

# **Left, Right then Left Again: Educators at the Intersection of Global Citizenship Education, Technology and Academic Literacies**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to critically consider the roles that academic literacy facilitators fulfil in exposing students to Global Citizenship Education (GCE). In university disciplines, literacies are primary tools that students employ to interact with global events, knowledge, theories and problems. As such, multimodal literacies including written, audiovisual and cyber texts facilitate students' access to the world through critical communication. Consequently, the authors construe GCE as disciplinary instruction that connects students to lived experiences beyond their own national borders. To demonstrate GCE, the authors employ the following methods for accessing, interpreting and generating knowledge: Firstly, a literature review is conducted. In doing so, key concepts and theories that define academic literacy and GCE are identified. Secondly, by combining reviewed literature that highlights GCE methods and scholarship pertaining to multimodal literacies, the authors make recommendations for integrating GCE into disciplines. In conclusion, the authors emphasise academic literacies, including digital discourses, as effective conduits for GCE principles and make further recommendations for future studies and methods that may be applied towards uniting literacies with international course content.

**Keywords:** Global Citizenship Education, educational technology, academic literacy, multimodality, higher education

## **Introduction**

Before and after COVID-19, digitisation in educational institutions thrust disciplines online. While increased digital interactions resulting from COVID-19 presented diverse and shared challenges for global universities, there was a progressive development across disciplines. That is, an enhanced awareness of the connectedness of students and staff with international peers and global citizens emerged through the Internet. For instance, no longer were staff and students confined to textbooks and in-class interactions. Instead, scholars' navigations of multiple digital platforms that include, but are not limited to, learning management systems, video conferencing and social media-altered disciplinary members' identities as global citizens. Certainly, the health threats of COVID-19 exposed shared vulnerabilities in international economies, educational systems and the wellbeing of communities.

As first-year academic literacies facilitators who interact with humanities and natural science scholars, we discovered that critical discourses displayed in online structures fostered Global Citizenship principles. To illustrate, eLearning enables our goals of exposing students to knowledge, current events and disciplinary perspectives which are operative beyond South Africa's borders. Furthermore, through our interactions with students, we observed that

academic literacies—which are scholarly communicative tools—functioned as conduits of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) principles. This article views GCE as a critical pedagogy that aims to combine the promotion of students’ critical awareness of what it means to be a human on Earth with the development of their academic literacies. To show this, multimodal resources including discussion boards, online mind-maps and the use of staff-designed instructional videos fast-tracked our capacities to expose students to real global events and citizens. Conversely, the objectives of GCE curricula were restricted by the varied access to, and capacities of, students to use technologies for learning.

To fully comprehend the potential of using technology for learning and in promoting GCE within academic literacy learning spaces (including both physical and virtual classrooms), it is important to consider the link between multimodality and technology. As a point of departure, we consider Kress et al.’s definition of multimodality: it is ‘the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event’ (2001, p. 20), drawing on the field of semiotics. It should be noted that multimodal learning has been used in classrooms since before the almost-ubiquitous appearance of digital technologies in higher education classrooms. For example, flashcards were widely used to teach reading in the United States in 1925 (Gates, 1925, p. 1). Illustrations on flashcards utilise young learners’ semiotic capital to connect images they already understand with written language, which is itself a semiotic code that they are learning.

Carrey Jewitt expands on the earlier definition of multimodality by applying it to technology as used in learning spaces, stating that ‘a multimodal approach to technologically-mediated learning offers a new way of thinking about the relationship between semiotics and meaning-making’ (2006, p.16). We suggest that it is at the intersection of multimodality, technology, learning and semiotics that academic literacy practitioners have the ability to foster GCE principles in their students. In this article, we explore how academic literacy practitioners can use specific eLearning technologies and multimodal learning (and accompanying semiotics) to help their students develop awareness of global events and their own place(s) in the world around them.

