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Creating Global Citizens?
The Case of 'Connecting Classrooms'

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ABSTRACT

There has been a rejuvenated and rapidly growing discussion on cosmopolitanism between academics in recent years, with particular emphasis on media and communications. However, this research is an attempt to turn the attention away from 'virtual worlds' and back to empirical reality; through a focus on the social experience of education. This paper considers how education as a communicatory and powerful force in its own right can allow for better understanding of cultural Others, for imparting knowledge about global issues such as sustainability and ultimately create global citizens; an area which requires much more research particularly in the developing world.

The cosmopolitan potential of education is examined through a case study of an innovative project, 'Connecting Classrooms' that began just over a year ago. This research sought to answer a fundamental question in relation to project; <u>how</u> does the 'Connecting Classrooms' facilitate the construction of global citizens? This was explored through reflection on how the project makers and members envisioned the global citizen, what activities and information they employed to facilitate their objective and the projects implications, presently and for the future. Through a series of interviews with head teachers and teachers in the Central Peaks Cluster in Ghana, as well as observation within the schools and interviews with British Council Co-Coordinators it became clear that my research question anticipated too much.

This paper argues there are many barriers in facilitating the construction of global citizens; the language of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship itself, as conceived in the West, proved to be inaccessible to those that live in the developing world and have very different priorities. There existed clear disparities between the motivations and meaning of the project of those delivering it in Ghana who saw it as a window of opportunity for development, and to the decision makers from above, who saw it as an opportunity to exercise advantageous resources in our globalized world to learn more about others. The digital divide is raised as a stark empirical reality that is a tremendous obstacle to learning and belonging in the global community; this must be considered by NGOs and Charities working on ambitious 'global' educational endeavors. Nevertheless, the project did make some advancement towards creating global citizens; often through surprising ways such as an increased sense of 'local' identity and through instilling confidence and curiosity in the children.

Introduction

Education: a debt due from present to future generations.

(George Peabody, 1852)

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

(Nelson Mandela, 1994)

Education used to have a clear role, little more than a generation ago it was clear that it was integral to a Nation's success; economically, socially and culturally. Our nation's history, geography and greatest literary successes were unquestionably of study and precedence in school. Education, school itself was a microcosm of the state; witness to the grooming of future national citizens and transmission of norms and values. However our world today, enriched in many ways yet equally wrought with uncertainty demands much more from education and a greater need for global citizenship, whereby we see ourselves 'bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern' (Walker, 2006, p.14).

The traditional ideology of the nation assumed it to be territorially bound, ethnically absolute in order to allow succeeding generations to experience a linear continuity and shared sense of history for example of significant events, famous figures and consequently, assume common origins and destiny (Smith, 1991, p.29); indeed "a whole way of thinking of the world is implicated" (Billig, 1995, p.61). Indeed so powerful is this way of thinking that much of our world is witness to war, violence, oppression all in the name of 'nation'; yet ironically many of the world's pressing problems, terrorism, ecological crisis, equality and peace no longer possess national solutions. The migration of millions of people, either through colonialism, force or voluntarily means "ethnicity, once a genie contained in a bottle of some sort of locality (however large), has now become a global force, forever slipping through the cracks between states and borders" (Appadurai, 1996, p.39); thus the capacity to live with difference is the 'coming question of the twenty-first century' (Hall, 1993, p.361). 9/11 marked the severity of misunderstanding, and dire consequences of a lapse in communication; indeed radically different global priorities and disparities became apparent. These disparities continue to grow, as the divide between the haves and the have-nots widens, the world increasingly demarcated by those who produce and those who consume; those who have information capital and those who do not. No country can afford to turn its

back on what goes on beyond its own borders and education can be employed as a powerful tool in bridging the gap.

Although global media and communications has allowed for people to learn about, witness, interact and empathize with their fellow global neighbors across the other side of the world; the fact remains that the very skills needed to access much of this, reading, listening, using technology are learnt through childhood. Education, as an institution, as a bearer of knowledge remains imperative in our globalized world and integral to the foundations of our adult life. Inevitably, education itself has been globalized; policymakers across the world are recognizing the value and importance of encouraging children to think globally, and act locally. Education can potentially be a communicatory and informative weapon in achieving cosmopolitanism and indeed many classrooms across the world are so culturally, and ethnically diverse that they are already learning to live with 'difference' and thus, possess a strong foundation for becoming global citizens. However, it remains clear that there is no institutional or written global syllabus aimed to provide global citizenship other than the voluminous and integral work of many international NGOs and Charities. The responsibility of educating global citizens is indeed an immense challenge; facing questions of how methodological nationalism be overcome? How can the world's many cultures, traditions, languages and beliefs come into a consensual and equitable 'global' education? Education and citizenship research must turn its attention to the global context; much more is needed on the nuances and possible development on ambitious attempts being made to globalize education from within; and this must be done representatively. There remains little research on the developing world, particularly in the context of global education and citizenship and even less qualitative data that allows for insight into what is a very complex social phenomena.

Many charities such as Oxfam, Global Gateway, in this case the British Council are endeavoring to equip the young with the skills they need to face a truly global future. Our children today, are our leaders tomorrow; the future of a global dynamic, a global citizenship rests in their hands. This case study is an exploration of one such project, 'Connecting Classrooms'. The study will explore how and what the global citizen is, how it can be constructed through education and how the project instils a global sense of consciousness and responsibility in the children. The decision to go to Ghana to conduct this research was through a desire to lessen the gap that exists between cosmopolitan dreams and existing realities, between the dense literature on western education and citizenship attempts and

the little that exists on the developing world; of which most is reduced to numbers and empirical facts on literacy. As they say about education; learning never stops and indeed, this area of study will continue to grow and flourish in our global future.

Literature Review

Globalization and its Implications

It is inescapable to approach any issue of our contemporary times without the context of globalization; even with its conceptual ambiguities and nuances there remains an underlying consensus that through its empirical reality we are all more connected. Robertson (1992) has described globalization as the "compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness into the world as a whole". Indeed every corner of the world, every place, home, locality is embroiled in 'complex connectivity' with rapidly expanding interconnections, interrelationships and interdependences through 'flow's of goods, people, money, cultures (Tomlinson, 1999). Thus, through a mere acknowledgement of this prevailing 'complex' connectivity it becomes essential to examine its relationship and implications across all dimensions of the social sphere; a condition which immediately needs elaborations and interpretation (Tomlinson, 1999). It is the implications for the future, and outcomes of globalization that remain highly contested; some argue it has led to the emergence of fervent nationalism, religious fundamentalism as national and local identities are not only being strengthened, but also being created (Rantanen, 2005) and further disparity in the world's wealth as the gap between the haves and have-nots continues to increase. Paradoxically others argue that the nation has undergone a process of 'deterritorialisation' encompassing an overwhelming renegotiation of social, economic, political and cultural logics into the post-national (Appadurai, 1996). Thus, many scholars have argued that we now live in a cosmopolitan world; united by world risks ranging from ecological crisis, economic interdependency to the threat of terrorism we are becoming increasingly aware of Others, our common destiny and the dilution of borders (Beck, 2006).

Cosmopolitanism: Reality or Ruse?

The case for cosmopolitanism has been exemplified in the existence of the rise of global civil society, in the form of NGOs, the development of technology allowing for better travel, communication, more exposure to others through increased migration and the existence of shared economic, ecological and terrorist risks. Thus we are living in a 'glass world' whereby "national borders and differences are dissolving", the subsequent transparency creates a "sense of boundarylessness", a shared sense of fate, fear and destiny and the inescapable recognition of difference and curiosity of others (Beck, 2006, p.7). To be

cosmopolitan is to possess a willingness to engage with the other, not in a merely superficial way but to have an 'openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity' through specific competences (Hannerz, 1990, p.241). Similarly, Rantanen emphasises one must leave their 'safety zones' in order to develop cosmopolitan qualities, through speaking/ learning another language or living with a person from another culture (Rantanen, 2005, p.124). This exposure and interaction with the other is now aided by the media; however cosmopolitanism inextricably still requires a certain degree of experience beyond the still 'safe' and often biased media exposure. The possibility of cosmopolitanism relies heavily on access, be it physical or visual and this is where many critics of cosmopolitanism argue the concept remains elitist, western-centric and centred around the notion of the 'homme du monde' (Tomlinson, 1999).

The notion that "one constructs a model of one's identity by dipping freely into the Lego set of globally available identities and producing a progressively inclusive self-image" (Beck, 2006, p.5) assumes access and choice, when for many, identity still arises from the nation, and the patchwork, quasi-cosmopolitan that does exist, does so under particular conditions -often coerced through the need of survival. Many thinkers have identified the migrant experience, particularly transnational workers as a cosmopolitan cell ever multiplying; however much research and evidence is drawn from their lives in the West, largely ignoring the repercussions in the southern hemisphere and more importantly, these cells are not homogenous, but differences in class, education, skill sets make them subject to varying cosmopolitan bio politics (Cheah, 1998). Indeed the disparity between the north and south is ever increasing and education is one such site of contestation; with the startling increase of the digital divide despite the increasing importance of flows of information (Castells, 2000). Indeed Calhoun (2003), on the basis of such disparity, highlights the case for those who do not belong to the cosmopolitan imaginary, arguing that the fundamental assertion that all communities, groups have the same desires and needs itself is an illusion.

The nation still continues to play an integral role as bounded homeland states remain the object of national independence movements and the EU (European Union) continues to be demarcated by national boundaries (Billig, 1995). As Anderson argues that the nation is the 'most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time, surpassing even religion; indeed he poignantly asks "who will willingly die for the Comecon or the EEC?" (Anderson, 1953, p.3). Furthermore, as Cheah (1998) enforces, the real issue is structural; is the world interconnected to the extent to generate on one hand, institutions that have a global reach

in their regulatory function; and on the other hand, a global form of political consciousness or solidarity? Possessing 'artificial eyes' is futile without extended arms to act, to fulfil our global responsibilities (Bauman, 2001).

Much emphasis in the field of communications has explored the realm of global media, new media and technology as catalysts to cosmopolitanism; however these mediums are employed in many varying social settings, by different generations with different objectives. If the more traditional role of education is; *"The act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life"* (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/education) …then not only does schooling offer us the skills to interpret and access the media around us, it has the potential to equip us with the cosmopolitan qualities required to be truly global citizens from an early age. Indeed Cheah (1998) cites the importance of education in instilling universal empathy/ sympathy; however this can only succeed if the logics of neo-liberalism, and cosmopolitanism as a marker of a country's success at climbing the international hierarchy of the international division of labour are surpassed. Thus the focus will now turn to the possibility of a cosmopolitan global order; how can our 'artificial eyes' (Baumann, 2001) be matched with our physical actions what are the prerequisites for global citizenship and how can they be enacted?

Global/ Cosmopolitan Citizenship

Citizenship refers to membership determined by factors such as a place of birth, parentage or naturalisation, of a political community (generally a nation state) in virtue of which one has legally defined rights and duties (Dower, 2003). However many scholars, such as Dower (2003), Delanty (2000), Isin and Wood (1999) emphasise the need to conceive of citizenship more broadly, to view it as a question of participation *in* and identity *with* a political community who may formulate and claim new rights and struggles to expand or maintain their existing rights particularly in our contemporary post modern times (Isin and Wood, 1999, p.4).

A politics of universalism has re-emerged in recent years, within the fields of academia, civil society and even popular culture and media; symptomatic of what Szersynsky and Urry have termed 'banal globalism' (Szersynsky & Urry, 2002, p.467).

"Why shouldn't the process of democracy -which has already overcome a thousand obstacles within individual states -assert itself beyond national borders, when every other aspect of human life today, from economy to culture, from sport to social life, has a global dimension?" (Archibugi, 2003, p.10).

Additionally the stark realities of global terrorism, ecological crises, growing public apathy as more people are interested in private consumption than public affairs inextricably places cosmopolitan citizenship at the heart of the question of the adequacy of contemporary boundaries of political thought for 21st century politics (Hutchings, 1998).

Inextricably the debate over global citizenship and a cosmopolitan polity presents many dualities and complexities; some such as Anderson (1991) see no legitimate political feeling outside the nation, for others such as Beck (2006) and Nussbaum (1997) political legitimacy can only be found in worldwide community of human beings who recognise their moral obligations to the rest of the world; translating the nation as an imagined community constructed on a shared and common past to a recognition of an imagined and inevitable shared global future. From the very definition of a 'global citizen', to the conceptual frameworks and structural foundation; the path to cosmopolitanism remains a divided one. The large volume of literature on this pressing debate, from a range of disciplines such as International relations, philosophy, postcolonial and cultural studies provide rich and divergent thoughts. To add to its complexity cosmopolitan citizenship should not be assumed to be a modern phenomenon; the beginnings can be traced to the Greeks, the Confucianism and even Hindu philosophy for example the oneness of all human beings as described in the Isha Upanishad, for example "He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from It (the Self)" (Parmentar, 2007, 3).

