's own research into teacher attitudes towards global learning, which found that although most teachers (81 percent) believe schools should support students to understand complex global issues, only 42 percent felt confident to teach about such issues.²³ On the one hand this is clear evidence of the need for more training and support

²¹ These three characteristics of global learning are well demonstrated by viewing the rich bank of resources, categorised by topic, that are available on Think Global's *Global Dimension Website*. See <https://globaldimension.org.uk/>.

²² Interview with Amy West, op. Cit.

²³ Think Global (2009) *Our Global Future: How can schools meet the challenge of change?* (London: Think Global). Available in digital copy at http://clients.squareeye.net/uploads/dea/documents/dea_teachers_MORI_mar_09.pdf.

to teachers seeking to engage with the field; but it also highlights the extent of the difficulties to be faced in a classroom situation.

In this situation, it is also natural for teachers to rely heavily on resources designed to help and guide them through lessons involving global learning. The UK is fortunate in that, by now, there is a very extensive collection of such resources readily available to teachers.²⁴ However, a large volume of resources does not necessarily equate with good quality, and Lisa Taner pointed out that problems often arise with resources that are produced by particular development charities, who along with their education mission, also having fundraising interests.²⁵ Balancing a desire to encourage fundraising towards a particular cause with a pedagogical imperative to be critical and non-judgemental, is a very difficult task, and one that has a profound effect on how global learning is implemented in British classrooms. Further, given that the vast majority of global learning resources in the UK have been developed by British practitioners with British audiences in mind, it is not surprising, but nevertheless regrettable, that there are sometimes Western cultural biases in otherwise useful global learning resources.

Curriculum and Assessment

Finally, there is the issue of curriculum and assessment. In the UK, as in many other countries, global learning is not a formal part of the school curriculum, and is not assessed or examined in the way that subjects like English, maths and science are. Perhaps inevitably, this means that global learning is often seen as a 'bolt on'; something that is possibly nice but not necessary. Statutory requirements, which are part of external school inspections, take priority. The difficulties this presents, for example in terms of engaging school leader interest, are manifold.

However, it is not entirely clear that inclusion within the curriculum would lead to better global learning outcomes. Both interviewees agreed that on the one hand, if global learning were a formal

²⁴ See Think Global, *Global Dimension Website*, <https://globaldimension.org.uk/>.

²⁵ Interview with Lisa Taner, op. Cit.

curriculum subject, with formal assessment requirements, there would very likely be more, better, and more accessible information about global learning available to teachers; and it would also very likely be easier to attract the attention and support of school leaders. On the other hand, however, global learning would also become 'another thing that teachers are judged on'; and consequently a source of negative pressure and stress. Both interviewees agreed that one of the strengths of current approaches to global learning is that there is considerable scope for individuals' personal commitment and energy to have a real positive impact on learner outcomes, which is a core attraction for those committed to the teaching profession. If confined by statutory requirements, it is possible that scope of individual passion would be lost, with detrimental consequences for the quality and diversity of global learning overall.

The lack of formal assessment of global learning does, however, create a weakness in the narrative of calls for more policy and funding attention. A core criticism of programmes to date has been the lack of any evidence that positive learning outcomes are actually achieved. The Global Learning Programme has acknowledged this problem, and is seeking to address it through implementing several innovative assessment tools for schools and students taking part. The *Whole School Audit* and the *Pupil Assessment Tool* are extremely important here, and although results are still forthcoming, it is hoped that these tools will make an important contribution to evidencing the positive outcomes of global learning.

In Summary

Overall, then, research and interviews showed that there are complexities and challenges for global learning in the UK, particularly in relation to school leaders, funding, content, and curriculum and assessment.

However, there are also exciting examples of innovations, both technical and in programme terms, which are increasingly helping teachers to overcome these problems, and engage confidently in high quality global learning. The remaining sections of this paper provide details of key initiatives.

Moving Forward: Best Practice Examples, Useful Tools, Good Ideas

The *Global Learning Programme* (GLP) certainly counts amongst the most important of current global learning initiatives. Its size and nation-wide scope alone ensure that it has potential to transform the global learning landscape in Britain. With a five-year time frame (2012-2017), a total of approximately £18 million in Government funding, and a declared ambition to reach 50 percent of schools across Britain (that is, about 10,000 schools), the GLP is well-placed to affect profound improvements in the way global learning is happening in UK classrooms.

