



# Inclusive Practices & SEN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES & SEN SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

## August 2018 Issue 3

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**53<sup>rd</sup> International IATEFL  
Conference and Exhibition**

2 - 5 April 2019

Pre-Conference Events 1 April

ACC, Liverpool, United Kingdom

Web: [conference.iatefl.org](http://conference.iatefl.org)

Social Media: #iatefl2019

Pre-conference event: **Monday 1st April, 2019**

***"Reaching out through creative arts"***

**a full day of participatory and interactive sessions**

**10.00 - 4.30**

*Friends Meeting House, 22 School Lane, Liverpool*

SIG Showcase day: **Wednesday 3rd April, 2019**

**IP&SEN SIG would like to invite papers on topics related to:**

- **cross-curriculum inclusive planning**
- **team teaching across subjects**
- **whole school approaches to inclusion**
- **holistic / systemic inclusive practices**

*Don't forget to tick the IP&SEN box when you put in your proposal!*

***Speaker proposal deadline: 4.00 pm (UK time)***

***Thursday 13th September, 2018***

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## Message from the coordinator

Welcome to our third newsletter which I hope you will all enjoy as much as the first two.

So far this year we have managed to have a very successful PCE in Brighton. Our SIG showcase day was also very well received, with a full house for all our speakers, and we received positive feedback on both events. The committee has also been busy attending and speaking at other events, writing articles and hosting webinars. One of our committee members, Phil Dexter, received an MBE for his work in the field of inclusion and Anne Margaret Smith gave a plenary talk at NATESOL conference in May.

This edition of our newsletter offers you a superb variety of articles which deal with a wide range of issues from LGBTQ+ by Tyson Seburn and Giovanni Licata, to an article by Yasna Yilorm Barrientos which looks at how we can create inclusive environments for all our learners through multisensory activities. There's also a great article by Gerard McLoughlin who looks at authentic materials that raise learners' awareness of a range of different issues.

I am just back from representing the SIG at BrazTESOL, where I worked with their Voices SIG to provide three days of training designed to promote inclusion and diversity in the workplace. The next six months of the year look to be very exciting and busy for IP&SEN SIG, too. We are involved in joint event with IATEFL's Pronunciation SIG in October, and the PARK school in Brno in November. We are also planning our own event in November, and we will be providing more information on this in the coming months. We are also working with TESOL Greece and JALT to raise awareness and offer teacher training in inclusive practices and SENS.

As well as this, the team is busy planning for next year's IATEFL conference in Liverpool, where we hope to see you all. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please get in touch with our newsletter editor, Rachael Harris, at [ipsensig@iatefl.org](mailto:ipsensig@iatefl.org).



See you in issue 4.

Varinder Unlu

## Message from the IP&SEN SIG newsletter team

Over the next few months, many of us have a change of routine (even if we are still working!) and we hope that you will find the third Inclusive Practices and SEN SIG newsletter the perfect companion for a long journey, or an afternoon on the beach.

In this edition, we are once again fortunate to have contributions addressing a wide range of inclusion issues, from social deprivation, through to visual impairment, and LGBTQ+ issues. This reminds us that Inclusive Practice is not just about supporting learners with disabilities, but about embracing and valuing the diverse characteristics of all our learners, understanding how differences might impinge on learning, and finding ways to facilitate full access for everybody.

Our webinar presenter, Dr. Yasna Yilorm Barrientos has written a summary of her wonderful session on creating a classroom environment for '*Safe and happy children*', which took place on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you have not yet seen the webinar, it is now available to view from the Inclusive Practices and SEN SIG website (<https://ipsen.iatefl.org/>). One of our speakers from the SIG showcase day in Brighton, Giovanni Licata, has also written up his talk for us to read it in more detail here. Later this year, Giovanni will be presenting a webinar for us, too.

The interview in this edition is with Petra Engelbrecht, and offers an insight into the situation regarding inclusive practices in South Africa. In the 'Meet the team' section, you can meet Jana Jilkova, from the Czech Republic, and the 'Top Tips and Resources' takes a look at bullying and harassment, and how we might start to tackle them wherever we meet them. Finally, Emma Fawcett reviews a book that she describes as 'a hidden gem': Irene Brouwer Konyndyk's (2011) reflection on her experiences as a language teacher, '*Foreign Languages for Everyone*'.

We hope you will enjoy this edition, and if you have any suggestions for other features or topics that you would like to see in our newsletter, please do get in touch at [ipsensig@iatefl.org](mailto:ipsensig@iatefl.org).



## Meet the team

In this edition you have the opportunity to get to know our committee member, Jana Jilkova, a little better.

### 1. Who are you and where are you based?

My name is Jana Jilkova and I am a lecturer at Charles University and Medical College in Prague, Czech Republic.

### 2. What do you do for a living?

I am a coach and career advisor; I also train in-service teachers and run certification courses for state examiners, including those assessing learners with special needs, at the National Institute for Further Education. I serve on evaluative bodies and occasionally teach in primary and secondary schools. However, my passion for helping people to fulfil their own goals and needs is more important than how I earn a living.

### 3. Why did you become involved in IP&SEN SIG?

There are many ways to reach one's own destination and some may need support to find the right road. I believe that language learners and teachers can gain so much by sharing best practice and experiences. In my life I have been supported selflessly many times and thus would like to repay something back to others. Furthermore, it is an honour for me to be involved in such a community of dedicated educators.

