INCORPORATING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION INTO BUSINESS ENGLISH LESSONS

ÎNCORPORAREA EDUCAȚIEI CETĂȚENIEI GLOBALE ÎN CADRUL LECȚIILOR DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ DE AFACERI

NADEJDA BACIMANOVA

MA, university lecturer

The Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova
The Republic of Moldova, Chisinau
61 Banulescu-Bodoni Street
E-mail: bacimanova.nadejda@ase.md
ORCID: 0000-0003-3951-874X

Abstract. *Teaching English nowadays is not an easy task, as English teachers, including those teaching Business English, are constantly under pressure, because they have got to do more than just teaching the language. Taking into account the changes and challenges occurring in the modern world, they have got to prepare the people who are ready to live, study or/and work in a globalised environment, where the basic language of international communication is English. The knowledge of the English language is not the only necessary thing on the way of becoming a global citizen. Some skills are also necessary, which are often named the 21st century skills. There are some practical ways to implement global citizenship education both at the institutional level and in the classrooms. Business English lessons prove to be particularly effective in this respect.*

Key words: *global citizen, global citizenship education (GCE), skills, knowledge, teaching, learning.*

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"Education is the most powerful
weapon you can use to change the world."
(Nelson Mandela)

INTRODUCTION

The modern world is subject to various constantly happening changes, related to all spheres of human life. Contemporary people take the challenge of innovations and tend to adapt their modernized mentality and technologies to newly appearing concepts of development. The list of challenges is constantly updating. What are some of the biggest ones we are facing in the 21st century? The recent 'leader', i.e. the coronavirus health pandemic, has recently been substituted by the war in Ukraine. Besides, there is climate change and pollution, ethnic conflicts and migration, terrorism, racism, poverty, prejudice, social inequality. To sum up, there are lots of political, social, financial and environmental issues the modern world is suffering from. There is something all of them have in common – they are all the result of an interconnected world. Problems do not happen just locally, they often affect neighbouring regions, and, ultimately, might cause changes (nowadays, unfortunately, mostly negative) all over the world. Considering the fact that, in this mutually dependent world, where events in one place affect other parts of the world, it is clear that it is not possible to live in an isolated way, not depending on events and changes happening worldwide. Thus, we are not just citizens of a country or a set of countries, we are citizens of the world. These ideas have given rise to the concept 'global citizenship', which refers to "a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity" [4].

Therefore, we all share responsibility to look after our world and everything in it. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's lesson about being responsible forever for what you've tamed has not lost its significance. On the contrary, it is as relevant as ever and is becoming even more vital than it was back then. We should be responsible for our planet and everything happening here, and younger generation should be taught this sense of responsibility in the same way the fox taught the little

prince to be responsible for his rose. Global citizenship education (GCE) is an effective means to do this as it is an educational initiative to prepare students not only for the challenges of the modern world, but also the opportunities and responsibilities that are brought by being a member of the global community. Young people are the key to protecting our world for future generations. Global citizenship education can inspire students to get involved in being the change they wish to see in the world, following Mahatma Gandhi's slogan "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

2. BASIC CONTENT
2.1. Global citizenship education: essence, focus, aims, dimensions, importance and value

Global citizenship education (GCE) is "a framing paradigm which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable" [4]. It should prepare students for the global challenges, opportunities and responsibilities that they are likely to face in the 21st century. This approach to teaching and learning opens students' eyes to the world around them, and empowers them to make positive changes both on the local and global level. Raising individuals as global citizens requires some changes in traditional educational approaches. Education is not only a means of globalization or integration, but it is also a tool for overcoming the problems created by globalization. That is why it is of great importance that the education system must renew itself in this sense and contribute to this process. In this context, global citizenship education has recently gained importance in education systems around the world. It is focused on the following:

- promoting among learners the idea of not only belonging to their nation, but also to the world;
- including global issues such as democracy, social justice, human rights, etc.;
- preparing for living in an increasingly diverse world.

