

**Título:**

WHERE DO WE FIND ‘GLOBAL’?

**Autor:**

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**Texto:**

**Where do we find ‘global’?**

Darryl Humble in a 2007 article for Tide~ talk ‘Development Encounters’ states ‘*Evidence from development studies texts (based on research by Humble and Smith 2007) indicates that the idea that you have to travel to developing countries to encounter development is still prevalent today. The focus of research methods texts is one particular example that continues to suggest that research on development must take place in developing countries and guidance is readily available about travelling, settling in to the field and engaging with local people. The emphasis here is very much of development as a ‘southern project’ which is constructed around a narrow conception of a development encounter which involves travelling to developing countries to ‘do development’.*

*Dr Matt Smith describes this as ‘the palm tree effect’ in which there is a prevailing assumption that we can only ‘do development’ in places where there are palm trees – in the geographical south.’*

This exotification of development, along with a concept of global being ‘elsewhere’ provides a geographical distance, which makes it easy for an individual living in a country without palm trees to dismiss a global issue as being irrelevant to their daily life, and the concern of ‘others’ in distant places as being far removed.

The ‘Cities ~ a focus for a connected global curriculum’ project proposed by Tide~ global learning sought to turn this idea on its head. The idea was that starting from an understanding of the issues facing Birmingham, young people would engage with the concept of real, relevant, shared global challenges, understanding the connections between themselves and others around the world. They would understand that global development happens everywhere – including in their locality.

**Difference or commonality?**

The starting point as described above is that exploring similarities is a useful entry point for engaging with global issues, and that taking this approach narrows the physical and conceptual distance, so that issues appear near and relevant. Fran Martin in ‘The Geographies of difference’, geography, vol 97 (3), pp116-122 suggests an alternative approach, which proposes that starting with an understanding of

similarities reinforces a tendency to use binary categories – something is either the same or it is not the same. This in turn forces us to fix our views in a way which may re-enforce differences rather than reduce them, re-enforcing dominant cultural perspectives, and minimising the importance of differences. She suggests that we use an understanding of difference (starting with our own differences within) as a starting point from which to understand similarity rather than the other way round. This is based on relational rather than binary ways of thinking and encourages us to always consider that we are ‘in-relation-to’ the other that might be the focus of our attention. In other words to focus solely on the other and *not also* on our relationship to the others is not helpful in projects where better appreciation and understanding of difference is the goal. The *not also* is important as it does not suggest the replacement of one way of thinking with another, but suggests that they can be used productively together.

This proposal while not dominant in the minds of the project members at either inception or during the project may however be useful to colleagues reading the article or using the teaching materials.

In order to understand the story of the project it is necessary to understand some of the context in which it was developed.

### **Tide~ global learning: a teacher network**

Tide~ global learning is a teachers’ network based in the West Midlands region of the UK. The network promotes the belief that young people have an entitlement to global learning as a core part of their educational experiences, by which we mean that they are entitled to develop their understanding of global issues by engaging in different contexts, through varied teaching and learning approaches. This belief has generated numerous teacher led projects over the years. A flavour of these include:

- Age specific – ‘Young children and global citizenship’
- Topic specific – ‘Water issues ~ local and global’
- Responses to a shared stimuli – ‘How do we build learners capacity to think critically about sustainable development issues?’
- Pedagogical approaches – ‘Start with a story’
- Curriculum focus – ‘It makes you think: ideas for science with a global dimension’

This varied but inter-related approach brings many benefits to those involved. Within the network there is a depth of experience and expertise, and members include teachers in the classroom and senior leaders; academics; colleagues working for non – governmental organisations, local authorities and subject associations; as well as a number of independent educators. This diversity provides a richness which means that Tide~ is seen as many different things to different people. Some see it as an organisation primarily concerned with sustainability; others as a publisher of resources; some as a provider of professional development; and still more as an advocacy organisation. All of these are true, but as is often the case the interaction between the different activities means that the impact of the whole organisation is greater than that of the sum of the individual sections.

The approach which Tide~ takes is that global questions are often complex, encompassing different perspectives and cultural traditions; that prior knowledge and experiences influences current understandings; and that new knowledge and

experiences challenge attitudes and values; that opposing views may seem simultaneously feasible; and while the experience of engaging is sometimes frustrating, it is usually ultimately rewarding. Needless to say, this process of global learning takes time and support, which is where the structure of a network is so valuable. An individual can be deeply engaged in a number of network projects over a period of years, or be involved in a more peripheral way depending on their circumstances. For many members, Tide~ has been an on-going source of support throughout their career, from student teacher to senior leader. The cycle of teachers working together to develop ideas and resources, which are then shared either through an event or publication, often provides a stimulus for further activity – as happened in the case of the ‘Cities’ project. This approach is not suitable for everyone as it requires engagement and commitment rather than an easily accessible ‘answer’. However, those that do engage tend to be the curious and the creative, who are often recognised as, or develop into leaders in their own field.

