

Enhancing Global Citizenship in English Language Teaching: Perspectives and Practices from Moroccan Educators

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Abstract:

In a rapid changing world characterized by globalization and ongoing technology and communication advancements, English learners need to develop employability skills that ensure their competitiveness and qualify them to realize satisfying careers. Employers around the globe are seeking leaders who can transcend all historical, geographical, cultural and independent barriers to embrace global citizenship. Employees are required to adapt to diverse perspectives to foster their innovation, and build sustainable relationships across borders. Eventually, they can enhance inclusivity and increase productivity to drive better business outcomes. For this reason and others, promoting global citizenship in English Language Teaching (ELT) settings seems to be essential for equipping learners with the necessary job requirements. To investigate this issue, the current study adopted a quantitative research method using an on-line survey questionnaire sent to Moroccan ELT teachers. The data gathered was analyzed through SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences), in the form of descriptive statistics in order to identify Moroccan ELT teachers' challenges in developing students' global citizenship and to suggest effective classroom practices to meet this goal. The study at hand will contribute to expanding literature on transversal skills development in ELT. Additionally, the implications and recommendations discussed will guide ELT teachers in fostering global citizenship among English learners.

Keywords: Global citizenship, employability, ELT, classroom practices, transversal skills.

1. Introduction

The increasing impact of globalization and the ongoing scientific and technological revolution have pushed educators around the world to change drastically the way teaching and learning occurs. Today, there is an ultimate need for developing learners holistically to face the challenges of a new global world. Eventually, there is a growing emphasis on transversal skills development in education in general and language education in particular.

Transversal skills encompass a wide range of skills and competencies that increase an individual's performance and guarantee more flexibility, adaptability and productivity. They are also key factors for encouraging innovation and creativity (Tilea, 2015). Global citizenship is one of these transversal skills that have taken the concept of citizenship into a global dimension, which abides by the demands of our interconnected world.

In this regard, English Language Teaching (ELT) has known a continuous evolution in teaching and learning approaches and methods, in an attempt to meet students' changing needs and to keep up with the global socio-economic requirements. The status of English as a lingua franca enables individuals to communicate across borders and engage with people from diverse backgrounds. In fact, ELT can help students to enhance their communicative and socio-cultural skills using linguistic and cognitive strategies that foster interpersonal relationships (Crystal, 2012). As a result, ELT seems to have the potential to contribute to learners' transversal skills development through fostering their global citizenship skills.

Accordingly, studies in Morocco highlighted the role of ELT in developing learners' transversal skills, particularly global citizenship. English language teaching in Morocco is supposed to foster learners' connection with communities at the local, national and global levels by raising their awareness towards their rights and obligations, so as to grow autonomous and responsible citizens (MNE, 2007) as quoted by Ait-Bouزيد (2020).

However, the education policy reforms have failed to meet this aim. Moroccan educators have stressed the pervasive necessity of equipping learners with transversal skills that meet the job market demands (El Ajraoui et al., 2019; Elouaali et al., 2024). Moreover, although the new Moroccan education reforms highlighted Global Citizenship Education (GCE) to comply with the international standards, they failed to move from theory to practice.

Moroccan educators and researchers believe that the reforms do not propose well-defined strategies and procedures to implement the guidelines effectively and to achieve the desired outcomes (Assissou et al., 2023). Additionally, the application of GCE in the Moroccan educational system faces a number of challenges related to an overall value crisis, traditional teaching and learning methods, limited use of ICT and lack of teacher training (Idrissi et al., 2021).

Against this backdrop, the current study aims to investigate Moroccan EFL teachers' practices in developing students' global citizenship skills for transversal skills development, and to identify the main obstacles that teachers encounter, so as to suggest the most effective practices for GCE in EFL classrooms.

2. Review of Literature

This section provides a review of literature regarding the ultimate need for transversal skills development, chiefly global citizenship education (GCE). It also reveals the potential of ELT in fostering language learners' global citizenship skills.

2.1. Transversal Skills Development

Recently, there is a consensus among researchers and educators on the primordial role of higher education in promoting students' skills and competences for a prosperous personal and professional life. Globalization, the technological evolution, and the changes in the global economy have led to a great emphasis on the development of transversal skills among students in universities and colleges to increase employability and to meet the demands of the future (Tilea, 2015; Rego et al., 2022; Maunsell, 2023).

In literature, researchers and educators strived to provide a clear definition of transversal skills, but the multifaceted nature of the concept resulted in manifold understandings of the term. This latter, which has received much attention in European frameworks and reforms, has taken different labels such as soft skills, transferable skills, employability skills, generic skills, key skills, 21st skills, and life skills. The European Council on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2006) defined transversal skills as “a

combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context, necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment” as cited by Tilea (2015).

In the same vein, UNESCO (2014) defined transversal skills as follows:

Transversal skills are those typically considered as not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge but as skills that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings (IBE 2013). These skills are increasingly in high demand for learners to successfully adapt to changes and to lead meaningful and productive lives (P:2).

Ultimately, transversal skills, which involve a variety of knowledge, skills and attitudes, transferable from one context to another, increase learners’ productivity and adaptability across diverse academic and job settings.