Global citizenship is a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasizes political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global. This kind of education gives learners the competencies and opportunities to realize their rights and obligations to promote a better world and future for all. Being applied in different ways in different contexts, settings, regions, cultures and communities, GCE has a number of common elements and implies developing in learners a specific set of knowledge, skills (cognitive and non-cognitive), attitudes, values and behaviours. Thus, the ***aims of GCE*** include fostering:

- deep knowledge about world countries, cultures, global governance structures, rights and responsibilities, global issues and connections between global, national and local systems and processes;
- cognitive skills of critical thinking, decision-making, co-operative problem solving, creativity, adopting a multi-perspective approach that recognizes the different dimensions, perspectives and angles of issues, etc.;
- non-cognitive skills including social skills, empathy, conflict resolution, communication skills, negotiation skills, networking and interacting abilities, each of them being related to different backgrounds, origins, religions, languages, cultures and perspectives;
- attitudes of global awareness, cultural appreciation, respect for diversity, care and empathy for others and the environment, each of them being supported by an understanding of a collective identity on the one part and individual cultural, religious, ethnic or other differences on the other part;
- universal values such as fairness and social justice, equality, dignity, respect etc.;
- behavioural capacities to act collaboratively, think creatively, be willing to find solutions for challenges and to strive for the collective good, on local, national and global levels.

The 'product' of GCE are global citizens, who are ready to face and resolve global challenges and contribute to transforming the world into a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure place. Oxfam defines a global citizen as someone who:

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen;
- respects and values diversity;
- has an understanding of how the world works;
- is passionately committed to social justice;
- participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global;
- works with others to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place;
- takes responsibility for their actions [2].

According to Clarisse O. Lima and Scott W. Brown [1], a global citizen is a person who has the following characteristics:

1) awareness and concern about globalization and its impacts on individuals and the world;
2) awareness about rights and responsibilities of a citizen;
3) meaningful and socially valued use of information and communication technologies (ICT);
4) basic skills needed to fully operate and participate in a globalized society (critical-thinking skills, decision making skills, problem-solving skills, initiative, IT skills etc.).

Global citizenship education entails *three core conceptual dimensions* which can serve as the basis for defining its goals, learning objectives and competencies, as well as priorities for assessing and evaluating learning. These core conceptual dimensions are based on, and include, aspects from all three domains of learning: cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural.

The cognitive domain implies that students acquire knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about global and local issues related to the environment, countries, populations, human rights, citizenship etc.

The socio-emotional domain is connected with developing the sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity. Students develop values/attitudes that help them live respectfully and peacefully with others from around the world.

The behavioural domain is related to acting effectively and responsibly at local, national and global levels for a more peaceful and sustainable world. Students are motivated to participate, fight injustice, and become agents of change.

GCE promotes learning that nurtures greater consciousness in and around real life issues. First of all, it is focused on ways to make changes at local level that can ultimately influence the global level through participatory strategies and methods. All this is possible with transformative pedagogy, which helps to increase the relevance of education in and out of classrooms. Transformative pedagogical practices are learner centered; foster awareness of local challenges, collective concerns and responsibilities; encourage dialogue and respectful teaching/learning; are focused on cultural norms, national and international policies that influence the formation of values; promote critical thinking and creative abilities; are solution-oriented; develop resilience and promote tolerance and respect [4].

GCE promotes teaching and learning that:
- are based on respectful attitude of/to every participant of the process;
- are learner-centered and highly interactive;
- promote active style of work and involve quite a lot of cooperation;
- offer opportunities for students to experience learning in varied settings including classroom activities, institutional ones, those requiring community participation or involving international exchanges;
- include globally-oriented learning resources that help students understand better their own identity both on local and global levels.

2.2. Integrating GCE into Business English lessons

Global citizenship education can be integrated with many subject areas, and each of them has an important contribution to developing the key elements of active and responsible global citizenship. One of the areas in which it can be especially effectively implemented is foreign language programs, including Business English. The English curriculum is ideal for this in many ways.

Firstly, English itself is the lingua franca of the modern era in general and the language of business in particular. It is no longer owned by a few nations, but has become a tool for a great number of speakers, both native and non-native, which is actively engaged in a shared cross-cultural dialogue.

