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## An Essay on Internationalism in Foreign Language Education



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### Abstract

This essay is an attempt to introduce into the discourse of Foreign Language Education the concept and phenomenon of internationalism. It begins with an analysis of the ways in which education systems promote nationalism and “national citizenship,” and suggests that an internationalist perspective would enrich this tradition in education. It continues with a discussion of the concept and the historical phenomenon of internationalism in its various forms, and the values it incorporates. Some approaches to defining notions of “global citizenship” and their limitations are identified, and the essay then argues that internationalism offers a more comprehensive basis on which to build “global,” “cosmopolitan” or other concepts of citizenship. This is then the foundation for presenting a way of thinking about Foreign Language Education as a means of promoting internationalism, which is illustrated by examples from recent practice. The essay ends with some thoughts about future directions in which the internationalist educational purposes of Foreign Language Education might be further realised.

**Keywords:** nationalism in education, internationalism, citizenship, foreign language education

### Introduction

Foreign language teaching (FLT) directs learners’ attention to other countries and is therefore “international,” but is it “internationalist”? In the following I propose to explain what I mean by “internationalism” and its historical and intellectual origins, and to argue that FLT should be internationalist, a characteristic which it has not yet fully embraced. Furthermore, I shall say FLT should be a central element of internationalist education, and thus contribute to limiting the pernicious effects of the chauvinistic nationalism which hides behind patriotism, “the last refuge of a scoundrel,” as Samuel Johnson famously said.

The fact that chauvinistic nationalism has been and still is a pernicious influence on the history of the 20th and 21st centuries, especially in Europe, cannot be demonstrated here at length. Almost a hundred

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years ago, it was strikingly and perceptively noted by John Maynard Keynes (1920) in his observations of the peace talks at Versailles in 1919. It destroyed the League of Nations in the 1930s. It is raising its head again today in the populism and chauvinism menacing Europe—for example, in the creation of a “hostile environment” for undesired foreigners in Britain, in the closing of Polish and Hungarian borders to refugees—and in the USA with a President who, at the time of writing, is trying to close frontiers to undesired visitors and migrants.

### Nationalism and Internationalism in Education

Much has been written about nationalism<sup>i</sup> in general and its relationship to education in schools in particular, for schools are a fundamental factor in the creation of national identity in young people (Barrett, 2007)<sup>ii</sup>. One element in this process, albeit mentioned only *en passant* in histories of nationalism, is the question of language. It has been shown that a national language—usually linked to a national literature, often a folk literature—is crucial, though not a *sine qua non*, in the evolution of nationalism and nation states (Gellner, 1987; Anderson, 1991; Hobsbawm, 1992), a process which Risager (2006, p. 26) describes as the “nationalisation of language subjects” of French in France or Danish in Denmark, etc. Schools are the prime location for learning a national language and Gellner describes the process of a “perpetual plebiscite” in which a national language is valued whereas dialects—and today he would doubtless refer also to languages of migration—are devalued:

There is indeed a perpetual plebiscite, a choice rather than a fatality. But the choice does not ignore the given cultural opportunities and resources. It takes place, not every day perhaps, but at each *rentrée des classes*. And the anonymity, the amnesia, are essential; it is important not merely that each citizen learn the standardised, centralised, and literate idiom in his (sic) primary school, but also that he should forget or at least devalue the dialect (and language – my addition) which is not taught in school. (Gellner, 1987, p. 17)

Hobsbawm added a further element, “social mobility.” He argues that acquisition of the national language facilitates social mobility, and simultaneously reinforces the status of the national language. In this process it is the secondary school which is important:

The crucial moment in the creation of (national) language as a potential asset is not its admission as a medium of primary education (though this automatically creates a large body of primary teachers and language indoctrinators) but its admission as a medium of secondary education, (...) for it is this which (...) links social mobility to the vernacular, and in turn to linguistic nationalism. (Hobsbawm, 1992, p. 118)

These are significant insights, but the role of schooling both includes and goes beyond language, in the creation of nationalism.

Although not noticed by authors such as Gellner and Hobsbawm<sup>iii</sup>, nationalism is also present across much of the curriculum, and school curricula are usually “national” in name and almost always national in character. Curricula enjoin teachers to teach “our” language, literature, geography, and history. Often the expectation remains implicit, but some curricula have a quite explicit reference to the role of schooling in creating national identity, especially if the state has been founded relatively recently. A striking example is provided by Singapore, a new country with a complex population of different “races,” where schooling is expected to create loyalty and national identity. In the 2000s, Singapore had a “National Education” syllabus which stated explicitly that its purpose was not only the teaching and learning of knowledge about Singapore but also the inculcation of emotional attachment and active commitment to Singapore against external threats, a willingness to “stay and

fight when the odds are against us” (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2006). This was, moreover, seen as a matter of psychological development, since “at the primary level, the students are encouraged to Love Singapore; secondary students are taught to Know Singapore; and Junior College/ Pre-University students are urged to Lead Singapore.” Today, “National Education” has widened in scope to become “Character and Citizenship Education.” Intended learning outcomes include pride in national identity and commitment to nation-building, valuing socio-cultural diversity and promoting cohesion, but also the ability to “reflect on and respond to community, national and global issues, as an informed and responsible citizen” (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2017).

