Special feature: a look at international schools

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July 2021
£3.50 - €5.50
ISSUE 476

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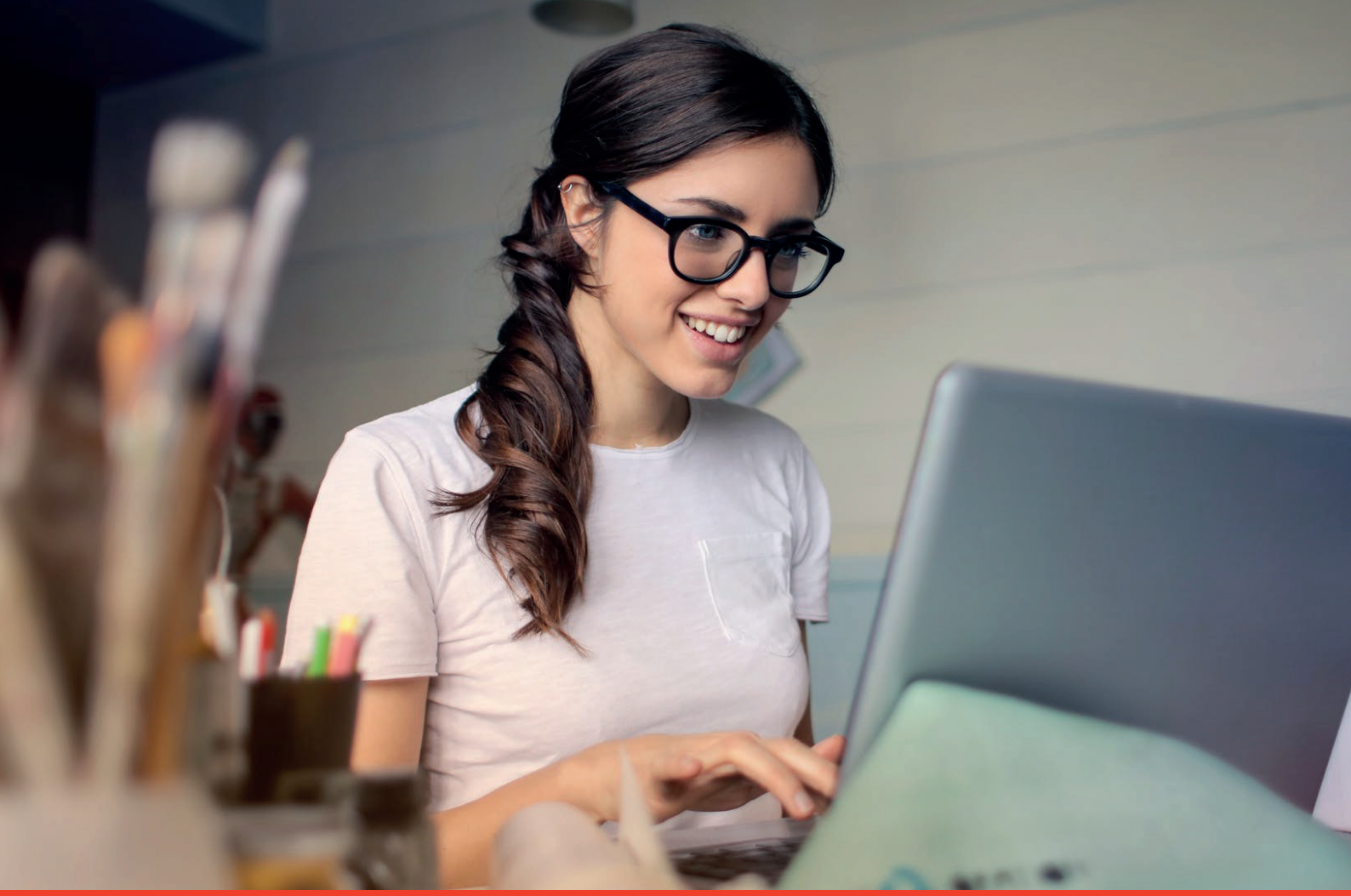

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The international scene

This issue we look at the challenges currently facing English language teaching around the world

What a strange old time it's been on our planet this past year and a half (and counting). While a few industries have seen an upsurge in business (we're looking at you, Amazon), many have suffered decimating blows. Take the aviation industry, for instance and, similarly, language schools, which have traditionally relied on international students travelling to learn in a host country where they can soak up the culture while practising their emerging new skill.

But with the restrictions on travel, whether that's proving you've had two jabs, quarantining or countries simply closing their borders, this has become prohibitively difficult. It's been noticeable particularly when it comes to short courses: no one is going to quarantine for 10 days if their visit is a month or less. Plus, with the ever-present threat of lockdown, young people – who make up the vast majority of students – are opting to stick close to home and loved ones.

> "Malta, for instance, is giving £10 a day to students who enrol at one of its language schools"

To address and try to alleviate some of the financial pressures on UK-based language schools, an All Party Parliamentary Group recently hosted a round table to gather information to feed back to Government with the idea of applying pressure to gain support for the faltering industry. We report on this on page 12.

It's not all gloom and doom. On other fronts, we look at those countries that are opening to overseas visitors and students, and the incentives they are offering to attract them back in these uncertain times. Malta, for instance, is giving €10 a day to students who enrol at one of its language schools. Strong incentive to go there and a clever way to get the economy rolling again (turn to page 13).

And how are the international schools fairing around the world? Melanie Butler takes a look at this, along with the rise of the educational super-schools (pages 14 and 15). We also have an in-depth explanation of what language schools can do to bring ecological issues into the classroom and make their teaching as green as possible (page 18). And we bring you the latest research into whether travelling to study a language is actually worth it. What do you think? Turn to page 8 to find out if you're right.

> "An in-depth explanation of what language schools can do to bring ecological issues into the classroom"

Tragically, if we're talking about schools, there is another subject that needs to be addressed: child safeguarding. The danger posed was highlighted by the recent case of a convicted British paedophile who changed his name by deed poll, and was thus able to leave the country and take work at an international school in Madrid. He got away with this by taking advantage of a perfectly legal loophole (page 8). We spoke to the Safeguarding Alliance to find out what can be done about this and how schools can best protect themselves from something similar happening to them (page 16).

In a change of tack, we all know that English is the lingua franca of the world. Even post-Brexit it is still the language of the EU in Brussels (though France is giving a good shot at bringing this state of affairs to an end). But what would you say if someone put forward the argument for another language overtaking it to become the new global language? In a compelling argument, Jeffrey Gil, author of *Soft Power and the Worldwide Promotion of Chinese Language Learning: The Confucius Institute Project*, makes his case for why he thinks Chinese may well overtake English as everyone's go-to language (page 22).

Finally, whether you're just starting out on your teaching career or need a bit of a refresher after a long (Covid-induced?) break, we have 10 top teaching tips that will work in any scenario on page 21. As usual, this issue is also packed full of information and news from the world of English language teaching. Hang in there – it can only get better.

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Language travel works

By Gill Ragsdale

NAASSOM AZEVEDO ON UNSPLASH

Time spent in an English native speaking country is generally seen as a valuable way to accelerate and broaden language learning. In 2019, over half a million English language learners came to study English in the UK. But is the experience worth the time and expense?

Wen-Ta Seng and a team of researchers from Taiwan set out to quantify just how much students gained from study abroad language programmes compared to students studying in their home country. Details of how they carried out their study are given in the box (opposite page).

Their overall finding was that study abroad programmes have a relatively large effect on language learning outcomes compared to studying at home. The overall effect size (g) came out at 0.9, which is generally considered to be a medium-large effect – it suggests that 82% of students studying in their home country would obtain lower test scores than any average student on a study abroad programmes.

To put this into a more general educational context, when John Hattie published the effect sizes of 252 influences on education, ranging from 'classroom discussion' to 'homework', he found the average effect size was 0.4. He called this the 'hinge point'. When judging whether an intervention was making a positive difference it should have an effect size of 0.4 or more. By this standard, clearly study abroad programmes are having a positive effect on language learning.

Compared to previous studies on the effectiveness of study abroad language programmes, Tseng went further and examined the moderating influences on language gains, breaking down the overall effect into particular factors. Despite the strong overall effect, digging further into the data revealed a great deal of variation between different individual studies and even between different programmes within the same studies.

Tseng identified the following factors influencing the effectiveness of the individual study abroad programmes:

- Program content
  - Some programmes focus on formal language learning, with classes on specific linguistic structures and their application, while other courses are more content based, focusing on, for example, history and culture. Courses with more formal language teaching were more effective.
- Type of residence
  - Staying with a host family was more effective than staying with other students in a dormitory or hostel.
- Length of stay
  - The course lengths ranged from three weeks to 1.5 years. The sweet spot seems to be around three months – students who stayed on their course abroad for 13 weeks or more were more likely to outperform those studying at home.
- Learner's language level
  - Beginner level students appeared to make the greatest gains, followed by advanced students, then intermediate. Tseng suggests there may be a U-shaped relationship, with beginners making rapid gains that slow down at intermediate level, but accelerate as advanced students engage more with native speakers.

Tseng also broke down the effect of study abroad programmes in terms of the specific linguistic gains made by students. The largest effects were found in measures of speaking and receptive vocabulary knowledge ($g = 1.0$). Positive effects were also seen on measures of writing, listening and pragmatic knowledge ($g > 0.6$).

Areas which showed no gains compared to domestic study programmes were grammar, reading and working memory.

Students in this study ranged in age from 10 to 33 years, and age did not influence the effectiveness of these study programmes.

Typical of education more generally, the effectiveness of a programme depends on how you choose to measure the outcome. In this study, measures of oral proficiency (predominantly ACTFL-OPI) showed greater gains than standardised tests and in-house assessments. Although most of the data came from English language learners, almost half came from learners of other languages. By far the largest effect was for learners of French, Japanese and Spanish ($g > 1.0$) compared to a significant but more modest effect for English language learners ($g = 0.6$).

The gap between English language gains when compared to French, Japanese and Spanish may reflect the different outcome measures used. For example, there were higher scores on the widely used ACTFL-OPI compared to more demanding EFL tests, such as TOEFL, which assess listening, writing and reading, as well as speaking.

All in all, Tseng's study shows that studying abroad can provide a boost to language learning compared to studying at home, and highlights factors to consider for both the students and language schools.

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■ *Tseng, W-T, Liu, Y-T, Hsu, Y-T and Chu, H-C (2021) 'Revisiting the effectiveness of study abroad language programmes: A multi-level meta-analysis' Language* Teaching Research https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820988423

Study method

Tseng and colleagues searched the literature from 1995-2019 for studies on the effectiveness of study abroad programmes on language learning. They excluded studies that did not have clear measures of the linguistic outcome (including pre-test scores for comparison) or lacked comparison with a control group (ie, students studying in their home country), leaving 42 studies to take forward.

The collected studies included data from nearly 4,000 students learning English, Spanish, French, Japanese, Chinese, German, Russian and some mixed classes. Just over half the data came from students learning English and around a quarter from students learning Spanish.

There are pros and cons to including different language learners. On the one hand, it adds power to the study by increasing the sample size, but on the other hand, it also adds a lot of variation that is hard to account for, especially as some of the languages (Chinese, German, Russian and mixed classes) contributed less than 10% of the data each. The comparison of different language learning outcomes did, however, have useful implications regarding testing.

