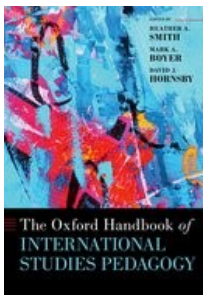

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CHAPTER

1 Pedagogies for Cultural Change: From Multimodal Learning to Building Theory in International Relations

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Abstract

How does (or should) the international relations classroom respond to a time of cultural change? To prepare the international relations practitioners for tomorrow, this chapter suggests addressing cultural changes through immersive understandings with borrowings from arts and anthropology, both known for interpreting cultural meanings. International relations represents cultural meanings about the world and frequently analyzes the cultural origins of the discipline. Culture is about the constitution of symbols, meanings, and rituals, and the institutions that support them. International relations arose as a formal discipline in the twentieth century when cultural meanings of global politics were defined through European great power rivalries and subsequently the multilateral institutions that arose after World War II. The current cultural changes include new forms of international interactions shaped through artificial intelligence and digital technologies, reckoning with global exclusions through oppressive structures such as racism, and existential crises such as climate change and pandemics. Three cultural techniques relevant for international relations are discussed: cultural immersions that enable reflexivity, multimodal techniques that enable complex consciousness of human interactions, and ethnographies that enable listening for building theoretical repertoires. Taken together, the techniques develop a critical consciousness about the world to recognize and adapt to cultural change through problem solving.

Keywords: cultural change, multimodality, reflexivity, listening, ethnography, problem solving

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Introduction

Stanley Hoffman's classic 1977 essay on international relations (IR) traces the ascendance of the discipline in the postwar era through the prism of power politics. Hoffmann (50) notes that there were "relays between kitchens of power and academic salons" that supplied US foreign policy both its purpose and a theory in support. The title of the essay notes that international relations emerged as a uniquely American social science riding the crest of realism. Published the same year as Hoffman's essay, *Power and Interdependence* (Keohane and Nye 1977), another classic in international relations, pushed away from a purely realist worldview in the discipline as US power shaped (and was shaped through) an increasingly interdependent world. The book reflected the prerogatives of both realism and liberalism. Further changes were afoot as the discipline accommodated itself to momentous events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Rio Earth Summit in 1992, or the proliferation of the internet in the 1990s. Cultural and technological change continues to hammer the paradigmatic walls of international relations.

The international relations classroom is eclectic and expansive to reflect the influence of multiple disciplines, theories, and methods. Its classroom texts reveal several worldviews including those reflecting the prerogatives of global power distributions (realism), the interdependence of its parts (liberalism), or historical structures of production (critical theory). Many debates in the discipline outline how IR theory
p. 4 syllabi veer toward one or the other ontology, and a turn-of-the-century reckoning from Alker ↳ and Biersteker (1984) pointed out that international relations syllabi in North America suffered from a "parochial behavioralism" in their epistemological orientation to the neglect of other methods. Miles Kahler (1997) noted that international relations forged its disciplinary boundaries through a consideration of anomalous events, but explained them with known theory (chiefly realism) and methods, with a debate between historical traditionalists and scientific behavioralists. Later analyses continued to point out how the discipline catered to American interests or furthered parochialisms (Hagmann and Biersteker 2014).

As the discipline treads through another century after the first academies of international relations were founded in the 1920s, there are ways that it can respond to the blind spots of its past and the cultural changes in the present. In fact, cultural changes in the present have increasingly highlighted the blind spots of the past (LeBaron et al. 2020). For example, the origins of international relations lie not just in great power politics but also the challenges of the management of colonies at the turn of the nineteenth century. There was another management trait that existed in the interwar period. In 1923, the Graduate Institute in Geneva was founded to train professional international bureaucrats for the League of Nations. Thus, despite the foundational myth of an American social science, international relations had other origins in colonial interactions and the bureaucracies of multilateral institutions. Conceptually, one of the thrusts of international relations from that area was the emphasis on the study of diplomacy and diplomatic histories. Another was the label of "idealism" bestowed upon multilateral cooperation to mitigate conflict through international institutions (Carr 1964).

How does (or should) the international relations classroom respond to a time of cultural change? Cultural change is about the constitution of new meanings. Culture is also about continuity. IR's current interdisciplinarity and mixed methods provide that continuity, even with dominant methods and paradigms as pointed out above. To prepare the international relations practitioners for tomorrow, the chapter examines the development of a cultural consciousness through 'anthropological' immersions that enable reflexivity, multimodal techniques that allow for listening, and ethnographic skills to both question and rebuild theoretical repertoires. The purpose is to recognize and adapt to cultural change through problem solving. The chapter first discusses pedagogical continuities before suggesting pedagogies for cultural change.

