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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Kelley Denise Fitzpatrick for the Master of Arts in TESOL were presented June 6, 1994, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Kelley Denise Fitzpatrick for the Master of Arts in TESOL presented on June 6, 1994.

Title: The Use of Global Issues in A University ESL Classroom:
The Students' Perspective

There is increasing interest on the part of ESL educators in the inclusion of contemporary, global issues in their classrooms. Theory about content-based ESL, as well as trends in education, generally, lend support to such enthusiasm. However, ESL educators may be erroneously assuming that their interest in this material is shared by their students. Global issues can also be controversial. Their inclusion in the classroom has the potential to create an uncomfortable, and therefore ineffective, learning atmosphere in a multicultural ESL setting.

This qualitative case study examined the use of global issues as the content material in a university-based ESL advanced listening/ speaking class, from the perspective of ten students. A variety of data-gathering methods were employed: direct observation of whole-class sessions; observation and audio-recordings of small-group

discussions; tape-recorded journals created by the subjects; audio-recordings of two interviews conducted with each subject.

The study focused on three areas: awareness of/interest in global issues developed by the subjects while in their home countries; background experiences and interest in critical analysis developed by the subjects prior to the study; possible changes experienced by the subjects, both in comfort and interest in using global issues in the ESL classroom, during the study. The results indicate that the majority of the subjects entered the classroom with some exposure to several specific global issues. Most had little experience in analyzing the issues using the type of critical analysis common to American academic settings. Initially, most felt hesitant about publicly expressing opinions regarding controversial issues; this reluctance was alleviated by the end of the term. Interest in the material also increased for most subjects during the term.

The primary difficulties were found to be related less to global issues and more to the activities performed while working with the subject matter. The study concludes that global issues may be better-suited to classroom activities requiring less public expression of individual ideas and opinions. It also recommends training for ESL educators in intercultural conflict resolution, to enable them to facilitate effective classroom discussion of controversial issues.

THE USE OF GLOBAL ISSUES IN A UNIVERSITY ESL CLASSROOM: THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

by

KELLEY DENISE FITZPATRICK

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

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in
TESOL

Portland State University
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As I've gotten older, and a little wiser, I've developed my own philosophy about life: It's a lot sweeter if you can get as much satisfaction from each ride as you get from reaching the actual end points of your destinations. Fortunately, there have been a number of people who have reinforced that belief during the journey toward my M.A. degree. To them I am indebted for making my ride a particularly enjoyable one.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about the immense benefits gained when the content of language learning materials has great relevance for the language learners themselves (Krashen, 1987; Taylor, 1987). The inclusion of realia---such media forms as magazines, newspapers, television and radio broadcasts, movies---is promoted as a source of real and natural language (Dubin, Eskey, & Grabe, 1986; Porter & Roberts, 1987; Oxford, 1990). In many cases such material is very accessible to the language learner, particularly for the learner living in a country where the target language is the majority language of that country. Many of the more recent textbooks designed specifically for ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms also use these relevant contemporary issues as the content material around which language skill-building exercises are constructed (Baumwoll & Saitz, 1978; Ackert, 1982; Kenan, 1982; Rooks, 1983; Blasky & Chafcouloff, 1985; Blass & Pike-Baky, 1985; Sunderman, 1985; Lygton, R. C. , 1986; Saitz, 1987; Hunter & Hofbauer, 1989)

By its nature, such material brings the student into contact with a variety of social issues, many of which are not issues specific to a single culture but issues that are being raised in many cultures

throughout the world. They include human rights issues, racism, peace education, environmental issues (water pollution, air pollution, toxic wastes, acid rain, global warming), endangered species, health-related issues (overpopulation, hunger, AIDS). These global issues affect all of humanity in varying degrees. They also provide potential for us to draw across cultural boundaries as we seek to understand, and find solutions to, the problems that we share on an international level.

Yet, there is also another side to this seemingly-attractive subject matter. Often these contemporary issues are also very controversial and the presentation of such issues in the classroom means the ESL teacher could find himself/herself in the middle of a highly-sensitive classroom situation. Introducing such material into an environment which brings together students of various cultural backgrounds and value systems also has the potential to create an uncomfortable and very emotional situation. Working with such materials may bring out ideological conflicts between the students, for which they may lack the linguistic and interpersonal skills to effectively come to a resolution. In a multicultural classroom, there is added potential for conflict because different cultures have different norms for expressing themselves, both verbally and non-verbally. Without knowledge of one another's cultural norms, there is the risk or misinterpreting one another's moods, attitudes, behaviors and the possible intentions behind the words being said. In addition,

the instructor may not recognize these conflicts, or may likewise lack the abilities to effectively mediate such conflicts. If not skillfully-handled, the interaction might result in an emphasizing of differences in cultural perspectives rather than fostering a respect for cultural differences balanced by a recognition of the potentially unifying aspects of our worldwide mutual problems. Therefore, before launching into the use of such relevant but controversial material, it would be sensible for the language teacher to develop a clear understanding of the use of such material in the language classroom in order to encourage students to exercise constructive, critical thinking about these global issues while at the same time achieving their primary objective: the development of their English language skills.

The purpose of this research is to explore the use of global issues as the content material in a university-based ESL program, as seen from the perspective of the ESL student. While there is increasing interest on the part of educators in inclusion of global issues in the ESL classroom (Ashworth, 1990; Fine, 1990; Fox, 1990; Jacobs, 1990; Larson, 1990; Mitina, 1990; Peterson, 1990; Ashworth, 1991; Brown, 1991; Larson & Mulling, 1993; Jacobs, 1993/1994), there has been no formal research to determine the level of interest and receptiveness of the students themselves for the use of this subject matter in the language learning classroom. Perhaps we assume that, because these issues are contemporary and

worldwide, they would be of interest to the students. But these issues can also be controversial in nature. Analysis and discussion of these issues often means questioning the decisions made by people in positions of power, as well as examining the ways in which the general public receives information (e.g. newspapers, magazines, television, radio). Given that an ESL classroom is likely to include a variety of culturally-based orientations toward such analysis---and possibly opposing points of view toward some of the global issues themselves---it would be useful to gain a greater understanding of the level of awareness and interest that the students have in focusing on these issues in the language learning environment. Are we assuming that university-level ESL students, simply by virtue of traveling abroad to further their education, will have an interest in international issues? In actuality, is it presumptuous of ESL educators to think that global issues can be used effectively in an academic ESL classroom as a motivating vehicle for language learning? Is it possible that, in reality, the use of global issues in an academic ESL classroom may create an uncomfortable and ineffective language learning environment for ESL students? Will the inclusion of these issues help or hinder their language learning experience?

This study represents an attempt to find answers to these questions by exploring what the students initially bring to the ESL classroom in relation to global issues, and critical analysis of controversial issues. The progress of the students through the

course of the term is also examined, in an effort to identify possible changes regarding interest in the issues and comfort in discussing these issues in a language learning classroom setting. The following served as guiding questions during the study:

1. Coming into the ESL classroom, what levels of *awareness* about contemporary issues, generally, and global issues, specifically, do the students bring with them, based on previous study (formal and/or informal) in their own countries? Similarly, what levels of *interest* do they bring to the ESL classroom with regard to these issues, based on previous study?

2. What background do the students bring to the ESL classroom with regard to critical analysis of controversial issues?

    a. What previous experiences do they have in critical analysis?

    b. What interest do they have in critical analysis?

    c. What are the societal norms of their native cultures in relation to such analysis?

        i. Most of these students will return to their own countries following their university studies here, to cultures which may not encourage overt questioning of authority or of the written word. Do some of these students feel that it is inappropriate or threatening to analyze and discuss controversial issues in a classroom environment? Or are they comfortable using global issues as a vehicle for language learning?

3. Over the course of the term what kinds of changes do the students experience in relation to using global issues in the ESL classroom?

    a. Are there changes in comfort level?

    b. Are there changes in interest level?

    c. Are there changes in interest in, and comfort with, using critical thinking skills to analyze these issues?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The basis for considering the use of global issues as content material for ESL classrooms comes from a number of sources:

1) Research and theory regarding content-based second language classroom instruction.

2) Trends in general education regarding the internationalization of education.

3) Increasing interest on the part of ESL educators and their professional organizations regarding the incorporation of global issues into the language learning classroom.

Content-Based Second Language Instruction

Content-based second language instruction came out of an interest in making the classroom language learning experience more like a natural second language learning environment, by creating more opportunities for the learner to use the language in real communication. More recently, some see it as a response to changes in student demographics, resulting in changes in student needs (Snow & Brinton, 1988). A steady increase in non-native English speaking students enrolling in American universities in the past two decades has been accompanied by a growing concern over their preparedness for the demands of university coursework.

Content-based language instruction may be a way to teach such students both the language and learning skills necessary to succeed at the university level (Snow & Brinton, 1988; Blanton, 1992).

In part, content-based second language instruction has also been a reaction to previous methodology (grammar translation, audiolingual) which had placed greater focus on the teaching of formal elements of a language. For example, the audiolingual approach focused on grammar and habit formation, while downplaying ". . . content information and thinking skills, even though these are a natural part of language in use" (Mohan, 1979, p. 181).

In the traditional methods, content was often handled in an inconsistent, disjointed and unnatural fashion. A sequence of exercises in an ESL textbook might be related only in their formal properties, with no relation in subject matter from one line to the next. In content-based second language instruction, both form and content are addressed. The formal elements which lend themselves most naturally to the particular subject matter of the course can be developed into a sequence of linguistic items to be taught along with the content material (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Mohan). For the content-based language instructor then, a greater attention to content does not result in the elimination of overt teaching of linguistic form, but rather in allowing ". . . the content (to) dictate the selection and sequence of language items to be taught rather than

vice versa" (Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989, p. 2).

Content-based language instruction also draws on research and theory about the motivation of the language learner. By focusing on information of interest to the language learner and by creating a classroom environment where the language learner can engage in purposeful communication about the material, the language learner's motivation can be increased; from the increased motivation the language learner's gains in second language skills will likewise be enhanced (Mohan, 1979; Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Snow & Brinton, 1988; Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989; Brown, 1991).

For university-bound ESL students there may be a particular motivational factor at work. Mason (1971) believes that for many students in post-secondary ESL courses, the ESL requirement is seen as a hurdle to get past in order to get on with their real goal---a university degree course. He suggests that many come to this country ". . . ready psychologically for immersion in the second language environment and [willing to accept] the consequences of their language handicaps" (Mason, 1971, p. 202). For such students, to be faced with additional ESL instruction after years of language instruction in their own countries can be frustrating.

Shih (1986) offers a positive solution to this dilemma. By using a content-based approach to ESL, it may be possible to create a stronger link to the mainstream academic classroom; by enabling the ESL students to see the connection between the two, it may be

possible to increase their enthusiasm for the ESL coursework. Shih examined several studies of the types of writing tasks required of all students (American and international) in each academic discipline, as viewed from the perspective of both the students and instructors, and also analyzed various approaches to teaching writing in ESL courses. Shih determined that, in general, traditional approaches have not prepared ESL students for the types of writing tasks they will face in their mainstream university courses, because these traditional approaches have not ". . . [dealt] with writing in a manner similar (or identical) to how writing is assigned, prepared for, and reacted to in real academic courses" (Shih, 1986, p. 625). A content-based approach to teaching academic writing attempts to present the ESL student with a language learning environment more similar to the mainstream university classroom by doing just that---assigning the same types of writing tasks as those required in mainstream classes (i.e., less personal experience and more writing from sources), teaching students how to critically examine materials and to research a topic, how to pre-write, write drafts, and to revise. While Shih's focus was on content-based academic writing instruction, her basic conclusions are applicable to academic ESL in general: "Student motivation may be higher when. . . a link to university content courses is made evident, as the relevance of . . . instruction to academic studies can more easily be seen" (Shih, 1989, p. 628).

Blanton (1992) adds another layer to this concept, in promoting a 'holistic model' for content-based college ESL courses in which *all* linguistic skills areas (reading, writing, listening/speaking, grammar) are logically integrated within a single ESL classroom. Blanton argues that ESL classrooms focusing on only one or two of the four skill areas in a single classroom run greater risk of 'artificial' language conditions, while a holistic approach increases the students' exposure to 'real' language. This enables the students to ". . . immerse themselves in language and language operations of the sort that will better prepare them for the academic road ahead. As the modes of communication reinforce each other, the speed and depth of language acquisition grows" (Blanton, p. 291).

Content-based language instruction also draws upon research in second language learning which has examined the role of comprehensible input provided to the language learner as an aid to the language learner's linguistic development (Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989). Because a content-based language classroom provides a consistent focus around a particular subject matter, the student is provided with a greater opportunity to seek out contextual cues in order to comprehend the linguistic input.

Brinton, Snow & Wesche (1989) see the roots of content-based second language instruction in three specific areas of language learning:

1) Language across the curriculum (in L_1 settings)

2) English for Specific Purposes (in ESL settings)

3) Immersion (in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL settings)

The language across the curriculum movement dates from the mid-1970s in both Britain and North America. Concerned with the experience of native speakers of English, the philosophy behind the movement is that aspects of language learning should be incorporated with aspects of content learning, rather than treating language skills as separate from other components of the educational process. "Students are not only given opportunities to learn to write and learn to read but are also encouraged to *write to learn* and *read to learn* in order to fully participate in the educational process" (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989, p.6). Extending this to language learning, Chamot and O'Malley (1987) see content-based second language instruction as a way of enabling students to not only learn the second language but to use the second ". . . language to learn. . ." (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987, p. 234). Successful cross-curricular education requires that the language and content area instructors coordinate their classroom assignments to assist the students in experiencing the cross over from one discipline to another, and has been applied successfully in both secondary and post-secondary level settings.

English for specific purposes (ESP) courses provide a formal language learning environment for second language learners with

very particular second language needs. Generally, the students in an ESP class are adults or post-secondary level students, who form an homogeneous group, e.g. they all come from the same occupational background and need to develop second language skills for use in relation to that occupational setting. The content material selected for the ESP class is based on this shared occupational background. Likewise, the language forms and functions selected for presentation in the class fit within this shared occupational framework. The students benefit from experiencing the second language in a highly contextualized fashion, enabling them to draw on previous experience with the content material to find contextual cues which aid in their second language development (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989).

Finally, research in immersion education has provided another body of information regarding content-oriented second language instruction (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989; Mason, 1971; Mohan, 1979; Sternfeld, 1988; Lafayette & Buscaglia, 1985). The majority of these studies examined immersion classrooms at the elementary and early-secondary levels, but there are also some examples of immersion classrooms at the postsecondary level (for the latter, see Mason, 1971; Lafayette & Buscaglia, 1985; Sternfeld, 1988). The studies have provided evidence that it is possible for a language learner to develop skills in a second language and to acquire knowledge of content material simultaneously, by being placed in a

classroom in which content is taught solely through the second language. A perceived advantage of the immersion setting is that the students acquire a much higher level of functional skills in the second language than do students in other second language instructional approaches, because they are able to develop their skills through regular, real-life interactions with native speakers of the language (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989, p. 9).

Three basic models of content-based second language instruction are identified by Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) which they place on a continuum stretching between the traditional language class and mainstream classrooms (p. 23):

TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE CLASSROOM	THEME-BASED MODEL	SHELTERED MODEL	ADJUNCT MODEL	MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM

In the theme-based model, a theme or topic is selected for use in a language classroom and the course curriculum is organized around it. Generally, the language teacher has the task of developing classroom materials. Authentic materials related to the theme and commercial ESL texts can be utilized as sources of the content material itself. Specific exercises to present the related formal elements of the language can also be adapted from ESL texts.

In the sheltered model, the language learners are taught a content course in a separate setting from native-speaking students. Where the theme-based course is taught by a trained language

teacher, the sheltered course is presented by a content area specialist whose primary experience has been in teaching the content to native speakers of the language. Generally the instructor must make adjustments in the way the material is presented (as compared to the way in which he/she presents it to a class of native speakers) to allow for maximum comprehensibility by the language learners. Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) note that the main objective of the theme-based classroom is to aid the students in acquisition of second language skills, whereas the sheltered course, by comparison, has a stronger focus on the students' learning of the content material itself.

In the adjunct model (also sometimes referred to as a "bridge" course (Peterson, 1985)), students participate simultaneously in a language course and a content course, utilizing the same content material as a basis for instruction in both components. The non-native speaking language learners are isolated from the native speakers for the language instruction (provided by a trained language instructor), but mixed in with native speakers for the content instruction (provided by a content teacher specializing in the subject material). While each of the instructors is ultimately responsible for the instructional component for his/her classroom, it falls upon the language instructor to coordinate with the content instructor, and vice versa, so that the students benefit from related experiences in the two classroom environments.

While these three models can be found in their purest forms, there are also examples of courses combining elements of the three models (Shih, 1986; Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989). Of the three models, the one most closely fitting the classroom environment in which the research for this thesis was conducted is the theme-based model. In analyzing the theme-based approach, Brinton, Snow and Wesche stress that the success or failure of a theme-based course is related to two major factors: choosing content material (and related exercises) which will not only interest the students, but will also provide ". . . a rich context for language skill development" (Brinton, Snow and Wesch, 1989, p. 40). Chamot and O'Malley (1987) stress the importance of selecting content material which will provide the right degree of challenge for the students. If the material selected provides only a repetition of concepts and skills the students have already learned in their first language, the ESL classroom ". . . can rapidly become a series of exercises in translation of vocabulary and skills from L_1 to L_2 . . . " (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987, p. 235). This reduces the opportunities for using the second language as a tool for problem-solving, for building on previous content knowledge, and for learning new information and concepts---activities which can increase the students' motivational level in the ESL setting.

Trends in General Education: the Internationalization of Education

Much has been written about the inclusion of global issues in

education in general, and this provides a source from which to begin thinking about how---and why---to consider the incorporation of these issues as the subject matter in all levels of content-based ESL classrooms. There is a range of phrases used to describe this orientation toward education: "global/globalized education", "internationalized education", "internationalized curriculum", "teaching for international understanding". Some educators also draw a strong link between "multicultural curriculum/education" and the global/international philosophy (Bennett 1990). The focus on internationalizing the curriculum has increased as the interdependence of the countries of the world has become more of a daily reality to more people throughout the world (Dunlop, 1984; Adongo, 1986; Burns, 1989; Anderson, 1990; Bennett, 1990; Horvath and Mihaly, 1990).

In many cases this has resulted in curriculum changes occurring at a local or national level within a single country. In other cases, the global focus has been realized in highly-developed educational projects operating on an international level, such as the UNESCO Associated Schools Project (which includes Argentina, Belgium, Columbia, Czechoslovakia, Finland, (West) Germany, India, Mauritania, the Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the United Kingdom among the participating nations) (Churchill, 1986).

Bennett (1990) states that ". . . we live in an interdependent world that is rapidly shrinking. . . " (p. 14), and that this has raised

our awareness of global issues. What has contributed to this sense of a "shrinking" world? Perhaps the greatest factor is the increase in contact and communication between all nations of the world, brought about in large part by advances in technology (Harris, 1986; Adongo, 1986; Anderson, 1990; Horvath and Mihaly, 1990; Tye, 1990). Harris points to the spread of mass media in connecting each of us to other parts of the world:

> . . . No young person today remains totally unaware of the world beyond the borders of his or her local community. The ubiquitous transistor is to be found in every corner of the poorest countries; television is spreading to the rural villages. Mass media have helped to create a general awareness about international issues. . . (p. x)

Tye notes that our advanced technology allows us to ". . . watch an event as it is happening" anywhere in the world (p. 40), which gives a greater sense of immediacy and reality to the viewer. Adongo states that "Our different societies and cultures communicate with one another today to a degree which is unprecedented in human history" (p.1), and describes the effects of an increasingly global economic network. For today's children, Adongo prophesies that, regardless of their eventual occupations, or whether they live in a developed or developing country, their economic well-being will be ". . . influenced by global processes. . . " such as multinational manufacturing corporations and worldwide monetary institutions and trends over which they will have little if any control (Adongo, p.2).

Tye (1990) points to two other aspects of technology that have

affected our global awareness: space exploration has provided us with the ability to view the earth ". . . from a distance so great that we can see how small it really is," and at the same time we have come to realize that we have the technology to destroy our planet within a matter of hours (p. 40).

As a worldwide awareness of global issues increases it seems logical that there will be many who feel these issues should be included in the curriculum. If an educator is interested in incorporating a critical examination and discussion of global issues into the classroom, what kind of support can that educator expect to find? A look at education in general indicates a mixed response. In analyzing the inclusion of multicultural and global issues in American education, Bennett (1990) states that concern has been voiced by educators for well over twenty years yet consistent support from the various parties involved to act upon these concerns has been slow in coming (p. 274). The factors that hinder the presentation of global issues are not confined to American education; they are found in many countries throughout the world (Adongo, 1986; Churchill, 1986; Harris, 1986; Horvath and Mihaly, 1990).

A brief analysis of how change occurs within the school structure may help to explain this hesitation to embrace global issues as part of the curriculum. Tye (1990) describes a three-level model of the school structure as an explanation for how change is incorporated or resisted. This is applicable for all nations, not just

for the American school system. At the foundation level, functioning on a national scale, is the individual society in which we live. Built on that foundation is a set of cultural and social norms as well as some basic beliefs about educational systems. This is referred to as the 'deep structure' and also exists at a nationwide level. The third tier is the individual school. At this level each school has its own unique personality. It is not uncommon for there to be regular, relatively short-lived change at the individual school level---indeed, Tye says, at that level we can see an ongoing 'process of adjustment'---but experimental change at the school level will be fleeting without there also being support for change at the other two levels. For lasting educational change, the directional flow must be from the society to the deep structure, and from the deep structure to the school. Therefore, there must be a major wave of change starting at the societal level to flow to the other two levels to result in enduring change to the educational system. But major change at a societal level is not a simple process. Tye (1990) explains that there are many areas where resistance is likely to take place.

> . . . The systems that make up our society---economic, technological, political, cultural, and environmental---react to profound social change in different but predictable ways. . . In social terms, one might think of the reaction as an effort to defend and maintain the status quo. Powerful vested interests have a stake in preventing major change, unless they can see a way to make it work profitably for them. (Tye, p. 41)

The resistance to major societal change can occur at various

levels: individual, group, institution. The factors contributing to this resistance can come from several directions. Pressures to conform to more traditional education can come from outside the educational system, either from society as a whole or from authorities entrusted with the maintenance of the society. They can also come from within the educational system, from national to local levels, from administration to fellow teachers, even from the students themselves. In addition, some of the complications associated with global education arise out of controversies within the global education movement itself.

This resistance to incorporation of global issues is a function of differing and conflicting perceptions as to the role of education and educators. To some, a critical analysis of contemporary global issues encourages close examination of the values and beliefs that are integral to the very structure of that society. They forget that a society is not a freely and independently-existing entity but rather is a reality constructed by human beings, and that a society is capable of being *re*constructed by its members on an ongoing basis. They fear that critical examination of a society's values and beliefs will lead to pressures to change the society. Such pressure is seen as a threat to the well-being of the society, rather than an impetus for healthy evolution toward a better society. Therefore they look to the educational system as a way to maintain the society in its existing form. As a result, any materials or approaches introduced into the classroom that are not directed toward the maintenance function are

to be resisted.

Despite our awareness of our global interdependence, there is often more of a competitively-oriented interaction between the nations of the world. A call to consider global issues---the problems that cross national boundaries and which, in theory, could/should unite us in a common effort to seek solutions for the benefit of us all ---is perceived by many as a potential risk to one's own nation and society (Adongo, 1986; Harris, 1986; Horvath and Mihaly, 1990). Therefore, for many educators, the dominating force is a sense of responsibility to maintain one's society, not to change it. Teaching controversial issues, encouraging students to question aspects of their society and government is actually a cause for fear for some teachers, who see global education as a danger or threat (Adongo,1986, p. 3; Bennett, 1990, p. 275). For some teachers, seeing that one might pay a price for diverging from the officially accepted viewpoint is enough to prevent them from testing the system (Harris, 1986).

In some cases, the more immediate problems faced by an individual nation can be so intense that it is difficult for the people of that country to direct their attention to the global level of the problem. Horvath and Mihaly (1990) describe current economic difficulties in Hungary which inhibit a globalization of education in that country; the more immediate concerns over poverty in their own country strike most Hungarians as ". . . much more important

than an international alliance against world poverty" (Horvath & Mihaly, pp. 147-148).

Churchill (1986) suggests another obstacle to teaching controversial issues which is almost directly the opposite of overt and energetic opposition: indifference in community support. This ". . . can sometimes be traced to skepticism on the part of parents and the public about reducing the number of class hours devoted to traditional, so called 'basic' parts of the curriculum, particularly if there is pressure to prepare students for competitive examination situations" (Churchill, p. 110). But Churchill believes it is possible to turn this indifference around by first emphasizing ". . . positive areas where agreement exists," then demonstrating how dealing with areas of disagreement can ". . . produce tangible benefits for students and their communities" (Churchill, p. 110).