In the selected studies, the effects of study abroad were quantified as effect sizes (g). Having a significant difference in outcomes between studying abroad or at home may not be of much interest if the actual effect on those outcomes is very small. As the dataset increases in size, the likelihood of significant but rather small effects increases, and effect sizes that are both significant and larger are the focus of interest.

Altogether, 283 effect sizes were generated from these studies and entered into one, overall analysis – a meta-analysis. Because some of these effect sizes were related, being from the same data sets, this was accounted for by carrying out a three-level meta-analysis that could weight the data appropriately.

Tseng's study is relatively rigorous in its analysis and by combining studies into a meta-analysis they had sufficient data to look at the effect of moderating factors on the overall effectiveness. For example, previous studies had not addressed how choice of outcome measure might influence how effective the programme appeared to be.

There is always some difficulty with meta-analyses in that different studies do not measure things or define categories in quite the same way and some factors are under-represented. Despite these challenges, 10 potential moderators and 11 outcome measures were identified for this meta-analysis, enabling a fuller comparison of study abroad compared to domestic programmes that goes beyond descriptive commentary, offering clear, quantitative results.

What's in a name?

The arrest of a convicted British paedophile at a Spanish international school highlights a lurking danger

British law allows citizens the right to change their name and have the new name used on legal documents. This law allowed a convicted British paedophile to escape to Spain, where he is now in jail awaiting trial for sexual offences against 36 Spanish children.

In 2016, Ben David Lewis, the director of a children's summer camp, was convicted of 'downloading or taking' indecent images of girls aged under five. He received a two-year jail sentence, but it was suspended. He was placed on the sex offenders register and banned from working with children.

Within four months he had officially changed his name to Ben David Rose using the deed poll process, which takes 15 minutes online. Then, perfectly legally, he applied for and received a passport in his new name.

The problem of paedophiles changing their names is not new. British child protection specialists, the Safeguarding Alliance, has been campaigning on the issue for many years. Its 2020 report on the deed poll loophole found that 1,349 sex offenders had alerted police that they had changed their name by this method. A further 913 offenders had gone missing after they changed their name without notifying the police.

> "Under Spanish law, all teachers must submit a criminal record check for sexual offending"

Speaking to *The Olive Press*, the expat newspaper which broke the story, Emily Konstantas, CEO of the Alliance warned, "There are currently hundreds, if not thousands, of known sex offenders slipping under the radar in the UK to seek work abroad."

Early in 2017, Ben Rose flew to Spain to take up a job as an au pair. He went on to teach at a private language school in Madrid and Concertado, a state-subsidised private school, and at a private language school before taking up a position at the British-style international school where he was working when he was arrested.

Under Spanish law, all teachers must submit a criminal record check for sexual offending, known as a DBS check in the UK. Having changed his name by deed poll, Ben Rose could easily have done so. However, according to the Spanish police, he chose to forge one..

A police search of his home turned up several falsified documents, including not only a fake DBS certificate, but also a forged Postgraduate Certificate in Education required by all state-qualified UK teachers.

Following Rose's arrest, the Safeguarding Alliance urged Spanish authorities to require British teachers to supply an original birth certificate alongside the criminal record check currently required. This is something else that Rose could perhaps have forged.

Something he would have found harder to fake were the names and contacts of two people, one a former employer, so the school could approach them for references. This is considered best practice in UK education.

In fact, it is not normal practice in Spain to write independently to former employers. Instead they accept written testimonials provided by the teacher, which are yet another thing that is easy to forge. This Spanish 'loophole' is one authorities should also consider closing.

For more information on safeguarding in international schools, turn to page 16.

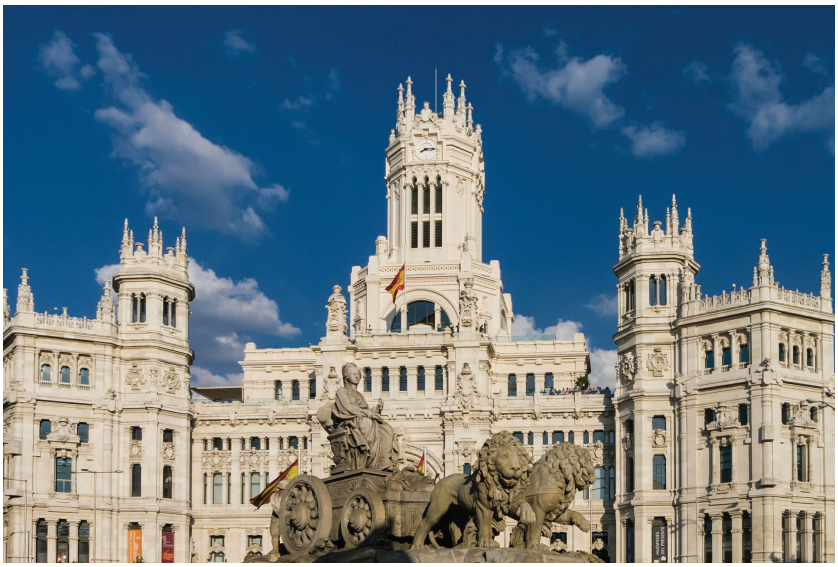

PHOTO BY CARABO SPAIN FROM PIXABAY

In short

A British teacher accused of sexual offences against 36 Spanish children aged between the ages of four and eight, is currently being held in De Soto Prison in Madrid awaiting trial. Spanish police were alerted by counterparts in Australia after they found pornographic photographs of his victims on the dark web.

The 31-year-old, known in Spain as Ben David Rose, was working at a British-style international school in Madrid, having also taught in a state-subsidised private school and a private language academy, as well as working as an au pair for a family in Zaragoza.

Acting on a tip-off from his fellow teachers, English language website *The Olive Press* established that the man had previously been convicted for child abuse in the UK courts under his birth name, Ben David Lewis, and had been given a two-year suspended sentence and banned from travelling abroad. The day after his conviction, Lewis changed his name by deed poll, a legal procedure which takes just 15 minutes online in the UK.

He then successfully applied for a British passport in his new name before setting off to work in Spain. *The Olive Press* was also provided with a British criminal record check for sex offenders, known as a DBS, and a Certificate of Qualified Teacher Status, both in the new name of Ben David Rose.

Spanish police confirm that a number of forged documents, including a DBS certificate, were found in Rose's house, along with the tools needed to create them. As the police statement pointed out: "In Spain it is a legal requirement whenever working with children to present a certificate that proves the lack of a criminal record for a crime of a sexual nature."

China cracks over private tutoring

By Melanie Butler

PHOTO FROM SHUTTERSTOCK

The Chinese government has set up a new department to oversee the US$120 billion private tutoring industry in its latest crackdown on the country's burgeoning for-profit education sector. In recent years, new government regulations have seen a tightening up on qualifications for native-speaker English language teachers, the requirement for all Chinese children in private schools to follow the country's national curriculum up to the age of 15 and, as we report on page 15, has just introduced a requirement for bilingual schools to be owned by a named Chinese national.

On 1 June, 13 Chinese online tutoring companies and app suppliers were hit with fines totalling some US$6 million for various wrongdoings, including 'fabricating teacher qualifications, exaggerating the effects of training... and fabricating user reviews', according to the country's State Administration for Market Regulation.

This was swiftly followed with an announcement by the Ministry of Education of the creation of a new body, the Off Campus Education and Training Department, to supervise cram schools and online platforms providing after-school education for children from preschool age to 18. According to the *South China Morning Post*, it will 'help private educational institutions set up Communist Party cells and establish rules for incorporation, fees and the content, scheduling and qualifications of training'.

Other reports predict future regulations will limit the hours students can study outside schools at the weekend and ban courses in the peak school summer holiday season, when the buxiban, as cram schools are called in China, make most of their money. A limit on young children studying in the evening, both online and at buxiban, was introduced early last year.

It is not clear at present whether the new department will also oversee English language schools, though most buxiban also offer English courses, nor is it known whether a holiday course ban could be extended to include junior summer school courses overseas.

Although the Chinese press has mostly reported the changes in the tutoring market as designed to protect children and, to a lesser extent, Chinese values, some foreign commentators have linked it with the new three-child policy, also announced in June, which encourages families to have more children in an attempt to balance out its ageing population profile.

> "An estimated 75% of all children in mainland China will receive private tutoring support during their school years"

Many Chinese parents have been reported to be resisting the calls to have more children because of the perceived cost of bringing up a child, including the fees for extra tuition outside school. An estimated 75% of all children in mainland China will receive some private tutoring support during their school years.

The craze for cram schools isn't limited to mainland China. Hong Kong and Taiwan both have buxiban, while Singapore, where citizens cannot enrol their children in international schools until the age of 16, also has a flourishing industry offering tutoring and 'enrichment' classes. In Japan, such classes at institutions, known as jeju, are common. Meanwhile, in Korea, parents continue to spend 2% of the country's GDP on private hogwon cram schools and English language classes despite continuing government efforts to crackdown on the practice.

Can the Chinese government win its fight to rein in the cram school craze? Time will tell, but the current spate of regulations has certainly caused a furore, if not among Beijing parents then with Wall Street investors, many of whom have poured money into China's private education giants.

No sooner were the fines announced on 1 June then shares in the biggest New York-listed Chinese education specialists plummeted. The sharpest fall was in Gaotu (formerly known as GSX Techedu), whose share price dropped 90% from its January peak. TAL Education dropped just over 60%, while shares in New Oriental, which is also a big player in EFL, dropped about half their value, according to *Forbes Magazine*.

As with the rest of the Chinese education market, the three New York-listed companies have reacted by slashing spending on marketing, an area where the regulators are now reining in the excesses, laying off staff and suspending new hires.

The crackdown, which has also hit China's tech giants – with Alibaba and Tencent having invested heavily in tutoring apps – shows no signs of abating. In mid-June, *Reuters* reported that authorities were planning to put a cap on tuition fees and introduce trial bans on vacation courses this summer.

Industry observers doubt whether the government aims to shut down the sector entirely, but the education gold rush seems to be over. As one specialist told *Forbes*, "The industry has gone from rapid growth to plateau.

"Investors can no longer view the education companies as being similar to tech stocks. They can no longer expect such explosive growth," she added.

Measuring language learning success

A new vocabulary list reflects how learners acquire additional words

By Gillian Ragsdale

GLEN CARRIE ON UNSPLASH

The order of words acquired by non-native learners is usually assumed to reflect word frequency in the English language generally, but when Belgian researchers tested word recognition directly and compiled lists of word families reflecting what students actually know, their lists suggested other strong influences on which words are learned and in what order.

There have been many attempts to compile lists of vocabulary appropriate to various levels of language proficiency. These lists are often organised into levels of word families. For example, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has six proficiency levels (A1-C2).

What these lists have in common is that they're compiled from the top down by researchers using word frequency to decide at which language learning level those words/word families should be known.

The Belgian study took a very different, bottom-up approach, testing language learners directly to find out which words they actually know.

An internet test was made freely available (see below), with each testing round comprising 70 random, real English words and 30 random, made-up but plausible words. The participants answered yes/no, indicating recognition of the word, while the inclusion of the nonsense words weeded out those who claimed to recognise words falsely.