It was Kant (1991) that paved the way for modern debate on cosmopolitan citizenship in his prestigious political writings; in 'Perpetual Peace' he argued that a certain recognition of association already existed just over two centuries ago citing the example that " a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*" (Kant, 1991, p.107-108) and that there was a desire for "the conditions of universal hospitality" (Kant, 1970, 105). Thus Kant extended the first social contract based on the *state* to a notion of an international order based upon a civil society and public approval. Essentially Kant's primary concern was with laying the foundations of a theory of international law, not with democratic

governance; perhaps an acknowledgement of how ambitious and perhaps unrealistic political cosmopolitanism is.

Dower (2003), a contemporary proponent of global citizenship, cites three main contingents to the citizenship debate; as a normative claim it raises moral and ethical questions as to how humans should act, as an existential claim we refer to our contemporary world to examine *where* global community can be found and finally as an aspirational claim about the future; what legal, institutional, practical frameworks are needed for the world to become *one?* Similarly, Heater (2002) has constructed his spectrum of the four meanings attached to global citizenship (Fig 1), beginning with those who feel a sense of association and belonging to a world community, to those whose actions are more closely defined to an environmental cause for example; the third and fourth category are again, aspirational, the third referring to a number of different laws relevant to a cosmopolitan global order such as natural law, international human rights law and finally, the aspiration for a world government (Heater, 1997, p.36-38).

Fig.1

VAGUE …………………………………………………………………………........................ PRECISE

Member of the human race	Responsible for the condition of the planet	Individual subject to moral law	Promotion of world government

It is these components that are considered the ingredients of global citizenship; the amount, and form each should contribute remains contested. Thus, the normative claim draws upon the duties and responsibilities of a global citizen who "accepts in varying degrees certain kinds of engagement as an 'active' global citizen in exercising responsibility or asserting universal rights, and certain attitudes towards human beings in general" (Dower, 2003, p.13-14). Global citizenship is associated with several capacities of the mind:

> *"The ability to see oneself and the world around one, to draw comparisons and contrasts, to see plurally, to see power relations, and to balance awareness of one's own realities with realities of entities outside the perceived self."* (McIntosh et al, 2005, p.23).

The ability to empathise and respect others will in turn account for an understanding of the 'politics of location' (McIntosh, 2005) and thus allow for a just and open global citizenship

whereby every human being dispenses with national exclusivity, possessing a global status as the ultimate unit of moral concern (Dower, 2003). In short a necessary prerequisite of global citizenship, through the Universalist line of thought, is the creation of 'world-cultural principles' comprising of definitions, principles and purposes cognitively constructed in similar ways throughout the world (Boli & Thomas, 1997) and compatible with those fundamental cosmopolitan tendencies outlined earlier such as possessing a willingness to engage with the Other (Hannerz, 1990). Indeed such a sensibility would be open to the new spaces of political and ethical engagement that seek to appreciate the ways in which humanity is mixed into intercultural ways of life (Stevenson, 2003, p.5).

Other theorists have focused on the importance of working towards an actual infrastructure through which to practice global citizenship; the assertion that all human beings have the moral capacity to be a global citizen is a given, but an *actual* world state, or global institution remains ambiguous. Stromquist (2002) has cited the institutional growth of civil society, and international NGOs who are able to address, question and set the political agendas overlooked by globalization; some argue the foundations have been laid down by the world's political structures, such as the UN but would do well to restructure and bring all political units under a supranational umbrella of authority across social and political as well as economic issues. Walker (2006, P.80) argues:

> "Sharing our humanity has become a matter of life and death and the last century should be marked as the period when the very worst behaviour of humankind eventually provoked the very worst behaviour of humankind eventually provoked the very best in response in the creation of global institutions like the United Nations and sister organizations....imperfect though that they are, they represent a formidable, tangible expression of our desire to share our humanity."

Held (1995) highlights the potential for reform within the UN, whereby a reformed General Assembly would allow for representation of IGOs, INGOs, citizens groups and social movements who in turn can freely deliberate over global problems.

> "*In short, cosmopolitanism ends with the transnational but has its roots in civic communities. These communities may be those transnational communities but the essence of the community is not mobility but communication... the problem with many varieties of cosmopolitanism is that they are conceived as discourses that transcend the nation and are therefore impotent in the face of nationalism.*" (Held, 1995, p.143).

Such an inclusion would allow for multiple citizenships, transparency of cultures, and a cosmopolitan public sphere as people would simultaneously be citizens of their immediate political communities, and of the wider regional and global networks. Indeed, nation and cosmopolitanism are not simply opposed but can co-exist in terms of an individual's identity; "*The concept of a single, exclusive and unchanging ethnic, or cultural or other identity is a dangerous piece of brainwashing*" (Hobsbawm, 1996, p.1067).

Certainly the sceptics of the idea of a world state argue the idea is too abstract, impractical, and most likely to be 'remote, bureaucratic, oppressive and culturally bland' (Parekh, 2003, p.13). Rather citizens should be *globally orientated,* and able to discharge their duties to global others by exercising their responsibilities as democratic citizens and where necessary challenging nationalistic policies which are against the interests of mankind (Parekh, 2003).

After outlining some of the foundations on which global citizenship could be articulated, it is important to address those who are in opposition and their concerns for such a political endeavour. Indeed, to entirely eradicate a national and ethnic consciousness in order to 'replace' it with a cosmopolitan identity is ambitious and perhaps even futile; not only because nationalistic roots are firmly implanted in our contemporary times but also because the new seed of cosmopolitanism would need time to nurture before it would be of any comparable strength. Essentially "*A timeless global culture answers no living needs and conjures no memories…it strikes no chord among the vast masses of peoples divided in their habitual communities.*" (Smith, 1995, 24); cosmopolitanism would create *'rootless citizens of nowhere'* (Macintyre as quoted in Shapiro, 1992, p.125).

Postcolonial scholars, and many from the developing world question the desire of having a single entity or world order; the relativists argue that the cosmopolitan ideal itself is a western fascination, which would fail to account for the cultural, and 'local' differences, values and meanings in the south. While millions live below the poverty line survival takes precedence over cosmopolitan luxuries:

> "*When one is barely scarping a subsistence level of income, daily fear of malnutrition and disease, imagining oneself as a world citizen is an unaffordable luxury, even in the unlikely event that the concept is known or comprehensible. One's village is the world…*". (Davies & Reid, 2005, p.163).

Zolo (1997) argues that demarcation between the north and south would only be deepened through *stylistic cosmopolitanism* as Westerners, possessing advantageous economic and cultural capital, would simply become more mobile as opposed to committing themselves to integrating with those in the South. Relativists question the very desirability of an all-encapsulating cosmopolitan order; the plurality of communities and local cultures would be denied for the sake of proliferating the values of the West upon the rest of the world. Undoubtedly having studied over the a wide array of literature on cosmopolitanism, and global citizenship its is poignant that a hefty majority of the literature written is from Western scholars; thus the very assertion of a global ethic, of universal values, norms and what is deemed a 'global' problem or priority is in itself in need of becoming truly representative and cosmopolitan.

Education: its Role, Importance and Potential; a Way of Connecting to Cosmopolitanism?

Surely in a world of global media and communications, commerce, world risks, civil society, *education* can not remain nationally closed; indeed as Archibugi (2003) raised indignation at the absence of a global democracy, surely education as part of our daily social practice and a marker, indeed producer of our future citizens must at least address if not serve the purpose of a global cosmopolitan order. Any speculation for the future, for progression must begin with our youth who more than any other group embody the projected desires, dreams, commitments of society's obligations to the future and thus the degree to which a society can address the needs of coming generations to co-exist with the obligations of a global democracy and individual responsibility is a true measure of its success (Giroux, 2005). Beck (2006) has warned that our present 9/11 generation are the world risk citizens responsible for paving the way forward in an era of uncertainty and complexity unseen by previous generations; there remains no 'national' answer to the problems they face, and they either progress or remain united in decline. Indeed, the starting prerequisite for cosmopolitan progression is to transcend national borders and paradoxically much education curricula, in every part of the world supports nationalism; acting as a flagging institution (Billig, 1995). The poor quality of education in primary and secondary schools has been blamed as an integral explanation for students poor comprehension of international events (Sanders & Stewart, 2003) and apathy towards politics internally as well as in other countries. Additionally…

> "*What is frequently found in educational documents and curricula is emphasis on developing national unity and identity through various subjects, plus lip service to cosmopolitan citizenship or similar notions… Further analysis often reveals that the cosmopolitan citizenship aims are diverted into serving the purpose of national unity and identity*" (Parmenter, 2007, p.3)

The dark side of globalization; terrorism, political apathy, marginalization, can be hugely challenged if not eradicated by serious attention and investment in our future citizens; *"Children are our terrorists to be (only) because they are so obviously not our citizens to come"* (Barber, 2003, p.27). Education policy makers, educators themselves, have the power to develop strategies that will empower individuals to counter the oppressive forces of globalization, from computer and media literacy, to helping students deploy information for progressive purpose -education instils hope. The potential is certainly there as…

> "*To some extent, national education outside schools in many countries already provides opportunities for people to develop cosmopolitan and other identities, through access to media, lifelong education, international community activities, sponsorship of transnational study and volunteer activities and so on. Through participation in such activities, people not only develop a stronger sense of their own place in the world, but simultaneously develop an awareness of themselves as belonging to a territorial sphere beyond the nation.*" (Parmenter, 2007, p.5).

Education as a catalyst to global citizenship dates back to stoic cosmopolitanism, and modern political thought has continued to stress its importance; perhaps even more vehemently. Kant (1991) stressed three imperatives, that education must help the develop the capacity of empathy, that the lives of children should never be used as a means to an end and that we must educate human beings to have belief in the rational abilities of themselves and others. Nussbaum (1997) asserts the needs for education to study the global through the local, to explore different cultures as well as the fundamentals of varying religions, to encourage critical thinking of ones own habits, norms, values and to instil the ability to see oneself as bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern.

> '*To conduct...global dialogue, we need knowledge not only of the geography and ecology of other nations – something that would already entail much revision in our curricula – but also a great deal about their people, so that in talking with them we may be capable of respecting their traditions and commitments. Cosmopolitan*

education would supply the background necessary for this type of deliberation.' (Nussbaum, 1996, p.12).

A curriculum cannot serve to produce global citizens through merely informing, knowing must transcend to *understanding*; producing students who go beyond mere tolerance and acceptance and the rigidity of right/ wrong to enjoying the complexity of ambiguity (Walker, 2006). Essentially there exists no formal 'global curriculum' or syllabus that covers global citizenship; the only institutional stance is from UNESCO and NGO groups such as Oxfam. UNESCO has recently produced seven basic guidelines from which schools around the world should base their education curricula on:

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1. acquiring the capacity to deal with rapid change in all walks of life

2. becoming active citizens, participating in political life in its widest

3. defending and promoting human rights

4. reconciling the local community with the wider world

5. learning languages

6. knowing how to assess the impact on daily life of scientific developments

7. being able to use new technologies of communication

(as cited in Walker, 2006, p.64)

Thus it is clear that whilst 'acquiring the capacity' to be cosmopolitan is full of ambiguities; many of the other prerequisites can be dealt with in an informative and practical manner; students can certainly be taught facts about the world, its geography, its institutions, transnational corporations, NGOs, Human Rights Laws and the role of the UN for example. Indeed Field & Fegan (2005) emphasises that youth today must not only understand the role of TNCs, the UN, IMF, World Bank, NGOs as they presently exist, but additionally understand their history, and context across borders in order to hypothesise change for the future.

The last two contingents focus on the technological, scientific and media advances of our globalized world; the vast possibilities of the Internet and information technology could expedite cosmopolitanism:

"*At its most visionary the idea of global education is one of a movement away from the bounded classroom, seen as haven from the world, self-contained and static, to a*

dynamic synergy of teachers, computer mediated instructional devices, and students collaborating to create a window on the world. Interaction with learners on a global scale leads to an increased awareness of extraordinary complexity of interrelations and a relativistic comprehension and tolerance of diverse approaches to understanding" (Mason, 1998, p.6).