Cultural Continuities and Departures

Academic eclecticism was baked into international relations along with the prerogatives of power politics in the United States that informed the incipient discipline. In the late 1940s, international relations was in search of relevant disciplines and theories—although the search was shaped with U.S. interests, power, and resources. This is readily apparent in the discipline's practices. The journal *World Politics* began to publish in
p. 5 1948 from Yale and then Princeton. The International Studies Association was established in ↳ 1959 chiefly for American scholars. *World Politics* in its first year published several research commentaries and a project funded through Carnegie Corporation to incorporate relevant disciplines and issues that would define the core of international relations. Grayson Kirk (1949) at Columbia University headed the Carnegie project so that the student of international relations, chiefly concerned with study of foreign policy, would "effect a synthesis of a bewildering variety of materials" (426). Eight areas of synthesis were selected for the Carnegie project for their intersection with international relations: geography, technology, social psychology, demography, political and social institutions, military power, international organization, and propaganda.

Three intellectual searches shaped international relations that guided both teachers and students. The first was the *search for theory*. The Hoffmann (1977) essay was notable for detailing how Hans Morgenthau (1967) presented parsimonious theorization, while Raymond Aron (1966) argued against theory to present a far more historical and complex representation of world politics. Both writers owed allegiance to power politics. Second, the *search for method* meant a departure from historical techniques to embrace behavioral methods that Alker and Biersteker (1984) would later characterize as behavioral parochialism. The third was the *search for national interest* both intellectually and in policy circles. National interest became the principal factor in theorization and behavioral specifications. The discipline specifically catered to US national interests. "The international relations infrastructure that had begun to appear in the 1930s exploded after World War II as government and foundations increased their demand for knowledge to match America's new global interests" (Kahler 1997). Taken together, all three searches also meant that the unit of analysis for international relations became the nation-state.

The searches in international relations have often been driven by "a turn in international events" that seem anomalous (Kahler 1997). James N. Rosenau (1997, 16) cautions that the IR scholar must predicate puzzles over anomalies. Puzzles are perplexing patterns in need of explanations, while anomalies are departures from known explanations, and for Kahler that explanation often became some amended version of realism. The fixation on events or anomalies has produced some faddishness in the discipline even when marshaling historical resources and patterns. Realists trace the origins of their thought to Thucydides, Sun Tzu, and Kautilya to point out historical origins for a paradigm that became predominant in a discipline after World War II. Similarly, the realist opposition to idealism, or the characterization of exchange and reciprocity as idealism, ignored the historical patterns of economic transactions both within and across political units and boundaries. By the 1960s, complex interdependence was acknowledged, but the paradigm continued to be labeled "idealism" from the perspective of questions about war/peace and cooperation/noncooperation. This turn to idealism ignored the importance of economic transactions on their own, beyond equations of national interest or the nation-state.

The tussles between realism and liberalism, and their undergirding with historical and scientific methods, were accompanied in the "classroom" with a plethora of innovative pedagogies. Scholars could draw upon
p. 6 an array of resources to introduce the world ↳ to students. Kirk (1949) mentions the following from 1948: "Memoirs, documents, autobiographies, newspapers, government hand-outs, propaganda publications, and the like." As the study of international relations deepened, other "materials" were added. Introductory international relations courses frequently presented students with films and documentaries (Gregg 1998;

Swimelar 2013). Study abroad programs that started at universities in the United States in the 1920 began to grow even more extensively in the post–World War II era.

Despite the proliferation of pedagogical practices, one must ask whether the introduction of new materials and resources for students significantly changed the way IR was practiced in the United States. The immediate answer would be in the negative. Films such as the 1964 classic *Dr. Strangelove* became a staple of introductory IR courses. Although they made students question the consequences of nuclear weapons and heightened sensibilities about conflict, the theoretical repertoire at that time was chiefly made up of realism, and peace was imagined negatively as an absence of war. The *Journal of Conflict Resolution* was founded in 1959, with behavioral methods at the forefront. The emphasis in many articles was the absence of war or lack of conflict given a realist world order.