## **Background**

One of the objectives of higher education is to develop students’ critical awareness of their status as citizens of the globe. Academic literacies instructors are not excluded from this pedagogical aspect. Similarly, Giroux, speaking with Bosio (2021, pp. 3–4), theorises global citizenship as ‘a notion of the social in which individuals have duties and responsibilities to others’. As such, academic literacy developers are obligated to enhance disciplines’ interactions with global phenomena. For example, according to Delacruz (2018), fostering literacy development is crucial to equip students as future productive leaders in the society. Delacruz (2018) emphasises that students must cultivate cross-cultural insights and effectively apply their acquired knowledge to address real-world challenges. Yet, in order to clarify the roles and obligations of academic literacies facilitators as initiators of GCE, it is necessary to theorise international belonging through pedagogical methods. In the context of this article, international belonging involves learners establishing identities as a part of communities that extend beyond local campuses. In theory, integrated global identities function at micro and macro levels. According to Smith et al. (2017), an individual’s education, gender, cultural orientations and life philosophy all play a role in their sense of global citizenship. Moreover, on a macroscale, governments, multinational corporations and media of all types feed into human experiences of international belonging.

We analyse GCE across three domains in this article. On the one hand, GCE is a teaching method. Thus, GCE is geared towards exposing pupils to social, political, ecological

and philosophical dialects on international scales. On the other hand, GCE is an epistemic system, or epistemology. An epistemology, then, is a conceptual structure that allows scholars to identify problems, ask questions and design investigative projects (Nabudere, 2012). Hence, as an epistemology, GCE involves awareness of concepts and norms that disciplinary members employ to construct, contest and validate international knowledge. Thirdly, GCE performs the role of an ontological framework. An ontology is a representation of reality that relies on context-specific categories and concepts of analysis to interpret world-wide phenomena. Each of the aforementioned GCE heuristic domains will now be elaborated on.

GCE aims to improve students' knowledge, aptitudes and critical awareness as a teaching method so they can better interpret and engage with the world around them. Problem-solving abilities, the ability to communicate in cross-cultural settings and knowledge of other languages are frequently cited as crucial GCE-related skills. In a similar vein, Kaya (2021) makes an indirect argument in favour of GCE, stating that democracy, justice and tolerance become the norm in societies where people are aware of universal values and are capable of critical thought. Consequently, instruction that broadens scholars' knowledge of diverse ethnic, religious and cultural orientations that populate disciplines simultaneously supports GCE (Kaya, 2021). Similar to this, collaborative knowledge-building pedagogy fosters GCE in the classroom. For example, The Global Citizenship Foundation (n.d.) asserts: 'A Global Citizen is someone who is open-minded, curious, compassionate, *collaborative* [emphasis added], co-creative, inclusive, non-discriminatory, responsible, [and] reflective'. In a comparable manner, the GCE paradigm aims to encourage knowledge construction and negotiation in culturally heterogeneous environments.

The variety of epistemologies that come from GCE is too numerous to list here. For instance, GCE is universal in outlook and is operable in diverse academic fields. Nevertheless, scholars and practitioners in higher education have supplied the GCE paradigm with sufficient knowledge on which new disciplinary practices and conceptualisations can be built. To illustrate, Torres and Bosio (2020) contend that GCE should foster critical citizenship through effective teaching and learning strategies. A member of society who is aware of the many facets of the environments they navigate is referred to as a critical citizen within Freire's (1970) theory of critical pedagogy. In accordance with this idea, Torres and Bosio (2020) suggest teachers' facilitation of problem-solving, and dialogues focusing on global phenomena develop critical thinking. It is important to note that GCE in the classroom encourages problem-solving epistemology among multicultural scholars who communicate through dialogue.

Social justice is another epistemic framework that appears in GCE theorisation. In the context of education, social justice is the idea that students should have access to the information, tools and resources they need to advance themselves, their families and their communities. Guthrie and McCracken (2010) develop the concept of social justice through education as a method for solving problems, while identifying inequalities in local and global contexts. Ethics related to social justice also appear in GCE scholars' critiques of neoliberalism and 'inequitable educational and societal practices' (Bosio, 2020, p. 187). Therefore, critical GCE theorists observe market reasoning and other neoliberal tenets as obstacles to critical dialogues, which Freire (1970) asserts are necessary for social transformation.