Often teachers face pressure to cover a prescribed curriculum which allows little room for an in-depth expansion of the student's worldview (Bennett, 1990, p. 275) or the necessary development of students' critical thinking abilities to apply to their examination of world issues. Onosko (1989) conducted a study examining the theories and beliefs of a group of American social studies teachers regarding the promotion of critical thinking abilities in their students. He found that a combination of external factors pressured teachers to cover a breadth of content coverage as opposed to depth of coverage (Onosko, 1989, pp. 183-184). Those teachers who

advocated critical thinking felt that the pressures to cover a breadth of material arose from an emphasis on preparing students for state exams and/or from state or district imposed curriculum guidelines. Although they felt critical thinking abilities are more likely to come out of in-depth coverage of less material---and that such an ability will function as a transferable skill, which students can independently apply to other examples---they admitted that imposed curriculum guidelines acted as a deterrent to promotion of critical thinking skills. Teachers who were less concerned with developing their students' critical thinking were content to merely ". . . *expose* students to ideas and issues. . . " while those advocating critical thinking sought ". . . to *explore* ideas and issues with students in greater depth" (Onosko, p. 191).

Yet Churchill (1986) again suggests that even the demands of a set curriculum and a focus on examinations can often be effectively addressed while at the same time finding avenues for teaching global issues. In describing issues of structural changes faced by participants in UNESCO's Associated Schools Project (which includes primary and secondary levels only), Churchill writes that Indian educators identified a variety of feasible solutions to teaching world issues in upper grades without taking time away from preparation for university entrance exams. They simply introduced global issues at an earlier grade level than the 'ideal' class level, and drew upon ". . . the existing programme to introduce the recommended topics.

In general, the change involved giving a topic already included in the curriculum more emphasis and different treatment" (Churchill, p. 118). Not only can globalized education be achieved without taking away from 'more traditional goals', the incorporation of global education into the curriculum can actually raise achievement levels in traditional areas, such as reading (Tye, 1990, p. 44).

Factionalism within the global issues movement itself has also hindered a widespread inclusion of global issues in education. Bennett (1990) cites a lack of conceptual clarity and lack of agreement as to the goals of multicultural and global education as contributing factors. Some perceived differences between multicultural education and globalized education have resulted in a 'separation, even competitiveness' between educators who place value on these areas, and within global education there is further splitting as advocates place themselves in ". . . a range of competing movements. . . for example, peace studies, environmental concerns, global economics, futurism" (Bennett, p. 275).

On an individual level, teachers may be inhibited by uncertainties as to how to, in practical terms, encourage students to critically examine world issues. Riggle (1989) and Bennett suggest there has sometimes been a lack of a framework or model to guide teachers in presenting global issues. Troester and Sargent Mester (1990) describe the effect this can have (specifically with reference to teaching peace education). In a recent study of 115 American

college and university speech communication programs they found that, despite a majority of faculty expressing a belief that 'Communication educators have an obligation to address issues of peace' over half also stated their curriculum does not address these issues. Troester and Sargent Mester believe that part of the conflict lies in a lack of clear definition about what the teaching of such issues involves:

> There appears to be a perception that teaching peace means indoctrinating students with the personal values of the instructor, a person sometimes perceived as likely to be a throw-back to the "peaceniks", of the sixties. Such an instructional approach is perceived as educationally unethical. Some educators, in fact, assert that schools should teach only the uncontested values needed for citizenship. . . since the definition of peace and hence its role as a "value" is certainly not uncontested, it should not be part of the curriculum. But, as speech communication educators, we realize that all values by their nature are contested. As a result, are we not as justified in teaching about peace as we are about truth and honesty? . . . (Troester & Sargent Mester, 1990, pp. 427-428)

Adongo (1986) suggests the need for ". . . pre-service and in-service training courses which deal with such issues as peace and disarmament, development and human rights," to provide all teachers with the knowledge base to teach world issues effectively (Adongo, p. 2-3). Penaloza-Florez (1984) agrees with this need for teacher training courses to include training to enhance international understanding, regardless of the subject taught by the student teacher. He stresses that this should be achieved by providing the student teacher with the knowledge base about international

organizations, declarations and agreements, but that provision of the content is not enough.

> Much more important are the attitudes and the commitment developed in teachers: attitudes favourable to the values that underlie international understanding and commitment to taking action, to support peace, human rights and fundamental freedoms. (Penaloza-Florez, p. 208)

Pfeiffer (1986) believes that "Education for peace, international understanding and the observance of human rights must become the common concern of all educational personnel" and that "Teachers of all subjects and at all levels must be qualified" (pp. 92-93). Yet Pfeiffer also admits the complexity of knowledge this would call for:

> . . . To teach about world problems in a clear and convincing manner, teachers and student teachers must be familiar with the issues. They must be able to comprehend and evaluate the social, economic, political and cultural dimensions of global problems (p. 92)

and further ". . . Teachers must be able to recognize the nature, diversity and interrelatedness of major problems" (Pfeiffer, p. 93).

Despite the many potential obstacles to global education, there are many situations where it has been successfully incorporated into the educational system. In order to make it work, teachers need to have support, and this support can come from a variety of sources. The level from which administrative support comes will vary from one situation to another, dependent on the structure of the educational system within a given country (e. g. countries where mandates are generated from a central governmental body; countries where locally-based authorities have considerable power in effecting

change, such as the decision-making power of a headmaster in the United Kingdom) (Churchill, 1986, p. 110-111). Perhaps more importantly, Churchill notes the support individual teachers can find amongst their peers. The power that a group of cooperative teachers can generate through their teamwork ". . . often cuts across the boundaries created by disciplines and administrative procedures, and the obvious benefits for the students and staff become the vital 'cement' that holds the project together over the years" (p.114).

Where the participants engage in cooperative efforts to incorporate global issues into the curriculum they enjoy the benefits of putting into practice the values they seek to impart to the students (Churchill, 1986). The process of these negotiations can improve working relationships between all players involved---administration, teachers, students, staff, parents and the community served by the educational institution---". . . improvements in human relationships [which] are at the root of the kind of attitudes towards world issues which represent the ultimate objectives of this education" (Churchill, 1986, p. 116).

In this process, the participants may also discover that what they had at first feared as controversial and dangerous can actually be viewed in a more positive, non-threatening light. Through participation in UNESCO's Associated Schools Project, and in other similar programs, teachers, authorities, and the public have discovered ". . . that there are ways of dealing with controversial

topics that protect legitimate societal and community interests without compromising intellectual freedom" (Churchill, p. 109). For example, formal international declarations can be introduced in the classroom as a framework for discussing human rights. In the process of learning about international agreements and international issues, students have been able to apply the new knowledge to their own *interpersonal* disputes: ". . . the analogy between lawful international behavior and their own conduct provided a powerful model that affected their actions" (Churchill, p. 109).

Much of the material written about global education focuses on teaching these issues at the K-12 range. However, many of the general ideas apply to students of any age, and some authors have even made specific reference to teaching global issues at a post-secondary level. Mertineit (1984) describes the series of steps taken by UNESCO, beginning in the mid-1950s, to formalize the concept of education for international understanding and cooperation. These steps culminated in the 1974 Recommendation, in which one section specifies that the Recommendation is applicable to ". . . 'all stages and forms of education' (and is not limited to primary, elementary and secondary schools, for example)" (p. 17). Troester and Sargent Mester see a growing movement to include peace education within American colleges and universities. While courses and programs in peace education have been offered by their church-affiliated counterparts, they feel this trend is spreading to the public

realm of higher education.

Pfeiffer (1984) echoes this emphasis on international education at all levels and forms of education in his discussion of a systematic presentation of global issues from pre-school into adulthood. At each stage adjustments are made to reflect the capabilities and previous educational (and life) experiences of the students. By the post-secondary stage the majority of students will have formed particular beliefs and attitudes about various national and international issues. At this point the educational system must allow a respect for a variety of individual viewpoints, even when they are at odds with the teacher and societal norms. ". . . The best approach lies in proficient and scientifically founded argument and in the explication of the social responsibility which every individual bears" (Pfeiffer, 1984, p. 38). Adongo (1986) recommends that, in teaching global issues to older students, they ". . . should be exposed to a range of philosophical and specialist writings, and they should be encouraged to think more deeply about such questions" (Adongo, p. 6).

Some educators emphasize that the process of teaching and learning about global issues is a lifelong process extending beyond the four walls of the classroom. ". . . Lifelong education is more and more a general social requirement and a personal need. . . Education in the spirit of the [UNESCO] Recommendation must therefore concentrate on giving adults incentives to self-education" (Pfeiffer, 1984, p. 38).

Reardon (1988) voices similar sentiments. She believes that the general principles outlined in her book on peace education are applicable to all levels of education. She believes that they

> . . . can and should operate in all of the spheres of intentional learning that we call education---both formal and informal---and throughout life. Indeed, I propose an education that is integral, or essential, to each stage of life and phase of experience, a developmental education based on the assumption of constant change and on the understanding that different kinds of knowledge are needed at different stages of life and in various cultures and geopolitical environments. . . (p. xii)

Trends in ESL: Interest in Global Issues

The information given so far has described concerns about incorporating global issues into education in general. But what are the implications for the inclusion of such issues in an academic ESL classroom? In the past decade, a number of articles have appeared in TESOL (the professional organization,Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, based in the U.S.) publications, voicing concerns about the internationalism of the profession, its organizations, and of their sociopolitical role (Strevens, 1984; Allwright, 1988; Eggington, 1992/1993; Ricento, 1993/1994). Collectively, these indicate a growing interest among ESL educators in the use of global issues as material appropriate for use in the ESL classroom.

In the mid-1980s, Peter Strevens, then-chairman of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign

Language (IATEFL), raised questions regarding the responsibilities of EFL/ESL professionals and of their organizations (Strevens, 1984). During the previous twenty years, as English had spread further around the world, the diversity of the EFL/ESL student and teacher populations had changed. Strevens considered several aspects of the impact of this change on the profession. He stressed the need for mutual respect and support among the professional organizations, and he also wrote about the social responsibility of EFL/ESL professionals to address the needs of their communities.

In the late-1980s, Dick Allwright, then-TESOL president, again raised the issue of internationalism in the profession, voicing concern that in his work and travels he had ". . . often met a national rather than an international outlook, as much outside the USA as inside it" (Allwright, 1988). To achieve a true "international-mindedness" in the profession, Allwright argued that it would call for more than simply a membership comprised of educators located throughout the world. It would also require some type of active participation by members in international issues. Allwright asked for input from members throughout the world regarding their concerns about international issues which could be of importance to TESOL's Committee on Sociopolitical Concerns.

From the late-1980s to the present, global issues have appeared in a wealth of articles in the TESOL Newsletter and TESOL Quarterly (Ashworth, 1990; Fine, 1990; Fox, 1990; Jacobs, 1990; Larson,

1990; Mitina, 1990; Peterson, 1990; Ashworth, 1991; Brown, 1991; Larson & Mulling, 1993), and on the agenda of the past several annual TESOL conventions. Some of the articles provide practical guidelines about points to consider if interested in using global issues in the classroom (Ashworth, 1990; Fine, 1990), and examples of positive experiences using global issues with ESL students (Fox, 1990). Other authors offer philosophical considerations as to how a focus on global issues may mean rethinking aspects of one's teaching philosophy and classroom structure, so that the classroom atmosphere becomes more representative of the values advocated in global education (Larson, 1990). The ESL classroom is also perceived as an environment naturally suited to analysis of world issues, based on the potential for language to create a bridge across cultures and for the language learning classroom to promote intercultural sensitivity (Jacobs, 1990; Mitina, 1990; Diaz-Rico, 1993/1994).

In the midst of this interest, TESOL became a non-governmental organization (NGO) of the United Nations in the spring of 1990. As such, the organization now has an official obligation to disseminate information regarding the U.N. and its policies to the public, to ". . . monitor and promote policies of our various countries in support of United Nations goals and resolutions" (TESOL Newsletter, October 1990, p. 31). As the U. N. is focused on global concerns, TESOL has assumed responsibility to take an active voice

in these same concerns. While there is growing interest and support for incorporating global issues into the ESL classroom, the problems and resistance encountered in general education may apply to the ESL classroom in varying ways. One area centers around differing perceptions as to the role of the teacher in the ESL classroom--- much like the issue described by Troester & Sargent Mester (1990) in general education. Most recently, a series of articles have appeared in which the authors debated the socio-political role of ESL professionals. In the December 92/January 93 issue of TESOL Matters, Eggington examined ". . . two underlying tensions which tug, often in opposing directions, at all levels of our profession" (p. 4): the concept of 'English as a language of social empowerment' and the concept of 'English as a language of cultural imperialism.' He argued that, by its very nature, teaching ESL *is* a sociopolitical activity and it would be irresponsible on our part to ignore that fact. In response to Eggington, Jones (1993) argued that the content-based approach to ESL, and what she sees as a growing preference for 'culture' teaching over 'language' teaching, has resulted in classroom tactics which fail to serve the students' needs. In her estimation some ESL educators have abused the classroom by using it as a forum to voice their own political beliefs. She feels that the emphasis should be on 'language' teaching, i.e. traditional skills such as grammar, syntax, vocabulary, to enable students to pass the TOEFL or GMAT. Eggington (1993) acknowledges Jones' concerns that ESL educators may be imposing

their own political views on students, however he argues that her call to return to the more traditional approaches to language teaching misses his original point. ". . . [A]lthough traditional grammar teaching. . . may be perceptually culture-reduced, it is still highly socially and politically charged" (p. 19). In addition, Eggington believes that focusing on TOEFL and GMAT preparation fails to provide students with the wide range of linguistic, academic, and sociocultural tools they will need in the mainstream university setting. Like Eggington, Ricento (1993/1994) promotes an honest and open recognition that cultural values are conveyed in whatever approach we take to teaching ESL, content-based or otherwise. He argues that *all* of the choices an ESL teacher makes about what occurs in his/her classroom are informed by dominant ideologies deeply embedded in that individual's culture. We cannot function in a cultural vacuum; the inclusion of culture in the classroom ". . . is never an either/or proposition, but one of kind and degree" (Ricento, p. 15).

Larson & Mulling (1993) suggest that the skills taught in ESL classes extend far beyond an ESL classroom and the educational institution of which it is a part:

> Professionals in second language education often talk about the fact that seated in our classrooms are future leaders of not only our communities but also of communities around the world. What are we doing to prepare them for more constructive, peaceful world leadership? (p. 19)

Similarly, Jacobs (1993/1994) sees this trend toward the use of

contemporary issues in ESL classrooms as ". . . a return to a humanistic view of educationists' role as professionals who seek to educate students to be participative, well-rounded citizens, not specialized cogs" (Jacobs, p. 15).

There is, however, the complication of teacher preparedness to teach global issues (Shih, 1986; Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989). Unless the ESL teacher has, by individual choice, included a wide range of relevant courses outside of the normal program requirements for teaching ESL---e.g. courses in economics, political science, social sciences---that teacher is not likely to ". . . be able to comprehend and evaluate the social, economic, political and cultural dimensions of global problems. . . " to the degree which Pfeiffer (1986) has suggested each educator must do.

Another complication is the relatively short period of participation by any given student in a university-based ESL program. Much of the literature from general education considers global education in a K-12 setting. Recommendations for teaching global issues are often based on a long term plan of development over as much as 12 years of schooling. The students who participate in all levels of a multi-level, university-based ESL program would have a relatively short period of exposure to global issues even if the program attempted to incorporate them at all levels. Within a program, an individual teacher would have a very short period of time with a single class of students, in a single term, in which to explore these issues.

An added factor in the ESL setting is the mixture of cultures brought together in the academic ESL classroom. This mixture means that the issues presented may strike the individual students in a much greater range of ways than would be the case for a more homogeneous group of students (who share a relatively similar cultural background and perspective, between themselves and between the students and their teacher) being taught about global issues. It is important to note that most students in a university-based ESL program are in the host country on a *temporary* basis. Where K-12 classrooms are also experiencing an increasingly diverse cultural mix, those students are, by comparison, more likely to be facing a permanent residence in the host country (and adjustment to the values and beliefs of the host country on a long-term basis). This calls for a great deal of cultural awareness on the part of the ESL instructor to be prepared to deal constructively with a broader range of reactions---particularly if the classroom includes students from cultures who view an issue from opposite ends of the spectrum. An effective presentation of controversial issues would ideally lead to higher respect (or, at the very least, tolerance) of individual cultural differences combined with awareness of the factors that cut across cultural boundaries. The classroom would not become a setting in which world conflicts are exacerbated. But if the teacher has not come to the task adequately prepared to help the students gain intercultural sensitivity as a part of the process of examining global

issues, there would seem to be potential to amplify the differences between the varied cultural perspectives. If inadequately planned and facilitated, the presentation of global issues in the academic ESL classroom might be more detrimental than consciously choosing to *not* include them.

Despite possible obstacles, there appears to be growing interest and concern among many EFL/ESL educators in incorporating global issues into the language classroom. Educators have begun to explore the logistics of using global issues to the point that a body of practical information and personal experiences has begun to form and be shared with other educators.

While some have expressed concerns about the impact on students (Fine, 1990; Fox, 1990; Peterson, 1990), there has not been any formal study of the use of global issues in the ESL classroom from the perspective of the students themselves. It is possible students may feel indifference or resistance to analyzing global issues, particularly at a post-secondary level. In an academic ESL setting, a teacher might find that students already have set ideas about the issues. They may have little interest in further open-minded analysis. Concerned with successfully passing the TOEFL exam, they may come into an ESL course expecting (and hoping) to find classes designed specifically to prepare them for the exam. Analyzing global issues may seem far removed from the needs they perceive as being most important to their particular situation. They

may feel defeatist about world problems, i. e. that the issues are too large and complex to analyze and act upon. Or they may come from cultures where questioning authority is not an accepted practice, and feel it is not their right to critically analyze such issues (Horvath & Mihaly, 1990; Stewart & Stoller, 1990). They may come from cultures in which the written word is not subject to analysis or questioning, but rather is accepted as fact (Jensen, 1986). In the interest of better understanding the students' needs, the goal of this research was to focus on the students' perspective, to ask questions about the effects felt by ESL students when global---and often controversial---issues are used as the content material in the language learning classroom.

The existing literature provides much support for considering the inclusion of global issues as a language-learning vehicle suitable for use in ESL classrooms. The information about content-based ESL suggests that approaches which present the classroom as a more natural language-learning setting may be more effective for second language learning than are other, more traditional, approaches. From developments in general education and trends in ESL, there is also much support for incorporating global issues in the ESL classroom. The information suggests that the nations of the world are becoming increasingly interactive and interdependent; it is unrealistic to think that educational systems can ignore these changes and adopt an isolationist attitude in deciding their objectives.

In addition, many educators have argued that teaching is a political activity---regardless of whether or not each individual teacher embraces this on a conscious level. Rather than deny this reality, it is better to bring it into the open and to make the students themselves aware of the fact that the educational process is value-laden (Eggington, 1992/1993). If one believes that education is about empowerment, then the students deserve access to all the information necessary to facilitate that empowerment. They also deserve to have their point of view taken into account when educators make decisions about the form and content of classroom materials.

While there is information from many sources which would favor inclusion of global issues in the ESL classroom, there is one important piece missing from the picture: the perspective of the students themselves. To make decisions based solely on those providing education would represent more of a controlling attitude toward the students, than a belief in education as empowerment. Without some understanding of the ways in which students respond to this type of subject matter, there is no way to assess whether or not the incorporation of the material is a favorable choice to make or an unfavorable one. To that end, this study set out to discover what one group of students thought and felt about using global issues as a vehicle for language learning.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This case study was conducted in a state university located in a metropolitan city on the West Coast of the United States (hereafter, for readability, these will be referred to as "this university" and "this city"). Subjects came from a listening/speaking class in the university's ESL program (hereafter to be generally referred to as "this ESL program"/"this program"). This particular ESL program is divided into four levels. Within each level the program is further divided into individual classes based on several language skill areas: grammar, reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The four levels of the Listening/Speaking classes are structured such that the content focus shifts from more concrete aspects of the student's immediate environment (the university itself, the city and state in which it is located) in Levels I and II, to a comparison of their home cultures to American culture, in Level III, until finally, at Level IV, the focus is on global issues.

Generally, many of the students enrolled in the Level IV classes are participating as a preliminary step in the process of gaining entrance into an American university bachelor's or master's degree course. Others may be enrolled strictly as a way to further develop

their English language skills (i.e., not as a prerequisite for entry into a university degree course). Usually, the majority of the students in the Level IV ESL classes have also participated in one or more of the three previous levels of the university's ESL program. Entering Level IV, such prior experience provides them with some orientation toward the rigors of the individual classes, and the logical progression through the levels. In some cases, however, students new to the ESL program test in at a high enough score to start in Level IV.

Subjects

The subjects in this study were enrolled in the Level IV Listening/Speaking class, which met twice a week for two hours each class session. On the first day of the term the researcher was introduced to the students, and briefly explained the plans for the research project. During the third class meeting, the researcher met with the students at the start of the class to describe the study in greater detail, explaining her previous experiences in other sessions of the Level IV Listening/Speaking class as an observer and small group discussion facilitator. Consent forms were handed out and discussed with the class as a whole group; it was stressed that regardless of their choice to participate/not participate, the instructor was not to know who was/was not in the study. All students were asked to return signed forms to the researcher by the following class meeting; those choosing to not participate were to

indicate this on the bottom of the form.

After initial shuffling during the first three weeks of the term, the student population settled with fifteen students in the class, ten of whom agreed to be in the study. (Two of the five electing to not participate indicated concern about the time commitment; three gave no specific reason.) The ten subjects afforded a small but diverse group, when one considers a number of demographic factors. The following is a description of each subject (identified by pseudonyms), based on information gathered during interviews with each of the ten subjects.

Five of the ten subjects were from Japan, three males and two females:

- Yasu, a 24-year old male, had lived in the U.S. for nearly four years at the time of the study. Arriving in the U.S. with what he described as very limited English abilities, he eventually enrolled in ESL classes at a private university (also located in this city). After one year of ESL classes, he was able to enroll at a community college in a smaller town about fifty miles away, where he then successfully completed two years of academic courses and obtained an A.A. degree. Moving to this city, he first enrolled in the ESL program at this university during the term in which the study took place. During the study he was enrolled in three other Level IV ESL classes: Writing, Reading and Grammar. Having not attended an

institution of higher education in Japan, he hopes to do a bachelor's degree in economics here in the U.S.

- Kimiaki, a 22-year-old male, had also lived in the U.S. for a few years prior to the study. After completing high school in Japan, he moved to Philadelphia, where he completed one year of ESL classes. Afterwards he relocated to New York City, where he attending college, completing two years of business classes. Most recently, he enrolled in this ESL program, starting with all four of the Level III classes during the term prior to the study. Like Yasu, Kimiaki did not attend a Japanese college/university and hopes to complete a bachelor's degree in business here in the U.S.
- Park, a 21-year-old male, is from Japan---more specifically Okinawa; this is important to note because, as Park is quick to explain, to be Okinawan is to be a member of a minority group in Japan. Like several of his classmates, Park has also been in the U.S. for a few years. Initially he came to this state for a one-month homestay while in high school, and spent the month in a small town about sixty miles east of this city. After completing high school he returned to the U.S., this time to another state university located about one hundred miles south of here, where he completed three terms of ESL classes. Afterwards he moved north, attending the same community college as Yasu (they first met there), where he

also completed two years of academic classes. Park first enrolled in this ESL program the term prior to the study, and took Level IV Reading and a TOEFL Prep. class. He plans to do a bachelor's degree here, probably in advertising/ management.

- Mayumi, a 22-year-old female, has been in the U.S. for about eighteen months. Prior to coming to the U.S. she acquired an associates degree from a Japanese junior college; her major was English. She hopes to complete a bachelor's degree in economics here in the U.S. She also took academic classes for a year at the same community college as Yasu and Park (but only knew Park on sight). Her ESL studies in the U.S. began in this ESL program with the term in which the study took place. Besides the Listening/Speaking class, she was also enrolled in the Level IV Reading, Writing and Grammar classes.
- Etsuko, a 32-year-old female, has lived in the U.S. for about thirteen months. Aside from Japan and the U.S. her only extended period of living in another country was a one-month homestay in England several years ago. She is married to an American, whom she knew for ten years in Japan prior to their moving to another city on the West Coast about a year ago. Etsuko holds a B.A. in general studies from a Japanese university. She and her husband plan to stay in the U.S. for an

extended period of time, so she would eventually like to do a master's degree here; she imagines she will first do a bachelor's degree to gain familiarity with the American system of higher education. Unlike most of her classmates, Etsuko was not taking the Listening/Speaking class as a prerequisite to entry into a mainstream program; her primary objective was to build on her English skills. This was her first term at this university, having arrived in the city less than a month before the term began. In addition to the Listening/Speaking class she was enrolled in an ENNR (English for Non-Native Residents) Advanced Reading/Writing class during the term.

