

## Chapter 16

# Touristhmus in Reverse: How to Develop Global Competence With Arts Education and Object-Based Learning

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### ABSTRACT

*This research investigates the potential for global competence education in universities using the innovative educational experience Touristhmus in Reverse (TIR). The study focuses on a group of third-year degree in teachers for primary education students who engaged in an arts education project inspired by the works of Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. These artists create large-scale sculptures of everyday objects that symbolically reflect cultural aspects of their installation sites. By examining the artists' cultural backgrounds and the cultural contexts of the installation locations, the project activates a dialectic tension between different cultures. This dialectic is connected to the concept of travel as an intercultural tool, where interaction between the traveler's cultural baggage and host culture leads to personal growth. TIR involves these artistic, cultural, and epistemological dimensions, promoting the acquisition of global competence. This competence enables individuals to better understand and coexist with culturally diverse societies, demanded by globalization.*

### INTRODUCTION

Touristhmus in Reverse (TIR) is an arts education initiative born within the project Aprendemos “ENTER” Culturas 2.0. Jóvenes and EducAction contra el racismo, funded by Fundación La Caixa, in the period 2022-2023. The project was directed by the researcher Dr. Isabel Gomez Barreto, professor at the Faculty of Education of Albacete, at the University of Castilla-La Mancha. With a strong interdisciplinary character, professors from areas as diverse as Psychology, Didactics and School Organization or Physical Education, Artistic Education and Music participated in the project. This project seeks to acquire and develop skills and attitudes of a global intercultural nature, strengthening different dispositions and

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skills to promote intercultural sensitivity. Structured in three phases, the TIR project is located in the last phase, which seeks to incorporate transversally global education content in various participating subjects, while subsequently exposing the awareness and cultural richness actions developed. TIR was developed in the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, from November to January. The chapter presents the theoretical framework on which TIR is based as an agent of global competence based on intercultural arts education, objects as protagonists of knowledge acquisition, and tourism as a source of cultural exchange. The objectives of TIR and the methodologies employed are presented, as well as a general reflection on the results obtained. This chapter seeks to provide an overview of TIR at all stages of its development.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Global Competence in Education**

Never before has society, and particularly its youth, been as interconnected as it is today. Educational institutions have a duty and responsibility to prepare young individuals, who play a crucial role in shaping the future of society, to adapt to a globalized world and embrace a lifestyle that is increasingly complex and ever-changing. According to Boix Mansilla and Jackson (2011), the acquisition of global competence is vital for the education of society as a whole, particularly for young people, in order to develop the necessary qualities to become responsible citizens who are committed to both the present and future world. The foundations of global competence lie in the ability to explore the world, appreciate diverse perspectives, effectively communicate ideas, and think and act ethically (Boix Mansilla and Jackson, 2011). Specifically, students need to acquire certain skills that enable them to interact effectively with the cultural diversity that exists in society and to be capable of addressing global challenges. In light of this, Boix Mansilla and Jackson (2011) advocate for the active integration of global competence into the curriculum at all educational levels, through initiatives that foster problem-solving skills and critical thinking, always with a focus on the global context.

It is the responsibility of teacher training programs to equip future educators with the necessary tools to cultivate global competence in their teaching practice. In order to achieve this, prospective teachers must first internalize specific skills, abilities, and attitudes that enable them to engage with the complexities of global issues and foster critical thinking and empathy in their students (Crawford, Higgins, & Hilburn, 2020). According to these authors, it is crucial that global competence is not treated as a mere add-on to the curriculum, but rather that the entire educational framework is guided by an approach rooted in global competence. Therefore, it is imperative to educate teachers on how to design educational programs that align with the dimensions of global competence. To accomplish this, Crawford, Higgins, and Hilburn (2020) argue that future teachers should be exposed to practical experiences that reflect the realities of a globalized world, enabling them to implement problem-solving strategies within global contexts. By incorporating these elements into initial teacher training, it is expected that educators will develop a comprehensive understanding of global competence and its practical application within diverse educational settings.

At this juncture, it is interesting to underscore the contributions made by Tichnor-Wagner (2016) regarding the significance of incorporating a comprehensive range of approaches to global competence within the classroom. This is particularly important considering the growing interconnectedness of students

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