In relation to the particular challenges examined in interviews for this paper, the GLP has important contributions to make. For example, there is explicit guidance and outreach to school leaders, through (as mentioned above) the Senior Leader Team packs. Further, the fact that participation in the GLP requires formal agreement and sign-off by the school leader means that heads must engage with the aims and objectives of the GLP as part of their administrative duties; raising overall awareness.

With reference to funding, the GLP constitutes the Government's major investment in global learning, and the multi-year timeframe, as well as the centralised financial approach, means there is greater coordination between different types of project and programmes. This systemic coordination also provides assurance on quality and relevance of the content; in order to receive funding from the GLP, global learning training providers must submit their courses for approval according to explicit criteria.

Perhaps most importantly, the GLP is making a push to increase the evidence base for positive global learning outcomes. The *Whole School Audit* is filled in by all participating schools on entry to the programme, and provides a snap-shot of the school's current global learning capacity. Following training and programme implementation, students within GLP schools are assessed on their global

learning via the *Pupil Assessment Tool*.²⁶ Implementation of these assessment tools is still under way, but it is hoped that in due course, results of the assessments will make a strong contribution to improving the evidence base for global learning, and therefore support calls for policy and funding attention.

Think Global's *Global Dimension Website* (GDW) is also a vital initiative supporting quality, accessible global learning in the UK. The GDW is a website for teachers, and provides the UK's largest collection of global learning resources. Resources are accessibly arranged according to different filters, such as topic, learning stage, or age. With over 10,000 unique visitors to the site each month, the GDW is a popular and important avenue for teachers throughout the UK to access quality learning resources.

The GLP and GDW are both long term projects, with extensive utility and multiple elements and applications. However, there are also a number of short-term, replicable initiatives which are effective not only at providing good quality global learning, but also at raising the profile of global learning amongst large numbers of teachers and school leaders, and providing high quality content for learning activities.

Think Global's *Global Educator of the Year Award* is bestowed annually on an educator within the UK who has made a special difference in inspiring colleagues and/or students to develop a better understanding of the world and the role they can play in making it more just and sustainable. With a cash prize, as well as having their work featured on the GDW, the *Global Educator Award* is an effective means not only of celebrating teacher achievements, but also sharing best practice in global learning with a wide range of other educators.

One particularly important global learning initiative in 2015 is the *World's Largest Lesson* (WLL). Developed and delivered by a consortium of education and media organisations (including Think Global), the WLL is a unique attempt to undertake a simultaneous international global learning

²⁶ Further details on both the Whole School Audit and the Pupil Assessment Tool are available through the GLP website: <https://globaldimension.org.uk/glp>.

activity. Designed to disseminate information and awareness about the United Nations' new *Sustainable Development Goals*, the WLL was held in the week commencing 25th September, and involved teachers all around the world using a set of lesson plans, animations and other learning resources to teach about the SDGs. A notable element of the initiative was the compilation of global learning resources from all across the world. Now available through the GDW, this collection is a vital first step towards rebalancing resource libraries away from the current tendency towards Western content bias, and including relevant, authentic international materials. As an example of global learning profile and awareness raising, the WLL has been one of the most significant actions to date.²⁷

Conclusions

Global learning is a complex but potentially rewarding focus area for education. Its great strength, which is also its great weakness, is that it can be understood in many ways. Most simply, it provides a set of instructions and resources for teaching and learning about complex global issues; but it can also be understood more generally as a particular type of critical pedagogy, and as a school management tool that provides practical and conceptual links between diverse elements of the curriculum. In the UK, which has a relatively long history of global learning, policy and practice has evolved over time according not only to different ways of understanding what it is, but also in response to practical considerations and (Government) preference and funding.

Global learning in this country is now at something of a cross-roads. Increasing globalisation means that the need for students and teachers to address 'the international' in the classroom is likely to continue to grow. Beyond school, studies of higher education and employment practices and imperatives show that tertiary trainers and businesses are also aware of the need for global competence; Think Global's own survey research showed that three quarters of business leaders

²⁷ Further details are available from <https://www.tes.com/worldslargestlesson/about-the-competition/>. Accessed 10 September 2015.

studied believe that the UK is in danger of being left behind by emerging economies unless our young people learn to think more globally.²⁸ At the highest international levels too, the importance of global learning, and particularly the importance of being able to measure and provide evidence about the outcomes of global learning programmes, is being recognised. From 2018, the OCED's renowned *Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA)* will include a specific focus on global competencies.