- Ali, a 20-year-old male from Yemen, arrived in the U.S. about three months before the study took place, to stay with relatives living in the city. Several years ago an older brother had completed a bachelor's degree at this university, and Ali's family expects him to eventually obtain a bachelor's degree from an American college/university. He would like to study business administration here in the U.S. Prior to beginning ESL classes at this university, Ali took ESL classes at a private language school also located in this city. During the study he was also enrolled in Level III Writing, and Level IV Reading and Grammar.
- Housan, a 22-year-old male from Saudi Arabia, joined the class three weeks into the term. He had lived in this city for

about two years, taking ESL classes at a private university, then at a small private business college (both in this city), followed by a small private language institute located in an outlying area. Prior to the study he had no experience in this ESL program. During the study he was also enrolled in Level III Writing, Reading and Grammar. Like many of his classmates, Housan has not done a higher degree in his home country and plans to complete a bachelor's degree in business administration/marketing here in the U.S.

- Ling, a 27-year-old female, comes from Taiwan, where she had previously completed a two-year associates degree in 'international trending' (a business-related area). She would like to complete a bachelor's degree in business administration here in the U.S. Ling arrived in the U.S. just before the term/study began, so everything about the U.S. educational system, culture and people was pretty new to her. Besides the Lstening/Speaking class, she was also enrolled in Level IV Writing, Reading and Grammar.
- Like Ling, Olivia, a 21-year-old female, had only just arrived in the U.S. before the term started, but her situation was quite different. Olivia is the only one of the subjects who has lived in more countries than the U.S. and her native country for any extended period. Originally from El Salvador, Olivia's family moved to Sweden about five years ago, so she had already

experienced the cultural, linguistic and educational challenges of relocating in another country before coming here. She finished high school in Sweden, then attended a Swedish university for one semester to study Spanish before she came to the U.S. Several of her close relatives live in this city---aunts, uncles, as well as cousins who have had most of their education in the American school system---so she has a good support system close at hand. Like Etsuko, Olivia's main objective in being here is to improve here English skills. She's here for one year to take university classes, then will return to Sweden to do a bachelor's degree. Eventually she hopes to return to El Salvador. While enrolled in the Listening/Speaking class, Olivia was also taking Level IV Reading, Writing and Grammar.

- Finally, Bobby, a 21-year old male, came to the U.S. from Indonesia. As a Chinese-Indonesian, he shares Parks' status as a member of a minority group within his native country. Bobby has been in the U.S. for about five months, and has been a student in this ESL program all of that time. During the term prior to the study he took Level III Grammar, Reading, Writing and Listening/Speaking. During the study he was enrolled in Level IV Grammar, Reading and Writing. He attended university for one year in Indonesia, majoring in 'informational systems and quantitative analysis' (a business-

related area), and would like to complete a bachelor's degree in business/finance here in the U.S.

Procedures

This study is a case study drawing upon ethnographic concerns and data-gathering methodologies. In designing the study, a qualitative approach was chosen because it was felt to be best suited to investigating the issues relevant to the particular setting. This study evolved from three previous terms of the researcher's observation of Level IV Listening/Speaking classes in this same ESL program. Those experiences revealed that there could be much variation in the students' observable participation in classroom activities. In conjecturing as to the reasons for the differences in behavior, it was clear that a multitude of factors could be involved. These could include the role of the individual personality of the student; the role of the class as a required stepping stone to move on to regular degree programs; the range within the class of low-to-high advanced listening/speaking skill levels (so the class was easy for some but challenging for others); the role of student/teacher relationships (student attitudes toward the teacher (like/dislike; trust; respect), American norms for student/teacher behavior as compared to home country norms); student/student relationships (friendships between students; friction between students); student attitudes toward the course structure and content; the student's

cognitive and linguistic abilities to work with the material; observable behaviors as a reflection of the student's native cultural norms for educational settings; gender-based behavioral norms of the student's native culture; class-based behavioral norms of the student's native culture; behaviors as a reflection of culture shock.

The class structure appeared to be a content-based approach with global issues as the content material. In this class, although the emphasis was on building particular linguistic and academic skills, the content and the related activities appeared to be a potentially dominating factor. In developing the study, the decision was made to focus on the content, with an emphasis on investigating the impact of the student's native culture on the second language-learning environment. Lack of existing research in this specific area resulted in a lack of tested instruments for considering a quantitative-oriented study. In addition, it was felt that a single, quantitative instrument would be too narrow and would yield limited results; the situation needed to be viewed in as many ways as possible, using as flexible an approach as possible.

There is much literature which suggests that qualitative, classroom-centered research can be well-suited to the complexities of second language-learning environments. Classroom-centered research has become increasingly accepted in the field of language teaching in the past few decades (Allwright, 1983; Gaies, 1983). Qualitative classroom-based research ". . . allows for the investigation

of aspects of classroom language learning which more conventional external observation cannot get at. . . " (Gaies, 1983, p.214). In particular, ethnographic research has gained in popularity as an ESL classroom research approach because it allows an examination of such issues as

> . . . sociocultural processes in language learning, [and] how institutional and societal pressures are played out in moment-to-moment classroom interaction, and how to gain a more holistic perspective on teacher-student interactions to aid teacher training and improve practice." (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p. 575)

Qualitative research is considered an important means to identify and describe a great number of thus far unidentified variables and phenomena present in language learning environments; this identification and description might serve as an initial step toward future related quantitative studies (Chaudron, 1985).

It is not uncommon for second language (L_2) researchers to employ aspects of ethnographic research methods without doing an ethnographic study in the strictest sense of the term (Chaudron, 1988; Johnson, 1992). Such researchers draw upon the descriptive qualities of ethnography to ". . . provide certain details or analyses of specific areas of interaction, which were observed and analyzed following qualitative and interpretative procedures. . . " (Chaudron, p. 46).

In this study, data was collected using a number of different methods. In order to present the data, it was necessary to organize

the findings into a meaningful and coherent form. In many cases this meant regrouping and quantifying many of the findings, and the resulting data was analyzed for patterns of behavior. Such procedures are recognized as accepted practices in the field of qualitative research:

> Process-oriented qualitative researchers explore the intersubjective and context-dependent nature of classroom events as they occur, noting the regularities and idiosyncracies in the events. In order for researchers to derive the implicit rules governing the participants' behavior, however, regularity of particular events or sequences in the discourse must be observed. This regularity then will support reliable claims about rules of interaction. It also allows for counting and other quantitative analyses; the ultimate need for generality and for comparisons across classroom contexts inevitably requires such quantification of events. . . (Chaudron, 1988, p. 48-49)

By drawing from an ethnographic approach, this study of the use of global issues in the ESL classroom had a level of flexibility which would not be possible using a more quantitative method; this was important when faced with the complexity of the particular classroom setting. An ethnographic approach allows for ". . . questions and hypotheses [to] emerge on site; they are not spelled out in advance. . . " (Johnson, 1992, p. 140). Ethnographic studies develop ". . . categories and concepts that make sense and have functional relevance to the participants in the setting. These categories and concepts---developed inductively, in context, and from the ground up---are refined and used in analysis." (Johnson, p. 148). Because of this flexibility, it was possible to expand and add to the data-

gathering procedures during the study, as related areas of concern emerged. For example, it was possible to develop the specific journal questions for the subjects after the study had begun, and to add items to the guiding questions for the interviews. The latter was particularly useful, because it resulted in a fourth area of questioning not originally planned as part of the study (seeing the content material within the context of the class as a whole), which meant the findings specific to global issues were not presented in isolation from the broader context of the class as a whole.

One of the main principles of ethnographic research was also an important aspect of this study: the focus on culturally-based patterns of behavior. Watson-Gegeo (1988) believes ethnographic research may be an effective means of investigating the role of culture in L_2 settings. She believes that it ". . . reminds us of the important role of culture in second language teaching and learning and gives us a way of addressing this issue. . . " (Watson-Gegeo, p. 586). With regard to understanding the classroom culture, she argues that an ethnographic approach can aid teachers in understanding ". . . the expectations that their students bring with them for what classroom life entails and for appropriate styles of interaction." (Watson-Gegeo, p. 587). In addition, the researcher may be able to identify classroom interactions of which the teacher may be unaware, including both student-student and teacher-student interactions

(Watson-Gegeo). This is achieved by using specific techniques, such as long-term, direct observation and analysis of the classroom activities, through which the researcher seeks to gain an insider's view of the situation.

All data-gathering was conducted by the researcher. Several different data gathering methods were used during the study. These included

- observation of all whole-class sessions
- collection of classroom-related printed materials
- observation of several small-group discussion sessions
- audio recordings of small-group discussions
- audio-recorded interviews with each of the subjects
- audio-recorded journals kept by each of the subjects

Observation of Whole-Class Sessions. Every class session was attended by the researcher throughout the term, to observe the subjects in the whole-class environment. This was done for several reasons. At the start of the term the intent was to let all of the students become a little familiar with the researcher before asking them to participate in the study, so that they wouldn't feel they were being asked to confide in a total stranger. Later on it was beneficial to be able to build on this trust by continuing to be a regular presence in the class throughout the term.

From a practical standpoint, regular attendance enabled the researcher to experience most of the classroom information and

instructions just as the subjects did. There were many components to the classroom: films and reading selections on which small-group discussions were based; outside lecturers invited to the class to make short presentations on various global issues; instructions for small-group presentations and individual speeches which the students would make; the actual presentations and speeches themselves; the general housekeeping announcements and feedback on progress with the classroom assignments which the instructor would make to the group as a whole. First-hand knowledge of these components enabled the researcher to ask informed questions of the subjects.

After the first class meeting, classroom observations were done from a seat in the back of the classroom, to be able to easily observe all of the subjects in this setting. Seating charts were made of many class sessions, noting where each subject sat, as well as notes as to which subjects arrived late for class. Overt signs of participation/non-participation were noted, e.g. subjects who appeared to be less attentive (dozing, staring out of the window, chatting with their neighbors) and subjects who were more actively engaged in the class (e.g. giving verbal feedback to the instructor/outside speaker).

Collection of Classroom-Related Printed Materials. Copies of all the handouts given to each subject were also collected for the study. These included a course syllabus; printed handouts related to the discussion process; four reading selections for the discussion sessions (one for a first 'practice' discussion and three for graded

discussions); a series of handouts related to the individual speech assigned as a final project. As with regular attendance in the class, these materials familiarized the researcher with the information and directions the subjects were receiving in the class. In particular, familiarity with the reading selections beforehand was important in order to make some assessment of participation during the discussions themselves, just as it was important to view the films (also used for discussions) with the class.

Small-Group Discussions: Observations, Audio-Recordings, Facilitators' Sheets. A major part of the Level IV Listening/Speaking class is centered around an academic small group discussion process, based on a guide developed by Fawcett Hill (1977). Students are taught this discussion procedure to prepare them for the type of critical analysis, and related discussion, of classroom materials they will eventually encounter in mainstream university classes. The procedure includes a specific outline format to complete in preparation for each discussion; a series of precise steps to be followed during the discussion process itself; and a variety of discussion roles to be assumed by participants during the discussion (Appendix A). In the Level IV Listening/Speaking class each student was also required to do a written self-evaluation after each discussion, assessing his/her individual participation in the discussion and the group's behavior as a whole.

For many ESL students this discussion process is particularly

challenging because it presents a very different approach to working with classroom materials than they have experienced in past educational settings. The process invites both an objective and a subjective critical analysis of the material. In learning how to perform an objective critical analysis of the materials, the students are first asked to identify main points and subtopics. Along with this, they are taught the importance of supporting their ideas using specific examples from the film or text. They learn that in group discussions it is appropriate to challenge another person's point if the reasoning behind the idea is not clear, and to ask the person to cite examples from the material to explain how he/she arrived at a particular conclusion. In the middle phase of the discussion process, participants integrate concepts found in the material with previous knowledge of the subject mattter. They are instructed to look for the ways in which the new material either supports or contradicts what they had learned previously about the topic. They also consider the ways in which the new material might apply to their own lives. The last phase of the discussion is the most subjective. At that point the participants are free to express their own opinions about the material, e.g. whether they agree or disagree with the messages and ideas presented in the material, whether they liked or disliked the material. However, even at this final stage the students are instructed to give supporting examples from the material itself and/or from their own experiences to back up their ideas and reactions.

Even for a student native to an American educational system, some aspects of the process may not be of a second-nature. Although the roles are relatively self-explanatory the actual steps of the discussion are 'mechanical' in that they force a type of discussion that moves from objective analysis to subjective response. For many American students, mastering this procedure would require learning to suppress their subjective responses and opinions until the final steps of the discussion.

The material for the small-group discussions came from two sources, films and short reading selections. On the first day of the term the students collectively chose the three global issues which they would study together during the term: gender-based issues, gangs, and poverty. From their choices the instructor developed three main global issue units, including materials for two discussions for each of the three units, and also a guest lecturer for each unit. With fifteen students in the class, it was decided to split up into three small groups of five students each, for the discussion sessions. Each group of five would meet six times during the term. While the student membership of each group was to remain constant throughout the term, the three discussion group 'facilitators' (the instructor and two TESOL Methods students) would rotate from one discussion to the next; each group would be overseen (and graded) by each facilitator twice during the term.

To understand the discussion process in its entirety, it is

important to note the precise role of the facilitator. During the discussion, the group members sit together in a formation that enables all group members to see and hear one another easily, e.g. by arranging their seats in a circle. Physically, the facilitator may be seated within the ring, however the facilitator is meant to take a minimally-participatory role during the discussion. As much as possible, the students are left to their own devices to conduct the discussion. It is up to them to decide which members will start the discussion, lead the discussion through the steps, keep track of the time, monitor the participation of each member and take responsibility for drawing the less-vocal members into the conversation. The facilitator can break into the process if it appears the students are unsure about how to proceed, if group members reach a point of impasse from which they appear unable to move on, or if the group is clearly off track (e.g. if they launch into personal opinions in the early stage of the discussion).

Ideally, the facilitator should always give the group members sufficient time to overcome any such obstacles in the flow of the discussion rather than breaking in at the first sign of a problem. It is important that the facilitator function more as a monitor of the discussion than a participant, to ensure that the students have the maximum opportunities to conduct the discussion themselves. If a facilitator takes too active a role, the process breaks down and the students will begin to defer to the facilitator rather than discussing

the material with one another.

The discussions were a major component of the class, and an important mechanism for each student to develop listening/speaking skills. Given that the ten subjects were split over three groups, it was necessary to identify procedures for tracking the progress of all the subjects. Two methods were used to gather the data: audio recordings of actual discussion sessions and the 'Discussion Evaluation Sheet' (Appendix B) used by each facilitator to record participation.

With the subjects split between three groups it was impossible for a single person to directly observe all subjects in all six discussions, to track their participation over the course of the term. Originally, the researcher planned to directly observe and audio-record each of the three groups for two discussions each, to obtain a sampling of each subject's participation. That plan was amended to include the use of three tape recorders to record all groups for all six discussions; these recordings could later be listened to away from the setting. The researcher would still rotate among the groups and observe each subject in two discussions, but with eighteen recordings it was also possible to *indirectly* 'observe' all subjects in all of the discussions.

After listening to the tapes of the first discussions, it was apparent that the quality of the recordings could vary greatly, and this proved to be the case throughout the term. Some aspects of

recording were difficult to control. Problems included

- failure to start recording at the beginning of the discussion
- failure to record any of the discussion
- positioning the recorder too far from the group, resulting in poor audio quality
- soft-spoken participants whose speech was barely audible
- movements, especially paper-rustling, which masked over whatever the participants were saying

In the end, of eighteen potential recordings, there were twelve complete, audible recordings and one partial-session, audible recording providing usable information. The length of these recordings ranged from approximately one-half hour up to two hours. Rather than transcribing all of the tapes, each recording was listened to using a tape player with a counter on it, to 'sum up' sections of the discussions in terms of who spoke a lot/a little, and any major points they made. The main objective was to identify overall patterns of participation, e.g. the amount/frequency of a subject's participation as well as the type of interaction---was the subject freely offering ideas and asking for information from others, or consistently waiting for others to ask him/her for ideas, reactions, information? In addition, specific comments were sometimes made by group members about

- the mechanics of the process itself
- ease or difficulty of working with the materials themselves (films vs. readings)
- the possibility of language facility as a challenge to discussion participation

- the role that culturally-based norms might play in interaction in the discussion setting

Notations were made on each of the discussion group write-ups for any of these points that might be usefully incorporated into other data-gathering procedures, e.g. as additional items for the end-of-term interviews with each subject.

The second source of information was the Discussion Evaluation Sheets. These forms were collected from the three facilitators, who used them to record each student's participation during a discussion session. As with the recordings, these formed an incomplete set; of fifteen possible sheets (fifteen, not eighteen, because they were not used for the final discussion), thirteen were collected from the facilitators. In spite of that, these forms, like the recordings, contributed toward an overall picture of each subject's participation in the discussions.

Interviews with the Subjects. Two interviews were conducted with each subject, the first during the third/fourth weeks of the term and the second during the last two weeks of the term. An extensive set of guiding questions was developed and used for each of these interviews (Appendix C and Appendix D). An original set of questions had been prepared before the study began. The full list of items was split over the first and second interviews; some sections of the second half were amended to incorporate ideas that emerged from classroom observations and input from the students themselves. The

list included initial questions of a demographic nature followed by a series of items designed to address the specific areas outlined by the main research questions of the study:

- Subject awareness/interest in global issues while in the home country looked at

  a) specific media sources used to get information and the frequency of use by the subject

  b) specific global issues and the environments in which they were studied, read about, and/or discussed

  c) people with whom such issues would be discussed: family, friends, same-gender group, mixed-gender group

  d) awareness of/membership in groups concerned with global issues

- Subject's background in critical analysis

  a) specific questions about the classroom format in the home country (class sizes; structure - lecture and/or discussion; exam format)

  b) cultural norms for analyzing the media (media as a source of truth)

  c) cultural norms for analyzing/questioning decisions made by those in power

- Subject's background in critical analysis - previous experiences in the U.S.

  a) experiences with critical analysis in other academic settings in the U.S.

  b) experiences with critical analysis in other ESL programs in other institutions in the U.S.

  c) experiences with critical analysis during previous terms of study within this ESL program

- Possible changes in the subject's interest and comfort levels in using global issues

a) specific media sources used here in the U.S. to get information; frequency of usage

b) people with whom subject discusses issues in the U.S.: others from his/her home country; other international students; American students; Americans (other than students)

c) reaction at the start of term/comfort level at start of term

d) comfort level at end of term

e) subject's preference for using subject matter other than global issues as content for an ESL class

f) subject's overall assessment of the value of the class: main reason for taking the class; evaluation of the class as a means of improving his/her English skills

In addition, after obtaining information from taped discussions and the subjects' journals, another section was added to the second half of the interview format, regarding various components of the classroom. This was developed in order to see where the subjects' ideas and feelings about global issues might fit within the context of the class as a whole. A major concern was that without asking the subjects to talk about these elements of the class, the study would be considering global issues in isolation, making it difficult to assess the degree to which the subject matter was problematic. For example, it could be that the content material of 'global issues' was not a difficulty in and of itself, but rather some of the *activities* the subjects were asked to do using global issues were the true sources of difficulty.

The first interviews lasted from forty-five minutes to one hour, the second ranged from one to one-and-a-half hours. All interviews

were conducted on campus in a private setting (either a meeting room in the library or an empty classroom). Notes were made on a copy of the interview form during and after the interviews. Full transcriptions of the tapes were not created---for many of the questions the subjects provided simple answers which could be checked off using the interview sheet itself. Where more complicated responses were given, these were either paraphrased or transcribed in full by the researcher. For those sections of the interview most like a questionnaire format, answers were later compiled into tables of the subjects' responses, for purposes of readability and comparison.

It should be noted that the order of the questions as they appear in Appendix C and Appendix D was not always strictly adhered to during the course of each interview. In cases where the flow of a subject's response led into an area of questions further down the list, the researcher chose to follow the subject's lead. This permitted the interview to have a more natural and conversational style. Also, in compiling the data, some questions were reordered and grouped to create a more precise and logical account of the findings.

Audio-Recorded Journals. As a part of the study, each subject was also asked to keep a tape-recorded 'journal.' A tape-recorded journal was chosen rather than a written journal, because it was more closely aligned with the skill focus of the class itself. As was explained to the subjects, the journal exercise was included because

it added another environment to the study. The classroom setting was a relatively public atmosphere; the small-group discussion was a slightly more intimate situation; the interviews with the researcher allowed for one-on-one conversation; the journal invited the subjects to reflect on the issues on their own. The intention was that, especially for some of the more publicly-reticent subjects, the journal might provide a comfortable atmosphere to say whatever they felt about the issues. In written instructions describing the procedure to the subjects, the researcher also reinforced that the information they provided would remain confidential.

Each subject was supplied with a blank cassette tape to make the recordings, as well as some written instructions about how to make the recording. Rather than asking the subjects to simply record whatever thoughts came to mind, the researcher structured the journals around five major parts of the class: the three main global issue units, the group presentations, and the individual speeches. For each of these sections, a written page of questions was given to the subjects to answer in the recording (Appendix E). It was also stressed that the subjects should not feel limited to answering just these questions---if they had other points they wanted to add, they could do that too. The questions were provided to make it easier for the subjects to start the task, but in the process they could veer into areas they found particularly interesting, confusing, difficult. The written questions were given to the students as each

section of the class was completed, and the subjects were usually given four to five days to make the recording and submit it to the researcher. Generally, as soon as the tapes were received from the subjects, a written transcription was made using a tape recorder with a counter device. For each of the recordings, the subjects were asked to speak for five to ten minutes. The length of each journal entry was noted on the transcript for a later assessment, with the thought that these might be reflective of each subject's interest/comfort with the class itself. As with the discussion group tapes, any comments directly referring to the use of global issues were noted on the transcripts; comments related to other aspects of the class were also noted. The information contained in the journals was then organized into a composite format for easier analysis and readability. As with the interview data, questions that elicited simple 'yes/no' responses could be easily tallied. Other questions allowed for a more freeform type of answer. With some of the latter, overall patterns in the responses made it possible to create broader categories into which the subjects' answers could be fit. Where other questions produced individual answers too diverse to categorize, the responses were left intact but grouped together for readability.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the use of global issues as the content material in a university-level ESL classroom. The main impetus behind this exploration was a desire to know whether or not global issues function effectively as a motivating vehicle for language learning in such a classroom. While many ESL educators favor the use of this material, there has been little investigation to determine the responsiveness of the students for inclusion of these potentially controversial issues. Based on the input from a group of ten subjects, this study focused on three major areas as a means of understanding the use of global issues in the ESL classroom from the perspective of the student. The three areas were:

1) The levels of awareness and levels of interest that the subjects brought with them through both formal and informal study in their home countries.

2) The background experiences and interest in critical analysis which the subjects brought into the classroom, based on formal and informal study completed prior to the term of this study.

3) The possible changes experienced by the subjects during the term, in both comfort and interest levels, in relation to using global issues in the ESL classroom.

As described in the previous chapter, a number of data-

gathering methods were used to investigate these issues. In the final analysis, the individualized interviews served overwhelmingly as the primary source of information. Some of the findings from the interviews were further supplemented by data drawn from the audio-recorded journals. Certain sources provided a basic picture of observable participation by each of the subjects in classroom activities. Of the three main components of the class---the small-group discussions, the group presentations, and the individual speech---the small-group discussions were of particular interest to this study. The group presentation and the individual speech were not analyzed in any great depth for two reasons. First, public speaking is an unnerving task for many people in their first language, let alone in a second, so it would be hard to distinguish observable behavior based on the task from observable behavior based on the subject matter. Second, both of these tasks were mandatory assignments---all subjects were required to participate---and attempts to make any qualitative assessments of the presentations were not considered to be a significant contribution to the findings of the study.

By comparison, the small-group discussions, although also a requirement of the class, were a less-public activity and allowed for greater range in participation. Through a combination of direct observation of the subjects in these discussions, as well as the data from the audio-recordings and the three facilitator's Discussion

Evaluation Sheets, it was possible to identify overall patterns of behavior by each of the subjects. Four of the subjects were in one group: Mayumi, Olivia, Bobby and Park. Four others were in another group: Ali, Ling, Kimiaki, and Etsuko. Two others were in a third group: Yasu and Housan.