Similarly, while study abroad programs ostensibly produced global outlooks and understandings, their immediate instrumental aims were located in national interests. In the late 1970s, an educational observer noted the importance of study abroad and educational exchange as "consequential to the national interest" and cited from the 1979 *Report to the President from the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies*: "U.S. interests … are affected swiftly and profoundly by events beyond our borders. The protection of those interests more than ever requires high quality research in academia as well as in government, and an aware and involved citizenry. We must also encourage informed and sympathetic views of America in other lands. Exchange of persons contributes uniquely to meeting these needs" (Perkins 1979), Critical accounts continue to point out that study abroad programs further US interests. One critic notes that American students often appear in "foreign" countries with paternalistic attitudes: "The discourse of study abroad surreptitiously reproduces the logic of colonialism, legitimizes American imperialist desires, and allows for the interests of U.S. foreign policy to be articulated through the specious rhetoric of global universality" (Zemach-Bersin 2007, 17).

Edward Said made a similar point in his monumental volume *Orientalism* in 1978, but with a critical trajectory: genealogies of discourse in the Occident or the Western world arose out of power and catered to colonial and postcolonial domination without bothering to validate their often dehumanizing depictions of the Orient or the East. A book review of Kumar Ghosal's *People in Colonies* in the first volume of *World Politics* reveals some unwillingness to engage with the human consequences of colonialism or refrain from patronizing a non-Western viewpoint: "In part his book is an old-style and slashing attack on imperialism as aggressive and rapacious, benefiting its instigators but not its victims. It is not unreasonable to assume
p. 7 that the type of thinking represented by ↳ Mr. Goshal is symptomatic of the restive intelligentsia of the colonial and quasi-colonial world" (Emerson 1949, 534).

Some caution is necessary at this point. An overemphasis on only locating US national interests in international relations can also marginalize the multiple contributions from historical pedagogical techniques. While no doubt IR's theories and pedagogies privileged realism, this privilege may not have determined all outcomes in its favor. The proliferation of multiple paradigms in international relations is proof. Liberal, radical, Marxian, structural, and critical views continued to flourish and exercised influence on the discipline. Overdeterministic conceptions of national-interest-centered pedagogical practices also deny all consciousness and agency from students. Quantitative and qualitative evidence for the multiple effects of study abroad are not hard to find. International students educated in the United States or visiting scholars in programs such as the Fulbright Program may have carried favorable perceptions of the United States, but equally their own independent views (or career trajectories sitting in contrast to American values or interests) are also easy to locate.

This chapter does not provide an intellectual history of international relations but does note the connection between IR's major tenets and pedagogical practices. A look at the International Studies Association reveals a proliferation of theories and methods, and borrowings from multiple disciplines. In 2023, the ISA

represented 7,000 members in more than 100 countries and has 30 subsections.[1] *International Studies Perspectives*, one of the officials journals from the ISA, has been particularly active in documenting teaching practices.

International relations is increasingly aware of blind spots that were not immediately obvious to those who produced them. While paradigmatic and methodological debates are germane to any discipline, two current issues in IR are especially important for understanding the pedagogies proposed below. One is about the rational actor, seemingly borrowed from economics, where the term is seldom used. The rational actor or utility maximization agent remains a staple of IR theory but is increasingly supplemented with sociological analyses that embed actor interests in culture, history, and institutions (Singh 2020a). The second blindspot is about the recognition of neglected historical issues in international relations. Puzzles and anomalies continue to highlight historical patterns and the inability of major paradigms to explain them. At present decolonization and postcolonial studies poses one of the biggest challenges to the construct of international relations theory (see also King and Thomas, this volume; and Sharma, this volume). These blind spots warrant use of new teaching techniques both to understand how they were produced and to move beyond them.

Techniques for Cultural Change

While the great power rivalry between the United States and China is one of the defining features of our
p. 8 times, there are several other issues that are equally at the forefront. ↳ They include the impact of digital and artificial intelligence technologies, the role of emerging powers and regionalism, a resurgence of interests in issues of coloniality and postcolonialism including racism, and global existential crises such as climate change and pandemics. To this may be added the rising cultural anxieties in an interconnected world that may be contributing to the rise of global populisms and economic nationalism.

To prepare the IR student, this chapter suggests a set of techniques that heighten students' consciousness through reflexivity, listening, and building theory from the ground up, rather than at the systemic level as was the case with many of IR's historical paradigms. Taken together, they speak to building and questioning extant cultural understandings. Having used these techniques in my own scholarship, I draw upon my experience, therefore the shift below, in a few places, from the third-person "omniscient" to a first-person narrative.

Toward Reflexivity through Cultural Immersions

One of the critiques of international relations, especially while speaking of the world through the lens of power politics, is that the discipline's practitioners are unaware of the position from which the world appears to organize itself into power structures and hierarchies. One person's order may be another's oppression. My book *Sweet Talk* (Singh 2017) offers a critique of David Lake's (2009) position in his book *Hierarchy* that hierarchy is a public good that benefits the weak. My critique of the hierarchy thesis is rooted in several types of quantitative and qualitative analyses, but the problem is rather prosaic: the producers of such theses are often unaware of the power from which they write. While we have come a long way from the patronizing 1948 book review about colonialism quoted above, we have advanced much less in understanding what coloniality means as a hegemonic intellectual practice.