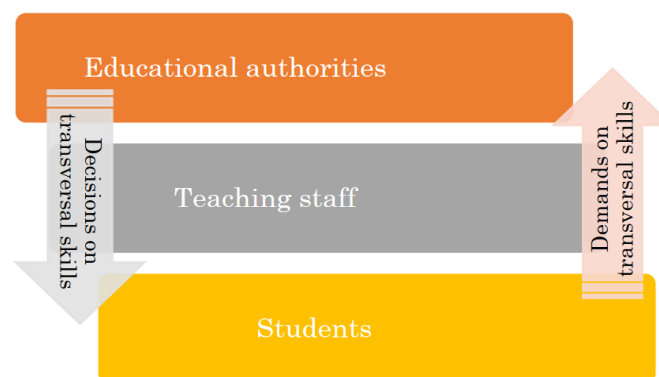
The UNESCO listed some examples of skill sets such as critical and innovative thinking, inter-personal skills, intra-personal skills, global citizenship, and media and information literacy. Goggin et al. (2019) suggested other skill categories like communication, problem solving abilities, teamwork, motivation, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), language and cognitive skills.

In literature, there are unlimited listings of transversal skill categories but there is not a clear-cut agreement on the most and least important ones to develop among learners (Bennett, 2001). Still, there is a consent on their integration in higher education systems in order to contribute to learners’ holistic development and meet the dynamic socio-economic needs of sustainable communities (Tilea, 2015; Rego et al., 2022; Maunsell, 2023).

Nowadays, the role of educational institutions is not only to foster students’ academic and technical skills, but also to train them to become autonomous and lifelong learners. To meet this aim, learners should be equipped with the pre-requisite transversal skills and competences to respond to the demands of the global economy and improve their socio-economic situation.

In fact, transversal skills development is highly demanded by different interveners in educational institutions. It is ubiquitous at distinct levels of the educational system (decision making, teaching staff and students) and entails the establishment of effective bottom up and top down strategies for a successful implementation of transversal skills development programs (see figure 1).

Figure 1 The development of transversal skills among stakeholders in the educational system (Tilea, 2015)



Today, higher education institutions are aware of the challenging mission they have regarding the preparation of highly skilled individuals for a changing job market. Nevertheless, traditional methods

and approaches to education are inefficient to reach higher education goals (Maunsell, 2023). As a result, the development of learners' transversal skills requires a strong alignment between policies, pedagogies, curricula and assessment, to design educational programs that increase learners' readiness for the workplace (UNESCO, 2014).

The integration of transversal skills in the educational system requires following a new educational paradigm that focuses on empowering the human capital using a multidisciplinary approach to skills development (Duart, 2019). The teaching and learning of these skills used to be separate from other knowledge subjects, but lately, educators and researchers are calling for an integrative approach to transversal skills development (Alzuoud & Gaudel, 2020; Maunsell, 2023; Elouaali et al., 2024).

Many highly-ranked universities, such as Cambridge University, John Hopkins University, Wales University and others, are aware of the importance of transversal skills for learners' holistic development and put action plans to integrate them in university policies, curriculum and methods (Litea, 2015). Nonetheless, to implement these strategies and methods, teachers' knowledge and skills are key factors to ensure quality learning and an effective acquisition of transversal skills.

2.2. Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

Global citizenship is one of the highly-demanded transversal skills today, as it enables individuals to surpass all socio-cultural boundaries and think globally to serve the common good of the global community. The term global citizenship education dates from the turn of the twenty-first century and encompasses global education and citizenship education (Lutge et al., 2022). UNESCO (2015) referred to global citizenship as a sense of belonging to a large community and a shared humanity, which stresses the political, economic, social and cultural interconnectedness between the local, the national, and the global.

The need for global citizens has raised recently due to the technological facilities available worldwide and to the nature of businesses that has changed into multinationals. In addition, the call for realizing sustainable development goals globally has pushed the world to think of ways that can bring the humanity together to face the unknown future. Eventually, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has gained interest among educators, researchers, and policy makers to equip learners with the necessary global citizenship skills that ensure their readiness for a global new world.

GCE promotes the role of education as a transformational power (UNESCO, 2014; Cho, 2017). It aims to develop learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes, which can be transferred into responsible actions to benefit the global community. GCE has the potential to contribute to the holistic development of individuals by fostering not only high-order skills namely critical thinking, problem solving, analysis, and evaluation but also social skills such as empathy, inter-cultural competence, conflict resolution, and others.

Furthermore, it widens their knowledge concerning global socio-political and economic issues and challenges that require innovative solutions. Ultimately, it increases their engagement in a life-long learning process as active citizens who work collaboratively to reach common global goals for the sustainable welfare of the planet (UNESCO, 2014).

However, promoting universality through GCE should not be at the expense of individual particularities. Local and global identities and interests ought to be brought together in harmony to realize the goals of GCE and support social cohesion to alleviate tensions and conflicts among populations (UNESCO, 2013).

In Morocco, the endeavors to prioritize GCE in the educational system encounter various obstacles at the

levels of theory and practice. LSCE (2017) as cited by Ait Bouzid (2020) has demonstrated that GCE is still at its infancy stages in the MENA region and that much work needs to be done for a successful application of its concepts, goals and competencies.

The recent Moroccan educational reforms have shed light on the importance of GCE to abide by the international standards and agendas including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda 2030 (Idrissi et al., 2021). Moreover, to resolve the mismatch between the skills taught and the ones required in the global market. Nevertheless, the translation of these assumptions into well-planned strategies and procedures, is hindered by various factors such as students' age, class size, traditional teaching and learning approaches, poor and outdated curricula, a lack of teacher training, and an absence of collaboration between all involved actors (Benzehaf, 2019; Ait Bouzid, 2020; Ziad, 2021; Idrissi et al., 2021;).