From the beginning of the term, several of the subjects were highly participative in their small-group discussions: Ali, Yasu, Mayumi, Olivia, Housan, and Bobby. Each of these subjects was able to take on a number of the different roles during the discussions, and usually came to the discussion sessions well-prepared, willing to share ideas and opinions. Ali and Olivia were consistent about making certain that all members of their groups were given opportunities to share their ideas and opinions, too, especially the more quiet group members. Ling and Etsuko were also fairly active group members. In the first discussions they spoke up less than the more active members in their group, but began to participate more as the term progressed. Two subjects, Kimiaki and Park, were generally less active than the other eight subjects. Kimiaki was quiet throughout the first three discussions but more vocal during the last three. Although he spoke less than the others, he often had interesting or unique ideas to express. Like Kimiaki, Park was fairly quiet in the early discussions, more vocal during the later ones. In the early discussions, Park usually waited for a direct request for his ideas from fellow group members. By the end of the term, he was able to

freely give his ideas and opinions, and ask the others for theirs.

Over the course of the term, observed variations in subject participation in classroom activities were noted. These included both differences in behavior from one subject to the next, and also differences in behavior in a single subject from one period of observation to the next. These observations naturally raised questions about the possible causes for such differences. Were they reflections of the areas of concern raised in the guiding questions of the study? The following is an analysis of the data collected during the study specific to each of the three guiding questions. In this presentation of the data, a number of tables and diagrams have been included with the related descriptive text. The reason for their inclusion is that it is important to be able to see each subject as both a member of the group (i.e., ten ESL students in a Level IV Listening/Speaking class, attempting to learn the academic norms of the American university setting) *and* as an individual member of a specific culture. While all observed behavior occurred in the U.S., the interpretation of the behavior draws upon the norms of each subject's home culture, as reported by the subjects themselves. Seeing group totals provides a picture of how the group as a whole has coped with this particular educational setting; this type of information might aid educators in making decisions about whether/how to incorporate global issues into the classroom. Including individual data for each subject adjacent to the group figures shows if/how individuals differ

from the group as a whole. This may trigger questions about the possible factors that cause this difference, specifically the role that home country cultural norms play in the individual's behavior here in the U.S. This may be particularly relevant if a subject frequently deviates from the norms of behavior as exhibited by the students in the particular Level IV Listening/Speaking class in which this study took place.

While processing the data gathered in this study, the researcher created a number of worksheets from which the tables and diagrams were derived for inclusion within the text. Not all of these worksheets have been included in the body of the text; some have been included in the Appendix. Certain criteria were used in making these selections. Worksheets were incorporated into the text in a visual format for 1) data which is most directly related to the guiding questions of the study, and 2) data which is more complex in its presentation and might be more easily understood with a visual counterpart to supplement the textual description. Worksheets which appear in the Appendix include 1) data which is a peripheral part of the findings in relation to the guiding questions, and 2) data which is clearly represented in the text alone. For the latter, the visual representation is included in the Appendix to provide the reader access to specific data relative to any of the individual subjects.

I. Coming into the ESL classroom, what levels of *awareness* about

contemporary issues, generally, and global issues specifically, do the subjects bring with them, based on previous study (formal and/or informal) in their own countries? Similarly, what levels of *interest* do they bring to the ESL classroom with regard to these issues, based on previous study?

The majority of the data regarding this area of questioning was derived from the individual interviews with each subject. As explained in Chapter III, several items on the list of interview questions were used to explore each subject's background in awareness about and interest in these issues while in their home county.

Using a list of media-related activities, the subjects were asked to identify which of these they used to gain information about the issues, and to indicate the frequency with which they used these sources (see Appendix C for the specific interview questions). The five activities from which to select were

1) reading a newspaper
2) watching television news
3) watching television programs about global issues
4) listening to radio news
5) listening to radio programs about global issues.

Although the original response categories allowed for a choice between 'no', 'yes-daily', and 'yes-weekly', there were nuances appearing in the actual responses during the interviews which made the original three categories inadequate for recording purposes. The actual responses produced five categories, which were adopted for

analysis purposes to include

1) never

2) occasionally (i.e. no regular basis, but less than once-a-week)

3) one time per week

4) 2-3 times per week

5) daily

As can be seen in Table I, certain activities were used more than others, and with greater frequency. Of the five activities, reading a newspaper was by far the most common source of information, as it was the only activity used by all subjects to any degree. Watching television news was the second most common source (used by seven of the subjects), watching television programs about global issues was third (used by six), listening to radio news a distant fourth (used by one), while none of the subjects reported listening to radio programs about global issues. Frequency of usage followed along similar lines: newspapers were read most frequently as a source of information, television news second most frequently, television programs about global issues third most frequently, and radio news a distant fourth in frequency of usage.

From a slightly different angle, the subjects were asked to provide additional information about activities with global issues, but this area of questions focused on fifteen specific issues, where the previous line of questioning took a more general approach. With this

TABLE I

MEDIA SOURCES : FREQUENCY OF USAGE- HOME COUNTRY

STUDENT	READ NEWS-PAPER	WATCH T.V NEWS	WATCH T.V. PROGRAMS ABOUT GLOBAL ISSUES	LISTEN TO RADIO NEWS	LISTEN TO RADIO PROGRAMS ABOUT GLOBAL ISSUES
ALI	occasional	2-3x per week	never	occasional	never
LING	daily	daily	2-3x per week	occasional	never
YASU	daily	never	occasional	never	never
KIMIAKI	2-3x per week	daily	daily	never	never
MAYUMI	daily	2-3 x per week	never	never	never
OLIVIA (Sweden)	daily	daily	2-3x per week	daily	never
HOUSAN	daily	occasional	never	never	never
BOBBY	daily	never	never	never	never
PARK	daily	daily	occasional	never	never
ETSUKO	daily	never	occasional	never	never
TOTALS	occasion. - 1 2-3x wk. - 1 daily - 8	never - 3 occasion. - 1 2-3 x wk. - 2 daily - 4	never - 4 occasion. - 3 2-3x wk. - 2 daily - 1	never - 7 occasion. - 2 daily - 1	never - 10

second set of questions, the subjects were asked to identify not only those activities with which they had had contact, but also to identify in which of five set environments this occurred (see also Appendix C for the interview questions). The five activities and the related settings

were

1) studied in school (K-12)

2) studied in college/university

3) read about on own

4) talked with friends

5) talked with family

The fifteen issues included four human-rights issues (racial/ethnic issues, gender-based issues, class-based issues, educational rights issues), two conflict-resolution issues (peace education, nuclear disarmament), six environmental issues (water pollution, air pollution, toxic waste, acid rain, global warming, endangered species), overpopulation, and two health-related issues (world hunger, AIDS). Tables II and III and Figure 1 show the tabulated results of the collected data. Table II provides a complete set of data for all subjects, in all five settings, for all fifteen global issues. For ease of analysis Table III and Figure 1 were derived from Table II.

As an overall picture, Table III provides detail as to the specific settings in which each subject had his/her greatest/least contacts with the issues (combining all fifteen issues together as a single entity), as well as total figures for the ten subjects as a group at the bottom of each the five categories. As can be seen from Table III, the most common setting in which the subjects as a whole had contact with the global issues collectively was through reading about the issues on their own. The next most common settings were talking with friends, and

TABLE II

SPECIFIC GLOBAL ISSUES STUDIED/READ/DISCUSSED IN HOME COUNTRY

ISSUE	STUDIED IN SCHOOL	STUDIED IN COLLEGE/ UNIV.	READ ABOUT ON OWN	TALKED ABOUT WITH FRIENDS	TALKED ABOUT WITH FAMILY	TOTAL NO. OF OCCUR-RENCES FOR EACH ISSUE
Human Rights:						
Racial/Ethnic Issues	A, L, _, K, M, O (E,S) _,_, P, E N=7	N=0	A, L, Y, _ M, O _,_,P, E N=7	A, L, Y, _ _, O _ B, P, _ N=6	A, L, _,_ _, O _,B, P, E N=6	N=26
Gender-Based Issues	A, L, Y, _ M,O (s), H,B,P, _ N=8	_, L,_,_, _,O _,_,_,E N=3	_,L, Y, _ _,O H,B,_,E N=6	A,L,_,K _,O H,B,P,E N=8	A,L,_,_ _,O H,B,P,E N=7	N=32
Class-Based Issues	A,L,Y,_ M,O (S) _,B,_,_ N=6	_,L,_,_ _,O _,_,_,E N=3	_,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,E N=7	A,L,Y,_ M,O _,B,_,_ N=6	_,_,_,_ _,O _,B,_,_ N=2	N=28
Educational Rights	A,L,_,K M,O (S) _,B,_,_ N=6	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,_ N=1	A,L,Y,_ _,O _,B,_,E N=6	A,L,Y,K M,_ _,B,_,_ N=6	A,L,Y,K _,O _,B,_,_ N=6	N=25
Peace Education	A,L,_,_ M,O (S) H,B,_,_ N=6	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,E N=2	_,L,Y,_ M,O _,B,_,E N=6	A,L,Y,K M,O _,B,_,_ N=7	_,_,_,_ _,O _,B,_,E N=3	N=24
Nuclear Disarmament	A,_,_,_ M, O (S) _,_,_,_ N=3	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,E N=2	A,_,Y,_ M,_ H,B,_,E N=6	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,_ N=7	_,_,_,_ _,O H,B,_,E N=4	N=22
Water Pollution	A,L,_,_ M,O (S) H,B,P,_ N=7	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,_ N=1	_,L,Y,_ M,_ H,B,P,E N=7	_,L,Y,_ M,_ H,B,P,_ N=6	_,L,Y,_ _,_ H,B,P,_ N=5	N=26
Air Pollution	A,L,_,K M, O (S) H,B,P,_ N=8	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,E N=2	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,P,E N=9	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,P,_ N=8	A,L,_,_ _,O H,B,P,_ N=6	N=33

'_' = subject did not report this as an activity in which he/she had engaged

TABLE II

SPECIFIC GLOBAL ISSUES STUDIED/READ/DISCUSSED IN HOME COUNTRY (continued)

ISSUE	STUDIED IN SCHOOL	STUDIED IN COLLEGE/ UNIV.	READ ABOUT ON OWN	TALKED ABOUT WITH FRIENDS	TALKED ABOUT WITH FAMILY	TOTAL NO. OF OCCUR-RENCES FOR EACH ISSUE
Toxic Wastes	A,_,_,K M, O (S) _,B,_,_ N=5	_,L,_,_ _,O _,_,_,E N=3	_,L,Y,_ _,O H,B,_,E N=6	A,L,Y,_ _,O _,B,_,_ N=5	_,_,_,_ _,O _,B,_,_ N=2	N=21
Acid Rain	A,_,_,K M, O (S) H,B,P,_ N=7	_,L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,E N=2	_,_,Y,_ M, _ H,B, _,E N=5	_,L,Y,_ M,_ H,B,_,_ N=5	_,_,_,_ _,_ H,B,_,_ N=2	N=21
Global Warming	_,_,_,_ _, O(S) _,_,_,_ N=1	_,L,_,_ M,_ _,_,_,E N=3	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,P,E N=9	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,_ N=7	A,_,_,_ _,O H,B,_,_ N=4	N=24
Endangered Species	_,_,_,_ _,O (E,S) _,B,P,_ N=3	_, L,_,_ _,_ _,_,_,E N=2	A,L,Y,_ M,O _,B,P,E N=8	A,L,Y,_ _,O _,B,P,_ N=6	A,L,_,_ _,O _,_,P,_ N=4	N=23
Overpopulation	A,L,_,K M,O (E,S) H,B,_,_ N=7	_,L,_,_ _,O _,_,_,E N=3	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,E N=8	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,_,_,_ N=6	A,L,_,_ _,O H,_,_,_ N=4	N=28
World Hunger	A,_,_,K M, O (E,S) _,B,P,_ N=6	_,L,_,_ M,O _,_,_,E N=4	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,P,E N=9	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,P,_ N=8	A,L,_,_ M,O H,B,P,_ N=7	N=34
AIDS	_,_,_,K _, O(S) _,B,_,_ N=3	_,L,_,_ M,_ _,_,_,E N=3	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,E N=8	A,L,Y,_ M,O H,B,_,_ N=7	A,L,_,_ M,O H,_,_,_ N=5	N=26
TOTALS	N = 83	N = 34	N = 107	N=98	N = 67	N = 389

'_' = subject did not report this as an activity in which he/she had engaged

TABLE III

TOTAL NUMBER OUT OF FIFTEEN SPECIFIC ISSUES, STUDIED/READ/DISCUSSED BY EACH SUBJECT

SUBJECT	#OF ISSUES STUDIED IN SCHOOL	# OF ISSUES STUDIED IN COLLEGE /UNIV.	# OF ISSUES READ ABOUT ON OWN	# OF ISSUES TALKED ABOUT WITH FRIENDS	# OF ISSUES TALKED ABOUT WITH FAMILY	# OF ISSUES-TOTAL FOR ALL SET-TINGS
ALI	12	N/A	9	13	9	43
LING	8	14	13	15	9	59
YASU	2	N/A	15	14	2	33
KIMIAKI	8	N/A	0	3	1	12
MAYUMI	12	3	12	11	2	40
OLIVIA	15	5	12	12	13	57
HOUSAN	6	N/A	11	9	9	35
BOBBY	12	0	14	14	12	52
PARK	7	N/A	6	6	6	25
ETSUKO	1	12	15	1	4	33
TOTALS	83	34	107	98	67	389

talking with family, followed by studying the issues in school. Least common was studying the issues in a higher education setting, but this might be explained by the fact that only half of the subjects had attended a college or university in their home country before coming to the U.S. The individual figures for each subject enable the reader to see how that subject relates to the pattern of the group as a whole, e.g. for some subjects the more common setting collectively (reading about the subject on their own), is *not* the most common setting for that subject as an individual.

Figure 1 is a composite of responses from all of the subjects for each of the fifteen specific issues, with the five settings combined as

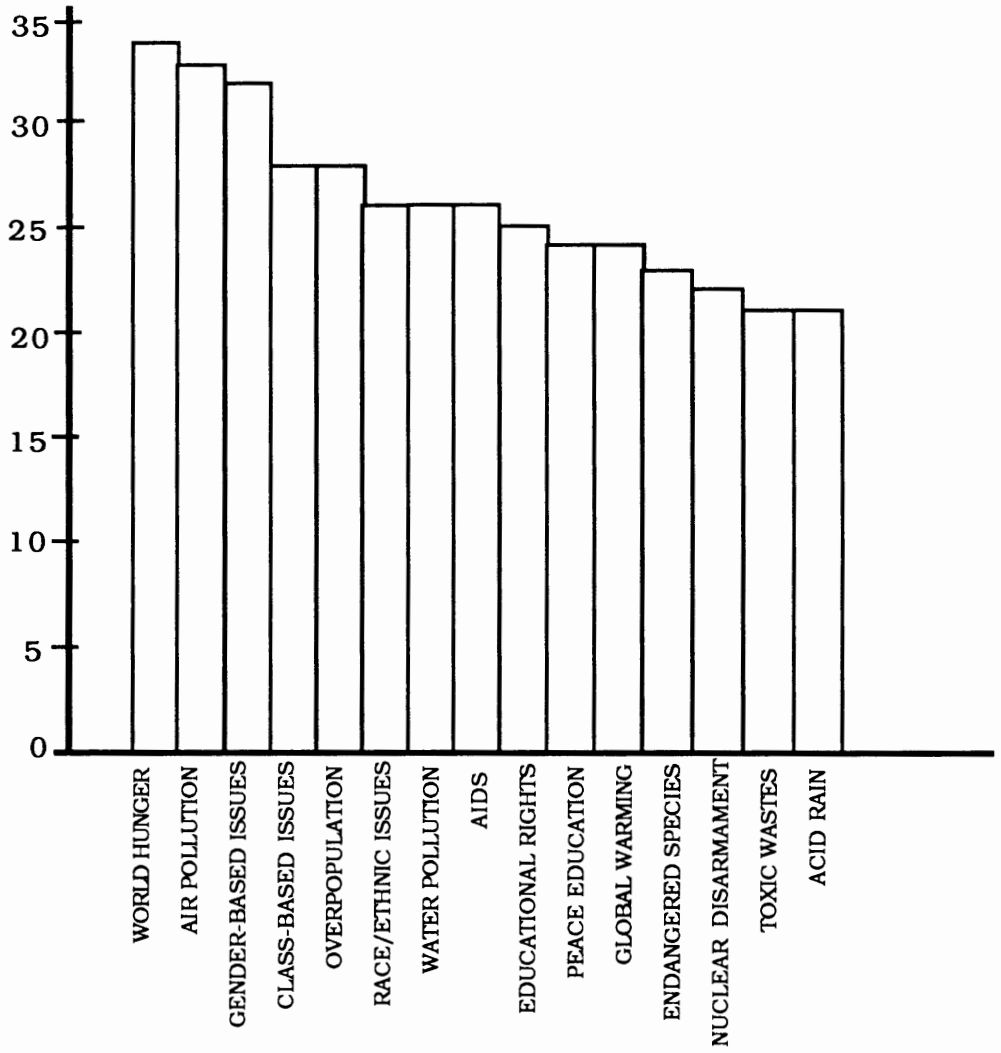

Figure 1. Specific global issues: Total number of incidents of contact by all subjects in all settings.

one entity. On the surface, the results may appear to be random. However, based on additional information supplied by the subjects during the interviews this may not be the case. For several of the issues with higher frequency of contacts, the subjects indicated that these were either recognized as problems in their own countries, or

were acknowledged as problems in other countries.

Asking subjects about these particular activities and settings is useful for more than one reason. On one hand it supplies indicators of interaction with the issues while still in their home country, so this contributes to a general understanding of the previous contacts with the issues that they bring with them. It is also important because it includes settings and related activities that are different from those they will encounter while in the U.S. It is important to consider the kinds of settings they used in their own country compared to the contacts available to them here. The school culture in which they encountered global issues in their home country may be very different from the school environment in which they are functioning here. For most, they are living far from family and friends, so the close personal relationships in which they could talk about global issues are absent. A point that will later be discussed is the issue of cultural norms for behavior in private versus public settings, and the role that such norms might play in levels of comfort/discomfort in discussing global issues in the public setting of an ESL classroom.

The one environment which seems most available to them here is the opportunity to read about the issues on their own---but even this is not the same environment and activity as in their home country. The written materials to which they will have easiest access here are in English, not in their first language, so their ability to use these materials will be dependent on their reading skills in the second

language. Presumably, they will encounter limitations in their ability to read materials of the same complexity as those they could access were they in their home countries.

The examination of contact with global issues in the home country was taken further with a group of questions related to the people with whom global issues were discussed by each subject in his/her home country (Table IV). These were connected to the previous set of questions in that they included family and friends as contacts, but without qualifying the contacts based on a breakdown by specific global issue. In addition, subjects were asked what role, if any, gender played in determining with whom one discussed global issues. While the focus of this section was behavior in the home country, subjects were asked to expand on the gender-based behavioral norms by describing any perceived differences between the home country and the U.S. in relation to those norms (Table V).

As Table IV shows, the majority of the subjects discuss global issues with both family and friends at least some of the time, although again the degree to which this is done varies from one subject to another. With regard to gender-based norms, the responses were perhaps not surprising in most cases, but interesting nonetheless. All subjects stated that when it comes to discourse about global issues, same-gender interaction was a norm in their country. Six of the ten subjects said that mixed-gender interaction was not the norm in their countries, while four stated that mixed-gender was as

TABLE IV

PEOPLE WITH WHOM GLOBAL ISSUES ARE DISCUSSED - HOME COUNTRY

SUBJECT	FAMILY	FRIENDS	SAME-GENDER GROUP	MIXED-GENDER GROUP
ALI	y - some	y - some	yes	no
LING	y - some	y - a lot	yes	yes
YASU	yes	y - a lot	yes	no
KIMIAKI	y - little	y - little	yes	no
MAYUMI	y - little	yes	yes	no
OLIVIA - E.S. Sweden	yes yes	yes yes	yes yes	yes yes
HOUSAN	yes	yes	yes	no
BOBBY	y - some	y - a lot	yes	yes
PARK	yes	y - some	yes	yes
ETSUKO	y - some	no	yes	no
TOTALS	y - little - 2 y - some - 4 yes - 5	no- 1 y - little - 1 y - some - 2 yes - 4 y - lots - 3	yes - 11	no -6 yes - 5

acceptable as same-gender discussions. Interestingly, one of the latter was Park, a subject from Japan (the others were Ling (Taiwan), Olivia (El Salvador/Sweden), and Bobby (Indonesia)); the other four subjects from Japan said mixed-gender discussion of global issues was not the norm. This difference in perception might be explained by additional information supplied by Park. He said that in Japan, although tradition has dictated that women not express their opinions about these types

of issues, he believes that Japanese society is changing and the traditional norms are slowly being replaced with more liberal ideas. Also, Bobby explained that although either same- or mixed-gender interaction is acceptable in Indonesia, it is sometimes dependent on one's relationship to the other person(s). Mixed-gender discussion is more likely to take place with close friends and family than with strangers---and there are *some* issues one wouldn't discuss with a stranger regardless of gender (e.g. issues about racism and ethnicity).

When asked about their perceptions of differences between gender-based norms in their home countries and the U.S., all subjects provided information regarding women but few mentioned men (Table V). Of the four responses regarding men, two subjects said the opportunities are the same in both their home countries and the U.S., and two believe that men have greater freedom to discuss global issues in the U.S. With regard to women, eight subjects feel that there are more opportunities for women to discuss global issues in the U.S. than in their home countries, and two said there were equal opportunities; no subject said that women had greater freedom of speech in his/her home country.

There were many specific comments made by the subjects in providing these answers. Five of the six male subjects thought women have more freedom to discuss issues in the U.S. Of these five, four also offered their perceptions as to how they think women in their countries feel about global issues. Ali believes that in Yemen women

TABLE V

GENDER-BASED NORMS FOR DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL ISSUES: COMPARISON OF HOME COUNTRY AND U.S.

	MEN			WOMEN		
SUBJECT	MORE U.S.	MORE HOME	EQUAL	MORE U.S.	MORE HOME	EQUAL
ALI			X	X		
LING	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion	X		
YASU	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion	X		
KIMIAKI	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion	X		
MAYUMI	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion	X		
OLIVIA	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion			X
HOUSAN	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion	X		
BOBBY			X			X
PARK	X			X		
ETSUKO	X			X		
TOTALS	2		2	8		2

can talk to other women about such issues, but he is not sure they have enough concern about the issues to even want to talk about them. Similarly, Yasu believes that women in Japan are not concerned about global issues to the degree that men are. On occasion, he has been surprised at how misinformed some of his female friends are about world problems. Kimiaki said it is far more common for men to discuss these issues in Japan, and that women are not interested in the issues. Their primary concerns are maintaining the household and

taking care of their families. According to Housan, the situation is the same in Saudi Arabia. Traditionally, women focus on the home and family, not politics, ". . . because woman in my country, she doesn't care about political things." He did add that he thinks this is starting to change a bit.

Park not only believes women have more freedom to discuss the issues here in the U.S., he feels that men also have greater freedom to openly express their opinions here than in Japan. In Japan it's okay to discuss the issues with family and friends, but not in the more public arenas of the school classroom or the workplace. Etsuko's comments echoed Park's remarks:

> Japanese woman not supposed to speak out, give opinion. That's considered not feminine. But in U.S. you have to be a person with an opinion, not a woman or a man. . . You don't have to feel guilty about talking your opinion.

Mayumi believes that, although they learn about gender-based equality in school, in practice it depends on each individual family. Many families are very traditional, expecting women to not discuss societal and political issues, while other families are similar to Americans, having adopted a more relaxed attitude about such behavior.

Two subjects believe gender-based behavioral norms for discussion are similar in their home countries and the U.S. However, Bobby again added that the exact issues that get discussed are affected by one's relationship to the other person, i.e. there's greater freedom with those close to you than with strangers. Olivia feels that, in

general, in both El Salvador and Sweden women can discuss global issues as easily as they can in the U.S. However, certain issues would be more easily discussed than others, e.g. gay rights can be discussed openly in Sweden, but would be difficult to discuss in El Salvador.

Within the group of ten subjects there is a range of background awareness/knowledge. Some subjects are reliant on more sources than others and with higher frequency; some show greater amounts of contact with the issues than do others. On a general level it is not possible to say whether or not the findings show a high/medium/low level of awareness/knowledge, due to lack of a gauge to measure that. For example, it is not possible to say how 'the average American' would compare to these subjects, or how people from many other countries would compare. However, the gender-based findings suggest that for most of the subjects the mixed-gender small-group discussion format that they encountered in the class is different from the cultural norms of their home countries. This may present some potential for conflict in that the set-up requires that they share ideas and opinions about issues in a setting in which this would not normally occur in their home countries. For some this may create an uncomfortable learning situation.