Participants were also asked for personal information, including choosing from five proficiency levels, from 'I know a few words' to 'It is my mother tongue'. Feedback scores were given and the test proved very popular, generating 17 million responses for the study.

Many more responses were actually collected, but only the first three tested by each user were used (some users tested hundreds of times) and anyone answering 'yes' more than twice to the nonsense words was excluded.

Participant profiles were very diverse, representing 150 mother tongues and all educational levels, with a mean age of 30. The most common mother tongues were Polish, Hungarian, German, Polish, Dutch and Chinese.

Analysing the responses led to a ranked list of 62,000 words. Of these, 114 were known to all participants, but were still ranked by responding time (eg, nouns in ranked order: 'coffee, water, music, radio' etc). Some less frequent, language-class related words also appear on this list: 'subject, verb, vocabulary'. A further 331 words had only one 'no' response.

Some words would not have been predicted from their frequency in the English language generally and some were even better known in English than in the first language. These latter tended to be academic words, such as 'informatics', and cognates from the mother tongue or other second language, such as 'paracetamol'.

Words that were comparatively less well-known than expected included more informal and child-friendly vocabulary, such as 'tadpole' and 'dunce'.

The list of 62,000 words were organised into 20,000-word families, which is a more useful compilation for teachers and learners (see link below). The families were ranked by the best-known member of the family, and include inflections and derivations based on suffixes. For example, the family 'correction' includes 'correctly' and 'corrective', but not 'incorrect'.

Overall, English language word frequency was only able to account for 46% of the variance in the likelihood that learners knew a word.

Apart from academic-related biases in vocabulary, other influences include the motivation of the learner and how interesting the vocabulary is to them. This may explain why so many learners knew words such as 'snowboarding' and 'sexy'. It is also likely that sources of English outside the classroom, such as TV, film and social media, are highly influential.

These lists, being derived from what learners actually know, can help teachers and examiners to assess text difficulty more realistically and better anticipate challenges, such as otherwise unexpected gaps in vocabulary knowledge.

The vocabulary test can be found at http://vocabulary.ugent.be

Wordlists are available at OSF | Word levels for English L2 speakers based on accuracy and response times in a yes/no vocabulary test with 62 thousand words.

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Can watching English videos erode a child's mother tongue?

By Gillian Ragsdale

Routine exposure to digital sources of English improves English language learning in Icelandic children without compromising their mother tongue development, according to research from the University of Iceland.

English is increasingly seen to dominate digital media globally, from TV to social media and gaming, and Icelandic education professionals are not alone in their concerns over the impact of children's familiarity with English on the development of their mother tongue.

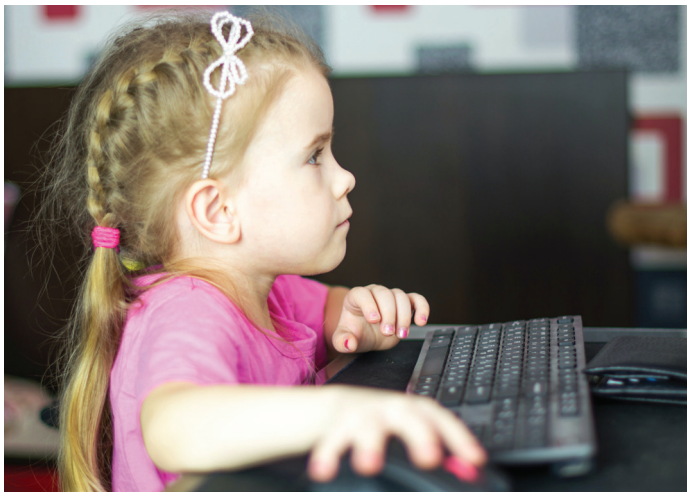
Sigurjonsdottir and Nowenstein sought to address concerns over the preservation of the Icelandic language by assessing whether children's exposure to English was associated with reduced Icelandic vocabulary and grammar in their test scores.

The study had two parts. First, 724 3-12-year-old Icelandic children answered an online survey (with parental assistance) on their Icelandic vs English language acquisition, as well as questions testing their grammar and receptive vocabulary. Testing included questions looking for evidence of transfer from English language usage to Icelandic, indicating that exposure to English might be interfering with proper use of children's L1.

In the second part of the study, a stratified random sample of 106 children and parents were interviewed and tested in more depth. This gave more detailed information, as well as more extensive vocabulary and grammar testing.

The proportion of overall language exposure averaged just 14%, although this varied from 0-52%. The type of exposure changed across age groups and overall exposure increased with age. At 3-7, exposure to English was mainly via the internet, such as YouTube, but from 8-12 this expanded to movies and social media as well.

Time spent on English media did not, however, lead to less input in Icelandic and children with more English vocabulary also had more Icelandic vocabulary. The influence of English exposure on children's Icelandic grammar suggested only a few small influences, for example, on the use of the subjunctive but no larger, overall effects. So, although Icelandic children are increasingly exposed to English, this does not appear to be at the expense of their linguistic skills in Icelandic.



BERMIX STUDIO ON UNSPLASH

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Student numbers tumble

Survey after survey shows the damage Covid has wreaked on the EFL industry

We first reported the (unsurprising) massive drop in English language students coming to the UK during 2020 on the *EL Gazette* website (21 May 2021). Here we take a deeper look into the full extent of the downturn.

> "At the time of writing, Australia's borders are closed to international students and aren't expected to fully open again to them until mid-2022"

According to the English UK Students Statistics Report 2021, it had 346 member centres in 2020, as compared to 415 centres in 2019. There were 83,446 students enrolled for member courses, but this number fell by 83.6% as the pandemic took hold. Due to the fall in students, 32 centres closed.

Of the enrolled students, 49% had face-to-face classes; 31% had signed up for face-to-face classes but ended up having a mix of both face-to-face and online lessons, and a further 20% had all their classes online, 16% of them from outside the UK.

To give a comparison, Australia's English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) enrolment was down by 68% in the final quarter of 2020 compared to the same quarter in 2019, according to a Market Intelligence for International Student Recruitment survey from ICEF. The survey also found that 50% of these students were studying remotely from outside the country.

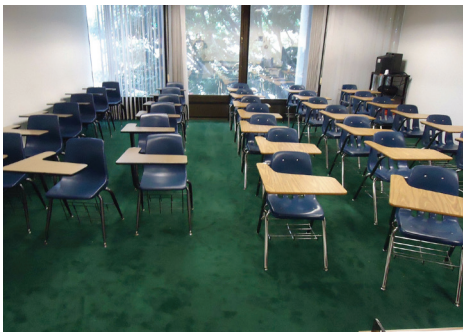


PHOTO BY ADAM VEGA FROM PIXABAY

At the time of writing, Australia's borders are closed to international students and aren't expected to fully open again to them until mid-2022, though there is talk of a gradual phasing in programme from late 2021.

It's a similarly bleak picture in Canada, which had previously been jostling into the third most popular destination for English language students. In 2020, student numbers were down 56% when compared to 2019. Unlike Australia, however, Canada is allowing international students to enter for the autumn 2021 term providing they follow its testing and quarantine rules.

A recent Navitas Agent Perception Report offers a glimmer of hope, as it found perceptions of the UK and Canada are that both are poised for a strong rebound once travel opens up again, with the USA hard on their heels. This is an almost complete 180° shift in agent perceptions, which now sees the latter country as 'warm and welcoming'.

While there is undoubtedly pent-up inclination to take up in-country English language courses, it may yet be some time before the enrolment numbers creep back up again.

Language schools seek support

Reporting on the All Party Parliamentary Group round table: Securing the Future of English Language Teaching in the UK after Covid

"To set the scene, this has been a dire, dire situation for the industry since the pandemic started," said Baron Karan Bilimoria, CBE, who lead the event.

"Student numbers were down 83% in 2020," Huan Jakes of English UK, reported. "As a result of that, 91% of staff were furloughed or released, so we're in danger of losing some of the expertise we've acquired over the decades." He went on to explain that English language schools hadn't been given any rate relief like other industries and, as they were never ordered to close, English UK members were reliant on discretionary grants from their local councils, so it was very much a 'postcode lottery' whether language schools had received any support. Further, he said they didn't expect any real recovery for the industry until summer 2022.

English UK would like the government to do two things: offer targeted business support in the short term, focusing on business rate relief and, in the medium term, provide tailored support for visas, immigration and travel in order to create the best possible operating environment for the industry.

Painting how grim things were, Farhan Quraish, CEO of the Speak Up London language school, said: "At the start of the pandemic we were faced with countless requests for refunds. We saw a mass exodus of our student base, both current and future. We saw key members of staff returning to their home countries. Our income immediately dropped to zero. We had the threat of eviction looming over us, as at this time there was no protection on commercial rents.

"There was also an incorrect perception that we were able to survive by switching our provision from face-to-face to online, but what wasn't realised is that in order for this to happen we would have to price match with already-established online providers that usually work with freelance teachers outside of the UK."

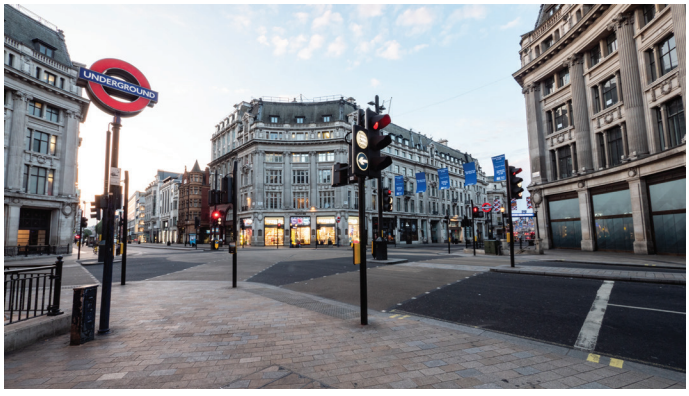


PHOTO FROM SHUTTERSTOCK

It was generally felt that the restrictions and regulations around entry to Britain post-Brexit combined with the heavy blow the pandemic has struck was taking an unbearable toll on private language schools.

MP Paul Blomfield summed up by saying the focus for government had to be on business support and called on the other MPs present to liaise with their secretariat to make representation as a matter of urgency.

Malta opens for summer but other destinations lag behind

Where can international language students study now? *Melanie Butler* finds out

A viral video of a beach party in the Maltese resort of Sliema is a sign that summer is here, while the report on the *Lovin Malta* website that 'the group of youths form part of an English language school' shows that the Mediterranean island nation, which opened its doors and its language schools to foreign visitors in early June, can expect a bumper summer – especially as the opening dates of the other main summer school destinations remain uncertain.

On 4 June, the Maltese government announced a €10-a-day voucher scheme for all visitors enrolling in a local language school for between 15 and 30 days. According to Tourism Minister Clayton Bartolo, while the main aim of the scheme is to support the country's Covid-hit English language industry, giving students €10 to spend in Malta for every night of their visit would ensure the students would spend more money in local businesses during their stay.

Tourists from a wide range of countries, including most of the EU, can enter the country if they can to produce a negative Covid test result before boarding their flight or, alternatively, from 1 July, a certificate showing the traveller is fully vaccinated. Some Covid restrictions about safe distancing remain, though as this article goes to press they are gradually being lifted. All too late for the students at the Sliema beach part who, locals complained, were guilty of breaking the rule that no more than six people should mix outside and drinking should not be permitted except at a table of four with food.

