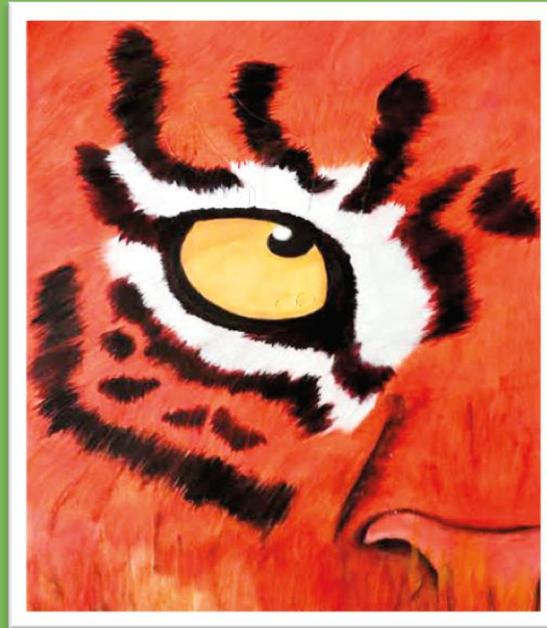




Global Issues SIG



GLOBAL ISSUES THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GLOBAL ISSUES SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP June 2017 Issue 36



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News from the GISIG Coordinators

A lot seems to have happened since our last newsletter and many of the ideas and initiatives mentioned in the December newsletter have now started to take shape. But more on these later...Let's start with one of the highlights of the year so far - meeting a good number of you face-to-face at the PCE in Glasgow. What a pleasure that was! The day provided lots of inspiring, motivating, insightful presentations, together with opportunities to find out more about the topics being presented from the guest speakers through Q&A sessions afterwards. The PCE also gave us a great chance to network and make useful contact with others who share a similar outlook both on the world we live in and the ELT work that we're all involved with.



So what are these developments that GISIG has been so busy with of late? Firstly, the initial contact that was made between GISIG and organisations working with refugees in Greece has now grown into a face-to-face and distance training programme. In addition, volunteer teachers in Greece are being paired up with mentors (several of whom are GISIG members) who will act as resources and sounding boards for whatever issues the teachers would like to discuss about their students and the lessons they deliver.

Our plans to support teacher training in three African countries (Angola, Cameroon and Rwanda) are slowly coming together. After several online meetings and one that involved 'real' human contact in Glasgow, the team has decided to scale down its operations for now and start with assessing needs and teaching resource requirements in Angola before rolling out its low-cost training programme in the other two countries. Trying to implement any sort of training in an economical way is bound to present many challenges but GISIG is very glad to be involved with this initiative and hopes to be able to support it in whatever way it can.

What else can we look forward to from GISIG over the coming months? Well, you're probably aware of our summer competition and we hope we'll get a great response to our call for a 'Special Days' lesson from all of you! The deadline for submission is **August 31st 2017** and the

prize is two free places on next year's PCE in Brighton. You can visit this link to see the format for your lesson plan: <http://gisig.iatefl.org/calendar-of-special-days> and then send it to us at gisig@iatefl.org or to the GISIG website. We will also have a GISIG online summit in September 2017. It will be comprised of a series of webinars and online discussion activities linked around a theme. We'll send out more information about this once the programme for the day is finalised.

Last but not least, some news about our PCE for next year...we shall be running this jointly with the Visual Arts Circle and speakers will be drawn from this inspiring group of people and our own equally inspiring GISIG members. Though not finalised yet, the theme of the day will be around social justice, ELT and the visual arts. We'll be updating you with more details about the day over the next few months and very much hope to see you there.

For information about the GISIG scholarship for IATEFL Brighton and how to apply for it, see https://conference.iatefl.org/scholarships_overview.html

In the meantime, enjoy reading this newsletter and have an exciting and productive summer.

Best wishes

Julietta Schoenmann and Linda Ruas, GISIG Joint Coordinators



Editorial

Stella Smyth

Welcome to this summer edition of the newsletter and thanks to all who helped bring it into being. First, **Rachael Tew and Eliza Winnert** report on the diverse range of activities that constituted our SIG's pre-conference event day in Glasgow last April. This is followed by **Katharina Groeblinger's** article on how she used traditional fairy tales with her German speaking students doing a BA in *Work Design and HR Management*. Readers interested in adapting folklore and fairy tales for imaginative lessons might also like to dip into Angela Carter's collection of reinvented fairy stories: *The Bloody Chamber* (2006). Still with literature, **Shanela Ranajara's** well-crafted poem illustrates how notions of personal and political crisis can be articulated in a universal manner.

Next, we are delighted to print **Trevor Scott Barton's** story, originally introduced to us by Marjorie Rosenberg. Trevor's paper, *A Human Face, A Human Letter*, takes us into his classroom in a US elementary school. It offers a heart-warming account of empowering his Latino migrant pupils through their writing.

Dragana Stegić's article reflects her interest in developing critical thinking with her classes in Slovenia and on awakening their interest in looking at controversial topics from a variety of perspectives. Furthermore, **Kathryn Aston** provides an inspiring paper on how to deal with climate change at a theoretical and practical level. Wading into more stormy waters, **Vaughan Rapatahana's** article puts forward a strong argument for mitigating instances of sexual predation in the TEFL industry by establishing and monitoring the enforcement of much tighter regulations for the recruitment of English language teachers, especially in SE Asia.

Moving to another part of the globe, **Jane Pearson's** article focuses on the UK's decision to leave the EU last year. She shares her personal responses to the changing political and economic climate within the EU. Also, those of us delivering courses to many EU students in Britain, or wondering how our own freedom to travel, study and teach will be affected by Brexit, may wish to raise the matter of comparative types of boundaries and border controls as political research projects and/ or discussion topics with our classes.

We then have a review of Linda Ruas's teaching resource booklet, *Global Justice in Easier English: Upper-Intermediate*. Finally, the *Report on the Global Issues SIG Forum at the APPI Conference in Lisbon*, last April, includes summaries of the talks by the four GISIG members who presented at it.

We hope you will be motivated to try out some of the teaching ideas and resources covered in this newsletter. Maybe you will even consider submitting a paper for our next issue, due out in December 2017.

The deadline for all kinds of submissions for [issue 37 of the Global Issues SIG Newsletter](#) is 1 October 2017.

Please email your contribution to <mailto:stella49ksmyth@hotmail.co.uk>

Samples of articles that we published in previous editions of the GISIG Newsletter and *guidelines for contributors* can be found on <http://gisig.iatefl.org/newsletter>

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IATEFL is the **I**nternational **A**ssociation of **T**eachers of **E**nglish as a **F**oreign **L**anguage. The Association aims to link English Language teachers and professionals from around the world and help provide opportunities for personal and professional development.

Why join IATEFL? IATEFL is a vibrant teachers' association that aims to connect and support teachers throughout the world. Being able to network with other professionals from around the globe can add a new dimension to your teaching and your own development.

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A Report on the GISIG PCE at IATEFL Glasgow 3 April 2017

By Eliza Winnert and Rachael Tew

After several years working in English language teaching and a relatively short time running a grassroots humanitarian project (and feeling the whole time as though we were haphazardly piecing it together and straddling two worlds), we heard about IATEFL and the Global Issues Special Interest Group, at a chance meeting with Linda Ruas. The discovery of GISIG's existence has transformed our two circles into something more like a Venn diagram, inside whose overlap we have found our 'tribe'. It was thus inspiring and encouraging to attend the IATEFL GISIG pre-conference event on Mon 3 April 2017; with a good variety of talks from people with experience in different areas, there was much to take away from the day, organised by GISIG coordinators: Linda Ruas and Julietta Schoenmann. The PCE began with a warm welcome and introduction from Julietta.



Then the floor was ceded to Joseph Field, senior project manager for a British Council higher education project in Jordan.



Joe Field: *Language for resilience - English enabling access for refugees*

Joe gave us an overview of the refugee situation in Jordan - a country with a population of only 5 million that is currently hosting 1 million refugees. He explained the set-up and implementation of a British Council project there that aims to empower Syrian refugees and impoverished Jordanians by raising their English Language skills to a level with which they are

able to access higher education online. Joe gave an honest and useful account of the successes and pitfalls in setting up and running the project, along with some personal, relatable anecdotes, some humorous, others poignant. It was interesting to learn how, on a large-scale too, implementation remains, by necessity, very much trial and error in nature!

This was followed by Nick Bilbrough's energetic account of the Hands Up Project.

