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Preparing students for a world which is global in its outlook and influences: The rhetoric, reality and response

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Abstract

The imperative for schools and teachers to understand and teach with global perspective has been reiterated in Victoria recently with the release of the Victorian Curriculum Reform Consultation Paper (VCAA, 2004). This paper states that, “the purposes of schooling are to prepare students for a world which is global in its outlook and influences.” (p.4).

The introductory paragraphs of selected states’ and territories’ Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) curriculum statements include and reiterate ‘global’ in the rationale for teaching and learning. Teaching in SOSE is charged with responsibility for incorporating ‘global’ into classroom practice. What is the role and place of SOSE in this teaching and how can SOSE teachers be better equipped to teach in a time of internationalisation and globalisation? Are teachers prepared to meet this challenge?

This paper will position the importance of teachers’ lived experiences, their capacity to reflect upon these experiences, to their preparedness and competency in teaching ‘global education’ both within a SOSE classroom and beyond. How can personal critical reflection sharpen the focus for teaching in and to this global world? What are the place of narrative and the lived experiences of teachers in sharpening this focus? The data for this paper is drawn from a self study of the author who is studying a Masters by Research and teaches Social Education and Education Studies at Deakin University.

The paper argues that pedagogy around teaching global education in the classroom cannot be isolated from the teacher’s identities, background experiences, which influence and shape their approaches to teaching in a global education curriculum. The methodology in teaching global education needs to be further aligned to teacher narratives and the lived experiences of teachers in order to link local, national and global domains.

The paper will describe how teaching for a ‘world which is global in outlook and influences’ can be researched by examining a selection of personal stories and lived experiences. The paper will conclude with a draft framework of global education that acknowledges reflection on lived experiences and narratives.
Defining Global Education
The theoretical and operational understandings of global education elicit different meanings across policy and curriculum in social education. What is global education? How can it be defined and understood? How has global education changed over time?

Hicks (2003), states that global education means “that term used internationally to designate the academic field concerned with teaching and learning about global issues, events and perspectives.” (pg. 274)

Global education in schools during the 1930s focussed on other places, people and countries. Global education was taught through a ‘bodies of knowledge’ paradigm. Illustrative of this is a school textbook Longman’s Shilling Geography, dated 1935. The Table of Contents lists 45 countries, the oceans, the solar system, the moon and tides and climate. Each country chapter includes a listing of facts such as size, boundaries, mountains, coast line, hills, lakes, rivers, industries, climate, trade and commerce, accompanied by a full page map. Australia’s location and geography provided an impetus for engagement with other countries. A closer analysis of Longman’s Shilling Geography illustrates this engagement – the world is not only about Australia but inclusive of other countries. In Australia in the 1930s and 1940s the world was imagined, however, through a Euro-centric lens. For example, the population of China was described in relation to that of Europe: “Probably about 400 million or more than Europe” (p. 47)

In the 1940s and 1950s education about other countries, and teaching about the world was unconnected and independent. There was a strong emphasis on knowing about countries, rather than understanding and analysing similarities and differences between them. Rote learning of place names, capital cities, rivers and mountains was the dominant pedagogy. The form of global education was rigid and didactic with recital of the names of continents, mountain ranges and knowledge of capital cities of Europe and Asia common place. Africa and South America were seen as dark foreboding places by schools in Australia with little content, or textbooks available.

The 1970s saw the development of education frameworks to respond to world issues and the beginning of a shift away from a knowledge approach. Richardson (1976) developed a framework for exploring global issues which included:

- Background
- Problems
- Values
- Action.

Global education was in transit between a knowledge paradigm of the 1930s -1960s towards a more problem based, values based approach. It was no longer possible to view the world through just knowledge of a series of unrelated facts. Education was the vehicle to empower students to understand beyond facts about the world and to
develop values in social justice for example. The world was positioned as a problematic place with education charged with responsibility for solutions.

Richardson’s work was seminal in the development of a global education framework and approach to curriculum and resource development. Hicks (2003) comments on this time in the UK, “the publication from this Project Learning for Change in World Society became a benchmark for all those interested in developing a global dimension in the curriculum” (p 266).

