



# GLOBAL ISSUES CHATTERBOX

KOTESOL - Global Issues SIG

Issue 2

Inside this issue:

## Temples and T-shirts: Challenges in Cambodia

By Dr. Robert Snell

The lines penned by Charles Dickens “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times” seem very apropos of modern Cambodia. Having visited the country for the first time this winter, I was overwhelmed by the experience. I consider myself a fairly well heeled traveler, but Cambodia caught me quite unawares.

I was visiting my brother in Thailand, and we decided to tear ourselves away from the allurements of Bangkok to take a quick trip to Angkor Wat. My brother had

been several years earlier and highly recommended the trip. Due to financial constraints, we were forced to opt for the overland travel package. Although considerably more “rigorous” than air travel, I highly recommend it. It gives a real sense of progressing thru the country, although everything is colored by the jarring bus ride, the choking dust and the various tout scams to relieve you of your cash. Cambodia is a devastatingly poor nation, and the homes you pass on the main road

are pitiful by almost any standard. After 6 hours of bone-rattling travel, we arrived in Siem Reap, the urban center for exploring the temples of the region. It was almost like arriving in another country.

Siem Reap is a bustling, lively city, which still has a sleepy, provincial look to much of it. Although it looks to house only several hundred thousand, we were told the population was close to 2 million.

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## Chatterbox Issue 2

By Scott Jackson

Thank you for reading our second issue of the *Global Issues Chatterbox*. A special thank you goes out to Dr. Robert Snell who authored the featured article about Cambodia. Also David Royal for his lesson plan entitled, “Boycott”, and Dave MacCannell for his wonderful cartoon.

Kim Hey Min and Song Soo Yeon are teachers from Ansan Boogok Middle School and Donong Middle respectively, who graciously contributed their comparison of Korean and Vietnamese cultures. Many thanks to the both of them as well.

The *Global Issues Chatterbox* is a newsletter whose goal is to provide information

about what’s going on in the world and to understand why things happen through a cultural perspective. Each issue will allow for **feedback and opinions**. If you agree or disagree about things said within the issue, you are **invited to express your opinion**, and perhaps your side of the story will be published in the next issue.

A lesson plan will be provided showing how culture and global issues can be used in the classroom. You are invited to share your ideas here as well. For the artists, satirical cartoons are welcome...please send them in .jpg format. And for those who have

been around, please feel free to submit articles about the places you’ve lived, taught or visited.

Don’t be limited by what has been suggested here. Any material that have a global issues or cultural theme will be graciously accepted.

All submission can be forwarded to: [globalissuessig@gmail.com](mailto:globalissuessig@gmail.com).

## Cambodia: Continued from Page 1

The road between the airport and the town is crowded with palatial hotels, complete with lovely landscaping, pools, pretty night lights and all the amenities modern travelers expect. The contrast between such conspicuous consumption and the poverty seen previously along the road was very jarring. As we were on the budget tour, we skipped past all these enticements and found a guest house for \$5 a night. Later, we did upgrade to a hotel with a pool, but still stayed in the mid-range hotels. Our new hotel was on a modest scale, but very pretty. They also made an attempt to educate visitors about some of the challenges facing Siem Reap, due to increased tourism. One serious problem is the shortage of drinking water. The major hotels require huge quantities of water. Likewise, the hotels create considerable sewage. Currently there is no sewage treatment plant in Siem Reap; sewage is treated with leeching fields. This is causing a problem, because the ground water is being polluted, and villages for miles around Siem Reap have no drinkable water now. The hotel pool began to seem like an unwaranted luxury.

We were told by a local that Siem Reap really only began to develop in a big way since 2003. That is when the big tour groups began to arrive, prompting the construction of the new hotels and all their attendant services. We were also surprised to learn about the large number of Korean visitors to the area. Two different Cambodians told us they were planning to study Korean, so they could better communicate with the Korean tourists. It is very humbling to see someone who makes only \$1 or \$2 an hour, but yet determined to better their lives thru the study of a difficult and complex language. I felt there was much to learn from the Cambodians, both for my stu-

dents and for myself.