Nick Bilbrough: *Zooming In and Zooming Out*



Nick Bilbrough gave us a look into his world running the Hands Up Project, with his engaging talk *Zooming in and Zooming out*, in which he argued the case for the power of interactive storytelling in language learning. He also shared some video footage of himself working remotely with classes in Gaza and in refugee camps in Jordan, using the programme Zoom. At a later talk at the main IATEFL conference, the audience was treated to a touching live link-up with one of Nick's classes in Gaza who performed two plays. We are sure we were not the only ones who felt inspired to bring more storytelling into our own classrooms.

A collection of his Palestinian stories and theatre scripts can be found both on the British Council and The Hands Up Project website, where Nick also welcomes both volunteers and support to enable him to continue his work.

<https://handsupproject.org/>





Susan Barduhn: *Intentionally experimenting with peace through community living*

Intentionally experimenting with peace through community living was not specifically about language teaching, but its theme of humanitarian education and 'learning about living together by living together' held strong relevance for us, and no doubt for most educators with an interest in Global Justice. Susan Barduhn (former IATEFL president) spoke about the origins and current work of World Learning, a non-profit enterprise with a 50-strong think tank concerned with 'creating the change required for a more equal, prosperous, and peaceful world.' As relatively young teachers who are just starting to gain an appreciation of the possibilities that branch out from the ESL pathway, and of the personal and professional development available in a wealth of interconnected areas, this thoughtful talk was a source of many new names, projects and philosophies to look up once back home. Many of the latter can be found on or via the World Learning Inc website.



After a break for some fresh air and food, we were welcomed back for the afternoon session with Kieran Donaghy.

Kieran Donaghy: *Promoting Empathy with Short Films*

Kieran managed to counter the postprandial graveyard slot by inviting us on something of an emotional rollercoaster of a presentation. Starting with an introduction that sparked instant conversation, he then took us on a tour of topics - from homelessness to illiteracy to parenting to gender issues. He did this by exploiting various short films and demonstrating with audience participation some activities that could be used to integrate them into their lessons. Kieran argues that interesting and pertinent topics, such as raising a transgender teenager, are often hard to find in coursebooks, but that short films – with their complete narratives that often address one meaningful topic at a time - can be an effective, non-offensive and non-intrusive way to tackle

topics that could otherwise be challenging for students. The effect of the presentation on much of the audience certainly supported his case for the power of using short, audiovisual narratives to initiate meaningful and empathetic communication in the classroom.



Judy Boyle: Project NO



The theme of powerful, impactful videos continued in the talk that followed, but with the added ingredient of Judy Boyle's fiery energy.

Passionate educators and students confront modern slavery and human trafficking, was fast-paced to maximise the relatively short amount of time allotted; she left us rather lost for words as her

thought-provoking presentation had laid uncomfortably bare the

implications of our daily choices as consumers, educators and global citizens. Judy described the small-scale beginnings of The NO Project, and how it has grown to become a powerful mission engaging students across the world to use respectful, provocative art in various forms to raise awareness – amongst themselves and others - of modern slavery and human trafficking. This was no feel-good empowerment talk. The audience was delivered hard hitting food for thought

and an invitation to action. Judy needs help writing lesson plans on different social justice themes to add to The No Project resource bank, and invites anyone who is interested in helping to contact her. <http://thenoproject.org/>

Julie Pratten: Heart ELT



Julie Pratten is an author and a publisher who acted on an individual level and then saw her initiative grow from her own strong will and the momentum of others. In her talk, *Taking a Stand as a Teacher*, Julie explained the inspiration and roots of her project, Heart ELT. This is a non-profit organisation registered in the UK. Julie talked us through the steps, hurdles and redirection from conception to a finished product.

A-Z of Hope Activities is an upbeat-themed grab and go book which can be used in most classrooms, including those that are low-resourced. It is a crowdsourced book, created with 'donated' activities from 26 different teachers from around the world. *A-Z of Hope Activities* was published in April and the second book in the series, *A-Z of Hope Warmers* will be published at the end of June. In addition to the A-Z of Hope series, Heart ELT has also published *Hope Peace Respect* by Fluency MC, containing the lyrics of Jason R. Levine's rap songs, and the *Peace Plan* by Julie Pratten and Julie G. Fox. Proceeds from the books are used to support teachers working in challenging circumstances, by providing them with resources and training.



This was followed by a lively open discussion on ***Is English a force for bad in an unstable world?*** It was facilitated by **Julietta Schoenmann**. She encouraged us to reflect upon its positive and negative potential. We then resettled for the final presentation of the day.

Margit Szesztay's short but thought-provoking talk on ***Global Citizenship for Peace*** used a warmer activity as a simple demonstration of how the concept of global citizenship can be introduced gently into the classroom; first, by reflecting on how each of us as individuals have not one but many things that define us as a human being. Margit described being a global citizen as 'Someone sharing the planet and its resources with 7 billion other human beings and with many animals and nature.'

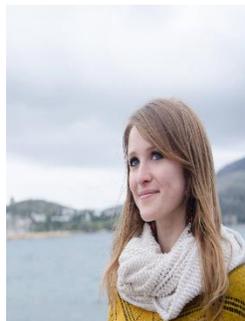


Before the day drew to a close we were once again invited to engage in small group discussions; this time thinking up possible conversation topics and issues before hunting out those who wished to discuss the same theme. Conversation topics ranged from the practical – funding for volunteer teachers – to the idealistic – can ESL teachers save the world? Feeding back as a whole group, it was quickly established that more new questions were raised than were answered. This was perhaps exactly the intention! We left the room even more motivated to embark on four days of seeking, solving, resolving, questioning and networking at the main IATEFL conference.



About the report authors

Eliza Winnert elizawinnert@gmail.com



I was born and raised in the UK. I spent several years teaching English in France. In April 2016, I moved to Greece to co-found the We Are Here community project, which focuses on providing refugee adults and children with access to creativity, recreation and education, including English language classes.

Project Coordinator: We Are Here Community Centre

www.weareherecentre.org



Rachael Tew racheal_tew@hotmail.com Rachael is a TEFL teacher volunteering in Northern Greece she has been with the "We are here" project since September 2016. She has taught various ages and abilities and loves every minute of it. She has no idea how long she will stay in Greece but as long as she continues to be useful she will continue to teach.

Educational Coordinator We Are Here Community Centre

www.youcaring.com/rachaeltew-758647

To access videos and/or powerpoints of the above presentations, go to

<http://gisig.iatefl.org/event/glasgow-2017/glasgow-pce-3-april-2017-english-in-an-unstable-world>



Raising students' awareness and sensitivity of gender and diversity issues

By Katharina Groeblinger

In today's highly complex and interconnected world, what is the most important and valuable lesson we can help our students to learn? There are probably as many answers to this question as there are teachers!

Nevertheless, I argue that one of the most important lessons to be learned is the ability to see and understand complex issues from different perspectives and to learn to accept different points of view. Not only are gender and diversity issues part of everyday life, but they have also triggered heated debates all over the world. At times, it may seem rather difficult to keep pace with the different arguments and developments!

Gender and diversity issues are also an essential part of the curricula at the university I am currently working at. When I started preparing a new lecture for my fourth semester students in the German-speaking Bachelor program, "Work Design and HR Management", I was wondering which task would be best suited to discuss these issues with my students. Indeed, I was looking for tasks that would also enable them to think outside the box, see things from different perspectives, share their perceptions with other students and start discussions. After doing some brainstorming, I accidentally came across a collection of old fairy tale books and I started wondering how accurate these story lines still are in the third millennium!

During the preparation phase and before the lesson, I admittedly had misgivings how my Bachelor students would react to this exercise? Would they perceive it as too childish? Would they take it seriously enough? Can gender and diversity issues even be taught? Or can we only support students in the sense that they have to understand certain issues from their own perspective? As it turned out, my concerns were completely unfounded. The students enjoyed the exercise very much and the oral and written feedback was extraordinarily good. Still, I would not recommend the same exercise, which I am going to describe in the following paragraphs, for my Master students.

What does a typical lesson on gender and diversity issues look like? As preparation, the students are asked to find a one-page summary of their favourite fairy tale. In general, there are between 15 and 20 students in this class and since some grew up bi-culturally, I encourage them to bring fairy tales from different cultures. In the actual lesson, I first clarify the meaning of all relevant terminology such as “What is a cliché, a stereotype or a prejudice?” The students are motivated to discuss examples and personal experiences. Afterwards, groups of approximately four to five students each are formed. By re-reading their fairy tales, each group tries to identify as many clichés, stereotypes and prejudices as possible. Examples would be the damsel in distress who needs to be saved by prince charming, women who are either displayed as victims or villains, the lack of homosexual relationships, the obligatory wedding at the end of the fairy tale, the good versus bad motive. The findings of all groups are then discussed in class, which usually results in very interesting, and sometimes heated discussions. As the final step, the students rewrite their fairy tales by avoiding all clichés, stereotypes and prejudices. Depending on the group size and the time available, each group typically picks one or two fairy tales to rewrite.