Hanvey (1976) in the USA developed a definition of global education that incorporated five dimensions of global education based on achieving global ‘awareness’ rather than action or participatory reform. He does not include values education or contested views of the world. They include:

- Perspective Consciousness
- Cross cultural awareness
- State of the Planet awareness
- Systemic awareness
- Options for participation

Hanvey had a large impact on the subsequent development of global education in USA and many definitions have been built from these five definitions (Kirkwood, 2001).

Influenced by the work of Hanvey and Richardson, Pike and Selby (1988) further developed global education through a four dimensions model that included:

- Issues dimension – this includes inequality/equality, injustice/justice, conflict/peace, environmental damage/care alienation/participation
- Spatial dimension – local global connection
- Temporal dimension – past present and future interconnections
- Inner dimension - values

This model included an inner dimension as an element in global education and acknowledged the importance of values to teaching and learning in global education. Hicks (2003) notes that each of these four elements needs to be present to claim teaching global education. Notions of controversy, problematic nature of the world and interdependence were however limited.

In Australia, Calder & Smith (1991) informed by Hanvey, Pike & Selby contributed a definition of global education that included:

- Global concerns
- Powerful and powerless
- Critical awareness
- Participation.

This global education definition acknowledged the problematic nature of the world through terms such as concerns, powerful and powerless and not just awareness but critical awareness. It also included an action component ie learning in global
education meant participation beyond the classroom. Their work led to publication funded by the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB)-A Better World for all: Development Education for the Classroom Calder & Smith, (1991). The title of this book is indicative of the potential and transformation that global education could have on the classroom. The term development education was one of the terms used for global education during this time.

Merryfield is one of the leading scholars in global education in the USA and has developed a list of eight elements drawn from other writers in the field. Kirkwood (2001) lists Merryfield’s eight elements of global education which include:

- Human Beliefs and Values
- Global systems
- Global issues and problems
- Cross cultural understanding,
- Awareness of human choices
- Global history
- Acquisition of indigenous knowledge
- Development of analytical evaluative and participatory skills

This definition by contrasts to previous definitions includes acquisition of indigenous knowledge and the transmission and incorporation of it into curriculum.

In 2002, the Global Perspectives: A Statement for Australian schools in Australia was funded under the federal government’s AusAID program – Global Education Project. This booklet provided a ready reference for teaching global perspectives. The aims of global education shows an increasing movement towards the inclusion of words such as global citizenship and globalisation.

- The Global Citizen
- Knowledge and Understanding
- Values and Attitudes
- Skills and Processes
- Action and participation (pp7 - 9)

This statement also includes the following ‘learning emphases’

- One world: Globalisation and interdependence
- Identity and cultural diversity
- Dimensions of change
- Social Justice and Human Right
- Peace Building and Conflict
- Sustainable Futures

Curriculum Corporation, 2002 (pp 10-13)

This statement guides and informs for teachers and educators on the inclusion of global perspectives across the curriculum and highlights the strong developments in society and environment learning area.

The production of a national global education statement provides a tool for the progressive integration of global issues across the curriculum in Australia. The
document is not prescriptive, nor is it mandated by Australian curriculum bodies, however its relevance and usefulness for all schools, to inform policy and guide teacher and curriculum reform, is important.

These changes to global education definitions over time, show the increasing complexity of the field and the problematic nature of definitions. There is a problem of meaning of global education, the term is not universal nor has a common meaning across countries let alone schools. Selby (2000), Kirkwood (2001) For some in the field, Calder and Smith (1999) in Australia it is about the action that results from the meaning, for others it is the acquisition of indigenous knowledge or understanding the effects of globalisation on local area or making links between local and global.

The meaning of global education comes from practice not just theoretical understandings alone, with the inclusion and purpose global education in curriculum being consistent across scholars. Selby (2000),

The aim of global education is to empower learners and involve them in transformative social action, at the local, regional and world levels, and to build a world based on human dignity, justice equity and freedom. Selby and Pike (2000)

Global education introduces students to a new way of viewing the world, fosters intercultural understanding and takes students beyond their own worlds. Teachers who have developed global education programs report that students learned to look critically and creatively into issues Calder & Smith (1996). In understanding others’ ways of life and believing, students can reflect on their own world and be more critical of assumptions about patterns of behaviour.

**SOSE Curriculum statements**
Curriculum statements are indicative of the current social, economic political and cultural aspects of the society to which the curriculum is designed to serve. This gives insight into the way in which the curriculum writers and political forces see the world at this particular point in time.