The view of GCE as an ontology offers another analytical framework for understanding it. Accordingly, ontologies are investigations of human conceptions of reality and existence, whereas epistemology examines the verification of knowledge (Eybers, 2020; Granados-Sánchez, 2023; Guarino, Oberle, & Staab, 2009). Ontologies, also referred to as worldviews, are conceptual frameworks used across different human societies to group their beliefs of reality. Considering the viewpoints of indigenous scholars from Australia, New Zealand and the United States, where Hird, David-Chavez, Gion and van Uitregt (2023) collectively define a world view as humans' 'deep cultural responsibilities and ethics as custodians of the worlds',

offers insights into curriculum and instructional design integration. In this process, educators also leverage personal and pedagogical ontologies while designing lecture and assessment formats. Likewise, GCE is approachable as a pedagogic ontology. The accentuation of the global grouping of human experiences is what makes it unique. Grasping the intricate interplay between epistemology and ontology is crucial for conceptualising GCE within higher education environments. As a result, educators' own ontologies as global citizens influence the ways in which they facilitate students' engagement with global phenomena. Nonetheless, as this article will explore, instructors need to be attuned to the diverse ontological and epistemological perspectives of students, which might differ from their own, especially within the realm of GCE.

## **Multimodality**

To give a complete overview of the current state of research on multimodality is, we think, both a task of Brobdingnagian proportions and beyond the scope of this article. What instead follows here is a short outline of some seminal research on multimodality that challenges traditional notions of monolithic 'literacy', thus opening new avenues of using text (in its broadest sense) and *literacies* in both teaching and learning. Firstly, we will identify key players in the field of multimodality, and then narrow in on how multimodality has been considered in teaching contexts. We will then conclude this overview by identifying research that examines the impact of multimodality in institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

To begin, the work of Gunther Kress (2010) provides a helpful launching pad. Throughout his work, Kress stresses the importance of understanding the act of interpreting meaning (of reading, in a broad sense) as a multimodal activity. As such, conventional ideas of learning from a written text have begun to shift, and both students and educators are looking more widely for ways to learn and to teach. Mills (2016, p. 81) turns her thinking around multimodality to education, and importantly identifies the classroom itself as a multimodal text. In the wake of COVID-19, traditional notions of 'the classroom' have been upended and, we suggest, that learning spaces (both physical and virtual) have out of necessity become more multimodal than ever before.

Looking now specifically at higher education, Lee and Khadka's book-length consideration of multimodality (2018) sheds light on the current state of multimodality in the university classroom. While insightful and representative of multimodality in higher education, the book's focus is squarely (but not exclusively) on the Global North. We point out, however, that this is not due to any major oversight on the part of the editors; research on multimodality in higher education across the Global South is relatively thin, and research on specifically South African contexts, although extant, is rare. Worth mentioning here are studies by Olivier (2021), Newfield (2011) and Stein and Newfield (2006); these authors, however, look at multimodality in South African higher education in the disciplines of law, language education and composition, and are thus of limited use to us here. By our estimation, Archer (2006; 2008a; 2008b; Huang & Archer, 2017; 2022) is the only scholar to focus directly on the multimodality in South African higher education with an emphasis on academic literacy. As such, Archer's work serves as a springboard for our research. Where this discussion extends, however, is with our discussion of the additional aspects of GCE via technology in teaching academic literacies.

## **Technology and GCE**

Given how communication technologies have changed in the past decade, it comes as no surprise that the academic realm is awash with materials focusing on how best to leverage digital tools and their affordances for teaching and learning. Providing here an overview of

such a vast body of work with such varied foci would be both unhelpful and somewhat retrogressive. We aim instead to give a review of recent research focused specifically on the intersection of technology and GCE. It is at this intersection that a focused literature review becomes possible, but it is worth noting that when a South African context is added, the research, to our knowledge, dries up completely. In 2020, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the adoption of technology in teaching and learning was fast-tracked globally. Even the most reluctant of educators, learners and even institutions were forced to come to terms with the shifting landscape of education. This shift, however, once again highlighted existing inequalities in access to technology across the Global South—see Woldegiorgis (2022) for a full discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on higher education in South Africa. These various inequalities are reflected also in the limited existing research on technology and GCE emerging from South Africa.

For now, we will look beyond South Africa for research trends at the intersection of technology and GCE in higher education. Harshman and Augustine (2013) and Kopish and Marques (2020) have considered how technology can be leveraged in fostering GCE principles among student teachers. Swarts (2020) poignantly examines the other side of the technological coin for GCE and considers how information technologies may pose difficulties for GCE and educators. While Swarts highlights three primary challenges that technology poses to GCE, of primary interest to us is the matter of government control of citizens and information. The control of information here refers to both information that citizens have access to and information belonging to the citizens themselves. While citizens and information are not strictly controlled in South Africa, the control of citizens and their information in other countries may hamper the efforts of educators to expose their students to certain parts of the world. Beyond this, however, we are unable to identify further research that focuses specifically on higher education.