For this reason and others, a fruitful global citizenship education entails a creative approach that engages all partners to achieve the desired outcomes. To prepare learners for the challenges of the 21st century, UNESCO (2014) proposed a multi-disciplinary approach to GCE that calls for integrating the teaching and learning of global citizenship skills within content subjects. Furthermore, it does not constrain GCE to formal educational settings but encourages global citizenship skills development through informal activities and tasks, a fact that provides learners with a stress-free and fun environment to support their personal and academic development.

It is also necessary to put into effect a collaborative and cooperative approach to GCE that incorporates different agents (policy makers, teachers, learners, parents, NGOs, educational institutions, businesses, etc.) to ensure an education that meets the socio-economic needs of the global community.

2.3. Global Citizenship Education and English Language Learning

The status of the English language, as a lingua franca spoken by people worldwide for different communicative purposes and in various socio-cultural contexts, has endowed the teaching and learning of English with the virtue of developing global citizenship skills among English language learners. The need for learning English has been increasing due to socio-cultural, economic and political reasons, which confirmed the necessity for speaking the English language to bridge the gap between local and global communities.

Speakers of English use it to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds, a fact which fosters their inter-cultural competence and raises their awareness to global issues (Byram, 1997). Besides, learning English enables learners to have access to a wide range of updated information from divergent parts of the world (Bendeck et al., 2023). By being open to issues that touch the global community, English speakers develop a global understanding of world challenges that impel them to act globally and responsibly.

In addition to that, the EFL classroom offers learners the possibility to witness the interaction between local and foreign cultures. This interaction helps to increase learners' cognitive skills particularly critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and decision making and make them respect universal values like tolerance, empathy, altruism, peace and others, which contribute to build global citizens committed to the rest of humanity. Uniformly, one of the main purposes of teaching English as a foreign language at the international scale is to develop global citizenship values (Oxfam, 2016).

2.4. Teachers as Transformative Agents

Educational policies around the world cannot be actualized thoroughly without a high quality of teaching capable of making changes to the individual's knowledge, skills, values and attributes to fulfil human

holistic development. The shift in educational psychology from teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered ones has put the learner at the center of the teaching and learning process and has reformed the role of the teacher from “a conveyor of knowledge” to “a facilitator or a counsellor”, which seems to be quite challenging for many teachers (Little,1999). Correspondingly, teachers’ attitudes and beliefs shape their classroom practices and affect the quality of teaching and learning.

Consequently, the shift into a learner-centered teaching and learning approach has to be supported by policy makers through investing in teachers’ professional development. Teachers need to benefit from adequate trainings that help them to advance their knowledge, attitudes and skills and to ameliorate their teaching practices, in order to adapt to different classroom situations and to the ongoing changes of modern education, socio-economic demands and technologies (Allen and Wright,2014; Darling-Hammond,2015).

In this regard, the incorporation of GCE in teacher education programs seems to be essential in meeting the demands of an interconnected world. The effectiveness of teaching affects the quality of learning, and teachers’ knowledge and competence determine the extent to which learners develop the pre-requisite skills and competencies (UNESCO, 2014). Relatedly, the inclusion of GCE in teachers’ pre-service trainings was initiated in countries like the United Kingdom and Germany, to raise teachers’ awareness to global dimensions and to train them on sustainable development methods (Shreiber and Siege, 2023).

Consequently, stakeholders need to support and train teachers to adopt innovative classroom practices so as to implement GCE effectively and maximize their ability to help learners transform into prosperous active citizens. On the other hand, without learners’ engagement and devotion, teachers’ endeavors to achieve the target GCE goals are put at stake.

3. Research Method

The ubiquitous necessity of global citizenship education among learners in general and EFL learners in particular has raised issues concerning the application of GCE in Foreign English classrooms and unveiled many of the barriers that teachers face to develop learners’ transversal skills. Considering this, the present study strives to investigate Moroccan EFL teachers’ classroom practices for GCE inclusion and to identify the main challenges they meet to foster Moroccan EFL learners’ global citizenship skills.

4. Research Method and Design

The current study has followed a quantitative research method that requires the gathering and analysis of numerical data to investigate the research problem. Moreover, as any inquiry that needs a research strategy to guide the research procedures and protocol, the study has utilized the cross-sectional survey research design. It is a popular research design used in education, to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors or characteristics of a population at one point in time (Creswell, 2012). Besides, survey designs are used for their practicality, time and energy saving.

5. Sampling

This survey research has targeted Moroccan EFL teachers as a study population, and a sample of n=68 participated in the research. The importance of teachers’ engagement in the implementation of educational reforms is largely recognized by educators and policy makers in the field (UNESCO, 2014; Idrissi et al., 2021; Bendeck et al., 2023). Subsequently, integrating GCE in Moroccan EFL classrooms

necessitates a special emphasis on EFL teachers as key agents of innovation in English language teaching and learning.

In Moroccan literature, the very few conducted studies on GCE focused mainly on the analysis of educational policies for GCE (Zyad, 2021; Idrissi et al., 2021) and on the content analysis of Moroccan EFL textbooks (Ait-Bouzid, 2020). Nevertheless, the role of EFL teachers in promoting learners' global citizenship skills received little attention. Against this backdrop, the research at hand has selected the Moroccan EFL teacher as the main unit of study.