Visiting the temples was a truly inspirational event. The temple of Angkor Wat is merely the largest and most famous of some 200 temples spread out thru the jungle and surrounding coun-

*Two different Cambodians told us they were planning to study Korean, so they could better communicate with the Korean tourists.*

tryside. The vast scale on which many of them were designed, the somewhat melancholy air of ruin and neglect which surrounds them, the staggering amount of manpower required to erect them-all of it was overwhelming. On visiting Bantay Sree, an outlying temple one hour from Angkor Wat, I had a chance to meet some of the local young people. Six or seven teen-aged girls were selling postcard, t-shirts and typical tourist fare. I wasn't in the market for anything, but agreed to buy a cold drink. I then began to talk with the girls. Their English ability was quite good, and they were not shy about using it. I complemented them on their English and asked how they could speak so well. They said they practiced English one hour a day. My next question was if they were high school students. They replied they were too poor, and couldn't afford to attend school. For some reason, that felt like a psychic blow. The girls were so vivacious, outgoing and friendly, and evidenced such proficiency with English. Yet due to their financial circumstances, they could not attend school and eked out a living selling t-shirts to tourists.

Upon returning to Korea, I began to think about how I could share my trip to Cambodia with my students in a constructive way. One obvious topic could be to explore the benefits/drawbacks of unrestricted capitalism, in this case in the form of a tourist explosion. While it certainly provides much needed jobs and money flowing into the economy, it also creates new problems, such as the water shortage. Another useful topic could be how to develop sustainable development in the face of rampant economic growth. There are a number of organizations already at work in Siem Reap, focusing on sustainable development. However, I am sure there could be more.

Although many worthy groups have already begun good work in Cambodia, I felt moved to do something myself. Thinking about the growing number of Korean tourists to the country, I considered organizing a teaching program using Korean university students. They could volunteer to visit Cambodia during the term breaks and offer language instruction in Korean, and perhaps English as well. In turn, the students would be exposed to a new culture, and to a host of challenges which urgently need solutions. They would also be helping to share their own culture, in a way in which they could be proud.

This newsletter is dedicated to promoting global issues within the language classroom. What better way for us to do this than to develop a language and cultural exchange between Korea and Cambodia. If you would be interested in getting involved with this project, drop me an e-mail and introduce yourself. I hope I hear from lots of you.

Bob Snell, Busan University  
bsnell2@yahoo.com

### Did You Know??

Vietnam is the second largest exporter of rice which is a very staple and vital food for the Vietnamese.

### Did You Know??

The flag of Vietnam has a red background with a yellow star at the centre of the flag. The yellow color represents the ethnicity of Vietnamese people. The star has five points, they represent the workers, peasants, soldiers, intellectuals and merchants.

You can walk in to any clothes shop in Hoi An, Vietnam, and they will open up the latest cat walk fashion pages and make up whichever outfit you pick, tailored to your exact size! You can even have a pair of shoes made in 3 hours!

## Lesson 2: Team Teaching in Korea

By: Scott Jackson

In 2006, I had the opportunity to work beside a Korean-English teacher at Bijon Middle School in Pyeong-Taek, Gyeonggi-do. As part of my duties with the Gyeonggi-do Institute for Foreign Language Education, I was assigned to co-teach in the public school to gain insight and experience of the Korean-English education system as it is realistically implemented. The intention of this paper is to give an inside view of that experience.

On September 4, 2006, Superintendent, Kim Jin Choon, of the Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education hosted an orientation session for 140 new international teachers to be placed into the public school system with a Korean partner. It is the goal of the Korean board of education to place native English speaking teachers in every public school by 2008. In Choon's welcoming address, he stated, "Our motto of long term goal has been, and is, 'educating world's foremost, well-rounded global individuals'".