Despite this interest and need, and the UK's relatively experienced global learning community, there remain important challenges, particularly for teachers and students who are, after all, at the heart of education. Research studied, and interviews undertaken, for this paper showed that attracting the stretched attention of school leaders, dealing with funding constraints and complications, uncertainties about good quality and appropriate content, and the pressures of managing statutory curriculum requirements in comparison with important but 'additional' learning activities, mean that teachers in the UK have to make a number of sometimes difficult decisions in order to embrace and support global learning.

There are signs of progress, and innovative initiatives like the GLP, the GDW and the *Global Educator of the Year Award* will go some way to supporting a positive future for global learning in the UK. But unless pragmatic questions of funding and school administration are also addressed, fundamental challenges will remain. Reconciling the philosophical divergences, and historical differences, between some in the field who have been committed at different phases of the policy and practice cycle, will also be a task for the near future.

Perhaps one of the most encouraging developments has been the rapid and substantial increase in global learning from other countries, and particularly countries such as Korea and Japan, where a fresh cultural perspective is adding dynamism and balance to approaches that have in some cases

²⁸ Think Global (2011) *The Global Skills Gap: Preparing young people for the new global economy* (London: Think Global).

become slightly stale. The potential for international collaboration, for mutual benefit, is substantial, and every opportunity for discussion and exchange should be welcomed as a step towards a bright global learning future.

Appendix A

About *Think Global*

Think Global (www.think-global.org.uk) is an education charity based in London, UK, with a focus on global learning. The organisation's mission is to 'Promote learning for a more just and sustainable world', which in practice means supporting teaching and learning that highlights the links and interdependencies between the lives of people in different countries across the world.

Think Global has been operating since 1983 (formerly as the 'Development Education Association'), and has three main areas of work:

- 1) Training and resources: This includes developing and providing global learning professional development training to teachers and schools across Britain, as well as developing, curating and disseminating global learning resources via the *Global Dimension Website*.
- 2) Policy and Advocacy: Think Global works with government and private sector decision-makers to inform and advocate on important international issues, such as climate change and migration.
- 3) Research: Think Global undertakes a variety of research into global learning policy and practice issues, working both independently and in partnership with other organisations including Government and private sector groups.

Think Global is also the umbrella body for the UK's network of Development Education Centres; and has a membership network with over 12,000 individual teachers, as well as over 140 organisations including public and private sector bodies, non-government organisations and other charities.

Appendix B

Question Guide – Interviews for UK Global Learning Research Paper

Four main areas of discussion were investigated during the interviews: school policy and leadership, funding, content, and curriculum and assessment. These areas were identified as important on the basis of existing research and evidence, as well as anecdotal information from teachers within the Think Global network.

School Policy and Leadership

We know that school leaders have a critical role to play in encouraging and supporting all learning activities. In your experience, how do UK school leaders tend to approach global learning? That is, do they tend to be supportive or not?

What do you think are the main reasons for this approach?

What do you think are the main levers and influences that can affect how school leaders approach global learning?

Funding

Funding provision for global learning in schools has changed a lot since the issue became popular in the 1970s. After a period of relatively generous grant funding in the 1990s, there have now been many reductions in government support; and there are moves towards more fragmented and privatised provision. Do you think this affects the way global learning happens in schools? Why and how?

Do you think teachers understand the funding processes around global learning? Do school leaders understand them? Does this matter, and why/not?

Content

'Global learning' is a very broad area, and covers a lot of quite complex topics. From a teacher's point of view, do you think global learning projects and programmes are *generally* useful in helping teachers and students understand these issues? Why/not?

Global learning also tends to deal with subjective issues, and those that involve moral judgements. How do you think UK trainers and resources deal with those subjectivities? How well do they deal with it?

Do you think UK global learning projects and resources would be appropriate for use in other countries (including non-Western countries?)

Curriculum and Assessment

In the UK, global learning is not a discrete part of the curriculum. Do you think this affects how teachers approach it? Why/not and how?

In recent years there have been calls (particularly from funders) for more and better evidence about the outcomes of global learning programmes. What effect is this having on the way global learning is delivered in schools?

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