These ambitions, conceptually, and practically in order to globalize education have yet to be actualized in any form of a widespread curriculum; many organizations such as World Bank, UNESCO, Oxfam and the British Council are endeavouring to fund and implement elements but much work remains to be done. There are hopeful examples such as UNESCO'S international exchanges and networks, the DfES Global Gateway, Oxfam's 'Curriculum for Global Citizenship', the British Council's 'Crossing Borders' and 'Connecting Classrooms' projects and the progress of the International Baccalaureate.

Building a syllabus, or devising a formal manner in which schools, children in every corner of the world could not only be informed and given the knowledge to become cosmopolitan; but also to communicate and interact with each other faces many of the challenges inherent within global citizenship. The style of learning in much of these endeavours remains overwhelmingly in the tradition of Western liberal humanism, from the language, delivery, accreditation to the content in itself; the developing world still needs more representation and as Omolewa (2006) emphasizes new media is only further impoverishing local cultures citing the example of online degrees of which over 80% are in English. The other concern with becoming reliant on new media to instil a global education is the subsequent fragmentation of time and space and estrangement from place and community (Mason, 1998). Inextricably schools today still deliberately teach nationalistic values in their curriculum; for example in Iran Islam is the foundation, in the People's Republic of China it is the 5 loves; the Motherland, the people, work, science and the Socialist system are promoted, in India love for country and respect for elders are important. Overcoming such cultural differences and imposing universal values would require a sincere transformation of education priorities from the local to the global, from traditions to modernity and the universal over the individual; all tensions that were highlighted by the Delors report to UNESCO (1996). As important as these tensions are, Tomasevski (2003) states that much of the literature available reasons from a top down approach thus possessing little insight into the priorities of those who, living in abject poverty, would place basic literacy as much more important than achieving global citizenship. Indeed literacy

remains a huge problem captured by the visual map issued by UNESCO, the disparity between the North and the South is clear. (Fig. 2). Thus, can any global education policies be made that would be mutually beneficial to developing the empirical set backs of the developing world, problems such as low literacy whilst still being orientated towards the global?

Fig.2
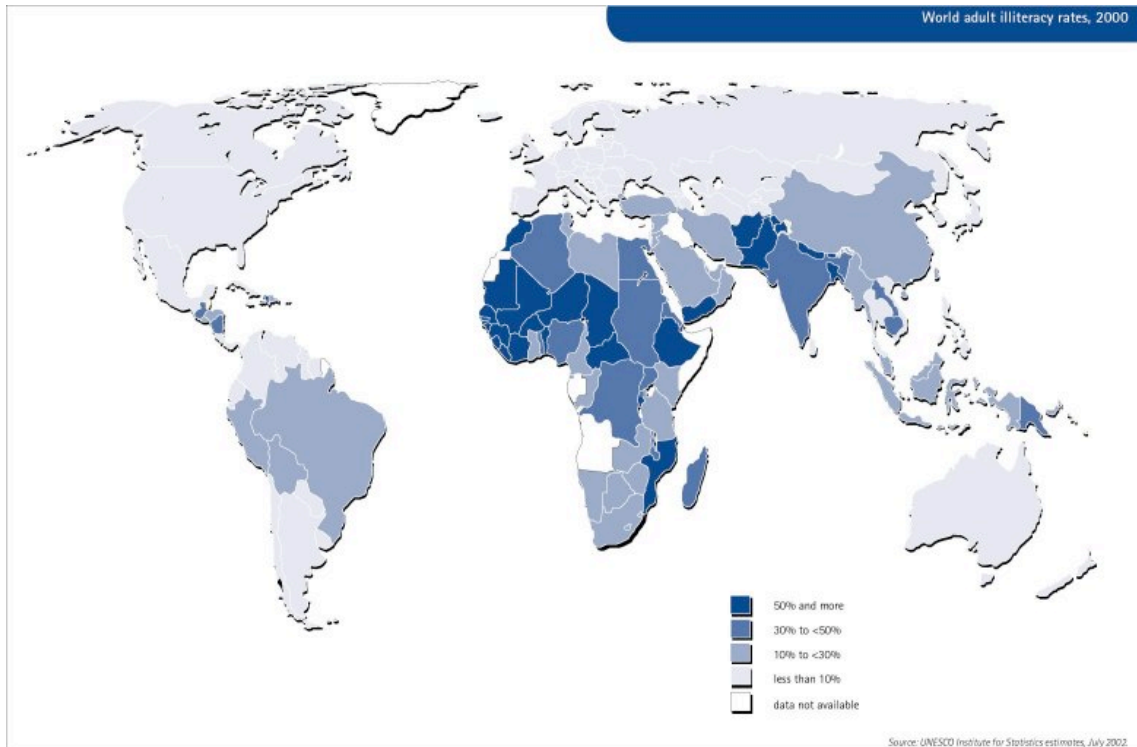
The UNESCO World Conference on education (1990) further highlight the huge problems that exist:

World Declaration For All

Preamble

More than 40 years ago, the nations of the world, speaking through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, asserted, "everyone has a right to education". *Despite notable efforts by countries around the globe to ensure the right to education for all, the following realities persist:*

More than 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, have no access to primary schooling;

More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing;

More than one-third of the world's adults have no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and technologies that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to, social and cultural change; and

More than 100 million children and countless adults fail to complete basic education programmes; millions more satisfy the attendance requirements but do not acquire essential knowledge and skills;

UNESCO World Conference 1990

(http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml)

However, education can in turn be a site of reform, of empowerment allowing individuals to counter the oppressive forces that currently circumvent 'globalization from below'. Teaching is not just transferring knowledge:

> *"… It is impossible to humanly exist without assuming the right and duty to opt, to decide, to struggle, to be political. All of which brings us back again to the pre-eminence of education experience and to its eminently ethical character, which in turn leads us to the radical nature of 'hope'.* (Freire, 2001, p.53)

Background on the British Council and the 'Connecting Classrooms' Project

"We connect people with learning opportunities and creative ideas from the UK to build lasting relationships around the world."
(British Council, 2007, p.1)

9/11 encapsulated the disastrous consequences of misunderstanding, and lack of empathy with others in differing countries and continents. In turn many organizations, in the US, and Britain in particular took it upon their goal to surpass the confines of 'nation' and allow their citizens to engage with their fellow citizens across the world over. British Council, with its rich history and inception in 1934, has expanded its role in areas such as Education, Science, Information and Knowledge, as well as in Culture.

Richard Weight succinctly captures the many roles and receptions that the British Council accrues:

> "*Say 'the British Council' to a citizen of the United Kingdom and those who know of its existence will respond in one of three ways. People who think of its work in teaching English and providing libraries and laboratories in developing countries will nod approvingly; people who know of its efforts to engage the world with the best of British culture through readings, concerts and exhibitions will smile affectionately; and those who see all these activities as a form of cultural imperialism, stemming from a refusal to accept that Britain is no longer a superpower, will arch a knowing eyebrow.*" (Weight, as archived by British Council, 2007)

Thus the roots of the British Council, its establishment in 1934 at a time when the empire was still alive and colonies were still under British Sovereignty and role then in promoting British ness have served to undermine its recent developments; or at least brought into question underlying motives. There have been memorable public outcries in response to some of the British Council's work; the Drogheda report (1954) claimed little prioritization of the developing world was taking place and that there was too much emphasis on Europe. Inextricably there is a fine line between cultural activity and dangerous propaganda; and the British Council, with its presence in 109 countries has a highly sensitive and influential role to play. To claims of international propaganda;

'Here is admittedly hard evidence that western governments do spend their taxpayers' money on promoting their national cultures to foreign audiences through organizations such as the British Council. But the idea is that this will benefit international relations through cultural exchanges. One can, of course, debate whether this is a form of international propaganda on behalf of the value systems of the countries conducting it. But if the objective is to inform, educate and entertain on the assumption that greater mutual understanding will result, then it can only be argued that this is propaganda on behalf of peace. (Taylor as archived by British Council, 2007)

With this purpose in mind and within our global political climate the British Council has a powerful role not only within its educational endeavors, which could potentially empower millions presently marginalized, but also in cultural diplomacy through the ability to use education, and information as a central organ of 'soft power' (Cull, 2007) in promoting cosmopolitanism and the responsibilities of the global citizen. Heavy laden with such responsibility the British Council embarked on a new project Connecting Futures, which brings together young people from the UK with those from countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. 'Connecting Classrooms' is one outcome of Connecting Futures, the project

> *"Provides cluster groups of three schools with the chance to partner with schools from two different countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the UK. The purpose of the programme is to <u>enable intercultural dialogue</u> and to <u>increase knowledge and understanding</u> of each other's societies… Each partnership is entitled to £15,000 per year, for up to three years, to take part in study visits, to purchase materials, and meet certain other costs associated with the project."*
>
> (http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-connecting-classrooms-about.htm)

The general curricula guideline (British Council, 2007) covers a wide array of subjects and disciplines all the containing ingredients for enriching students with cosmopolitan and global sensibilities.

Joint curriculum projects enable schools to work collaboratively on a project of common interest. Your project must support and be integrated into the curriculum of all partner schools. The general aim of your project should be to increase understanding and an awareness of each other's countries and the wider world between young people, and this can be achieved by identifying key themes that feed into your school curriculum.

Possible themes for projects might include;-

• **Literacy / language learning** This could include;- story-telling, cultural heritage; development of literary traditions; creation of a story / publication; creative writing or poetry around a theme.

• **Drama** This might involve a joint creation of a play or dramatic event - each cluster could contribute to a partnership production.

• **Art** Pupils could produce artwork around a common theme, leading to a joint exhibition.

• **History and Geography** Partnerships could look at and compare local and regional identities; or focus on cultural heritage or local history.

• **Sport** This might include raising awareness of sporting culture; learning about new sports and games, or possibly running joint tournaments.

• **Science** One of the key issues here is the environment. This could include comparing weather in different countries, looking at ways of tackling climate change, making better use of resources

• **Citizenship** Here there are opportunities to focus on global citizenship; looking at themes like intercultural understanding; health, sustainability etc.

The scheme has gained much attention from those in the education field, from politicians who sense it is a great chance to prepare and propel future generations; so they can be successful within a globally interdependent world. Indeed as a sign of the importance and dedication to the project the Rt. Honorable Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott visited some of the schools involved in Ghana; indeed it was the same clusters I was fortunate to visit for my research.

Conceptual Framework

The issues and concepts raised by the literature review are difficult to intricately weave together; however it is the very nuances between these contingents, cosmopolitanism, global citizenship and education, that are of utmost importance to this project. I will employ the theoretical critiques of global citizenship, education and cosmopolitanism as an over arching context to explore the theoretical gap that exists between the vast literature that has been written and the actual attempt to implement such theories through the example of "Connecting Classrooms". Most studies on education have heavily focused on national education, assumed to be under complete governmental control; yet our complex times demand we look beyond national borders, and examine the new, creative, and less formal, perhaps even less tangible efforts to globalize education such as 'Connecting Classrooms'. It can not be assumed that global citizenship and national education are mutually exclusive; and it is innovative attempts by NGOs and Charities such as British Council that are working to make concepts reality.

The literature on education, in an international context has failed to add the important dimensions of citizenship in a coherent manner; what is needed urgently, but undeniably a tremendous undertaking, is a comparable study of world citizenship *understanding*. There is still a great deal of research needed on the incongruence of citizenship within education, particularly in a global sense. Additionally much of what is available has been produced in the developed world, assuming the findings to be universal. Thus my research will take into account the differences and difficulties of interpreting let alone implementing cosmopolitanism into education in schools involved in 'Connecting Classrooms' in Ghana, Africa; where their day to day reality is a far cry from the standards of schools in Britain. Indeed, on this premise I wish to add to the conceptual framework an additional looking glass, that of Ghana's context in 2007.

A Brief Interlude: Ghana in 2007

Some brief background will be given on Ghana, particularly in the time period of the research, as 2007 witnessed the 50th anniversary of Independence and 200 years since the abolishment of slavery. Ghana is situated on the West African Coast and is built up of ten regions; my research was carried out in the Cape Coast region, extending from Accra to

Elmina (Fig. 3). The population stands at 22 million and 2 million of this is in the capital Accra (British Council, 2007).

Fig. 3

Agriculture remains an important source of living, and fortunately the country has an abundance of natural resources including cocoa, pineapple, bananas, palm oil and sugar cane for export. Tourism has provided another valuable source of income. However poverty is still a problem in Ghana, particularly in the last decade and it is overwhelmingly a rural phenomenon, indeed 80% of the poverty is in rural areas matched with a high percentage of illiteracy (Botchie & Ahadzie, 2004). On a global scale figure 5 captures Ghana's struggle to be a par with other countries.