Snow White was, for example, rewritten in the following way:

Snow White decides to spend one semester abroad. She accidentally meets seven dwarfs with whom she opens a hotel. Snow White becomes the manager of the hotel and she falls in love with one of the dwarfs. The prince, who happens to be staying at the hotel at that time, weds the two lovebirds.

In another example, one group of students rewrote the classic fairy tale ***Cinderella***:

Cinderella has grown up surrounded by a loving and supportive family. One day she and her step-sisters are invited to a ball by Cinderella’s step-mother. At the ball, she is approached by the prince. Cinderella is shocked by his bluntness and directness but fortunately, she is saved by her step-sisters. As a consequence, they open a helpline for women.

After each group is finished, all rewritten fairy tales are read out loud and discussed. If two groups chose to rewrite the same fairy tale, the discussions are particularly interesting. Which stereotypes and clichés were identified? Are all of them outdated? How were they addressed and rewritten? And most importantly: Is it even possible to rewrite fairy tales in a prejudice-free and non-discriminatory way? Don't we all fall victim to stereotypes and prejudices which we are not even aware of most of the time?

If a teacher wants to dedicate more time to gender and diversity issues, I can highly recommend watching old and new film adaptations of well-known fairy tales such as *The Beauty and the Beast*. It is very interesting and revealing to discuss what has changed over the years, what still needs to change and whether new clichés and stereotypes have replaced rather outdated ones. Obviously, it is also beneficial to bring current articles on gender and diversity into the class.

Rewriting fairy tales is not only a fun exercise, it also teaches the students valuable lessons which can easily be applied to various situations and circumstances. After having taught this lesson to many different groups of students, I have the impression that approaching these highly sensitive issues from a seemingly "childish" perspective does have significant advantages. On the one hand, students seem to drop their guard more easily and, on the other hand, their interest is boosted because they have never done a similar exercise before.

At the beginning of this article, I posed the question, what might be one of the most important and valuable lessons to be learned by students who are faced with insecurities, dramatic changes, global issues such as terrorism, hunger, environmental and financial crises, on a daily basis? What can prepare students for the fact that in today's world there are not necessarily any easy or correct answers to questions regarding complex issues? Sometimes posing the right questions is more important than finding the correct answer, which may not even exist. The same is true for the above-mentioned exercise: There is not one correct answer. Most likely, there are as many perspectives as there are students. I would like to conclude with the most

important lesson to be learned from this exercise: which is asking as many questions as possible, acknowledging and accepting different perspectives and thereby also questioning your own outlook on life.

About the author

Katharina Groeblinger is the Head of the Department for English and international affairs, in the study programs, 'Work design and HR Management' and 'Strategic HR Management in Europe'. She has been giving guest lectures at universities in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Latvia, Germany and Russia. She is a regular speaker at international conferences.

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Information about the IATEFL Conference Brighton 2018 Our 52nd Annual Conference will be held at the Brighton Centre, Brighton

Dates for your diary:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 18 May 2017 | Scholarship application opens |
| 18 July 2017 | Scholarship application deadline |
| 14 Sept 2017 | Speaker Proposal deadline |

9 April 2018

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10-13 April 2018 IATEFL Brighton 52nd Conference and Exhibition

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Third Person Feminine Subject Pronoun

By Shanela Ranaraja

She won't speak –
her mouth is shattering around the words,
and the trains of thought are plunging off cliffs,
smashing each other up,
derailing.
She won't eat –
bread turns to ash after two seconds on her tongue,
and it tastes of futility, because she knows
she'll never not be hungry again.
She gulps water when she hears the names,
imagines whiskey tearing through her throat,
tips back the bottle and drinks it down.
It helps choke the memories.
She stubs her shoes on the stairs and makes them squeal –
the silence doesn't stop shadowing her,
but she's making an effort.
She holds her elbows in when she turns corners –
there's no knowing which tornado will smash her soul open.
Besides, it's harder for the cold to catch her up
if she lets herself look as small as she feels.
She's walking, she's walking, she's walking –
to stop would mean that she knows where to go
and she doesn't.
She changes her handwriting every other sentence –
maybe someday she'll remember which one belongs.
She thinks about herself in the third person –
then it's easier to pretend that none of this
is happening to her.
She closes her eyes as she opens the door.
She's not afraid of what she'll see.
She's afraid of what she won't.

'Third Person Feminine Subject Pronoun' was inspired by the sensation of emotional instability and confusion which gripped myself and my graduating class during one particularly draining year. It examines the extent to which a person can, in the wake of a catastrophic event - losing loved ones and a once-inspirational pursuit, or sometimes due to no perceivable trigger, find themselves with no idea of who they are – not beyond a pronoun which they use to separate themselves from the world. I believe this complete loss of self to be more than the

adolescent crisis it is often dismissed as. It is universal; it can overtake anyone at any time, at any age. It is incredibly difficult to recover from and some of us may never recover. It is essential that readers understand that this multi-form, nameless loss of hope and identity is real, global, and deadly. If they themselves find themselves in this painful limbo, they must understand that while recovery is desirable, the fact that they might not know any other way to exist is neither shameful nor extraordinary; it is simply something they and their loved ones must learn to survive together.



About the poet

Shanela Ranaraja is a Sri Lankan student who came 2nd in Pearsons, international Edexcel competition for English Literature. She is now planning to study anthropology and English in the USA; she creates poetry and paintings exploring the fate of Generation Z in a technologically driven, morally nuanced world. Her most recent art exhibition, 'Now you See me', was at the Alliance Francaise in Kandy (October, 2016). <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161023/magazine/an-artists-personal-journey-212945.html>

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We are pleased to include one of Shanela's paintings on the cover of this edition of the *GISIG Newsletter*.

Did you know that IATEFL has an online shop where you can purchase books relevant to you for your professional development? Visit <https://secure.iatefl.org/onl/shop.php> for more information on what's available.





A Human Face, A Human Letter

By Trevor Scott Barton

I am a 4th grade teacher at an elementary school in Greenville, South Carolina. The neighborhoods around my school are filled with families from Mexico, Central America and South America. The children of these families make their way each morning through the doors of my school, through the doors of my classroom, and through the door of my heart. At various times and from various people during the past election cycle, these Latino friends were described with demagogic, destructive and dehumanizing language. I know from my life with them that this language does not tell the real story, does not paint the true picture, of the committed, compassionate and creative people they are to me and to our community.

Let me tell you a story. There is a boy in my classroom. I will call him Tomás, which is not his real name, but he has the earth in his brown eyes, the sun in his smile, and is very much a real, flesh and blood nine year old kid. Sometimes he laughs until he cries, and sometimes he cries until he washes the sadness from his heart, but at all times he keeps those eyes and that heart open to learn as much as he can from the people and the places around him. He speaks Spanish mostly, and English a little, so at the beginning of the year we could barely communicate with each other. He is learning more and more English words and phrases as the school weeks pass by, and I am learning more and more Spanish words and phrases, so we are getting along just fine.

His English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher came to pick him up on the last day of school before Christmas break. "Bye Mr. Barton," he said with a smile. "I will be back SOON." He emphasized the word soon because we had just been talking about adverbs during our daily writer's workshop. "Bye Tomás," I said with my own smile. "I can't wait to see you AGAIN." We giggled and he walked out into the hallway with other English language learners.

Soon he did return again. He walked to my table and placed a letter in front of me. "This is for you," he said, and he walked back to his table to resume his writing project.

I am thankful for Mr. Barton.
Here are some reasons why.
First you teach me how to do
fiction or non fiction stories.
Second you help me how
can I be good at writing.
Finally you make me happy
when you pick me to be the
student of the day.
From your student,

I lifted my eyes to Tomás. I thought about his mother bringing him and his younger brother to the United States from Mexico, hoping to make a better life for them. I thought about how thankful I am to be his teacher, to work with him every day to help him be all that he can be and do all that he can do. I thought about how wonderful he is.

I picked up my pen and wrote a letter back to him. I walked over to his table and placed it in front of him. "This is for you," I said, and I walked back to my table to resume my work.

I am thankful for Tomás. Here are some reasons why.

First, you teach me how to be a better teacher because you are a great student.

Second, you told me you want to become a doctor and there is a kindness in your heart and a sharpness in your mind that will make you great at anything you choose to do.

