

Members' Voices

メンバーの声



Nicolas Emerson

LD SIG Website Manager
nemersonld@gmail.com

I have always enjoyed the social aspect of learning. I love exploring ideas with others and developing understanding through discourse. I am fascinated by technology, and how it can be used to facilitate language learning. The role of the teacher is changing, and I feel that educators need to foster learner autonomy and equip students with the capabilities necessary to thrive as twenty-first-century learners.

In 2004, I graduated from Falmouth University in the UK with a bachelor's degree in journalism. I returned to education in 2009, enrolling on a 1-year PGCE to train as a creative media teacher. My course tutor had just stepped down as head teacher of a famously progressive local secondary school, and I feel fortunate to have learned under his wise tutelage. He introduced my cohort and me to the work of educational theorist Professor Guy Claxton, the Building Learning Power movement, and the concept of 'learning to learn,' which significantly impacted my early pedagogical beliefs.

Following my PGCE, I worked as a supply teacher in various educational settings, leading to a term-long placement in a secondary school as an English and media teacher. Subsequently, I secured a role lecturing print media and film at a local FE college. During this period, I completed a master's degree in education. My thesis explored where learning to learn could best be situated within the institution. I piloted a learning skills program in my classes, guiding students to set goals and reflect on their learning.

In 2013, I relocated to Japan to embark on a new chapter in my learning story as an EFL teacher. With no formal foreign language teaching qualifications, it took a while for me to find my feet. My first role in Japan was as an

elementary school ALT in an idyllic rural town in southern Fukuoka. It was a fortuitously soft landing.

I've worked my way up through junior high schools, high schools, *eikaiwa*, junior colleges, to my current role as a university lecturer and researcher. In a serendipitous circle of events, one of my former elementary school students from my first year in Japan was a student in one of my high-ability English classes last year. It was a delightful reminder of my journey as a teacher in Japan and how far I have come.

Now that I've gained nearly ten years of experience working as a language teacher, I feel ready to re-engage with my academic pursuits. In an echo of my previous study in the UK, I'm currently researching online goal setting and self-evaluation, attempting to understand how EFL teachers can utilize technology to facilitate learner reflection. My next project will center around collaborative story writing using a web application that my wife and I are in the process of making. I intend to continue down this research thread, exploring how technology can support the development of learner reflection, creativity and autonomy.

Ethel Natalia Revello Barovero

Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur
erevello@untdf.edu.ar



Knocking on the doors of different cultures to learn English: Kickstarting multiculturalism projects in the 21st Century Classroom

Hello everyone, I'm Ethel. I'm from Argentina and I was born in Córdoba – it is the second largest city of Argentina and it lies to the west of Buenos Aires. In 2010 I moved to Ushuaia -the capital city of Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur province –, three thousand

kilometers south from my hometown for working reasons – I was told that English teachers were needed. I have been working as an English teacher and professor for more than 20 years now. Although this is a small city in Argentina, I had to cope with the weather – quite colder from the rest of the country; I had to learn more about living here – as a consequence of the snow and the slopes, there are particular driving rules I had to learn; and I had to learn about the different cultures that coexist in this city – people from different parts of the country, and even from other countries such as Chile, Bolivia and Dominican Republic, live here. Ushuaia is surrounded by an awesome landscape and it is promoted as an exotic resort place; it is 1000 thousand kilometers far from Antarctica Peninsula and it is also called the End of the World.

I am an online English primary school teacher, too. I teach English to students in the only Antarctic school in Base Antártica Conjunta Esperanza: Escuela 38: Presidente Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín. “This school has a central role in the social and recreational activities (...) they work collaboratively to fulfill their needs” (Revello Barovero et al., 2021). I share some of the teaching videos in my [YouTube channel](#).

I have been working in the Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur since it was created. People from other regions of the country come to study and live here. I still feel like I am a tourist in this city and there are still unknown places to visit and take pictures. At university, I'm eager to develop cultural competency to help my students become open-minded, empathetic and inclusive professionals. In my own practice, I have tried to develop a positive attitude towards students with disabilities because I strongly believe that everybody should have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams and achieve their goals. There is still so much to explore in terms of democratic educational lesson planning, syllabuses and curricula. Personally, I am fascinated by thinking about people meeting different cultures because it fosters creativity, empathy and collaboration. I am sure this is the first step towards world peace.

In my teaching, I explore teamwork skills with informal networks, such as the online programme [CONNECT](#) – a project that encourages meaningful international virtual exchanges for students who would never have the opportunity to interact with each other. I believe that positive interactions with people from different cultures improves motivation, develops confidence and it helps to give sense to their own traditions and customs. Including international interactions in the syllabuses and teaching design lessons ensures the building up of a society based on peace and multiculturalism -a humanizing force that gives a sense of respect, encouraging participation and growth, and allowing students to gain valuable communication skills, and learn global citizenship.

I focus my research on English academic literacy and democratic education. I guess Raeywen Connell and Paula Carlino are my educational heroes. Their deep belief in democratic education and the way they explain it hit a chord with me. “Education is about creating capacities for practice – capacities that are both individual and social.” (Connell, n.d.)