Fig.4 (www.ghanaweb.com)

Position in World

1st				
50th				
100th				
150th				133
192nd	150 $390	139 60 years	145 66%	143 66 deaths

- GNP per capita in US$
- Life expectancy
- Literacy
- Infant mortality per 1,000 live births
- Human dev. index
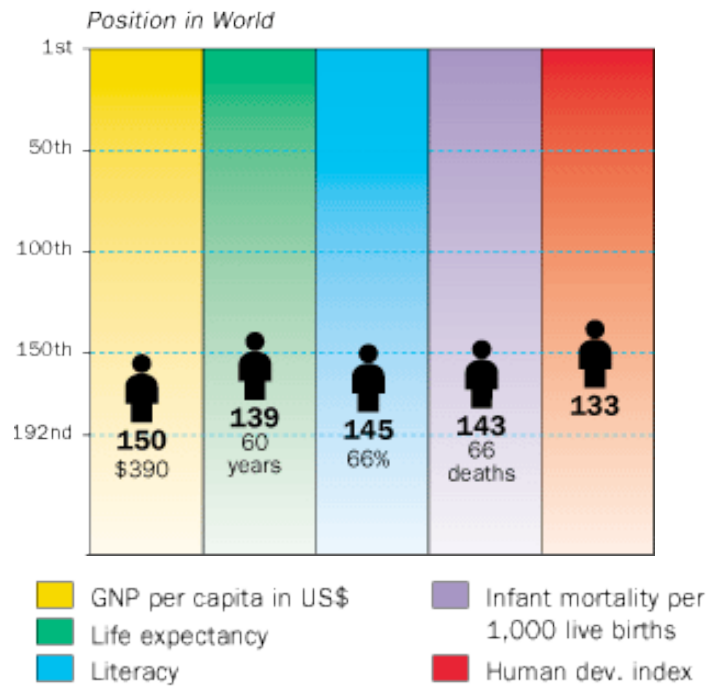
Literacy still remains a national priority, as over half the population is unable to read or write despite the vested efforts of the government to rapidly improve the education system. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) and President Kufuor, appointed in 2004 have placed education on the top of their agenda. Surprisingly there are many schools in Ghana, but reaching out to parents in rural areas to encourage them to educate their children is the real obstacle. To date:

> "Ghana has 12,130 primary schools, 5,450 junior secondary schools, 503 senior secondary schools, 21 training colleges, 18 technical institutions, two diploma-awarding institutions and five universities serving a population of 17 million; this means that most Ghanaians have relatively easy access to good education. In contrast, at the time of independence in 1957, Ghana had only one university and a handful of secondary and primary schools. In the past decade, Ghana's spending on education has been between 28 percent and 40 percent of its annual budget." (http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/education/)

On a final note the atmosphere of March 2007, the celebrations of Ghana's 50th year of independence, bore witness on an awe inspiring sense of national pride, and optimism that one can only imagine.

Thus a case study exploration, under the broad conceptual framework outlined, and the context of Ghana, will allow us to explore whether education can transcend the nation-building construct to instilling awareness, responsibility and universal hospitality in students who, in turn, can flourish as global citizens. Examining this practical example will allow us to further critique the literature and present conceptualizations about global citizenship and cosmopolitanism within education; how do the ideas turn into tangible forms?

Research Question

→ **How does the 'Connecting Classrooms' project facilitate their bid to construct Global Citizens?**

Secondary questions

→ What is a Global Citizen according to the project initiators, the implementers? And how does this differ between the parties involved and to how the literature reviewed constructs the global citizen?

→ What information about people, places and distant cultures is provided to facilitate cosmopolitanism?

→ What is the importance of 'Connecting Classrooms' presently and in the future?

Research Design and Methodology

Research Strategy: a Case Study of 'Connecting Classrooms'

The objective for this research is to explore *how* the 'Connecting Classrooms' project constructs the global citizen. The method adopted to undertake this research was a case study; this was deemed appropriate for a number of reasons. Firstly, the research questions address complex social phenomena; phenomena that is not easily distinguishable from its context (Yin, 2002). Thus a broad case study, with an interdisciplinary use of qualitative methodological approaches will help address, not the outcomes, but rather the *how* and *why* (Yin, 2002) of the project in creating global citizens.

The primary methodology will be the use of in-depth, semi-structured interviewing with Head teachers and teachers in a cluster of 'Connecting Classrooms' project schools in Ghana; additionally there will be interviews with the project Co-coordinator in the British Council, Ghana Accra office and an interview with the Project organizer in the London office. To complement this method I will also undertake background documentary research on policy documents, training/ teacher guidelines, parents and public information and the curriculum itself; this will enrich my overall findings with the benefit of context. Finally, to achieve a holistic methodological approach and as the project itself is relatively new, only operating for its first year, it was important to carry out observation within the schools. Observation would provide a window of authentic insight into Ghana, its schools, social, norms and values which would in turn allow for more meaningful interpretations of the interviews and documents; as well as of the practical day to day operation of the project within the classroom.

It was imperative to research into the official 'Connecting Classrooms' guidelines and interview co-coordinators from above as well as to those doing the ground work; the teachers, head teachers in Ghana, working within the schools in order to be able to juxtapose the conceptualization of the project with the reality. Indeed, just as there remains a chasm between the theories of global citizenship, cosmopolitanism and its practice in the form of education; there is potential that this could be mirrored by what is written and prescribed by policy makers, project advisors and to what actually takes place in the schools in global education projects. This research is also an attempt to add to the very few studies

conducted, in actual schools, in the developing world, which are committed to implementing projects such as 'Connecting Classrooms' in a bid to build global citizens.

Adopting such a multi-faceted approach under the umbrella of a case study is an ambitious challenge; however a suitable approach for researching a relatively new project; which is itself both grand in scale and innovative in its objectives. It was for this reason that I chose not to solely rely on one particular source. Inextricably an ethnographic study throughout the course of the project was another feasible option in ascertaining access to such a breadth and depth of insight; but essentially not an option available to this research due to time constraints and practicalities such as it being a projects that spans over 20 countries, for over three years.

Methodological Issues

Undertaking a case study whereby context is inevitably included as a major element of the study poses technical challenges; the richness of it is in the use of multiple sources, hence creating more variables which may or may not be controllable, and initially a great deal of work to ascertain those sources. However, despite these challenges the case study not only contributes to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena but satisfies the distinctive need or desire to understand complex social phenomena in our contemporary times, particularly when the relevant behaviours can not be manipulated (Yin, 2002, p.1-7).

Interviewing will prove to be highly valuable in this research; it will help uncover individuals' "unconscious beliefs, hidden attitudes, values and motivations" (Gaskell, 2000, p.39) shedding much light on the realities of the 'Connecting Classrooms' project. Particularly in the field of educational projects there is a real need for qualitative data;

> "*Although qualitative research has gained ground in the last 20 years, professional organizations and professional journals in education, and personnel committees on which senior faculty tend to sit, are often dominated by those who have a predilection for quantitative research.*" (Seidman, 1991, p.6)

If conducted ethically, interviews will provide a voice to those on the grass roots, 'the others' who carry out the process of implementing the project as opposed to solely the decision makers and project co-ordinators.

"Social abstractions like 'education' are best understood through the experiences of individuals whose work and lives are the stuff upon which abstractions are built" (Ferrarrotti, 1981 as quoted in Siedman, 1991).

To ensure the research is ethical I will inform the respondents fully about the project and my intentions; an ethical consent form (Appendix 2) will be signed by myself and the respondent, whom I will give a copy to as well as a verbal reassurance that they are free to contact me should they have further questions or would like a copy of the dissertation.

However, I will be interviewing head teachers/ teachers in schools in Ghana thus "cross-cultural encounters often inhabit vastly different worlds or engage each other with sharply contrasting aims" (Ryen, 2002, p.336). Thus there may be cross cultural problems in building trust and rapport with the respondent or difficulties, for example, in reading body language, understanding local language nuances or reversely the respondent struggling to understand my accent and colloquialisms.

Additionally in my interviews with the British Council there may be the same issue but in reverse. The power relations may shift; and as a student the elites involved in this project, perhaps in senior positions in the British Council maybe less willing to engage in the interviewing process.

"Interviewing elites calls into questions issues of control, power, and accessibility." (Odendahl & Shaw, 2002, p.304)

Odendahl & Shaw (2002) highlight the key issues in dealing with elites, particularly in interviewing. Reflecting on their personal experience in conducting a case study on the National Network of Grantmakers (a body of major donors and advisers) they conducted over 100 interviews; many with senior executives. Indeed they encountered issues of gaining access, many elites are uninterested or simply too busy, those that do commit may be defensive, formal and authoritative, and in essence the whole process is highly labour intensive. Indeed, as a young student, deemed less experienced and knowledgeable on the

field being researched the elite may not respond in the same way they would to an equal; or may be overly formal, refraining from building a social rapport or engaging fully.

The choice to carry out non-participant and unsystematic observation within the school also has methodological issues. Ideally;

"*Simple observers follow the flow of events. Behaviour and interaction continue as they would without the presence of the researcher, uninterrupted by intrusion.*" (Adler and Adler, 1998, p.81)

However, observation leaves very little control to the researcher; the researcher must endeavour to remain conspicuous and be as 'invisible as possible' (Merken, 1989, p.15). Indeed my presence in the school, like any visitor, will rouse interest, my different dress, body language, appearance may be obtrusive to the research; but this is an inevitability that I will have to accept. The benefits of 'being there' (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997)

"*enables researchers to understand the context of programmes, to be open ended and inductive, to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, to move beyond perception based data (e.g. opinions in interviews), and to access personal knowledge.*" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p.305).

This direct access in the framework of 'Connecting Classrooms' far outweighs the limitations of this method.

Particular Methods and Procedures

Sampling

There were several sampling issues I was to contend with; firstly which cluster of schools in Ghana would I be visiting, secondly which individuals would I be interviewing. Firstly the schools sampled were based on practical requirements of transportation, accommodation, safety and the distance from Accra (the capital). Secondly, the schools were deliberately different, one being private, one public and the third an all girls school in order

to have a diverse account of the projects implementation. The schools sampled were from the Central Peaks Cluster:

- Montessori School
- Mankessim D/A Primary
- Elmina Catholic Girls JSS

Interviewee respondents were selected upon fulfilment of the following criteria;

- The subject had to be currently involved in the project decision-making process
- The subject had to be currently participating in the project; in an intimate role concerning the implementation of 'Connecting Classrooms' into the actual Schools
- The subject had to be either in the UK or in Ghana during my fortnight visit in order to have a face-to- face interview

Additionally, Ghanaians have a strong sense of respect for authority and their elders and therefore, it was important that I interview the Head of the school before speaking to the teachers. Thus my interviews were with:

- Rachel Ireland, British Council Co-ordinator (London, UK)
- Parissa Sackey, British Council programme Co-ordinator (Accra, Ghana)
- Three of the Head teachers of Cape Coast Cluster (Cape Coast, Ghana)
- At least three interviews with teachers of each of the schools in the Cape Coast Cluster (Cape Coast, Ghana)

More than three teachers from each school were spoken to during the research, this was mainly due to focus group interviewing which had to be adopted mid way through the research due to the limited time restraints at the schools. The final schedule can be seen in Table 1, the individuals highlight in the same colour show the group interviews that had to take place.

Table 1:

Interviewee	School/Organization	Position	Date
Parissa Sackey	British Council, Accra	Programs co-coordinator	
Lucy M	Mankessim School	Head teacher	March 20, 2007
Victor	Montessori School	Head teacher	March 20, 2007
James	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Ben	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Noble	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Frederick	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Addo	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Mawulolo	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Isaac	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Lucy	Elmina School	Head teacher	March 22, 2007
Regima	Elmina School	asst. Head teacher	March 23, 2007
Rebeccah	Elmina School	Teacher	March 23, 2007
Alice	Elmina School	Teacher	March 23, 2007
Mercy	Elmina School	Teacher	March 23, 2007
Evelyn	Elmina School	Teacher	March 23, 2007
Margaret	Elmina School	Teacher	March 23, 2007
Comfort	Montessori School	Teacher	March 20, 2007
Francis	Montessori School	Teacher	March 20, 2007
Josephine	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Eugenia	Mankessim School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Dominic	Montessori School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Alice	Montessori School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Clement	Montessori School	Teacher	March 21, 2007
Rachel Ireland	British Council, London	Project Co-coordinator	July 24, 2007

Gaining contact with the initial British Council representatives proved to be an arduous process; the UK representative was very difficult to reach, thus contact had to be made with the overall Project Manager, Jane Henry, in Kenya initially. Through continued perseverance in the form of emails and telephone calls to the UK and Overseas British Council Representatives, over a period of three months, the research proposal was accepted. The time frame (19- 30th March 2007) of my visit was a very busy time period for the British Council, as well as the schools in Ghana as the celebrations for 50 years of independence and the 200 years of the abolishment of slavery were in full swing; as well as end of term exams in many of the schools. However, after my insistence that I would organise my own transportation and accommodation the two week trip was confirmed. Ideally my stay would have been for much longer; and I would have visited school clusters in other vicinities such as the NUG, and GUKSA cluster in Koforidua in order to be more representative of the project.