To select a sample that can represent the population of the study, the research has used a non-probability sampling strategy or snowball sampling. This latter, involves a 'chain reaction' whereby the researcher identifies individuals who meet the research criteria and then asks them to identify other potential subjects (Dornyei, 2007). This technique is useful because it provides an easy access to hard-to-reach populations. In addition, it aids to establish a good rapport between the researcher and participants, which allows getting accurate and genuine data. It is also worth mentioning that snowball sampling has been widely used for its practicality and cost-effectiveness.

6. Data Collection and Analysis

To ensure a good quality of research, this study has followed rigorous and systematic data collection and analysis procedures. We gathered quantitative data through an on-line close-ended survey questionnaire sent to Moroccan EFL teachers. The questionnaire contained multiple choice questions, Likert scale questions, and yes or no questions. Thus, we adopted, but also adapted, the survey questions from the literature relevant to the research topic as well as from the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT (2022). Over a four-week period, the number of respondents reached $n=68$.

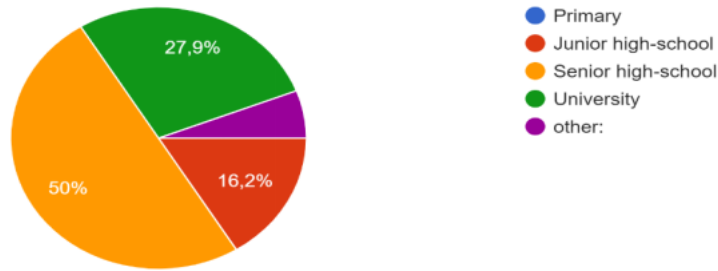
For data processing and analysis, we opted for the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Our analysis of the collected data took the form of descriptive statistics, namely means, frequencies, and percentages, which we presented in tables and graphs for a better legibility of results. The process of analyzing data has enabled us to draw valuable insights on the most effective EFL classroom practices for GCE and to identify the main challenges Moroccan EFL teachers encounter.

7. Results and Discussion

The data analysis results disclosed Moroccan EFL teachers' attitudes towards developing global citizenship skills in ELT. They also listed the principal global citizenship skills Moroccan EFL teachers can develop in their classrooms. Additionally, our results, which uncovered the main obstacles teachers face in GCE, suggested the best classroom practices to promote the target skills.

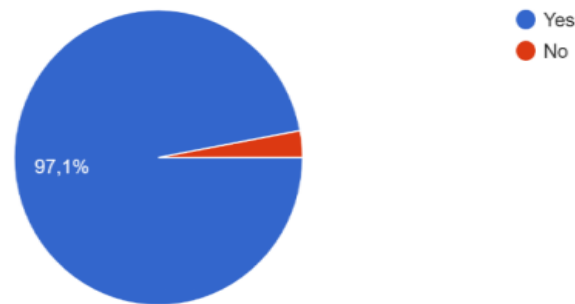
The demographic data of the sample $n=68$, includes (64.7%) of females and (35.3%) of males from different age categories, who teach different levels distributed as follows: junior high-school teachers (16.2%), university teachers (27.9%) and senior high-school teachers (50%). See Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Distribution of teaching levels among the research participants



7.1. EFL for Global Citizenship Education: Teachers’ Beliefs

The survey results revealed that most of the Moroccan EFL teachers, (97.1%), believe that EFL has the potential to foster global citizenship skills among Moroccan English learners (See Graph 2).



Graph 2: Teachers’ beliefs about EFL for Global Citizenship Skills development

English language teaching and learning confirmed its capacity for implementing global citizenship education in language classrooms. The learning of English and its use as a lingua franca, allow English language learners worldwide to communicate across borders with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds and for multiple purposes (Byram, 1997). This fact, gives them the opportunity to develop their intercultural competence and adopt global perspectives that respond to the demands of this interdependent world.

English teachers open up learners’ horizons to diverse identities and cultures, a fact that makes them build positive relationships with people around the world (Oxfam, 2015). This global dimension of ELT proliferates global citizenship skills such as empathy, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and other skills among language learners (Sohrabi et al., 2022; Bendeck et al., 2023).

Table 1: Moroccan EFL views regarding the global citizenship skills promoted through ELT

Global Citizenship Skills	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Critical thinking	68	1	5	4,07	,498
Ability to argue effectively	68	1	5	4,09	,989
Ability to challenge injustice and inequalities	68	1	5	3,75	1,111
Cooperation and conflict resolution	68	1	5	3,82	1,078
Take initiatives on global issues	68	1	5	3,91	,893
Develop intercultural awareness	68	1	5	4,21	1,016
Respect differences and values	68	1	5	4,13	1,035

Develop concerns for global issues	68	1	5	3,91	1,018
Valid N (listwise)	68				

SD=Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), N=Neutral (3), A= Agree (4), SA=Strongly Agree (5)

Furthermore, learning English as a second or foreign language develops learners’ cognitive skills particularly critical thinking, problem solving, analysis, and evaluation (Bialystok, 2017; Oxfam, 2015; Ait Bouzid, 2020). As a matter of fact, these are among the core conceptual dimensions of global citizenship education, in addition to socio-emotional and behavioral skills (UNESCO, 2015).

Teachers’ attitudes and beliefs influence their view of English language teaching and learning and shape their classroom practices. Many studies investigated teachers’ attitudes towards global education (Saddiqa et al., 2020; Strachan, 2020; Attou et al., 2024), but a few were concerned with EFL teachers’ beliefs regarding the power of ELT in fostering GCE .

In Morocco, a study conducted by Belabcir (2024) on the potential of EFL in developing learners’ leadership and global citizenship skills found out that (89.7%) of the Moroccan EFL teachers believe that ELT promotes leadership and global citizenship skills. The statistical analysis of the survey Likert scale questions asked to our sample population supports the previous findings.