Vaccine passports

This vaccine-passport approach to language travel has also been signalled by Canada, although a date for the launch of the new system has yet to be set. Under the new policy, students would still have to self-isolate for up to five days in a residence or homestay while awaiting the results of the Covid test they are required to take on their arrival in the country. The country's language travel industry, which includes language schools for both English and French, has welcomed the proposal, noting that it would remove the need for students to spend time and money in the country's 'Covid hotels', which are reported by schools and agents as a major reason for students reluctance to enrol in Canadian schools.

The USA is also expected to adopt the vaccine passport approach to foreign travel, with the Biden administration demonstrating approval for allowing vaccinated EU citizens to enter the country this summer.

Vaccine passports, however, are not generally available to the under-16s, the largest cohort in the European summer school market, as vaccinations for under 18s has only been recently approved and few youngsters are likely to have had both jabs before the July peak for junior courses has passed.

Ireland, which is following the EU agreement, is also likely to accept vaccine passports when international travel resumes. Citizens from EU countries should also be allowed to enter with a negative Covid test if international travel restrictions are lifted as scheduled by mid-July, with most language schools looking to re-open shortly after for a truncated summer season.

> "Quarantine rules make it hard for short-stay students"

The outlook for the UK market, by far the largest of the main summer school destinations, remains uncertain. Although the UK schools are currently open, the ongoing quarantine rules make it hard for short-stay students to come. Schools are hopeful, though, of some summer business in August, mirroring the experience of 2020 when there was a surge in late summer.

Southern hemisphere

In the southern hemisphere, now in its winter season, South Africa is open for business and some schools are advertising junior courses, though travellers from some countries may face quarantine when they return home.

Australia remains closed, although there is talk of some states running pilot programmes for international university students in the near future. There is good news for international students who are working in the country, as the government proposes, for the first time since Covid struck, to include them in the next financial support package.

It is in New Zealand, however, that the future looks most bleak, with industry figures warning that the entire English language industry could collapse by the end of the year, according to the *RNZ* website. Although the university language centres are likely to survive, only 25 private language schools are currently still open, according to the article.

Education Ministry documents, seen by *RNZ*, show the government has been aware of the problem since April. A summary from a number of workshops held by officials identified a risk that "the entire English language sub-sector will not exist by the end of the year.

"Staffing has been reduced across the board, a number of English language schools have closed and a number of other schools are considering their options beyond June."

Information correct at time of going to press.

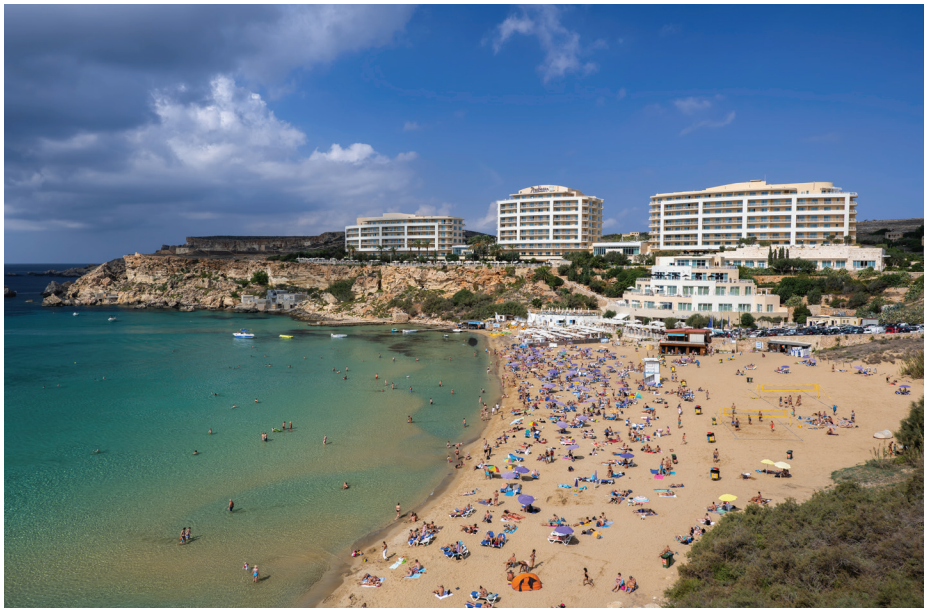


PHOTO FROM SHUTTERSTOCK

The schools of the Empires fight back?

What is the current state of play when it comes to International schools? *Melanie Butler* gives her verdict

British international schools are nothing new – the English Schools Foundation in Hong Kong dates back to 1894 when the King George V School was opened in Tsim Sha Tsui for the children of local British colonialists.

Nor is Britain the only colonial power to have opened schools in its former Empire and leave them behind when it left. The Grand Lycée Franco-Libanais in Beirut, Lebanon, was founded in 1909 and is still the flagship of the 16 lycées in the country. Unlike the British, whose colonial schools were modelled on the historic public schools and were independent of government and not for profit, the international lycées were part of the French state school system and the 529 state recognised lycées in 139 countries are still regulated by the French educational authorities.

The American government has also long supported schools offering a US-style curriculum. The State Department still lists 193 assisted schools, known as schools at posts, since many were originally set up for the children of US diplomats posted overseas, though not all of them receive financial support from the American government or offer a strictly American style of teaching.

> "Several provinces in Canada offer accreditation for the growing number of Canadian schools overseas"

There are now new government-backed players on the block. Several provinces in Canada offer accreditation for the growing number of Canadian schools overseas and there are moves in that direction in Australia. Haileybury School in Melbourne (founded in 1892 by a former pupil of Haileybury College in England with the college's permission) now not only has five campuses in Australia, but a branded affiliate school in Beijing and partner schools in Guangzhou in China, Timor L'Este and the Philippines.

Perhaps the latest state to enter the international school market is not a Western power, but an educational superpower. Singapore International Schools (SIS), a group backed by the Singaporean government and, reportedly, the country's sovereign wealth fund, has opened campuses in Hong Kong. Dhaka and Mumbai. Meanwhile, Indian style international schools have long been established in the Emirates and other locations with high numbers of Indian expats, including Singapore.

The Chinese government is also rumoured to be looking at expanding its network of Mandarin-medium schools overseas.

So, who is winning in the war of the international schools? Cambridge International, a department of the University, claims 10,000 Cambridge schools worldwide, which certainly knocks the lycées into Napoleon's cocked hat. But while all Cambridge schools take Cambridge academic subject exams in English, not all of them by any means are British-style international schools.

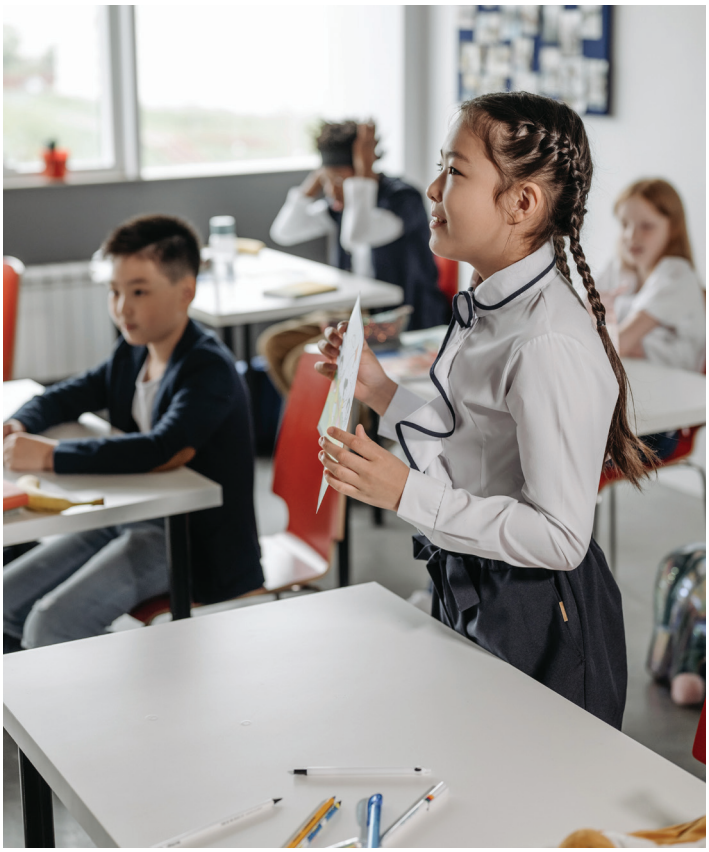


PHOTO BY PAVEL DANILYUK FROM PEXELS

Apart from a pat on the back now and then, the British government gives little to the British international school movement, but then it never has.

It is down to associations, such as the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) and think tanks including the Independent Schools Council (ISC) to supply the information and backup they need, not only in areas like curriculum and teacher recruitment, but in more difficult situations, such as child safeguarding, which we deal with on pages 8 and 16.

Isn't this just a British obsession? After all, that's what the grandees of Education France said when a French teacher, recently released from a British jail for molesting his students on a school trip to England, asked for his teaching license to be restored. Two years later he was arrested for sexually abusing a pupil in his school in rural France.

Safeguarding children is not just a matter for British schools or even British international schools. William Vahey, an American teacher described by the FBI as "one of the most prolific and heinous alleged predators we've ever seen", worked in American international schools across the world for nearly 40 years, despite having convictions for child abuse in California, before he was caught by the American school in Nicaragua. He fled to the States and committed suicide

Nor is it just international schools. Richard Huckle – dubbed "Britain's worst paedophile" by the British press, worked as an English language teacher in Christian church communities in Malaysia where he raped and filmed the abuse of children. He was later killed in jail by a fellow inmate.

The truth is that paedophiles go where children are: schools, language schools, churches, even scout groups. And all too often in the past, schools the world over have either ignored the problem or have dismissed it. I remember contacting an international school in Indonesia where a reader had tipped us off that a notorious paedophile, James Fraser Darling, had worked before getting a job in EFL. The school confirmed that Darling had worked there, but denied he could have been a paedophile because "the children loved him".

If British International schools and their associations can help schools across the world recognise and root out the danger in their midst, it will be better for everybody.

Asia closes ranks

The restrictions on who can attend international schools – and when – in a number of Asian countries are tightening, says *Melanie Butler*

A new Harrow International School is due to open in Japan in April next year. The school, which like the other Harrow-branded schools in Asia, is part of the AISL chain that operates under license from the historic British school, will be fully residential, as indeed the original Harrow school has always been. It hopes to welcome 960 students from across the region to its new home in the Japanese mountains.

It cannot, however, legally welcome local Japanese children until they reach the age of 15. Under Japanese law, children of citizens must attend 'Article 1' schools until they finish compulsory school education, with a very few exceptions, such as the children of families with dual citizenship. International schools are not covered by Article 1, as they operate under license from the local Prefecture and are classified as 'miscellaneous schools', a category that includes driving instruction centres.

From the age of 15, Japanese children can be enrolled in private high schools, including international ones. A growing number of Japanese parents are opting their children out of the Japanese system at an earlier age, though, and sending them to English medium schools, often unlicensed, according to an article on the *Nikkei Asian* website. However, this involves the parents getting 'approval from public elementary and junior high schools to treat them as truants', a process which can leave the children in legal limbo.