### 4. What do you see as the role of the SIG?

The IP&SEN SIG plays a role in bringing together learners, parents, educators and business partners to collaborate and support each other with regard to a variety of difficulties that learners may experience, barriers in teaching approaches and a more inclusive learning environment. I believe that the IP&SEN SIG contributes to the idea of making things possible, as outlined in Revell's (1997) book *'In your hands; NLP in ELT'*.

### 5. What do you hope to bring to the SIG?

Having a wide range of perspectives, I hope to share my beliefs, and my trainees' and learners' beliefs and worries, in order to help disseminate best inclusive practices.

### 6. Do you have any other "hats" you'd like to tell us about?

I have been an eTwinning and Scientix ambassador, and I am particularly proud of having had the chance to establish the SELTIC project dealing with Science and English Language Teaching Integrated in the Classroom.

## Using LGBTQ+ for ELT debate topics is not inclusive practice – Tyson Seburn

At a recent talk I gave on LGBTQ+ issues in ELT materials, one participant asked me something along these lines: *Isn't discussing gay marriage a valid debate to have with students from countries where everything LGBTQ is illegal? Shouldn't we allow them to discuss their ideas in the safe environment of the language learning classroom?*

Debates are a common discussion task in our classrooms. When we debate something, however, we imply that there are at least two sides, both of which have valid arguments in the context we are using the topic. In countries where marriage equality has been incorporated into the law and anti-discrimination laws have also included sexuality, this becomes particularly problematic as a debate topic. Even in countries who have not yet adopted such legal terms, one needs to consider how a debate is framed, whose voices are represented in the debate, and what guided discussion is encouraged.

This, however, does not prevent well-intentioned teachers from using material that sets up debate in ways I argue are detrimental. Take these familiar prompts as an example:

- *Marriage should only be between a man and woman.*
- *LGBTQ+ couples should be able to adopt children like anyone.*

Here, opposing sides are framed as two valid arguments to make. In fact, they literally force one group of students to take the side that argues against LGBTQ+ rights, even if they don't agree. Part of the purpose may aim to practise negotiating language or community-appropriate vocabulary, but the context establishes the othering (and potential demonising) of the LGBTQ+ individual. It also may validate those whose opinions already believe equality in this context is wrong.

Do these contribute to healthy discussion, understanding of cultural context in which the students are learning/living, respect for differing attitudes? At best, they're problematic. Realistically however, they foster an environment where students are set up to disagree, where emotional and cultural baggage may charge the conversation, and where those who identify within the LGBTQ+ community may feel they are not at liberty to represent themselves in an authentic, "normal" manner. This type of activity, though perhaps well-intentioned, is not a one-off; often when LGBTQ+ are included (if at all) in ELT lessons, a form of productive activity like this is included.

Returning to the question from the participant I mentioned at the beginning, my answer is a 'no', at least in terms of setting up a space



in the class specifically devoted to debating this. Segregating LGBTQ+ to a particular topic or lesson for one class itself perpetuates the othering of any individual within this community and presumes that the rights of that particular student or teacher may be open to discussion. It encourages learners with these opposing attitudes to feel validated and presumes that no one in the class identifies as LGBTQ+. If changing minds is part of the teacher's goal, I'm not convinced that having this discussion in any class-related form will make a dent in anti-LGBTQ+ beliefs anyway, at least not within the time frame afforded by the activity.

Instead, I'd like to suggest the follow considerations regarding debate-style activities (and quite possibly more broad inclusions of LGBTQ+ in materials), as it is what we as teachers can control:

- **Voices represented in debates:** In order to debate a particular topic with integrity, the premise suggests that voices from various sides be accurately represented. Does a class debate on LGBTQ+ rights include representation from the LGBTQ+ community? Are the LGBTQ+ individuals in the classroom a) willing to be openly identified at this point in their language learning experiences?; b) willing to be the representative of their community in such a debate?; c) likely to feel accepted by peers/teachers if their side of the debate loses? Beyond these, if there are no LGBTQ+ students in the class, should a group debate and come to conclusions about the rights of individuals who are not represented? Sure, this may happen in the political arena, but I don't think that's the standard to strive for.
- **Reframing the context:** Would the same treatment of a debate still feel as valid on other topics? For example, what if some of our students come from countries where women are not allowed to vote or drive or any other number of equal rights? Does this then make it OK to open up a lesson on women's right to vote? Would female teachers or students be comfortable with this? How about racial discussion in these terms? I expect most would say 'of course not'.
- **Considering one's privilege:** We all bring in our own biases to the classroom. We need to consider what privileges we have that affect our perceptions of what is 'normal' to discuss and what group of people can be 'othered' acceptably. Just as an example: Should we open a discussion on whether straight, white couples should be allowed to marry? Be teachers? Be president? When one is



cognisant of these privileges, we do tend to think twice about how this affects our attitudes towards lesson material.

- **The students and teachers:** Can we be 100% sure no one in our classrooms identifies as LGBTQ now or in the future? Will LGBTQ+ students feel included and supported by a teacher who sets up other students to discuss their rights? Looking beyond this, would an LGBTQ+ teacher feel this is OK? Do you, as an LGBTQ+ teacher, talk about this community like you are not a part of it? Does this create an injustice to the students in the same community? I struggle with this myself.
- **The law:** In some cases, one might be able to make a case that an existing law is or is not correct; I accept that. When, however, it comes to human rights and equality, I'd argue that the welfare of people is a higher stakes discussion than whether the legal drinking age should be raised or lower, for example. Beyond this, if marriage equality is a done deal in the country of the language classroom, it's done. It's no longer open for debate. Our learners in this context need to accept it and learn how to communicate appropriately to the population they may encounter and interact with.