Table 1 above presents the results analysis of Moroccan EFL teachers’ views concerning the global citizenship skills promoted through ELT. In this case, the mean is very significant: 1 to 1.8 = (SD), 1.81 to 2.60 = (D), 2.61 to 3.40 = (N), 3.41 to 4.20 = (A), and 4.21 to 5 = (SA) (Pimentel, 2010).

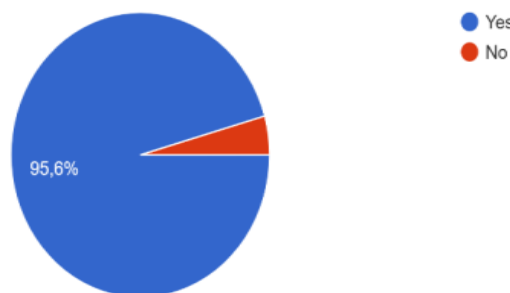
The means range between agree and strongly agree while the highest mean is attributed to developing inter-cultural awareness (M = 4,21). In other words, Moroccan EFL teachers believe that ELT can develop many of the suggested global citizenship skills, and that the most prevalent one is developing inter-cultural awareness.

Overall, Moroccan EFL teachers’ beliefs confirm many of the viewpoints in the literature, which are in favor of the prominence of English language teaching and learning as a means for enhancing individuals’ global citizenship skills.

7.2. Global Citizenship Education and Employability

The holistic development of language learners is a key to their personal and professional success. Empowering learners with the in-demand skills and attributes maintains their competitiveness and increases their productivity in the workplace. In this regard, (95.6%) of the sample population believe that global citizenship skills development empowers learners’ employability.

Graph 3: Moroccan EFL teachers’ beliefs concerning GCE for increased employability



Global citizenship is one of the most sought skills by employers in international business today to meet the challenges of globalization and achieve sustainability. With globalization and technological

revolution, businesses today surpass local communities and demonstrate a global awareness towards the global community (Blue, 2023). This fact urges the need for employability skills development in educational and training institutions.

Based on extensive research into employers’ needs, the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT (2023) has listed the most important employability skills students ought to develop in addition to learning English. Among these skills, we note global citizenship, which optimizes the positive role of organizations and businesses towards global matters. Likewise, the 2023 future of jobs report affirmed that one of the top 10 most important skills for employers include working with others, chiefly empathy, active listening, leadership, and social influence, which are all in relation to global citizenship.

In fact, ignoring global citizenship has negative effects on employers’ performance. The lack of an inter-cultural awareness may result into tensed and conflictual professional relationships either at the individual level or in teams. Individuals with narrow perspectives may lack certain core skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, innovation, and creativity. Moreover, having a mono-cultural way of thinking deprives individuals from benefiting from cultural exchange experiences and opportunities of international collaboration and cooperation (Bolton University, 2024).

Eventually, this lack of global citizenship skills does not only affect the individual’s career but also the organization where he/she works, as it decreases its productivity and competitiveness among global businesses. Thus, the success of any organization now and in the future depends on how skilled and qualified its employers are.

In the Moroccan context, many studies confirmed that the low quality of human capital led to high rates of employability and inactivity among Moroccan young people. Graduates lack many of the employability skills needed to thrive in the workplace (Millennium Challenge Corporation, 2018; Tejan and Sabil, 2019; Belkbir,2023), due to the mismatch between the skills taught and the changing needs of the job market as explained in the World Bank Report (2021).

Consequently, there is a desperate need for educational reforms that respond to the requirements of the job market and supply learners with the imperative transversal and employability skills for their palmy integration in the global labor force.

7.3. Global Citizenship Education in ELT: Classroom Practices

The successful implementation of GCE in ELT implies the use of innovative and collaborative teaching and learning practices. In this respect, ELT teachers’ voices should be heard to find the best methods and techniques to empower learners’ global citizenship skills and contribute to their holistic development. In this study, Moroccan EFL teachers selected a set of promising classroom practices that can meet this goal (see table 2 below).

Classroom Practices	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Use information and technology tools	68	2	5	4,25	,817
Create a safe environment for learners to express opinions	68	1	5	4,43	,719
Encourage learners to explore complex issues and diverse viewpoints.	68	2	5	4,28	,688
Use roleplays	68	1	5	3,88	,985
Encourage students to use internet critically	68	1	5	3,88	,985
Adopt collaborative teaching methods	68	1	5	4,34	,822
Encourage students to take responsible actions	68	1	5	4,34	,822
Encourage students to express their ideas about the future	68	1	5	4,28	,770
Engage students in community-based activities	68	1	5	4,35	,824
Use art and music in class	68	1	5	3,49	,938
Use globally-oriented learning resources	68	1	5	4,04	1,014

Table2: The most effective classroom practices for GCE in Moroccan EFL classrooms

Not effective (1), Moderately effective (2), Neutral (3), effective (4) , Very effective (5)

The table depicts the most effective classroom practices selected by the Moroccan EFL teachers for empowering global citizenship skills among Moroccan EFL learners. The selected practices hold means that range between M=4,25 and M=4,43, listed as follows:

- Use information and technology tools.
- Encourage learners to explore complex issues and diverse viewpoints.
- Encourage students to express their ideas about the future.
- Adopt collaborative teaching methods.
- Encourage students to take responsible actions.
- Encourage students in community-based activities.
- Create a safe environment for learners to express opinions.