Finally, you make me happy. You make me happy you are my student.

Immigration is a major issue of our times. However, there are people who are looking for ways to protect immigrant children like Tomás who are giving themselves to life around us. And I hope that many of us can work together to build an effective, fair and just immigration policy.

Whenever you hear the words "immigrant," "illegal," or "wall," I hope you see the hopeful, thoughtful face and hear the kind, soft voice of Tomás, as I do. I call on all of us to be Statues of Liberty that say, "Send these...to me," instead of angry faces that scream, "Send these...away."

I send Tomás to the United States and to you all. Let him walk through the doors of your hearts.

About the author

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Critical thinking and Global Issues

By Dragana Stegić

My first encounter with the English language came long before I had it as a subject at school. The 1980s was the decade of the rise of Music Television (MTV) and I practised my pronunciation by humming the tunes of Madonna and Kylie Minogue. I still find that to be the most efficient and fun way of learning a foreign language. My carefree childhood was abruptly interrupted by the civil war in Bosnia, my homeland. The love of English and curiosity about the world was replaced by day-to-day survival, trying to grasp what on earth was going on and who were the bad guys and the good guys, when only a few years back we were all friends and neighbours. It was only years later that by doing thorough research and analysis, I was able to process everything and fully understand the various factors which led to those conflicts. Applying some of the key concepts of critical thinking not only helped me understand, but it also helped answer some of the burning questions which were up until then left unanswered.

As for the ELT environment, as a beginner teacher I was always a bit intimidated by my colleagues' experience in the field. I actually thought I had little to offer and that anything I had to say would be of little interest to someone with 20 or 30 years of teaching experience. However, throughout this process, I discovered that I thoroughly enjoy public speaking and workshops. As chance would have it, during this period, I became interested in critical thinking and joined a six month online course organized by the University of Oregon, USA. The more I learned about the complex concept of critical thinking, the more I became fascinated with the idea of making it a part of my teaching practice. I noticed that some teachers get too comfortable and lulled into their teaching methods, without any desire to change anything once the routine sets in. Others categorically refuse to teach anything not in line with the coursebook!

I can understand that a classroom is a safe haven where teachers can adjust and moderate everything according to their wishes. However, with the rising number of conflicts and hate speech across the globe, and as someone who has seen first-hand how toxic hatred can be, if not cut in its roots, I decided that I would do workshops about introducing critical thinking into

the classroom. One such workshop took place in Kaposvar, Hungary, in October 2016; here, Margit Szesztay (current IATEFL president) after seeing me present, invited me to write this article. Anyone attending teachers' conferences knows it is not an easy task shrinking everything one wishes to say into a 30 minute talk, especially if the topic is something a person is really passionate about!

The title of my talk was *Using one's head for more than a decoration*, because this is the most common advice parents in the Balkans often give to their children. It literally means using one's head for more than a fancy hairdo. I had situations when students sometimes strongly disliked the topic discussed in class, but when confronted and asked to clarify what they meant, they could not come up with more than: "I don't know, I just don't". As much as trying to motivate students to take part in any activity can sometimes seem like mission impossible, the least anyone can do is teach them how to support even the silliest of their claims with facts and evidence. It is perfectly alright for people to have opposing views, but it takes some skill to learn how to support one's point of view with proper arguments.

Last year saw the refugee crisis shake up Europe and it was definitely a topic which was brought up in the classrooms throughout Slovenia. Instead of preaching about how horrible the entire situation was (which I know would result in some eye rolling in class) or simply ignoring it because it had nothing to do with where I live, I opted for doing the "a day in the life of..." activity with my students. This is a great way of helping students put themselves in someone else's position. In this case, I used shoes as a metaphor (what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes). For the first lesson we started off with famous names from history, such as 'Nelson Mandela'. Students wrote about what his daily routine must have been like, the days he spent in prison, travelling the world as well as some other struggles he might have had. Lesson after lesson, we moved further away from famous to anonymous faces, such as a Syrian child en route to Europe in a small rubber boat. This step-by-step approach helped students visualize, reflect and shift their perspective. They asked questions and discussed why some people welcome refugees, while others protest against them. In the end, they were able to see the situation much more clearly.

Introducing important topics takes time and should not be forced in any way. When doing this activity I myself had to step into my students' shoes and try to understand why some of them hesitate to take part, as well as where that resistance comes from. It is also very important to add that this activity worked really well in my classroom. That does not mean it will work for everyone. There are teachers who need to face students, parents or the school's strict policy. Some even need to face themselves first, because they find that some of the topics are not in line with what they think or believe. But what is most important is the willingness to do it now. Tomorrow might be too late!

About the author



I was born and raised in Bosnia. I have been living in Slovenia for the past 12 years. I am an English teacher working with teenagers and adults, focusing mostly on critical thinking and global issues. For the past two years, I've been in charge of the ABELTA project which aims at bringing the TAs in the Balkans to work closely together. dragana.stegic@iatefl.si

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EAP, Critical thinking and Climate Change

By Kathryn Aston

Introduction

Man-made climate change is scientifically proven and threatens human life and civilisation. The international agreement, signed at the Paris COP in 2015, gave hope that governments might take action to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the inevitable changes to come thanks to past emissions, such as increased flooding, droughts and extreme weather.

Climate change is relevant to most university disciplines as we seek not only technological solutions but also ways to live more sustainably. The most obvious of these include engineering, architecture, urban planning, agronomy, sociology, politics, and economics; but journalism, education, psychology, theology, philosophy and psychology also have their part to play in helping us manage and make sense of our changing world.

However, at the University of Sheffield, where I work, many departments do not offer modules related to climate change at undergraduate level, and relatively few students conduct research in it later, a pattern likely to be replicated in other British universities. There is also a lack of engagement with climate change in public discourse which may be reflected in the content and focus of university courses in the UK. My own students tend to have poor understanding of the issue and little awareness of how it might affect their futures, much less how their disciplines might contribute to meeting humanity's greatest challenge.

So the questions that EAP teachers might ask themselves is; how can we help students to see the relevance of climate change to their lives and studies? And how do we use the issue to develop the skills they need to pursue their disciplines? The answer to both of these questions, I think, is to focus on critical thinking skills.

Classroom activities for critical thinking

Students need critical thinking skills to help them with academic reading, writing and debate. These skills include “reflecting on issues in a structured way... [using] insight and logic”; “drawing conclusions about whether arguments are valid and justifiable”; and “presenting a point of view in a structured, clear, well-reasoned way that convinces others” (Cottrell, 2011, p. 2). This kind of thinking does not come entirely naturally, and so training is usually needed. Climate change is a good topic for sharpening these skills, and can be used in the classroom to explore common barriers to critical thinking.

The theory that we each have “two brains”, the “rational brain” and the “emotional brain” (Marshall, 2014) has been used to explain how people can accept on an intellectual level the evidence that climate change is a grave threat, and yet fail to feel it as such, or to act on their concerns. Cottrell (2011, p.1) argues that “personal, emotional or affective reasons can create barriers” to critical thinking; so students should be aware of when their rational thought processes are being influenced by their emotions. Climate change might be used to highlight how it is possible to hold two contradictory beliefs at the same time, i.e. that it is simultaneously a serious threat and nothing to worry about. Students could examine how emotional responses, such as denial, hopelessness or fear, might contribute to this irrational position. In class, we might give them some examples of common excuses for not engaging with climate change, such as that the scientists disagree, that is not caused by human activity or that it is the fault of some other group. Teachers might ask them to consider why people might hold these views and how they might be contested. This could be extended into an argument building exercise where students practise some of Cottrell’s critical thinking skills (2011) outlined above.

Another potential barrier to critical thinking is our mental “frames” (Goffman, 1972, cited in Marshall, 2014, p 80). Frames are constructed out of our experience, knowledge and beliefs; they allow us to make sense of new information and help us decide what to pay attention to or ignore. Climate change is a “wicked” problem with no single cause or solution which can be

framed in different ways, for example as an economic, technological, energy, social justice, or land use problem (Marshall, 2014).

Framing leads to the rejection of any information that does not fit and so leads to all kinds of cognitive biases. However, the critical thinking skill of “evaluating the evidence for alternative points of view” (Cottrell, 2011, p 2) requires the student to keep an open mind and consider all the information available before coming to a conclusion. It might be useful in class to examine how one issue such as climate change can be “framed” in so many different ways, and how each interpretation of the problem might lead to some of these biases. A good activity for this is the role play, for example a public meeting about whether to allow an energy company to “frack” for shale gas in the local area, with students taking various roles in the debate, such as a representative of the energy company or a local resident worried that the water table might be polluted. However, if you are lucky enough to have the right mix in your class, there may be no need for roles to appreciate different perspectives. A debate with students from Saudi Arabia or Venezuela, whose economies depend on fossil fuels, and Malaysia or sub-Saharan Africa, which are likely to be affected by extreme weather that results from burning them, might be very enlightening!