While hopefully these considerations on using debates may cause us all to reconsider their use, there are many ways to create an inclusive classroom space for all learners, not simply the majority. This can lead to a great dialogue as exemplified on the original post (<http://fourc.ca/debate-lgbtq/>). In conclusion, I'll finish with this:

As a general principle, inclusion of LGBTQ+ narratives into lessons alongside any others without drawing specific attention to them creates a space where LGBTQ+, whether teachers or students, are not excluded or made to feel spotlighted.



**Tyson Seburn**, author of *Academic Reading Circles* and coordinator of *IATEFL TDSIG*, is Lead EAP instructor of Critical Reading & Writing at the University of Toronto. He holds an MA Educational Technology & TESOL (University of Manchester). His interests focus on public spaces for exploring teacher identity and development.

## The 'eyes' have it - Gerard McLoughlin

As a teacher I have begun, more and more, to bring authentic materials into my higher-level classes. My own aim is to help direct students to reputable websites and to raise their awareness of issues and topics that are rarely found in course books. The title of the article is a play on the political expression 'The \*ayes have it': Do my eyes and your eyes see things in the same way? It's all about perspective and I find it interesting to help students see things from a different perspective. I use twitter a lot for my sources and in the activities, I have included the hashtags. At the end of the article you'll find all the links to the different videos I have mentioned. Let's look at some ways in which I have brought authentic materials into my classrooms to raise students' awareness of different issues.

[\* 'aye' is an old word for 'yes'. In the UK parliament, if a vote is won by those who voted 'yes' the speaker will say '*The ayes have it.*' – **editor.**]

### 1. The blind photographer

Pete Eckert is a professional photographer who was born sighted and then went blind in his early twenties. I found out about him when watching British TV and saw an advert that he had produced for a well-known car manufacturer. I then went online and found his own website and a short video where he talks about how he went blind and how he approaches his photography (here: <https://vimeo.com/69540630>). From this I developed an activity to use in the classroom.

#### **Procedure:**

Ask students: *Which of these jobs can a blind person do, why/why not? Piano Tuner, Barber, Social Worker, Photographer, Bicycle Repairer, Lawyer.* Get feedback and tell them that all of them are done by blind people. I then exploit the short description to the video, by getting them to predict what he will say. (The blind photographer explains the improbability of his vocation and how the eye is not always the most important thing in taking a picture). Then play the video (it's about 4 minutes long).

#### **Teaching Tip:**

I always find that with a listening task, students don't always catch everything, so I tend to then replay sections where they miss things and build it up on the board as a gap fill. For example, at the beginning of the video clip Pete says "I was a visual person for half my life. I'd intended to go to architect school, I'd already gone through graduate

school". On the board I show how many gaps with the first sentence: \_\_\_\_\_ and ask the students to copy in their notebooks. I then replay that sentence until they have completed the full phrase. This really helps them tune into the typical problems they have with listening to fast connected speech.

## **2. Neil Harbisson 'I listen to colour'**

I'm partially colour blind myself, and although it doesn't adversely affect my daily life, I have problems in classes and talks when asked to look at examples in red and green. So, try to avoid these combinations when presenting materials to your own students. I was amazed by Neil Harbisson who is an artist and musician based in a small town near Barcelona. He has achromotopsia (total colour blindness). He only sees things in black and white. When he was at university he attended a lecture on cybernetics and approached the speaker to see if he could help him experience colour. The result is a computer programme that allows him to hear colour. He has made a TED talk based on his experience and this is another good resource.

### **Procedure:**

Ask the students if they know what 'achromotopsia' is; if not, tell them. Then tell them they will watch a video of an achromatopsian person (Neil) and they should take notes on what he says about these things: electronic eye, chip, bone conduction, perception, cyborg and restaurants. The video is about nine minutes long but you only need to play the first four minutes to get the answers. You might need to replay sections.

## **3. Restaurant reviews**

I am grateful to Jamie Keddie for allowing me to use a video he made with Paul Shaw, one of the founders on the Disabled Access Friendly Campaign. In the video Paul talks about his friend's recommendation about a restaurant. Paul is in a wheelchair and this is apparent when you show the video (keen eyed students spot it quite quickly).

### **Procedure:**

Ask the students to decide in pairs what's important to them when they visit a restaurant. Get feedback and then play the video (just the sound) and ask them to say why Paul's friend recommended the restaurant. Check the answers: The toilet has a ramp, a mirror that's low down and a bar. You might need to replay those sections again, with the images. Then put them in small groups to discuss what facilities are available for people with mobility issues where they live. You could give them pointers such as: transport, at home,

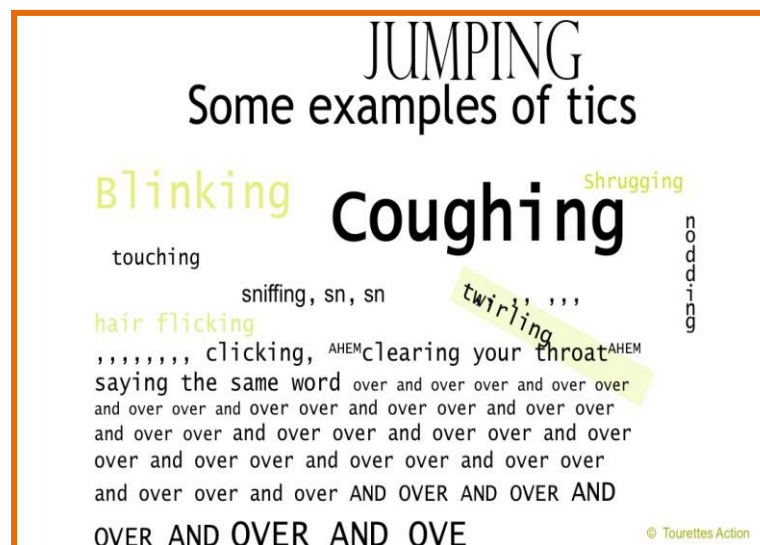
restaurants/bars, shops, work/school. For homework you could get them to research what facilities are available and prepare a poster.