In general, the traditional approach to teaching transversal skills was context-independent, generic, and separated from core subjects, but recently this paradigm has shifted into a more integrative human-capitalist approach where contextual factors are taken into account, particularly professional needs. This approach has a complex and holistic nature that brings about added social, personal, and professional value (Maunsell, 2023). The list of selected classroom practices affirms that empowering GCE in ELT entails the application of a multi-dimensional approach that diversifies learning opportunities inside and outside the language classroom.

Global Citizenship Education for transversal skills development imposes looking for innovative and collaborative teaching and learning methods that can contribute to obtain the desired outcomes. The creation of a positive and stress-free environment is necessary for practicing democracy in EFL classrooms. Learners should enjoy the rights to express their opinions, share their thoughts, explore diverse points of views about critical issues, discuss global matters, ask questions, and reflect upon their assumptions and attitudes while teachers need to listen actively to their learners and support their transformative process (UNESCO, 2014; OXFAM, 2015; Al Abri, 2022).

Exposure to different cultures increases EFL learners' desire to exchange knowledge and communicate effectively with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Byram, 1997). This cross-cultural nature of the EFL classroom makes it the ideal place for developing global citizenship values and skills (Sohrabi et al., 2022). The ability to accept cultural diversity and understand global matters helps to instill global citizenship values among EFL learners, notably empathy, tolerance, conflict resolution, and social justice.

In addition to that, allowing learners to express their thoughts and ideas about the future in the EFL classroom encourages them to think globally and to find creative solutions that can make the world a better place for the present and future generations. As a result, the promotion of GCE in EFL classrooms is a driver to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as it equips learners with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values to become responsible and active global citizens capable of facing future challenges (Akçay et al., 2024).

In the same vein, learners' interaction with diverse cultures and worldviews develops their cognitive skills particularly analysis, evaluation, critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving, which are one of the key learning outcomes of GCE proposed by UNESCO (2015).

These attributes would supply learners to make connections and understand the interconnectedness of diverse countries and populations in order to act for the common good of world communities.

Nevertheless, EFL teachers’ substantial knowledge about global citizenship issues and values is vital for guiding learners to integrate global citizenship skills into EFL learning (Aljuaid, 2022).

Bridging the gap between language learning and GCE involves the building of a participatory and collaborative environment that favors active learning. The shift in educational psychology from teacher-centered learning approaches to student-centered ones has generated new innovative roles for both teachers and learners, a fact that supports GCE learning goals as outlined in the table below:

Table 3: Teachers’ and learners’ roles in a GCE classroom (OXFAM, 2015)

Teachers	Learners
Teacher as an organizer of knowledge	Active and participatory learners
Teacher as an Enabler	Asking questions
Holistic learning focus	Taking responsibility for their own learning
Process-centered learning	Collaborating in their learning
	Actively listening to the opinions of others
	Connecting their learning

To develop learners’ global citizenship skills and values, EFL teachers need to create experiential and relational global learning opportunities, where learners are proactive and creative (Bletscher et al., 2017). A GCE approach to EFL teaching and learning revolves around learners’ engagement both in formal and informal educational settings and on collaborative action to bring about the desired changes. In this regard, EFL teachers should foster learners’ autonomy and leadership to monitor their own cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral development. Additionally, they should receive the necessary support and acknowledgment to demonstrate their abilities and skills.

To meet this goal, EFL teachers need to nurture independent and interactive teaching and learning approaches that respond to GCE learning goals and embed real-world performance tasks (Braskamp, 2008; UNESCO, 2014). Learners have to be immersed in global transnational interactions through rich authentic learning experiences both inside and outside the EFL classroom (Sohrabi et al., 2022). Experiential learning activities such as community service, internships, fieldwork, practicums, projects, and international mobility reinforce transversal skills development in general and global citizenship education in particular (Maunsell, 2023; Braskamp, 2008).

In this interconnected world, education has become a social transformative apparatus that considers learners’ acquisition of pre-requisite skills, attitudes, and behaviors to think and act adequately in diverse socio-cultural contexts (Akçay et al., 2024). The exposure to diverse global issues and challenges aims to raise learners’ awareness to the importance of taking ethical responsible actions to ensure future sustainability. Similarly, English language teaching is supposed to connect learners to their communities at the national and international levels, through fostering their consciousness of their rights and responsibilities (Ait Bouzid, 2020).

Through a GCE approach to EFL teaching and learning, learners are expected to understand how their personal choices and decisions affect the planet, analyze, and evaluate issues related to social justice and ethical responsibility in order to understand the implications for individual and collective action (UNESCO, 2015). It is important that learners show empathy for global issues and challenges, respect diversity and plan action to face inequalities, discrimination, and other social injustice phenomena that hinder governments’ efforts to realize SDGs.

The involvement of learners in community-based activities has a positive impact on their values and perceptions, and inspire them to take local actions. Furthermore, giving learners responsibilities inside and outside the classroom enhances their sense of commitment and responsibility, which empowers their leadership skills. Yet, many teachers find these methods and techniques time consuming, difficult to evaluate and, challenging to the academic standards (Braskamp, 2008).

Correspondingly, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in EFL classrooms optimizes the teaching and learning of global citizenship skills (Lutge et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2024). ICTs give learners the opportunity to get up-to-date and accurate information in different modes and from multiple resources about various current issues that affect world communities. Moreover, the use of the Internet and social media benefits learners from collaborative and authentic experiences that supply their life-long learning process.