Singapore is a striking example of a new state which has rapidly and deliberately used its education system to create a national identity despite the multiplicity of ethnicities—or “races” to use the local term—and Green (1997, p. 143) in a wide-ranging survey also takes Singapore as an example to make the general statement that:

In the developing world, however, there has been an ever more explicit link between education and state formation, which education unequivocally linked with both citizen formation and national economic development.

Green goes on to argue that, although globalisation has made education systems more “porous,” i.e. influenced by ideas - and teachers and students - transferred from other countries through internationalisation, nonetheless “there is little evidence that national systems as such are disappearing or the national states have ceased to control them. They may seem less distinctive and their roles are changing but they still undoubtedly attempt to serve national ends” (1997, p. 171).

Where globalisation has led to the introduction into curricula of new foci on global issues, as Green points out and as cited from Singapore above, there is a new opportunity of FLT. For, in older national curricula, the position of foreign languages was anomalous. A national curriculum creates affective relationships with learners’ own country whereas FLT directs attention to other countries. FLT has a history of including knowledge about one or more countries where the language is spoken, known as *Landeskunde*, *civilisation* and variants on these terms. *Landeskunde* has included geography, history and other aspects of “area studies”; literature has usually been given a separate status (Kramer, 2012). At first glance, this seems to mirror the treatment of national language, history, geography etc. in school curricula, but there is a significant difference. The teaching of a national language, literature, history etc. supports – and is intended to support – feelings of identification with “the” or “our”<sup>iv</sup> nation, often reinforced by daily routines such as the pledge to the flag in the classroom, singing the national anthem<sup>v</sup> or the presence of a picture of the Head of State on the classroom wall. Yet it is scarcely necessary to remind ourselves of the many instances of nationalism being used for chauvinistic purposes, especially in times of “crisis”<sup>vi</sup>, a turning inward which is the opposite of the outward-looking perspective of FLT. Yet nationalism remains unchallenged as an ideology of schooling—let alone in other spheres of life<sup>vii</sup> – in which “loyalty” to “our” country is expected before all else.

The challenge can come from foreign language teaching, but the international perspective of FLT has never been properly promoted as a means of creating a critical perspective or developing an international or cosmopolitan identity and loyalty<sup>viii</sup>. Even in Europe where the notion of a “European dimension” across the curriculum has been pursued, the potential for language learning as a means of creating a new identity has received little attention<sup>ix</sup>. Theoretical proposals that language teaching should become “transnational” (Risager, 2006) or “transcultural” (e.g., Biell & Doff, 2014; Reimann, 2018) refer to the lack of research on the impact of language learning on national and other identities, but do not make detailed proposals of what this could or should be. My argument is that we need an internationalist FLT.

However, unlike nationalism, internationalism has been analysed much less frequently, either in general terms or in connection with education. For example, in an introductory book on nationalism by one of the most prolific writers in English (Smith, 2001), internationalism is not included in the index. This supports Kuehl's (2009) assertion that historiography has paid little attention to internationalism and we need next a nuanced understanding of internationalism to underpin the challenge I am calling for.

### Internationalism

It is important, first, to distinguish internationalism from internationalisation. Internationalisation has become widespread in Higher Education and is beginning to be a focus of secondary education (Rizvi, 2017). It focused initially on student and staff mobility, on changes in institutional structures and, more recently, on calls for internationalised curricula in Higher Education (Leask, 2001; *IoC, n.d.*). Internationalisation may or may not lead to internationalism, for there is no necessary relationship between the two, and internationalism is not confined to education systems; it has a much wider and more complex relationship to societal institutions.

Elvin (1960, p. 16) offers a useful starting point, with a definition of internationalism which he hopes is not contentious, aware as he is of the pitfalls of definition and the need for further analysis:

What I mean by internationalism is a readiness to act on the assumption that mankind as a whole is the proper society to have in mind for matters that cannot with safety or with such good effect be left exclusively within the domain of smaller social groups such as nations. I think it will be agreed that this is not an extravagant definition.

Further analysis of the history and ideology of internationalism, though hitherto limited in scope as Kuehl (2009) argues, shows that different types of internationalism have existed, and exist. Most types have accepted that the nation and the nation-state—problematic though the latter concept may be—co-exist with internationalism. Kuehl (2009) goes on to explain that only revolutionary internationalism starts from the premise that the nation-state can and should disappear.

Although Holbraad (2003) identifies and analyses “liberal,” “socialist,” “hegemonic” and “conservative” internationalism, the most well-known and influential type is “liberal internationalism,” defined by Halliday as:

a generally optimistic approach based upon the belief that independent societies and autonomous individuals can through greater interaction and co-operation evolve towards common purposes, chief among these being peace and prosperity. (1988, p. 192)

Holbraad too links liberal internationalism with “confidence in the rational and moral qualities of human beings” (2003, p. 39) and “faith in progress towards more orderly social relations.” Kuehl (2009) argues that liberal internationalism is a phrase, often employed without definition, that is associated with the periods pre- and post-World War I. Halliday (1988) takes a similar view and explains how liberal internationalism was associated with peace movements before that war and the peace settlement after it.