#### 4. Tourettes

I watched a BBC documentary called 'Employable me'. It was about finding work for people with mental health issues such as Tourettes, Autism, Aspergers and more. These were issues I had no awareness of myself. I was so impressed with the series that I tweeted my reaction to the programme #EmployableMe, and one of the participants responded to me (Paul Stevenson @goldylookfleece). He has 'Coprolalia' a severe form of Tourettes (involuntary swearing). He now works as a photographer and we have kept in touch. I also follow Tourettes Action @tourettesaction and Police Autism UK @npaa\_uk. Through following these organisations I have found lots of resources to use in class to raise awareness of cognitive differences and mental health issues.

##### Procedure:

Ask the students what different tics they can think of (I usually give my own example of scratching my head when I'm nervous). I then show them these examples:



On the Tourettes Action website (<https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/>) I found a video where different children talk about their Tourettes. I tell students to watch the video and take notes on which tics the kids mention, and how they feel about them.

Once we've checked the answers I then show them slides from a power point available on the website showing 'What is Tourette Syndrome?' 'What is it not?' and 'Challenges'. We then watch the second part of the video and they take notes on what the kids want.

#### 5. Free and Equal United Nations

This organization is about lesbian, gay and transgender people. I found a video which show the effects of bullying with young adults and how it is sometimes the parents who instill the values in their children. The

video is a cartoon and there is no dialogue, just some music. It tells the story of a boy who plays football with his best friend every day, until one day his mother sees her kissing another girl. She stops them playing together and after this he physically abuses the girl. When the mother sees this she is horrified, but it all ends well.

### **Procedure:**

Sit the students face to face so that one of them can't see the video. Play about 10 seconds of the video, then ask the student watching the video to explain to the other student what happened. Do this twice, then they change roles. Continue until the end of the video.

Once they have watched the whole video, replay it with them all watching and pausing to get different pairs to retell the story. This is where you can then help with any language they need. If you have the right group, you could then get them to talk about how they feel about bullying. For homework they can they write a summary of the video.

### **Summary:**

I hope I have given you some ideas to try out with your classes and ways to raise your students' awareness of different issues. If you would like to follow me on twitter: @GerardMcLo



**Gerard McLoughlin** ([gerardmcl@gmail.com](mailto:gerardmcl@gmail.com) @GerardMcLo) works as a teacher and teacher trainer at International House Barcelona, Spain. He is the vice-president for TESOL-SPAIN and an ambassador for Disabled Access Friendly Campaign. He has spoken about (dis)ability issues at conferences in Spain, France and Malta.

### **Video links:**

Peter Eckert: <https://vimeo.com/69540630>

Neil Harbisson: [https://www.ted.com/talks/neil\\_harbisson\\_i\\_listen\\_to\\_color](https://www.ted.com/talks/neil_harbisson_i_listen_to_color)

Brilliant Toilet: <http://lessonstream.org/2013/11/11/brilliant-toilet/>

Tourette's Action: <https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk>

UN Free and Equal: <https://www.unfe.org/videos/>

## **Safe and happy children: the magic of teaching English in a multisensory classroom - Dr. Yasna Yilorm Barrientos**

Inequity, social, cultural and academic segregation, profit, competition, discrimination and teaching to the test have reduced Chile to what is known as an Educational Apartheid (Waissbluth, 2013), mainly characterized by the fact that children attend schools depending on their families' income. According to several researchers (Waissbluth, 2013; Yilorm & Acosta 2016), the majority of these students share similar life experiences such as: unemployment, malnutrition, overcrowding, dysfunctional families, delinquency, child labour, and alcoholism, among others. It is worth mentioning that children who live in poverty experience aggressive behavior caused by extreme suffering and by being rejected by the economic and social system they belong to (Kwon, cited in Yilorm & Acosta, 2016). Social vulnerability indexes show that affective behavioral conditions and critical incidents in classrooms with socially vulnerable children are frequently observed. It is a fact that most of the students find it challenging to deal with matters such as: self-regulation of emotions, motivation, problem identification and solving, sequential planning, mental flexibility, fluency, memory and metacognition levels (Antich; Acosta; and Navarrete, cited in Yilorm & Acosta, 2016). However, in spite of the existing living and learning realities, research has also stated that socially vulnerable students should be recognized as skilled and motivated beings (Jadue, cited in Yilorm & Acosta, 2016). This recognition will obviously require a profound change of paradigm. All students have their own capacities and teachers need to accept students' previous knowledge and respect their thoughts and emotions in order for them to undertake their teaching / learning process in a more positive way (Yilorm & Acosta, 2016).