Social cues also tell us how much attention we should pay to an issue. In Europe and the US at least, there is a “socially constructed silence” (Zurubavel, 2006, cited in Marshall 2014, p. 82) around climate change – or what we might call the “elephant in the room”. Climate change has become an unsuitable topic for polite conversation. Perhaps this is because of the strong feelings of hopelessness and anxiety it can arouse, or it may be because a person’s attitudes towards the issue indicate their “in-group” and can therefore be divisive, much like talking about politics or religion.

However, participating in academic debate means students may have to discuss controversial topics, or accept that other people may not share views that for them are unquestionable. Climate change is not as dangerous a taboo as religion, politics or sex, perhaps because it is truly global; it is not about *my* body or *my* country or *my* faith as opposed to yours. (Compare it to abortion as a topic for example, or the political status of Taiwan, or Islamic terrorism). In the classroom, students could examine how the media or their textbooks often fail to engage with

climate change and discuss why this might be, so that the typical emotions and social restrictions around such taboos can be safely explored. This discussion could be extended to other cultural taboos that might affect students on their courses, the emotions they might feel around them and how they might be able to speak or write about them with courage, honesty and respect for others' views.

Incidentally, most EAP books do not exploit the issue satisfactorily, perhaps because of the "taboo" described above. In my department, out of 46 recently-published books from 10 publishers on EAP writing, only four books use the topic in a way that involves the critical thinking skills outlined above. Out of 19 EAP reading books from five publishers, only one engages with the issue in any depth; and another contains a reading text which suggests that climate change may not be happening or may not be caused by human activity. It seems that EAP materials are pitched at the current low level of public understanding and debate about climate change.

Out of class activities

Students can develop their critical reading by doing their own research on climate change, focussing on how it affects their own countries or how their future disciplines can contribute to finding solutions. The Met Office, the BBC, NASA, the UN and many environmental bodies have excellent online resources on climate change, and a research project presents a good opportunity for students to practise such skills as assessing the reliability of sources, synthesising information, and avoiding plagiarism.

Another way to help students see the relevance of climate change to their studies is through pre-sessional projects. At the English Language Teaching Centre at Sheffield University, prospective Master's students on pre-sessional courses must research and write an academic-style extended essay or report as part of their assessment. Recently, for maximum relevance, the centre has asked their future departments to supply suitable project titles. Departments could therefore be asked to furnish additional questions related to climate change which could be offered to students as an optional alternative.

Conclusion

Climate change is not just an issue for “greens”. It concerns everyone, especially young people who will live with its consequences, like our EAP students. Engaging honestly with climate change in the classroom can help students not only to see themselves as part of the solution, but to develop the academic skills they will need to be successful in whatever they choose to study in the future.

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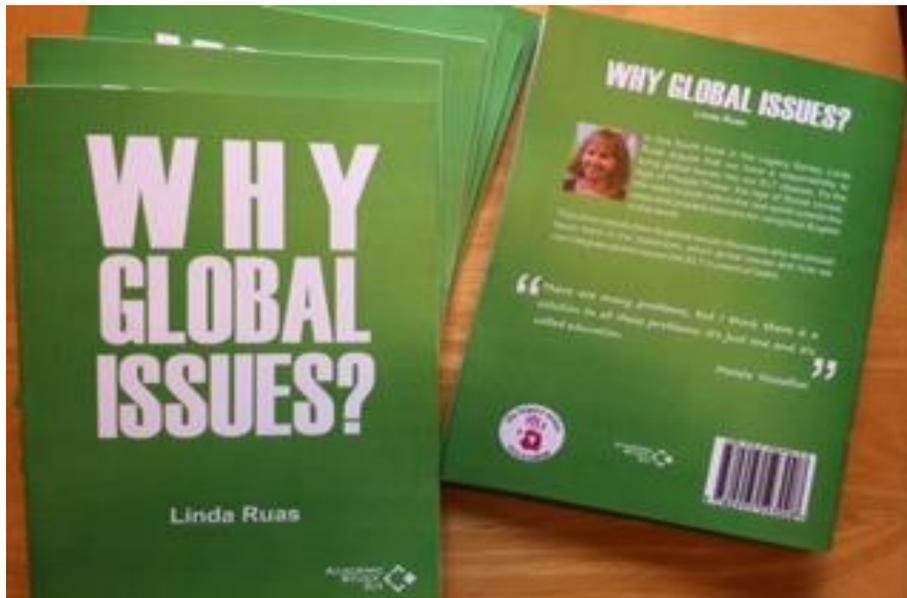
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Sexual predation in the TEFL industry

By Vaughan Rapatahana

The increasing number of reported cases of sexual predation on young people, by western male English language 'teachers' who have been hired from overseas or in country to teach English in developing countries (especially in Asia) should be a major cause for concern for all of us in the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession. (ECPAT UK, 2011:13).

Many sexual predators attack only a particular type of victim, such as children of a certain age or gender, but sexual predation also includes the preying on adults. However, the terms, 'sexual abuse, sexual assault, and sexual harassment are often used interchangeably, and legal definitions vary' (Berson et al 1999: 150). Moreover, Shakeshaft (2004: 22) points out that 'terminology used to identify offenders ranges from paedophile to molester to abuser. Such terminology often clouds descriptions and identification of offenders'. For the purpose of this article, however, I will equate sexual predation with the sexual exploitation and plunder of young people of both genders.

It is important to note that sexual predation is a widespread global phenomenon. One only has to recall the showbiz names of Jimmy Saville, Gary Glitter and Rolf Harris, to begin to see how prevalent the situation is, in part due to the constant availability of cheap airfares, as well as speedy internet connections, whereby paedophile networks thrive, as well as those which serve to offer paid child sex activities online. Then there is the interrelated situation of sex tourism, whereby predators travel to so-called third world countries, such as Cambodia, specifically to indulge in unlawful sexual activities. The term 'professional perpetrator' is also utilised to describe those who use their professional position to seek employment, which allows them to access children for sexual abuse within the workplace (King, 2010).

Regarding sexual predation in the field of education, the problem of sexual malfeasance is also large, geographically widespread and covers a range of sexual offences committed by men and

women educators against both young adults and children of both genders. While Shakeshaft (2004) notes that the majority of abusers are men, there are a surprisingly high number of women preying on young male students, as reported rather frequently online and in printed news media. So is it any surprise then, that sexual predation is also so prevalent in the TEFL industry?

Furthermore, it is essential to consider the vicarious role some unscrupulous agencies play in shamelessly pushing the 'requirement' for the attainment of English language skills. They help to ensure that the way is wide – and is indeed widening – for sexual predators to be able to travel to 'teach' English. I am highlighting the manipulative and deliberate promulgation of a perceived 'need' for the English language in 'third world' countries, by agencies who have most to gain by such fiscal expansion. In this regard, the English language Hydra is, in a way, facilitating sexual predation; because by promoting English as essential, it is also promoting and exploiting a perceived need to hire first language speakers of it. Lax screening and recruitment procedures for such native English language teachers has thus frequently led to sexual predators from Canada, the UK, Australia, USA, New Zealand working as English teachers with some of the world's most economically deprived and most vulnerable learners (SCMP, 2013; Rapatahana and Bunce, 2012).

Indeed, 'an estimated 250, 000 native English speakers work as English teachers abroad in more than 40, 000 schools and language institutes around the world [and] because nearly half of all English teachers abroad will leave their position and return to their home country each year, more than 100, 000 positions for English teachers abroad open each year'. This 2016 link continues with further such statistics,

<https://www.internationalteflacademy.com/faq/bid/102201/how-large-is-the-job-market-for-english-teachers-abroad>

Given this huge demand and the subsequent plethora of jobs teaching English, the opportunities for such sex offenders to teach English are manifold, due to the perceived 'need' to have English language skills in such nations, so as to be 'able to compete' internationally and so on. This constitutes the deliberate hegemonic tenets of neo-liberalism (see *Why English? Confronting the Hydra*, Bunce, Phillipson, Rapatahana and Tupas: 2016). Such purveyors of the

Hydra are still all too free to stroll into several countries and sexually molest at-risk, poor and disadvantaged students, themselves striving to attain some measure of English language competency in an effort to escape penury. Moreover, the very structure of this industry itself contains defined yet unequal roles for both expatriate mentors and local mentored: there are manifest power dynamics involved.