If internationalism has been minimally investigated in general, in education there has been even less analysis, either conceptual or empirical, particularly in the context of compulsory schooling. This historic lack of interest among educationists was probably due the dominant unquestioned assumption that schooling is “of course” a matter for nations and their states<sup>x</sup>, and as a consequence, nationalism

predominated in the past and extends its influence into the present. One exception is a focus on the intercultural mindset in the International Baccalaureate, where indeed one might expect internationalism to appear but in fact there is more focus on skills or competences than on values and identifications (Castro, Lundgren, & Woodin, 2015).

There are other concepts and a growing interest in how schools can turn outwards but here too we find an emphasis on competence, a guiding concept in contemporary education (Fleming, 2009). It is evident for example in the recently produced model of “Global Competence” from the OECD (2017) comprising four “capacities,” a term which follows from a competence approach:

Global competence is the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.  
(OECD, 2017 p. 7)

This work does address, somewhat tentatively, questions of attitudes and values, but not whether and how identifications should be part of the purposes of education.

The UNESCO term is “global citizenship” and the choice of the term “citizenship” leads to a closer concern with identification, “a sense of belonging,” as well as the element of being active, “understanding, acting and relating”:

Despite differences in interpretation, there is a common understanding that global citizenship does not imply a legal status. It refers more to a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity, promoting a “global gaze” that links the local to the global and the national to the international. It is also a way of understanding, acting and relating oneself to others and the environment in space and in time, based on universal values, through respect for diversity and pluralism. In this context, each individual’s life has implications in day-to-day decisions that connect the global with the local, and vice versa. (UNESCO, 2014, p. 14)

Here the reference to “universal values, through respect for diversity and pluralism”<sup>xi</sup> is a precursor of similar formulations in the OECD document, although the latter is more circumspect about claiming universality for the values it defends. The abstract definition in the UNESCO document is operationalised in a further document of guidance which employs the discourse of objectives-setting and in particular a “socio-emotional” objective, again with the notion of “a sense of belonging”: “Learners experience a sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, based on human rights” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 22). In internationalism, this kind of identification is important first as a counter-balance to the exclusive promotion of identification with nation and state in nationalist education (Osler & Starkey, 2003).

We have seen then that there are various emphases in the approaches. There are those which focus on competences. Others focus on values. Others again focus on identifications and “belonging.” What is missing in all of them is an explicit position on a direction for education, based on the moral and political force of internationalism, to which we turn next.

### **Internationalism as a Moral and Political Force**

We have seen that definitions and descriptions are complex, but Halliday (1988) suggests that all types of internationalism share three characteristics. The first two are descriptive. First there is an

acknowledgement that there is a globalisation process at work – i.e. a binding together through communications and trade, begun in the 19th century with the invention of railways and steamships. The second common characteristic is attention to managing the impact of economic internationalisation or globalisation on political processes. Whatever the convictions of national groups or entities—governments, trade unions, feminists, or opponents of nuclear power or capitalism—all cooperate more closely as a consequence of the phenomenon of globalisation.

The third characteristic, is of a different nature. It is the normative assertion that the first two are phenomena which should be welcomed, since they promote understanding, peace, prosperity “or whatever the particular advocate holds to be most dear” (Halliday, 1988, p. 188). Internationalism in this view can therefore be interpreted in multiple ways in multiple contexts and groups, but a fourth general feature of internationalism is the association of internationalism with democracy. Invoking both Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson, Goldmann (1994, p. 54) for example suggests that internationalist agendas go hand in hand with democratic change at the domestic level: “[It is part of] the tradition of internationalist thinking to consider law, organization, exchange, and communication to be more likely to lead to peace and security if states are democratic than if they are authoritarian”<sup>xii</sup>. This differentiates internationalism from the positions taken in the UNESCO and OECD documents mentioned above which do not see world citizenship as necessarily associated with democracy. Osler and Starkey (2003) are closer to internationalism when they combine an earlier version of the UNESCO document with Held’s (1997) concept of “cosmopolitan democracy” to create their concept of “cosmopolitan citizenship.” For them however, there is no reference to creating new identities through further identifications; they say that such citizens will be “confident in their own identities” (Osler & Starkey, 2003, pp. 246-247) or that learners “celebrate multiple identities as well as loyalties and belongings at a range of scales, such as those relating to families, neighbourhoods, cities, nations and continents, or, indeed at the global level, to their fellow humanity” (Osler & Starkey, 2015, p. 32). In the position taken here, education for internationalism is pro-active in creating new international identities rather than celebrating what already exists.