The webinar (*June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018 – see the IP&SEN website, or click here for a [link](#)*) shows how methodological strategies such as games, magic, art therapy, music and critical thinking can help create inclusive classrooms (Yilorm & Acosta, 2016). On one hand, games do not only entertain students, but also constitute a necessary activity to reach personal wellbeing (Martínez, 2013). Games demand a high level of concentration, which requires students to disconnect from reality. This condition allows all the participants to experience relaxation and low affective filters (Yilorm & Acosta, 2016). On the other hand, magic



tricks, songs, painting and coloring, as well as reasoning and problem solving, contribute not only to the construction of a positive atmosphere, but also relax students, make them focus, express their emotions and develop values such as love, generosity and empathy. Consequently, the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language is understood as a social and interactive, formative, holistic and integrative process of communication. Students enjoy their learning process more and are responsive to favorable learning conditions in which problem solving satisfies their needs (Acosta, cited in González, 2009).

Contrary to traditional teaching practices that focus on the mechanical reproduction of contents through the integration of the four skills, inclusive practices consider students' experiences, promote active participation and offer multisensory teaching experiences, since the process of understanding and perceiving information, of acting and sharing emotions, differs from one student to another.



**Dr. Yasna Yilorm Barrientos** is a Chilean EFL teacher. She is English Language Didactics professor and a Teaching Practicum supervisor at Universidad Austral de Chile. She holds a Master in Education, TESOL concentration (USA, 2007) and a Doctorate in Pedagogical Sciences (Cuba, 2016). Her research deals with multisensory and playful didactic strategies in socially vulnerable contexts. Her book: *Let's Go for English in 100 Fun Ways* (2015), was published by the Ministry of Higher Education in Cuba.

## References

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- Newsletters and resources from the SIG(s) you have joined
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## Contribute to the IATEFL Wider Membership Scheme

The Wider Membership Scheme (WMS) helps the international ELT community reach out to teachers in parts of the world who need additional financial support by subsidising their membership of IATEFL and, in so doing, opening up a world of professional development, support and networking opportunities they would not otherwise have.

**To donate to this scheme visit: [members.iatefl.org/donate](https://members.iatefl.org/donate)**

## What's sexuality got to do with it? – Giovanni Licata

I first started teaching English by pure chance. Just like many of us in this profession, I slipped into it: I was a stage actor living in Rome and I needed more pocket money than my contracts in triple-off Broadway gigs could get me. It took me about three days to find my first TEFL job in Rome.

The fact that I could speak English and that my style reminded students of 1980s movies about broke Italian-American actors from NYC was good enough for my employer at the time. I had no qualifications, zero experience and - to be honest - very little commitment to the profession: every morning I would go into class thinking about the lines I had to memorize before rehearsals in the evening. But that's a different story which has been told by many voices in the ELT world.

My first business lunch with my then Director of Studies, however, was pivotal, though I probably did not realize this at the time: it was the first time I was forced to think about *heteronormativity* and the TEFL world. My DoS was a very successful woman running her own school and enjoying her expat-life in Italia. I cannot remember how the subject came about, but quite early on into our lunch she uttered one of the lines that I soon came to consider one of the most subtly *heteronormative* I had ever heard: "I have nothing against gay people, but... [long pause]...why do they have to be so ostentatious in the workplace?" When I asked for further clarification, I was given a thorough explanation of what *ostentatious* meant.

My DoS could not understand why so many lesbian/gay teachers referred to their partner's gender all the time. She saw this as a way of making everyone aware of their sex life - which should always be kept private. When I pointed out that *she* was wearing a wedding band *and* referring to her husband every day and that - according to her theory - she was *also* giving us clues as to whom she slept with, she blanked. Her reply was quite matter-of-fact: "That's different, we're married, we have a family, everyone knows". Her logic was disarming: clearly, my engagement ring at the time was way *sexier* than hers! Needless to say, LGBT+ teachers were invited not to mention their partners in class to avoid "unnecessary" controversy. Anyway, the following month I lost my job for refusing to change my name from *Giovanni* to *John* to make it sound more American - whatever that meant for my DoS.

What *is heteronormativity* then? Heteronormativity consists of “those structures, institutions, relations and actions that promote and produce hetero-sexuality as natural, self-evident, desirable, privileged and necessary” (Cameron and Kulick, 2003: 55). We all partake in the reinforcement of this social construct. Earlier this year the motion picture *Call me by your name* opened in theaters around the world bringing Aciman’s novel on Elio and Oliver’s love story to large audiences. As the movie sparked a lot of interest, the two lead actors received global attention and coverage: journalists lined up to interview Timothée Chalamet and Armie Hammer at film festivals to ask them what it was like to play a gay role since they happen to be two heterosexual males. Reverse that to openly gay/lesbian actors and the scenario would change quite drastically: one would really struggle to find interviews with Cynthia Nixon or Jodie Foster asking them what it was like to play heterosexual women in movies and TV series for years. That is heteronormativity in a nutshell: a system whereby heterosexuality is the *unmarked* choice.

So, what about heteronormativity in the classroom and does sexuality have anything to do with education in general, and the English language classroom, in particular? Filax et al. (2005: 81) explain that all fields of human behavior including that of education are permeated with heteronormativity: deconstructing this “two-sex, two-gender, one sexuality ordering” (p. 81) is therefore not just a matter of topic-choice. In fact, topic avoidance could translate into the marginalization of those identities in the classroom that are not hetero-normed (Phelan, 1994, Cameron, 2005).

