

Embodying Global Citizenship¹

Jim Garrison

I will identify and discuss some competencies that are among the most important aims of global citizenship education. I will accentuate creativity, especially co-creativity. I will also identify several virtues of global citizenship education before concluding that such education should always begin in the local community. Most importantly, I will strive to expand our thinking by drawing on John Dewey's emphasis on the importance of embodiment.

I will begin by offering some Deweyan reflections on the four global competencies recommended by the Asia Society, a non-partisan organization that aims to build international awareness about Asian politics, business, arts, and culture through education. It has many centers around the world.² The current President is former Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd.

I chose the Asia Society because it is among a small group of organizations recommended by the United Nations. Further, they emphasize creativity while also providing a fine publication containing many useful recommendations for educating the four competencies they recommend. The competencies are: "Investigate the World," "Recognize Perspectives," "Communicate Ideas," and "Take Action."³ "Take action" will be addressed in the context of discussing the first three.

Globally Competent Students Investigate the World

Educating for Global Competence (2011) is a publication of the Asia Society. I highly recommend it. According to them, "Global competence is the capacity and disposition to

Jim Garrison (Professor Emeritus of Philosophy of Education at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia, USA and Past President of the Philosophy of Education Society and the John Dewey Society)

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² The Asia Society has centers in several North American cities as well as Hong Kong, Manila, Mumbai, Seoul, Shanghai, Melbourne, and Zurich.

³ "What is Global Competence." Downloaded from the Asia Society, Center For Global Education on 20 February, 2022 at 5:53 p.m.: <https://asiasociety.org/education/what-global-competence>.

understand and act on issues of global significance” (xiii). This is a good working definition.

Chapter III of *Global Competence* is titled “Globally Competent Students Investigate the World.” The reader is told that “Globally competent students ask and explore questions of critical global significance” (21). This is a good idea, but from the standpoint of Dewey’s theory of inquiry questions are limited because they are entirely cognitive and confine the inquirer to predefined problems.

Investigating the world does not begin with storable questions and problems. It begins with situations arising from the disruption of coordinated action. Clearly stated problems are half-solved. The first step in investigating the world in global contexts involves identifying problems in mutually agreeable terms. Such identification involves intuitions, feelings, and habits not just ideas and values.

Different nations and peoples within a global community will not only have different ideas and values, but different embodied intuitions, feelings, and habits. Problem identification, problem investigation, and possible problem solution involves respecting and coordinating all of these. Of course, problem identification and solution also involve recognizing perspectives and communicating. What I have to say regarding intuitions, feelings, habits, ideas, and values in investigating the world is also relevant to recognizing perspectives and communication.

Situations arise when our habits of taking action fail to coordinate some situation. One has feelings of awkwardness, of disharmony with the world. One feels something is wrong before they know it. The role of feelings in global education is very important, but rarely recognized. There is an important embodied aspect to inquiry that includes not only feelings, but also native impulses as well as intuitions. As Dewey (1930a/1984) remarks, “Reflection and rational elaboration spring from and make explicit a prior intuition” (249). Inquiry begins with intuitions and feelings about the noncognitive quality of a given situation.

In a given context one has feelings of connection as well as disconnection. The philosopher William James (1890/1950), who greatly influenced Dewey, writes that we “ought to say a feeling of *and*, a feeling of *if*, a feeling of *but*, and a feeling of *by*, quite as readily as we say a feeling of blue” (245-246). For James, “Feelings are the germ and starting point of cognition;” they are the precognitive beginning of analysis (222). When investigating the world in global contexts it is as important to attend to feelings of connection and disconnection as it is to ideas.

Of course, people will also have different ideas about what constitutes a global problem. Dewey (1934/1987) remarks, “We cannot grasp any idea ... until we have felt it and sensed it, as much so as if it were an odor or a color” (125). If we are to investigate the world, we must have a feeling for not only our ideas, but for the ideas of others.

For Dewey, embodied habits are an important function of inquiry. In his book, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, Dewey (1938/1986) affirms that “every inferential conclusion that is drawn involves a habit ... in the organic sense of habit” (19). Habits provide skilled “know how” in contrast to linguistic “knowing that.” Dewey states, “Habits are the basis of organic learning” (38). Habits organize and structure vague feelings into well focused emotions.

Habits are hard to change. The habits that we cannot control us. (Have you ever tried to change a bad habit?) Habits are embodied dispositions to act propelled by emotions. Global educators must not overlook the importance of their students forming good habits of many kinds including, but not limited to, good habits of investigation.