In 1999, the Adelaide Declaration was developed and included these goals relevant to global education.

“These national goals provide a basis for investment in schooling to enable all young people to engage effectively with an increasingly complex world. This world will be characterised by advances in information and communication technologies, population diversity arising from international mobility and migration, and complex environmental and social challenges.

The achievement of the national goals for schooling will assist young people to contribute to Australia's social, cultural and economic development in local and global contexts. Their achievement will also assist young people to develop a disposition towards learning throughout their lives so that they can exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of Australia.”

MCEETYA,(1999).
The Adelaide Declaration has a strengthened role and rationale for global education compared to the Hobart Declaration ten years earlier. This is evident through the use of terms - increasingly complex world, challenges and diversity. There is not however a sense of sustainable world nor one that there are issues around citizenship and globalisation. This rationale is driven from an economic rationalist argument rather than a sustainable active citizenship basis evidenced by use of terms and the purposes of schooling. Whilst the Adelaide Declaration has a strengthened emphasis and acknowledgement of the global community and the importance of links to it, it falls short of noting the interdependence of peoples or futures education. Calder, (2000).

**Studies of Society and Environment curriculum**

The inclusion of ‘global’ in the introductory sections of Australia’s Studies of Society and Environment curriculum statements provides insight into the importance that curriculum makers are now devoting to global education. Analyses of introductory paragraphs of three SOSE curriculum areas highlight the inclusion of global. Does this translate to teaching global education? Does the inclusion of global in these statements herald an educational reform movement in global education? Is there already one happening? What meaning can be attached to the inclusion of given to global in each of these statements?

Global education has most strongly been developed and taught within the SOSE, HSIE curriculum area across Australia. The content taught in SOSE curriculum most closely matches and reflects concerns of global education. Curriculum Corporation, (2002)

The inclusion of globalis acknowledgment that SOSE curriculum needs to embrace a global world. In South Australia SOSE curriculum statement, ‘global’ is associated with interdependence and associated challenges in terms of complexities and contradictions, the problematic nature of understanding society. The subsequent SOSE curriculum could be problem/issue focussed through inquiry as the pedagogy to understanding and would promote an active engagement with students.

The Western Australian Society and Environment. (2002) statement presents ‘global’ passively and states what is hoped students will gain from learning SOSE ie ‘how individuals live together – there is no sense of how they don’t live together with exclusion of complexity or interdependence or multiple perspectives. The use of global is along a scale of local, national, regional and global with skills needed to develop knowledge about this. There is emphasis on knowledge to gain understanding not participation or action. Implications for global education is developing knowledge about global contexts, there is little inquiry and engagement with the global, nor seeing the complexity of issues or active participation.

The Northern Territory statement, (2003) is focused on what the area includes and then presents global along the continuum from local to global within a problem based setting. A global perspective is required, to move beyond the local and national to see a global perspective. As a result of inquiry across local to global, critique and problem solving is developed and solutions proposed.
The imperative to teach in SOSE curriculum with a ‘global focus’, ‘global education, a ‘global view’ or a ‘global perspective’ is reiterated through a quick analysis of some current curriculum statements in SOSE in Australia. There is however a range of terminology in this area, the meaning largely left to the individual teacher and school curriculum. **It is the teacher….** …who makes all the difference for the student…. that 60% of variation in learning outcomes can be attributed … who enthuse students to develop a love of learning and a passion for the world.

The depth and quality of the teacher understanding are significant factors in what and how global education is taught, Pike (2000). In all the definitions associated with global education it is the teacher that translates the definition into meaning that is enhanced through reflection identities across local, national and global contexts.

Tucker (1990) stated that “teachers not textbooks appear to be the primary carriers of the global education culture” (p.114) If a literature teacher only uses novels from their own nation to deconstruct text, then potential understandings about cultures and people is limited. Students need to see and read about multiple perspectives and viewpoints, that there is more than one way, more than one understanding or approach and the world is made up of different ways of seeing and doing.

Haavenson et al (1998/99) states that the second level of global education is through having a broad perspective of the world. This broad perspective of the world is influenced and shaped through the choice of content, approaches, pedagogy in the classroom. The quality of global education taught is related to the teacher and the atmosphere and teaching space created by the teacher is very important.