Halliday refers to the normative characteristic of internationalism as “aspirational,” and others link internationalism to what might be called a “moral dimension.” For Malkki (1994, p. 41), the analysis of internationalism can be carried out in two ways: “as a transnational cultural form for imagining and ordering difference among people, and as a moralising discursive practice,” the latter being a matter of “the ritualised and institutionalised evocation of a common humanity,” and it is identification with a common humanity in concrete and practical activities which an internationalist approach to education seeks to establish by building on historically-grounded conceptualisations.

For it is important that an emphasis on a common humanity in internationalism is also found in a historical analysis. Lyons refers to “the humanitarian impulse” in his account of the appearance of many international organisations – including the International Red Cross – in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Holbraad similarly refers to the humanitarian form of liberal internationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which included the argument made by both J. S. Mill and Gladstone that a new principle of international law allowed states to intervene to resolve conflicts within a state or between states. This is a principle which has become part of the thinking of some non-governmental organisations with the concept of “ingérence humanitaire” and “le droit d’ingérence” (Herlemont-Zoritchak, 2009). The principle also underpins interventions such as the one in Iraq by governments acting in consortia, and there is current debate as to whether international bodies such as the UN might intervene to protect human rights<sup>xiii</sup> (Forum Mondial des Droits de l’Homme, 2014).

This moral dimension of mutual responsibility in internationalism is also the basis for an emphasis on world peace which was realised in different ways at different periods and which is ultimately related

to, and has stimulated the development of, “peace education”<sup>xiv</sup>. For Kuehl (2009), an embodiment of this aspect of internationalism appeared in the post-1945 period in the form of “democratic humanism” exemplified in the Declaration of Human Rights. Malkki (1994, p. 56) takes a similar view, referring to the Declaration of Human Rights as a manifestation of the “internationalism of transcendent values.” Internationalism is thus not shy of taking a political stance, with a commitment to democracy and associated phenomena, such as press freedom and freedom of speech, as a *sine qua non*<sup>xv</sup>.

Furthermore, as Thomas Mann wrote in the depths of the 1930s and the fascism in Europe, a period with which contemporary times and populism are often compared, democracy has far more than a political meaning:

Ich knüpfe [den Namen der Demokratie] an das Menschlichste, an die Idee und das Absolute, ich bringe ihn in Beziehung zu des Menschen unveräußerlicher und durch keine Gewaltniedrigung zerstörbarer Würde. (1937/2005, p. 320)

(I connect [the name of democracy] with that which is most human, to the idea, to the absolute, I relate it to the dignity of mankind, inalienable and indestructible by any violent humiliation.)<sup>xvi</sup>

A normative view of internationalism is thus available to give direction to all teaching including FLT. As we have seen, internationalism involves:

- recognition of the benefits of globalisation because it provides the conditions for cooperation at all societal levels, be they governmental, employment-related, educational or leisure-orientated;
- the pursuit, through cooperation, of understanding, peace and prosperity for all partners equally;
- the implementation of democratic processes and democratic humanism, based on Human Rights, through which equality in cooperation can be assured.

In terms of curricula and curriculum design, internationalism thus involves:

- a pluralist recognition of the existence of many disciplines and traditions of teaching all of which may be included in the curriculum;
- the implementation of teaching processes which give equal voice to all involved and a rational, democratic approach to solving problems.

It is important to note the significance of “equality in cooperation” to counter-act the dominance of “Westernisation” which some writers fear (e.g., Jiang, 2008), and wish to reject. “Glocalisation” is not the only option, provided the education systems of “Western” states make an effort to understand others and include them in the education of their students.

It is equally important that, although there could be a rejection of the importance of “democracy” and “human rights” as “Western” phenomena, their acceptance in some form is widespread enough (Gearty, 2008) – in “East,” “West,” “South,” and “North” – for there to be no significant problem in their being fundamental to internationalism. The specific form they take will be the outcome of the cooperative work done by all actors involved.

### Internationalism and FLT

Turning to FLT curricula in particular, there are signs of recognition of the need for a richer and more complex educational perspective which might be realised through internationalism. There are two elements involved. The first is the recognition of the need to address global problems and the role of

FLT in doing so. One example, from the Bavarian curriculum for languages (Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung, 2004), makes explicit reference to peace education, with the assertion that language teaching should:

develop the readiness to accept and respect people from other language and culture communities. In this way, teaching in modern foreign languages also makes a contribution to peace education. (my translation)

The second element is a new emphasis on how FLT can and should pursue not only the instrumental purposes which have dominated much FLT thinking, but also humanistic ones. This can be found in the Norwegian curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006), for example:

Foreign languages are both an educational subject and a humanistic subject. (...) Competences in language and culture shall give the individual the possibility to understand, to “live into” and value other cultures’ social life and life at work, their modes and conditions of living, their way of thinking, their history, art, and literature.