The risks of this marginalization can be detrimental. The language classroom should be a locus of social interaction where learners and teachers negotiate communicative resources by using language as a medium (Thorne and Lantolf, 2006). And whenever communication is negotiated, relations of power may come into play as the classroom is a micro-context operating in a macro-cosmos with its set rules and hierarchies. As educationalists, we might then have to ask ourselves whether by ignoring these relations and not adopting a *critical* approach, we are thus effectively reinforcing dominant ideologies, which favor certain groups and marginalize others through their cultural artefacts (Habermas, 1998).

On this matter, Sumara and Davis’s article “Interrupting heteronormativity” (1999: 192) clarifies that a *queer* pedagogy does

not want to sexualize EL education but rather investigate how it is already specifically *hetero*-sexualized. Dumas (2010:617) explains that, unlike heterosexual relationships, same-sex relationships might be hypersexualized in the teachers' and the learners' mind. This *hypersexualization* may account for my first Director of Studies' concerns with regards to LGBTQ+ teachers being ostentatious. Clearly, materials in ELT are no exceptions to the taboo placed on LGBT+ identities in the classroom. As Rose Aylett reminded us all at IATEFL 2018, ELT publishers have *tasty* taboos, i.e. topics that are avoided in published materials as they are deemed too controversial or problematic. You can find Rose's inspiring and refreshing presentation at <http://gisig.iatefl.org/event/brighton-2018/global-issues-showcase-day-iatefl-brighton>.

These tasty PARSNIP topics (politics-alcohol-religion-sex-nudity/narcotics-isms-pork) predictably include an 'S' for sex. However, what is included under the S for Sex is a lot less clear and predictable. One might assume that basing your lesson around *50 Shades of Grey* would be inappropriate for a language class. Yet, different boundaries apply to heteronormative vs non-heteronormative materials. We can easily think of coursebook pages on famous male-female couples (e.g. Victoria & David Beckham), but are there coursebook pages on Ellen DeGeneres and Portia De Rossi? Every English language and literature class in Italy will read excerpts from Romeo and Juliet or Pride and Prejudice. Yet Oscar Wilde's love and disillusionment letter to his lover Alfred Douglas, *De Profundis*, is certainly not as widespread in national curricula. Would Ellen and Alfred come under the "s" for sex?

Despite the bad reviews that coursebooks have been getting over the last 20 years or so and the surge of material-light approaches, global coursebooks are by far the most widespread source of materials across the ELT world to date (Littlejohn, 2011). Researchers have been warning ELT practitioners against the potential damage of an all-encompassing use of the global coursebook (Tomlinson, 2008, Prodromou and Mishen, 2008): yet, this is often used as the syllabus (Appel, 2011). Voices from the field of critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 1990) have inspired authors such as Gray (2010) to define EFL textbooks as "cultural artefacts" (p. 714) where English seems to be the medium through which a partial set of values is perpetrated.

In a famous article 'Window-dressing vs cross-dressing in the EFL sub-culture' published at the turn of the century, Thornbury (1999)

highlighted that, despite the advances made in gender equality and despite the number of units revolving around global issues (e.g. developing countries), “coursebook gays and lesbians [...] are still in the coursebook closet” (p.15). Fourteen years later, Gray (2013: 40) published a study into LGBT invisibility and heteronormativity in ELT materials. Gray (2013) recognized the worldwide historical advances made in LGBT rights and the visibility of *queer* identities. Yet, despite the surge of articles on LGBT themes in the EL classroom (Nelson, 2009, Dumas, 2010, Tekin, 2011, amongst others) and the consequential birth of dedicated journals (e.g. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*), Gray (2013) found that heteronormativity is still pervasive in the realm of published EFL materials.

In his analysis of widely adopted coursebook titles (e.g. *face2face*, Redston and Cunningham, 2006, *New English File*, 2012, Latham-Koenig et al, 2012), Gray’s (2013) findings are unsurprisingly definite: no reference to sexual preferences other than those prescribed by heteronormativity was found. Even reading activities on the life of the worldwide famous singer Elton John in *face2face* (Redston and Cunningham, 2006) make no mention of his same-sex spouse, their two children or his campaigns for gay rights.

In my talk at IATEFL 2018 on how to *queer* your pedagogy, I suggested that change must start from the teachers. If teachers become the bringers of change, educational content around the globe will exponentially be more inclusive and learner-focused. You can find the slides to my presentation here: <https://ipsen.iatefl.org/news-and-events/past-events>.

So, what *has* sexuality got to do with it? Perhaps a lot more than we might think. Teachers and learners are not empty vessels: they come into the classrooms with their stories, their desires, their wishes, their fears, their emotions and their sexuality, which – whether implicitly or explicitly – will form a part of their social interaction. It is simply part of one’s identity, part of the way we relate to the world and to our interlocutors. Perhaps, the question we all ought to start asking ourselves is “why do we present a mono-vision of sexualities in the classroom”? If our ultimate goal is to have fairer and safer classrooms, perhaps it is high time we all considered attempting an answer. A call to action? Certainly one directed to all of us, including myself. Because an internalized sense of shame dictated by *heteronormativity* is pervasive and deeply rooted.



As I was leaving IATEFL in Brighton, a colleague suggested over dinner that presentations on the marginalization of LGBT+ identities in ELT and on its direct consequences (bullying in the classroom and the workplace, for instance) be allocated plenary slots at conferences in order to give them larger audiences and promote inclusivity. Interestingly enough, the table reacted to her suggestion by saying that such a focus would not be of interest to *everyone* in the audience and that it would, therefore, be unsuitable for plenary slots. I sat back and thought to myself, "Here we are: a group of professionals from different contexts talking about whether these are suitable or unsuitable topics for plenaries at a conference: a good enough reason to bring the debate to the *largest* possible plenary-talk audience".