How do teachers develop global understandings to teach with a global focus to prepare students for a world that is now global in its outlook and influences? The role of the teacher and the teachers’ lived experiences in developing a global education classroom is silenced in current definitions and frameworks.

Banks (2001) captures the essence of this teaching when he states that “teachers must develop reflective cultural national and global identifications themselves if they are to help students become thoughtful caring and reflective citizens in a multicultural world society.” (p 5)

Teachers of global education need to develop reflective practices on their own identities, prejudices, choice of curriculum content and pedagogy and this needs to be ongoing, embedded and shared. Teachers’ understanding of their own journeys as a teacher and what they bring to the classroom is critical for teaching global education more than any other curriculum area.

Many teachers are not prepared or feel confident about teaching global education. In my own experience with pre-service teachers, their own life experiences are often narrow characterised by little travel, living in one suburb or area of Melbourne and being surprised in global education sessions at the world ‘out there. This resonates with Merryfield, (2000) who states “Unfortunately most of today’s teachers have not
been prepared to teach for diversity, challenge inequities or even recognise the effects of globalisation in the lives of their students and communities.” (p.430)

Ritchie and Wilson (2000) in their study in teacher education comment on the difficulty in transforming teachers from a traditional to progressive approach. What they did not consider in their study was consideration of their own lived experiences of school, stories of family and the cultural representations of teaching and learning literacy. They failed to take into consideration the view of self and subjectivity. The binary between traditional and progressive was complicated layers needed to acknowledge complexity of identity and the forces that shape that.

If this is the case that the progression between traditional and progressive is complex with acknowledgement of multiple identities and their social and political ideologies considerable, then a greater acknowledgement of the self needs to be included in pre-service education and teacher professional development. For teachers who are preparing students for a ‘global’ world, then their own constructions of ‘global’ their understandings about what is global and how it is enacted in their own lives and the increasing impacts that globalisation is having on their local lives is important.

Telling stories of students’ and teachers’ global lives, their local lives and making connection to teaching with a global focus can unlock the social, political environmental and cultural forces that shape their own lives.

The work of Ritchie and Wilson (2000) working with language teachers has implications for working with teachers in global education. They comment that “…change is made possible and becomes sustainable when teachers gain critical perspective on how their identities have been constructed by/in the culture and how the cultural narratives of teaching have shaped their personal and professional subjectivities.” (p. 24)

Global education demands that teacher reflection occur on a sophisticated level due to the complexity of the influences and lived experiences on teachers’ lives located in cultural and national contexts. Teaching global education requires a conscious understanding and reflection to begin the journey of self located in the classroom. In searching for meaning in global education it is in the capacity of the teacher to reflect not only on their own multiple identities but on the nexus between their local and global worlds and how this enacts upon them at a national level. Pike (2000)

A way forward…

Enter research…
This journey I am embarking on of study, reading, reflection, noticing and analysis has surprised me. This surprise lies in the connections between my own selected stories, my lived experiences across space, time and cultures, to academic reading, discourse, discussions and narrative in a post modern world, under the arch of research. I am realising there is not a neutrality about ways of seeing. I did not fully realise connections between these disparate arenas of my life. Just like global education has moved from acquiring knowledge to interdependence so this research is for me.
Bloom (2002) states that, “to be self reflexive is equated to coming clean as a researcher about how race, class, gender, religion, and personal/social values influence the researcher’s understanding of the power dynamics of the research”. pg. 290

So who am I in this field of inquiry? Where am I positioned? Where do I come from in approaching this? What has been my background? Who and what have been the influencers? Why have certain experiences shaped and moulded me, whilst others have had little impact? How does my own experience interact with the research?

Clandinin (1998) writes about everyone’s personal experience as a way of inquiry in the social sciences. “Experience is, therefore the starting point and key term for all social science inquiry”. (p.153) It is however not just the events in themselves which give entry into the world of research and ultimately drawing connections to the world of teaching, global education and pedagogy, but the meaning contained in each of the stories and narratives.

How can I immerse myself in events? How can I elicit the feelings that ‘place’ bring now to me intersected in time? What were my surprises which at the time were felt in the stomach or head? I have become surprised at myself, I do recall, I can bring back those memories with a greater depth and understanding and see the interconnectedness between the vignettes presented here.