Second, there is a certain subject flexibility in foreign language courses, which does not exist in others. When we teach English, we need a context. And the phenomenon of global citizenship can provide that content. In Business English classes, it is common to read/listen and discuss global issues related to international trade, making/selling/buying goods and services, various aspects of multinational companies' activity (management, marketing, finance, etc.), negotiations, doing business internationally and others. Reading texts on such a great variety of topics exposes students to different perspectives of life. An indispensable part of Business English lessons is listening to conversations, watching videos, where people from different corners of the world meet and often speak English with different accents. Thus, students deal with real-world situations showing the diversity of the world. Taking part in projects, speaking and writing practices, individually or collaboratively, are a natural way to elicit students' opinions and ideas and share them with group mates/teachers.

Third, learning English is closely connected with 'putting yourself in someone's shoes', which is directly related to many of the goals of GCE, e.g. fostering empathy, promoting peaceful intercultural communication, learning from the cultures of others, etc. At Business English lessons, students are often engaged in role-play activities, group/pair work, case studies, where they perform various roles,

discuss various people's actions, comment on their decisions, and consider positive and negative consequences.

Finally, GCE is implemented at Business English lessons through promoting cooperative learning, setting up collaborative tasks, which provide an appropriate environment for helping students develop personal, socio-emotional, behavioural and so-called 21st century skills. In particular, learners are engaged in collaborative tasks and projects that allow them to develop self-awareness and empathy as well as practise critical thinking, analytical, problem-solving, digital, collaborative, communicative, and creative and lots of other useful skills.

It is clear that the main task of foreign language instructors should not be just teaching vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, listening, speaking, reading and writing; they have a responsibility to train students who will actively participate in the solution of global issues or at least develop awareness and understanding of these issues. Global issues should be addressed in ELT courses as a way of teaching for global citizenship. In this context, one of the best approaches is content-based, when teaching is organized around themes and topics, instead of grammar, functions or situations. The English language becomes an instrument of learning about the world, that is why it is beneficial to tackle motivational themes and authentic materials in the process of teaching/learning. GCE becomes an educational filter through which teachers create and manage the learning environment, plan and design teaching materials, deliver and evaluate their lessons, responding to students' real needs.

English teachers always encourage students to explore diverse identities and cultures, think critically about their place in the world, build respectful relationships and collaborate positively and dynamically. A global citizenship approach to teaching/learning English develops learners' empathy, respect for diversity and a better insight into their place and role in local/national/global communities. It also expands learners' thinking and enlarges their horizons, as well as develops critical literacy, leading to higher motivation and better achievements. The emphasis of GCE on real-life learning, using real stories coming from real people, is

a great way to inspire learners become global citizens. They are provided with practical opportunities to develop self-expression, communication and social skills to interact with others both in their own communities and worldwide.

Taking into account the above-mentioned information, it is safe to say that Business English classroom is a favourable space to promote GCE. There are several reasons why it is so beneficial for preparing global citizens. The first reason is GCE helps students develop their global identity. Students view English as a way to communicate in the global landscape, but not just as a means to access the English-speaking world. Another reason is that the Business English curriculum often includes many themes related to GCE. Finally, looking at GCE from an educator's point of view, English language teachers often have more resources and opportunities for global training, which enables them to be more resourceful and creative on the latest global issues; not only educating students but also conducing teachers' growth. For this reason, teachers should have a positive attitude towards global citizenship; be knowledgeable about designing an educational environment that integrates global citizenship education into their courses and arranging the classroom environment to implement these practices. However, not all ELT instructors have sufficient level of knowledge, skills, attitude and action related to global citizenship education. Therefore, it may be helpful to provide ELT educators at all levels with in-service training on integrating global citizenship education into ELT so that they can organize the teaching-learning environment according to the principles of global citizenship education.

2.3. Ways of implementing GCE in the Business English classroom

It can be concluded that the need for global citizenship education is a growing global norm. English lessons prove to be particularly effective for integrating its important elements and aspects into classroom management and learning environment. The ways of implementing GCE in the Business English classroom might be the following:

- empowering students through Business English knowledge;
- learning about other people/nations/regions/countries through language activities (reading, listening, speaking);
- using global citizenship for the teaching context;
- encouraging resource sharing;
- setting up collaborative tasks, organising pair/group work, which demonstrates the importance of cooperation and showing respect;
- ensuring fairness in interactions;
- respecting personal boundaries and preferences of work dynamics (e.g. acknowledging students who prefer to work individually);
- encouraging students not only to voice their own opinions, but also to actively listen to the opinions of others, developing active listening skills;
- minimizing waste and promoting a tidy, clean environment;
- providing students with opportunities to both question themselves (e.g. self-evaluation tasks) and learn from those around them (e.g. peer teaching, peer assessment);
- using visuals that normalise global citizenship showing the diversity of people and challenging stereotypes.