Turning now to research on technology and GCE in South Africa, the research is almost entirely absent. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, research had tended to focus on e-learning in South Africa and the challenges faced by both students and educators (Bharuthram & Kies, 2013; Dagada & Chigona, 2015). Scholarship emerging both ‘during’ and ‘after’ the pandemic has focused on the mass transition to online learning, its associated challenges, and students’ and educators’ experiences of them (Khoza, Khoza, & Mukonza, 2021; Maphalala & Adigun, 2021; Nkomo & Matli, 2022; Thompson & Christian, 2022). While these are indeed valuable avenues to explore, they are not of particular relevance to this discussion. As such, this article is by our estimation the first to consider the intersection of technology and GCE in South African higher education.

## **Moving Forward with GCE and Academic Literacies**

### ***The Curriculum, GCE and Academic Literacies***

Depending on where in the world one is located, scholars have different interpretations of what it means to employ GCE principles in the curriculum. In addition, distinct enabling and restricting factors for the implementation of GCE exist in multiple regions of the Earth. Despite this, and according to this article’s findings, there appears to be consensus that the following curriculum domains demonstrate GCE: international travel, language proficiency and course content. Thus, the development of academic literacies will be linked to all three of the aforementioned curriculum paths in an integrated manner.

In order to broaden their education, it would be beneficial for the majority of the learners around the globe to have the chance to study overseas. However, when looking at this curriculum method from an African and Global South perspective, there are constraints to

consider. South Africa, for example, is experiencing a crisis in terms of youth unemployment. In the third financial quarter of 2021, there were approximately 10.3 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24; 33.5% of them did not have a job (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Statistics South Africa (2021, p. 28) also reports that the official unemployment rate for adults, the majority of whom are categorised as ‘Black African’, is 34.6%. Due to this dire economic situation, a considerable number of students are unable to afford international travel and studies. Therefore, to fully immerse students in knowledge, current events and global issues, academic literacies facilitators and discipline members in South African, Global South and international institutions of higher learning/serving students from diverse sociocultural origins will need to use other means. In theory, the development of global citizenship in students and the transmission of knowledge related to global citizenship both hinge on their possession of global literacy skills. Thus, Shulsky et al. (2017) assert that, for students to effectively navigate the complexities of a globe where national boundaries are becoming less clear, they must master a variety of communicative strategies. It has therefore been shown that integrating linguistic and academic literacy abilities into the curriculum for teaching global citizenship is a successful strategy.

We do not, however, suggest advancing academic literacies through a neoliberal approach. For clarity, we use the term ‘neoliberalism’ here to refer to educational models that put market interests first (Williams & Taylor, 2010)—in particular, the notion that students’ literacy and linguistic talents should be developed just for the benefit of global businesses and economic systems. Should literacy educators adhere to neoliberal ideals, they are at risk of worsening socioeconomic disparities that exist throughout the Global South as well as in certain economically developed countries. Rather, we advocate a critical instructional pedagogy for integrating GCE principles and academic literacies into disciplines. To be clear, a critical GCE curriculum aims to develop learning environments that activate academic literacies towards developing students’ critical thinking. Therefore, this teaching method encourages students to critically analyse global power relations and apply their findings to localised situations, fostering a deeper understanding of global phenomena and relationships. Through Freire’s (1970) concept of critical pedagogy, we theorise that through communicative tools, teachers can enable learners to express their hopes for alternative, improved realities.

We acknowledge, however, that it is impractical for students from working-class communities or countries in the Global South to have access to cultural exchange programmes. Thus, educators, citizens and learners should collaborate in order to develop creative solutions that combine internationally affiliated social, economic and scientific knowledge. Additionally, we contend that exposure to cultures and information outside their own country can be accomplished through the use of digital tools and multimodal teaching techniques. Going forward, emphasis will be placed on the relationship between multimodal communication and GCE.