In this tradition of ongoing engagement, this project built on previous work at Tide~ including ‘Cities as a lens to the world?’ <http://www.tidec.org/resources/cities-lens-world-feature-article> and the 2009 Cape Town study visit

### **UK Government: Education and International Development priorities**

The second context worthy of consideration is that of the education sector in the UK. When the bid was submitted, there was a strong move supported by the government towards a more creative and integrated curriculum in secondary schools. Experimentation was actively encouraged by the national body with oversight for curriculum development – the Qualification and Curriculum Agency [QCA], with teachers and schools encouraged to look holistically at education, making connections between different subject areas. There was also explicit mention of the global dimension and sustainability as important aspects which should permeate across all subjects. This encouragement to be creative after many years of what was perceived as top down instruction was both welcomed and feared by teachers. At Tide~ we saw the wider context as an opportunity for this project which would support classroom teachers, and be supported by school leaders. This situation changed significantly when a new government was elected in 2010 – one year into the project. The new government – a coalition of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats – abolished a number of national organisations such as the QCA, and introduced a range of reforms. While strategy documents gave positive encouragement for teacher to teacher collaboration, along with strong statements about the autonomy of teachers to determine a curriculum appropriate for their pupils, the emphasis of the government reforms so far has been focussed on school structures, rather than curriculum developments. This has created a more hostile policy environment for the project.

### **Funders, aims and objectives of the project**

The project was funded by the UK Government through the Department for International Development as part of their long term ‘Building support for development’ strategy. This strategy included the Development Awareness Fund, which supported a range of innovative activities over a number of years. Tide~ global learning had received previous funding under this scheme, including funding for a regional initiative ‘West Midlands Coalition’ for seven years as part of this strategy.

The project purpose was ‘ *Cities in different parts of the world are increasingly aware of their global context and have common concern about global issues, for example relating to climate change, patterns of investment or the migration of people [often escaping poverty or conflict]. The project seeks to popularise [in the education community] an awareness of that commonality and exploit it to improve approaches to teaching about development.*’

The project aimed to bring together teachers and students with professionals from private, public and voluntary sector organisations who had a day to day role in addressing some of the key issues faced by Birmingham. The proposal was that through a process of dialogue and an exchange of ideas, participants would become more knowledgeable and confident about the issues and how they could be addressed within a learning context. This in turn would have a sustainable impact on the capacity of the education system to engage in global learning, through both teacher knowledge and confidence supported by teaching resources.

### **Activities and outcomes**

The structure of the project was always going to involve creative work with teacher groups and activities with young people, alongside opportunities to share this learning with others through key events and resources. As a process it mirrored many other Tide~ projects, leaving space for the detail to be determined in an organic way, responding to the needs and interests of teachers over a period of time.

### **Teachers**

There were a number of teachers who had been involved in work around cities through previous projects, such as those mentioned above. Some of these, along with some new recruits formed an initial working group and started by thinking about the issues which affect cities in general, and Birmingham in particular. Through a process of practical activities using resources such as Cities in a Bag, and doing fieldwork in the local area, the group developed a number of teaching ideas, which were then trialled and refined in classrooms. In each case, the materials were developed in response to the particular needs of students. In one school the surrounding area had undergone significant change following the closure of a car factory which had been a major employer before switching production overseas, and so the focus was on globalisation. Another developed a language trail around the local area, to be used as part of exchange visits with students from European schools. A third used the Cities in a bag activity to ask questions about the nature of Cities as a joint humanities project. A teacher conference at the end of the first year provided an opportunity to share the outcomes with colleagues, and take the idea of a ‘connected global curriculum’ further.

A particularly pertinent feedback comment identified the need for a curriculum stew, rather than a curriculum soup. In a stew [the name for a British meal which usually involves chopped up meat and vegetables being cooked in stock in a pan] the individual components can be identified. In a soup, however, the ingredients are blended together. So in a curriculum stew, each individual subject area would remain distinct, with its own characteristics and strengths; while in a curriculum soup the subjects would be indistinguishable from each other, with no defining characteristics. The question of how individual subjects are represented in cross curricular activities

had caused a lot of controversy in England, with the new government championing separate subjects, taught in a traditional, knowledge focussed way.