For Dewey, “Habit is the mainspring of human action, and habits are formed for the most part under the influence of the customs of a group” (334). Culture has us before we have it. He continues, “The influence of habit is decisive because all distinctively human action has to be learned, and the very heart, blood and sinews of learning is creation of habitudes. Habits bind us to orderly and established ways of action” (335). We acquire our social habits by participating in the customary practices of our community. Global educators must recognize regional, national, and local differences in how people *in-habit* their world. One must also learn how to unbind themselves from xenophobic and ethnocentric habits. One way to do this is to acquire the habit of reflecting on our habits.

Global educators commonly recognize differences in values, but they often overlook that values are embodied. Values are not just abstract ideals; they have emotional force. For something to be valuable it must be deemed desirable. Therefore, different people in different cultures not only have different values they also have different desires.

Investigating the world involves deliberation regarding right action. Deliberations encompassing otherness and difference often involve incommensurable intuitions, feelings, desires, habits, and emotions as well as ideas and values. For Dewey (1923/1983), “different wants are in themselves qualitative and incommensurable” (265). Therefore, “Deliberation is not then to be identified with calculation” (Dewey, 1932/1985, 275). When values are incommensurable, the only hope may be to cooperatively co-create new ones that at least ameliorate conflict.

Dewey (1922/1983) declares that “deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action. It starts from the blocking of efficient overt action, due to that conflict of prior habit and newly released impulse” (132). Creative possibility is embodied as “each habit, each impulse, involved in the temporary suspense of overt action takes its turn in being tried out. Deliberation is an experiment in finding out what the various lines of possible action are really like” (132). A “choice” in Dewey’s terms, is “made as soon

as some habit, or some combination of elements of habits and impulse, finds a way fully open” (134). In global contexts, deliberation requires the art of co-creative activity seeking to coordinate sometimes incommensurable impulses, intuitions, feelings, emotions, habits, ideas, and values. For effective co-creative action to occur one must have feelings of connection with their collaborators. To exercise the art of deliberation one must not only be aware of their own habitual, impassioned embodiment, but also the embodiment of others.

Oftentimes, incommensurable situations can only be ameliorated when the participants themselves undergoing transformation. Situations are what they are in part because of those that participate in them. Therefore, Dewey concludes, “the thing actually at stake in any serious deliberation is ... what kind of person one is to become, what sort of self is in the making, what kind of world is making” (150). In global deliberation, the identities of the investigators themselves may need to change. Such changes involve embodied habits of action. Global citizens must be prepared to change their embodied identity in order to grow together with others.

The adjustment facilitated by reconstructive inquiry requires coordinating the needs, feelings, habits, desires, interests, ideas, ideals, and purposes of everyone participating in a given situation. That is why Dewey (1920/1982) says, “The only guarantee of impartial, disinterested inquiry is the social sensitiveness of the inquirer to the needs and problems of those with whom he is associated” (165). To intelligently investigate the world the global citizen must learn sensitivity to the needs and problems of others along with how they feel about them.

It should now be clear that for Dewey, investigation is the work of embodied and creative intelligence. Dewey rejects traditional notions of abstract disembodied “rationality.” Etymologically, the word “intelligence” derives from the Latin *intelligentia* denoting understanding, knowledge, discernment, art, skill, and taste. Such understanding is what Dewey (1925/1981) means by the phrase “the method of intelligence” (326).

Dewey is a philosophical pragmatist, which is not to be confused with mere practicalism. For Dewey (1917/1980), “A pragmatic intelligence is a creative intelligence” (45). He has “faith in the constructive, the creative, competency of intelligence” (Dewey, 1916a/1980 338). Creative minds capable of working with others to define, investigate, and resolve global problems is a crucial competency for global citizens.

Globally Competent Students Recognize Perspectives

Chapter IV of *Educating for Global Competence* (2011) is titled “Globally Competent Students Recognize Perspectives.” It addresses the competency of being able to “articulate

and explain the perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought” (31). One should also be able to clearly articulate and explain their own perspective. Further, “Deploying their knowledge of history, culture, and current events, students with global competence are able to compare their own perspectives with those of others” (31). They should also have the ability to integrate different perspectives and “to synthesize a new one” (31). I endorse all these competencies, but I want to engage recognizing perspectives at the most basic level.