**Giovanni Licata** is a teacher and teacher trainer at IH-Accademia Britannica in Rome. Having worked in schools across Europe, Asia and the US, he has developed an interest in sociolinguistics as well as teacher and learner identities in the ELT classroom. His dream is to open a wine bar in L.A. and serve Italian wines and freshly-made bruschettas.

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As part of the IP&SEN SIG programme of events in 2018, Giovanni Licata will be presenting a webinar on **October 20<sup>th</sup> at 5.00 pm** (UK time).



## **An interview with Petra Engelbrecht – Phil Dexter**

### **How are you involved in Inclusive education in your current and recent work in both the United Kingdom and South Africa?**

My own involvement in inclusive education is on various levels e.g. research, the training of teachers, more community focused support where needed, as well as independent consulting.

My research is concerned broadly with equity in education as a continuous and dynamic process to develop inclusive school communities, creating knowledge about its implementation and identifying those factors that enable or inhibit the implementation of inclusive education in diverse cultural-historical contexts.

During my time as Professor in Educational Psychology at Canterbury Christ Church University, between 2010 and 2015, I continued with my research in the UK and other countries e.g. Germany, Finland, Slovenia and Lithuania as well as in Palestine. In collaboration with my colleague in Finland, Hannu Savolainen, for example, we developed a longer-term team research project on teachers' attitudes and sense of self-efficacy in relation to inclusive education in South Africa and Finland. We continued with this project after my return to South Africa and our findings have been published quite extensively.

As Senior Research Fellow at North-West University, Potchefstroom campus, I am now mentoring younger colleagues on continuing their own research on inclusive education, and collaborating with various colleagues on supervising postgraduate students and developing funded research projects. I am also a member of working groups in the Department of Higher Education and also the Department of Basic Education and Training on inclusive education, and I am continuing with my consultation work on inclusive education.

### **How and why did you get involved in this area of inclusive education and inclusive practices?**

My initial specific involvement with the movement to develop inclusive education in South Africa was initiated in the early 1990s by the Chairperson of the Down Syndrome Association of South Africa at that time, Marie Schoeman, who asked me to become involved with families of children with Down Syndrome in accessing their

neighbourhood mainstream schools. My subsequent meetings with Marie and her son Kosie, as well as with other families, not only changed my personal perceptions of exclusion in education, but also directed my research towards inclusive education.

It is also important to stress that - having grown up in Apartheid South Africa - my work continues to be driven by a commitment to human rights and equity, and I have invested a great deal, both on personal and professional levels, in the development of inclusive education in southern Africa.

### **What do the terms 'Inclusive Practices' and 'Inclusive education' mean for you?**

As a South African, I personally base the term 'inclusion' on the realisation of human rights, and see the term 'inclusive education' as the right of every child to access quality education in mainstream schools, to be accepted and valued within these school communities, and to participate in classroom and wider school community activities.

'Inclusive practices' within these inclusive school communities will then be about teaching decisions and practices that will include, rather than exclude, learners.

### **Have you seen an evolution in the role of pedagogical concepts such as special educational needs, inclusion, inclusive practices? Where do you see the future trends in inclusive education and inclusive practices?**

Although all these concepts have multiple meanings in diverse cultural-historical contexts, I have seen an evolution in the role and the use of these concepts in the past 20 years: from a narrow 'deficit' approach within separate educational settings for children with disabilities, to the emerging of a general consensus that these concepts should focus on the recognition of the right of learners with diverse educational needs to access their neighbourhood schools, as well as the acceptance and participation of every learner in mainstream/general education classrooms.

My dream for the future is, of course, that these pedagogical concepts, that are still regarded as the responsibility of separate 'special or inclusive teacher educators' in universities or 'special needs teachers' in schools, should be embedded into pedagogy as a whole, and that

inclusive education and inclusive practices will become the responsibility of every teacher in every school.

**How do you understand some of the different approaches to inclusive practices and inclusive education from what are often described as 'global north' and 'global south' perspectives?**

It is important to note, as a South African, that the development of inclusive education has been transferred - in most cases without question - from higher-income to lower-income countries. This reflects normative assumptions based on the development, initially, of special education, and lately of inclusive education practices, in higher income contexts. The understanding of inclusive education, therefore, in some post-colonial contexts (e.g. in Malawi and Guatemala, where I was involved in research projects) reflects the export of ideas based on the development of inclusive education in high-income countries. In those countries, adequate funds, as well as highly qualified professional support structures, are freely available.

As a result, there is an ongoing debate here in South Africa about the urgent need for the construction of home-grown inclusive education approaches that draw on the strengths and capabilities of local communities, including indigenous knowledge, and only make informed use of conceptualisations of inclusive education from high-income countries. Here in South Africa, the philosophy of \*Ubuntu positions community central to traditional life, and if taken into account in the development of localised versions of inclusive education, it will be more about the collective rather than the individual.

[\*Loosely translates as 'the quality of being human, especially of being who we are, through the interactions we have with others' - **editor.**]

**What do you see as the positives and the challenges in teachers using differentiated approaches?**

I am rather hesitant about the uncritical use of differentiated approaches, due to the fact that - in some of the classrooms I have observed, in various parts of the world - differentiated approaches tend to be based on categorising specific learners as different types of learners, thereby continuing the practice of labelling and exclusion. In a recent comparison of how teachers enact inclusive education in Finnish and South African classrooms, we found that the differentiated approach they all tend to use is based on ability, and that learners are then labelled and excluded accordingly.