The spread of Asian international schools enrolling local children has continued apace since AISL opened its first overseas branch of Harrow in Bangkok in 1998, at the suggestion of the Thai royal family, which has long sent many of its princes to the British school.

Increasing numbers of children are enrolling in such schools in Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia. Many of the new schools are branded affiliates of British schools: Dulwich International, another early entrant in the market, now has branches in Singapore, Korea and Myanmar; Marlborough College has opened in Malaysia, as has Repton in Dubai.

All is not plain sailing, because Japan is not the only Asian government that bans its citizens from sending their children to international schools. Since it became an independent state, Singapore has insisted that all children of citizens attend a local state primary school, although they may enrol in a private secondary school within the Singapore system, some of which also own branches for expatriate children. This means Singaporeans cannot attend a local international school until the age of 16.

> "A growing number of Japanese parents are opting their children out of the Japanese system"

Korea's laws are particularly strict on international schools, only allowing enrolment by children with at least one foreign parent, Korean children who have been educated for at least three years and children of a person of foreign birth who has become a naturalised Korean citizen. As in Japan, Korean parents often opt to send their children to unlicensed international schools operating under the guise of language schools. The government has been cracking down. In 2017, it deported a number of Canadian teachers who were working at a British Columbia syllabus school and in mid-June the owner of a 'language school' offering a US curriculum and accredited by a US body, was fined for running an unauthorised school.

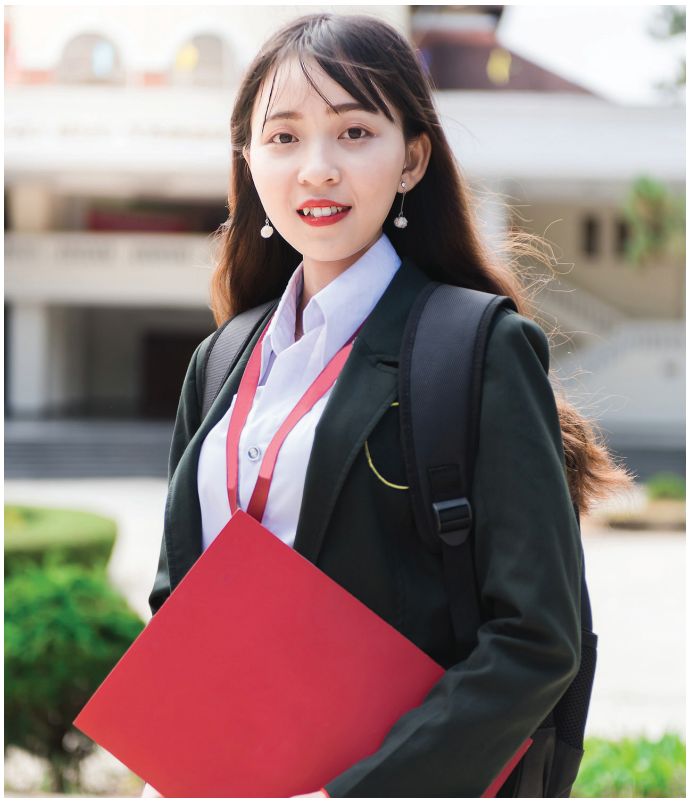


PHOTO BY DAN BUI FROM PIXABAY

In China, the Hong Kong region still allows local children to enrol in international schools, though following the recent introduction of the National Security Law there may be policy changes. Since February, children aged from six are expected to be taught the four offences under this law – subversion, secession, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces – while in April, curriculum changes were made in the core subjects of maths, liberal subject, and the Chinese and English languages.

On the Mainland, the government introduced a 'high school only' policy for local children in 2018. So, while children under the age of 15 may attend local private schools, many of which are branded affiliates of British public schools, they must be taught the Chinese national curriculum and take national exams in Chinese at age 16. Many British-affiliated chains reacted by launching bilingual schools, such as the AISLs Harrow Innovation and Leadership Academies launched in 2020.

This year, however, the Chinese government has gone further. From September, all private schools in the country will have to 'adhere to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, adhere to the direction of socialist education, strengthen the education of socialist core values for the educated', and must include Communist Party members on the board of governors.

Most onerous of all, private schools can 'only be owned by Chinese nationals who live in the People's Republic of China' and who can be jailed 'for violating the national education policy'.

Are the problems facing international schools in Asia about to get tougher?

Name games

We spoke to Emily Konstantas, chief executive officer of the Safeguarding Alliance, to find out how schools can best protect their students from an alarming loophole

PHOTO BY MABEL AMBER FROM PIXABAY

The Safeguarding Alliance has identified a serious safeguarding loophole whereby registered sex offenders are able to change their name by deed poll, both enrolled and un-enrolled, and go under the radar of all authorities, putting societies most vulnerable at considerable and immediate risk of harm. This renders both the UK's Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (otherwise known as 'Sarah's Law') and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (otherwise known as 'Claire's Law') redundant and makes a mockery of the legal system.

The process by which a registered sex offender can change their name by deed poll, both enrolled and un-enrolled, is far too simple, inexpensive and unregulated. An offender can change their name, from prison or elsewhere, at minimal or no cost and commence the process of obscuring their identity unmonitored.

The UK's Sexual Offences Act 2003 places the onus of reporting a name change on the registered sex offender. This is a legal loophole rendering reporting unreliable and resulting in sex offenders slipping under the radar of all authorities.

There is no joined-up approach between statutory and other agencies. As a result, the effectiveness of important legislation, the Sex Offenders Register, the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme and Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme are being undermined and rendered redundant.

The threat in schools

Schools can implement a birth certificate check to cross reference this against other forms of identification, such as passports and driving licences, as you cannot change the name on an original birth certificate.

However, this must be exercised with caution, as some sex offenders will change their name for sentencing, meaning their birth name remains protected. This is highlighted in the high-profile case of government aid worker Peter Davis, who changed his name just before trial to James Robert Harris.

> "The very live risk of registered sex offender name change cannot be underestimated in international school settings"

The case of Ben Lewis or Ben David Rose (just one example of many) highlights why the very live risk of registered sex offender name change cannot be underestimated in international school settings.

In 2016, registered sex offender Ben Lewis changed his name by deed poll and moved to Spain.

This was despite receiving a two-year suspended prison sentence and being barred from working with children or leaving the country.

Using the name of Ben David Rose, and within weeks upon his arrival in Spain, he took up a live-in position as an au pair to a family with three young children. He then went on to become a teacher at several prestigious British schools in Spain, even producing a DBS in the name of Ben David Rose, despite being a registered sex offender in the United Kingdom, albeit in his birth name.

What is being done

The Safeguarding Alliance has been raising public awareness of this very serious issue and continues to lobby the UK Government to amend legislation and close the loophole. We are calling for:

- Amendments to the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill;
- A national and joined-up sex offenders register;
- A public inquiry into the historical failings around registered sex offender name change;
- Immediate guidance to be published for all organisations employing people to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- The removal of the automatic right of registered sex offender name change;
- A review into the current name-change process in the United Kingdom;
- A passport application review.

How joining an organisation helps

Being part of organisations such as the Safeguarding Alliance and the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) enables schools to remain up to date with trending safeguarding concerns and issues. The Safeguarding Alliance is proud to work in partnership with COBIS to ensure a global transnational approach is taken to identifying and communicating safeguarding themes.

Why NCUK

World-class preparation for world-class universities: the proven formula to help international students succeed at university

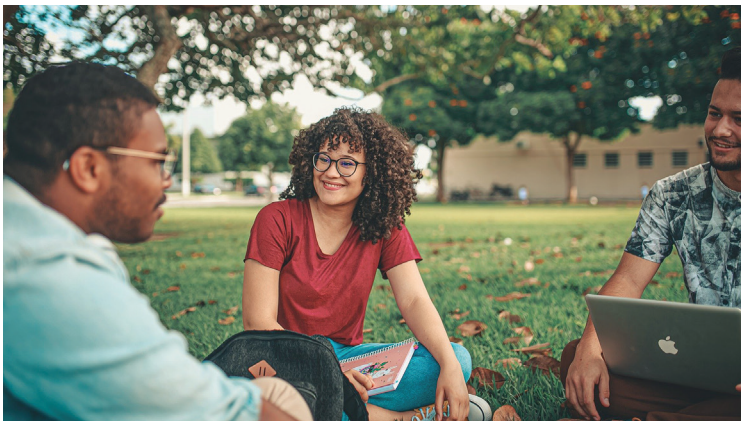


PHOTO BY NAASSOM AZEVEDO FROM PIXABAY

With more and more international students striving to enter overseas universities each year, their decision to choose the right pathway programme plays a pivotal role in helping them get into their first choice.

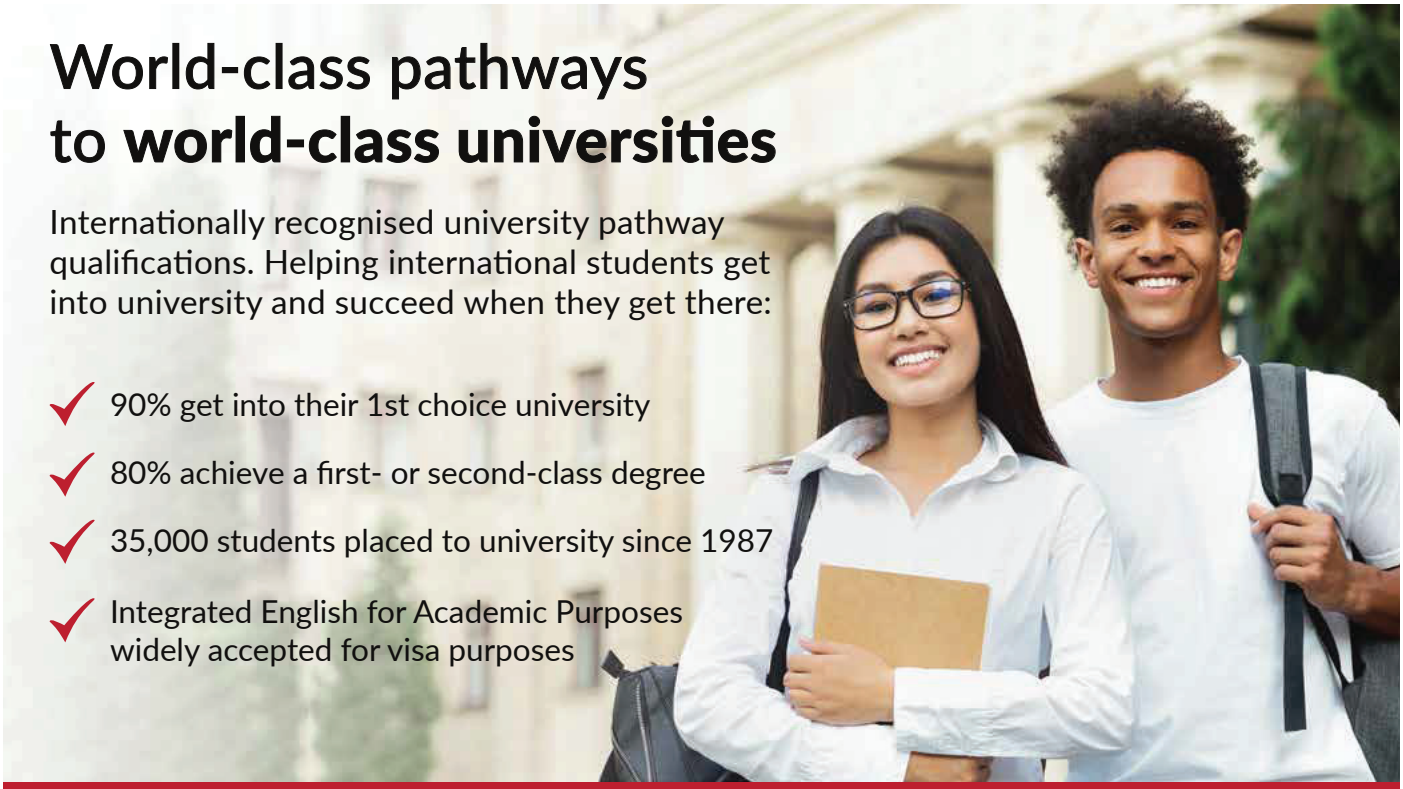
NCUK is unique in international higher education. Each year, our university pathway qualifications enable thousands of international students to progress to university through our global network of 90+ Delivery Partners in 30+ countries. Our qualifications are designed with our University Partners to provide students with the academic and English language skills required to gain entry to 50+ leading universities worldwide, including the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Formally recognised by UK ENIC as being comparable to GCSE A-Level, Advanced Placement (AP), Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education (SSSCE) and Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), the NCUK International Foundation Year not only enables students to progress into top-ranked universities worldwide, but also helps them to succeed when they get there. As many as 90% of NCUK students get into their first-choice university and 80% go on to achieve a first- or second-class university degree.