This notion of education as a right, and that everybody should have access to it, made me realize that English learning is a right and that learning a language means learning a culture; but this does not mean that I have to get students involved in a different culture. Learning a language implies learning our own culture: learning to talk and write about our own lifestyle. This provides students with autonomy and spontaneity. If we take into account that through reading we can have a broader vision of the world, learn about other realities, develop creativity and critical reflection; learning to read is equivalent to learning to learn, that is, acquiring autonomy in the generation of our own learning (Revello Barovero, 2021). I believe that teaching English is a means of learning about our place, history and traditions; this depends on what the purpose of teaching is and the values teachers foster in their lessons. The appreciation of learning how to read, write, listen and speak in a foreign language helps students to build a world of active citizenship

through intercultural dialogue and learning through people from all over the world.

Teaching English from a regional perspective with a global vision encourages sustainable education. Not only does it include an appreciation of climate and environment issues, but also biodiversity, sustainable consumptions and other topics. I include local geography and environment issues in English lessons, and make students think about their natural environment and how to take care of it. I also ask them to read about indigenous peoples, and the way they live nowadays in our society; it is a way of making them visible -a lot of people think that there are no more indigenous peoples in our society. In tourism, students are asked to prepare a speech about a local winter resort or a local trekking route and make descriptions. In the past, students were able to choose any city from any province or even from any country. Making global issues related to regional ones is a challenge. It demands a lot of time for lesson planning. "As teachers, it must be taken into account that a conflict is an opportunity to grow since it allows the parties to learn about differences and to cope with them" (Rojas Carrillo et al., 2021). Sustainable education brings about conflict between economy and equity; between economic growth and environmental protection. Creating our own local material for teaching is time consuming and builds conflict between publishing houses and teachers. This is also an opportunity to think about new ways of teaching and learning.

Taking into account the multiculturalism of the Fuegian society, and the roots of the university – global sustainable education –, I believe that democratic education helps people to become responsible citizens, to develop their capabilities, and to realize their intellectual potential. In order to accomplish the mission of the university, I think that the design of English courses based on different cultural perspectives and environmental issues can reflect changes in society and lessons are more attractive. I concur with Kochoska that changes in the environment affect the shifting interests, needs, the behaviour of students, and their readiness

to accept or reject certain ways of learning or models of communication (Kochoska, 2007).

REFERENCES

- Connell, R. (n.d.) *Education*. http://www.raewynconnell.net/p/education_23.html
- Kochoska, J. (2007). *Civic education and the classroom climate*. Bitola: Faculty of Pedagogy.
- Revello Barovero, E.N., Colloca, C.B. (2022). Academic English Literacy in Geology and Biology Syllabuses. *Actas del VI Congreso de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación de la Universidad Internacional de Ciencia y Tecnología*. <https://doi.org/10.47300/978-9962-738-04-6>
- Revello Barovero, E., Ibarra, M.C. & Navarro Salazar, V.H. (2021). Una educación práctica, prosocial y creativa en la comunidad fueguina de la Base Esperanza. *I Jornadas de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades Antárticas JoCSHA* (pp. 65-66).
- Rojas Carrillo, N. I., Castiblanco Rodriguez, C. (2022). Conflict Mediators form Early Childhood, a Social Transformation that is Sustained in a Presential and Virtual Education. *Actas del VI Congreso de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación de la Universidad Internacional de Ciencia y Tecnología*. <https://doi.org/10.47300/978-9962-738-04-6>
- Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur. (2022). *Todo Noticias*. 25 de junio de 2022. *La Escuela de Idiomas apuesta a la internacionalización del currículum a través de programas de formación transnacionales en lenguas extranjeras*. <https://untdf.edu.ar/noticias/2179>



Noelia Bustos

Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur

Paula Ferreyro

Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur



We are studying biology at Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur (UNTDF). This university is located in Ushuaia – the capital city of the biggest province of Argentina – and English is needed to become a regular student, although it is not a requirement. English is the language of science. Knowing English before taking up biology is a must. Reading English papers is an activity included in many subjects and books written in English about different topics are part of the syllabus of many compulsory subjects. In our opinion, Academic English has to be taught at university. As this is not the real situation, students have to learn on their own. We decided to take up an optional English Academic course to learn how to deliver a speech at a conference or how to prepare an informal oral presentation.

We have participated in the international programme “CONNECT”, in which students from different countries introduced themselves and talked about culture: food, music, traditions, celebrations, and history. In the programme we were students from 14 countries and in my group we were five students from different nationalities. It was an interesting experience because we learnt about celebrations in Ivory Coast, Mexico, Thailand. And we got to know that a country changed its name! Turkey is now known as Türkiye.

Noelia: I believe that texting messages, preparing audio messages and reading messages everyday is a good opportunity to practice and learn English. Studying a foreign

language in isolation is very difficult. This possibility helped me to keep in contact with the language and forced me to learn new vocabulary, think about how to make sentences; how to learn new strategies to acquire fluency.

I strongly believe that reflective learning is an important tool to learn and the help of a teacher is needed. Thinking about the way I read or write takes time. At times I thought it was a waste of time. The same happens when practicing pronunciation. But after a couple of months I realized that it helped me do some better productions. I discovered new ways of learning new vocabulary and its pronunciation or new sentence patterns. I get really excited when I remember new words, and I can use them when talking.

Paula: These new experiences provide us with new tools to learn English. I think that taking up meetings with people from other countries and cultures helps the student learn English. The fact that we participated in the CONNECT programme helped us too: writing messages, speaking during the meetings while we learned about different cultures and practicing our English was an enriching experience for all the students. Definitely, learning and studying in groups using different tools helps in the path of learning a new language.