II. What background do the students bring to the ESL classroom with regard to critical analysis of controversial issues?

The previous section was primarily focused on the subjects' contacts with global issues while living in their home countries.

This included information about the particular settings where contact took place, as well as details about the people with whom such contact occurred.

This second section is centered around the types of critical analysis activities and behaviors the subjects had participated in prior to the term in which this study took place. The majority of this information is based on activities while living in the home country, but also includes critical analysis experiences in educational settings in the U.S. prior to the term of the study; these include experiences both in ESL classes at this institution and/or other educational institutions, and in regular, academic classes in other higher educational settings. As with the previous section, much of the data for this section was derived from the individual interviews with the subjects. The findings from the data were grouped into the following subtopics:

a) the subject's previous experiences in critical analysis in his/her home country

b) previous experiences in critical analysis in educational settings since arriving in the U.S. but prior to the term in which this study took place

c) the societal norms of the native culture in relation to such critical analysis

d) the subject's interest in critical analysis

   1. general comments about his/her behavior and views

   2. the subject's assessment of various forms of journalism as sources of 'truth'

   3. the subject's awareness of/participation in activist groups

In order to explore previous experiences in critical analysis in their home countries, the subjects were first asked to provide some information about the structure of K-12 classrooms in their native countries. As can be seen in Table VI, class sizes ranged from a low of 20-25 students per class up to 50 students in a classroom. In fact, the majority of the responses indicated class sizes at the high end of the range; eight of the eleven responses indicated that class sizes of 40-50 were the norm---quite large by American standards for K-12 class-rooms. Ali added that his school was atypical of most in Yemen. He attended a private school where class sizes ranged from 20-25, but the average class size for public schools in Yemen is 50-60 students. (Note: Olivia provided information from both El Salvador and Sweden for this section, so some data may be described based on eleven 'sources' here, rather than ten subjects.)

In all cases, the subjects stated that the classroom structure was a teacher-fronted lecture format. Two subjects, Housan and Etsuko, noted that teachers are afforded great respect in their cultures. In Japan, teaching is viewed as 'a sacred job' performed by dedicated professionals. In Saudi Arabia, the teacher is respected as a knowledgeable authority. According to Housan, there is a very strict rule of conduct in this regard: 'We have one point: Always the teacher is right, always. You can't---if you disagree, you can't say 'I disagree.' Can *not*.'

Nearly all subjects stated that the classroom focus was on

TABLE VI

CLASSROOM FORMAT (K-12) - HOME COUNTRY

SUBJECT	CLASS SIZE	CLASS STRUCTURE				EXAM STRUCTURE					ANALYTIC. DISCUSSION OF MATER. OUTSIDE CLASS
		Teach-Front	Lect.	Disc.	Focus Memoriz	T/F	Mult. Cho.	Fill In	Short Essay	Long Essay	
ALI (Yemen)	20-25	yes	yes	no	yes	x	x		x		no
LING (Taiwan)	50	yes	yes	no	yes	x	x		x		no
YASU (Japan)	40-45	yes	yes	no	yes		x		x		no
KIMIAKI (Japan)	40	yes	yes	no	yes			x			no
MAYUMI (Japan)	50	yes	yes	no	yes	x	x		x		no
OLIVIA (El Salv.)	40	yes	yes	no	yes	x	x		x		no
(Sweden)	25-30	yes	yes	yes	no				x	x	yes
HOUSAN (Saudi Ar.)	25-35	yes	yes	no	yes				x		no
BOBBY (Indonesia)	45-50	yes	yes	no	yes				x		no
PARK (Japan)	45	yes	yes	no	yes			x			no
ETSUKO (Japan)	40-50	yes	yes	no	yes	x	x		x		no
TOTALS		y=10	y=10	y=1 n=9	y=9 n=1	5	6	2	8	1	y=1 n=9

memorization of the material. Exams were usually either true/false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or short essay. Several subjects stated that material was simply presented as 'facts' that had to be learned for the exams. There was no analytical discussion of the

material either inside or outside of the class. Any discussion that did occur was centered around clarification of the facts as presented by the teacher, if the students did not understand them the first time around. Kimiaki said that, although it was acceptable to raise your hand in class to ask for such clarification, it could also be somewhat embarrassing to admit in that public setting that you didn't understand what had been presented.

For Yasu the educational structure in Japan was sometimes frustrating. Up through junior high, he had been a 'good student', conforming to social pressures to study hard in preparation for the eventual demands of the highly-competitive entrance exams into a Japanese university. In high school he became rebellious and liked to read about issues that interested him personally, but was discouraged by his teachers and parents from wasting precious time exploring material that wouldn't be on the exams. Despite their lack of encouragement, he was 'very hot' about various societal issues during high school, and preferred to spend his time talking to his peers about the things that he found most important.

Olivia's school experiences were quite different from that of the other nine subjects. Although the structure and focus of schools in El Salvador was similar to that of the other subjects, Olivia's high school years in a Swedish school system were quite different. The classroom size was smaller, 25-30, there was much discussion of the material both inside and outside of the classroom with an emphasis on

exploring the material as opposed to memorizing facts for the exams. Although the classes were also teacher-fronted in Sweden, Olivia said that students were encouraged to critically analyze the material, to ask questions and to contribute their individual points of view about the material they were studying.

Of the five subjects with any experience of higher education in their home countries, two could not recall doing any critical analysis in their classes. The three who could (Ling, Bobby and Etsuko) had only vague memories of engaging in an activity similar to the type of analysis they were asked to perform in the Listening/Speaking class during the term of the study.

Most of the subjects came to the Level IV Listening/Speaking class with little or no background in critical analysis from their first twelve years of schooling. But did any of them acquire critical analysis skills in any formal, post-secondary settings after arriving in the U.S.?

Table VII illustrates the experiences of each subject after coming to the U.S. and prior to the term of the study. As is evident from this data, most of the subjects also had little experience with such skills in these settings. Of the ten subjects, only two, Kimiaki and Bobby, claimed experiences with critical analysis in one previous term of study in this ESL program. Two other subjects, Housan and Park, said they used critical analysis skills during a previous term of study in ESL classes at other institutions. Three of the subjects, Yasu,

TABLE VII

SUBJECT'S BACKGROUND IN CRITICAL ANALYSIS: PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES IN THE U.S. PRIOR TO THE STUDY

SUBJECT	PREVIOUS TERMS OF ESL - This Program	PREVIOUS TERMS OF ESL - Other Programs	PREVIOUS TERMS OF ACADEMIC, NON-ESL CLASSES - Other Institutions
ALI	0	0	0
LING	0	0	0
YASU	0	0	2 terms (community college - 2 classes)
KIMIAKI	1 term (Level III - L/S class)	0	2 years (college in NY City - business classes)
MAYUMI	0	0	0
OLIVIA	0	0	0
HOUSAN	0	1 term (private lang. academy - discussed contemporary issues)	0
BOBBY	1 term (Level III - L/S class)	0	0
PARK	0	3 terms (at another university)	2 years (community college)
ETSUKO	0	0	0
TOTAL # SUBJECTS WITH PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE	2	2	3

Kimiaki, and Park, had also encountered critical analysis while taking regular academic classes in previous terms at other institutions of higher education.

Combining the data from Tables VI and VII, it is possible to see that there is quite a range of experience with critical analysis skills among the ten subjects. Two subjects, Ali and Mayumi, indicated they

had no previous experience with this type of analysis prior to taking the Level IV Listening/Speaking class. Two others, Ling and Etsuko, are unsure of prior experiences. Several subjects appear to have had one to two terms worth of experience (Housan, Bobby, Yasu). Others reported around three years worth of experience (Kimiaki, Park, and Olivia). This data suggests that for many of the subjects, coming into the Level IV Listening/Speaking class there have been limited opportunities within formal educational settings for them to develop the critical analysis abilities which they would be asked to use in the Level IV Listening/Speaking class setting. Aside from Olivia, the subjects with the most definite experiences in working with critical analysis have gained those experiences since coming to the U.S. This means that even for those who have had experiences, they have 1) been encountered in an American-based educational setting which may structure and approach academic material in a very different way than would be done in their home country, and 2) had these experiences so recently that they are still fairly new at applying critical analysis skills in an academic setting.

It is also possible to develop critical analysis skills in less formal settings that schools or universities. These skills can also be acquired in informal social settings if the conditions are right to encourage the formation of such skills. To investigate this possibility, the subjects were asked to talk about some of the societal norms in their countries with regard to analyzing and questioning the decisions made by those

in power (again, Olivia described both El Salvador and Sweden). As can be seen in Table VIII, for some of the subjects neither activity would be normal in their home countries, while for others both analyzing and questioning would be acceptable practices.

Interestingly, questioning of leaders is permitted in seven of the eleven cases, but actually engaging in a critical analysis occurs in only five of the cases. Kimiaki said that, although it is okay to question the leadership in Japan, he personally trusts the leaders to make good decisions and sees no reason to question or criticize them. From his perspective it is pointless for an individual to criticize those in power anyway, because the individual has no power to change the behavior of leaders. Etsuko said that that is the feeling of many Japanese, citing as evidence a relatively low voter turnout during elections. According to Etsuko, most Japanese feel rather apathetic about trying to effect change, because "We know Japanese politics are ruled by money, so lots of people give up." They suspect that there is ". . . lots of stuff going on behind the scenes that public knows nothing about." Even Park, who answered 'yes' to both items, said that questioning and analysis are done but not seriously or in great depth, and nowhere near to the degree that he has witnessed Americans engaging in these activities in his three years here in the U.S.

However, the two other Japanese subjects, Mayumi and Yasu, indicated that it is neither appropriate to question their leaders, nor is it the norm to analyze the decisions they make. Mayumi, like

TABLE VIII

CULTURAL NORMS FOR ANALYZING AND QUESTIONING THE DECISIONS MADE BY THOSE IN POWER - HOME COUNTRY

SUBJECT	DO THEY ANALYZE?	O.K. TO QUESTION?
ALI	yes	yes
LING	yes	yes
YASU	no	no
KIMIAKI	no	yes
MAYUMI	no	yes
OLIVIA - El. Salvador	yes	yes
- Sweden	yes	yes
HOUSAN	no	no
BOBBY	no	no
PARK	yes	yes
ETSUKO	no	yes
TOTALS	yes = 5	yes = 7
	no = 6	no = 4

Kimiaki, says that they trust leaders to make good decisions and are taught that leadership should not be criticized. Yasu had several comments, made all the more interesting knowing that he had personally rebelled against some of his society's norms while in high school. According to Yasu, in Japan people ". . . like to walk together." They like to have a good leader to follow, they do not like to stand out as individuals and find it easiest to go along with the crowd. It is hard to go against the grain in Japan, and disagreement must be expressed with subtlety. Yasu stated that "Japanese don't say 'no' really"; instead they use indirect approaches in their interactions rather than an open display of opposition. Perhaps it is

not surprising that Yasu has found it hard to find peers who want to question or analyze the leaders' decisions. In high school he had a few friends who would discuss issues with him, but most of his peers were too busy prepping for the university entrance exams. Once enrolled in university, they were too busy having fun to want to talk about serious things; in Japan, Yasu said, the first twelve years of school are intense but the university years that follow are much easier by comparison, referred to as 'a vacation' by many. Completing a university education, however, guarantees the individual to a good, secure job. As Yasu's friends have graduated from university, they've become concerned with their work and families. They feel little inclination to rock the boat, either because they see no reason to question a social structure in which they are the beneficiaries, or because they feel little power to change social structures, so feel no reason to openly analyze and question the decisions their leaders make.

In Saudi Arabia, people are also reluctant to engage in these activities. Housan said that it is okay to talk about their leaders in a very general way (e.g. you could mention that you'd seen a person somewhere or that they gave your family a particular gift), but not in an openly critical way. In his country, the people are careful about discussing political issues in general---they learn that they should 'only go so far' in presenting opposing points of view. It would be unthinkable to voice one's criticism to the point that you moved

others to openly protest or to rebel against a leader or his policies. This adds perspective for understanding Housan's remark about teachers being viewed as uncontested authorities in his culture; school lays the preparatory ground for later behavior as adults in his society.

In some ways, the situation is similar in Indonesia. Bobby said that, on an official level, there is freedom of speech in his country, but in reality that is not the case. "You can say it openly but not too loud!" Individuals do not criticize their government, nor do the newspapers. If a person chooses to criticize, caution is exercised as to where and when such criticism would be made---and never with a stranger. Of the U.S., Bobby said, "It's freedom country!", and that he is sometimes surprised by how openly-critical we are of political leaders here. He finds it especially interesting that personal behaviors are brought out in the open, e.g. the allegations of sexual harassment leveled against a U.S. senator and the Whitewater investigation's delving into the President's personal finances.

On the other hand, three subjects (Ali, Ling, Olivia) believe that it is quite common for individuals to both analyze and question the decisions of leaders in their countries. Ali said that in Yemen, every day after lunch, people meet to socialize, in same-gender/same-age groups, and this provides the setting where political issues are most often discussed. In Taiwan, the people can discuss politics much more openly, compared to previous periods in that country's history.

In addition, Ling said, they can legally demonstrate in public, where in the past that would have been forbidden. Olivia described a similar openness in both Sweden and El Salvador. In the past, in El Salvador, it would have been extremely risky to question the leadership, but she believes that as a result of their recent civil war the situation has changed substantially.

Thus far, the data presented has been concerned with possible formal and informal environments in which the subjects may have come into contact with critical analysis activities. Data from the study was also collected for indicators of each subject's interest in using critical analysis skills. While answering the questions about societal norms for questioning and analyzing political leaders, some subjects also indicated their individual choices in this respect. For example, Yasu described his resistance to Japanese norms by actively analyzing political and social issues during high school. Kimiaki and Mayumi indicated that as individuals they chose to subscribe to the societal norm of not questioning political leadership when they felt to do otherwise was either pointless or unnecessary.

During the interviews, the subjects were also asked to respond to the questions, "Do you think newspapers/television news, news reports on radio generally tell us the truth?" as a possible way to explore their personal inclinations toward analysis. The media sources in question are ones that were assumed to be easily available to the subjects in their home countries and in the U.S., and a likely

source of information about local, national and world events---including the kinds of issues students might encounter in an ESL classroom focusing on global issues. As was previously seen in the data regarding sources of information, these media sources---in particular, newspapers and television news---have served as important sources for nearly all of the subjects. While the choice of the term 'truth' may strike some as rather loaded, use of this term is considered appropriate in this area of questioning. The intent was to find out if the subjects actively engage in any sort of critical analysis on their own when they use these sources. It was felt that using the term 'truth' would encourage an immediate reaction from the subjects, as most people have definite ideas about the broad concept of what is 'real' or 'true.'

The resulting data is presented in Table IX. As with some previous questionnaire items, the original planned choices of 'yes' and 'no' proved to be inadequate once the interviews were underway because for many subjects a simple 'yes' or 'no' did not accurately reflect their perceptions. Instead, five categories were created:

1) no
2) no opinion either way
3) yes - sometimes
4) yes - mostly
5) yes

For all media forms each subject answered in the same way. Two subjects, Yasu and Bobby, felt that journalists don't report the truth in their countries. Bobby suggested that the media is restricted from

TABLE IX

DOES THE SUBJECT SEE VARIOUS MEDIA AS A SOURCE OF 'TRUTH'?

SUBJECT	NEWSPAPERS	T.V. NEWS	RADIO NEWS
ALI	no opinion	no opinion	no opinion
LING	y - sometimes	y - sometimes	y - sometimes
YASU	no	no	no
KIMIAKI	y - sometimes	y - sometimes	y - sometimes
MAYUMI	y - sometimes	y - sometimes	y - sometimes
OLIVIA - El Salv. - Sweden	y - sometimes y - sometimes	y - sometimes y - sometimes	y - sometimes y - sometimes
HOUSAN	y - mostly	y - mostly	y - mostly
BOBBY	no	no	no
PARK	y - mostly	y - mostly	y - mostly
ETSUKO	y - sometimes	y - sometimes	y - sometimes
TOTALS	no opinion - 1 no - 2 y-sometimes - 5 y - mostly - 2 yes - 0	no opinion - 1 no - 2 y - sometimes - 5 y - mostly - 2 yes - 0	no opinion - 1 no - 2 y - sometimes - 5 y - mostly - 2 yes - 0

telling the truth, because if the public knew the truth about many issues there would be massive uproar. He did not say who exactly was responsible for imposing these restrictions on the media. Yasu believes that, in general, newspapers can't tell us the truth because they are businesses. They rely on financial support from advertisers; therefore, they are prevented from reporting anything that would threaten the well-being of those advertisers, which could in turn

result in diminished financial support for the newspaper. He was also critical of the fact that in Japanese newspapers the individual journalist's name does not appear adjacent to the article, so readers do not know the individual responsible for the piece. In addition, he cited instances where the Japanese public has been totally reliant on non-Japanese reporters for information about a world event. During the Gulf War, Japan had no reporters on location to give first-hand accounts of the events; instead they relied on news bought from an American network (CNN), so learned about a major event solely from an American perspective. However, Yasu also believes that American newspapers are 'more truthful' that their Japanese counterparts.

Ali had no particular feeling one way or the other about truth versus fabrication in the media. "I don't care what's in the newspapers. I just read them and say, 'Do whatever they want'."

Five of the subjects indicated that at least some of the time they believe journalists report the truth, and two believe most of what is reported to be true. Kimiaki and Housan think that the facts are sometimes distorted to make the stories more interesting and attractive to the audience. Ling said that in the past the media in Taiwan was strictly controlled by the government to make the government look good, but now there are alternative newspapers and they can openly judge the political leaders. Both Olivia and Mayumi talked about using personal knowledge to assess the degree of truth presented in media stories. When the media is reporting on an issue

about which Mayumi is already informed, she assesses the accuracy based on what she already knows. If they report on something she knows nothing about, she accepts it as the truth until she learns other information to refute what the media has reported. Olivia says, "I'm very critical. We should be more critical. . . " of what we read and hear. Living in Sweden, she relies on information from Yugoslavian friends to better assess the validity of what is reported by the news media. And Olivia raises an important point: Even when journalists set out to honestly and objectively report 'the facts', they are always seeing and reporting the situation based on their own cultural and individual perspective; in essence, the truth is relevant.

Finally, the subjects were asked a few questions regarding global issue-related activist groups. As can be seen in Table X, six of the ten subjects had heard of the international organizations, Greenpeace and Amnesty International. One subject, Etsuko, had belonged to Amnesty International in her home country, and recently joined a chapter here in the U.S. Five of the ten subjects also mentioned awareness of other activist groups in their home countries, of either a local or national level, but none had belonged to any such group. Two of the subjects explained their aversion to joining such groups. Ali said that

> . . . even if I believe in something and want to change it, and there is a group that wants to change it, I won't join that. . . Maybe if I found it in front of me or something like that, I would try to help around change by myself. . . I like to be free. . . I don't want to be chained to them.

TABLE X

AWARENESS OF/MEMBERSHIP IN GLOBAL ISSUES-RELATED ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

SUBJECT	FAMILIAR WITH GREEN-PEACE?	FAMILIAR WITH AMNESTY INTERN'L	MEMBER OF GREEN-PEACE?	MEMBER OF AMNESTY INTERN'L	OTHER ACTIVIST ORGANIZ-ATIONS IN HOME COUNTRY	MEMBER OF ACTIVIST ORGANIZ-ATION IN HOME COUNTRY
ALI	no	no	no	no	yes	no
LING	no	no	no	no	yes	no
YASU	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no
KIMIAKI	no	no	no	no	yes	no
MAYUMI	yes	yes	no	no	no answer	no answer
OLIVIA	yes	yes	no	no	no answer	no answer
HOUSAN	yes	yes	no	no	no answer	no answer
BOBBY	yes	yes	no	no	no answer	no answer
PARK	no	no	no	no	yes	no
ETSUKO	yes	yes	no	yes (2 yrs in Japan; recently joined U.S. chapter)	no answer	no answer
TOTALS	Y = 6 N = 4	Y = 6 N = 4	N = 10	Y = 1 N = 9	Y = 5 no an. - 5	N = 5 no an.-5

Yasu felt dubious about joining groups because of the possible hypocrisy of some group leaders; they claim to subscribe to certain benevolent philosophies but when one looks at aspects of their private lives, their public words don't always match their private actions.

Ling said that there are many local and national activist groups in Taiwan, joined by people of many ages. In fact, the average age of

members of the women's movement in Taiwan is around forty. Ling suggested a possible explanation:

> . . . [R]ight now Taiwan still has the . . . examination for the enter to the, uh. . . graduate. . . like college and university. So people, students, did not have much time to pay attention this kind of issue. After they graduate and work so they pay a lot of attention this issue.

Ling added that for women in Taiwan the opportunities to work and to be financially self-supporting have increased substantially in her lifetime.

III. Over the course of the term, what kinds of changes did the students experience in relation to using global issues in the ESL classroom?

The first section of the presentation of the data was focused on the types of environments in which the subjects came into contact with global issues while in their home countries. The second section examined formal and informal types of critical analysis activities the subjects engaged in prior to the term of this study. This third section is concerned with the experiences of the subjects while enrolled in an ESL classroom in which global issues served as the content material for a variety of listening and speaking activities, and in which critical analysis skills were called upon before, after, and during those activities. More specifically, this section was concerned with discovering whether the subjects experienced changes in comfort and interest levels in 1) using global issues in the classroom, and 2) using a critical analysis approach to discussing the issues.

The first areas of inquiry for this section considered some of the same aspects covered in the exploration of contacts in the home country---usage of media sources/frequency of usage, and people with whom the subject discusses the issues---but this time focusing on behavior while here in the U.S. Most of this information came from responses supplied by the subjects during the interview process.

Table XI illustrates the media sources currently used by each subject while living in the U.S., including all five of the sources used in the home country as listed in Table I. A related, sixth source---reading a newspaper in the subject's first language---was also added to this list. The intent was to learn to what degree, if any, a subject sought to maintain awareness of the issues by consulting a media source tied to the home culture and the subject's first language.

For each of the sources the data relative to contact in the home country is also shown adjacent to data for contact in the U.S., for ease of comparison. Symbols in the U.S. columns are used to indicate changes in frequency of usage between the home country and the U.S.

A minus sign, '-', indicates a decrease; a plus sign, '+', indicates an increase; an equals sign, '=', indicates no change. When responding to these questions, the subjects were told to report only behavior that they engaged in of their own free will, ie.e. if they were accessing a media source in relation to a classroom activity they should *not* respond with a positive answer.

As can be seen from the total figures at the bottoms of the

TABLE XI

MEDIA SOURCES - FREQUENCY OF USAGE: COMPARISON OF HOME COUNTRY AND THE U.S.

SUBJECT	READ NEWS-PAPER			WATCH T.V. NEWS		WATCH T.V. SHOWS ABOUT GLOBAL ISSUES		LISTEN TO RADIO NEWS		LISTEN TO RADIO SHOWS ABOUT GLOBAL ISSUES	
	Home	U.S. Eng.	U.S. L1	Home	US	Home	US	Home	US	Home	US
ALI	occ.	1x wk.	no	2x wk.	3x wk.	no	no	occ	no	no	no
		+	-		+		=		-		
LING	daily	3x wk.	occ.	daily	daily	2x wk.	occ	occ	no	no	no
		-	-		=		-		-		
YASU	daily	daily	no	no	daily	occ.	1x wk.	no	no	no	no
		=	-		+		+		=		
KIMIAKI	2x. wk.	occ.	occ.	daily	2-3x wk.	daily	no	no	no	no	no
		-	-		-		-		=		
MAYUMI	daily	occ.	occ.	2-3x wk.	1x wk.	no	no	no	no	no	no
		-	-		-		=		=		
OLIVIA	daily	daily	no	daily	daily	2x wk.	no	dialy	no	no	no
		=	-		=		-		-		
HOUSAN	daily	1x wk.	daily	occ.	daily	no	no	no	no	no	no
		-	=		+		=		=		
BOBBY	daily	daily	no	no	1x wk.	no	no	no	no	no	no
		=	-		+		=		=		
PARK	daily	occ.	2-3x wk.	daily	2-3x wk.	occ.	no	no	daily	no	no
		-	-		-		-		+		
ETSUKO	daily	daily	occ.	no	daily	occ.	no	no	no	no	no
		=	-		+		-		=		
TOTALS											
no	0	0-	4+	3	0-	4	8+	7	9+	10	10
occ.	1	3+	4+	1	0-	3	1-	2	0-		
1x wk.	0	2+	0-	0	2+	0	1+	0	0-		
2-3x wk.	1	1=	1=	2	3+	2	0-	0	0-		
daily	8	4-	1-	4	5+	1	0-	1	1=		

columns, of the five sources consulted in the U.S., two sources are used to some degree by all subjects: reading the newspaper (equal to the total subjects in the home country) and watching television news (up from seven in the home countries, to ten in the U.S.). Only two subjects reported watching television programs about global issues, down from six subjects in the home country. For two sources the usage is the same in both the home countries and the U.S.: one subject using radio news as a source, no subjects listening to radio programs about global issues.