As noted over a decade ago, in ABC Online (2006), 'more and more sex offenders are moving to less developed countries and infiltrating English language schools so they can continue to abuse children...Sex offenders target organizations working with children.' Those who offend overseas often also have a history of sexual predation in their own home countries, as indicated in news reports of trials. Indeed, many are registered sex offenders in the UK, US and other nations, across a range of sexual crimes. They enter these countries ostensibly to pass on their 'skills' as 'native' English speakers, but in reality had often earlier networked among themselves, so as to pick and choose where to go to prey on vulnerable (school) children, in order to satisfy their own particular sexual preferences. (Wolak et al, 2008:1). They also utilize the web to select, groom and seduce their victims. Their nefarious behaviour therefore unfortunately also implicates English, more particularly ESL and EFL, in the global structures of sexual predation.

These predators roam SE Asia in particular, but not exclusively, for East Asia, South America, the Pacific Islands have reported incidents of such TEFL predation. In PR China, also, there are many recent reported cases of such sexual predators. In sum, these predators favour these locales because of the western driven expansion of TEFL there – the so-called 'need' for English; as well as poverty-driven sex tourism. They may also prey on lax supervisory standards and inter-country communications, and certain cultural mores and naiveties in these societies

In fact, standards of recruitment and background checking are often laissez-faire, because a majority of these predators are generally not recruited by official, regulated western agencies, but source their positions once in-country, where they obtain employment far more easily. Yet, Western authorities have also been remarkably slack as regards not checking more strenuously on the whereabouts of registered sexual predators, to the extent that some individuals have left their home countries showing their own passports, or have avoided the ambit of CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) in the UK. For example, it seems that in China, 'there is no

supervision of the [foreign expert] certificate issuing procedure.' Why? Because of endemic system loopholes, 'in many cases, foreigners with only a travel visa become teachers,' as pointed out by Xiong Bingqi from *21st Century Education Research Institute* in Beijing (Sino-US.com, 2013.) Indeed, only 30,000 'cultural and educational experts' in 2013 had foreign expert certificates, out of a reported 540, 000 in China overall (Global Times: 2014.) The accelerated drive to employ foreign teachers of English overrules any consistent and cogent background checking, a point also made by Bunce (2016), regarding the incredible ease by which young white people are employed on short term teaching 'holidays' in these same locales. Even if there are suspicions and accusations about individual teachers, local cultural customs often come into play. 'There are lots of cultural mores about welcoming foreigners and many cultural taboos about complaining about teachers' (ABC News: 2007). There is also the problem of denial.

Moreover, there are pragmatic infrastructure considerations, which allow such sexual predation to occur. Because there are so many English teaching job opportunities, especially in Asia, sexual offenders can also jump quite easily and anonymously from one country to another, particularly if they are already on the run from prosecution elsewhere. Asian countries tend not to share background information as regards individual foreigners, while, 'paedophiles also take advantage of Asian legal systems where cash bribes can lead to charges being dropped or victims' relatives and other witnesses suddenly changing their stories' (The China Post, 2007) As Cotter (2009: 496) states, 'Police complicity ranks as another prominent roadblock to combating child sex...in Southeast Asia'. Let us not forget either, that there is anecdotal evidence of safe havens within such communities where local criminals protect – for a fee – such sexual offenders.

With the continued glut of reported sexual offences against their nation's youth by expatriate teachers of English, some countries have tightened up the procedures of their employment and in Japan, South Korea and Viet Nam at least, there are mandatory background checks of teaching candidates. Since the highly publicized John Mark Karr case in 2006, (BBC News: 2006), Thailand has indeed toughened its screening procedures for those wishing to teach. But 'the laws governing the employment of foreign teachers are vague and not always enforced' (Bangkok Post: 2015.)

In Cambodia, meanwhile, there has been some sort of momentum toward seeking the International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC), a background check intended to prevent UK sexual offenders travelling to other countries and gaining access to children through teaching or volunteering roles, and supplied by the British Police. However, the applicants themselves must request the certificate, at a cost of about US\$93. In Cambodia, very few schools have ever applied for this, primarily because of the costs involved (Phnom Penh Post: 2015).

For Mainland China, since the 2013 offences in Nanjing and Beijing (South China Morning Post: 2014), at least lip service regarding more strict background checking and a requirement for higher qualifications, has come into play. The SCMP (ibid) reported that guidelines, which commenced on October 31, 2014, demand that in Beijing, at least, 'all candidates will face suitability checks [and] people will also need to have more than five years of teaching experience before working in the city's institutions and schools,' while all such candidates will also be required to show teaching qualifications. Yet there remain ways to ignore this including fly-by-night recruiters (China Salon: 2014).

There should also be far more research done to document the extent of the abuse, as well as comparisons of laws and practices across countries. This could provide a blueprint for future research and possibly preventive action at local and global levels.

What we as educators should be doing is to bring the issue out in to the open as ignoring it merely enables it to thrive. The key way to confront instances of sexual molestation and exploitation, rape, and procurement of child pornography by English teachers, is to continue to publicise the topic, to challenge wrongdoings at the very first sign of them.

In conclusion, the individual teacher of English language not only has a duty to report and to publicise sexual predation cases they may know about, but – just as importantly – to illuminate and reject all the iniquities involved in the massive inequitable or profit driven, language grab that is the English language Hydra. As long as there is a perceived and unscrupulous western-fed push for English language skills in traditionally non-English language communities, sexually predatory 'teachers' of English will continue to grab onto the coat tails of the promoters of

English language worldwide. While as Naysmith (1986:6) points out, there is actually little such 'need' for many of the students involved, let alone improvement in their lives.

If we were to tame the English language Hydra, we would, at the same time severely curtail opportunities for sexual predation by its teachers. Tempering the drive for the mythical beast that is English language mastery in non-English as first language countries will substantially subdue deviant sexual and sexually exploitative activities within the realm of TEFL. It will not – of course – cure sexual predation of children, given that writers, such as Anna Salter (2003) note the complexities about the causes of such sexually deviant behaviour in the first place; nonetheless, the TEFL industry has to take far more proactive steps to counter it.

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http://www.proversepublishing.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/PPPInfo_T_B_posted_on_2016_Nov_22a.32761244.pdf

CONTACTING IATEFL PERSONNEL

Want to contact IATEFL trustees, IATEFL committee members or IATEFL Head Office staff? Find all contact information at <http://www.iatefl.org/about-iatefl/who-is-who-in-iatefl> or check out the back pages of *IATEFL Voices*, our bi-monthly magazine.

Post Brexit, Post Truth - Post Hope?

By Jane Pearson



For those of us in the UK who were proud to be European, the Brexit vote on 23 June 2016 has left us in unknown waters, adrift and rudderless. For two thirds of my lifetime, I had felt secure in the alliances that have formed the European Community.

We put up with anti-European myths about cucumbers that were too bent, bananas that were too straight, carrots that were too mis-shapen and cattle that had so many tags in their ears that from a distance it looked as though they were wearing Easter bonnets. We smiled indulgently at these inflammatory press stories and rumours, believing that the greater good was being served by formalising a strong peace with those neighbours we had so recently fought.

Now, as more than 40 years of international brotherhood crumble around me, I find it impossible not to hear the words of William Butler Yeats' poem, 'The Second Coming', ringing in my ears. Things have fallen apart, the centre is not holding and, from my perspective, gloating Brexiteers are certainly 'full of passionate intensity'.

Yet we Remainers were not an insignificant number. Of those 72.2% of the population who voted in the Referendum, 51.9% wanted to leave Europe and 48.1% wanted to stay. It was a decisive victory for the Brexiteers, but by no means a landslide.

Now, those who felt powerless in the hands of Europe have got their way and those of us who were comfortable with the checks and balances that membership of a group of nations offered, feel powerless in our turn. I suppose it is a kind of rough justice, but it has not been translated into a good democratic balance in the British Parliament, and balance is supremely important to democracy.

The Conservative (right wing) party has been in power for almost a year with no viable parliamentary opposition to its policies and Prime Minister, Theresa May, has seized the propitious moment to call a snap general election on 8 June. I write this before the election and

with no crystal ball in which to see the future, an unenviable position, following the shocking failure of the pollsters to predict the Brexit result. All I dare say at this stage is that no one expects Theresa May to lose! The left wing Labour Party, in danger of turning itself into a populist movement rather than a parliamentary party, has had to concentrate its mind on parliamentary matters in rather unseemly haste. No one expects them to win, the question is whether they can continue in opposition. The handful of Liberal Democrats (pro-European) see the opportunity of a Phoenix-type resurrection after a year of ignominy.