Max van Manen’s (1990) work on temporal nature of the lived experience comments, “various thinkers have noted that the lived experience first of all has a temporal structure: it can never be grasped in its immediate manifestation but only by reflectivity as past presence … Lived experience is the breathing of meaning… Thus a lived experience has a certain essence, a ‘quality’ that we gain in retrospect.” (p.36).

It is this quality that I am trying to capture here. At the time, many of these events happened with little afterthought. Through a retrospective lens I am attempting to create meaning from these experiences. The meaning will become the basis for further thought, reshaping and translation.

So the story begins for a white, Anglo-Australian, female, middle class, travelled, academic in the social sciences to see the connections, to recall and notice selected events through a lens of ‘global’ and the meanings associated with this. Schmuck, (1997) comments 'without solitary dialogue educators do not know what they truly value.’ (p. 3)

All of these stories have impacted on me for various reasons. In some there is surprise cross-cultural realisations at different cultural practices and norms eg time in New Guinea; others it is about the disparity and differences between countries in the world eg. Nepal and observed inequities. For other stories it is joy at the personal transformation in education colleagues whilst travelling and teaching in Laos.
I am located in the dominant society in Australia. Reflection on this dominance and the resultant power that it generates is being realised. Much of my life I have lived without fully realising the identities that I am. Part of this was always being in the majority, the dominant. It is my writing of these lived experiences that my identities and the influence of power, class and identity is unravelled.

Merryfield (2000) in her study of teacher educators describes the influence of power, identity and experience in shaping the lived experience. This resonates with the lived experiences I have recorded. These experiences have had a transformative influence on my teaching now in teacher education. An example of this is my choice of case study to illustrate authentic learning and assessment. This is a deliberate attempt to move outside of the dominant narrative. I use an excerpt from the film *Not One Less* - set in rural China, with real village residents as actors. For pre-service students, this is engrossing, challenging and challenges assumptions about education, China, classroom management, authentic learning. The differences students see in this film to their own lived experience of classrooms, school, authentic learning and teaching, community interpersonal relationships give responses that are raw and energetic. Students remember the film on end-of-unit teaching evaluations and specifically note the film from China. My choice of this illustration came from a visit to China, seeing the juxtaposition of rural and urban, skyscrapers and villages, modern schools and rural buildings.

Merryfield (2000) also notes the importance of retrospective meaning making which goes beyond meaning for oneself. It is in the telling that the meaning emerges and also the way in which the story is told.

**Some stories**

**#1 The VASST Meeting 27th May 2004**

In late May 2004 I was asked to present at the Victorian Association of Social Studies Teachers (VASST) Annual General Meeting. I was honoured to be asked to speak. So I accepted. A long time ago I realised that personal growth comes from being placed in uncomfortable but challenging spaces – this invitation was categorized as such. Before this meeting I began preparing my talk – I had little time as I was also presenting in Canberra to a group of leading educators in global education, so needed to be efficient with the time I had set aside.

I had just read an article by James Banks a leading NCSS fellow and researcher in the USA. In Banks’ (2001) article a quote leapt from the page with such clarity and impact. “Teachers must develop reflective cultural, national and global identifications themselves if they are to help students become thoughtful, caring and reflective citizens in a multicultural world society.” (p.6)

This hit a chord with me – the need for teachers to develop reflective qualities across a number of levels in order to help students develop competencies in global education to become reflective citizens in a multicultural world. Yes it was one of those moments when two threads became one and are stronger and with greater force than their individual paths. This quote meant convergence of aspects of my research –
global education, reflection, personal stories, local, national, global all came together from this distinguished academic.

In preparing for my annual meeting talk, and with the pressure of time, I decided I had to be strategic in my use of time. What I know the most about and that was my own person and my work, so I decided to couple these two and present using the Banks quote as the lynchpin.

I was integrating my research in global education, reflectivity, stories, identity into this presentation and I felt that I ‘walked the talk’. I used the quote as an introduction to my struggle with identity as a global educator and the impact that me as a teacher has on my students.

So how did it go? I was surprised at its impact – people commented on the way it made them move in terms of their own sense of where they are and who they are. There were comments about the importance of showing what is meant by a mere quote and how this can be translated and made real by reference to it in a presentation. There were responses in terms of the importance of stories, personal struggles, identity and the need to question and ponder where educators are and the need for our reflection as educators.