These high student success rates are attributed to the quality of our qualifications, the academic integrity of our Delivery Partner network and our range of English for Academic Purposes modules (EAP).

Integrated within subject study, our EAP modules have been designed to ensure that academic language development occurs alongside subject study to support students' subject knowledge development, rather than being a stand-alone English language module. This provides students with the real experience of using and understanding academic English language to ensure that they are fully prepared for the transition to an English-medium university. Our range of EAP modules are also widely accepted by our University Partners for visa purposes in lieu of IELTS (or equivalent), saving students time and money on sourcing alternative proof of English tests.

Our vast experience of delivering qualifications across multiple markets, coupled with our new teaching materials, flexible delivery models and extensive academic support means that it is now even easier to get started teaching NCUK qualifications than ever before.



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Climate action in language education

Christopher Graham suggests opportunities for the global ELT community

It's been estimated that the number of people studying English around the world at any time is 1.5 billion. That's a lot. Equally, English is the language of much of the climate change debate and indeed of environmental protest. There's a certain satisfaction in looking at the scale of the ELT professional community and seeing our potential to be global influencers and a force for good being realised, through both our 'green' workplace behaviours and what we teach in terms of climate change. ELT work being done on the climate emergency globally shows what we can achieve.

At the 2019 Innovate conference in Barcelona, Daniel Barber threw down the gauntlet by declaring a climate emergency in ELT and many people saw that as a call to action.

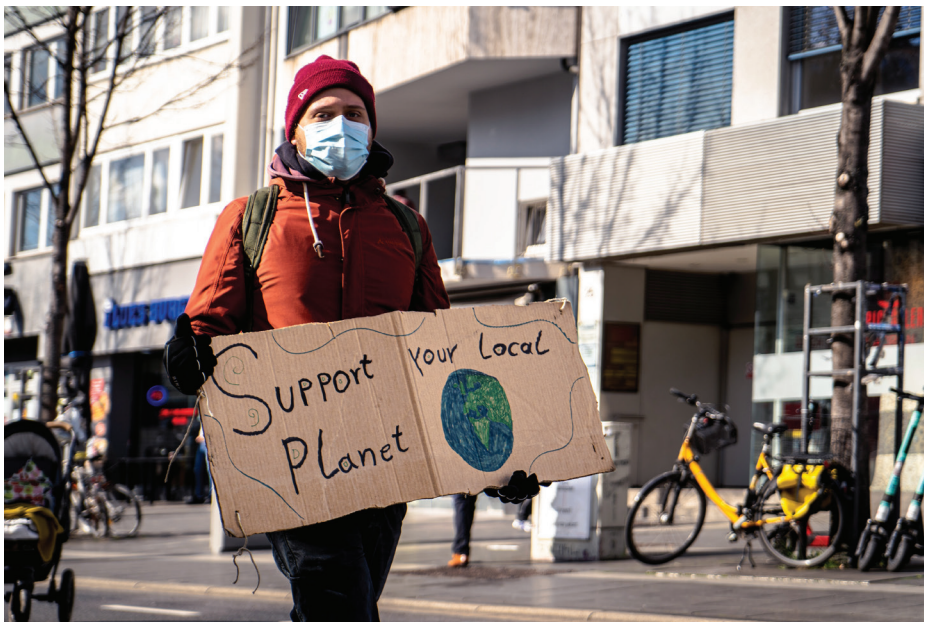
Since then, ELT Footprint has appeared, won an ELTons Innovation Award and gained over 3,500 Facebook followers. Additionally, ELT Footprint UK is making its mark on the private language school sector in the UK, and institutions and teachers internationally are beginning to develop the skills to integrate climate change education into ELT.

This year the UK is co-hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, and the British Council has been pivotal in both supporting these initiatives and highlighting and documenting examples of best practice

> "There is increasing integration of climate issues into classes"

under the Climate Action in Language Education umbrella.

Climate Action in Language Education has four strands, each of which supports teachers wanting to integrate climate topics into their teaching. The first strand comprises a podcast series exploring the intersection of the climate crisis and language education,



MIKA-BAUMEISTER ON UNSPLASH

and championing environmentally based ELT initiatives globally. In partnership with Oxford University Press, each podcast episode shares more about the origins of climate-related language in both English and other languages.

The second is a series of professional development modules to support teachers in producing climate-related lessons and making sustainability part of students' lives, with over 4,000 teachers from more than 100 countries doing the training so far. The third strand is a series of 12 lesson plans at a range of levels and age groups, each around a key climate change or sustainability topic. The plans are supported by a booklet with ideas around climate education in ELT.

The fourth strand is the Climate Action in Language Education report. With Deepa Mirchandani, I am the author of the report, and want to share some of the broader findings, but first let's explore the rationale and methodology.

The purpose of the report is quite simple. To put a spotlight on good practices globally, and to inspire and encourage reflection and action. The approach to the report is international and cross-stakeholder, as we wanted to get a snapshot of the current state of affairs, as well as look into the near future. The analysis looked at both *how* we do things in ELT (teach, produce books and measure progress) and *what* we teach in terms of climate content. The whole project has been under the shadow of Covid-19, but our interviews explore any environmental Covid dividends, as well as the climate impact of the rapid movement online.

The stakeholders in the report included students, teachers, institutions, assessment bodies, teacher and school associations, and publishers. Information and perspectives were collected by four online surveys and a series of interviews.

Let's look briefly at some at some key findings. This is no more than an overview and the full report will be available for download by anybody. There were three overall general stand-outs for me:

1) The ELT community is increasingly engaging with its environmental footprint and its role in climate education, with many of the initiatives being grassroot or 'bottom up'. Individual institutions, teachers or indeed students are making the running.
2) The projects are largely piecemeal, with very little sharing of ideas and this seemed to apply even within organisations. We hope this report and

the other elements of Climate Action in Language Education will help to facilitate more sharing.

3) Actions were often 'de-centred'. Some of the most exciting projects were in non-English medium countries, many in developing economies.

Looking stakeholder by stakeholder, we found that among the publishers there seems to be clear progress on carbon footprint reduction in terms of how they produce and distribute books. However, the idea of climate change issues being embedded into course books (rather than in just one unit) is still only beginning to be embraced.

Among teachers, there is increasing integration of climate issues into classes, although this is not universally the case and teachers mention needing professional development around integrating of topics.

Students specified that they would welcome climate topics being included in their ELT classes. Interestingly however, there is significant student anxiety around the climate crisis demonstrated by the words they use to describe their feelings. These include 'worried', 'scared', 'sad' and 'ignorance'. This has implications for how teachers and course book writers approach climate-related issues. The report will be available from late August at https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection, but you don't need to read it to consider what you can do to reduce your footprint and bring climate education into your teaching. You just need to try and to share.

RIZKI YULIAN ON UNSPLASH

Footnote

Free training modules on climate action will run throughout the year. Visit the following;

- Training https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/training
- Podcast https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/podcast
- Lesson plans https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/climate-action-language-education-lesson-plans

Christopher Graham *holds a degree in Politics from Warwick University, a Cambridge DELTA and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He is an ELT consultant and writer, and has worked in the field since 1981 in over 30 countries for the British Council, ministries of education and publishers. One of the founders of ELT Footprint, a 2020 ELTons winner, he is currently working for the British Council on the Climate Action in Language Education project as a researcher and author.*

Kids can make the best teachers

Learning to teach English to adults is one thing, but a class of six-year-olds is quite another, says *Melanie Butler*

Most private sector EFL teachers have been there – at least, those of us who were trained in the British tradition – we spend four weeks on a certificate course training to teach a language to adults, practising with adult learners, writing essays about adult learners. Then we get on a plane headed to Granada, or Guangxhou or Greece, and the first class we teach are six-year-olds or, particularly in East Asia where pre-school English is all the rage, even younger. In Japan, for example, English for newborns is reportedly all the rage.

Now, if you happen to have taken one of the new-look US four-week courses, such as those run by Bridge or designed by the TESOL association, you may well have chosen to specialise in younger learners for the last two weeks rather than adults.

But, whatever you have learned, facing a rowdy group of six year olds – or even 16-year-olds – for the first time can be a daunting experience, so we asked Myrsini Verdoukas and Jenny Dooley to give us their top 10 tips for first-time Teflers and, as you can see on the opposite page, they took them from their new book on teaching pre-schoolers. It's all about classroom management and if you can manage a group of three-year-olds, a group of 30-year-olds will be a breeze.

Many new teachers, especially native English speakers, worry most about how they'll teach the technical content (what's a modal verb again?), but perhaps the most important thing is how to get the learners to learn.

This is most self-evident with younger learners. Babies up to the age of six months can discriminate every human speech sound, regardless of language, recognise it and imitate it. Although that natural gift begins to fade over time, research by Professor Patricia Kuhl shows that it can be rekindled up to at least the age of six – as long as children are motivated by their teacher. And if you don't believe me, I recommend Professor Kuhl's spectacular TED Talk *The linguistic genius of babies* (https://www.ted.com/talks/patricia_kuhl_the_linguistic_genius_of_babies?language=en).

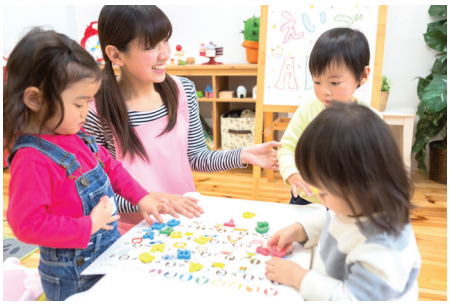


PHOTO BY SHUTTERSTOCK

It is, as Verdoukas and Dooley point out, all about exposure. The genius for recognising sound patterns may fade, but the importance of motivation does not. Small children do not tend to suffer from language learning anxiety – a well-established psychological phenomenon. The ways we deal with children, using gentle humour, avoiding belittling, creating a safe environment, can be equally important for adults.