Indeed there was much distrust about the objectives of my research in the beginning and detailed proposals were required, my supervisors contact details were asked for; as well as my consent to sign a legal disclaimer agreeing to protect the confidentiality of my work and to refrain from using the 'British Council' in my main title.

Much background documentary research was conducted prior to conducting the main methods; indeed material such as websites, promotional material, the curriculum guide, the British Council 'Learning Worlds' magazine, media coverage were all imperative to conducting interviews with prior knowledge and thus being able to probe further on issues.

Design of Research Tools

After a thorough background documentary search, mostly from online sources, and the theoretical reading an interview guide was drawn up (Appendix 2). Possessing no experience of interviewing cross-culturally and on such a complex social phenomena I conducted several informal discussions with a Ghanian colleague who was able to share much knowledge with me on the broader education, social and cultural issues in Ghana; and more specifically about colloquialisms, bodily gestures and language.

Although all were based on the 'past, present and future' of the project, there were amendments made between the two for the British Council Co-Coordinators and for the School staff.

Each interview began with a brief introduction from myself, and some informal questions to the respondent such as their thoughts on the recent celebrations of Ghana's independence, and how long they had worked at the school. This was very easy to do with the teachers, as Ghanaian people tend to be very friendly and hospitable.

Many of the questions were about the respondent's own experience with 'Connecting Classrooms', their thoughts on its implementation and future potential. Some open ended questions, were further probed, particular those that concerned ambiguity. The interviews tended to last 45-60 minutes. A conscious effort was made in the beginning not to refer to cosmopolitanism, or global citizenship in the questions in the hope that this would occur from the respondents' own answers; however mid way these terms were referred to explicitly in the questioning. The interviews were recorded with prior consent, and then later

transcribed on return to England; due to the gap between conducting the interviews and transcribing there were often phrases that needed to be clarified, these were listed and then checked with my Ghanaian informant. Overall notes were then made, and thematic highlights before writing the analysis in order to organize the material.

Observation began as soon as I arrived in British Council head quarters in Ghana; I carried pen and paper around with me so if the case arose I could write down any thoughts. Towards the end of my stay I made a more concerted effort to just make a mental note of what had been observed and then write it up later when in privacy; as some times the act of writing things down seemed to unsettle teachers or students. These observation notes were then used along with the Interview findings to conduct an overall analysis.

Challenges, Difficulties and Limitations of the Study

There were many challenges I faced throughout this research project; the process of securing access was a lengthy and exhaustive process in itself; however the hardest challenge was in Ghana. I, as the researcher, was naïve in my consideration of how much I thought my presence in the school and in class would intervene with the research. Due to the recent visit these school received from British Diplomats, and the Deputy Prime Minister; they had regarded me as a 'guest' too. I was taken around the school and introduced as an 'important visitor from London' and sensed that much preparation had gone into preparing drinks, snacks and an overall warm reception for me. Despite efforts to emphasize that I was simply researching for my dissertation it was clear that the head teachers, and teachers themselves felt that I had a more intimate involvement with the project and may be able to have a say over the decision making process. Thus power relations came into play and often I sensed staff, head teachers, as well as students in informal conversations felt the need to speak only positively about the project and about Britain itself. Indeed some 'demonstration' classes were put on to showcase the children's knowledge on Britain. My appearance also attracted much curiosity from the children and staff; as they would find an inconsistency with my British accent and Asian features. The children would often shout 'Obruni, Obruni' (white person) but then giggle and follow me to see my reaction. In class observation, to begin with as a sign of respect the teacher would seat me at the front of the room, however this would distract the children from class so after excusing myself I would sit in the back corner of the room.

On a practical level, despite bringing my laptop, and voice recorder there were many circumstances in which I was not prepared. Electricity would sometimes cut out and I would run out of copies of ethical consent forms and have to find a local Internet hut (this was particularly difficult in Mankessim). The schools had limited facilities, often they would be open rooms without doors so I would be interviewing while the children would be having choir/ sports practice right next door affecting the quality of my recordings. Indeed there were limited numbers of staff in two of the schools, and due to time constraints I had to change from doing individual interviews to unexpectedly, dealing with a group of teachers in three of the interviews, one interview in particular dealt with seven teachers in a nearly two hour conversation; this required flexibility on my part. The group format proved to offer distinctive advantages for data collection; it allowed and encouraged formation of opinions through interaction with others (Vaughn, Schumm & Sunagub, 1996) and made the situation more 'normal' for the respondents.

There were also cultural difficulties; I seem to have offended teaching staff through ignorance of certain expectations. This happened on an occasion where I passed an object with my left hand, and on another when I had been given a specialty malt drink (custom in Ghana) but wasn't able to drink it due to the strong unfamiliar taste. The greatest difficulties were ethical. Before my trip, whereby a British Council staff member in Ghana asked me to bring a few personal possessions from England; which I had to kindly refuse. Furthermore when in dialogue with teaching staff there were some interruptions spurred by my presence as a female and as a visitor to the school, where male staff would make a remark displaying interests in aspects other than my research. Essentially everything was dealt with in good humor as Ghanaian people are very caring considerate people.

Results and Discussion

The results were in many ways unexpected and challenged the research questions set. My observations were valuable in framing an interpretation of the interviews; often providing clarification on certain value judgments or expressions. Several key themes between the differing schools and teaching staff arose; although many discussed the importance of the children becoming 'global' citizens it was often due to the direction to which I led them towards in the latter part of the interview. It quickly became clear that there were many other motivations for joining 'Connecting Classrooms' and many different interpretation of how global citizenship can be realized; one such way was through developing Ghana so as a nation it could be more involved in the international arena. Here are some of the main findings.

Facilitating Global Citizens; Cosmopolitanism in the Classroom

All the teaching staff and the head teachers agreed that the Connecting Classrooms had 'broadened their horizons' through different ways. Head teachers, acting, as representatives of their school would meet, discuss and debate over how to achieve their goals; indeed this planning process is integral to the project in itself as Rachel Ireland emphasized:

> "We want people to be challenged by difference, and the reason we leave it open to the schools to decide what they want to do is so they have ownership over it…it's a way of getting teachers together, how to sort out conflict resolutions." (Interview, Rachel Ireland, 2007).

Thus the planning facilitated the need for deliberation, the need to deal with and respect difference until an equitable consensus could be reached; the teachers would then be responsible for transferring such skills into the classroom. The project itself was broad in scope, the project outline for this particular cluster ranged from personal letters between the children, to booklets about their environment, with pictures of their geographical features as well as exchanges of material between the teachers e.g. Montessori school had sent the UK some popular Ghanaian folklores, language guides and maps. This diversity in topics and flexibility had allowed the children to learn about Britain and Zimbabwe's political educational institutions, their climate and local environment, about their food, language, favorite music or websites in a sincere and engaging way. The process of interaction in itself seemed to be

providing confidence to the children. Many teachers noticed a transition from a certain reserved shyness to a desire to learn more; *"Before they were shy, now they interact more, they have made friends from the other schools and write them"* (Interview, Regina, 2007).

According to the teachers, not only were the children better informed and knowledgeable about other children in Britain and Zimbabwe but they asked questions; they had built a curiosity that led them to challenge the world around them more critically. Thus they took enjoyment out of working out the complexity of the people, cultures they were engaging with; achieving this is fundamental to their future as global citizens according to Walker (2006). This was affirmed with my own interaction with the children, during one class in particular on citizenship, many of the pupils wanted to ask me about Britain; how we do things, such as adopt a child. On another occasion a student at Montessori School came into dialogue over the political regime, pointing out that if they too chose to democratize like Ghana then countries, such as Britain would be able to help more.

The children also felt very attached to the environment, not only was this shown in the utmost respect they displayed for their school grounds but in their awareness on global ecological issues through Connecting Classroom's focus on *"gardening projects, with a focus on food growing, tree planting, composting and environmental management."* (Learning World, 2007). The teachers recognized that through the pragmatic approach of this component the children felt they were involved in a global effort, that they really can help make the… *"Earth a better place, global warming needs all hands on decks, this is what's happening to our earth; so lets do this!"* (Interview, Victor, 2007).

Other 'practical' elements centered around discussion on citizenship in a pragmatic sense; what is the protocol for visiting other countries? Why do you need a Visa? What does the African Union do? Indeed Rachel Ireland stressed that this practical element was encouraged so as to allow children to digest the larger issues of our time in smaller more tenable ways as the generation now faces many more obstacles and complexities than in the past;

> *"I think as things have progressed in the twentieth century the world has become a smaller place in many senses, the media gives you up to date information about anywhere potentially and to gain an understanding and grasp those issues without just thinking 'Oh my gosh, how on earth do I deal with that?! I think if, when you are in school, or whatever level of intellectual experience, you need to gain an experience of what those are, because its only going to get more important the smaller the world gets."* (Interview, Rachel Ireland, 2007)

For the head teachers, who had had the opportunity to travel to contact seminar meetings in the capital of Ghana (Accra), Zimbabwe and Kenya and also, on a trip to Britain where they visited the schools in their cluster they felt they had learnt much more about Britain and also had the opportunity to change a few misconceptions and stereotypes that British children held about Africa. The head teacher of Elmina girls' school exclaimed

> *"I want the children to come to Ghana; they thought we were living in caves as animals… when we went to dine with them they watched to see if we would use cutlery. There was some sort of ignorance over there…. we have to, we have to (do this project)."* (Interview, Lucy, 2007)

Frustration at these misconceptions and ignorance was displayed by much of the staff; who felt the British perceived Ghanaians, Africans in stereotypical ways. They felt it important that British children know that Ghanaian children are the *"same as them; we are the same as them, there is no difference, just they are more advanced than us"*, another teacher emphasized *"they keep pets, we keep pets, they put on uniform, we also put on uniform, they have a national anthem, we also do"* (Interview, Victor, 2007).

Indeed the head teachers that visited were shocked at the level of ignorance of children; *"They did not know we wear uniforms, that we are sittin' on desks and table and having a playground, I took photos to show this is the real thing"* (Interview, Lucy M: 2007). Such misconceptions were held by the Ghanaian children too, who felt the British were snobbish, the head teacher of Montessori informed me;

> *"A mega survey was done in Kenya, it showed Africa perceive Britain in a certain way which was of a bad taste to the government. They realized people have a bad perception towards the British this programme is to clear the perception; the British are like us, they think like us, they are not snobbish, they are friendly, they tolerate people."* (Interview, Victor, 2007).