Although the 2006 Orientation book gives no indication as to who Jessica Howe is, she introduced the lecture of the day informing the attendees that communicative activities are the key to accomplishing the Superintendent's goals. Ms. Howe continues her introduction by stating, "Since the communicative activities are usually follow-ups to topics already introduced in the unit, as students perform the communicative activities, you and the co-team teacher can go around the room and make yourselves available for help with vocabulary and instruction, as needed". Referencing my experience as a teacher trainer, I can confidently say that the general consensus of the public school teachers is that "we don't have time to do follow-up activities". I can also say with confidence having co-taught for six weeks at Bijon Middle School, that the time issue is simply not true.

My co-team teacher's name is Lee, Myungai. She's a 20 year middle school English teaching veteran with excellent communication skills. It took her all of five minutes to explain the mechanics of the lesson in a given class. That left us about 40 minutes to do communicative, task or project-based follow-up activities.

Korea's 7<sup>th</sup> national curriculum and the preceding curriculum still in the planning stages are heavily focused on implementing culture into the English classroom. As I

entered Bijon Middle School, I had this in mind, so when Mrs. Lee suggested we give the students a project, I immediately planned a cultural project-based lesson.

Since I'm Canadian, the project was focused on Canadian culture. Each class averaged about 38 students, so we divided them into eight groups. Each group was assigned a slightly different task to complete about Canada as follows: **Group 1** – draw a map of Canada with provincial and territorial divides; identify each province and its capital city. Write the population of each capital city. **Group 2** – Do the same as group 1 without the capital cities and population, and draw or paste each province's flower into the correct area of the map. **Group 3** – Identify four Canadian national holidays. Find pictures of each holiday and write short sentences describing them. **Group 4** – Find pictures of three sports famous in Canada and write short sentences describing each. **Group 5** – Draw a picture of the Canadian flag and explain it with short sentences. **Group 6** – Same as group 2, but instead of flowers, draw or paste each provincial flag. **Group 7** – Find information about the 'Calgary Stampede'. Paste pictures and explain each with short sentences. **Group 8** – identify a few of Canada's staple foods and write a short opinion about each - complete with pictures.

For the next three class periods, the students brought information they had researched for homework. Mrs. Lee and I paced the classroom aiding and making suggestions as needed. The final class period allowed each group to stand up in front and present their finished projects in English.

The purpose of the project was to first get the students using their already learned linguistic abilities casually; i.e. without the aid of a text-book. It was next to introduce aspects of another culture in a fun and pleasing way. Lastly, the presentation not only gave them experience speaking English in front of others, but to also share what they learned about Canada; thus everyone in the class learned every aspect of the project.

Mrs. Lee and I made a video that

shows the results complete with interviews with the students on their feelings toward the project. Throughout November and December, 2006, Mrs. Lee and I presented this video at various chapter meetings. The video is now available for public view and is entitled, "Bijon Middle School". By skipping to section 3 of the video (time index approximately: ), you can see the reaction of the students.

Mrs. Lee and I both agreed that the only thing we would change in a project-based class such as this is more attention would be given to the proper oral presentation skills required.

This particular project gave the students experience applying the vocabulary they have been learning since third grade elementary school into a real situation. The first day of this project proved to be rather difficult to get the students critically thinking out the language in an unknown situation. Mrs. Lee and I guided them with questions related to past lessons, and in some cases, the students looked back in their textbook to verify the grammar of what they wanted to say. In essence, they had the vocabulary, but were unsure of the structure because until now, they had only applied structure through fill in the blank exercises. By the third day, the language was coming out much more naturally and without the aid of the textbook.

The next phase of our team teaching efforts focused on task-based, communicative exercises. Check out the next Issue of the Global Issues Chatterbox for details on that.

### References:

**Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education** (2006) *Orientation 2006: Assistant Native English Teachers in Gyeonggi Province*. Unpublished.

Scott Jackson,  
Teacher Trainer—GIFLE

# The Funnies

By Dave MacCannell

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**What in the world is going on?**

Striving to unite the world through global understanding and culture.

Have an opinion?  
Want to submit an article?  
Submit a lesson plan?  
Make a cartoon?  
Have questions?

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Please submit by August 15, 2007

Theme for next issue: Indonesia; however all submissions will be accepted.