The conference also had workshops run by colleagues from non education organisations which provided opportunities to examine a global topic in depth with a professional from that field, something which teachers don't often get a chance to do. Examples included the built environment and wellbeing, retro fitting a house to high eco standards, and faith and cohesion. This fitted in with the notion that teachers need time and support in order to engage with global issues for themselves. The feedback from the event showed that this outcome had been achieved, with many commenting on how they were particularly inspired by these workshops.

Our initial idea was that the teacher groups would engage with a global issue, rather than focus on a subject area, but because of the changed emphasis from the government, which highlighted the importance of distinct subjects, in the second year we decided to be more explicit about the subject areas which the teacher groups would focus on. So the groups in the final half of the project were:

- Living archives – geography and history teachers with support from Birmingham City Archives
- City Languages – modern languages
- Global Connections – geography, religious studies and design technology
- Dynamic Cities – citizenship with support from youth organisation Envision
- What is a city? – had an over-riding view of the project and asked some key questions which would serve as an introduction to any of the activities.

This more focussed approach proved successful in terms of recruiting new teachers, and also in convincing senior leaders in the schools that what we were doing was relevant and of value to them. We also allocated some funding for Project Co-ordinators who were mostly teachers who would take on a role of co-ordinating the activities of the group, arranging meetings and attending overall project meetings. The official nature of the role, and the funding attached was supported by a signed agreement with the school which agreed time for the teacher to be involved in the project. This move was in response to it becoming increasingly difficult for teachers to be able to get permission to attend meetings during school time.

The groups spent between six and nine months developing and trialling teaching resources as part of the project. The focus was to support the development of innovative curriculum materials, and to provide a framework for creativity and risk taking. The groups met regularly to share ideas, and the whole group came together for two whole days in July and November 2011 to agree the parameters and focus of the activities which then contributed to an online publication. This publication shared the learning from each group through resources and write ups, and can be seen at <http://www.tidec.org/secondary/cities-people-and-change>.

## Case study: Using stories to develop intercultural understanding and language awareness

Helen Stanistreet teaches Spanish in several primary schools in Sandwell, West Midlands. These very different schools have culturally and socially diverse populations, and the pupils bring a whole range of experiences and languages to the schools.

Working across the whole of KS2 [7-14], Helen used bilingual versions of the well known picture book 'Handa's Surprise', supported by the 'Language Investigator' resources by Coventry City Council and Tide's 'Fat felts and sugar paper'. She developed a series of activities which aim to:

- encourage pupils to share their own knowledge of languages and cultures;
- be proud of their skills as linguists;
- learn Spanish.

Helen explains:

*"The children didn't tend to use and share their home languages in the classes - this was the thing that I wanted to change. I wanted them to be proud of themselves for already being bilingual, and celebrate this fact with others"*

Helen developed and used a range of teaching and learning activities, which are available at <http://www.tidec.org/sites/default/files/uploads/I%27m%20me%20and%20I%27m%20proud%20of%20it.pdf>

### **Helen Stanistreet shares her reflections about using these ideas with her pupils:**

*"I have been teaching Spanish in primary schools for four years and I am very aware of the intercultural understanding aspect of the Framework for Languages; it is the strand that I find hardest to deliver.*

*"At the time of writing, I was working in two different primary schools, but children in each of the schools were a variety of nationalities and spoke many languages. This, I felt, was something to celebrate - a resource within the children themselves, offering me and their peers a rich introduction into languages and culture. Up until this point the children didn't use their home languages in the classes - this was the thing that I wanted to change. I wanted them to be proud of themselves for already being multilingual, and celebrate this fact with others.*

*"Being 'language detectives' enabled many children to be the experts within the class setting. They knew a lot of the languages and, given the opportunity, could speak and often write them, so their sense of self worth increased greatly. I made it quite clear to all the classes that I don't speak as many languages as the children do, so they were the experts.*

*"As a teacher of Spanish, I am used to structuring my lessons with clear language objectives in mind; I usually know what language point I want to develop, or what key language I want the children to practice. But this whole project, with its emphasis on intercultural understanding and Global Learning, demanded something different. I was completely out of my comfort zone! The whole experience took the focus off me as a teacher and aimed it straight at the children who, I must say, rose to the challenge brilliantly.*

*"I saw a child who had barely spoken to me before, reading the entire book in Polish to the whole class. One child in Year 5 gave me a story that she had written entirely in Punjabi. She read it out with great pride, whilst the other children listened and 'followed' the words on the screen. Other Punjabi speakers took great delight in telling me what the story was about, and I had only managed to pick out two key words! To know more than the teacher? Priceless!*

*"This was only really the start of my 'I'm me and I'm proud of it' project. I know we need to do more. I do feel that the children are happier to use their language in the schools, and want to share the fact that they can speak another language - something to be proud of indeed. They also questioned themselves and their own thoughts, and were able to learn from their peers. "*

## Case study: Integrating languages and global learning

Bertram Richter, Claire Fazilleau and colleagues in the Languages Department at Tile Hill Wood School and Language College in Coventry have developed a series of innovative activities designed to integrate intercultural understanding, global learning and MFL in a truly cross-curricular approach based on a Year 7 French immersion programme.