A global citizenship approach within the Business English course offers numerous, diverse opportunities for real-life learning in English, enabling younger generation to learn, think and take action in relation to global issues. Here are just a few practical ideas:

SPEAKING AND LISTENING
- Develop empathy, explore different perspectives and recognise the complexity of an issue by role playing a particular character or situation. Case studies are especially favourable in this respect. Dealing with them, students investigate how some departments/companies/ communities around the world are being influenced by various situations happening on local/national/international level.

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- Develop students' skills to constructively discuss their own values, opinions and ideas about simple and complex local/global issues such as doing business, working for an employer or being self-employed, relocation, mergers and takeovers, creating decent working conditions and pleasant working environment etc.
- Use various teaching strategies, methods and techniques to develop a wide range of English skills, including critical, creative and collaborative thinking; supporting arguments and counter-arguments; generating hypotheses; making and checking predictions etc.
- Explore issues such as conflict resolution, creativity, inventiveness, entrepreneurship, building a successful career, successful promotion, importance of HR, career growth, etc.
- Develop collaborative thinking and increase exploratory talk.
- Present information about local/global issues, products, companies in a variety of ways, providing visual support, using various types of graphic organizers.

READING

- Use various fun and effective learning strategies to explore the information about various local and global issues, e.g. „Know – Want to know - Learnt", SWOT analysis, a Venn diagram etc.
- Use case studies to explore similarities and differences between the lives and experiences of others and learners' own ones, and identify common hopes, worries, and values.
- Use a wide range of texts to stimulate learners' imagination, critical and analytical thinking abilities.
- Research business stories from different cultures. Look at how people/companies/organizations succeed or fail and analyse reasons and consequences.

WRITING

- Write leaflets, create posters, which persuade others to take action. Develop learners' ability to make a case clear and persuasive, using specific examples and supporting evidence.
- Inspire learners to find, write down and present interesting facts about local and global issues related to the topics studied during the course.
- Write business letters/emails about real or imaginary issues.
- Write persuasive letters to customers.

Teaching Business English with a global citizenship approach has a number of benefits.

BENEFITS TO LEARNERS

- Develops effective communication, critical literacy and thinking skills which lead to better achievements.
- Improves cultural understanding and enhances learners' awareness of their own opinions, values and assumptions.
- Develops language knowledge which reflects the cosmopolitan nature of English in a changing world.
- Enables learners to explore how language is used to represent the world and the ways people experience it.

BENEFITS TO TEACHERS

- Engages learners through the use of real-life stories and situations to develop their reading, writing and spoken language skills.
- Motivates learners to deepen their understanding of local and global issues.
- Challenges learners' current perspectives and values.

BENEFITS TO THE WIDER WORLD

- Enables learners to apply their language learning to local and global issues.
- Encourages learners to value diversity and challenge inaccurate or false assertions made by others.
- Gives learners confidence in sharing their learning with real audiences.

- Equips learners with the knowledge, understanding, values, attitudes and skills that will enable them to contribute towards a more just and sustainable world.

3. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of all this complex and multifaceted work students will become real global citizens who:

- are more emphatic, worldly, understanding;
- don't follow the crowd, but always have their own judgement;
- take time to learn and become lifelong learners;
- always keep an open mind;
- crave experiences, not possessions;
- are not afraid to think big, as big issues need big solutions;
- are not short-sighted;
- work well with others, are ready and able to collaborate;
- are ready and willing to embrace responsibility;
- are ready to embrace their role in the world community and understand how their actions help shape our world.

Global citizenship education is an educational philosophy, a teaching/learning style enabling students to make informed choices about their communities and the world around them. It helps students learn that they share similarities with others, and that, at the same time, there are differences, which develops respect and appreciation for diversity. It helps students realise that they are part of something large. As a result, they are prepared to live in a constantly changing world, contributing in a positive way to its sustainable development. At its core, GCE empowers teachers to become better educators, students to become better learners, and all the participants of the educational process to become better people for a better world and active global citizens.

„We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make the difference." (Nelson Mandela)

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