### ***Multimodality, GCE and the Curriculum***

As previously mentioned, socioeconomic constraints may pose challenges to educators who wish to foster in their students GCE principles, an awareness of the world around them and of their place in it. We propose, however, that all is not lost. Where expensive exchange programmes become impossible, creative educators can still forge ahead through multimodal teaching via technology.

We lean here again on the work of Mills (2016, p. 81), who identifies the classroom itself as a multimodal text. While this is still true of even the most conventional and uncreative classroom (a chalk-and-talk approach, although basic, is ultimately multimodal), educators currently have the potential, through technology, to turn ‘the classroom’ into a space where

students have the opportunity to engage with the world in meaningful ways that extend beyond physically visiting them. At this point in our argument, we feel that multimodal teaching and teaching with technology must invariably converge. Given the nature of digital media and the tactile act of engaging with electronic devices, we argue that teaching and learning with technology, no matter how limited it may be in application, is essentially a multimodal experience.

While it must be noted that easy and equal access to technology across the Global South is still a tremendous challenge, we will assume here that students have at least some degree of access and connectivity. While students may not have their own devices or connections, even the most remote or under-resourced universities in South Africa make use of learning management systems (LMS; either closed source such as Blackboard, Moodle or Canvas, or open source like Sakai) that allow educators to build multimodal learning spaces online. South African universities also have ICT laboratories that educators can use as spaces where they can expose their students to GCE principles and the world around them.

As mentioned earlier, Archer's work (2006; 2008a; 2008b; Huang & Archer, 2017; 2022) demonstrates that academic literacy as a discipline is well positioned to leverage the possibilities of multimodality. We propose that the discipline is thus also well positioned as an avenue for academic literacy practitioners to build GCE materials into their curricula. We will, in the following section, return to multimodality and examine some concrete ways that academic literacy practitioners can integrate GCE into their curricula through multimodal teaching and technology.

## **Some Avenue for Application**

### ***GCE and the Curriculum***

We argue that it is advantageous to incorporate GCE principles into university courses that emphasise improving students' academic literacies in both the Global South and North. Yet, it is essential to execute GCE in ways that are practical in the corresponding contexts due to the economic disparities between some universities and the local inhabitants in these regions. To provide an example, the curriculum integrates subject expertise with real-world encounters, allowing students to practically engage with their learning across various international settings. Furthermore, students are exposed to languages and cultures that might not reflect those of their home countries and educational institutions. Yet, due to financial limitations, instructors and higher education institutions in the Global South need to employ alternative strategies in order to achieve the same learning objectives.

Academics should not passively concede to financial constraints and abandon goals for GCE in the Global South. Instead, subject-specific courses cover a range of areas where GCE concepts and themes can be applied. Due to the limitations of this article, only two domains of the curriculum—namely, the content and language aspects of disciplinary subjects—will be examined as effective teaching tools for GCE concepts. To illustrate, one of the main themes and findings of Bosio's (2023) comparison of GCE practices in 10 countries was that educators believed the paradigm should promote critical dialogue in the classroom. As reading, writing and critical thinking are among the main ways that critical dialects are developed, educators can incorporate these capabilities into curricula that promote a global perspective. According to Rankin-Dia (2016), integrating academic literacies with global challenges, notably in the fashion industry, has the ability to aid students in gaining research skills through the use of primary sources and boost their self-confidence when studying global commerce.

It is possible that one of the significant advantages of the GCE approach in terms of academic literacies is its ability to enhance students' language proficiency. Note that languages

are distinguished from literacies in this context because the latter incorporates languages to produce, challenge and modify knowledge. For instance, one advantage of cultural exchange programmes is that it immerses students in global settings where they can use the foreign languages they have learned at their home universities. Likewise, given the difficulties they encounter, educators in the Global South can use a similar strategy. For instance, while English is the predominant official language of universities in South Africa, the majority of students come from multilingual families, with English sometimes serving as their second or third tongue. As a result of disjunctures between many students' first languages with the official instructional tongues in South Africa, allowing critical dialogues about GCE can help them develop confidence through mastering English as an academic language.