Bertram explains:

*Tile Hill Wood School & Language College are trying to embed global learning into the MFL curriculum. Our aim is to:*

1. *enable our students to see a topic **from different angles***
2. *challenge their **beliefs and emotions** in a safe environment*
3. *empower our students to exchange ideas **face-to-face** with others around the world*

Over recent years, Tile Hill Wood School & Language College has been a leading light in the development of a successful 'immersion approach' to languages teaching based on 'Content and Language Integrated Learning' [CLIL]. More information about CLIL is available on the CILT website [www.cilt.org.uk](http://www.cilt.org.uk)

To take the approach to a new level, Bertram Richter [Head of Languages] participated in the *Cities, people and change project* to bring a global perspective to their curriculum. This began with a departmental training session in which staff identified topics that would be the focus for Years 7 and 8 and 9. In groups, staff then developed a series of key questions for each topic, such as:

- ? School – What is the most important subject?
- ? Family and friends – What makes a good friend/ parent/ sibling?
- ? House and home – Natural disasters: where is home if you lose it?
- ? Free time – Are people today too reliant on technology for fun?
- ? Food and healthy living – By which criteria would you judge healthy eating?
- ? Holiday – What makes a perfect holiday and why?
- ? World of work – What makes people successful?
- ? Music and films – How does music/ film connect us with people in other places?
- ? Clothes & fashion – What do clothes say about you and why?

These ideas were further developed into lessons and schemes of work, with the staff working in small collaborative groups to offer support to each other in what has been a very creative approach to curriculum development. For more information see <http://www.tidec.org/secondary/cities-people-and-change/downloads>

Bertram explains:

*"Many staff have commented on how much they enjoyed planning and delivering their global learning lessons. They particularly mentioned the positive challenge of approaching familiar topics creatively and from a new angle using 'global learning questions' as a guide."*

For more ideas and resources from Tile Hill see <http://thwlanguages.posterous.com/>

Bertram reflects on using a global learning approach with his department:

*"I strongly feel that language learning needs to be as relevant to students' lives as possible while going beyond the stereotypical 'describe your house/ family/ pets/ school or ordering food in a restaurant' approach. Our definition of global learning tries to achieve this aim. Our work with TIDE has been a key influence in revamping our Year 9 Schemes of Work in French, German and Spanish for from a global learning perspective for the academic year 2012/13."*

Claire reflects on using ideas with her students:

*"The lesson had a huge impact on pupils' motivation and engagement. As soon as they were given the photos, they got involved in discussions, trying to guess where the families were from and commenting on the diverse diets. They were able to re-use their prior knowledge and to adapt it to talk about a topic which mattered to them and in which they had genuine interest."*

*In the future I will develop the ideas and strategies into a series of lessons to allow for more language manipulation and more spontaneity."*

Learning from the project was an on-going, iterative process. A core group of sixteen teachers took lead roles throughout the project, and they were key to the direction and shape of the final outcomes. They took a lead role in dissemination, within their own schools, and more widely within the education community. One teacher was a member of the Cape Town study visit, did a keynote presentation at the teachers conference, was interviewed for a case study in 'Teaching contemporary themes in secondary education; global learning and sustainable development' [2010], co-facilitated a session at the Midlands History Forum annual conference, led sessions with colleagues in Wolverhampton, and was the focus of a case study on global learning and the impact on learning for a forthcoming publication by Oxfam GB. A further 51 teachers were directly involved in developing teaching and learning materials with students, and 281 took part in workshops and conferences throughout the project which shared the learning more widely. This represents a model of knowledge sharing and engagement which will continue to have an impact on teaching and learning.