Based on the above figures one might conclude that the overall patterns of usage of the various media sources is quite similar between the home countries and the U.S. However, when we consider the frequency with which each source is used by the group as a whole here in the U.S., the picture is somewhat different than in the home country. While in the U.S. the subjects watch television news more frequently than they read the newspaper; eight of the subjects use television news as a source ranging from 2-3 times a week up to a daily basis, while five use reading a newspaper with that frequency. In their home countries, nine read the newspaper with that frequency, while six watched television news. In fact, all the subjects report watching television news at least once a week in the U.S., while only six watch it that frequently in their home countries. A possible explanation is that reading in a second language is more difficult for the subjects than is listening/speaking, therefore a

source which draws upon listening/speaking skills may be a preferred method for getting the information. Also, a source like television may provide more visual clues to help in understanding the spoken words---clues that would be less present in a newspaper and totally absent in a strictly auditory form like radio broadcasts. One subject mentioned that here in the U.S. she'd actually arranged for a close-captioned television so that she could both hear what was said and follow along with the written transcription!

While the group totals provide some interesting data, it is important to look more closely at the data by individual subject to see how each subject's behavior is similar to or different from his/her behavior in the home country. In doing this part of the analysis, choices were made as to which exact changes in frequency should be included. Rather than include all changes as bearing equal weight, it was decided to treat an increase or decrease between the options 'never' (which appears in Table XI as 'no') and 'occasionally' as relatively minor, and therefore not necessary to count when considering the overall changes in a subject's behavior. This was done because the category 'occasionally' has been used to include any irregular usage ranging from less than once a week up to once a year. By comparison, the other three options ('one time per week', 'two to three times per week', 'daily') each reflected a much smaller and more defined range, and were considered to have equal weight. Any change involving any of these three options was therefore deemed

countable.

In looking at the increases and decreases it was further decided to consider these shifts differently according to whether the change was from one category to the next, or represented a jump over one or more categories. Movement between adjacent categories was considered to be a *minor* change, and less significant than a jump over one category (e.g. from 'occasionally' to 'once a week'). Likewise, a jump over one category would be considered *moderate* in comparison to a jump over two categories (e.g. 'occasionally' to 'daily'); a jump over two categories was considered a *major* change. A jump over three categories (e.g. from 'daily' to 'never') was considered to be a *significant* change. Using these criteria, the behavior of each subject was analyzed for possible changes between behavior in their home country and behavior in the U.S. These changes are listed below:

1) Ali: minor increases in reading the newspaper and watching television news.
2) Ling: minor decreases in reading the newspaper and moderate decrease in watching television programs about global issues.
3) Yasu: significant increase in watching television news, from never in Japan to daily in the U.S.
4) Kimiaki: a moderate decrease in reading the newspaper, a minor decrease in watching television news, a significant decrease in watching television programs about global issues.
5) Mayumi: major decrease in reading the newspaper, minor decrease in watching television news.
6) Olivia: major decrease in watching television programs about global issues and significant decrease in listening to radio news.
7) Housan: would be considered a moderate decrease in

reading a newspaper if only behavior related to an American publication is considered. However, no change is registered when it is noted that he also reads a newspaper in his first language on a daily basis here (just as he did in Saudi Arabia). Major increase in watching television news.

8) Bobby: moderate increase in watching television news.
9) Park: would be considered a major decrease in reading a newspaper if only accessing an American publication were considered. However, it is recorded as a minor change through the inclusion of his reading a newspaper in his first language two to three times per week here, compared to daily in his home country. Minor decrease in watching television news, significant increase in listening to radio news.
10) Etsuko: significant increase in watching television news.

From this data it is apparent that the subjects fall into three categories. Some subjects show overall decreases in contact with sources (Ling, Kimiaki, Mayumi, Olivia). Some show overall increases in contact with sources (Ali, Yasu, Housan, Bobby, Etsuko). One subject, Park, has both a minor decrease with one source and minor increase with another source; if one is allowed to cancel out the other, then Park would have no change in frequency of contact overall.

The precise meaning of these findings is not so easy to identify. It is possible than an overall increase or overall decrease is related to change in a subject's level of interest in contact with the various media, and by inference, interest in remaining informed about newsworthy events including global issues. Olivia, who showed a major decrease in viewing television programs about global issues, mentioned her sense that American television tends to present all

information from basically an American viewpoint, which she finds offputting. In Sweden, she enjoyed watching a weekly hour-long program which presented in-depth reports focusing on a different country/region of a country each time.

It is also possible that changes may reflect something more than/other than simply interest levels. Those who show an increase in contact may have been made to use the media forms as a source of information for activities in previous classes; having formed the habit while fulfilling other classroom assignments, they may have continued with the new behavior of their own accord. Similarly, subjects showing an increased usage of a media form for news purposes may initially have been attracted to that media form for other reasons. Having established a habit of using it for one purpose, they may find that their usage expands to other areas. For example, several subjects who registered an increase in watching television news also mentioned that they like to watch television as a form of entertainment; they consider the entertainment-oriented programs to be a great source of information about American culture. Perhaps it is not a far stretch for them to add in television news as a source of social and political information, and also as a source of information about American culture too.

It is also possible that those who show decreased contacts have not reduced their contacts due to lack of interest, but for other

reasons. As full-time students they may feel they have little free-time as it is, and prefer to give it to less serious activities. Or they may be encountering social and political issues in their other classes, and find their interest level is satisfied through contact with the issues in other classes such that they are not drawn to making contact on their own time.

In another attempt to gauge interest levels, the subjects were asked to reflect on some aspects of their behavior in relation to their discussion of global issues. They were to consider differences between the amount that they discussed global issues while in their home countries, compared to the amount they discuss the issues while here in the U.S. (see Appendix F for the data worksheet). This is slightly different from the earlier question in Section I, regarding the comparison of gender-based norms for discussion of the issues. Where the previous questions focused on the subjects' perceptions of societal norms for men and women to discuss the issues, this question was concerned with differences in their own personal behaviors. The subjects were asked to identify the people with whom they discuss the issues, based on four categories:

1) people from their own country
2) other international students from other countries
3) American students
4) Americans other than students

Two subjects see no difference in the amount they discuss the

issues here and in their home countries, while two others are unsure. It is interesting that two female subjects believe they do *less* discussion here in the U.S. than in their home countries. In their cases, it may be important to note that these questions about individual behavior were asked during the first interviews, and therefore quite early in the term. At that point, both of these subjects had been in the U.S. for little more than a month, so were probably still adjusting to a different culture and language. This may have resulted in a reluctance to talk, and/or they may simply not have had the frequency of opportunities yet for discussion of the issues. Seven of the other eight subjects had been here for at least five months; several had been here for two years or longer. Of those seven, four reported speaking more here than at home.

Most of the discussions that the subjects participate in here in the U.S. occur with either fellow members of the subjects' own countries or with other international students, as opposed to American students or Americans in general. By discussing issues with fellow country persons they are able to communicate with people with whom they share a common linguistic and cultural background---people to whom they can most strongly relate as foreigners living in the U.S. With other international students they share that same bond as foreigners in the U.S. but lack the bond of a common culture and first language. With American students they might at least share the experience of being students, but most of

them report a lack of discussion of the issues with American students. This may be easy to understand. For eight of the ten subjects this was their first term at this university, and only one subject was taking any classes outside the ESL program. This meant that the vast majority of their time in class---a place where students traditionally form friendships with one another that can extend outside the classroom---was spent in contact with non-American students.

In Section I, in the discussion of the settings in which the subjects had contact with global issues in their home countries, it was noted that the most common settings in which the issues were discussed were the more private, intimate ones. The environments ranged from the individual activity of reading, to a shared activity with family and friends, then to the least common---and least private ---setting, the classroom. In a sense it reflects a shift from the most familiar to the least intimately-known and least controllable environment. While in the U.S. the subjects lack most of the home country settings---family, friends, and an educational system with which they have a long history---but perhaps they begin to construct a new range of most-familiar-to-least-familiar settings from those available to them in the U.S.

The focus of the study then shifted to an investigation of the subjects' comfort levels and interest in working with global issues while enrolled in the Level IV Listening/Speaking class. During the

second interviews the subjects provided information about changes in comfort level over the course of the term. Using a five-point scale ranging from 'comfortable' to 'uncomfortable', the subjects were asked to identify where on the scale they would place themselves at the start of the term, and where they would place themselves having completed the term. It was extremely important that the subjects understand that the response should reflect how they felt about the activity of *discussing global issues* in the language learning classroom, i.e. not about discussion in general. As they made their selections, the interviewer asked them to explain why they had made their choices; if it became apparent that they had interpreted the question too broadly, the interviewer then clarified the question and asked if they needed to change their rating.

As can be seen in Table XII, there was a dramatic shift from the beginning to the end of the term for the group as a whole. At the start of the term, four subjects were comfortable, one was left of center, and one was at the center, while four subjects were not comfortable with the issues. By the end of the term, seven subjects were comfortable and three were left of center (so leaning more toward being comfortable).

Individually, three subjects (Ali, Yasu, Olivia) were comfortable from beginning to end. Two subjects made slight shifts toward increased comfort, Etsuko from the center moving one step closer toward 'comfortable', and Park moving one step from left of center to

TABLE XII

COMFORT WITH SUBJECT MATTER:
COMPARISON OF START OF TERM TO END OF TERM.

SUBJECT	COMFORT-ABLE			UNCOMFORT-ABLE
ALI - Start End	S E			
LING - Start End		E		S
YASU - Start End	S E			
KIMIAKI - Start End		E		S
MAYUMI - Start End	E			S
OLIVIA - Start End	S E			
HOUSAN - Start End	E			S
BOBBY - Start End	S	E		
PARK - Start End	E	S		
ETSUKO - Start End		E	S	
TOTALS	S = 4 E = 6	S = 1 E = 4	S = 1 E = 0	S = 4 E = 0

'comfortable'. Four subjects made dramatic moves from being 'uncomfortable' at the start of term to either 'comfortable' by the end (Mayumi and Housan), or to one step left of center (Ling and Kimiaki). One subject, Bobby, actually became less comfortable during the term, stepping from 'comfortable' at the start, to one step

closer to the center by the end.

The comments supplied by the subjects during their interviews provided much insight into the factors that contributed to their comfort levels. At the start of the term Ling felt that because these types of issues were 'serious' they would call for expression of complex ideas. While it would not be linguistically difficult for her to express such ideas in her first language, she was concerned about her abilities to work with difficult material using English. Having only been in the U.S. for a short time when the term started, she had had little opportunity (compared to the others in the class) to make an accurate assessment of her English listening and speaking skills. By the end of the term, by taking a fairly active role in the discussions, she had overcome her initial concerns about her abilities, and so felt more comfortable about discussing the issues by the end of the term. A remark made in one of her journals suggests she enjoys overcoming such challenges. She explains that the group presentation was her first experience ever at speaking in front of a class, and was very hard to do:

> . . . I'm very shy and also I'm afraid to speak in front of the many people. It it will let me feel nervous. But last time, when I give my presentation even though I feel very, very nervous but finally I done it! I feel I have already push myself into the other step.

For Kimiaki, the biggest difficulty was overcoming a sense of futility in discussing the issues:

> I didn't used to speak in the group discussion about

> global issues. And I thought. . . each of the student have different opinion and talk about one general issue. And my opinion is general issue, cannot change anything. So even if I say something, nothing change.

This is perhaps reflective of earlier remarks he made when explaining that many Japanese feel it is pointless to question the decisions made by leaders because they feel questions and analysis will not bring about change. However, he found personal incentives to increase his participation as the term progressed and by doing so also found his comfort level was increased:

> . . . the beginning of this term, I didn't do well on my group discussions. And if I continue to don't give my my attention, my grade gonna be bad [laughs]. So I try to give my opinion in the group discussion. Then get, step-by-step, getting better. . . And I can say my opinion clearly.

For Mayumi, the difficulties also arose from the necessity to give one's opinion about the issues, without always having much information upon which to base her ideas and opinions:

> The first time was very nervous to talk about my opinion, because I was not used to talk about my opinion. So first I want to listen somebody say something. Then I will say 'Okay, I agree with you.' I couldn't say it my opinion, real opinion, my real opinion. . . I was scared to listen my against opinion, somebody against me. I could ---I was not sure I can support my idea.

Park sometimes found this a problem, too. With some issues he lacked background knowledge to add to whatever he'd learned from the film or article, and this made him a bit uncomfortable about talking about a subject about which he knew very little:

> Sometimes depend on the topic. Some of the topic, I have already know or experienced. But some of them I

> have no idea, even though I have heard the topic. So that ---if I don't have any background or experience, ideas, I'm afraid what I'm gonna say, just according to the, uh, reading. That's it. I don't have any other knowledges.

Housan talked about the difficulty in working with subject matter which brought out the students' differences in opinion. At first it was hard for Housan to determine how to work with these conflicts, due to concerns over hurting the feelings of other group members, or making them angry, by stating an opposite point of view. In his culture, one is taught to be considerate of others, polite with strangers, and therefore careful about how opinions are expressed to a stranger. Housan found that expressing differences of opinion became easier for the members of his group as the term progressed, and they became more familiar with one another.

The effect that such reluctance can have on the sharing of information was made evident during the first group discussion. While discussing the film 'Baby Boom', it was evident that Housan was not alone in his concerns about voicing his opinions. The researcher was directly observing the group in which both Housan and Yasu were members, when one of the females in the group made a comment about gender-based norms. She said that it was more natural for women to take on the active parenting role because women are much more sensitive than men. No one in the group disputed her claim until the facilitator stopped the discussion and overtly asked the males in the group what they thought about the remark. First the

facilitator offered her own response, that if she were a male sitting in the group she would have found it difficult to not react to the statement. At this, the group laughed, the males nodded their heads, then they began to counter the claim that men are less sensitive than women---but they did so only *after* the facilitator had invited them to respond, and they admitted that they were initially uncertain about voicing a difference of opinion to such a strong statement. If the facilitator had not 'given permission', so to speak, it is questionable that they would have said anything at all despite having definite reactions.

Bobby, the only subject who became less comfortable about discussing the issues during the term, had a related comment about handling differences of opinion. In the beginning he had an open attitude toward the discussions. He expected people to have different opinions about the issues but did not anticipate that that would create a problem. But by the end of the term this had become confusing. He wasn't sure how to constructively handle the diverse viewpoints, and felt that rather than the discussions serving as a way to share different opinions, they sometimes resulted in useless arguing:

> I already think that every person have different idea. So sometimes if I argue, just make me. . . Why should I argue? This doesn't make sense, I mean, you think this way and think this way. I can not change your mind, your thinking, so I just argue because I want to make point.

Analyzing their comfort levels with discussing global issues was

TABLE XIII

REACTIONS TO SUBJECT MATTER: COMPARISON OF START OF TERM TO END OF TERM

SUBJECT	START OF TERM			END OF TERM			PREFER USE OF CONTENT OTHER THAN GLOBAL ISSUES?
	Favor-able	No Opinion	Unfavor-able	Favor-able	No Opinion	Unfavor-able	
ALI		X		X			no
LING			X			X	yes
YASU	X			X			no
KIMIAKI		X				X	yes
MAYUMI		X		X			no
OLIVIA	X			X			no
HOUSAN	X			X			no
BOBBY		X		X			no
PARK	X			X			no
ETSUKO		X		X			no
TOTALS	4	5	1	8	0	2	y=2 n=8

only one part of understanding their overall reactions to the material. To expand on this, the subjects were also asked some questions about the subject matter in general (Table XIII). First they were asked to recall their initial reactions at the start of the term, when the instructor told them that the class would focus on global issues as the content. Four of the five had favorable responses, five had no opinion either way, and one had an unfavorable reaction. Two of the five with no reaction cited a willingness to go along with whatever the teacher

had planned, because as students they felt they had no choice. The one unfavorable reaction came from Ling, who, as mentioned before, was concerned about her linguistic abilities to handle the complexity of the material.

By the end of the term eight subjects had favorable reactions and two had unfavorable reactions to the material. Those with favorable reactions approved of the material for a variety of reasons. Two (Ali and Etsuko) thought that by working with global issues students have an opportunity to have their own horizons expanded, which they saw as a desirable outcome. For Ali, the unit on gender-based behaviors was particularly interesting, because it was the first time he'd ever really thought about women's rights; in his experience, this is not an issue that gets discussed in his country. Coming up against new ideas did not strike him as a threatening experience. On the contrary, he saw it as a chance to learn information that he might apply outside the classroom, in everyday life. When asked if he though this would have an impact on him when he returns to Yemen, he responded, "Yah. . . 'cause I'll be aware of things they don't know. . . And I'll be having informations about things more than they do." Olivia also thought discussion of the issues in the classroom was good practice for future interactions with Americans, knowing that there is a tendency to talk about these kinds of issues here in the U.S.

Many thought that global issues provided a material that stimulated discussion in a way that less-controversial material might

not do. Yasu realized that some other material might be more comfortable for certain students but would bore others:

> If we talk about something like very, very tiny thing, like Japanese [unintelligible], maybe Japanese people is very comfortable. . . or Indonesian people is very comfortable. But other people is very, very boring. But global issue is kind of topic to everybody. . . acid raining, deforestation, the pollutions---these topics is, you know, everyone has interest in, right? So global issue is very, very nice.

Olivia suspected that working with global issues in the ESL classroom might be helpful preparation for students who plan to go on to do regular academic classes. In fact, Park was able to confirm this based on educational experiences here in the U.S. prior to this class. He had first participated in three terms of ESL classes at another university before going on to do two years of regular academic classes at a community college. In the earlier ESL classes he had also studied some global issues, and later found that the information he gained in the ESL classes provided good background knowledge when he started taking regular academic classes. He added that, although it was sometimes awkward to discuss the issues, he feels it was worth enduring the discomfort for the value of the end result. He came to the U.S. knowing he would encounter new ideas and new ways of doing things; by keeping an open mind he has found that living and studying here gets easier over time.

The two subjects ending the term with a less favorable reaction to the material had some thoughts about what type of content material they might have preferred using in the classroom. Although Ling

admitted that she found the material interesting, she still thought it was too serious for an ESL classroom. Being new to the U.S. she really wanted to learn about general aspects of American culture, and would have preferred that as the subject matter of the class. Kimiaki felt a more factual and less emotive type of material might be better than global issues. During the previous term, Kimiaki had completed the Level III Listening/Speaking class in this same program, which focused on American culture, including comparisons between American culture and the cultures of the ESL students. He found that much easier to discuss because the material was less about personal opinions and reactions, and more about 'facts.'

In addition to the information provided in the individual interviews, the subjects were also asked to give some reactions to the specific global issues they studied in the class, as well as the issues they chose to present in their group projects and individual speeches. These data (presented in Table XIV) add support to the claim that their overall response to the subject matter of the class was favorable. When asked if they enjoyed studying the three issues---gender-based roles, gangs, and poverty---the majority of subjects responded favorably. They also reported that they enjoyed doing both of the public speaking assignments (Table XV). In two cases (Ling and Mayumi) the subjects stated that at the beginning of the group presentation project, their prime motivation was to fulfill the assignment, but in the process of gathering information for the

TABLE XIV

JOURNALS 1, 3 AND 4 - REACTIONS TO THE THREE GLOBAL ISSUES

	QUESTION 1: DID YOU ENJOY STUDYING THIS ISSUE?								
	Gender-Based Issues			Gangs			Poverty		
SUBJECT	Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No	No Answer
ALI	X			X			X		
LING	X			X			X		
YASU	X			X			X		
KIMIAKI		X		X				X	
MAYUMI	X			X				X	
OLIVIA	X			X			X		
HOUSAN	X					X			X
BOBBY	X			X					X
PARK	X			X			X		
ETSUKO	X				X		X		
TOTALS	9	1		8	1	1	6	2	2

presentation they actually became personally-interested in the topic. Kimiaki had a similar experience with his individual speech.

The subjects were asked to elaborate on why they enjoyed the topics, and, in a similar question, to describe what they found most interesting about studying each of the issues. A number of common responses were given. For many subjects a topic was interesting if it was something that seemed relevant to them. This could be a problem that they knew existed in their own culture, so they had

TABLE XV

JOURNALS 2 AND 5 - RESPONSES TO DOING GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL SPEECHES

	GROUP PRESENTATION/INDIVIDUAL SPEECHES					
	Group Presentation: Enjoy doing the assignment?			Choosing Group/Indiv. Speech Topics:		
Subject	Yes	No	No Answer	Personally-Interested	Fulfilling Assignment	No Answer
ALI	X			G,I		
LING	X			I	G ←— G	
YASU	X			G,I		
KIMIAKI	X			G	I ←— I	
MAYUMI	X			I	G ←— G	
OLIVIA	X			I		G
HOUSAN		X		G		I*
BOBBY	X			G,I		
PARK	X			G,I		
ETSUKO	X			G,I		
TOTALS	9	1		G=7 I=8	G=2 I=1	G=1 I=1

* subject did not submit final journal entry for this component

first-hand knowledge of the issue. Or they felt that even if the issue was not prevalent in their own culture, it was useful for them to be aware of the problem as students living here in the U.S. where they could see that the problem truly did exist. In fact, in many cases the subjects mentioned that it was interesting to learn more about American culture by studying these issues, which indicated that for many of the subjects these issues may strike them more as *American*

issues than *global* issues!

Many subjects stated that they enjoyed learning more details about issues for which they had a general, but limited knowledge coming into the class. A frequent response was that the discussions, in particular, provided an opportunity to learn about the issues in relation to one another's cultures; these shared ideas and both eye-opening and surprising. Subjects also noted that it was encouraging to see that the issues also have possible solutions, and that that helped to balance out the serious nature of the topics.

During the second interviews the subjects were asked which of the issues presented in class---through either the films, reading selections, guest speakers, group presentations or individual speeches---they found most interesting. The issue most frequently mentioned was gangs (six times), followed by gender-based issues (three times), capital punishment (twice), then drugs, racism, and AIDS education for teenagers (each once). Two subjects mentioned that at the start of the term they were not interested in studying about gangs. They were concerned about having to watch a film about a violent topic, and a world that is very foreign to their experiences. However, their interest grew in the process of watching and discussing the film, aided in part by the film's positive ending.

In most cases the subjects also felt that the three unit topics and the topics of their presentations were important issues, for many of the same reasons that they found them enjoyable to study (Tables

TABLE XVI

JOURNALS 1, 3 AND 4 - SUBJECTS' OPINIONS: IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUES PRESENTED IN THE THREE GLOBAL ISSUE UNITS

	QUESTION 1: DO YOU THINK IT IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?								
	Gender-Based Issues			Gangs			Poverty		
SUBJECT	Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No	No Answer
ALI	X			X			X		
LING	X			X					X
YASU	X					X	X		
KIMIAKI		X				X		X	
MAYUMI	X					X	X		
OLIVIA			X	X					X
HOUSAN	X			X					X*
BOBBY	X			X					X
PARK	X			X			X		
ETSUKO	X			X					X
TOTALS	8	1	1	7		3	4	1	5

*subject did not submit journal for this unit

XVI & XVII). Only one subject consistently said he did not feel the issues were important, Kimiaki. The main reason for this was that he believes most of the issues are 'not my business,' i.e., they aren't problems for him on a *personal* level so he feels they do not concern him at all. Even though he chose 'Homeless Vietnam Veterans in America' as the topic of his individual presentation, and said that he became more interested in the topic by researching it for his presen-

TABLE XVII

JOURNALS 2 AND 5 - SUBJECT'S OPINION: IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUES PRESENTED IN HIS/HER GROUP PRESENTATION AND INDIVIDUAL SPEECH

	IS THE TOPIC OF YOUR PRESENTATION AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?					
	GROUP PRESENTATION			INDIVIDUAL SPEECH		
SUBJECT	Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No	No Answer
ALI	X					X
LING	X			X		
YASU	X			X		
KIMIAKI		X			X	
MAYUMI	X			X		
OLIVIA	X			X		
HOUSAN	X			X		
BOBBY	X			X		
PARK	X			X		
ETSUKO	X			X		
TOTALS	9	1		8	1	1

tation, he felt personally unchanged after having done the project because he is not homeless. For Kimiaki, the issue would only have importance if he is directly connected to it. The possibility of an *indirect* impact does not seem to be apparent to him, e.g. that on a human level an individual may feel that poverty of any individual is unjust and the have's should look out for the have-not's, or that the well-being of the society as a whole may be affected by segments of the society that are suffering in some way.