The humanistic purpose is formulated as respect for other values as a consequence of “living into”<sup>xvii</sup> other ways of life. Language learning can and should moreover lead to a better understanding of self and one’s own development:

(Language teaching and learning) can also contribute to developing interest and tolerance, develop insight in one’s own conditions of life and own identity, and contribute to a joy in reading, creativity, experience and personal development. (My (literal) translation)

The curriculum for regional and foreign languages in France presents (Ministère de l’Éducation nationale, 2009) language teaching as contributing to citizenship and mobility where intercultural competence is important:

The intercultural dimension is fundamental in the learning of a modern language. This dimension gives to this learning a wider function than the acquisition of the linguistic means for immediate communication in everyday life. It aims at the “appropriation” and mastery, by learners, of knowledge (savoirs), attitudes (savoir-être) and skills (savoir-faire). Going beyond familiarity with a fact about a country, the knowledge skills and attitudes give access to an understanding of foreign cultures. (my translation)

The Norwegian curriculum statement (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006) goes however one crucial step further by introducing the idea that language competence is a basis for democratic activity beyond the limits of the country or state:

Good competence in languages will also lay the ground for participation in activities which build democracy *beyond country borders* and differences in culture. (my (literal) translation, emphasis added)

It is thus possible to see that the characteristics of internationalism are appearing with ever stronger emphasis in foreign language teaching policy documents: the importance of (humanistic) values and understanding others, the critical reflection on one’s own self and country, the developing link with education for (active) citizenship and participation in democratic processes which go beyond the borders of the nation and state. We need now to see how the aspirations expressed in policy can be realised in practice.



## A Way Forward

### *An internationalist interpretation of education for citizenship*

My argument so far has been that all education, but FLT in particular, should take an internationalist perspective, and that this means addressing issues which are “too big” for nations. An internationalist perspective gives learners an Archimedean point from which to view the world, and their own nation and country within it, a point from which they can see what they have never seen before. Ewa Hoffman (1989, p. 275) captures this experience as not only conceptual but also embodied, as she reviews her life in a new language:

Because I have learned the relativity of cultural meanings on my skin, I can never take any one set of meanings as final (...). It's not the worst place to live; it gives you an Archimedean leverage from which to see the world.

In order to operationalise the conceptual analysis, I want now to introduce ideas from education for citizenship, and to suggest that FLT has certainly to create new ways of seeing but has to go a step further. Seeing is the first step. Taking action is the second. Citizenship education demonstrates how learners can take their learning beyond the classroom and make immediate use of it in the here and now, in the communities to which they belong, at local, regional or national level. A succinct definition of its purposes is found in the “Crick Report” (1998, p. 41):

The strands

#### *6.7.1 Social and moral responsibility*

Children learning from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other (this is an essential pre-condition for citizenship).

#### *6.7.2 Community involvement*

Pupils learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community.

#### *6.7.3 Political literacy*

Pupils learning about and how to make themselves effective in public life through knowledge, skills and values.

It is the second of these strands which is especially important here. It is ensured that “active citizenship” is not just seen as for the future, when the young learner becomes an adult. Community involvement should be contemporaneous with teaching and learning in the educational institution, be it school or university.

There is however a limitation in citizenship education which FLT can help overcome. Citizenship education does not often take an international/ transnational or, as some would prefer, “cosmopolitan” perspective (Osler & Starkey, 2003). Nor is it aware of the linguistic competences needed in international or cosmopolitan interactions<sup>xviii</sup>. When an international perspective and internationalist ideology is combined with the emphasis on taking action in the community, there is an enrichment of the local, regional and national which leads to new insights and new kinds of action. Young people can learn to work together in an internationalist perspective across linguistic and cultural boundaries—with the competences acquired in FLT—to analyse and act upon issues which require something other than a national or nationalist perspective. In this respect, they fulfil the aims of language teaching as expressed in the continuation of the Norwegian curriculum document (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006) cited earlier:

Good competence in languages will also lay the ground for participation in activities which build *democracy beyond country borders* and differences in culture. (my translation with emphasis added)

### *Examples from practice*

That citizenship education in some form is found in compulsory schooling is not surprising but it is also interesting to see that universities are beginning to take the issues seriously. There is, for example, the Talloires network (<https://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/>) which is “building a global movement of civically engaged and socially responsible higher education institutions” and advocates the expansion of civic engagement activities. Similarly, in France, a recent decree creates the recognition of students’ skills and knowledge acquired as a result of extra-curricular activities such as charitable work (Legifrance, 2018).

Implicit in these developments is the notion of “active citizenship” about which more has been written than can be explored here but which is illustrated and supported by European documents such as *Active Citizenship* (European Economic and Social Committee, 2012) and is defined in one research report as: “Participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy” (Hoskins *et al.*, 2006, p. 10).

In recent years some FL teachers have begun to work in this direction and to describe their work for other teachers, in schools and universities. The essence of such work is to combine the international perspective of foreign language teaching and the emphasis on “action in the community” of citizenship education (Byram, 2008). This combination is encapsulated in the definition used in the planning of intercultural citizenship projects:

Therefore a good intercultural citizenship project will ideally have the following characteristics:

- create a sense of international identification with learners in the international project;
- challenge the “common sense” of each national group within the international project;
- develop a new “international” way of thinking and acting (a new way which may be either a modification of what is usually done OR a radically new way);
- apply that new way to “knowledge,” to “self” and to “the world” (Byram, Golubeva, Han, and Wagner, 2017, p. xxviii).