# Global Issues Lesson Plan 1: *Boycott!*

By David Royal

- Purpose:** 1. To give students experience finding and evaluating information from the Internet.
2. To deepen students understanding of the consequences and responsibilities of consumer choice.

**Level:** high school or older

**Time:** approximately 1 hour

**Note:** Handouts are not required for this activity, but if you are interested in using them, they are available here: <http://www.esletc.com/GIMaterials.shtml#boycott>. Also, students will need Internet access.

**Step 1 (optional):** Give some basic tips on doing Internet searches. The Using Google handout is one way to do this. I tend to focus on the benefits of using well-placed quotation marks and the importance of using multiple, specific keywords. If you are teaching in a room with computers and an overhead projector, demonstrating the various techniques could be useful. More Internet-savvy classes may skip this step.

**Step 2:** Introduce the pre-discussion questions (below) and answer any vocabulary questions that come up. I find it useful to give sample answers for some of the questions, especially 1 and 5. Have students discuss the questions in small groups (~15 minutes) and then have volunteers from each group share their ideas with the class.

**Step 3:** Using the last pre-discussion question as a starting point, introduce the concepts of boycotts and consumer responsibility. This may be new to some students, so it is best to proceed slowly. The idea of a boycott may be more difficult for students to understand if they are not particularly brand conscious. When I teach this, I explain that corporations exist primarily to generate wealth for their owners. That is their main responsibility. Therefore,

I explain, our responsibility as consumers is making sure that we give our dollars only to companies whose practices we approve of and wish to be a part of. We as consumers are responsible for controlling corporate behavior. I then explain that, sometimes, groups of people choose to boycott a company, withdrawing their support, because they do not approve of what that company is doing.

**Step 4:** Introduce the homework assignment. For homework, I ask students to investigate some boycotts. You can use the Boycott Activity handout, or simply ask them to look into some of the brands that came up during the discussion. I ask students to find out both who is boycotting a given company and the reasons behind it. I tell them that companies may have different people boycotting them for different reasons. On my handout I use Coca-Cola, Nike, Disney and Starbucks, only because (in Hawaii) these brands were familiar to my students. In addition to researching a few of the brands we discussed in class, I encourage them to look for a boycott that they agree with, but this is not required. This assignment could be done as homework or in a computer lab during class time.

**Step 5:** Ask students to get into small groups and have them use the post-discussion questions to share what they found. Next, have volunteers share their information with the class. If students are interested in the issues that come up, it is possible to use this activity to lead into a classroom activism project, where students try to spread awareness of an issue or take part in direct consumer action.

If you use this activity or have other ideas for bringing activism into language classes please visit my website. I'd love to hear from you!

## Pre-discussion Questions

1. How do you decide what to buy? What things do you consider? (Brand, country of origin, price, environmental effects, treatment of workers, appearance / style, quality, etc.)
2. Which companies or brands do you like? Why do you like them? What do you know about them?
3. Are there any companies or brands that you don't like? What don't you like about them? What do you know about them?
4. Why do companies exist? What purpose do they serve? What good things can they do?

What types of bad things could a company do? Who is responsible for making sure that they don't do these things?

## Post-discussion Questions

1. What did you find out about each of the companies you researched? Who is boycotting them? Why?
2. Do you agree or disagree with the boycotts that you found out about? Did anything that you learned change how you feel about these companies? Are you more or less likely to buy their products? Would you ever boycott a company? If not, why not? If so, what type of thing would make you boycott a company?

By David Royal

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# Vietnam: A Cultural Comparison to Korea

By: Kim Hye-Min and Song Soo Yeon

© **Vietnam (Vietnamese: Việt Nam)**  
official Name : the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

## 1) Geography

the easternmost nation on the Indochinese Peninsula. It borders China to the north, Laos to the northwest, and Cambodia to the southwest.

## 2) Population

Over 85 million, the 13th most populous country in the world.

-Ethnicity

1) "Viet" or "Kinh", account for 86.2 percent of the population

\*A homogeneous social and ethnic majority group

\*Exert political and economic control

\*Purveyors of the dominant culture

2) More than 54 ethnic minorities

## 3) Economy

listed among the "Next Eleven" economies;

according to government figures, GDP growth was 8.17% in 2006, the second fastest growth rate among countries in East Asia and the fastest in Southeast Asia.