And how do we acheive all this in the classroom? By following top tip number one: be prepared.

10 tips to become a successful teacher

Simple but invaluable advice it's worth remembering as you start your teaching career

As teachers, we always aim to equip pupils not only with intellectual skills, but most of all with important life skills.

That is the focus of the book *My Edutainment World*, by Myrsini Verdoukas and Jenny Dooley (Express Publishing). As the book mentions, it is a holistic approach to teaching English to preschoolers, but the activities and tips included can easily be adapted to cover the needs of students of all ages. It is designed for the teacher who comprehend that students develop greater fluency in a language when they are naturally exposed to it.

What does it take to become a successful language teacher? Let's have a look at some of the tips that are supported by this resource of ideas.

PHOTO BY NGO HUU MOI FROM PIXABAY

1. Be well prepared

Even if you're an experienced teacher, good preparation is always recommended. For experienced teachers, the process may take up less time, but it is still necessary. If you follow this tip, you will relax and enjoy the lesson rather than be trying to organise everything while the kids become restless or bored.

2. Be an entertainer

Humour and fun are the triggers of the brain. If you manage to trigger the kids' brains, then you can be sure that they'll participate in all the tasks you want them to be involved in. Be enthusiastic, fun to be with and energetic. Students will then be engaged in your lesson.

3. Be a role model

Treat your students the way you would like to be treated. Negative feelings, irony, bitter comments, shouting and raising your voice are not ideal. Use please and thank you, and be polite at all times because it demonstrates courtesy and respect. Be the teacher who believes in them, their supporter and the one who accepts them for who they are. In general, set a good example, show them and guide them towards the desired behaviour in a positive and inspiring way.

4. Make them feel secure

Learning a foreign language is an overwhelming process for a lot of kids, even if they have had some years of prior exposure to it. There are always new areas, rules, words to learn and, since it is a foreign language, that means that they don't often get the chance to use it on a daily basis, so communication might seem like a nightmare to them. Respect their fears and work on the solution in a friendly way with them. Greet them politely, explain everything willingly and generally create a positive environment where asking for advice won't be a stressful situation, but the most natural thing in the world.

5. Provide safety

This tip is crucial, especially for very young learners. Try to create a safety net for them inside and outside the classroom. Young ones are very energetic and run around. Avoid having kids running with objects like sticks or other things that could hurt them if they fall. Also, make sure that there is enough space for them to carry out any actions without accidentally hitting each other.

6. Give simple and clear instructions

Explain everything in a simple way and always remember to give examples. One step at a time is a golden rule to keep in mind as, regardless of age, quite a lot of kids find it really hard to remember a lot of different instructions given at the same time.

7. Set specific goals

Your goals and expectations must be clear and well defined. Vague or generalised goals are unhelpful because they don't provide sufficient direction. Remember, you need goals to show your students the way. The 'one step at a time rule' should also be applied in this case as a lot of different goals might be intimidating and cause fear, stress, and sometimes distraction and lack of participation on behalf of the students.

8. Be flexible

If something isn't working, then change it. Don't stick to things that cause boredom and indifference just because they're on the syllabus.

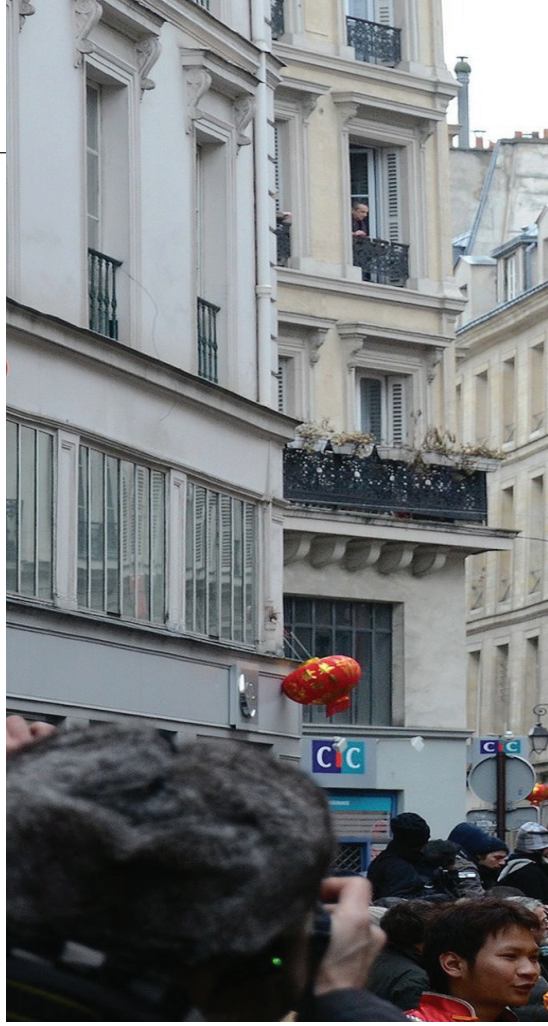
9. Manage your time

This tip is closely related to the preparation tip, as if you have prepared a lot of stuff before the actual lesson then it will be easier to manage your time during it. Especially when you wish to include experiential and hands-on activities you need to take into consideration that you should always leave some time for cleaning up and putting things you have used away.

10. Set your rules

Classroom rules should be established from day one. Be consistent in applying them and don't be afraid to be a bit strict from time to time. Also, explain to your students the difference between strict and bossy. They will surely appreciate it!

Vying for global domination



Jeffrey Gil, author of *Soft Power and the Worldwide Promotion of Chinese Language Learning: The Confucius Institute Project*, offers his views on whether Chinese will overtake English as the world's language

It's nearly 25 years since David Graddol, who used to be EL Gazette's global news editor, wrote the The Future of English? He foresaw an oligarchy of languages with English at the top. In your new book, The Rise of Chinese as a Global Language, you seem to be predicting a duopoly. Is that right and if so, why?

David Graddol's *The Future of English?* was a big influence on my thinking about the future of languages globally. I focus on Chinese, because it is widely considered to be the language with the most potential to take over from English as a global language. However, I acknowledge that other languages are also increasing their use and status, and I would like to apply the same concepts and methods I used in my book onto Hindi/Urdu, Arabic and Spanish in future research.

I propose three possible future scenarios for English and Chinese as global languages: English could remain a global language, co-exist with Chinese as a global language or be replaced by Chinese as a global language, depending on the outcome of China's rise. Continuation will result from either China's decline or China as a threat, co-existence will result from China as a major power and replacement will result from either China as a superpower or China as a threat.

Continuation is most likely in the short-term future. However, there is already some evidence of co-existence and this is likely to increase in the medium-term future. Replacement is possible only in the long-term future, considering the gap between the use and status of Chinese and English at present.

How did you first get interested in Chinese and its changing role?

My PhD thesis was about the English language and English language education in China. One part of my thesis looked at whether English was a threat to Chinese language and culture, and as part of investigating that issue I looked at the use and status of Chinese globally. I found that Chinese was present in many countries through the Chinese diaspora and that there was a growing interest in Chinese language learning among people from non-Chinese backgrounds. At that time, the Chinese government was just starting to promote Chinese language learning around the world through Confucius Institutes and other means. I found this fascinating and decided to keep an eye on developments and trends in these areas, which eventually led to my book.

> "I found that Chinese was present in many countries through the Chinese diaspora"

You use the framework of comprehensive competitiveness. What do you mean by that, and what are some of the ways in which Chinese is comprehensively competitive and in what ways is English?

Languages become important in the world because they are associated with power. In other words, a language can give people access to certain resources or benefits. Language comprehensive competitiveness is a framework which sets out what these resources or benefits are. The components of language comprehensive competitiveness are: policy competitiveness, cultural competitiveness, economic competitiveness, population competitiveness, script competitiveness, scientific/technological competitiveness, educational competitiveness and geostrategic competitiveness.

Policy competitiveness is about how governments and international organisations promote a language through their policies. Cultural competitiveness is about the cultural products and practices which can be accessed through a language, such as movies, TV programmes and internet content. Economic competitiveness is about the level of economic development and economic power of the country in which a language is spoken. Population competitiveness is about the number of speakers of a language

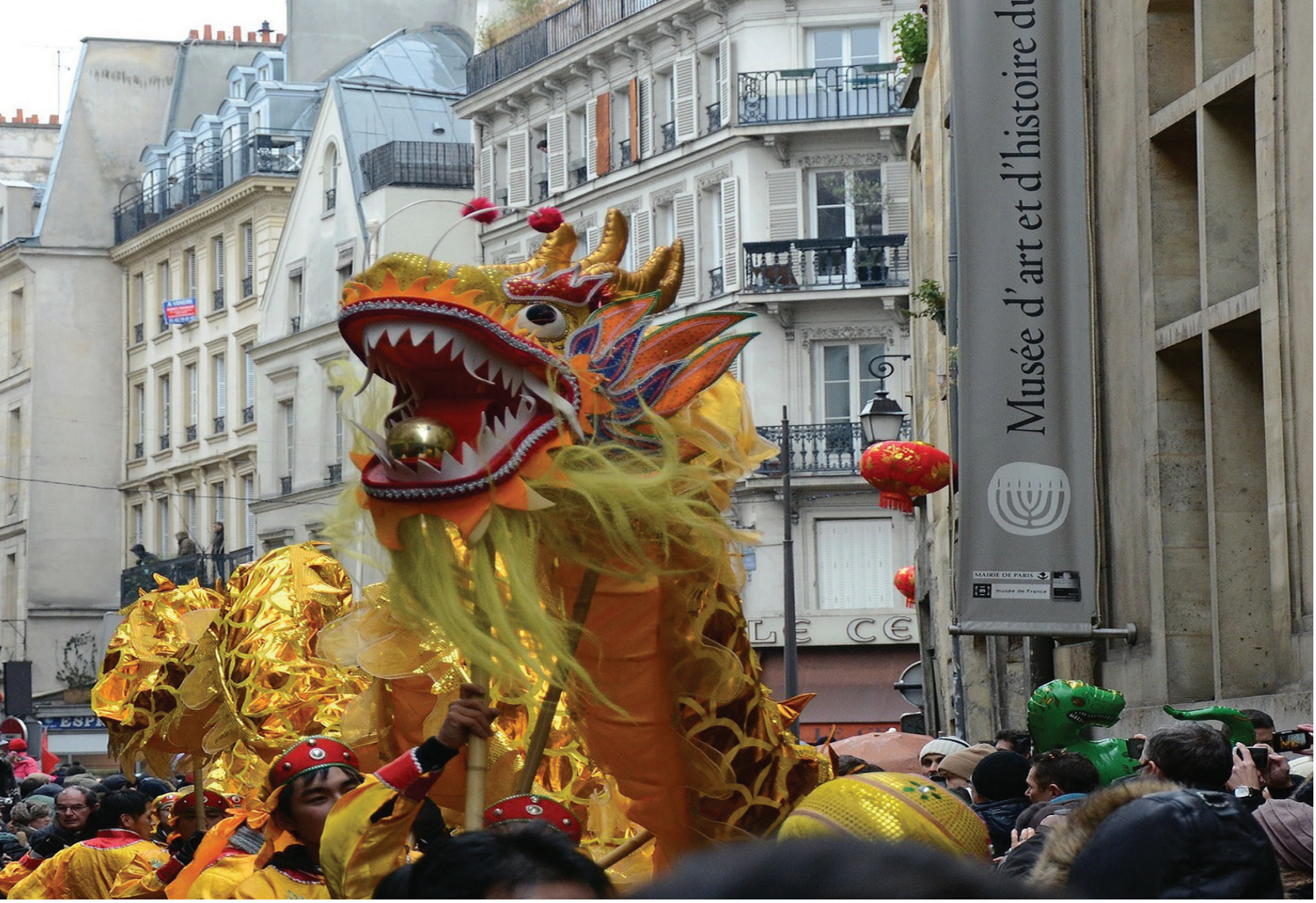


PHOTO BY DAVID MARK FROM PIXABAY

and number of second/additional language learners. Script competitiveness is about whether a language has a written script and the purposes this script can be used for. Scientific/technological competitiveness refers to the utility of the language as a means to access information about advances and developments in science and technology, while educational competitiveness refers to the utility of the language to access education and research. Finally, geostrategic competitiveness is about the extent of interests of the country where the language is spoken in the international system and its influence within the international system.