To begin, social perspectives are embodied. They involve noncognitive native impulses, feelings, and intuitions as well as cognitive habits, ideas, and values. Second, social perspective sharing is a three-term not a two-term relation. Instead of two people exchanging perspectives, the minimal condition of perspective taking is two people, (A) and (B), striving to coordinate their activity around a third thing (T). The “thing” (T) may be physical objects, feelings, habits, ideas, values, and much more.

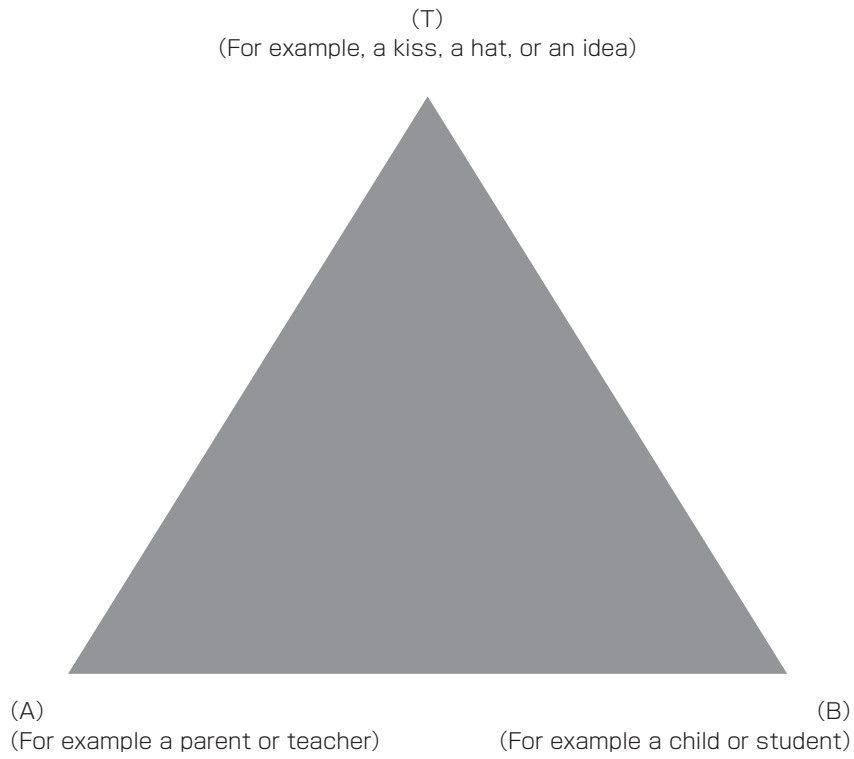
Michael Tomasello (2019) has accumulated considerable empirical evidence for the three-term approach to social perspectives:

[C]hildren’s skills of perspective-taking originate in social interactions structured by joint attention. With joint attention we may say that we are attending to the same thing, only differently; we are triangulating on it, each with our own viewing angle. Without joint attention, there is no common object on which the two of us may have different viewing angles, and no sense of perspective. (64)

What Tomasello calls “joint attention” is social perspective taking. “Triangulating” is three-term transaction involving (A), (B), and (T). (See Figure 1.) More complex perspective taking expands on this three-term relation. Tomasello demonstrates that while other primates can determine those things to which other members of their species are attending, they cannot consider their own perspective on the thing and then triangulate to the perspective of another primate on the same thing. We become most distinctively human by taking the perspectives of others.

However, human perspectives are much more than just Tomasello’s “different viewing angles” (*op. cit.*). Human perspectives involve embodied needs, feelings, desires, selective attention, habits, meanings, knowings, valuing, ideas, personal history, and much more. My favorite example is negotiating a romantic kiss. It is an embodied three-term activity that is not particularly cognitive and requires not only being aware of one’s own body, but that of another.

Figure 1 The Triangle of Social Perspective Taking



In any activity, one cannot say (A) and (B) are attending to the same thing (T) until they come to agreement in action regarding that thing. Here is what is most important: As with inquiry, the identity of (A), the identity of (B), and the identity of (T) may be altered in the ongoing effort to coordinate joint activity. For example, it takes time to negotiate a kiss and the meaning of even a single kiss may develop over time. For example, a kiss may lead to (A) to marry (B). Some marriages may create a family, then grandchildren, and many other “things” (T). Even the simplest instances of joint coordination may have karmic consequences.

Global citizens should understand the embodied primordial origin of the sharing of perspectives and how not only perspectives, but the perspectival “thing” (T), may change over time. It will help global citizens better coordinate their action regarding many different “things,” including complex situations.