Connecting classrooms and communities, online learning, and information-sharing platforms that allow learners “to create podcasts and blogs, conduct research, interact with real-life scenarios and collaborate with other learners” develop learners understanding of global citizenship and motivate them to take global actions (UNESCO, 2014; UNESCO, 2015). Young learners today feel the need to express their opinions, act for global change, and demonstrate their social agency through digital platforms. Yet, learners and teachers’ digital competencies are detrimental to warrant a safe and ethical usage of the various technological gadgets.

Figure 2: The five digital citizenship domains necessary to build active and ethical digital citizens (UNESCO, 2024)



Young people need to be equipped with media and information literacy skills to criticize, evaluate, and use digital gadgets appropriately and interact positively with others to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships by showing empathy and self-awareness. Meanwhile, they should display creativity and innovation in content creation while taking the necessary safety measures to protect their personal rights and digital space.

Likewise, teachers need to develop their technology knowledge (TK) especially media and information technology to guide learners in their discovery, evaluation, creation, and sharing of information through

digital platforms. Moreover, they ought to maximize the chances for creativity to enhance learners’ agency and entrepreneurship.

Additionally, teachers should raise students’ awareness to the vital need for a committed engagement to global causes such as climate change, social injustice, poverty and others, which threaten their lives and affect humanity as a whole. Likewise, they have to sensitize learners to the impact of using technology on different facets of their lives (UNESCO, 2024).

7.4. Challenges to GCE in Moroccan EFL classrooms

Moroccan EFL teachers are aware of the importance of empowering learners’ global citizenship skills. Nevertheless, teachers in general and Moroccan EFL teachers in particular face a number of hindrances that prevent them from reaching the desired learning outcomes (Bletsher et al., 2017; Cho, 2017; Saddiqa et al., 2020; Al Abri et al., 2022; Aljuaid, 2022; Attou et al., 2024).

Challenges	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
The fear to indoctrinate students	68	1	5	3,25	1,028
Limited allocated time	68	1	5	3,90	1,053
Lack of Information and Communication Technology tools	68	1	5	4,06	1,035

Table 4: Moroccan EFL teachers’ challenges to GCE in EFL classrooms

SD=Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), N=Neutral (3), A= agree (4), SA= strongly agree (5)

As clearly shown in the table above, Moroccan EFL teachers face many challenges to develop students’ global citizenship in EFL classrooms. Based on the means presented, the most agreed upon challenges they struggle with are the use of outdated and overloaded textbooks (M = 4,47) and teaching large classes (M = 4,37).

Literature affirmed that ELT teachers face many obstacles that impede the effective implementation of GCE in ELT classrooms. It is true that the educational reforms in many countries focus on transversal skills development among learners, particularly global citizenship skills, but the educational policies do not propose clear and well-defined strategies and procedures that align language teaching and learning to GCE (Al Abri et al., 2022; Idrissi et al., 2021; Al Juaid, 2022). As a result, teachers rely on their personal experience and competences to find ways to develop students’ citizenship skills, that may not held the wanted results.

Another challenge is teachers’ lack of professional development opportunities. ELT teachers are in an urgent need for adequate pre-service and in-service trainings that equip them with global citizenship skills and values and that train them on GCE methods and techniques to enhance their self-efficacy in English language teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2014; Saddiqa et al., 2020; Aljuaid, 2022; Barry et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2024; Akcay et al., 2024).

Without an effective integration of GCE in teachers’ trainings programs, their understanding of global citizenship will be defective and their quality of teaching will decrease. Similarly, studies on GCE have shown that partial understanding of global citizenship is one of the hindrances that intervene in GCE process, especially that many of the global citizenship values are inconsistent with the social norms.

Consequently, some teachers expressed their dubious attitudes concerning the importance of GCE in En-

glish classrooms (Cho, 2017; Attou et al., 2024). Hence, teacher education and professional development is a key to construct a solid knowledge about global citizenship skills and to help teachers develop the appropriate pedagogy skills to integrate GCE in EFL teaching and learning.

In this survey study, Moroccan EFL teachers face many challenges in empowering learners' global citizenship skills. However, they mostly agree on problems related to overloaded and outdated textbooks, in addition to teaching large classes. Studies investigating GCE integration in Moroccan English textbooks revealed certain limitations in terms of "conceptualization, implementation and assessment" (Zyad, 2021, P:174). A textbook analysis study by Ait Bouzid (2020) confirmed that Moroccan English textbooks, "Gateway to English 2", "Ticket to English 2", and "Insights into English 2", raise learners' awareness to global citizenship themes as sustainable development, poverty, and tolerance but neglect other core values like democracy, conflict resolution, and human rights. They also offer numerous activities that call for behavioral actions against global issues related to the environment, illiteracy, and health.

Conversely, the GCE dimension in these textbooks relies on a mere presentation of information and facts that do not encourage learners to reflect, compare, analyse, and evaluate local, national, and global values. Besides, the provided activities and tasks do not empower learners' cognitive skills particularly problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making.

Curriculum limitations also lie in the dynamics that govern the relationship between the English language and global education. Some Moroccan EFL teachers believe that the integration of GCE in Moroccan English textbooks fosters English hegemony over local languages, which threatens the preservation of local identities. Thus, a balanced and inclusive approach to GCE integration in English language teaching and learning is pivotal to bridge the gap between local and global communities (Attou et al., 2024).