The response was empowering for me as it validated the risk I took in sharing a personal side of me to an audience that was full of people who represented episodes of my life’s journey. There were friends in the audience of more than 25 years and work colleagues from three different workplaces, so the audience formed part of the friends and colleagues in my own journey.

The annual meeting presentation represented integration between the impact of the quote, this research, my work and myself…. It was far more powerful because of the convergence of public and private spaces.

The telling of my personal story was seen as an inaugural event and this created a precedent to follow for next year’s Annual Meeting. So this telling of the lived experiences, the personal narrative, the struggle, the pedagogy I use in the classroom was transformative – it set a precedent for future sch occasions. This was the developing Framework in action – personal stories, pedagogy, and transformation.

What I had set out to do was to engage the audience in my research albeit in its early days and my own teaching and cause the audience to reflect on perhaps their own practice. The research journey was not just one but many friends and colleagues – perhaps we as researchers need more of such events and spaces to talk about our work and our selves.

#2 Personal Narrative 2
Introduction
I………..

• have lived in Australia all my life
• have been a tourist to UK, France, Germany, Israel, Egypt, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Fiji, New Zealand, New Guinea.
• have worked in Thailand, Korea, USA, Indonesia, China, Nepal, Laos.
I………
  • have taught the names of the continents and rivers of the world; of the Bushmen of the Kalahari, of the Eskimos, of the Sherpas and the aboriginals in Australia.
  • have taught the differences between developing and developed countries and the indicators of standards of living, of desertification and global warming, the importance of conserving water and picking up litter

I
  • am a member of the international committee at the University
  • have worked with the Asia Education Foundation where I led study tours to Asia
  • have led many teachers in global education workshops
  • delivered a paper on global citizens and global teachers to an international conference
  • initiated the development of the national document - Global Perspectives a Statement for Australian Schools

I ……….
  • am white, female, middle class, Anglo-Australian, educated, a labour supporter, eldest child, a partner a telephone counsellor
  • can read, write, and speak only English
  • have more than 50 books in my home
  • have two computers and communicate through email
  • own a television, DVD, CD and stereo
  • regularly holiday outside of my own town
  • drive a car made in France
  • visit restaurants of Japanese, Thai and Italian cuisine

I ……………
  • am in the minority

Am I preparing students for a world which is global in its outlook and influences?

Am I global?

I don’t know……………

This vignette is about power, identity and inequality. It is conscious of powerful and powerless, equality and inequality, it is temporal and spatial. It notes travel, teaching, over time. This is about multiple realities and their coexistence and tension. In this there is critical re-examination of identity and the assumptions that have created identity. It is about interconnectedness and an attempt to link this local to global contexts. The answer to the question - am I global and the indifference is a reflection of the ongoing meaning attached to the question, the deconstruction and analysis and the search for the criteria upon which to judge such a question.
#3 The 21st birthday, 1973
I first travelled overseas when I was 19 to New Guinea, as a member of a Uniting Church work party to a village on Watom Island. I was immersed in village life for three weeks. My senses keen to the differences between life in a New Guinea village and life in suburban Melbourne. The weather, culture, food, lifestyle, people, shelter all were challenges. I realised through direct experience that not all societies operate the same. I knew this in an academic way but not in a real seeing and believing way. I recall a 21st birthday party with an advertised starting time of 1pm, our group promptly there at 1pm, it eventually started three hours later.

I vividly remember the taste of chicken cooked and wrapped in banana leaves in a pit oven, senses exposed, tantalised and excited by new tastes and smells.

This story is about the lived experience and crossing cultures for the first time in my life. I was taken out of the comfortable and known into the uncomfortable and unknown. I was experiencing a new culture, difference in terms of race, culture, ethnicity, language a culture that could be tasted and smelt. New practices and ways of doing were abundant and reflection on ‘whiteness’ and being an Australian …I was part of the dominant culture – we were looked on as more skilled and there to help. I helped the village women cut out dress patterns, the men in the group helped to build a primary school. We were there to help them improve their way of life mirrored to our own. I only touched the surface. Although for a short time – three weeks the first ‘crossing cultures’ experience for me was like the first ‘being in love’ – they are both powerful, energetic and memories last for a lifetime.