English rates highly on all of these indicators because it was the language of the two most powerful countries of modern times, Britain and the USA. Chinese rates highly on geostrategic competitiveness, population competitiveness and economic competitiveness because of China's political importance, the large number of Chinese speakers around the world, and China's economic power and influence in the world. At present, Chinese lacks a strong association with popular culture, science and technology, education and research, and its writing system is more challenging to learn and use than the English alphabet.

Your book's title refers to the new global language of Chinese rather than Mandarin. Isn't the number of varieties of Chinese spoken, especially by the Chinese diaspora, a disadvantage for a global language?

With China's rise, Mandarin has become more prominent in the Chinese diaspora than it was in the past. Specifically, Putonghua, that is Standard Mandarin as it's used in the People's Republic of China (PRC), has been gaining ground as the lingua franca of diverse Chinese communities. This is the variety which will likely be used for global purposes. This is similar to people using a Standard variety of English for global communication and their own variety for local interactions. Of course, the increasing use and status of Putonghua may have negative consequences for other varieties of Chinese.

> "At present, Chinese lacks a strong association with popular culture, science and technology"

What is your message to ESOL teachers – should they be worried about their future careers?

I think English language teaching will remain a viable career for some time yet. I also think there's a real opportunity for ESOL teachers and researchers to share expertise and cooperate with colleagues in Chinese language education. As Chinese language learning becomes more popular and the language spreads, teachers and researchers are likely to encounter similar issues to those we have encountered in ESOL. Some of these include which variety of the language should be taught, the role of native and non-native speakers as teachers, and whether popular teaching methods such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) can be used across all contexts.

However, in the long-term future, we may need to adjust to there being less demand for learning English. This will mean there will be fewer job opportunities for those with minimal qualifications. My advice to ESOL teachers would be to make yourself stand out by upgrading your qualifications, learning the language of the country in which you'd like to teach and becoming familiar with the cultural, historical and educational conditions of that country.

***Jeffrey Gil** is a senior lecturer in ESOL/TESOL at Flinders University, where he is involved in the development, teaching and administration of courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate level. His research interests include English as a global language, and the global use and status of Chinese.*

Virtually IATEFL

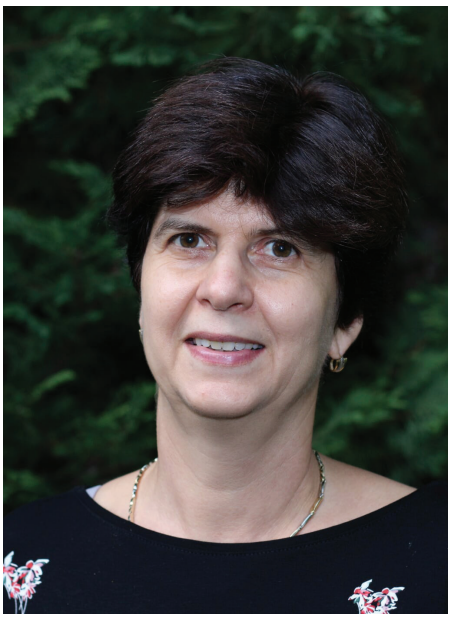
Spotlight on keynote speakers at this year's conference

This year's IATEFL Conference took place in June virtually, but that didn't lessen the impact of the plenary speakers. If you weren't able to take part – or did, but would like a refresh – we asked each of them to sum up the topic of their talk for *EL Gazette* readers.

Judit Kormos is the director of studies for the MA TESOL Distance programme at the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University in the UK. She is particularly interested in dyslexia in second-language learning.

"In my plenary at the 54th IATEFL conference I show different ways of supporting students with specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) in learning additional languages. In the first part of my talk, I discuss the challenges language learners with SpLDs might experience in a classroom in face-to-face settings and online in a digitally mediated environment.

"In the next part, I demonstrate how accessible educational design can assist students in these pandemic times and what adjustments we can make in our teaching to create an inclusive language learning environment. In the second part of the presentation, I give suggestions for the use of



a wide variety of learning strategies and techniques that can be applied to support all learners in an inclusive, educational context. The focus in this part is on raising students' phonological awareness, improvi22ng their spelling, writing and reading skills, and expanding their vocabulary knowledge. I also share examples from some of our newly developed comics tools from the CIEL project (https://ciell.eu/) that can assist students with text comprehension and composition writing, as well as resources from the ENGaGE digital task bank (http://engage.uni-miskolc.hu/index.php/self-study-course/).

Kieran Donaghy is an award-winning writer, international conference speaker and teacher trainer. He has written a number of books for students and teachers of English, and runs the School for Training in Barcelona.

"In my IATEFL plenary talk, *Embedding a culture of empathy in English language teaching*, I attempt to show that empathy is central to successful language learning and to making language teaching a more compassionate and fairer profession.

"I start by exploring what empathy is, its neurological foundations and its three main components: cognitive empathy, affective empathy and empathetic concern. Next, I argue that empathy in individuals is essential to healthy social and emotional functioning, and contributes to the enrichment of civic society and education.

"I then draw on research to support my argument that empathy is particularly important in language education, given that positive relationships between the teacher and learners and among learners, and positive group dynamics are vital in contemporary language classrooms, with its focus on communicative competence, cultural diversity and the centrality of social interactions.

"I also look at hindering factors which may make it challenging to embed a culture of empathy in the profession. In the final part of the talk, I explore how we can explicitly develop empathy as a skill among teacher trainers, and teachers and learners. I explore how a variety of techniques and approaches from diverse sources, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, humanistic education, literature, drama and the visual arts can be used to help to foster empathy in language education.

Thom Kiddle is director of the Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE), chair of Eaquals board of trustees, treasurer and a founding director of AQUEDUTO (The Association for Quality Education and Training Online) and webmaster for the IATEFL Testing, Evaluation and Assessment SIG. He has been involved in language teaching, language assessment and educational technology for 25 years.

"In this talk, I attempt to draw the three strands of language teaching, language assessment and educational technology together to consider what trends, opportunities and challenges were emerging before the pandemic began and what changes have been accelerated by it.

"I believe that the language teacher's empowerment is central to navigating a principled path through the multiple dimensions of teaching, testing and technology, and argue that certain aspects of this are under-valued in teacher professional development and unchallenged in accepted practices. I hope to bring these to light and to life with a presentation which incorporates video, poetry, circus skills and a few test questions!"

IATEFL 2022 will be held 17-20 May 2022.

LEARNING TO TEACH GRAMMAR

By Simon Haines
DELTA Publishing, 2020
ISBN: 978-3-12-501628-6

JESHOOTS.COM ON UNSPLASH

Explaining the tricky stuff

Wayne Trotman finds a book that tackles teaching grammar simply

Who among us has never felt a degree of trepidation and perhaps inadequacy at the thought of having to spend the next lesson covering a tricky grammar point for the first time? Questions swirl in the mind: "Can I pull it off so that most of my students grasp it – or might they gang up on me and complain to the director of studies?" Such thinking occurs not only in those for whom English is a first language, but those who might have trouble explaining the mechanics. It's also an issue for those who acquired their knowledge of grammar in an ELT classroom and now must pass it on to the next generation. The good news is that this excellent title will be of immense help, especially to teachers in training, those recently qualified and for old hands looking for fresh approaches.

In the introduction, the author, clearly an experienced trainer, presents several tips for easing anxious trainees' fears about grammar. These include a reminder about not being obsessed with terminology. I paused to smile here as I was reminded of a former colleague who scolded his class when they were unable to correctly identify an example of the past perfect passive. Other points include admitting to the class you sometimes don't know the answer to their questions on grammar. In my own experience, this is not so simple for those for whom English is not a native language – their students tend to view this apparent ignorance as a professional weakness.

> "A former colleague scolded his class when they were unable to identify an example of the past perfect passive"

In the final part of the introduction the author provides expert advice on teaching grammar. He outlines the challenges involved in relation to the function of the teacher and to students' needs. He next looks at initial considerations, such as the learners' backgrounds and their existing knowledge, and answers several frequently asked questions like, "How is the language broken down for teaching purposes?" and "What can go wrong when teaching this structure?"

The format for each of the 10 chapters is a three-part sequence. 'How to recognise it' presents initial examples of a grammar point in context, and the reader is asked to think of the meaning and use. This, the author maintains, helps to shake off the students' fear of grammar. In a way, then, I suppose my former colleague, even with his obsession with terminology, was helping his class. 'How to use it' provides details of the form itself, with a brief overview of the rules, while 'When to use it' lists common uses and likely related contexts and themes. Some ideas in this section are further developed in 'Suggested classroom activities' or are cross-referenced to the sample lesson plan for each grammar point.

'How to Teach it' is, of course, the central component of each chapter. Here the author once again simplifies matters by breaking this down into three areas. 'Practical matters' provides general notes on specific issues related to the grammar point, such as when is the best time to introduce the form. 'What to watch out for' lists possible problems or difficulties learners may have when first meeting the grammar point, including typical mistakes and first language interference, while each chapter contains 10 suggested tasks with which to help consolidate matters in learners' minds.

Also providing support are worksheets, which come in two types: sample tasks to be used with new learners, and consolidation tasks which provide extra back-up. Digital material for support is freely available for download with an app from the publisher. Most chapters include a 'Good to know it' slot, in which related grammar points are noted. The first unit, for example, helpfully quantifies differences between never (0%), hardly ever (1%-10%) and occasionally (11%-20%).

Added to the above are summaries of how grammar has been taught down the years, ranging from grammar translation to the more recent lexical approach, plus commonly used lesson structures for doing so, such as PPP – presentation, practice and production. There are also two lengthy glossaries, one relating to grammar and vocabulary, the other to methodology. All of which means this book may be used as part of a course or for self-study, and would be an excellent addition to the shelves of all centres running basic training courses, plus those of any dynamic ELT department.

***Wayne Trotman** is a teacher educator at Izmir Katip Çelebi University, Izmir, Turkey.*