Power politics is not the only paradigm whose practitioners are oblivious to the power of its practices. Liberals favoring foreign aid or other forms of global redistribution may not understand the pushback from the Global South on forms of paternalism. Marxists and critical theorists may scoff at the "false consciousness" of the downtrodden, who do not recognize their oppression in modes of production and

class relations. Experts in international organizations trained at elite academies may be unaware of their biases, even when advocating participatory strategies. One UNESCO veteran who had been with the organization for more than 30 years noted, "When I look back on the hours and hours I spent listening to experts who had never actually dealt with a juvenile delinquent, never had been party to the negotiation of a labor dispute, never tried to cope with problems of a mother of eleven in a favella or the dilemmas of small business in precarious situations talking airily about applied social science I must wonder where I have been these thirty years" (Lengyel 1986).

The corrective to bias in assumptions that a scholar makes about the world lies in reflexivity. It entails the
p. 9 recognition that both the propositions and the evidence collected ↳ to validate those propositions may be tainted with hidden biases and assumptions. For example, at face value the difference between "power produces order" or "oppression produces silence" may seem to be very little if the evidence lies in lack of protest in a society. Entire disciplines have been riven apart once reflexive assumptions were laid bare. The charge of racism in anthropology reflected its assumption that human nature or cultural practices could be understood through "primitive" people whom anthropologists sought to study through their ethnographies in the developing world. Current scholarship in anthropology has pointed out both the sophisticated forms of markets and exchange that earlier anthropologists had not recognized (Guyer 2004), along with the integration of these sites in the global economy, even if for exploitative purposes (Ferguson 1990). In international relations, while numerous scholars including Alker and Biersteker (1984) call for international relations to be reflexive, the discipline at the turn of the century appeared to be "the least self-reflexive of the Western social sciences" (Neufeld 1993, 53).

The classroom is an important site for introducing reflexive reasoning. It can start with a simple question: What's the social or intellectual context for understanding the readings for the day?[2] A more annoying question might be why a particular discipline has not paid attention to fundamental questions; fortunately, since the 1980s, and much to the consternation of all realists and a few liberals, international relations has increasingly asked questions about human oppression, exclusion, regionalisms, non-Western IR, emancipation, and normative paths forward. Older paradigms in international relations, through sophisticated forms of reasoning, blocked certain questions from being asked. I have argued elsewhere that questions of race and racism were kept out of international relations by a set of scholars who wrote about the Hobbesian "man", wretched but somehow not racist (Singh 2020b). Not all scholarship asking the old or new questions that need to be asked is "reflective," as Robert Keohane (1988) once called it, and often employs interpretative, positivist, and mixed-methods traditions.

While reflexivity can be introduced in the classroom through dialectical questioning or assigning readings about the subject, another way to approach the question is through narrative deconstruction and reconstruction. The current scholarship in international relations presenting the world as stories or narratives offers a guide (Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle 2014). Even "hard" social sciences such as economics, least likely to be interdisciplinary, have lately acknowledged that theories in their own disciplines are stories and paradigms (Shiller 2020). Most narrative structures feature human actors and their tragedy, triumph, or stasis. Simplistic theories provide little complexity to the circumstances of human beings. The understanding of human endeavor in international relations at the individual level would bewilder a storyteller looking for nuances of human character: the discipline features the overdetermined rational actor who arrives on world stage without any mention of the historical or cultural context, or the "left behind" whose behavior seems to be entirely determined through class relations.

Most international relations understands the agency of human beings or individual actors, known as the
p. 10 first image of international relations, through the effects of the third ↳ image of the structure of global order or the second level of nation-states. It is puzzling why the first image should always obey the diktats of the third image, especially when it does not. For example, the postwar experience of development

strategies presenting some form of a magic (Keynesian) multiplier mostly failed because human beings did not act the way they were modeled within the precepts of theory.

Reflexivity example: The way international development is imagined among social scientists often shapes the strategies and interventions that are practiced, including those from international development organizations. In the immediate postwar era, people in the 'developing world' were often seen as lacking aspiration or accepting their fate. Examples included the slow "Confucian" and "Hindu" rates of growth, attributed to spiritual and religious value systems. Many development strategies, therefore, sought to shake up local culture beliefs and provide people an outward orientation (Lerner 1958). The legacy of such ideas continues in cultural theses that attribute pro-development beliefs to groups and ethnicities within a country, including those that accord China's high rates of growth to Confucianism, in a most remarkable turnaround in ethnocentric theses (Harrison and Huntington 2000). The problem with attributing growth to some singular cultural trait is not that such theses exclude culture but that they make it simplistic, stereotypical, and static.