Most of the subjects were taking the class for instrumental purposes, either as a skill-building experience to enable them to

TABLE XVIII

SUBJECTS' OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE OF THE CLASS

SUBJECT	MAIN REASON FOR TAKING CLASS		OVERALL WAS THE CLASS A GOOD LEARNING EXPERIENCE?	DID THE CLASS HELP SUBJECT IMPROVE HIS/HER ENGLISH SKILLS?
	PERSONAL CHOICE	TOEFL PREP/ UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT		
ALI		TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
LING	X	TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
YASU		TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
KIMIAKI		TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
MAYUMI		TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
OLIVIA	X		YES	YES
HOUSAN		UNIV. REQ.	YES	YES
BOBBY		TOEFL PREP	YES	NO
PARK		TOEFL PREP	YES	YES
ETSUKO	X		YES	YES
TOTALS	3	8	Y = 10	Y = 9 N = 1

improve their TOEFL scores and thus gain admittance into a university degree program, or to fulfill the university requirement regarding the number of credits in which an international student must enroll during a term (Table XVIII). Only two subjects, Olivia and Etsuko, were taking the class out of a purely personal choice.

Despite differences in comfort levels and interest in the subject matter, and purpose in taking the class, all ten subjects felt it had been a good learning experience when asked to give an assessment of the overall value of the class (Table XVIII). Nine of the ten also felt that the class had helped them to improve their English skills. Only

Bobby felt the class had not been successful in this regard. While it was useful to learn how to make presentations according to American standards, he did not feel his English listening and speaking skills were improved much. His reasoning behind this answer may be seen as less a criticism of this particular class and more a criticism of formal versus informal language learning environments. Bobby argued that the ESL classrooms in general do not help build English skills as well as the informal environments outside of the classroom, because the classroom does not provide a natural language learning environment. He thinks ESL instructors speak slowly and make various accommodations to help students understand them, adjustments which he feels he does not need. By contrast, through a job he has on campus, he has regular contact with an informal language learning environment in which his coworkers make few concessions to his linguistic abilities. Rather than find this discouraging, he believes that it provides a positive incentive for him to make greater efforts to understand and to be understood, and the return for his efforts is much higher than would be the case in an ESL classroom. Basically, he thinks he learns faster and better in a natural setting, and finds it a bit frustrating to spend time in ESL classrooms where he is sometimes bored.

One subject, Etsuko, particularly enjoyed the film, "The Fisher King," because to her it presented many other aspects of American society besides poverty. On the other hand, many subjects found it

difficult to extract the poverty-related information in the film in order to have the discussion. This difficulty was perhaps reflected in their journal responses to the question, 'Did you learn any new information about this issue in this class?' (see Appendix G and Appendix H). Only six subjects reported that they had learned new information from the poverty unit, while seven learned information in the unit on gender-based issues, and eight learned from the unit on gangs. In preparing the group presentations, nine reported that they had learned new information about the topic their group had chosen; of these nine, four had chosen to research topics with which they already had some familiarity. Similarly, with the individual speeches, nine of the subjects felt they had learned a lot about their topic by doing the assignment; four of the nine had chosen topics with which they were already familiar.

In her third journal entry, Etsuko had spoken extensively about some confusion she was encountering in terms of the class focus. She found it difficult to figure out where to place her energies, i. e., whether to focus on the skills themselves or on the content material:

> . . . the class is doing two things at one time: learning new information about global issue and also learning note-taking skill and, uh, discussion skill. And that's kind of confusing to me, trying to do these two things at the same time. It's good idea, but um, I don't know which I should put my emphasis on. Should I concentrate on the learning skill---the note-taking skill---or on discussion skill? Or should I try to learn more things from the lecture and the paper and, uh, film? And it's best if I can combine these two things and have a maximum result, but, uh, I tend to think so much about the learning skills.

She also talked about the pace of the class, in terms of the number of units and subtopics within the units, and whether or not she found it effective:

> . . . having three different, uh, two different, film and article, and different topics each time, it's um, it's, uh, difficult because I realize maybe I can after one discussion I think, okay next time I didn't do this and this, I didn't do good this and this. So I can try this way next time. But also I have to deal with a different subject, so see that's that add more pressure to me. If I'm going through the same thing, repeats again, that way I can make sure that I improved, I learned this and I used that for the next, uh, discus-sion. But if I also have to deal with new subject, um, get confused.
>
> Particularly step four and three, applying your knowledge, um, or experience to the subject, if you build if you repeat discussion about same topic, you can use something we discussed in the previous topic in the next---the previous discussion---in the next discussion. So we can practice that part or that technique and skill. But if you discuss different topic each time, you have to come up with new ideas and, um, practicing that particular part or particular skills, mm, is more difficult.

These observations by Etsuko led to the addition of three related questions to the second interview. Subjects were asked to assess whether or not they felt splitting the class into the three units (interspersed with the group presentations and individual speeches) provided an effective pace. Would they have liked more units, or less units or did they think that three were about right for the length of the term? Most of the subjects were satisfied with three units (see Appendix I for detailed data). Only two, Etsuko and Ling, thought two units might be better. Ling commented that, like Etsuko, she had found the class focus unclear in the beginning. At first she had

tried to do a careful analysis of the material for each discussion, and became more concerned about understanding the content than building her discussion skills. After comparing strategies with other students, she decided to relax her standards for fully understanding the material, and shifted her focus to the skills themselves.

The subjects were also asked if they felt the films and articles provided enough information for them to have the discussion. Eight of the subjects felt the films provided enough material to have a discussion, but only two felt the articles were always adequate. Several subjects said that if the topic was something about which one had previous background knowledge to bring to the discussion---either previous study, or first-hand knowledge because the issue definitely exists in his/her home country---then a single film or article was enough.

Two subjects felt neither medium provided enough information for a discussion. Ali commented that it was important to remember each article and film was just one very small example of the issue as a whole, and to work with it as such. Etsuko felt that if the students have enough background and interest in the subject, then a single film or article might be enough. When such background knowledge was missing, she felt the discussion session could result in a tendency to come to agreement too quickly. Also, when the source material is from an American point of view, students are limited in their ability to fully understand what's being said. As an example, she

cited the article on capital punishment, which focused on one American's point of view. In her estimation, without having additional information about crime in America---e.g. rates of crime, whether or not rates are increasing or decreasing, the types of crime, the financial and emotional costs of crime---it was not possible to have an intelligently analytical discussion about the issue. Given that one of the final steps of the discussion process is to evaluate how well the movie or article presented the ideas, her concerns are worthy of consideration. They may also be reflected by other subjects who mentioned that they didn't always feel satisfied with the depth of the discussion.

IV. How does the content material, global issues, compare to other components of the classroom in terms of ease and difficulty reported by the subjects?

The final section of the study was added in order to provide a gauge for better assessing the subjects' responses to the use of global issues in the classroom, to see them within the context of the class as a whole. During the second interview, the subjects were asked to identify whether or not they found each of thirteen main components of the class 'easy' or 'difficult', using a five-point scale. (The choice of terminology was an oversight on the part of the researcher, but was only realized after the data had been collected. Although not precisely the same terms as 'comfortable' and 'uncomfortable', it was felt that the terms 'easy' and 'difficult' were similar enough to allow

for comparison. In most cases the subjects tended to use 'easy' and 'comfortable', and 'difficult' and 'uncomfortable', synonymously.) The resulting data are presented in Table XIX. The data identifying the subjects' comfort levels with the subject matter are included at the top of the table for comparison. All data are based on the subjects' responses at the end of the term.

It is evident that, where all subjects were feeling comfortable with the subject matter by the end of the term, there were other aspects of the class which they still found problematic. Based on data in the two right-hand columns, eight of the ten subjects reported difficulties with a total of nine components of the class.

Some of the problems were related to inadequate linguistic skills. For example, subjects reported difficulties with speaking in English, watching the films, reading the handouts, performing a critical analysis of the materials---all as a result of limitations in their English vocabularies. Or they found it difficult to work with the materials based on the requirements of an American academic approach which was different from what they were used to in their home countries.

Three subjects mentioned that the self-analysis process following the discussion was especially difficult to do. Ali found it hard to assess his own performance:

> I can't judge myself, am I doing good or not. . . How can I know if I am doing well or not? It's better when there is someone tell you 'Oh, you made a mistake over here.'

TABLE XIX

COMFORT WITH GLOBAL ISSUES AS SUBJECT MATTER AS COMPARED TO COMFORT WITH OTHER MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE CLASS

	No. of Subjects **Comfortable**				No. of Subjects **Uncomfortable**
COMFORT W/SUBJECT MATTER Start of Term	4	1	1	-	4
COMFORT W/SUBJECT MATTER End of Term	7	3	-	-	-

	No. of Subjects Assessing Component **'Easy'**				No. of Subjects Assessing Component **'Difficult'**
MAJOR COMPONENTS OF CLASS:					
Group Discussion Process - Preparation	2	5	2	1	-
Group Discussion Process - Discussion 4	3	2	1	-	
Group Discussion Process - Post-Discuss. Analysis	3	2	1	3	1
Speaking in English	2	4	3	1	-
Listening to English	4	5	1	-	-
Watching the Films	4	4	1	1	-
Reading the Handouts	2	4	2	1	1
Listening to Guest Speakers	2	6	2	-	-
Critical Analysis of Materials	1	4	3	2	-
Group Presentation - Working with Others	6	-	2	1	-
Group Presentation - Researching the Topic	4	2	4	-	-
Group Presentation - Making the Presentation	2	2	3	1	2
Individual Speech	3	6	1	-	-

N = 10

This difficulty with evaluating his own classroom behavior is consistent with other information he supplied earlier, in relation to the role of the student in the educational system in Yemen: he was used to teacher-fronted classes with no discussion; he had no initial response to the subject matter of this class because as a student he felt he had no choice about what was presented in a classroom.

Kimiaki said that he felt uncomfortable both in judging others in the group, and in praising his own performance. In Japan, modesty is valued, therefore it is considered inappropriate to say 'I did a good job.' For Kimiaki it goes beyond the awkwardness of submitting a written self-praising evaluation to a teacher; the very act of thinking self-aggrandizing thoughts strikes him as an odd thing to do.

Housan also found it unnatural to state these kinds of opinions about individual behavior in a written, classroom assignment. He found it strange to be graded on his opinion (as he sees it), and worried that if his opinion was different from the instructor's that would simply translate into a bad grade.

Both Housan and Mayumi thought it was challenging to remember exactly what each person had done during the discussions, in relation to the roles and steps specified by Fawcett-Hill, because of a tendency to get caught up in the content of the discussion while it was occurring. This made it difficult for them to do a thorough post-discussion analysis.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In asking the students to talk about interest and comfort levels in working with global issues in the Level IV Listening/Speaking classroom, it was evident that some of the problems they encountered were directly linked to the material itself. It was also apparent that there were problems which were related less to the subject matter and more to the specific tasks which they were being asked to perform while working with the content material.

The problems directly connected to the material itself fell into four main areas:

1) Lack of interest in a topic

2) Concerns about inadequate English skills deemed necessary to talk about such a complex subject as global issues

3) Lack of background knowledge about the topic which limited the subject's ability to discuss the topic satisfactorily

4) Difficulties in expressing personal opinions about the subject matter with strangers.

The first problem, lack of interest in a topic, was not shared by all subjects. In fact, the majority of the subjects enjoyed studying

most of the issues, and one even noted that other subject matter might, inturn, have been boring to others in the group. If one accepts that it may be impossible to select subject matter of equal interest to allstudents, it may be possible to justify settling for material that appeals to the majority.

The second problem, concern about lack of adequate skills for discussing the material, was also not a problem mentioned by the majority of the subjects. One in particular, Ling, cited this as a concern at the start of the term, but judging by her increasing participation in her discussion group sessions over the course of the term, she was able to overcome her initial hesitations. Still, it is worth considering that her concern suggests that this material may be more suited for use in an advanced level ESL class than in less advanced levels.

The lack of background knowledge was also mentioned by several subjects as a problem area, which sometimes affected the quality and depth of the discussions, and the abilities of the subjects to participate in the discussions. While there are limits as to how much information can be provided to the students during a single term of a class, there may be ways to improve the amount of information that the students are able to extract from the materials presented in the class. For example, during the study the students received information about three main topics and several subtopics in the following sequence:

1) a film about gender-based roles ('Baby Boom')
2) two articles about gender-based behavior
3) a guest speaker discussing domestic violence
4) a film about gangs ('South Central')
5) a guest speaker discussing drugs and drug trafficking
6) an article on capital punishment
7) a film about poverty ('The Fisher King')
8) a guest speaker discussing the relationship between poverty and aging, including changing trends in various countries around the world
9) an article on deforestation and poverty in developing nations

Based on comments made by the subjects during the study, it appears that many of them had difficulty in identifying possible links between the different films, articles and guest speakers. For example, what gender-based behaviors were portrayed in 'South Central'? What were the gender-based behaviors represented in 'The Fisher King'? How are drugs and gangs related? How is capital punishment related to gangs and/or drugs? Are there relationships between gangs and poverty? Perhaps in a class which presents a number of different global issues, the students could be alerted to watch for these types of links (and in this specific classroom setup, it could even be incorporated into the discussion process itself, e.g. after identifying the main topics and subtopics of a film or an article).

The difficulty in analyzing the material is more likely a reflection of the subjects' lack of extensive experience with critical analysis, generally, than a difficulty specific to the analysis of the subject matter itself. As revealed by the data, most of the subjects had done little critical analysis, of either an objective or a subjective

nature, prior to entering the Level IV Listening/Speaking class. One of the most striking findings in the study was the information relative to the structure of K-12 classrooms in the subjects' home countries, i.e., the relatively-high norm for class sizes of 40-50 students per class. Such a class size in K-12 schools would be considered quite unusual---some might even say *impossible*---in the U.S. This high (by American standards) student-teacher ratio may warrant recall when considering the absence/presence of critical analysis activities in the home countries of the subjects as compared to classroom practices in the U.S. There are two possible related angles from which to view this situation.

First, what effect might class size have on a teacher's ability to effectively include critical analysis activities as part of the learning process? Previously in Chapter II, Onosko (1989) described the difficulties some American social studies teachers encountered in promoting critical thinking skills due to pressure to cover a set curriculum. Imagine the challenge to cover the material with a class size of 40-50 students! It is perhaps understandable that in a setting where a single teacher is called upon to present a set amount of information to a large group of students in a set period of time, there would be limitations on the types of activities that could be used for imparting that information in the classroom, as well as limitations on the type of exam formats used for assessing the students' understanding of the material. In this respect it is not surprising that most

of the subjects had no experience of critical analysis in their home countries. Given the large class sizes, the educators may have felt that there was no time to deviate from the curriculum by engaging in time-intensive discussions and analyses.

Secondly, what might acceptance of a large student-teacher ratio suggest about the value that the society places on critical analysis activities as a part of the educational process? The fact that these countries accept such a high student-teacher ratio may be a reflection of their societal perceptions about the role of education, as described by Tye (1990) and Troester and Sargent Mester (1990) in Chapter II. If a society believes the role of a teacher is to maintain the underlying values and beliefs of that society by passing those values and beliefs along to its youth during their early, formative---and impressionable---years, then it would follow that a school system might be structured such that the teacher is seen as an authority who presents uncontest-able facts. Under such a system, the classroom format described by many of the subjects---teacher-fronted, lecture-style, memorization of facts---might be preferable because it does not encourage the students to question the values and beliefs of the society to which they belong. Inclusion of critical analysis activities would be seen by some as a threat to the stability of the society itself, and therefore not an acceptable method for use within the classroom.

Finally, in describing problems in working with global issues as the content material in an ESL classroom, several subjects had

mentioned that in their home countries the people with whom they might discuss global issues depended on their relationships, e.g., they would be less likely to talk about serious matters with a stranger and more likely to discuss them in a more intimate setting. This problem was again raised when they described their difficulties in talking about the issues in the discussion groups. At the start of the term, most were new to the ESL program and did not know one another. Even though they were in an American university setting, and knew that one of their objectives was to learn American ways of communicating, several subjects felt reluctant to be too open in the group discussions, especially in the early part of the term. In part, this was due to their cultural background regarding norms for discourse in private and public settings which taught them to hold back in a public setting like a classroom. Most of the subjects said that this problem was naturally overcome during the course of the term, as they got to know one another. Still, this problem might warrant careful ordering of the issues studied in the class. Where possible, it might be more conducive to start with a less volatile issue for the first discussion or two, so that the students are not put in a position of giving opinions about particularly difficult issues. Most of the students said they thought 'Baby Boom' was a good film for the first discussion, because it was funny. They were still able to share information about culturally-different norms of behavior, but were also able to draw upon the humorous way in which the topic was

presented in the film.

From the responses of the subjects, it also became apparent that some of the problems were related not so much to the choice of global issues as the content material for the class, but more strongly related to the particular activities in which they were engaging while working with these issues. The main areas of difficulty were 1) problems with intercultural sensitivity, and 2) problems with differences in cultural norms for discourse.

Most students enrolling in pre-university ESL programs probably enter the classroom with an expectation that they will be interacting with people from many different cultures. But that acknowledgement alone is not enough to guarantee effective communication. Variation in formal intercultural interaction prior to the Level IV Listening/Speaking class may have contributed to the classroom experiences of the subjects during this study. During some terms of the Level IV Listening/Speaking class, many of the students will have come through one or more previous levels of the ESL program and so will have had the benefits of familiarity with some of the members of the class from the beginning of the term. For some, they may have been together for as many as three terms, in as many as four different skill areas, during previous classes in the program. They will also have benefitted from some previous classroom discussion about cultural differences.

With the subjects in this study, that was not the case. Several

were new to the institution---some were quite new to the country. This meant that from an early point in the term they were called upon to reveal ideas and opinions to relative strangers, with the added challenge of trying to express complicated thoughts in a second language---without necessarily having any formal training in problems in intercultural communication.

As revealed by the subjects, when these issues are used with activities that call for interaction between the students there is potential for conflict to occur between the students, more so than with less controversial subject matter. Such conflict can arise when activities with the subject matter bring out differences in values and beliefs between the participants without a mediator present to not only monitor the interaction, but also to reestablish harmonious interaction when conflict occurs. This is not a simple task. The conflict may not always be obvious to an observer. The silence of a participant could just as easily be interpreted as lack of interest, inhibitions due to speaking abilities, or lack of preparation for the discussion, as it could be recognized as a reluctance to speak because the person fears others will react judgmentally to his/her opinion and culture. The underlying causes may not even be obvious to the participants, they may only sense that effective communication has broken down but may not really know why, or what to do about it.

Each culture's communication norms include not only verbal behavior, but non-verbal behavior as well, which may differ

substantially from the norms of another culture. Interpreting a classmates' verbal and non-verbal behavior, based on one's own cultural norms, has the potential to lead to misunderstandings between students, e.g., a student may conclude that the classmate is angry when, by the classmates' standards, his/her behavior is moderate.

For many subjects one of the biggest difficulties came out of cultural norms for giving their own opinions in a spoken form, which in the classroom also translates into concerns about public disclosure of information as opposed to a private one. Some of their comments also reflect cultural preferences for group harmony over individualism.

During the interviews and in their journals, the Japanese subjects described the rules for good manners in communication, relating to verbal and non-verbal behaviors in their culture. It is considered rude to openly, verbally contest what another person says. During the second interview, Kimiaki explained that if you disagree you either keep that disagreement to yourself or just acknowledge that you understand what's been said. Kimiaki also mentioned that during the discussions it was difficult enough to overcome his culture's norm of not expressing his opinions, but that was only one aspect of the problem. When he finally started to express opinions and ideas to the group he found it angering that others would interrupt before he'd finished speaking; in Japan it is considered

very rude to interrupt when another person is speaking. Active listening is preferred: one lets the person speak without interruption, and a longer pause is allowed before reacting in order to give the listener time to process what has been said and formulate a clear response. So for Kimiaki, having made the decision to try to adjust to American norms for discourse, he sometimes felt reluctant to speak up for fear he'd be interrupted or his idea verbally attacked by another group member. Interestingly, the audio-recordings of Kimiaki's group's discussions reveal that Ali may have been aware of the problem in some way, and would make efforts to repair the situation. On a number of occasions, after Kimiaki was interrupted by another group member, Ali would wait until the person finished her remarks and then he would directly ask Kimiaki to finish what he had started to say.

For the Japanese, verbal communication takes on an indirect character, by American standards. Opinions, when expressed, are seldom given in the early stages of conversation, but must be held back until a body of more objective, factual information has been presented which would support the individual's opinion. During the second interview, one of the subjects, Mayumi, talked about the fact that the Japanese are highly-sensitive to non-verbal behavior, and often look to non-verbal behavior as a more true reflection of communication than the actual words being said:

. . . But Japanese people don't say exactly about my our

> opinion. So we can guess from the acting. And some people really don't want something. But if somebody asking him, he cannot refuse. But so he will say okay. But the face and acting is little different, so we can guess.

When asked if she watched non-verbal behavior during the group discussions she replied that she did, somewhat out of habit:

> Kind of Japanese custom is I think. It's a kind of manner because if we don't---if people have a manner, good manner, they don't say exactly their opinion. So we have to guess, and it's good manner.

When asked if Japanese people ever get into 'heated arguments', Mayumi said that such behavior is uncommon in Japan but sometimes happens. When it does occur, "They try to calm down, and get the good manners." She also explained that in the early stages of a conversation, by watching for non-verbal messages of agreement or disagreement, it also helps each individual to determine whether or not to state their opinion, and how strongly to state it.

In Saudi Arabia, the cultural norm is not so much one of indirectly communicating one's opinion as it is an understanding that discussion to the point of argument is unacceptable. According to Housan, it's okay to express one's ideas but individuals are also expected to accept that they have differences of opinion and leave it at that. Open disagreement is discouraged, due to concerns about hurting the feelings of others or making them angry. Therefore, if one person disagrees with another, it has to be couched in an acceptable term, e.g., 'maybe. . . ' Alternatively, one person can respond to another with an individual opinion, but it must be clear

that it is only his/her personal opinion, i.e., that he/she is not attempting to discredit the other person's statement and point of view with an uncontested 'fact.'

Given that the main objective behind the Level IV Listening/ Speaking class is to improve the students' listening and speaking skills, it was encouraging to find that nine of the ten subjects felt that the class had been successful in this respect, and that overall, all ten subjects thought it was a good learning experience. However, an unanswered point of concern is how conducive was the use of global issues in facilitating these improvements? Where eight of the nine subjects reporting improvements were quick with their positive responses, one of the subjects was somewhat hesitant. Kimiaki agreed that he had been able to improve his academic discussion skills by taking this class. However, the implication was that this was achieved not necessarily because the class facilitated it, but instead was due to his own determination to improve his linguistic skills in spite of a less-than-optimal learning environment. In Kimiaki's case it seems like improvements were made in his listening/speaking skills in spite of having to talk about material that did not really interest him. One wonders what level of skill he might have attained in an environment which he found more comfortable and more interesting.

The findings of this study suggest that the selection of global issues as the content material for an ESL classroom is not, in and of

itself, particularly problematic. In fact, the subjects indicated overall that they were interested in the material and found it stimulating to work with. What the findings do suggest is that there may be a need to look more closely at what activities are chosen to go with the material. For example, the material may be more suited to activities that allow students to make fewer public disclosures of their viewpoints about the issues, e.g., better suited to written forms than spoken forms.

If the material is to be used in activities that are more public, there may be ways to overcome some of the discomforts the subjects experienced. In particular, if the class is a multicultural group composed mainly/totally of students who do not know one another, it might be helpful to include whole-class or small-group discussion about cultural differences in communication norms, and the types of problems that can arise in intercultural communication.

This, of course, raises several questions about the training that ESL teachers receive in facilitating effective intercultural communication. Do most programs focus more on merely identifying different cultural norms, without explaining how an individual teacher might enable students to have effective communication in spite of different norms? What are pre-teacher trainees taught about recognizing intercultural conflicts between their students? To what degree are pre-teacher trainees taught methods of conflict resolution which they could use in an ESL classroom? To what degree do professional ESL

organizations offer workshops and conferences which include training in and discussion about conflict resolution?