\*For many decades, Vietnam's economy was plagued with inefficiency and corruption in state programs, poor quality and underproduction and restrictions on economic activities and trade. It also suffered from the trade embargo from the United States and most of Europe after the Vietnam War.

### \*"đổi mới" (Renovation)

In 1986, the Sixth Party Congress(the government) introduced significant economic reforms with market economy elements as part of a broad economic reform package called "đổi mới" (Renovation). Private ownership was encouraged in industries, commerce and agriculture. Simultaneously, foreign investment grew threefold and domestic savings quintupled. Manufacturing, information technology and high-tech industries form a large and fast-growing part of the national economy.

## 4) Languages

86.2% of the population speak Vietnamese as a native language

\* In its early history, Vietnamese writing used Chinese characters.

**\*In the 13th century, the Vietnamese developed their own set of characters called Chữ nôm.**

## © Culture Analysis

**The similarities between Korea and Vietnam**

### 1) Relationship with China

**\*in Vietnam history**

In 111 BC, the Chinese Han Dynasty consolidated Nanyue(modern northern Vietnam) into their empire.

For the next one thousand years, Vietnam was mostly under Chinese rule.

**\*Both countries have something in common because of China's influence.**

#### **a) Language**

In its early history, both Koreans and Vietnamese writing used Chinese characters.

\*In the 13th century, the Vietnamese developed their own set of characters called Chữ nôm.

\*In the 15th century, the Koreans developed "Hangeul"

#### **b) Religion**

Mahayana Buddhism, and Confucianism

-have strongly influenced the religious and cultural life of the people in Korea and Vietnam.

#### **c) Practice Ancestor Worship**

-Practically all Koreans and Vietnamese, regardless of their religious background (including Catholic or Buddhist), practice Ancestor Worship.

#### **d) Education**

Due to Korea and Vietnam's long association with China, Korean and Vietnamese culture remain strongly Confucian with its emphasis on filial duty (Children are devoted to their parents.) Education and self-betterment are highly valued.

### 2) colonialism

**-Both countries have experience with being colonized.**

Korea was colonized by Japan, while Vietnam by France.

\*The Japanese and French administrations imposed significant political and cultural changes on Korea and Vietnamese societies.

\*A rapid nationalist political movement soon emerged.

### 3) The civil war and the division

#### **a) Korea**

The Korean War (1950-1953) left the two Koreas separated by the DMZ, remaining technically at war through the Cold War to the present day.

#### **b) Vietnam**

\*The Vietnam War occurred from 1959 to April 30, 1975.

\*The war reunified the Vietnamese under a communist government.

\*To a degree, the war may be viewed as a Cold War conflict between the U.S., its allies, and the Republic of Vietnam on one side, and the Soviet Union, its allies, the People's Republic of China, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the other. Others, viewed the conflict as a civil war between communist and non-communist Vietnamese factions.

### 4) Economy - Developing very fast

#### **a) Korea**

From 1962–1989, South Korea underwent a remarkable economic transformation from being poverty-ridden to attaining the status of a newly industrialized nation.

#### **b) Vietnam**

according to government figures, GDP growth was 8.17% in 2006, the second fastest growth rate among countries in East Asia and the fastest in Southeast Asia.

### 5) Rice Farming

Rice agriculture was the main business of the two countries' ancestors.

Rice farming needs a lot of labor power, so people were living together for cooperation with each other. This strongly influences the two countries' collectivist mindsets.

*Kim Hye Min is a middle school teacher of 1 year with Ansan Boogok Middle School. Song Soo Yeon is a middle school teacher with Donong Middle School also with 1 year of experience.*

## Let's Talk Culture

By Scott Jackson

Omaggio Hadley (2001) quotes Seelye (1984, 1993) by stating

“Even if teachers’ own knowledge (about culture) is quite limited, their proper role is not to impart facts, but to help students attain the skills that are necessary to make sense out of the facts they themselves discover in their study of the target culture.”