In my development classes, I have circulated films, novels, and other fictional narratives to introduce students to the complexity of cultural life in the postcolonial world. Fictional narratives tend to be less preachy and authoritative, unlike a documentary, and the characters become a part of ourselves as the writer or the filmmaker draws us into the story. They also reveal the agency or the lack of agency of individuals. The 2021 Booker Prize for fiction was awarded to South African Damon Galgut for his novel *The Promise*, which presents the difficulty and the internal opposition within an Afrikaner family toward transferring a cottage to the Black maid Salome, a promise that her mistress Rachel Swart extracts from her husband on her deathbed. As readers we visit the inner tormented world of Rachel Swart's husband and children and the anger that Salome's son Lukas feels toward the Swarts. The character about whom we know very little in the book is Salome. As the *New Yorker* review put it, "Salome has indeed been silenced by those in control of her destiny" (Wood 2021). At the end of the dark story, one has a hard time imagining policies of land redistribution that could be implemented in South Africa without force.

Fictional narratives can produce passive reading, listening, or seeing. In looking for ways to engage the students actively, I worked with the Center of New Design in Learning and Scholarship at Georgetown University (where I taught 2000–2012) to retell or design their own narratives from the fictional narratives that they had experienced: every student thus became conscious of the editing choices they made (see full exposition in Singh 2014). The resulting project was called "Cultural Identity Narratives," wherein students prepared 8–10-minute-long digital narratives based on fictional accounts (usually at least a film, a novel, and music) they had found.[3] Two preconditions were laid in: the accounts had to come from the developing
p. 11 world from people who either lived or ↳ claimed descent from there, and the students had to piece together "found" materials and not use their own words. This ensured some "bottom-up" quality to the narrative, rather than through the omniscient third-person narrator. Compare the following to the narrative from Zemach-Bersin (2007, 17) who was cited earlier:

> While studying abroad for a semester in Ghana in 2006, a white American student named Patrick was asked to become a small village's "Inconswahane"—the Chief of Development. According to Patrick, "The village had taken me in as one of them. And they gave me this chief kente cloth and hat and sandals and all these things." "Everywhere I went I was treated like a god," Patrick reported with elation; "It was amazing." … Patrick's story is more than a dramatic and unsettling reproduction of colonial fantasy and desire, complete with submissive natives who bear gifts and grant godlike authority to the white, western, developed man. It is, in fact, an explicit fulfillment of the imperialist and power-seeking goals imbedded within the American discourse of study abroad.

In the cultural identity narrative, the student translator experiences a culture intimately but also at a distance, always aware of being the editor of the story being represented: while the characters, visuals,

music, and text stay with the listener or viewer, the latter is not the expert. This is unlike being a theorist who pronounces omnisciently that the weak suffer what they must or the godlike status of a development strategist advocating interventions. The translation also makes the student conscious of the distance between them and the narrative. According to Sakai (2006, 74), "The translator is responsible for the translation but they cannot be held responsible for the pledges expressed in it, because the translator is someone who cannot say 'I.' " The active act of translation introduces the student to check the validity of the words they are using about "Others."

The act of translation is inherently reflexive and empathic. The 2022 International Booker Prize for literature was for the first time given to a Hindi writer, Geetanjali Shree, and her translator Daisy Rockwell, for *Tomb of Sand* (*Rét Samadhi'* in Hindi). While becoming translators, sensitivity to context for the image, text, or sound makes the students aware of their own reflexive position with respect to translation. These texts carry genealogies. The student's task, in my Georgetown project, was to also remix the found texts, but the act of remixing involves heightened appreciation of the contexts within which these texts are found and the meanings they carry. The task of translation is also humanizing. It would be hard to find the kinds of stereotypical and dehumanizing "Orientalizing" images that one sees of Asians or Arabs in Hollywood historically in texts that come out of the regions in which their narratives are situated.[4] The cultural identity narratives thus provide a voice to texts from the "ground up," thus reversing the top-down systemic imagery of international relations.

Remixing narratives can be time consuming, but they are a powerful technique to understand one's
p. 12 reflexivity and humanize the subjects of our research. They can serve ↳ as an experiential foundation for further queries and to understand nonlinear and complex relationships (see Paras, this volume, on intercultural competences).