Although these examples were specific to Britain, in relation to Africa the teachers emphasized that these misconceptions were a global issue; the underlying assertion being that 'Connecting Classrooms' could potentially be the vehicle of change. Ben at Elmina's girl's schools emphasized;

> *"Most of them (the children) don't know other cultures, so they see the Arabs and they fear them because they don't understand them, but if they get to know them, the different cultures they know why they are putting that on and using all that they will have awareness"* (Interview, Francis, 2007)

This was supported at Montessori School were the head teacher exclaimed;

> *"We will have less problems with the terrorists, yes you see, because we make them part of us, part of our decision making bodies and understand whatever we are doing and then they join us; so why would they fight us?! But now they feel isolated, they want their presence felt."* (Interview, Victor, 2007)

Thus the progress in dispelling myths and encourages a child to step into the shoes of another child half way across the world fulfils an integral prerequisite for cosmopolitanism. However another prerequisite is that it should be the shoes of *any* child; it did become noticeable that the staff and children addressed Britain far more than their other cluster partner Zimbabwe. Perhaps this was in honor of my presence; it was clear that many of the classes were deliberately put on as 'demonstration' lessons as I had often heard attempts from the head teachers to discretely whisper to colleagues that my interviews were done and that I would be arriving soon. Hence, many classes were on colonialism, citizenship and social studies such as the global climate; and in one case from the children's reaction it was clear they were bemused as to why this was being focused on in the run up to their Mathematics exams. Aside from this in general conversation with some of the students and the teachers their knowledge and curiosity was for Britain in particular; the children would fondly speak of their national sports heroes playing for England's football team, or ask about London and its music scene. During my time with the children during their breaks they would be eager to ask me what websites and music I liked; they would want to exchange emails or msn addresses even though it was clear they had limited access to the internet and joked that they would come to London. Indeed the head teacher of Montessori exclaimed;

> *"Everything you ask now they are interested in Britain, formally every child knows about America through the media, but with this programme you can have a lot of people knowing about Britain, so now it is not only America that is popular; Britain is also popular."* (Interview, Victor, 2007)

For the teachers, it was less a trend but that they aspired to 'learn from Britain'; *"We want to interact with them so we can learn a lot from them… we have to strive in the future in whatever we can do so we can be a par globally; a big challenge for us"* (Interview, Lucy, 2007)

Several teachers when commenting on their motivations for joining the project talked about how they hoped to acquire skills from Britain to help themselves progress, as well as their country; in informal conversations with three of the teachers they wanted to know

about further learning, study and teaching possibilities and in a macro context they talked about Ghana needing to 'follow in Britain's footsteps'. It suggests that the teachers had subscribed to a feeling that to be global is to *be* like Britain; to follow the West. There was a pressure to meet the challenge of this 'Connecting Classrooms' Project, with its cosmopolitan aims; to instill global interest in many cultures, to create a desire to be responsible for the rest of the world and global crises when it was clear that Ghana, the teachers of Ghana felt they were on an unequal foundation and would have to work much harder to achieve such aims. There exists a clear misalignment between the official stance on the attributes of global citizenship, whereby Rachel Ireland stressed the importance of young people in different countries learning, understanding more about each other and having a commitment to global sustainability and issues such as migration; whereas for the teaching staff in Ghana it became about developing as a nation, modernizing in pursuit of the West and gaining entry to global citizenship. Again, this is a key nuance in creating global citizens; on what premise and whose delegation are priorities, prerequisites ascribed? (Dower, 2003).

At Montessori school, which was fortunate as a private school to have better resources and computers for example, the head teacher openly talked about a major motivation of being connected with Britain through 'Connecting Classrooms' was to possess a certain cosmopolitan 'image'. The project would immediately make the school more marketable and have a better status than other private schools, as parents were willing to pay for that international dimension;

> *"The motivation was the school will have an international dimension, we did not know the deputy prime minister but then he came, it adds to our image, especially as a private school, so you know when people from outside visit, it places us above the other schools in the region."* (Interview, Victor: 2007)

This again suggests the insincerity of this cosmopolitan endeavor; its construction as a 'stylistic cosmopolitanism' (Zolo, 1997) that is only available to whose with the capacity to consume it through tourism, education, culture; thus further alienating the concept from the majority of Ghanaian people, who already feel they need to aspire to the West to achieve global belonging, and be considered 'modern'.

Connecting Classrooms; Connecting the Global and the Local

The relevance of space and place became very important in much discussion with the teachers; it was clear that the 'Connecting Classrooms' project had provided the children with a stronger sense of their own place locally as well as instilling a sense of belonging to a territorial sphere beyond the nation, a global community (Parmentar, 2007); something that media exposure had been unable to achieve. The teachers felt that exposure to other cultures through education, and through the personal approach of Connecting Classrooms, directly corresponding with children in Britain and Zimbabwe…

> *"Is more appropriate, better than the media at teaching the children about other cultures; a lot of things on the media are not right, or bias, this is the real thing; more believable."* (Interview, Comfort, 2007)

It was stressed that many of the children, particularly at the public schools have only had exposure to their immediate locality; rarely having had the opportunity to travel Ghana let alone the rest of the world. Through their involvement with 'Connecting Classrooms', the children were brought together from their different localities, and social backgrounds to produce the work, the festivals for the project and the recent visit form the British Deputy Prime Minister. Indeed this was a huge achievement, as the children had met, made friends and now corresponded between themselves bridging *internal* social divisions between the public / private school stigma through a sense of local, and patriotic pride. The children were excited to be celebrating Ghana's 50th Independence, they had badges, pens, flags and t-shirts devoted to the cause, whatever their age and background. The head teacher of Mankessim felt there was more local unity; *"this will keep the peace, even nationally, like how we are working with our sister schools, Mankessim with Montessori, Elmina, there will be that kind of cordiality between the schools, it will unite the students in these local areas."* (Interview, Lucy M, 2007)

More importantly the teachers emphasized that the children are becoming more confident, some children who had only lived a village life and had never even traveled around Ghana gained the chance to go to Cape Coast; thus one teacher emphasized now they will 'travel, do sight seeing'. These small developments are all indicative of the children gaining a disposition towards leaving their 'safety zones' (Rantanen, 2005) and experiencing new places, people, languages and culture; all indicative of a bright future as global citizens. As one teacher pointed out the effects of this project are not solely on the children; *"These*

children will go home, they will tell their families, then the local communities benefit too and it will all help with global issues." (Interview, Ben, 2007). Thus the importance of equipping these children with global qualities was seen as possible through a strong sense of the local, and simultaneously as an important marker for helping community and disseminating their knowledge with society as a whole.

Having discussed the way in which 'Connecting Classrooms' facilitated global citizens, through activities and the 'local' and how the notion of the global differed between the parties involved; it is important to analyze how the project had limitations and perhaps barriers to fulfilling the global aims and objectives outlined for the project. Indeed from my time in the schools in Ghana it became clear that highlighting these issues was an important priority for the head teachers and teachers there.

Barriers to cosmopolitanism and creating global citizens

On immediate arrival, the first school I visited was Montessori school; considering this was a renowned private school I was still startled at their lack of resources and in deed this shock only deepened when visiting Elmina and Mankessim public schools. At both of these schools I was shown around the school, and the staff would point out the lack of science equipment, the practically non existent musical and sports equipment; 'we need a lot as you can see yourself' one teacher remarked in good humor. Indeed every one of the teachers and head teachers wanted to emphasize their need for better resources and funding; some more seriously than others. From the very school building itself, to facilities, to class sizes and the lack of access to technology; the staff viewed them not only as barriers to fully allowing their students to be globally active, but in a larger context to preventing Ghana, Africa to join the global arena in an equitable position and to improving the 'Connecting Classrooms' endeavor. In the beginning it seems these needs were entirely neglected as the head teacher of Montessori exclaimed;

> *"The project initially did not allow the buying of computers but I had to argue it, so now each class gets one laptop… I am fortunate I have ten computers but still we are not connected to the Internet, the public schools, well they have nothing"* (Interview, Victor, 2007)

In the case of Mankessim and Elmina girls school, they were reliant on the British Council for their first computer; one teacher expressed:

"We can't do anything about it unless the government will give it. Cant get the money from anywhere; the parents cant provide the materials…Children don't even know what computers are, they don't have it, even we can just read about them or see them in the media" (Interview, Lucy M, 2007)

With the funding stipend the schools were counting on purchasing digital cameras, printers, a computer; however the head teachers, and teachers confided in me that the bank accounts had been opened, the syllabus implemented but the money had still not been provided from the British Council.

"The laptop has not come and our grant has not been released; in all the activities we have paid the expense. The heads organized all internal traveling to meetings, we have kept the programme running, here everyone wants to be a part, and everyone wants to be a part." (Interview, Victor, 2007)

In the focus group meeting at Elmina girl's school, where seven respondents interacted, this topic area became particularly sensitive as the group atmosphere allowed them to unite in their disapproval of some elements of the project. In an exasperated manner one teacher asked; *"Why have we not had a single computer, I'm asking you why, do you know?"* (Interview, Addo, 2007). As a result of their lack of facilities the teachers at Elmina felt they were less involved than Montessori, the private school in which most of the communication to the UK and Zimbabwe was conducted. Indeed it became clear during my stay that many British Council visitors were sent to Montessori school, there were framed pictures proudly hanging on the walls; whereas in Elmina and Mankessim there were fewer visitors and for most events, such as the recent British Deputy Prime minister, the performances and reception were hosted unsurprisingly at Montessori. A teacher at Elmina exclaimed; *"You have seen Montessori, they have the facilities, and we don't, so sometimes we feel marginalized, very, very marginalized."* (Interview, Noble, 2007)

A suggestion made by several of the teachers is that funding and technology (at least a computer) should be in place *before* the project takes place in order to enrich the activities; "implement the technology before and that alone would make the project succeed." This was further supported with some ideas of how that technology would encourage the children to understand each other for example *"if we had the internet we could chat live on web cam, or send each other pictures."*. Many of these concerns were

highlighted by Cheah (1998) who argues many of the cultural global organizations do not practice universal inclusivity and more importantly; to make the first world cosmopolitan model the ideal would demand a high, perhaps even unattainable amount of economic development in the south of the world.

When broaching this issue with Rachel Ireland from the British Council in London (who had little experience on the schools in Ghana, as her field was the UK) she asserted;

> *"I wonder if you asked them, explored a little deeper what they meant by that comment and if they need those things for school life in general or if they need them specifically for the Connecting Classrooms project. I understand there is an issue of resource in these schools, even in some schools in the UK but the schools make their partnership and they agree this is what we want to do, this is what we need…finance will always be finite."* (Interview, Ireland, 2007)

Following this it was stressed that the focus was not development, rather that the funding was solely to ensure the project was carried out; indeed where does the line between school life in general end and Connecting Classrooms begin? This sharp demarcation is in sharp contrast to the desire to go above and beyond in much of the teachers' dedication in Ghana, particularly in incorporating the elements into the national curriculum with the pressure of limited teaching staff; I personally observed teachers and students staying on longer to complete their activities.

Furthermore Rachel emphasized that the schools decided themselves what activities and resources will be involved the project; however in discussion with the head teacher of Montessori it was expressed that there was some disagreement with the initial project draft, of whom the project leader was a teacher from the UK cluster and this was re-drafted in a bid to make the project 'more suitable for our children and school'; however it is clear from the project outline that digital cameras, laptops, and video-cameras are necessary. It seems there is some miscommunication that Rachel as a project co-coordinator is unaware of. Indeed the only teachers that said they felt they were fully informed of everything going on were in Mankessim School, and that was very much under the pressure of the Headmistress being present and assuring me she had conducted her role in informing all staff. It was clear from simple questions about the role and timescale of the project that many knew little about the decision making process. Rachel Ireland herself had omitted that there had been communicational problems, even within the decision making process from above;

> *"Even within the British Council offices themselves they all have slightly different agendas in relation to all sorts of things but we are all signed up to value the school partnership and there are obviously communications things we have to sort out, whose responsible for what and who do you talk to when such a such thing happens; so basic logistical things. In relation to the school partnerships themselves you mean, you know its never an easy thing to do, to establish a relationship between schools, teachers, students and it takes a lot of hard work and commitment; which is why we say in our selection criteria you need to be committed to a certain number of things in relation to the project meeting as many pupils in the schools as possible, that you get as many teachers involved, you've got the support of the head teacher so that when things happen as invariably they do because its life, then there are systems in place and a commitment to making it work."* (Interview, Rachel Ireland, 2007).

Rachel's emphasis that this was an issue of commitment as opposed to having the right mechanism of support seemed to omit the responsibility of British Council in following the project right from inception to fulfilment.

Additionally some limitations highlighted by teachers were firstly the fact that only one representative from each school is able to go to the contact seminars and British Council led workshops;

> *"They should run a workshop for all of us. So it looks like most of us are not interested (gesturing the rest of the teachers) but we don't know what's going on, the British Council should run a workshop for everyone who is involved. Confidence comes from the workshops, you need to be there; we are not familiar with the connecting concepts."* (Interview, Frederick, 2007)

It seemed that for the teachers in the Central Peaks cluster the most exciting element of the project was the potential to meet others in person and be able to interact, and learn from them in a more intimate way than was possible at present. In a more pragmatic sense it also meant that the project curriculum was formulated at a contact seminar meeting without their input; thus already having time constraints from the national curriculum, limited resources, large class sizes with limited number of staff the teachers were expected to adopt new material and integrate it wherever they could. In the large focus group meeting of teachers at Mankessim school they had expressed their concern with the additional pressure of studying literature with unfamiliar phrases despite their proficiency in English; *"Look at some of the literature, the children write their paper but we have to give 10% error because there are some terms used that are different to Ghana, or Africa, they use some terms only the British would know."* (Interview, Addo, 2007). The head teacher at Montessori spoke of similar problems with some Shakespearean texts that were sent over. Thus as one teacher asserted;

"We must keep our national diversity and interests in a world framework, I believe in unity, one syllabus but the fear after this is, would it be possible? That is the fear."
(Interview, Noble, 2007)

Even at an early stage in conducting the research it became clear that my use of the word 'cosmopolitanism' either in the interview question or in any informal discussion was ambiguous; the teaching staff in Ghana found it intangible; in an effort to be polite they would not point this out directly, rather they expressed it through long pauses, tense body language and short answers (usually 'yes it is'). Thus, I decided to stop using the word and instead employed adjectives and description of cosmopolitan qualities as highlighted by much of the literature review. However the sheer inability to articulate the term is in itself a huge barrier to cosmopolitanism in the classroom.