The only real post Brexit winner appeared to be the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) whose sole reason for existence was to persuade the UK to leave Europe. Now, however, in spite of brave words in the media, they are losing support to the Conservatives; in May 2017, they suffered a massive, ignominious defeat in local government elections.

Meanwhile, the country continues to divide into pro and anti- Europe factions, as far apart as they were during the referendum campaign of 2016 and, if anything, rather nastier. It is not racist to be worried about mass immigration, but some of the anti-immigration comments that have been reported in our press since Brexit have certainly been racist.

This is not helped by an apparent confusion in people's minds between migrants fleeing war and famine and (perfectly legal) European economic migrants. How often do you hear, 'I don't mind the *genuine* asylum seekers, it's the others we should keep out'? But who is genuine and who is 'other'? They say civilisation is judged by the way a society treats its most vulnerable members. What does that tell us about our attitude to refugees at a time of world upheaval?

Uncertainty, of course, is unsettling and it would help if we knew exactly what Brexit will mean, but our Government is determined to forge its plans in private, which leads to a suspicion that they, too, don't know quite what to do now. If they had a good plan, I'm sure they would share it with us. When the High Court ruled that the law required Parliament to vote on the Brexit plans those High Court judges were roundly condemned by the Government, the Brexiteers and the right-wing press. So much for the rule of law!

'Brexit means Brexit,' our Prime Minister continually tells us. But that is as meaningless as asking what chocolate is like and being told 'chocolate'. It conveys nothing. We have voted to leave Europe, but we have no idea what we are moving towards in terms of the single market and migration or, indeed, anything else.

As for the demand for 'sovereignty', what do Brexiteers mean by that? Freedom to exploit workers? Freedom to persecute minorities? Freedom to demonise those on welfare benefits? Freedom to imprison those who disagree with you? Freedom to close your borders? Freedom to go to war with your neighbours? If the European Union stopped us doing all that then Brexit is a seriously negative step indeed.

Post Brexit signs of other European countries questioning their membership of the EU and veering towards the far right have not always materialised. The French presidential election in May rejected far left and right anti-European parties for the pro-European Emmanuel Macron. The Austrians too, rejected the far right in their presidential election of May 2016, though only by a narrow margin. Will this leave the UK stuck outside Europe, isolated and wondering what happened to Brexit and any other 'Exits' that have not so far materialised? It looks more likely that Europe can still hold itself together and less like a line of dominoes poised to collapse.

We also have President Trump across the Atlantic finding out the hard way that even a US President cannot always have his own way, though he can have a jolly good try. Trump's presidency was another close-run, shock victory, which left political doors dangerously open to extremists. Like Brexit, this was fuelled by a sector of the population who felt they had lost all control over their lives. We can no longer put Brexit or Trump or European unrest down to freak voting patterns. There is a disaffected mass of people out there whose jobs and standard of living have been seriously damaged following the last economic crisis, and who blame immigration more than any other factor for it

Immigration – blaming the outsider - is an easy target in times of general hardship. Maybe the big challenge for those of us who value tolerance and moderation and who despair at seeing our countries shuffle closer to extremism is to understand those who are driving us there. More of the real wealth and power is in the hands of a very few, fabulously rich individuals and – even

more frightening - global, multinational companies, accountable, not to any government, but to their shareholders. Profit rules the world. The gap between the rich and poor is growing and governments are either unwilling or unable to change this.

Maybe tolerance and moderation are luxury goods, like big houses, fast cars, private medicine and university places. Maybe those of us in the middle, neither fabulously rich nor grindingly poor, have sleep-walked into this electoral revolution. Aware of the wealth and power gap above us, in our arrogance we thought ourselves immune from envy and resentment from below. Maybe this is our wake-up call!

The terrifying thing is how do we act? If democratic governments are powerless against the force of globalisation then we are also powerless. Yet we ignore this worldwide imbalance at our peril. An encouraging start would be some hard-hitting, honest debate between governments and people. An unlikely occurrence in a world that has labelled itself 'post-truth'. Returning to the poet, Yeats, 'mere anarchy', it seems, is alarmingly close to the horizon, though I hope very much we can avoid the drowning of innocence in the 'blood-dimmed tide'.

Reference

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), Irish poet. 'The Second Coming' was written in 1919, immediately after the First World War.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/43290> (as accessed on 20th May 2017)

About the author

Jane Pearson is a writer. She lives in the Welsh mountains with her husband and dog, plays the piano, enjoys the company of her family and – Voltaire fashion – tends her garden.

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Following Jane's article, you might like to explore how to bring political discussions into class - one great way is through **Reflect ESOL - see intro and resource pack: <http://www.reflect-action.org/~reflecta/reflectesol>**

Review of Ruas, L. (2016) *Global Justice in Easier English: Upper-Intermediate London: New Internationalist*

Reviewed by Stella Smyth

Global Justice in Easier English: Upper-Intermediate is part of a series of three short booklets of about 42 pages, at levels Pre-intermediate (A2), Intermediate (B1), and Upper intermediate (B2). Each booklet includes 6 units constituting approximately 2 hours of classroom work. These units are cognitively challenging, culturally varied, and oriented towards adolescents and adult learners.

Each unit centres on a powerful topic that is likely to stimulate older teenagers and adults in various English language learning contexts. For example, *Global Justice in Easier English Upper-Intermediate's* six units are: 'Deforestation', 'Ability and Disability', 'Transgender', 'The Organ Trade', 'Development', 'Charities and NGOS'. Some of these topics are seldom covered in coursebooks. This booklet will therefore be a welcome resource for a teacher looking for ideas and activities that will genuinely engage students with up-to-date, real world concerns.

Moreover, this particular Upper-Intermediate booklet, along with the other two in the series by Linda Ruas, is designed very flexibly, with a comprehensive answer key to all exercises; it can thus be used for self-study, and/ or for work in class. Each of its 6 units integrates the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and has a 'focus on language section'; for example, there are exercises on prepositions, and articles (unit 1), the language of statistics and comparisons (unit 2). Concise explanations of all language points, such as the form and function of conditionals (unit 6, p.32) are provided at the back (pp.41-42). These explanations of the grammar rules are linked to the themes of the reading texts in each unit. Learners are also encouraged to observe lexical patterns and grammatical structures in the context of the readings.

A teacher or student need not follow the units chronologically, but in accordance with the topic that most interests them and which is most appropriate to their particular syllabus or scheme of work. It is also refreshing to see that there is a good range of tasks and that the units differ in terms of both task types and topics. Nonetheless, some popular activities, such as cloze

exercises, quizzes, discussion tasks, finding errors in extracts and correcting them, are repeated in more than one unit.

All of the readings have been taken from the current affairs magazine, *New Internationalist* and made 'easier' or abridged in the 6 units by reducing the vocabulary and range of syntactical patterns and grammatical structures that were in the original texts. However, teachers can freely revert to all of the original articles by going to newint.org. This offers a further opportunity for teachers to introduce such stimulating materials to their learners (in one-to-one or group sessions) for extending their vocabulary and knowledge of current affairs. Being able to compare the abridged and complete version of each article can also be exploited for ways of teaching paraphrasing, summarising and editing skills in an English for academic purposes (EAP) lesson with multilingual university students.

Not only would *Global Justice in Easier English Upper-Intermediate* be very useful for teachers working on university pre-sessional EAP courses in the UK this summer, but it would also be very useful for any teacher delivering intensive EFL programmes and looking for ways of integrating project work on their English courses. For instance, after watching a short video on the Brazilian Ka'apor community's fight against loggers (Unit 1 p.4) Ruas (2016) suggests students 'research other areas of the world where there is deforestation.' In this regard, learners can also be encouraged to use the complementary newint.org

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Learners - how to use this wiki](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Learners_-_how_to_use_this_wiki)

Indeed, all three *Global Justice in Easier English* booklets work best together with the visuals and sample lessons from the related, free online wiki:, https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Main_Page. Here there are more than 75 free [Ready Lessons](#), on powerpoint and PDF, that can easily be adapted by teachers.

In sum, *Global Justice in Easier English: Upper-Intermediate* is an economical, labour-saving,

New Internationalist Easier English

Learn more English while reading about and discussing powerful, real world topics

New Internationalist Easier English offers resources for developing language skills with all teenagers and adults, in the UK and all English-language contexts around the world. They have been designed for both the ESOL context in the UK and the EFL context worldwide. They contain a huge range of teaching ideas (articles, photos, ready lessons and quizzes) all powered by New Internationalist's world-recognized content.