#4 Behind the door, 1994
The red and green striped shoulder bag hangs behind my bedroom door… a little tattered but still shapely and sturdy enough to be a companion on frequent visits to my local fruit shop. It holds memories of time, in another country – Nepal immersed with communities of people settled on the slopes of the world’s tallest mountain range. A three week trekking experience prompted and transformed my view on the world and myself. It was in this place – Nepal that I began to see a world outside of myself… I began to see identity, race, class, privilege and background ……my world was ‘developed’, ‘white’, ’middle class’ and above all else ‘extravagant’.

The Nepalese appeared so untapped in their existence on one level- the level of possessions, but trapped in others of poverty, illiteracy and environmental degradation.

I struggled with the poverty seen almost everywhere, I struggled with the waste strewn over what seemed like everywhere, I struggled with the world’s inequities and the political diversions that stops greater equity, I struggled also as I climbed the mountains – myself and Mary were always last, but we always made it.

I struggled with the sherpas, the shoes they wore whilst I had $150 shoes that will be worn less that the sherpas who were wearing thongs.
Had my world become global? Was my identity being shaken … my comfort dislodged, my view of the world forever changed? I rested and was comforted in the privilege of class, however was restless. I was comforted in my uncomfortableness, I was forever shadowed however by the enormity of the mountains and the enormity of the inequity in the world.

However … I saw me … my own whiteness, background, identity, privilege and class, visible…… trekking along the slopes of the Himalayas. I had never really seen me located in a society and privilege before.

This is about travel, struggle, inequality the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’. It is seeing the world that I had taught – there were faces to the statistics and they were there before me. The lived experience became the lived curriculum. It was also about power and the powerless. I was questioning the inequalities and the wealth that was in my country. No longer was there one culture but many. No longer could I be dismissive of the world’s inequalities because I don’t know or have never experienced. I now know. I had the responsibility of knowledge upon me. This story is about raising the consciousness and critical awareness of global concerns.

I remember for a long time after I returned from Nepal, every morning in the shower I thought about the people I had met on y trek, they washed over me and stayed with me long after the towel. Even now during this morning ritual I think of those people on the slopes of Nepal.

#5 More than a job…..beyond travel, 1993 -2001
My global journey became part of my job when I spent nine years working with the Asia Education Foundation. This job afforded me the privilege of leading teacher education study tours to selected countries in Asia.

It was during these study tours where I observed and was part of people being transformed. I vividly remember one teacher – Clare who was uncomfortable during the first 2-3 days – she was experiencing culture shock … not sleeping and being totally withdrawn. Clare had never travelled outside of Australia nor left a family at home.

Something happened after this initial shock. Clare became involved and was seeing the world, through different eyes. Clare had moved beyond her own discomfort and was engaged – she took hold of all opportunities, saw through new eyes and became transformed.

Upon return to Australia, Clare developed videos from her own footage, talked and shared the experience, changed her teaching style and content and over the next two years re visited with her husband many of the places seen on her own.

Clare’s experience made my time as leader worthwhile as it was powerful signature of the transformation of self. Clare was not alone in the study tours having a powerful transformative effect, there were others who were transformed, refreshed and revived in their teaching and their person. Clare stood out due to her shaky and
uncomfortable start and her exponential recovery and engagement as well as travelling back to places visited.

Only some teachers moved out of their comfort zone ….those that struggled ‘came out’ with a greater sense of the experience. These experiences energised their teaching and often disrupted their worlds both at a personal and professional level. It is important for me to feel that I was part of this transformation and for me it became more than a job and was beyond travel.

However there is travel and there is travel. There is travel that reproduces as closely as possible the conditions in the country of origin: the hotels, food, comfort level that equates to back home. Travel is as a voyeur and an observer rather than a participant in the country or place. Then there is the travel that uses local buses, tastes local cuisine and stays in the local hotels. It is in the second type of travel that the possibilities for transformation and learning are far greater, it is not synthetic but authentic to the country and way of life.

This is about teaching and the power of certain types of travel, immersion in new cultures and the lived experience to shape and transform this teacher. This was truly a pivotal experience for Clare. It reinforces the importance of immersion in another culture to view oneself and the location of where that person is in all of this. It informs the potential of cross cultural experiences and the struggle that they can be and they can be more than travel it was an inner transformation and consciousness that Clare experienced.