This educational philosophy has been pursued by a network of language teachers in schools and universities. They have taken full advantage of modern technology to create innovative projects. Here I present two examples, but others can be found in Byram *et al.* (2017) and Wagner, Conlon Perugini, and Byram (2018).

The first project is from the lower secondary age range. There were learners aged 10-12, in Argentina and in Denmark, both groups learning English and using it in the project as a lingua franca as they worked together over the internet.

The teachers had two kinds of aims, “thinking” and “acting” which correspond to the two steps of “seeing” and “taking action” used above:

### **THINKING**

- encouraging children to explore and reflect on environmental issues—globally and locally
- understand environmental issues and how to recognize them in their own surroundings,

- challenge taken-for-granted representations of the environment,

## ACTING

- engage in trash sorting and recycling practices,
- contribute to improving the environment in their local communities = action in the community

There were four major stages in the project, which took place over several weeks:

### *STAGE 1 – DISCOVER ABOUT “US” AND PREPARE FOR “THEM”*

- Learners identified “green crimes” (such as not switching off a computer when not in use) in their schools, families and communities, and drew pictures or made video-tapes these crimes.
- Learners carried out a “trash analysis”: listing, classifying and sorting trash in waste bins in schools

### *STAGE 2 – PRESENT “US” TO “THEM” AND COMPARE*

- Using a wiki, each group presented their findings to the other and the groups then compared the “crimes” and attitudes to recycling in their respective environments
- Each group carried out a survey among family members, friends, etc. about their environmental habits and again compared their findings on the wiki
- They each analyzed media images and texts on environmentalism, as produced in Argentina and in Denmark, and again compared.

### *STAGE 3 – WORK TOGETHER – IN “US AND THEM” GROUP*

- Mixed sub-groups of Argentinean and Danish learners worked collaboratively online using skype and wiki; they designed posters to raise awareness of environmental issues

### *STAGE 4 – FOCUS AGAIN ON “US” AND ACTING*

Both groups return in this stage to their own community and take “action” they have decided on as a consequence of the previous stage. For example, the Argentinean learners:

- created videos and songs and shared on Facebook
- were interviewed by a local journalist and had the collaborative posters published in local newspaper,
- designed a banner and hung it in the school street.



The second project took place in 2012, on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of what in the UK was called the Falklands war and in Argentina was the war about the Malvinas.

There were 50 Argentinean university students of English and 50 UK students of Spanish; both groups had high language competence, around CEFR C1. They worked in sub-groups on the project but here a general overview is provided.

The teachers in this case had the same two kinds of aims as in the previous project:

#### **AIMS – THINKING**

- encouraging students to explore and reflect on historical issues – from national and international perspectives
- understand historical issues and how to analyse them in national and international contexts,
- challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about their national history

#### **AIMS – ACTING**

- Students should carry out their own research (of historical documents such as newspapers, interviews, etc.)
- Students should communicate with people in their own community about historical issues, drawing on a new international perspective

This project also had four major stages:

#### *STAGE 1 – DISCOVER ABOUT “US” AND PREPARE FOR “THEM”*

Each group independently researched newspapers, talked with parents, created PowerPoints about the war as presented in their own country 30 years previously; since they were not alive at the time, this

was historical research for them

### STAGE 2 – PRESENT “US” TO “THEM” AND COMPARE

The groups then communicated with each other to explain how the events were presented in their own country. They communicated synchronically and diachronically (with a wiki and the software Elluminate). One of the activities was to interview Argentinean and English war veterans. They then created blogs/Facebook pages and noted reactions from their friends, acquaintances and others.

### STAGE 3 – WORK TOGETHER – IN “US AND THEM” GROUP

The groups then collaboratively created leaflets, brochures etc. to show perspectives from both Argentina and England, and to present their ideas on reconciliation.

Here is one example:

During the Falklands/Malvinas conflict, the media and the government manipulated information in such an obvious way that it seemed as if it were a joke. The touch of humour of some of the front-pages of British magazines and newspapers makes one think that they did not take the Argentinians seriously, and this is probably the message they were trying to convey: “Relax people, this is a piece of cake”. At that time, people were not able to know the whole story since politicians controlled what the media could or could not say, but nowadays we can, and we HAVE TO, listen to many different points of view in order to draw our own conclusions.

Los medios argentinos también manipularon a su pueblo mediante la prensa haciéndole creer al pueblo que la tan mentada guerra iba sobre ruedas y que el ejército argentino estaba venciendo al enemigo británico, cuando la realidad de un ejército no preparado era más que evidente. Al estar los medios completamente controlados por el Gobierno, la gente no tenía otra información más que la errónea brindada por el gobierno, lo cual hace que veamos el panorama ahora desde una óptica muy diferente a la del pueblo en ese entonces.