Understanding the primordial coordination of perspectives also helps us understand the primordial acquisition of linguistic meanings and how meanings may change as perspectives change. It is now recognized that language is first learned by participating in social practices in which individuals must be able to coordinate their perspectives with that of others. In fact, it is the ability of human beings to acquire abstract symbolic meaning; that is, language, that is the

focus of Tomasello's research.

Dewey's (1916b/1980) provides an example of primordial language learning in *Democracy and Education*. To a very young child the sound of "h-a-t" is meaningless. However, when the mother picks up a "hat" while uttering the sound "h-a-t" then places it on the child's head, or her own, or both, the sound "h-a-t" gains meaning ... by being used in a given way" (19). That is, "in a *joint* activity, as a means to setting up an active connection between the child and a grown-up" (19). The young child (B) must take the perspective of the mother (A) regarding the hat (T). Only later when the child becomes more linguistically competent can they point to things using only words. Relations between parent and child or teacher and student provides many examples. The mother (A) and the child (B) are *co-creating* each other as they *co-create* the meaning of the thing (T).

Now think about the difficulties of coordinating embodied perspectives to create shared meaning within a global setting. While recognizing perspectives are important, it is not enough. Global citizens must be able to co-create, and frequently re-create, shared perspectives. This brings us to communication because, fundamentally, communication is about creatively coordinating perspectives.

Globally Competent Students Communicate Ideas

Dewey (1925/1981) affirms, "Of all affairs, communication is the most wonderful" (132). This is so because, "When communication occurs, all natural events are subject to reconsideration and revision; they are re-adapted to meet the requirements of conversation" (132). Global citizens must be prepared for the changes communication brings. Such changes include intuitions, feelings, habits, and actions, not just ideas and values.

Chapter V of *Educating for Global Competence* (2011) is titled, "Globally Competent Students Communicate Ideas." True, but what we communicate includes far more than ideas. Recall that for Dewey, "We cannot grasp any idea ... until we have felt it and sensed it" (*op. cit.*). We communicate feelings along with ideas. Indeed, a great deal of communication involves nonlinguistic expressive meanings such as one finds in dance, music, sports, and such.

We must reject what Michael Reddy (1979) calls the "conduit metaphor of communication" drawn from information processing (290). Many assume communication is like a cable that transports ideas from one person to another. However, we have seen that communication is actually about co-creatively exchanging embodied perspectives.

Listening is an important part of communicative coordination. "Language exists," Dewey (1934/1987) writes in *Art As Experience*, "only when it is listened to as well as spoken. The hearer is an indispensable partner Thus language involves what logicians call a triadic

relation The external object, the product of art, is the connecting link between artist and audience. Even when the artist works in solitude, all three terms are present” (111). This is the same three-term relation discussed earlier. *Communication is a co-creative art*. This is especially the case in dialogues across differences where communication often requires creating understanding where otherwise comprehension cannot be found.

However, the art of communication is much broader than just linguistic communication. Oftentimes, nonlinguistic expressions of meaning can succeed in communicating when language fails. Dewey remarks: “It is by way of communication that art becomes the incomparable organ of instruction” (349). Global citizenship education should emphasize artistically expressive ways of creatively, and co-creatively, communicating feelings and not just ideas.

The authors of *Educating for Global Competence* astutely assert that global citizens should “demonstrate a capacity to integrate a range of artistic modes of expression to convey their message” (43). Dewey (1934/1987) agrees and claims that “art is the most effective mode of communication that exists Anything in the world, no matter how individual in its own existence is potentially common But it ... is shared, by means of works of art more than by any other means” (291). However, we must not see the arts of communication as only “conveying a message.” That is the conduit metaphor.

The Virtues of Global Citizens

Thus far, I have discussed the competencies of global citizenship. I would now like to say a few things about intellectual and moral virtues. Dewey (1916b/1980) recommends four intellectual virtues that he calls “The Traits of Individual Method.” All four expand our understanding not only of the competency of investigating the world, but also exchanging perspectives and communication. Like any virtue, intellectual or moral, all four can become emotionally driven habitual dispositions for taking action.

The first is “confidence” by which Dewey does not mean egotistical self-confidence. Rather, “It denotes not *conscious* trust in the efficacy of one’s powers but unconscious faith in the possibilities of the situation. It signifies rising to the needs of the situation” (181). Such faith includes the imaginative possibilities of creatively working with others to ameliorate incommensurable situations.