As a teacher trainer, I use this statement as a basis for teaching how to recognize cultural patterns. This in turn enables a trainee to create lesson plans that encourage students to recognize differences in thought processes. A good foundation to begin the process can be found at [www.geert-hofstede.com](http://www.geert-hofstede.com). As you scroll down the page, you will find a summary of Hofstede’s Dimensions of culture. These dimensions include, *Power Distance index (PDI)*; *Individualism (IND)*; *Masculinity (MAS)*; *Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)* and *Long-Term Orientation (LTO)*. Hofstede suggests that every culture in the world has all five dimensions, and he measures them on a scale of 0 to 116. For example, **Korea’s** numbers are: **PDI: 60; IND: 18; MAS: 63; UAI: 85; LTO: 75**. This doesn’t mean much until they are compared to other cultures around the world. For example, **Australia’s** numbers are: **PDI: 36; IND: 90; MAS: 51; UAI: 61; LTO: 31**.

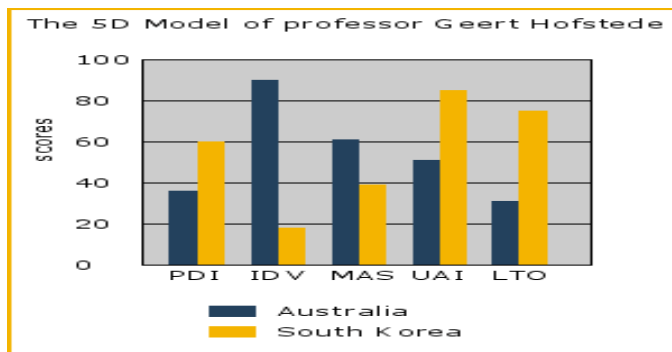
Once the trainees understand what each dimension represents, I ask them to com-

pare the numbers of Korea to another country and give examples of how these two societies are different.

The first dimension - *Power Distance Index* - indicates how much inequality there is between people, lists Korea at 63. This is higher than Australia. I ask the trainees to come up with examples of behavior

*the trainees have a very clear insight into their own cultural behaviours, and can now identify the behaviours of other cultures and relate them back to Hofstede’s model.*

in Korean society to reinforce this concept. The most common example is the use of Korean language identifying *juniors* and *seniors*. The Korean language is based on a hierarchy which is influenced by thousands of years of Confucianism. This hierarchy determines the level of politeness through verb endings one uses depending on the age of those communicating. If a younger person (the junior) is speaking to an elder (the senior), the verb endings chosen will indicate a high level of politeness. The elder will be allowed to use a lesser polite version of the same verb. Although there are levels of politeness in English, the degree to which society enforces polite language between juniors and seniors is not as stringent as is with Korean social rules through language. This is one aspect of why the PDI number in Korea is higher than that of Australia.



[http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_dimensions.php](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php)

After the trainees have come up with a few more ideas, I give examples that reinforce the lower number of Canada (PDI: 39), my home country. Through this discussion, the trainees begin to see cultural patterns.

I continue this through the other four dimensions; examples are elicited and discussed. At the end of a 90 minute class, the trainees have a clearer insight into their own cultural behaviours, and can begin to identify the behaviours of other cultures and relate them back to Hofstede’s model.

The next step in my program is to introduce the different communication styles and relate those differences back to Hofstede’s dimensions. From there we start analyzing differences in communication. This develops into a much better understanding of cross-cultural communication, and allows the trainee to analyze the conversations in their English textbooks on more cultural basis. In the end, this cultural awareness can be delivered to the students of English, resulting in a better understanding of how the English language is used. The teacher gives clues of identifying cultural patterns through conversations, rather than simply stating facts about other countries.

In the next issue, we will take a look at the different communication styles and how they relate to Hofstede’s dimensions of culture. A lesson plan will be included. Your homework is to look at the Hofstede web site and understand the dimensions of culture.

### References:

Omaggio Hadley, A. (2001) *Teaching Language in Context (Third Edition)* Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle

Scott Jackson,  
Teacher Trainer—GIFLE