**PENSÁ POR VOS MISMO**

**NO ONE CAN RULE YOUR MIND**

**SEE BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY**

### STAGE 4

In this stage they took “action in the community,” as suggested in the pedagogy of education for citizenship. For example, the Argentinean students distributed leaflets in the street and engaged people in conversation; some of them taught a special class in an English language school using the materials they had devised in their project. Others taught an English class with an NGO in a poor neighbourhood. And there were other activities which brought the results of the work developed in their classrooms and across the internet to the society in which students live and work, their national (imagined) community but with an international perspective<sup>xix</sup>.

Porto has shown in several publications (Porto, 2014; Porto & Byram, 2015; Porto, 2018) that students take internationalist positions on the issues raised in their classrooms and cooperation. They become engaged as internationalists as defined above by Elvin, “a readiness to act on the assumption that mankind as a whole is the proper society to have in mind” when thinking and acting on matters beyond what can be handled by smaller groups. The matters they handle arise at national levels, but students rise above national perspectives. They begin to create an international group acting together, and an international identification. They then look “down” or “back” on the national perspective which they had hitherto acquired from the society around them and take actions in their own communities as “intercultural citizens” in order to change the perspectives of their fellow (national) citizens. Porto and Yulita (2017) has also compared their work with the CDC and concludes:

The results in this study demonstrate that the learners developed a set of competences for democratic culture. The underlying intention of the task of designing a leaflet was to nurture an attitude that would encourage them to take action in their community, and students did indeed display a wide range of competences of fundamental importance for the development of civic-mindedness. (2017, p. 15)

Internationalism in foreign language teaching is, in sum, a realistic purpose for foreign language teaching and evaluation has demonstrated success. This is not to say that this approach is the only possible one.

### Ways Forward

I have attempted in this essay to argue that foreign language teaching has a particular role to play in prompting learners to take a different view on the world than the nationalist one, which much education promotes. I have discussed some of the current options - including cosmopolitanism and world citizenship - and pointed out that they lack a moral direction. Internationalism is a way of thinking and acting which is grounded in historical events and philosophies. Liberal internationalism has a vision of the world which goes beyond the national and is based on promoting a change for the better both in terms of the moral position taken and with respect to the actions which follow. Foreign language teaching has a privileged position in education systems because, by its nature, it should lead to an internationalist position.

In the final section I have described examples that demonstrate how foreign language teaching can both in theory and practice realise its fundamental but oft-ignored international(ist) character. Simultaneously, the examples show how foreign language teaching makes a major and unique contribution to young people’s education even as it provides them with tools for communication. Internationalism should be at the heart of foreign language teaching,

The examples given are not of course exclusive ways of realising in practice the theoretical position of internationalism. The fundamental issue is that foreign language teaching needs to realise its full nature and potential in these ways and others, and that practitioners should work together with theorists to ensure this happens in innovative and systematic ways.

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<sup>i</sup> Nationalism is defined by Miscevic (2014) as follows:

The term "nationalism" is generally used to describe two phenomena: (1) the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and (2) the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) self-determination. (...) It typically features the supremacy of the nation's claims over other claims to individual allegiance and full sovereignty as the persistent aim of its political program.

It is the first of these which is more important in this text, and the ways in which nations use education systems to make claim to individual allegiance.

<sup>ii</sup> John Dewey attributed the strong relationship between state education and nationalism mainly to German thought reacting to Napoleonic conquests in the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

Under the influence of German thought in particular, education became a civic function and the civic function was identified with the realization of the ideal of the nation state. The “state” was substituted for humanity; cosmopolitanism gave way to nationalism. To form the citizen, not the “man,” became the aim of education. (1916/1985, pp. 99-100)

iii An exception is Kedourie (1966, p. 84) but his statement is extreme and perhaps deliberately provocative: “in nationalist theory (...) the purpose of education is not to transmit knowledge, traditional wisdom (...) its purpose rather is wholly political, to bend the will of the young to the will of the nation. Schools are instruments of state policy, like the army, the police, and the exchequer.”

iv Much the same process happens in the media to create a sense that nationalism is normal and even “banal” (Billig, 1995).

v At the time of writing, there are reactions against national anthems on both sides of the world, as sportsmen in Trump’s America refuse to stand for the anthem and Hong Kong football fans boo the anthem of Mainland China. In the latter case this has led to the introduction of a law to criminalise such actions.

vi The extreme and powerful examples stem from the Fascist times and still affect contemporary views of education. A contemporary debate about the re-introduction to Japanese schools of the “Imperial Rescript on Education” used in Japan from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to create loyalty to emperor and state, is one example of the potential mis-use of schooling (Japan Times, 2017). Another striking example is the post-1918 attempts to introduce an international perspective in Germany. This was described by an American visitor, Daniel Prescott (1930), who saw how quickly chauvinism returned (Byram, in press). A third example comes from my personal experience when, during the Falklands/Malvinas war in the 1980s, my children were exposed to a chauvinist account of events by their primary school teacher.

vii At the time of writing the chauvinism of the “Brexiters” is strident in some media and people who dare to question this are receiving death threats (The Guardian, 2017).