There are multiple language acquisition strategies that cohere with the GCE paradigm. Briefly, when students critically reflect on their own languages and cultures, GCE can improve their perceptions of diverse cultural and epistemological perspectives. For instance, languages and cultures both influence one another (Karsten & Illa, 2005). Hence, the application of academic English can expose South African and international students who speak different languages to new, diverse ways of communicating and organising economic, social and cultural knowledge when they study a variety of disciplines at a global level. However, critical thinking capabilities are essential while using English in academic settings to disseminate information about socio-economic and cultural issues.

Consider how many multilingual pupils there are in global and African communities who stem from communal cultures. Such awareness is relevant to developing literacies and GCE as communal ecologies are distinct from individualist ecosystems, where the focus is on the growth of the individual rather than the community (Jagers & Mock, 1995). Consequently, it is crucial to keep in mind various cultural epistemologies in the classroom that may not easily cohere while engaging with global issues as students are taught languages for disciplinary purposes. As such, it is critical to adopt a humanistic strategy that acknowledges and values the economic, epistemological and cultural variety that exists within the classroom in order to integrate GCE into the curriculum. For example, not only do novice scholars emerge from diverse linguistic and epistemic backgrounds but as Eybers and Paulet (2021) argue, global variations in social and economic organisation can constrain the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge. Accordingly, Ubuntu, an ethic that emphasises the oneness of humans, may capacitate students and instructors to cross-cultural boundaries while dialoguing critically about the world at large (Ngubane & Makua, 2021).

### ***Multimodality, Technology, GCE and the Curriculum***

In the following section, we will consider practicable examples of how multimodal teaching and learning through technology can interact with GCE and academic literacies. Importantly, we offer here suggestions that are either free or often available to South African students by virtue of their registration at a local institution of higher learning.

The first example is one that, we feel, is an extremely powerful tool for academic literacy practitioners as it ties directly into the learning objectives frequently identified in South African academic literacy courses. Students are frequently required to learn how to read visual texts like maps or graphs, and these texts are powerful tools for exposing students to GCE principles. Ourworldindata.org offers a vast body of interactive data that academic literacy practitioners can edit according to their needs and then embed directly into their LMS course pages using the following source code:

```
<iframe src="https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/percentage-of-primary-schools-with-toilets?country=Sub-Saharan+Africa~Sub-
```



Saharan+Africa+%28excluding+high-income+countries%29~CAF~ZAF”  
loading=”lazy” style=”width: 100%; height: 600px; border: 0px none;”</iframe>

The example above exposes students to a choropleth map of Africa that details the percentage of primary schools on the continent with toilets in 2015. Students are able to mouse over specific countries to dig down into the data and see exactly what the percentage is for each country. The map also offers a slider so that students can view the dataset for each year between 2008 and 2015. The enhanced interactivity provided by embedding the map as an iframe directly into the LMS affords students flexibility to explore the data in both a visual and ‘tactile’ way. Students can be further encouraged to account for anomalies in the data; for example, some nations never present data on the map. Students may consider issues related to data collection, access to information or other factors that may impact countries across the Global South. An additional benefit of embedding data directly into an LMS in such a way is that students will have access to such tools directly in their LMS. This kind of functionality is important in the Global South where mobile data is still costly. During COVID-19 lockdowns, a number of mobile service providers classified many institutional LMSs as ‘zero-rated’, making them essentially free to use for students. Educators could thus draw materials from across the Internet into their LMS pages, allowing students to access GCE materials of this kind free of charge.

We will also mention YouTube videos in this discussion but, before getting into specific examples, we caution practitioners about using this avenue as an ‘easy out’. It is often used as the digital equivalent of teachers playing video cassettes during classes in the 1980s and 1990s. Videos are often deployed in learning environments without proper care and consideration, rendering the content a convenient time filler. What we propose instead is to use YouTube thoughtfully and in conjunction with a tool like Language Reactor. Throughout this article, we have stressed the importance of multilingualism in GCE, and technology can be leveraged here also to bridge language gaps. Language Reactor is a freemium translation extension for Chromium-based web browsers. Although the extension currently follows a freemium model, the free plan is extremely comprehensive and allows users to translate existing subtitles into the language of their choice. Although sometimes imperfect, this tool goes a long way in aiding students who are learning English for academic purposes. Students can listen to an English video and choose to read the subtitles in their home language(s), helping them to improve their vocabulary and understanding of course content. Alternatively, students may choose to translate from a different major language into English; this will give Anglophone students exposure to content that may otherwise have a decidedly Western outlook. At present, the extension works best when translating from English subtitles to just about any other language, but the system is set to improve as it matures, and more users contribute to the language model.