Moving Forward
Each story has meaning both for the author and for teaching global education. The story about New Guinea is about cross cultural awareness, the story about Clare is about the transformative nature of global education. Threads between my stories and my teaching are emerging, the reason I am keen to see pre-service students undertake a school experience placement outside of Australia is the powerful effect that a new culture and place can have. All teachers possess stories. Not everyone has the time to reflect on those stories.

This draft Framework for understanding global education is acknowledging personal stories which can provoke a pedagogical and curriculum response in the classroom. Using and drawing meaning from the lived experiences of the teacher gives meaning to global education in the classroom. For example in teaching about countries less developed than Australia - a common inclusion in the middle years SOSE curriculum a first hand knowledge of being in such countries gives colour to teaching and makes vibrant issues surrounding inequities and interdependence one of the recurring themes in global education because the stories of people can be bought in.

Each part of the Framework can be linked to one of the stories. The stories are of difference, cross-cultural understanding and awareness, disparities between peoples and nations and teacher transformation. These are based on some of my stories.

This Framework for teaching with a global focus or to teach for a world which is global in its outlook and influences is inclusive of lived experiences of teachers. It is
the impact and meanings given to lived experiences on the teacher that enable teaching with a global focus with greater meaning for both students and teachers and the interpretation of the stories.

The consequences of this developing Framework at a curriculum policy level where SOSE statements in state and territory documents all mention the world ‘global’ is that the lived experiences of teachers needs to emerge and recognised and given value and meaning as a powerful agent of transformation in the classroom and with a potential impact on pedagogy and meaning.

For some schools they are already enacting and working with the lived experiences of teachers and students. A primary school in the ACT has developed a website that celebrates and captures the stores of many members of the school community – parents, teachers and students. The school has a large multicultural student population. As a way of celebrating and promoting this population a number of students and teachers stories were written and then publicised through the website. Through the weaving of these stories there is a wonderful mosaic of lived experiences that are shaping the culture of the school. There is little conversation about the reasons why global education is important it is celebrated through these stories. The publicity of these stories through the website has verified the global education taught in the school, with the school leading other schools in the field of global education.

The framework recognises the importance of the teachers and the stories that the teacher brings to the classroom. It recognises the stories within each of us as being inseparable from the teacher, inseparable from pedagogy, inseparable from content and inseparable from teaching style and practice.

Pedagogy in teaching global education cannot be isolated from teachers’ identity, lived experiences, thoughts and their approaches to teaching. Global education needs to be shaped with the teacher in mind.

Kirkwood (2001) describes globally educated people as “those who possess high-tech skills, broad interdisciplinary knowledge about the contemporary world, and adaptability, flexibility, and world mindedness to participate effectively in the globalised world” (p.11). How do teachers develop such attributes and characteristics? Given the impact on classrooms of September 11, were teachers on September 12 prepared for their classroom with knowledge and understanding to help students work through, to understand and not to jump to easy answers and trite responses to such an event.

Being in a different place when such events occur brings a different perspective to understanding. Gough (2002) writes about being in South Africa on September 11, 2001. He writes of how the three main newspapers covered the events on September 12th from 12 pages to none. Many South Africans paid little attention to the events over the next few days. The reason is that South Africa is confronting one of the greatest pandemics of our time- the increasing effects of HIV/AIDS. Gough (2002) states that his own “personal understandings of globalisation and commitments to justice have changed substantially as a result of working in southern Africa. (p.2)
The aim of global education is to empower learners and involve them in transformative social action, at the local, regional and world levels, and to build a world based on human dignity, justice, equity and freedom. It is to provide teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge understanding and empathy to work with children in the light of a ‘September 11 experience’.

Global education introduces students to a new way of viewing the world, fosters intercultural understanding and takes students beyond their own worlds. Teachers who are reflective practitioners who can give meaning to their own lived experiences, identities can develop rich global education classrooms in SOSE and to other curriculum areas in the school. The challenge is to provide spaces for such reflection and meaning making to occur for teachers to prepare students for a world which is ‘global in its outlook and influences’.
## Global Education Framework – DRAFT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Personal Stories and Journeys</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reflective Practitioner</strong></th>
<th><strong>Curriculum and Pedagogy</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Reflexivity</td>
<td>Provocative</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedagogy of global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race class gender, space, time, place, identity ethnography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<th><strong>Global Education</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reflective Pedagogy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Transformative Paradigm</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories of global ed in the curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Students</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Global</td>
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References