Discussion

In the fashion of 'Connecting' the focus will now turn to addressing the findings in light of the original research questions, dealing with issues of the importance of the project, how it facilitated cosmopolitanism, what information was exchanged in a bid to construct global citizens. Inextricably there are strong facilitators of global citizenship inherent in the project; much information was shared through the project from facts about the climate and geography, pragmatic information on traveling and how to get a visa, from description of the social and community life and to the literal day-to-day realities and norms for the children. However the real facilitation lay beyond the field of being informed; *interaction* was integral. The teachers were all pleased at the opportunity for the children of Ghana to interact directly with the children in Britain and Zimbabwe. Elements of the project, such as the visual diaries, the letters, the intimate exchanges through old fashioned letter writing allowed a sense of friendship to be formed between the children, as well as a greater sense of self in a macro context; the children could 'see', 'question' their fellow global citizens across the other side of the world thus they began to articulate themselves *in* the global. As Nussbaum emphasized, to simply know is not enough, to begin to understand and respect both self and other is the true challenge (1996). The children were able to learn skills of deliberation, social interaction with a cultural 'Other' and enter the second segment of being 'active' on specific global issues in Heater's (1997) spectrum of Global citizenship. There is no doubt that this project went above and beyond simply being 'informative'; whether the children were aspiring to be 'global' on their terms or aspiring to the pervading Western take on cosmopolitanism remains ambiguous.

It was inextricably clear that the children aspired to the technology, internet access, gaming privileges held by children in the developed world, indeed technological proficiency became the measure of how global one was; this remained unacknowledged by the British Council Co-Coordinator in London, who felt that it was more an issue of how well other cultures were explored and understood, subscribing to the Kantian view of 'universal hospitality' (1991). Indeed this highlights that there is not enough research or understanding of how such polemic terms; global citizenship, cosmopolitanism are interpreted in the developing world, in this case Ghana. Omolewa (2006) is right to argue for a better understanding of such concepts through global comparisons and contrasts.

The ability to question present assumptions and stereotypes was a key achievement for the teaching staff in Ghana; it was important to breakdown misrepresentations of Africa. Indeed in a broader context, this was another motivation for Ghana to join 'Connecting Classrooms'; they saw it as a way to develop the nation against media misrepresentations. The strong identity formation that the children had built on their locality; was only intensified by meeting other local children; but as Held (1995) has emphasized global citizens are not simply rootless; conversely they hold strong roots in their local civic communities; which they then transcend above the national to the transnational. Thus 'Connecting Classrooms' enabled a re-articulation of the global *through* the local; and for the families and villages of these children, a re-articulation of the *local* through the global influence of these pupils. This demonstrates that education can incorporate a global dimension in balance with the preservation of and in the interests of local cultural identities; certainly a prerequisite to creating 'globally orientated citizens' (Parekh, 2003).

As Zolo (1997) has emphasized the developing world does not have the resources to undertake a commitment to cosmopolitanism as outlined from a Western point of view; this is a blunt but accurate diagnosis. There were many ambitions, many innovative ideas that the teaching staff in Ghana had considered; but the reality remained that they were dependent on the British Council to actualize these. The fact remains these schools cannot be helped by their government because national resources are stretched and this was the stark reality of schools everywhere in Ghana. Most importantly the digital divide, clearly projected by the microcosm of the schools in this project, had profound effects; a feeling of marginalization was invoked, and a need to play catch up. The British Council standpoint, that finances are finite and irrelevant if commitment is there, is very easy to assert from the

comfort of one's office in London, where access to the internet, to a computer, telephone, fax are all taken for granted; indeed ideas must have legs and more must be done to alleviate the problems in Africa than simply understanding and empathizing with them. More must be done to provide the support needed in the developing world to educate global citizens. We live in an information society, our every economic, social and political phenomena is networked; without access you do not belong, and become marginalized (Castells, 2000). The marginalization of social groups could have profound and troubling consequences; projects like 'Connecting Classrooms' need to take one step further and bridge real global difference before they can achieve one global consciousness and sense of being. Thus, any future discussion on global citizenship through education must focus more on the limitations and barriers erected; as the idealistic notions of much cosmopolitan conceptualization does not apply to the developing world.

Conclusion: Reflections on the Present & Connections to a Future of Educating Global Citizens.

Ghana's plight, to catch up with the West, to change misconceptions of Africa and their sense of marginalization from the 'cosmopolitan imaginary' (Calhoun, 2003) is the plight and burden of all countries in the developing world. The 'cosmopolitan' of the West translates into 'global, skilled and technologically advanced' in the minds of Ghanaians; who are striving to become one component amongst the many powerful nodes of global communication networks that are taking over our world (Castells, 2000). The dire lack of resources and access to technology has left the teachers in Ghana wrought with frustration; for they know the self-fulfilling prophecy that will start churning its ugly head; *without* technology their knowledge and development is curbed, *with* technology comes the need to have knowledge to employ it, else it remains redundant. Thus the motivation for the schools in Ghana, to be part of 'Connecting Classrooms' was as much as to gain the actual resources and technology needed as it was to *learn from* Britain the competencies required to use it.

Indeed my primary research question is rendered superfluous until the larger issues of global inequality are over come; and the conceptualizations of the very ideals being strived for made more accessible and representative of those in the developing world. This research has only dented what remains a large barrier to achieving the construction of global citizens through education; more research must be carried out, particularly through comparison between the Developed and Developing world to ascertain what the global citizen *is* according to a *representative* world belief; only then can the educational structures be implemented to facilitate it.

It is recognized that 'Connecting Classrooms' is a new and innovative project and thus the smaller issues of miscommunication, particularly concerning funding are logistical and readily remedied. Thus, the objectives of future research would be to openly identify the strategic motivations of differing parties with a larger sample than the practical constraints of this research allowed for, in order to then consolidate them into a sole objective; to attempt to readily define the 'global citizen' and the cosmopolitan on the terms of those whose voices are unheard and to recognize that the countries partaking in the project are not embarking from an equal foundation of resources or standing. Before assessing the structures in place to facilitate education for global citizens, we must identify and implement the structures to enable all countries to join the global deliberation process on such ideals.

Governments, NGOs, researchers, teachers, education specialists, all must turn their attention to how our children of today, and citizens of tomorrow can be equipped with the skills, resources and knowledge to become global citizens.

As the famous Ghanian proverb goes 'It takes a village to raise a child' -indeed, a truly *global* village.

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Appendix 1

A small window of insight into the Cape Cluster 'Connecting Classrooms' Schools, and their invaluable teaching staff; who requested these images be included in my dissertation so as to shed light on Ghana. Consent was granted for each photo.

[**Note of the Editors:** Unfortunately some of the photos needed to be removed to reduce the size of this file]

Appendix 1

Appendix 2a. Interview Guide used to conduct interviews in Ghana.

Interview Agenda
→ Provide introduction and brief interviewee on research project, ask for consent to record and transcribe the interview.
→ Ask them for their personal details, their position and build some rapport.

Past: innovation & implementation
→ How did you hear about the project?
→ how did you get involved with the project?
→ what was your initial personal reaction
→ what was your motivation to get involved
→/ hypotheses
→ Overall objectives, motivations and reservations of the scheme
→ was there a planning process and how did it work? -were they involved?
What were the original goals and areas to be targeted?
→ How was the scheme received by the general public i.e. parents, children and local community
→ what collaborations across communities, groups, countries needed to take place for the project to be implemented
→ were there any tensions in the preliminary negotiations?

Present: progress, challenges and effects
→ describe the project as it is presently
→in what ways is this project distinct/different from other exchange type programs in creating notion of the 'global'?
→ what areas of the syllabus do they feel particularly aid the construction of global citizens
→ what sites of the syllabus were difficult to agree on or teach in a cosmopolitan way? E.g. when teaching history is it difficult to cover different cultural realities
→ how do they think they achieve good cultural understanding as opposed to simple awareness
→how do they feel the children have responded; do they think the children see themselves less as Ghanaian, or British and more as citizens of the world?
→ what skills have the children developed through this scheme to help them succeed in a globalized world
→ have they had to be flexible often, have situations arose where teaching has had to adapt to overcome difficulty to respond to this 'global syllabus'?
→ if some scepticism or problems are highlighted follow this up by relating it to the macrostructure of the project i.e. have the organisers, the project managers understood and empathised with difficulties

Future: relevance and potential
→ how will project continue (practically will funding continue, and speculatively has it been well supported and successful?)
→ what relevance will it hold?
→ what can it achieve? Can it truly expand to other places like South America/ India?
→ would they choose to make changes/ developments?

Appendix 2b.

Interview Agenda for British Council Project Co-Coordinator

Interview Agenda
→ Provide introduction and brief interviewee on research project, ask for consent to record and transcribe the interview.
→ Ask them for their personal details, their position and build some rapport.

Past: innovation & implementation
→ how was 'Connecting Classrooms conceived?
→ how did you get involved with the project?
→ what was your initial personal reaction
→ what was your motivation to get involved
→/ hypotheses
→ how would you describe the overall objectives of the project
→ was there a planning process and how did it work?
→how long did it take to plan and implement?
→ in what sense were you involved; professionally and personally?
→ were special expertise sought necessary for the project?
→ What were the original goals and areas to be targeted?
→ how was the project received by others in the British Council?
→ How was the scheme received by the general public i.e. parents, children and local community
→ what collaborations across communities, groups, countries needed to take place for the project to be implemented
→ were there any tensions in the preliminary negotiations?
→ obviously there are huge differences economically and educationally in terms of infrastructure between the developing countries of Africa and developed Britain; what considerations had to be made in order for the project to be mutually successful?
→ in a cultural sense did you anticipate any difficulties e.g. different values attached to certain folk tales, or different priorities placed on activities such as the diary?
→ in a larger context, living in a global village and as some would argue a cosmopolitan era how did you see a project such as Connecting Classrooms intersecting with our contemporary times?
→ was the timing of the project important for British Council; e.g. importance of global events such as 9/ 11, fundamentalism, war, celebration of Ghana's independence etc.?

Present: progress, challenges and effects
→ describe the project as it is presently
→ Ulf Hannerz has described cosmopolitanism as a willingness to engage with the other in a sincere way; would you say Connecting Classrooms is actualizing this?
→ George Walker has argued we can produce global citizens through several criterion ranging from examining the ideas of others that challenge our own beliefs, dealing with tensions, ambiguities, and change; do you think that the activities such as sharing knowledge on games and local values cultures of the children is a step towards this?
→in what ways is this project distinct/different from other exchange type programs in creating notion of the 'global'?
→ growing discourse on international/ global realm of education; how do you think Connecting Classrooms contributes to this?

→ what areas of the syllabus do you feel particularly aid the construction of globally aware citizens

→ what sites of the syllabus were difficult to construct in a cosmopolitan way?

→ how do they think the British Council, and the schools involved have achieved good cultural understanding as opposed to simple awareness

→how do you feel the children have responded; do they think the children see themselves less as Ghanian, or British and more as citizens of the world?

→ what skills have the children developed through this scheme to help them succeed in a globalized world

→ has there been any changes, developments through its first implementation in order to serve it better as a global project?

→ have you found yourself, and those involved well supported in making such amendments?

→ in terms of making the project practically possible in Africa, which was a huge task how well do you feel the project has succeeded?

→ one common concern that kept coming up was the fear of not being on par with Britain, not only in terms of lack of resources but a sense of concern about how they may be wrongly perceived by children and indeed adults in Britain; do you think these concerns are relevant to the success of the project?

→ what would you say are the differences in values attached to this project for the many countries involved?

Future: relevance and potential

→ how will project continue (practically will funding continue?)

→ how would you define success?

→ has Connecting Classrooms been successful so far?

→ what relevance will it hold?

→ what can it achieve? Can it truly expand to other places like South America/ India?

→ would they choose to make changes/ developments?

→ do you think this project has political value; could the skills developed allow for these children to better involve themselves in global civil society?

→ what has been your fondest memory during the project?

Thank Rachel for her time and greet her good bye.

Appendix 2c Ethical Consent Form

<u>Creating Global Citizens?</u>

<u>Educational Endeavours in the Case of Ghana</u>

<u>Researcher: Mandeep Samra</u>
BA (Hons) Oxford University, MSc Global Communications at LSE, MA Global Communications USC University

I am a Masters student conducting my dissertation research on educational projects (in this case Connecting Classrooms) in Ghana, and would be highly grateful for your time on this interview (no longer than 60 minutes) which will ask you about your insights and experiences of the project.