Cultural Consciousness through Multimodal Techniques

Textbooks in international relations tend to present an "as-is" view of global politics. Point and counterpoint are important for classroom discussion for both questioning and constructing knowledge; therefore, instructors often supplement these texts with argumentative or provocative readings. Such questioning is important not only for the student-scholar but also for "real-world" actors in global politics from the systemic to local levels. For Paulo Freire, consciousness is awakened by dialogic communication or problem solving (Freire 2018, Singh 2008). The participants in dialogic communication find a cultural voice through naming their world; the perspective provides a consciousness of one's circumstances in life and the capability to change them through problem solving. Amartya Sen ([1999] 2000) refers to a similar approach in *Development as Freedom*. The Boyer and Brown (this volume) also address problem-solving practices in an international relations classroom.

Despite its diversity of paradigms, textual knowledge in international relations is monologic, replete with "embankment" approaches, as Paulo Freire terms them, to knowledge creation. Multimodality, especially as it borrows from creative arts practices, allows students to be both creative and excited about texts. Modality for any text is the way meaning is conveyed through a system of signifiers. According to Jewitt (2011, 1), modalities are "semiotic resources for making meaning that are employed in a culture—such as image, writing, gesture, gaze, speech, posture." The cultural identity narratives above facilitate a form of communication that can be generalized to learning through multimodality. As before, artistic practices are ideally suited for these types of communication.

All interactive classrooms offer some form of dialogic communication. By contrast, almost all academic texts are linear and monologic. Multimodality includes audiovisual and interactive materials, as well as interpersonal experiences such as body language and gestures. Anthropologists Collins, Durington, and Gill

(2021) in highlighting the importance of multimodality, address themselves to the diverse processes and collaborations in scholarship, which range from interpersonal encounters to field research and media saturated environments. Equally, they call attention to the hierarchies and rituals in academic publishing that can marginalize multimodal research or narratives.

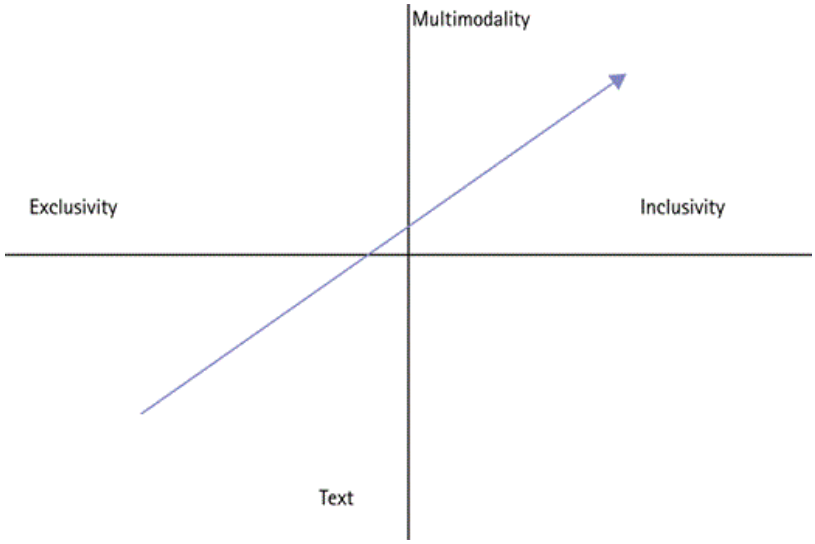
Multimodal practices in a classroom break down linear and authoritative practices inherent in texts and push students toward creative expression (also see Ramel, this volume). The 2 × 2 matrix and figure in table 1.1 and figure 1.1 represent the departure in understanding content and form of multimodal versus monologic texts (both adapted from Singh and Chrysagis 2019).

Introduction of multimodality in a classroom must begin by recognizing that it already exists in pedagogical
p. 13 practices. Teaching that takes stock of these practices and ↳ calibrates them to goals in a class can leverage multimodality for maximum benefit. Teaching now takes place in media-saturated environments, and students arrive in the classroom with varied but rich skills in media indulgence and production. While writing an argumentative paper or testing a hypothesis with evidence will continue to be standard teaching practices, for the time being, there is hardly a teacher who does not engage in multimodal practices in the classroom. Especially since the pandemic, teaching is now delivered even more fully than earlier through media rich environments such as Blackboard, Coursera, Webex, and Zoom. Online environments post several challenges but also provide a multimodality unavailable in a physical classroom: rapid breakouts through chatrooms, or quick polls through zoom, short or long engagements with experts and others around the world through invitation to zoom. Students also bring richer agency to the classroom presentation through the mere act of being made cohosts in a zoom environment, or though semiotic references such as their screen savers or the background of their living or study spaces. Just as reflexivity provides a way of situating scholarship in historical and cultural contexts of the scholar, multimodality in the classroom provides a rich context for students and instructors to question and co-create knowledge.