Easier English wiki

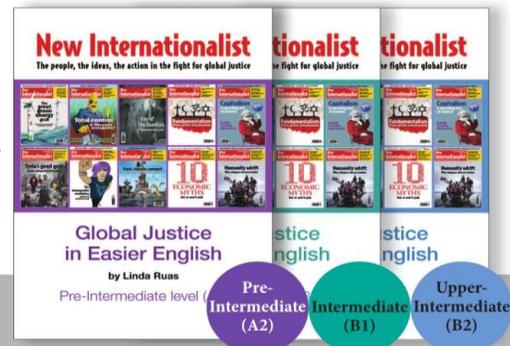
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- Each contains six themes (two hours work in each), b&w photos and are 42 or 48 pages

All New Internationalist books, magazines and other products available from ethicalshop.org



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creative and cutting-edge resource. I look forward to delving into it further with my students. This booklet along with the two others in the series are for sale at the Ethical Shop, for £3.99 , for one, or 3 for £10. <http://ethicalshop.org/global-justice-in-easier-english.html>

Upcoming IATEFL SIG Events 2017

English for Specific Purposes SIG Event: 28 Oct, Sheffield, UK

Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG Event: 28-29 Oct, Luton, UK

Business English SIG in cooperation with Research SIG annual conference: 10-12 Nov, Salini Bay, Malta

Book online for all IATEFL SIG events at <http://secure.iatefl.org/events/>

Report on GISIG Forum at APPI Lisbon, 28-30 April 2017

Introduction



GISIG members are bursting with ideas about bringing global issues into class, but we know that not everyone can afford to come to the annual IATEFL conference. So we've decided to organise GISIG forums at a few other conferences. As our

first, we approached **APPI (Associação Portuguesa de professores de inglês)** about the possibility of having a forum at their annual conference together with the new IP&SEN SIG. The APPI President, Alberto Gaspar, welcomed the idea immediately and, together with other conference organisers, couldn't have been more supportive and welcoming.

We offered money towards travel costs to one GISIG committee member and one GISIG member, made leaflets and posters and turned up in Lisbon to a sea of smiling, interested faces.

My short introduction focused on information about what GISIG is, does and is planning, interspersed with visuals (thanks to *New Internationalist*) of various global issues, to get people discussing which issues we can bring into class, and how. My second short closing presentation summarised GISIG and what it offers members, and gave an overview of recently produced classroom materials on global issues. We finished with a practical classroom task, thinking up chants to put on banners about what's really important in the world: equality, forests, sharing, disability ... the list goes on and on. We'd like to thank all the teachers who came to our GISIG forum in Lisbon and hope to see many of them as members of GISIG soon.

LindaRuas@hotmail.com

For details of the presentations see: <http://gisig.iatefl.org/event/appi-gisig-forum-in-portugal>

From knowledge to action with *Girl Rising*

Gergő Fekete

***GISIG social media
coordinator***



Have you or your students ever been bored during a film screening in class? Were they struggling to keep their heads up or fidgeting under the desk while the movie was going on?

I started my presentation with a similar scenario and moved on to the whys and hows of bringing global issues into ELT with the help of the *Girl Rising* documentary. The film tells the story of nine girls facing barriers to education, such as early and forced marriage, sex trafficking, and gender-based violence. After watching the trailer, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ztOo-VK7-4>) we learnt that the film is a great tool to provide students with not only the knowledge and the skills (e.g. critical thinking skills or seeing issues from multiple angles), but also the values/attitudes (e.g. curiosity, empathy) needed to deal with global issues. I also showed some activities that help teachers achieve all these goals of global education, such as

- The gallery walk exercise, where students embark on a magic carpet trip by looking at pictures and learning about different countries while moving around in the classroom.
- Statistics prediction, in which students try to guess missing figures in pairs.
- The exit cards, which help students reflect on the content of your lesson.

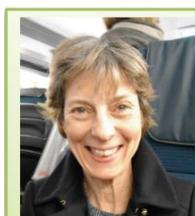
Finally, I concluded my talk by showing how students can accomplish the last goal of global education: taking action. By composing tweets on the popular social media platform, Twitter, students can raise awareness of important global issues, such as the education of women, and reach an amazing number of people at the same time. *Girl Rising* is highly recommended to anyone who wants to bring real-world issues into the classroom by showing students a thought-provoking and enlightening documentary. I have recently completed my MA thesis, entitled:

"Fostering a Global Mindset in the English Classroom: A Case Study Using the Film 'Girl Rising'".

I would be very happy to send it to anyone who would like to read it.

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Where should all the Othellos go?



Stella Smyth
GISIG Newsletter
editor

My presentation began with a historical account of the role of the Moors and mercenary soldiers in Shakespeare's lifetime (1564-1616). I then showed how he represented this social group in his play *Othello*. Having illustrated how this was

also a period of massive colonial expansion and warfare between rising imperial states, I suggested that the way Shakespeare integrated these economic and social realities into the voice and personal tragic narrative of his Moor protagonist - namely, Othello, could be explored in EAP or ELT lessons with young adult learners. In fact, Othello's autobiographical accounts in Acts 1 and 5 could be adapted for creating interdisciplinary activities related to contemporary migration, national and international unrest. I argued that Shakespeare always had his finger on the pulse of popular and controversial cultural concerns of his London audiences. In *Othello*, he used all his theatrical arts as an ironic means of projecting their injustices and racist views back onto themselves.

I suggested that particular extracts from the play, such as Othello's final speech (V.ii.334-352) could be used to develop activities whereby historical analogies are drawn between the economic and political experiences facing migrants and minority groups in Shakespeare's time and at present; these can be compared with critical means of presenting challenges facing migratory ethnic and religious groups today.

Some activities suggested were:

- Mapping the routes, reasons and economic impact of migrants from contemporary war zones such as Syria entering Europe, and comparing them with the mental and physical journeys Othello made as the archetypical C16 century Barbary Moor.

- Considering how a theatre director might stage Othello's speech (V.ii. 334-352) from the perspective of either a male or female migrant worker rejected from a state that had once welcomed his/her services, cultural capital, loyalty and skills.
- Analysing how samples of tabloid front pages have manipulated Shakespearean quotations (e.g. 'the green eyed monster') to engender public scaremongering concerning the concept of otherness.
- Curating student ideas for a museum of migration and inviting them to research and review how the recently opened Museum of Migration in London, or any other art exhibitions and museums address this topic. <http://www.migrationmuseum.org>
<stella49ksmyth@hotmail.co.uk>

Teaching for Social Justice: From Social Context to Teaching Content

Margarita Kosior

*GISIG member and
blogger, writer on
GI in teaching*



The purpose of my session was to present four practices I have used in order to transform my students into global citizens.

First, I presented silent discussion, a technique especially useful to tackle "difficult" topics, such as modern-day slavery or the holocaust. The basic principle is that the participants are not allowed to talk for fifteen minutes and the only means of communication among them is a long stretch of big wrapping paper and markers. You can read more on silent discussion in the June 2017 issue of [Humanising Language Teaching](#).

I moved on to illustrate how this technique, among others, was used by me in two projects. The first one was a collaborative project on the topic of the holocaust, the results of which can be found on the GISIG website ("[ELT for Social Justice – Addressing the Issue of the Holocaust](#)").

The second project was conducted in cooperation with [The NO Project](#), a campaign which raises awareness of modern day slavery. For the purpose of their assignment, my Methodology

trainees were asked to design a 50-minute lesson on the topic of human trafficking. The best sample will be uploaded to The NO Project website. All English language teachers who are willing to prepare lessons designed to raise awareness of modern-day slavery can contact info@thenoproject.org to contribute their own teaching materials to this cause.

Finally, I explained that it is also worthwhile to incorporate social issues into teaching Young Learners by talking about good practices. I feel that when I talk about justice and values to my students and even to my own children, aged 9 and 11, I prevent rather than fight injustice in the world. And we all know that prevention is often the best cure.
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Disclaimer

The GISIG Newsletter seeks to provide a democratic forum for all voices and perspectives on global issues, while not necessarily subscribing to the opinions raised by particular contributions or authors. It believes in facilitating critical debate and reflection on global questions. Readers interested in responding to any papers in this issue, may like to email the contributor or the GISIG committee.

- For details of all GISIG committee members see <http://gisig.iatefl.org/about-us>

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- **Benefit English language teachers all over the world providing opportunities for personal and professional development.**
- **Enable the international network of ELT professionals to grow, by encouraging and fostering the regional and local groupings, so that members can learn from each other.**
- **Encourage grassroots professionalism where all categories of members at whatever stage of their career can make significant contributions and continue to learn.**

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