The next virtue is “open-mindedness” (180). An open mind plays with possibilities and alternative ways to address situations. It involves communication and openness to other perspectives. However, Dewey warns, “Open-mindedness is different from empty-mindedness. To hang out a sign saying ‘Come right in; there is no one at home’ is not the equivalent of

hospitality” (183). Those that invoke cultural relativism to avoid not only investigating, but evaluating, different cultures are empty-minded and irresponsible.⁴

The third virtue is “single-mindedness” (180) which implies “completeness of interest, unity of purpose It is equivalent to mental integrity” (183). Single-mindedness signifies being fully engrossed in a given situation. It includes integrity, sincerity, and honesty in one’s intellectual and creative endeavors.

Finally, there is “responsibility,” which is a disposition to “consider in advance the probable consequences of any projected step and deliberately to accept them: to accept them in the sense of taking them into account, acknowledging them in action, not yielding a mere verbal assent” (185). Responsibility requires a sincere effort to foresee the consequences of actions and to be answerable for what is accomplished.

What about moral virtues? Larry Hickman is Director Emeritus of the Center for Dewey Studies. Daisaku Ikeda is President of Soka Gakkai International and winner of the 1983 United Nations Peace Medal. My dialogue with them (Garrison, *et. al.*, 2014) was published in English as *Living as Learning*. Chapter 11 of this book is titled “Education for World Citizens.” There Ikeda states three essential virtues of global citizenship:

- (1) The wisdom to perceive the interconnectedness of all life and living things; (2) The courage not to fear or deny difference but to respect and strive to understand people of different cultures and to grow from encounters with them; and (3) The compassion to maintain an imaginative empathy that reaches beyond one’s immediate surroundings and extends to those suffering in distant places. These superior traits embody universal wisdom and spirit. I proposed their cultivation as one of education’s major roles in the years to come. (146)

I entirely agree with President Ikeda. So too would Dewey (1938/1986) for whom all “changes occur through interactions of conditions. What exists co -exists” (220). Second, rejecting strident nationalism, Dewey (1915/1979) urges us to realize that “we are actually interracial and international,” although he wonders if “we have the courage to face this fact and the wisdom to think out the plan of action which it indicates” (203). Third, in “Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us,” Dewey (1939/1991) points out the reward for such courage, “To cooperate by giving differences a chance to show themselves because of the belief that the expression of difference is not only a right of the other persons but is a means of enriching one’s own life-experience, is inherent in the democratic personal way of life” (228). For Dewey (1932/1985), “The only truly *general* thought is the *generous* thought. It is sympathy which

⁴ I personally find the cultural practices of female genital mutilation, cannibalism, finger amputation, and human sacrifice abhorrent.

carries thought beyond the self” (270). Like intellectual virtues, moral virtues can, with practice, become habitual.

Global Citizenship in the Local Community

In a section of our dialogue, titled “Redefining Global Citizenship,” Ikeda remarks:

For many, the first image conjured up by the term global citizen is someone fluent in many languages or whose work takes him or her constantly racing around the world. In fact, the term is also a perfectly apt description for people who have no connections to international business, who are not globetrotters, but who, while firmly rooted in their local communities, think about things from a global perspective and take actions for world peace. (Garrison, *et. al.*, 2014, 145-146)

Ikeda wishes to restore global learning to daily living.

In response to Ikeda’s profound insight, I mentioned Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the first president of the Soka Gakkai, who wrote *A Geography of Human Life*. Ikeda remarked that Makiguchi once wrote, “The community, in short, is a microcosm of the world” (148). This led to a discussion during which Ikeda commented: “The microcosm of the individual life contains everything in the macrocosm of the universe, all its measureless expanse and potential. We need to open young people’s minds to this view of life and the universe” (149). In a chapter of *Democracy and Education* titled “The Significance of Geography and History” Dewey (1916a/1980) writes, “There is no limit to the meaning which an action may come to possess. It all depends upon the context of perceived connections” (215). Open-mindedness to the presence of global connections in the local community places global citizenship education within the affairs of daily living. We may acquire the habits of good global citizenship by first learning to be good citizens in our family and community.

In his essay, “Thoughts On Education For Global Citizenship,” Ikeda (2010) remarks, “Like Dewey, Makiguchi focused on the local community as the place where global citizens are fostered” (57-58). The world is bound together by ecological systems, international trade, and the fact that all humans are biologically related. Everyone is a global citizen whether they realize it or not. The task is to become a better one.

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