In Chapter II, Larson and Mulling (1993) were quoted as saying that ". . . future leaders of not only our communities but also of communities of the world. . . " are seated in ESL classrooms. And they asked, "What are we dong to prepare them for more constructive, peaceful world leadership?" In practice, does the ESL classroom serve to promote effective intercultural communication, or does it sometimes reinforce intercultural misunderstandings? Perhaps more importantly, do most ESL instructors see this as a valid concern?

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As a case study, this research relied on information provided by a small group of subjects. One of the purposes in doing this study was to gain insight into the role that each subject's native culture might play in his/her experiences in using global issues in an ESL classroom. This was considered important because a better understanding of those influences might enable ESL instructors to increase their sensitivity to cultural differences when selecting material and related activities for their classrooms.

However, making generalizations about cultural norms is difficult when data has been drawn from a small group of subjects. In

several cases, there was only a single subject to represent his/her culture (Ali, Ling, Olivia, Housan, and Bobby). It would be difficult to assess with precision whether or not each of these individuals is typical of his/her native culture in terms of their beliefs and values. Certainly, Olivia's situation must be recognized as an atypical experience in that she had already lived, and been educated, in two very different parts of the world prior to coming to this university.

Even the five Japanese subjects had varied experiences prior to the study. Yasu's remarks about his education in Japan suggest that his was an atypical response to the Japanese system of education. In his case, individual personality may have had a stronger influence than cultural norms on his response to using global issues in the classroom. Etsuko also poses an unusual situation in that she had extensive contact with an American prior to moving to the U.S., and now has extensive contact with many American in-laws and family friends. Surely her perspective of the world is a bicultural view.

Park and Bobby may also represent something different from the 'average Japanese' or 'average Indonesian' point of view, because both are members of minority groups in their countries. In the first interview with Bobby, he said that being Chinese-Indonesian is equivalent to being African American in the U.S. Perhaps Bobby's remarks about exercising caution in discussing sensitive issues is based not simply on an Indonesian norm per se, but rather the norm for someone who has not enjoyed all of the freedoms of the dominant

group in his country.

A possible solution to this lack of generalizable findings would be to repeat the study in order to gather data from a large population. However, repetition of the study in its entirety may prove an unrealistic means of attaining a larger body of information. The particular class in which the study took place is only one type of classroom where global issues are used. If the objective is to understand the cultural norms that the students bring with them, and the influence those norms may have on their interest and comfort levels, it might be possible to modify the data-gathering methods to include only the interviews. Further, given that many of the problems the subjects experienced in this study were not directly related to the material itself, and were overcome by the end of the term, it may not be necessary to look for changes in interest and comfort over a set period of time. It might be possible to limit the data-gathering to a single interview per subject. The questions could be modified to focus on the environments in which the subjects formally and informally studied and discussed global/contemporary issues in their home countries, the media sources they accessed, and the gender-based norms for discussing these issues.

However, other limitations of the study would need to addressed, particularly those which arose from weaknesses in the design of the interview questions. As mentioned in the first section of Chapter IV, there were difficulties in interpreting some behaviors

in the home country. For example, after tabulating the information on the media sources and frequency of usage in the home country, it was difficult to attach precise meaning to the findings. With no basis for comparison, there was no way to interpret whether the individuals showed high, medium, or low rates of usage of the various forms of media. All that could be done was to see how they compared to one another, and then to see how usage changed once they came to the U.S.. But even the latter could not be taken as a strong indicator of changes in interest levels, because it was difficult to determine what other factors may have influenced the changes in usage.

Another difficulty in the design of the interview questions was made apparent by Etsuko during the second interview. When asked to rate the fifteen components of the class, she was reluctant to place herself in either the 'easy' or 'difficult' column on any component. Her reason, she laughingly but sincerely explained, was that Japanese people prefer moderation in everything, therefore it would be unnatural to select either of the two extremes. There is no easy solution to this dilemma. As a researcher, one can only recognize that one's own cultural values may influence research design, and that the responses of subjects will sometimes be tempered by cultural factors beyond one's control.

Finally, the results of the study might be more meaningful if we knew how the ESL subjects would compare to their American counterparts. One of the objectives of pre-university ESL classes is to

prepare the students for entry into regular, academic classes in American universities. As a result, the skills taught in ESL classes may extend beyond reading, writing, grammar, listening and speaking to include other academic tools that the students will need for successful participation in mainstream classes. The critical analysis, academic discussion and public speaking skills taught in the Level IV Listening/Speaking class are some examples of such tools. It would be useful to know what levels of awareness and interest in contemporary issues and critical analysis skills American university students bring with them from informal and formal learning environments. It would be helpful to know how comfortable American university students are with openly expressing their opinions in the public classroom setting and in small-group formats. With a modified list of interview questions, it might be possible to expand the study to include not only ESL students, but a sampling of American students as well (probably freshmen, new to the university setting and therefore closer to the ESL students in experience of the university culture). It may be that some of the difficulties that ESL students experience with using global issues in the classroom, and with the problems related to the types of activities they were asked to perform in the class during this study, are also shared by American students.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHING

This study set out to explore three main areas with regard to the use of global issues in a pre-university ESL classroom:

1) The levels of awareness and levels of interest that the subjects brought with them through both formal and informal study in their home countries.

2) The background experiences and interest in critical analysis which the subjects brought into the classroom, based on formal and informal study completed prior to the term of this study.

3) The possible changes experienced by the subjects during the term, in both comfort and interest levels, in relation to using global issues in the ESL classroom.

With regard to the first two points, the findings of this study suggest that---allowing for some variation between students---it is very likely that many students will enter the ESL classroom with some exposure to any one of a number of specific global issues. However, most will have relatively little experience in the type of critical analysis of the issues which is common in American academic settings. Most will have had little experience in objectively analyzing material--- identifying main ideas and subtopics, recognizing cause-and-effect relationships, citing specific references from materials in support of ideas---nor will they come to the classroom with much experience in expressing personal opinions about/reactions to the material based on an analysis of the material. For those entering the ESL classroom with experience in critical analysis, it is very likely that the experience will not be substantial. It is also likely that such

experience will have been acquired since arriving in the U.S., so will still be a relatively new way of approaching academic material for the student.

With regard to the third point, it appears that many students may feel initial hesitations about discussing global issues in a classroom setting in which they are asked to publicly express individual opinions about the issues. However, by the end of the term, most students may find that they are able to overcome such reluctance, as they become more familiar with one another and the process for exchanging ideas and opinions. In addition, most students may find that their interest in the issues increases over the course of the term.

In conclusion, the results of this study would suggest that the use of global issues in the pre-university ESL classroom would not be a source of difficulty for the students in general. However, the results also indicate that the choice of activities in which students are asked to participate while working with this subject matter must be given careful consideration. Activities of a more private nature may be more comfortable for the majority of students than activities that call for a more public expression of one's ideas and opinions. If global issues are used with more public types of activities, it is recommended that the instructor be knowledgeable about conflict resolution and capable of helping the students to effectively manage differing points of view.

Overall, the subjects in this study showed strong support for the inclusion of this type of contemporary issue as subject matter in a pre-university ESL classroom. The use of global issues was deemed important because it achieved three useful results: use of the material encouraged interaction between students; it enabled students to learn from one another by sharing information about differences and similarities in the cultural beliefs and values of their home countries; the material served as a source of information which might provide good background material when students advance into regular, academic classes.

The subjects in this study gave generously of both their time and personal reflections about experiences in both their home countries and in the U.S. As educators, we value from their willingness to share such information. As educators, we may also see our role as one of empowering students. Yet these subjects have also shown that students, too, can empower the educators by providing important input about the language-learning classroom from the student's perspective. By eliciting the input of students, educators may, in turn, be better able to make well-informed decisions when selecting classroom content material and activities.

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APPENDIX A

DISCUSSION GROUP HANDOUTS

OUTLINE FOR DISCUSSION GROUP PREPARATION

Step 1 *Define terms and ideas*
List all the words you don't understand, look them up and write down the definitions. Think about the ideas and messages involved and write down things you don't understand about them. Prepare questions for the group about ideas you don't understand. Also, write down any key phrases which you think are important to understanding the information.

Step 2 *What is the message?*
Write down what you think the main message or main idea of the movie or article was. Write down anything you feel is important in relation to the main message.

Step 3 *Identify major subtopics*
Write down anything you would like to say about each of these. Are there any questions you would like to ask the group?

Step 4 *Integrate the material with other knowledge*
Write down the usefulness of the material to other ideas and concepts. Note contradictions and similarities between this material and other things you might have heard, read, or experienced.

Step 5 *Apply the material to your life*
Write down how the material can apply to your own life. What is there about this material that you can use or that will help you in the future---in school, at home, at work, etc.

Step 6 *Evaluate the movie, reading, or presentation*
Write down how effectively you think the speaker, article or movie presented the main message and subtopics. (Whether or not you agreed or disagreed is not important here. If you understood the message, if the speaker, or movie was clear about the ideas involved, then it was effective.) Evaluate the message and subtopics and give your thoughts; do you agree or disagree or are you unsure of how you feel about the material? Tell why you do or do not agree, or why you aren't sure.

DISCUSSION GROUP PROCESS

IMPORTANT: Make sure you have completed your Outline for Discussion Group Preparation before you come to class.

Step 1 *Estimate time for each of the steps of the discussion*

a. You will usually have one hour and 30 minutes to discuss.
b. It might be a good idea to select someone to keep track of time and announce to the group when you are two or three minutes from the end of each time segment.

Step 2 *Define Key Terms and Ideas*

a. Talk about the words you had trouble with; explain their meanings and give examples.
b. Help others with words they don't understand but that you do.
c. Encourage each group member to talk about what each word means to them.

Step 3 *What is the main message?*

a. Tell what you think the main message was.
b. Encourage all group members to do the same.
c. Discuss the way your interpretation is different from others'.
d. Perhaps you may want to write the message on the blackboard.
e. Don't talk about your opinions yet.

Step 4 *Identify Subtopics*

a. Discuss the subtopics each of you has written down. When the group agrees on what they are, you may want to write them on the blackboard.
b. Talk about whether or not these subtopics supported the main message.

Step 5 *Integrate the material with other knowledge*

a. Talk about how this material connects or contradicts other knowledge you have.
b. Ask questions of other members about how they see these ideas relating to knowledge they already have.

Step 6 *Apply the material to your lives*

a. Tell how you think it relates to your life.
b. Give examples of how you might use these new ideas.

Step 7 *Evaluate the movie or presentation*

a. Talk about how well you thought the movie, article or speaker presented the ideas. Did you understand? Were the messages and ideas clear?
b. **OK, now you can talk about your opinions!** Tell whether or not you agree or disagree with the messages and ideas.

Step 8 *Evaluate your individual participation in the group and overall group effectiveness*

a. Did you contribute everything you could?
b. Did you understand the others? Did you ask for clarification?
c. Was your time allocation adequate?
d. Did everyone contribute?
e. What participation roles were you particularly good and at what others do you still need to work on?
f. Did you get sidetracked and talk off the topic?
g. Did you give your opinion too soon and thus stopped the academic discussion?

DISCUSSION ROLES

A. *Initiating* - This role involves starting the discussion or beginning new sections of the discussion. To do this, you usually need to introduce the section or discussion and then begin by asking questions of the others to get them started.

B. *Giving and Asking for Information* - This role is crucial to the success of you discussion. You need to give information when it is asked of you and also, in turn, you must then ask someone else in the group for information.

C. *Giving and Asking for Reactions* - This is similar to the role above except instead of asking for information you are asking someone if they agree or disagree with your idea. Now remember this is not necessarily asking for an opinion or whether they liked or didn't like something. Likewise, if asked you need to tell the group whether you agree or disagree with the idea being discussed.

D. *Clarifying, Restating and Giving Examples* - This is absolutely essential for the group to understand each other. Often, someone will say something that the group doesn't understand. If you think you understand, then restate the information that person said in your own words or have the person repeat what they said and have them perhaps use an example to illustrate this. It is absolutely necessary that everyone in the group understand what is being said at all times.

E. *Confronting* - This role is not used often but it should be used. If you don't agree with what someone is saying and question how they reached that conclusion, then you need to challenge them. Be careful that you aren't rude and offend them. You can disagree politely.

F. *Synthesizing and Summarizing* - This role is too often not used but is extremely important. At the end of each section of the discussion, it is necessary to sum up the ideas which have been discussed and then move on into the next section of the discussion. If this role is not used, you will waste time discussing and re-discussing the same ideas, which can be very frustrating.

G. *Timekeeping* - Because the discussion takes place within a limited amount of time, it is important that the group not waste time on sections.
A person needs to gently urge the group to move on and keep an eye on the time.

H. *Group Tension Relieving* - Because of the serious nature of many of the discussions, sometimes people get emotionally involved in the topic and tempers can flare. If a group member sees that someone is getting overly upset, then sometimes humor can help ease the emotional tension. Again, this role is not needed very often but it is needed.

APPENDIX B

DISCUSSION EVALUATION SHEET

DISCUSSION EVALUATION SHEET

NAMES					
Initiating					
G & Info					
G & A Reactions					
Clar., Rest., Giving Ex.					
Confronting					
Synthesizing & Summarizing					
Timekeeping					
Group Tension Relieving					

APPENDIX C

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FIRST INTERVIEW

Demographic information:

Age:

Gender:

Country of residence:

How long have you been in the U.S.?_____

How long have you studied English in the U.S.? _____

Have you taken other classes in the ESL program at PSU? _____ yes _____ no

a. In Listening/Speaking: Level I _____ Level II _____ Level III _____

b. Other classes in the ESL program: _____

_____

Have you lived in other countries (besides the U.S. and your own country)?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, where and when? _____

If you have already studied in a college or university in your own country, what was your major area of study?_____

If you are planning to do a degree course in the U.S., what do you plan to be your major area of study?_____

To explore awareness/interest in global issues/contemporary issues while in student's own country:

In your own country, do you read a newspaper?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____daily _____ weekly

In your own country,do you watch the news on t.v.?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____daily _____ weekly

In your own country, do you watch t.v. programs about global issues?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____daily _____ weekly

In your own country, do you listen to the news on the radio?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____daily _____ weekly

In your own country, do you listen to radio programs about global issues?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____daily _____ weekly

In your own country, do you talk about global issues with your friends?

_____yes _____no

In your own country, do you talk about global issues with your family?

_____yes _____no

Of the following global issues, which have you studied in school, studied at a university level, and/or read about on your own?

	studied in school	studied at a university level	read about on your own	talked w/friends	talked w/family
human rights					
racial/ethnic equality					
gender-based equality					
class-based equality					
education (equal rights to)					
peace education					
nuclear disarmament					
water pollution					
air pollution					
toxic wastes					
acid rain					
global warming					
endangered species					
overpopulation					
world hunger					
AIDS					

Do you discuss these issues more here or at home?

Here, do you discuss them more with

- a member of your own country?
- another international student?
- American students?
- Americans period (other than students)?

At home, would you discuss these issues more

- in a same-gender group?
- in a mixed gender group?

Here in the U.S., do you feel there is more opportunity for a woman/man to discuss these issues than at home?

Have you ever belonged to a group that was concerned with a global issue (for example, Greenpeace, Amnesty International)? _____ yes _____ no

If so, which one(s)? _____

For how long? _____

APPENDIX D

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SECOND INTERVIEW

To explore background in critical analysis of controversial issues in home country:

What's the format in school (K-12) and in college in your home country?
For example is it classroom lecture, memorization of information?
What are exams like (true/false, multiple-choice, short answer, essay)?

In your own country, do you discuss contemporary issues in school?

_____ yes _____ no

Do you discuss material outside of class?

_____ yes _____ no

In your own country, do you try to analyze the decisions that are made by public figures/ people in positions of power?

_____ yes _____ no

In your culture is it o.k. to ask questions about the decisions made by people who are in positions of power? _____ yes _____ no

Do you think newspapers generally tell us the truth? _____ yes _____ no

Do you think television news tells us the truth? _____ yes _____ no

Do you think the news reports on radio give us the truth? _____ yes _____ no

To explore changes that occur during the term regarding interest in the use of global issues in the classroom and the use of critical analysis in exploring these issues:
(may need to differentiate how often they do this by their own choice, and how often they do it because it's been assigned to them in an ESL class)

Here in the U.S. do you read an English-language newspaper?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____ daily _____ weekly

Here in the U.S. do you have access to a newspaper in your first language?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often do you read it? _____ daily _____ weekly

Here in the U.S. do you watch the news on t.v.?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____ daily _____ weekly

Here in the U.S. do you watch t.v. programs about global issues?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____ daily _____ weekly

Here in the U.S. do you listen to the news on the radio?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____ daily _____ weekly

Here in the U.S. do you listen to radio programs about global issues?

_____ yes _____ no If yes, how often? _____ daily _____ weekly

To explore changes in comfort level that occur during the term, in relation to the use of global issues in the language learning classroom and the use of critical analysis to explore these issues:

Before doing this class, did you have prior experience trying to do this kind of critical analysis of material?

1) at another school (in Portland; in Oregon; in another state in US)
   - in ESL classes
   - in academic classes
2) at PSU
   - in ESL classes

At the start of the term, what did you expect to happen in an advanced ESL Listening/Speaking classroom where the focus would be on global issues?

How did you feel about discussing global issues in the language learning classroom at the start of the term?

comfortable uncomfortable

___ ___ ___ ___ ___

How do you feel about discussing global issues in the language learning classroom now that you've finished the term?

comfortable uncomfortable

___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Do you feel that you were able to improve your English skills by talking about these global issues in a language learning classroom? _____ yes _____ no

What parts of the class were easy/difficult? [KF: Here ask *why* they felt easy/difficult too--what worked for them and what didn't.)

	easy				difficult
group discussion process					
- discussion itself	___	___	___	___	___
- preparation for discussion	___	___	___	___	___
- self-analysis afterwards	___	___	___	___	___
speaking in English	___	___	___	___	___
listening to English	___	___	___	___	___
watching films	___	___	___	___	___
reading handouts	___	___	___	___	___
listening to speakers	___	___	___	___	___

analyzing the material	___	___	___	___	___
group presentation					
- working with others	___	___	___	___	___
- researching the topic	___	___	___	___	___
- making the presentation	___	___	___	___	___
individual presentation	___	___	___	___	___

Of the global issues you studied, which ones did you find interesting?

Of the global issues you studied, which ones had an impact on you (and can you describe the impact they had)?

How did you feel about the materials you used for the discussions?
- Did they provide enough information to have a discussion?
- Were there too many topics to focus on? Too few?

What do you think the content or subject-matter of an ESL class should be?

possible examples if they are at a loss for ideas:
- The English language
- Facts: science, society
- Social problems
- English/American literature
- Culture of various countries
- Political problems
- Experiences of students
- American life
- other_____

Should it be something other than global issues? If so, what should it be?

What was your main reason for taking this class?

On the whole, do you feel that this class was a good learning experience?

For the study, I asked you to do a tape-recorded journal.
- Had you ever done a journal before?
- Did you like doing this? Why/why not?
- Was it easy or difficult? Why/why not?
- Did you like being given questions to answer? Were the questions clear?
  - or -
  Would you rather have just said whatever you felt like saying (with no guidance from me)?
- Did you like doing a spoken journal, or would you rather have done a *written* journal?

APPENDIX E

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

UNIT #1 - MALE/FEMALE ROLES - JOURNAL QUESTIONS:

1. Did you enjoy studying this issue (men and women roles) in this class? Why or why not? Do you think it is an important issue? Why or why not?

2. What did you find the most interesting about studying this issue?

3. What did you find the least interesting about studying this issue?

4. Did you learn any new information about this issue in this class?

JOURNAL #2: GROUP PRESENTATIONS

1. Please describe to me how you came up with your topic for the group presentation. Did you first form a group of people to work with and then decide on a topic? Or did you, as an individual, already have an idea about what topic you wanted to do and then find other people who were interested in the same topic?

2. Did you feel personally interested in the topic (as opposed to just doing the work to fulfill the assignment)? Why or why not?

3. Was your group topic something you already knew a lot about?

4. Did you learn much new information about the topic by doing this project?

5. Do you think the topic you chose is an important issue? Why or why not?

6. Did you find any of the other topics presented by the other groups in the class especially interesting? If so, which one(s)? Why?

7. Did you enjoy doing this assignment?

JOURNAL #3: GANGS

1. Did you enjoy studying this issue in this class? Why or why not? Do you think it is an important issue? Why or why not?

2. What did you find the most interesting about studying this issue?

3. What did you find the least interesting about studying this issue?

4. Did you learn any new information about this issue in this class?

JOURNAL #4: POVERTY

1. Did you enjoy studying this issue in this class? Why or why not? Do you think it is an important issue? Why or why not?

2. What did you find the most interesting about studying this issue?

3. What did you find the least interesting about studying this issue?

4. Did you learn any new information about this issue in this class?

JOURNAL #5: INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION

Please tell me a little bit about how you chose the topic for your individual speech.

1. What topic have you chosen for your speech?

2. Was it your first choice, or did you have to change because someone else had already chosen the topic you wanted to do?

3. Do you feel personally interested in the topic (as opposed to just doing the work to fulfill the assignment)? Why or why not?

4. Did you pick a topic related to something we've already heard about in class, either through the three units (men & women issues; gangs; poverty) or through the speakers or through the readings? Or did you try to find something totally different to talk about?

5. Is the topic of your individual speech something you already knew a lot about?

6. Have you learned much new information about the topic by doing this project?

7. Do you think the topic you chose is an important issue? Why or why not?

APPENDIX F

SUBJECT'S DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL ISSUES - HOME COUNTRY COMPARED TO U.S.; DISCUSSION CONTACTS IN U.S.

SUBJECT	DISCUSS MORE IN U.S. OR HOME COUNTRY?	DISCUSSION CONTACTS IN U.S.			
		Member of Home Country	Another Internation'l Student	American Students	Americans Non-Students
ALI	unsure	X		X	
LING	home	X	X		
YASU	unsure		X		
KIMIAKI	here				X
MAYUMI	here/home equally	X			
OLIVIA	home	X	X		X
HOUSAN	here/home equally	X			X
BOBBY	here		X		
PARK	here	X	X		
ETSUKO	here	X	X		X
TOTALS	unsure - 2 home - 2 here - 4 equal - 2	7	6	1	4

APPENDIX G

JOURNALS 1, 3 AND 4: NEW INFORMATION LEARNED ABOUT THE ISSUE IN CLASS?

New Information Learned About the Issues in Class?

	Gender-Based Issues			Gangs			Poverty		
SUBJECT	**Yes**	**No**	**No Answer**	**Yes**	**No**	**No Answer**	**Yes**	**No**	**No Answer**
ALI	X			X					X
LING	X			X			X		
YASU	X			X			X		
KIMIAKI		X		X			X		
MAYUMI		X			X		X		
OLIVIA	X				X			X	
HOUSAN	X			X					X*
BOBBY		X		X				X	
PARK	X			X			X		
ETSUKO	X			X			X		
TOTALS	7	3		8	2		6	2	2

* subject did not submit journal entry for this unit

APPENDIX H

JOURNALS 2 AND 5:
NEW INFORMATION LEARNED ABOUT THE TOPIC CHOSEN FOR GROUP/INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION IN DOING THE PROJECT?

New Information Learned About the Topic Chosen for Group/Individual Presentroup/Individual Presentation by Doing the Assignment

	GROUP PRESENTATION			INDIVIDUAL SPEECH		
SUBJECT	**Yes**	**No**	**No Answer**	**Yes**	**No**	**No Answer**
ALI	X*			X		
LING	X			X*		
YASU		X*		X*		
KIMIAKI	X			X		
MAYUMI	X			X*		
OLIVIA	X*			X		
HOUSAN	X					X**
BOBBY	X*			X		
PARK	X*			X*		
ETSUKO	X			X		
TOTALS	9	1	-	9	-	1

* subject had much knowledge about the topic prior to the class
** subject did not submit final journal entry for this component

APPENDIX I

SUBJECT'S SATISFACTION WITH NUMBER OF UNITS, AMOUNT OF INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSIONS, AND DEPTH OF DISCUSSIONS

Subject Satisfied with Structure of Course?

SUBJECT	NO. OF UNITS Too Many	Too Few	Just Right	ENOUGH INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSIONS? Films	Articles	ENOUGH DEPTH TO DISCUSSIONS?
ALI			X	no	no	no answer
LING	X			yes	no	not always
YASU			X	yes	yes	no answer
KIMIAKI			X	yes	no	no answer
MAYUMI			X	yes	no	no answer
OLIVIA			X	yes	not always	not always
HOUSAN			X	yes	yes	no answer
BOBBY			X	yes	no	not always
PARK			X	yes	no	not always
ETSUKO	X			no	no	no
TOTALS	2	-	8	y = 8 n = 2	y = 2 n = 7 not alw. = 1	n = 1 not always =4 no answer = 5