It is easy to see how video content can be incorporated into a teaching curriculum, but we stress that audio materials can be leveraged to either provide additional learning materials or to simply reinforce students’ contact with global cultural capital. For example, educators can embed podcast episodes directly into their LMS course pages using source code that would look quite similar to the example given earlier in this article. This will allow students to play the content directly in their LMS while engaging with other learning materials on the same page. Educators can often easily and directly link individual podcast episodes directly to their curriculum content, and this content can be easily drawn from across the globe. An added benefit of podcasts is that they are also easily created by individuals across the globe, on a limited budget, and with limited infrastructure. This means that listening-materials often exist for even the most niche topics.

Audio content is, by our estimation, also a powerful tool for exploring global cultures and fostering in students a better understanding of the world around them. For example, <http://radio.garden> is a website where users can listen to radio stations from across the world

while also engaging with an interactive globe. On a basic level, students can listen to a station to get a feel for different music tastes or to listen to a specific language. More engagingly, however, an educator may choose to incorporate this audio interactivity into their curriculum and use it to encourage their students to think through issues of Global North/South inequality and lack of access to the Internet. This is easily seen by the ‘dead zones’ where stations simply do not exist. Where the Global North is awash with stations, the Global South has stations almost exclusively in its most major economic centres. Similarly, educators may choose to use this avenue to explore issues related to globalisation and cultural imperialism by having students listen to global stations to see how music from the United States and Britain dominates listening tastes across the West, large portions of Africa and parts of Asia.

In closing this section, we also consider briefly how audio can be used to simply immerse students in another culture while working on a particular topic. Educators may choose to curate specialised playlists for their students on platforms such as Spotify and embed them directly into the LMS pages. This could be done with a specific learning goal or topic in mind, or educators may choose to simply give their students specific cultural material to immerse themselves in while working on an assignment for that specific course.

## **Conclusion**

Facilitators of academic literacies play a crucial role in cultivating links between various academic fields and global social ontologies. As expounded earlier, academic literacies serve as conduits for knowledge, bridging the gap between students’ personal, global and specialised understandings. In light of this, this article recommends affording students and local community members the opportunity to influence how the curriculum engages on an international scale. Arguably, literacy facilitators occupy a vital crossroads where the global sphere, education and communication converge. Similarly, GCE seeks to enhance students’ comprehension, multi-literacies and discerning awareness within a multinational context. Given the intricate interplay between literacies and global ontologies, this article strongly recommends integrating literacies-focused teaching methods, including digital modes, engagement with artificial intelligence and multilingualism, to nurture students’ identities as active participants in the celebration of global citizenship. To embark on this endeavour, this article suggests crafting a curriculum that integrates GCE-focused content, problems and themes, intentionally blending critical thinking, problem-solving, cross-cultural dialogues and linguistic practices. This approach operates at the intersection of critical inquiry, inventive solution development and the celebration of global citizenship.

In light of the aforementioned suggestions and recognised constraints of this article, the subsequent recommendations are proposed for further investigation. Firstly, it is recommended that future research in GCE purposefully incorporate students’ and disciplinary worldviews into the fabric of global ontologies. This comprehensive approach should underscore the intentional involvement of academic literacies instructors, who can actively facilitate robust global interconnections across various disciplines. Additionally, a pivotal avenue for exploration lies in weaving the philosophy of Ubuntu into higher education, thereby delving into its potential to significantly propel the notion of global citizenship, particularly within the diverse tapestry of cultural communities. This integration would inherently underscore the role of literacies and GCE in fostering understanding and collaboration among these distinctive worldviews.

Future research could explore the potential benefits of integrating pluri-culturalism and GCE in enhancing cross-cultural communication. This could involve cultivating a range of literacies, encompassing critical thinking and multilingualism. Further investigations into this approach, enriched by diverse literacies like oral discourse and argumentative writing, might

seek to foster global interactions and deepen cross-cultural understanding. Additionally, innovative collaborative projects studying the facilitation of cultural exchanges and dialogues between local regions and international partners could amplify the impact of these efforts. Consequently, students' celebration of their identities as global citizens may come alive in the classroom.

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