### **Young people**

Young people were involved throughout the project indirectly as a result of the activities of their teachers and directly through two key events. The first event was held at the Council House in Birmingham with a focus on Climate Change and the international summit in Copenhagen in 2009. Seven schools had taken part in preparatory activities looking at questions related to sustainability and developing statements for inclusion in a poster which was then distributed to all schools in Birmingham and displayed on billboards throughout the city. The poster was presented to local politicians who were going to Copenhagen, to ensure the voices of young people were heard at that gathering. The event itself included a panel discussion with local politicians and activists which took prepared questions from the audience. Further details can be found at <http://www.tidec.org/resources/cities-project-young-people's-active-citizenship-event>

The second event was an active citizenship conference in November 2010. One hundred and twenty young people worked in mixed school groups in workshops with themes such as waste, health, refugees and climate change, and also spent time developing skills for taking action. Throughout the day a group acted as evaluators, interviewing their peers and recording their thoughts. The final question and answer session with a panel including two local politicians, a member of the young people's parliament and a poet, was the highlight for many, with pertinent questions and lively debates.

Both of these events provided a direct opportunity for engagement with decision makers, and stimulated the participants to think carefully about global development issues. In both cases, the events were supported by activities in schools, so formed part of a continuum of learning rather than an isolated one off activity, and so added depth and variety to the learning process.

In evaluations, 100% of young people said that they felt positive about what they had learnt about choices and action taking. Quotes from the evaluation report for the Young People's Active Citizenship Event include:

*'I think children have a point of view like about crime and other issues in cities';*

*'It gave me ideas how to help in the local community and how to help other countries'*

Overall, 6170 young people were involved in the project, from 18 different schools.

An activity aimed at engaging young people was 'Big Questions Online' <http://www.tidec.org/resources/cities-project-introduction#Big%20Questions%20Online> , which came out of the discussions at the launch seminar [see below]. Although It didn't take off in the way which we had hoped, with young people in different institutions responding to the same stimulus and sharing their responses, this resource has the potential to be developed further, and did result in responses from German colleagues.

### **Community organisations**

The intention of the project was to bring together colleagues from different sectors to share experiences and expertise about Cities. To launch the project, we organised a seminar 'Birmingham the view from here', with presentations on key issues around climate change, health and wellbeing, community cohesion, and economic regeneration. We wanted to challenge ourselves with questions like 'How do we begin exploring big issues for Birmingham for ourselves and with young people?' 'How do we get people from different organisations talking to each other in a constructive way?' For presentations and a full report see <http://www.tidec.org/resources/cities-project-creative-ks3-curriculum-development-birmingham-view-here> .

The project changed part way through in response to the governments changed priorities. This meant that the strand of work with community organisations did not develop as planned, and did not play such a prominent role in the second half of the project. The two exceptions were the

Birmingham Archives team, who were closely involved in the 'Living Archives' work, and youth organisation Envision who worked on 'Dynamic Cities'. These two examples illustrated the potential for collaboration and learning between different organisations.

### **Lessons from the project**

As often happens, the project changed and developed as it progressed. One year in, the funders asked for the project purpose to be re-written, so it became: *'This project seeks to enable teachers to bring Southern development issues into their teaching and so enable learners to gain learning outcomes related to Southern development by making connections to similar issues in their own city.'*

*For the purpose of this project, Southern development issues are defined as those related to the environment such as the impact on human development of climate change and waste management; economic development such as trade with Southern countries; and social issues such as migration, poverty reduction, conflict and interdependence with and between countries in the South.*

*The methodology for achieving the project purpose is through creative curriculum development by teachers in partnership with fellow teachers, Tide~global learning, and experts in these issues.'*

This meant that the original emphasis on working with those outside of education – with all of the risks and challenges that this entailed - became a much lower priority for the project as it progressed.

The changed government priorities in education, and the abolition of influential bodies such as QCA, meant that we had to adapt our approach as we went along, and find new partners and channels of communication in a changing world. The introduction of Project Co-ordinators, and the increased focus on subject areas were responses to these changes.

The model of a core group of teachers who played a lead role throughout in terms of leadership and direction was very effective. It ensured that the learning and experiences from the project will stay within the education system, and have an impact for many years to come. This model was replicated to a certain extent among the young people, but there is room to develop it further, so that they are more involved, and lead activities with their peers.

## Where next?

Building on the success of the project, Tide~ is working with FERE-CECA in Madrid, Spain, and the University of Potsdam in Germany, and in collaboration with colleagues in The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea in a new project funded by the European Union called 'Young people on the global stage: their education and influence'. This will include collaborative activities such as study visits, teacher projects, leadership development for young people, engagement with politicians, and resource development. An initial activity which will ask young people to identify the characteristics of their city, along with key issues, unique points and connections to other places will be the starting point for the project. We would be interested in hearing from any colleagues who would like to be involved in this 'Global Cities' activity, or indeed any other part of the project.