The teaching and learning of global citizenship skills is also hindered by educational context difficulties. Moroccan EFL teachers consider teaching large classes as one of the obstacles towards innovative GCE (Zyad, 2021). According to the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research in Morocco, the average class size approximately consists of 40 students per class, whilst among the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries, the average is of 20 students per class (Malouli, 2018).

Eventually, the teaching of large classes prevents teachers from adopting creative teaching methods since the acquisition of global citizenship skills is ideally possible through student-centered approaches. The high number of students does not allow the implementation of active learning methods such as experiential learning, project-based learning, community learning, blended learning, or enquiry-based learning. At the end, teachers resort to teacher-centered methods that do not empower learners' transversal skills nor align with the supposed conditions for quality teaching.

At the level of assessment, the evaluation procedures mirror the teaching-centered practices that focus on rote learning and superficial recall of information (Zyad, 2021). These latter are deemed to be incapable of fostering learners' critical and creative thinking and infusing global citizenship values. In other words, traditional assessment instruments like standardized tests are not reliable enough to measure and monitor learners' global citizenship development progress.

ELT teachers face other challenges such as insufficient allocated time, lack of global citizenship resources and materials, lack of technology tools, students' attitudes and values, and absence of partnerships (Braskamp, 2008; Bletsher et al., 2017; Aljuaid, 2022; Barry et al., 2023). These challenges

inhibit all educational policies' endeavors to build active and responsible citizens endowed with personal and professional attributes and capable of contributing to worldwide sustainability through global citizenship education.

8. Implications and Recommendations

In the light of previous literature, results analysis and discussion, this section discusses a base of generated implications, and suggests a number of recommendations for an effective integration of transversal skills development in Moroccan EFL classrooms.

8.1. Implications for Practice

The findings of this survey study investigating Moroccan EFL teachers' classroom practices and challenges in empowering learners' global citizenship for transversal skills development have valuable implications on GCE in ELT and policy development. In Morocco, a well-defined strategic approach to GCE integration in EFL is pivotal to realize the objectives of recent educational reforms while a multi-dimensional and collaborative approach to GCE teaching and learning in EFL classrooms is highly recommended.

It is necessary that stakeholders create a supportive positive environment for GCE by providing a wide range of global oriented resources, latest technological gadgets, more allocated time, and small class sizes. Besides, curriculum developers and syllabus designers need to think of updating the available Moroccan English textbooks by incorporating the current dimensions of global citizenship in a balanced and inclusive manner that bridges the gap between GCE and linguistic skills and that preserves local and national attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Moreover, the activities and tasks proposed within these textbooks should not only display information about global citizenship, but also constitute instruments for fostering learners' cognitive and socio-emotional skills to train learners to take sustainable actions.

Moroccan EFL teachers need to benefit from diverse professional development opportunities such as pre-service and in-service trainings, exchange programs, mentoring and coaching initiatives, advancement courses, and others. The aim is to have a clear and complete understanding of global citizenship skills and values and use the adequate teaching and learning methods to integrate GCE in EFL classrooms effectively.

In the same regard, a student-centered approach seems to be a pre-requisite for developing learners' global citizenship skills and engaging them actively through innovative teaching and learning methods like experiential learning, project-based learning, community learning and blended learning. To do this, the creation of a participatory environment based on building partnerships with national and international institutions as well as civil society organizations, parents, global leaders, employers, researchers, educators, and curriculum developers maximizes transversal skills development, mainly global citizenship skills.

8.2. Implications for Future Research

In Morocco, studies investigating global citizenship education are still at their infancy stages. Many aspects of this issue require more attention from educators, researchers, and syllabus designers. Future research inquiries should consider the effect of EFL classroom practices on GCE among Moroccan EFL learners, the development of teachers' training programs that involve various transversal skills, the design of English textbooks that creatively integrate global citizenship skills into linguistic skills, and the implementation of regular systematic needs analysis. Furthermore, examining the relationship

between global citizenship development and socio-cultural factors as gender, age, social class, cultural beliefs, and so forth may raise new debates around GCE.

With reference to research methodology, the investigation of Moroccan EFL classroom practices and effective GCE entails conducting more in-depth studies that adopt qualitative or mixed research methods in order to get corroborated results. Making use of qualitative data collection methods such as classroom observation may provide a detailed description of GCE classroom practices and an analysis of teacher-student and student-student interactions. Mixed research methods can help to measure the effect of GCE on learners' global citizenship skills development and EFL learning.

8.3. Limitations

The present study admits that the sample size selected does not allow for the generalization of the findings. However, this humble work can trigger further studies on GCE for transversal skills development in Morocco.

9. Conclusion

This paper investigated Moroccan EFL teachers' practices in developing students' global citizenship skills for transversal skills development and identified the main challenges that teachers encounter. Moroccan EFL teachers hold positive attitudes regarding the promotion of global citizenship skills in EFL classrooms for empowering learners' holistic development. To achieve this aim, teachers believe that the most effective classroom practices to implement GCE should incorporate innovative teaching and learning methods built on ICT integration, experiential learning, collaborative learning, and community-based learning in addition to the creation of a safe and democratic learning environment.

With regard to the challenges that Moroccan EFL teachers face, there are many hindrances to global citizenship skills development in EFL classrooms, but the most striking ones are the use of overloaded and outdated textbooks and the teaching of large classes. These findings contribute to unveil the potential of EFL teaching and learning in fostering learners' global citizenship skills. Besides, it raises the interest of Moroccan researchers in investigating the integration of transversal skills development in Moroccan education to meet the new demands of a globalized and interconnected world.

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