Table 1.1 Understanding the Content and Form of Multimodal Analyses

Content → **Form ↓**	**Monologic** **(author to audience)**	**Dialogic** **(co-creation/representation)**
Textual	Academic writing	Interactive forums
Word/visual/acoustic	Visual media	Multimodality
	e.g., documentary film	e.g., DIY, participatory practices

Figure 1.1



Moving from textual exclusivity to multimodal inclusivity.

p. 14 The biggest challenge to academic scholarship, which follows the linearity of textual argumentation within multimodal texts is that they offer several forms of departure that upset traditional student-teacher hierarchies. Students may be engaged in coproducing wikis or blogs, digital curations and narratives, and films and other forms of audiovisual production (see Smith, this volume, for students as partners). These new forms of scholarship still have an uncertain status within many disciplines, and looking at its prominent journals, IR may be among the more conservative disciplines, as opposed to arts and anthropology. Nevertheless, recognized scholars as well as academic journals are now beginning to venture into multimodal spaces. At the conservative end, many academic journals now feature audiovisual commentaries from authors. There are journals such as *Global Perspectives* that publish multimodal scholarship. Multimodal scholarship through digital means is especially useful for collaborative work. Unlike STEM, social science disciplines lag behind in collaborative scholarship. Writing a wiki or producing a digital narrative facilitates collective participation in a way that is quite different from an article that can accommodate only a limited number of coauthors. The standards for vetting such collective work—such as over creative commons or Wikipedia—are also different from peer review. Nevertheless, as multimodal pedagogies and scholarship develop, there are likely to be debates and development of standards for evaluation.

Cultural Listening and Theory Building

This essay has introduced classroom techniques, many of them situated in digital and multimodal methods, to advocate pedagogies for an everyday cultural view of global politics. The cultural argument needs to be buffered through the introduction of ethnographic techniques in the international relations classroom. The systemic and "top-down" views of the world are valid to a large extent and explain important dynamics about the world. However, these views are unable to fully account for the kinds of issues that were always important but have become even more so in the twenty-first century—for example, cultural anxieties about a connected world, colonial and postcolonial issues, and agency and voice in global orders.

Ethnographies start with fieldwork and field notes, both close cousins of reflexivity and multimodalities mentioned earlier. Consider the following description from Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011, 79): "An ethnographer most effectively characterizes individuals in context.... This entails presenting characters as fully social beings through descriptions of dress, speech, gestures, and facial expression, which allow the

reader to infer traits." The meaning of context varies according to the type of ethnography. In a Clifford Geertz (1973) interpretative sense, the ethnographer "discovers" cultural meanings through understanding "the symbolic system" and analyzing the relationships that exist therein. A far more reflexive approach understands an ethnography itself as constitutive of the meanings: "The narrative, like the metaphor
p. 15 furnishes ↳ meanings and reason to reported events.... [T]he narrative shapes 'the field' into a readable whole" (Atkinson 1992, 13).

The absence of ethnography from international relations classrooms is puzzling. Neither the historical nor the "scientific" methods accord much attention to ethnographic narratives. This may be due to the predominance of systemic or multi-country narratives that work against an ethnographic approach. A deeper issue may be the relative neglect of cultural issues for which ethnographic approaches are well suited. Another reason may be gatekeeping from anthropologists themselves, where narratives from non-anthropologists are dismissed as not being ethnographic enough. Whatever the reasons, absence of ethnographies has cost international relations serious engagements with culture and hampered its ability to describe the effects of global politics in everyday life.[5]

First, ethnographic practices can enrich the international relations pedagogies in several ways. Ethnographies can enhance the study abroad experience and assist in direct engagement with cultures. Ethnography as a method, especially historically, carried its own ethnocentric and racist assumptions from the researcher's home country, but it has come a long way in correcting these biases.[6] Students in fact can carry out ethnographies of globalization in their own peer groups, workplaces, or neighborhoods to document everyday aspects of global politics. Second, to the extent that field research is a dominant practice among students and practitioners, ethnographies can deepen that experience. Usually, international relations scholars limit themselves to elite or non-elite interviews in their field research, supplemented with an analysis of political, economic, or sociological contexts. A richer documentation of cultural context in which these interviews are situated can enrich our understanding of the embeddedness of human and institutional practices. Third, the advances in multi-sited ethnographies show that "the local" and "the global" are hardly separable but can be studied in detail through ethnographies. Anthropologists such as Arjun Appadurai, George Marcus, and Ulf Hannerz have pioneered writing transnational anthropologies. Marcus (1995, 96) speaks of multi-sited ethnography that "moves out from the single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulation of meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space." Appadurai (1996) describes several types of "-scapes" that bind global processes together such as technoscapes or finance scapes that present combinations of human being, institutions, geographies, and especially the rituals that bind them.