viii On the other hand, there is concern in some countries that foreign language learning will be a negative challenge, that it will undermine national identity. Japan is one of the best-known examples and a country where the policy debate has been strong for some years. Fears that teaching children of elementary school age a foreign language – by which is meant English – will undermine their national identity, are part of a long-standing tradition of defending the special nature of Japanese identity (*nihonjinron*). Language education aims were presented, at the beginning of the 21st-century, as being to produce “Japanese with English abilities” who would *inter alia* be able to present Japanese ideas to the rest of the world through English. Although at that time academic definitions of English as a Lingua Franca or as an International Language were not well developed, it was an implicit dimension of this new policy purpose. Little was said about aspects of foreign language education which might lead to understanding other people, acquiring attitudes of tolerance or even active interest in them.

ix The nearest formulation to this perspective is found in the European Commission’s White Paper of 1995 in which it is said that “Multilingualism is part and parcel of both European identity/citizenship and the learning society” (European Union, 1995, p. 47)

x It is the object of subsidiarity in the EU i.e. the realm of the member states and not of the EU and its parliament (European Parliament, 2018).

xi Pluralism is a position articulated by Isaiah Berlin. He argues that relativism is a view which is trivial: “I prefer coffee, you prefer champagne. We have different tastes. There is no more to be said. That is relativism” (1998, p. 9). Pluralism is different:

The conception that there are many different ends that men (sic) may seek and still be fully rational, fully men, capable of understanding each other and sympathising and deriving light from each other. (ibid.)

Such rational understanding depends on ‘imaginative insight’ but also on a common humanity: ‘What makes men (sic) human is common to them, and acts as a bridge between them’ (ibid.). He argues that we can criticise and even condemn other cultures, but we cannot say that we cannot understand them or assert that they are merely subjective. It is the combination of rationality and imagination which is the means to understand.

xii The Council of Europe, though it does not draw on theory of internationalism, is an international body whose members are states, and which emphasises that it based on three ‘pillars’: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Its *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (Council of Europe, 2018) is an example of the embodiment of these principles in the educational process though the competences which

should be taught in state education systems. A stronger emphasis on internationalism as a moral force might have led to a more explicit internationalism in this document and then in education systems.

<sup>xiii</sup> There is a parallel development in the globalisation of human rights and the extension the scope of attribution of rights and identities from the national to the universal:

l'institutionnalisation mondiale des droits de l'homme transforme les relations structurelles des individus et des États. Les individus ne revendiquent plus leurs droits au simple titre de citoyens d'un État mais également au nom de leur appartenance à la collectivité universelle de l'humanité. (Koenig, 2007, pp. 681-682)

<sup>xiv</sup> Peace Education is a related concept, for example, "Peace education in UNICEF refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level" (Fountain, 1999).

<sup>xv</sup> It is not possible at this point to discuss when a state is democratic, but it would certainly exclude states where there is a one-party rule, where human rights are abused and where there is censorship of the press. An ostensive definition of democracy can be found in the Council of Europe's *Compendium of the Most Relevant Council of Europe Texts in the Area of Democracy* (Council of Europe, 2018) in which key concepts include free and fair elections, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and education for democratic citizenship *inter alia*.

<sup>xvi</sup> At about the same time, E. M. Forster was writing and speaking against fascism and for democracy, in a more personal and simple language. Democracy provides liberty for those who create and discover and permits people and in particular the press to make public criticism. Democracy 'starts from the assumption that the individual is important, and all types of individuals are needed to make a civilisation.' He contrasts this with those systems which are "efficiency-regimes" which "divide citizens into the bossers and the bossed." The bulwark against totalitarianism—and in his time it was fascism and communism—is liberalism and individualism:

The dictator-hero can grind down his citizens till they are all alike but he cannot melt them into a single man (sic). The memory of birth and the expectation of death always lurks within the human being, making him (sic) separate from his fellows and consequently capable of intercourse with them. Naked I came into the world and naked I shall go out of it! And a very good thing too, for it reminds me that I am naked under my shirt, whatever its colour. (Forster, 1939/1965, p. 84)

<sup>xvii</sup> This is a reminiscent of anthropological and historical methods which "enter into" another way of living and thinking. Berlin (1990, pp. 59-60) considers Giambattista Vico:

Vico is the true father both of the modern concept of culture and of what one might call cultural pluralism, according to which each authentic culture has its own unique vision, its own scale of values (...). His deepest belief was that what men (sic) have made, other men can understand.

<sup>xviii</sup> Starkey is one of the very few authors who consider the relationship of language teaching to Human Rights Education. He tends to focus however on how the language teacher can introduce appropriate methods and analyse teaching material from the HRE perspective, rather than how a linguistic and intercultural competence is the basis for interactions (Starkey, 1996; Osler & Starkey, 2015).

<sup>xix</sup> The processes described here fulfil the conditions for reduction of prejudice formulated in the "Contact Hypothesis, first brought to prominence by Allport (1954). There need to be at least three conditions for intergroup contact to be productive in this sense: equal status of the partners, a common goal and institutional support. Although this was not an explicit dimension of the project, it was part of the theoretical background.