Participation is voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have and will ensure the utmost confidentiality of your details by maintaining professional protocol.

Thank You

Best
Error! Contact not defined.
London School of Economics
Department of Communications
Email: m.k.samra@lse.ac.uk
Tel: 07947 684 417

_____

I understand the basic procedure of this study and am aware that I may discontinue participation at any time. I hereby give my consent to participate.

_____   _____

          Participant signature and name   Date

I have personally discussed the research procedure and am satisfied he/she understands the information provided.

_____   _____

          Researcher signature   Date

Appendix 3

Interview Transcript: Rachel Ireland, British Council Project Co-Coordinator (London)

I: Can I ask you a few questions about your role and position in the British Council?

R: Well I work specifically, one hundred percent on the Connecting Classrooms project, I've been with the British Council for just over a year now and in fact I was employed specifically in relation to implementing it. The initiative itself is regional, its come together from many different branches, its not UK driven; thus I was recruited to identify and select schools to be involved in the project."

I: so did you have much involvement in selecting the schools in Africa?

R: No just the UK schools

I: And how did you go about selecting those?

R: um, well theres thouasands of schools in the UK, so we wanted a mix of schools, primary, secondary, from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, I located these mainly through LEAs, not all have it, and then I contacted the school directly and obviously there was a large promotional drive, that our colleague who works here worked on…

I: is that Josephine?

R: yes Jo, Jo Power. Then we developed the website, the application form and we anticipated that there would competition between schools, UK schools like to get involved in international programmes. So that was the first step, so then we sent out invites and the selection panel chose the final schools.

I: so what was your initial personal reaction?

R: Exciting to be working on something new, for a start and it was a new job, a new organization as I hadn't worked for the British Council

I: how would you describe the overall objectives of the project?

R: The objective is through joint curriculum in schools to improve perceptions young people have of each other in different countries

I: So after selecting the schools were selected how was the project implemented?
The schools are identified then we build clusters, we gather the teachers at a series of contact seminars ran annually. We've developed a methodology through a number of, sort of the best of what the British Council has done in relation to this sort of work…we've had a lot of contact seminar work throughout World Links team, which is about establishing school partnerships, but also we worked very closely with another programme, which is an African-led programme 'Interaction'. We use their philosophy and principles to identify ways of getting teachers together to discuss ways of working, how to sort out conflict resolutions, you know those sorts of things and through that they decide themselves what schools they

would want to partner up with. At the contact seminars the project curriculum is designed and a project plan drawn up. British Council approves the plan and the funds are then released.

R: Its interesting you mention ;conflict resolution, this is common within NGOs ….

I: The conflict resolution sort of referred to the overcoming of personal conflicts in the decision making process

R: Did you have to seek any specialist advice, were there any kinds of education specialists that you had to involve?

I: We use education specialists within the British Council and I am also, you know a specialist in education. We've worked through, interacted with many specialists in the field of leadership and we use them to help us develop the project so yes.

R: How was the project received by others?
So how was it delivered by schools, the public?

I: Yes, I mean generally

R:Well it was positive, people tend to like being invited to apply for something its positive thing so at that stage it was exciting for them

I: Are there any particular benefits for the school in the UK? As I know in Ghana the schools receive some funding

R: Part of the drive is obviously financial. Another is the government drive in England and Wales, and set in different ways Ireland and Scotland which is about putting internationalism at the heart of education and Charles Clarke the education secretary spoke about putting the 'world' into 'world class education' and so schools know that it can be something recognized in an OFSTED report. They also know its something that can improve the motivation of their pupils and those sorts of things.

I: Obviously there are huge differences between these countries, their differing cultures, motivations so what considerations had to be made bridge those differences or what difficulties were there?

R: well, even within the British Council offices themselves they all have slightly different agendas in relation to all sorts of things, you know different stake holders in different countries, but we are all signed up to value the school partnership and there are obviously communications things we have to sort out, whose responsible for what and who do you talk to when such a such thing happens; so basic logistical things. In relation to the school partnerships themselves you mean, you know its never an easy thing to do, to establish a relationship between schools, teachers, students and it takes a lot of hard work and commitment; which is why we say in our selection criteria you need to be committed to a certain number of things in relation to the project meeting as many pupils in the schools as possible, that you get as many teachers involved, you've got the support of the head teacher so that when things happen as invariably they do because its life, then there are systems in place and a commitment to making it work.

I: Some of the activities are very specific, like the story telling, whats the purpose of those activities?

R: We want people to be challenged by difference, and the reason we leave it open to the schools to decide what they want to do is so they have ownership over it; they know they want to do this and this is how.If you tell them what to do its much more difficult to get their full motivation and commitment

I: Also in a practical sense the schools in Ghana felt they didn't have the resources to be globally on par…

R: The practical difficulties, well that's part of the learning process I think, any frustrations and surprises are part of learning.

I: in a larger context, living in a global village and as some would argue a cosmopolitan era how did you see a project such as Connecting Classrooms intersecting with our contemporary times?

R: Again that's a fundamental thing of what we're trying to do, We believe in all those things, and obviously part of the remit of the British Council is to promote British culture. Gosh! if I had had that opportunity at school, to have that input in so many different cultures, I mean I think it's a fantastic thing. We owe it to our people, to our children to give those opportunities now, whatever the age group

I: Ulf Hannerz has described cosmopolitanism as a willingness to engage with the other in a sincere way; would you say Connecting Classrooms is actualizing this?

R: Yeah absolutely; otherwise I wouldn't be here! We want to go beyond the local and think global. The results by and large show it does improve concentration, the children understand more about the wider world; of course there is much more we can do in the sense of creating global citizens"

I: why do you think its important that children are global citizens?

R: Well I think as things have progressed in the twentieth century the world has become a smaller place in many senses, the media gives you up to date information about anywhere potentially and to gain an understanding and grasp those issues without just thinking 'Oh my gosh, how on earth do I deal with that?! I think if, when you are in school, or whatever level of intellectual experience, you need to gain an experience of what those are, because its only going to get more important the smaller the world gets and more in our lifetimes; well I'm a little older than you are but we've seen England go from being the United Kingdom to become part of Europe and all these Eastern countries becoming part of the European Union and its changing the way people see their identities, themselves and migration. So many different cultures in one place and its so much to do with identity and caring about the world you live in.

R: Do you think, a project like this, if it continues, successfully alongside other global efforts due you think it could help with global issues such as terrorism and the world is truly cosmopolitan?

I: I'm not sure I'm that much of an idealist myself, but what we have to do is try; I don't think I can answer that in any other way. If people keep trying to understand things, understand each other that goes somewhat to achieving that

I: George Walker has argued we can produce global citizens through several criterion ranging from examining the ideas of others that challenge our own beliefs, dealing with tensions, ambiguities, and change; could you talk about some of the elements of the project that deal with these?

R: I think the first one is most relevant and yes definitely; essentially that's what the selection criteria asks for and the project curriculum does. Every area, whatever subject can contribute, sharing stories from cultures and you can learn about another way of thinking. There are always similarities as well as differences, often surprisingly.

I: I know some of the schools in Ghana are going to receive a camera, and computer; do you think this will go somewhat towards helping create global citizens by giving the technical skills?

R: I realize some don't have electricity, or any connection to the internet. Depends what the technology is used for. Need to train teachers first and foremost, allowing for better communication with the different countires, then all manner of things could happen, maybe video conferencing and teaching online.

I: In what ways is this project different to other global endeavors such as UNESCO and Global Gateway?

R: Obviously there are similarities and i'm not going to say this is the most unique project in the world, because I don't really know that it is. But for the purpose for which it was set up, which was getting young people to understand their cultures and to get rid of the incorrect assumptions that many people naturally have and for a lot of reasons its been innovative in these ways.

I: Have you had feedback from the schools or evaluated the project?

R: We do monitor to check the money is being spent appropriately, that the schools are achieving the aims and doing what they said they would do. We also receive an annual report and we really like to hear quotes. Learning about someone different to you has been the biggest impact and comment. Its still early, and there's been a few visits but mostly they've communicated in other ways.

I: Do you think the children are seeing themselves less as Ghanaian, or British and more as global citizens?

R: That's a difficult question to answer at this stage. I'd like to be able to say yes; thats what we're after, we've got some evaluation advisors who will be working on this for the next few years. Just from the sort of ad hoc feedback people have sent us they have been surprised by what they've learnt from different cultures.
I: can you tell me more about this project will be evaluated?

R: Not really its gone out to tender and the evaluation is still in progress. It can be done. There are various ways of establishing base lines and having random tests.

I: Where there any changes made to the project?

R: Not in the fundamental project. Obviously the processes and systems were changed as we went along and we, too are learning as we go along. The British Council is very experienced, we have a wealth of aid experts so as not to come up against a brick wall. We haven't changed the fundamental premise, as we haven't given it enough time to prove itself yet

I: How do you define success? And would you say the project has been successful?

R: Um well success, it can only be measured if you know what your initial aims and objectives are, given the fact its new, and give that there's a small number of staff, 12 people, working on 84 partnerships, primary, infant, and special schools, we've established good relations with the Ministry of Education in Africa; in a short space of time we've established a lot. Once the first three year cycle has been done we can evaluate a bit more.

I: One concern that came out in Ghana was that the schools felt they didn't have the technology to fully partake in Connecting Classrooms; do you think this will change in the future?

R: I wonder if you asked them, explored a little deeper what they meant by that comment and if they need those things for school life in general or if they need them specifically for the Connecting Classrooms project. I understand there is an issue of resource in these schools, even in some schools in the UK but I would want to challenge any comment made like that as the schools make their partnership and they agree this is what we want to do, this is what we need…finance will always be finite. The grant is just for Connecting Classrooms to be fulfilled so I would want to unpick that comment a little bit further if I was you.

I: How will the project continue in the future?

R: We do want to continue it after the first cycle but we don't know due to funding. We would want to extend to sub-saharan Africa and potentially go beyond that, anythings possible (laughs) its all down to funding and what we achieve in the first cycle.

I: Do you think the project has political value; do you think these children will go onto being active global citizens?

R: Well the reason I like working with children is you start with a seed of something and actually you don't know where its going to go, the potential for it could be in any area of society, you know that's not the specific aim but it gives opportunity; you never know the impact of something like this on an individual.

I: What has been your fondest memory or experience so far?

R: The real highlight for me has been the contact seminars, it enables the teachers to make their own minds up. We've had six seminars now and I'm looking forward to some of the achievements to come.

I: Thank you for your time Rachel.

THE END.

Appendix 4

4 a. A sample from the British Council Application Form; Eligibility Criteria

Please read the Guidance Notes carefully before completing this application form. You must type your answers. We only accept applications that are submitted to us by email.

1.1.   This Application Form

1.2.   The purpose of this application form is to register your interest in forming a Connecting

1.3.   Classrooms partnership and aim to secure a place at a contact seminar in April 2007.

Eligibility
• The programme is open to clusters of schools in the UK and in the following Sub-Saharan African countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

• Schools in the cluster must not be in receipt of funding from any other source involving joint curriculum work between the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa.

• DFID Global School Partnerships (DGSP) funding:
a) Schools with DGSP funding for partnerships between the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa:
    o Schools that have recently completed or are currently in receipt of a **Reciprocal Visit** grant with a Sub-Saharan African country are not eligible to apply for Connecting Classrooms.
    o Schools that are currently in receipt of a **Global Curriculum Project** grant with a Sub-Saharan African country are only eligible to apply for this programme if they are in the third and final year of the funding.
b) Schools with DGSP funding for partnerships involving countries outside of Sub-Saharan Africa
    o You are eligible to apply to Connecting Classrooms but you must declare this on your application form and provide evidence that you have the capacity to manage both partnerships.

Selection Criteria
Essential
1. Commitment to working in a cluster of 3 schools in your country and in partnership with 6 other schools from two different countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

2. Commitment to educational goals as an integral part of the partnership

3. Commitment to working together in equity-based relationships recognising that every school has something to learn and every school has something to share and all can benefit from working with each other

4. Commitment to providing opportunities for young people to engage in intercultural dialogue through joint curriculum work

5. Commitment to building sustainable partnerships and working with the partnership for a minimum of three years

6. Commitment to the wider community

Desirable
- Schools which have no or little previous experience of international work (this can either be all schools in the cluster or one or more)
- A plan for whole school involvement reaching high numbers of students
- A plan for teacher's professional development/sharing good practice
- A focus on student involvement throughout
- Plans to work towards the International School Award

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