Introducing students to ethnographies need not involve field research in "foreign" countries. Current debates in anthropology show that even the turn to studying white middle-class cultures in anthropology ignored questions of colonialism, violence, domination, and extraction in the United States (Gupta 2021). Similarly, the international relations students can study questions of decolonization, postcolonialism, and racism through ethnographies of the very sites in which they are learning—the classroom, their families, or their neighborhoods. Reflexivity and multimodalities can assist with such efforts.

p. 16

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested methods and strategies for acculturating international relations pedagogies with reflexive, multimodal, and ethnographic techniques. International relations is a multidisciplinary and mixed-methods discipline but faces challenges in the twenty-first century from the discipline's prior blind spots and power dynamics: the techniques suggested provide useful corrections. The current international student can also benefit from the plethora of online and digital technologies that enable active participation and provide ways to critically evaluate and produce knowledge.

International relations texts regularly report what Anthony Giddens (1984, xxiii) calls "practical knowledge," or knowledge whose precepts are widely accepted. An example noted above is the possibility of peace in a distribution of power. However, the classroom can go beyond, to also move toward "discursive consciousness" (another Giddens concept) that allows the student to say something "about the conditions of their action and that of others" (p. xxx). "It is impossible to have a modern sovereign state that does not incorporate a discursively articulated theory of the modern sovereign state" (p. xxxiii). Such a discursive consciousness arises from a critical engagement with existing knowledge and its historical practices, and understanding the context in which they are situated. Reflexivity, multimodality, and ethnographic techniques enable such as consciousness.

The chapter ends with two cautions. The techniques suggested here are suitable for all paradigms in international relations. The Raymond Aron (1966) essay discussed above features a discursive consciousness of the precepts of realism from a writer who could be identified as a realist. Second, the techniques in this chapter are not a substitute for existing ones. In my own scholarship, I would credit reflexive practices for making me think of questions of postcolonialism and race, and then test them through quantitative and other methods. The advocacy for including cultural techniques for advancing and testing propositions in our scholarship or pedagogies is just not that iconoclastic, except for the most reactionary minds. Incorporating culture needs to be an everyday practice in the study of international relations.

Notes

1. While the increase of subsections may point toward needless subdivisions, they also feature intersectional networks and the expansive reach of the discipline. For transparency, the author contributed to the creation of two subsections, international communication and science, technology, arts and international relations, and has chaired three sections, including the International Political Economy section at the ISA at various times.

2. In hindsight most of my training in economics in India was avowedly reflexive, even if my professors did not call it that.
p. 17 This was the case with economics in general, which took ↳ markets and institutions to be 'underdeveloped' in post-colonial contexts, and to specific scholarship that sought to represent the developing world. An example of the former was the Keynesian multiplier, and of the latter Rostow's stages of growth. Both understood markets in a narrow economic way. However, at least at that time, the Mumbai School of Economics and Public Policy, where I studied, did not teach micro- or macroeconomics as core courses. Instead, micro was taught as Value, Distribution, and Growth. The way to question Keynes or Rostow was from the perspective of economic and social value, returning somewhat to the classical period when questions of value were dominant, to highlight the limits of Keynesian or Rostowian assumptions about "non-market" societies. Later in my graduate training, Tom Biersteker was the first professor I had in the West who regularly called attention to the context within which any scholarship was written.

3. Sample cultural identity narratives can be seen here: Kelsey Burns, "Reading Lolita in Tehran," 2005; Hilla Meller, "Father of Daughters," 2011, http://vimeo.com/user11028897; Patrick Scullin, "Brasil Final Cut," 2012, http://vimeo.com/38174563.

4. Separately, I have written about the polysemic text of one of Bollywood's most famous songs that I call "India's Song of Defiance" in presenting challenges of governance, authority, gender, and Islam in postcolonial India (Singh 2016).

5. For critical discussions and notable exceptions, see Vrasti 2008; Montsion 2018; Brigden and Mainwaring 2022.

6. For a recent powerful critique of the racist practices that continue within anthropology, and the agenda for a decolonization of the discipline, see Gupta 2021.

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