The inclusive pedagogy framework developed by Lani Florian, Martyn Rouse and other colleagues, in which they argue for a range of options that are available to everybody in a classroom (rather than differentiated approaches for only some of the learners), addresses my concerns about using differentiated approaches in an uncritical way.

**Do you have any other practical tips for school leaders, teacher educators and teachers who are new to this field of inclusive education?**

Inclusive education is a process, and there are no easy ways to develop inclusive school communities. Patience, persistence, knowledge and self-reflection on the process are therefore needed to bring about much needed change. Continuing to critically reflect on my own perceptions of difference in classrooms, and how and why my own values and understanding of human rights can contribute to either inclusion or exclusion, has enabled me to develop, both professionally and personally. Also, it is helpful to identify and attend professional development opportunities that can add value to your knowledge of inclusive education and inclusive practices.

Furthermore, do not hesitate to reach out and collaborate with parents, colleagues and other professionals. Inclusive education as a process can be exhausting and complex at times. Creating a positive school culture in which support for one another is a priority contributes to the development of inclusive school communities.



**Petra Engelbrecht** is a Senior Research Fellow, North-West University, Potchefstroom campus and Emeritus Professor, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK as well as a consultant on inclusive education.

## **Terminology, top tips & resources** **- Anne Margaret Smith and Varinder Unlu**

*This regular section provides a brief explanation of some of the terminology used in the field of Inclusive Practices and Special Educational Needs – if you have a term you would like us to look into then please contact us at [ipsensig@iatefl.org](mailto:ipsensig@iatefl.org).*

### **Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable behaviours that may occur anywhere – in the classroom, in the staffroom or in public places outside of work. The information here comes from a range of sources and may be useful in various contexts.

### **Bullying or Harassment?**

These two terms are often used as if they are interchangeable, but actually there are subtle differences in their meanings, according to [www.bullyonline.org](http://www.bullyonline.org).

**Harassment** is usually physical in nature, and often consists of sexist or racist behaviour. It could be an isolated incident, or just occur on a few occasions, but it should be very obvious to anybody who witnesses it that it is not part of normal interaction between two people.

**Bullying**, on the other hand, is often (but not always) based on psychological attacks, targeting a person's self-esteem by criticising competence, appearance or social status. It is often aimed at people who seem 'different' from the majority, for example because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It tends to be built up over a period of time, out of many small interactions, which individually may not seem very significant. However, the accumulation of constant jibes or slights may be extremely damaging.

Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing or name calling
- making threats
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Bullying isn't exclusive to children in the playground or classroom. It's very common amongst adults and often goes unreported. Reporting bullying can be a very difficult thing to do, but it is very important to

ensure there are reporting procedures in place and everyone knows what they are.

## Top tips & resources

*In this section we take a look at easy-to-implement ideas. If you're looking for solutions for a specific issue, then please get in touch at [ipsensig@iatefl.org](mailto:ipsensig@iatefl.org).*

**If you're being bullied**, there are a lot of things you can do. The first thing to remember is that bullies are human. They act in the way they do because they lack attention and nurturing. They are insecure and want to feel powerful. It's often better to try and work it out yourself and the more empowered you are, the more you can help yourself. Bullies want a reaction from you by scaring you and if you show them that their actions haven't affected you, you are taking that power away, so don't get angry or upset.

- Stay calm, say nothing and walk away.
- Be assertive, not aggressive. Fighting back can make things worse.
- Focus on something else.
- Tell them to stop.
- If the bullying is online, block and report the person.
- Get off the internet and avoid checking (even though you may want to).
- Don't respond to online bullies. Take a screen shot so that you can share it with others for evidence and support and delete accounts where you are bullied.
- Speak up. Tell someone you trust. It will make you feel less alone.

Make sure that you seek help to deal with the physical and mental fallout. Find ways to reduce stress, as this will help you think more clearly.

**Spotting a student who is being bullied** is not always easy, but teachers need to be on the look-out for members of the class who are often isolated in the group, who become more withdrawn and disengaged during the course. There may even be signs that their possessions are being taken from them, damaged or destroyed. Remember that **the person or people doing the bullying** may also need some help. Bullying or aggressive behaviour may be an outward sign of a person experiencing difficult situations in their personal life. They may have learnt that domineering behaviour will keep them safe,

or they may be compensating for feelings of low self-worth.

**Classroom discussions of diversity** can be a good way to open up channels of communication, and allow learners a space to say how they feel different from others. Role plays and 'hot-seating' are other valuable techniques for exploring the issues around discrimination and bullying.

It can be difficult – even dangerous – **to intervene in situations where somebody is being harassed** and should not be done if it puts you in danger. However, if you see somebody being harassed in a public place, and seeming to need support, one way of diffusing the situation is just to go over and speak to them as if they are expecting you. For example, if you see someone on the receiving end of obviously unwanted attention in a bar, you could go over and say “Hi – there you are! Sorry I’m late. Shall we go?” and then steer the person to another part of the room.

## **Resources**

Online resources

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/lifebabble-guide-to-bullying>

<http://www.bullyingstatistics.org/content/adult-bullying.html>

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html>

## **“Ask for Angela”**

<https://www.met.police.uk/AskforAngela>

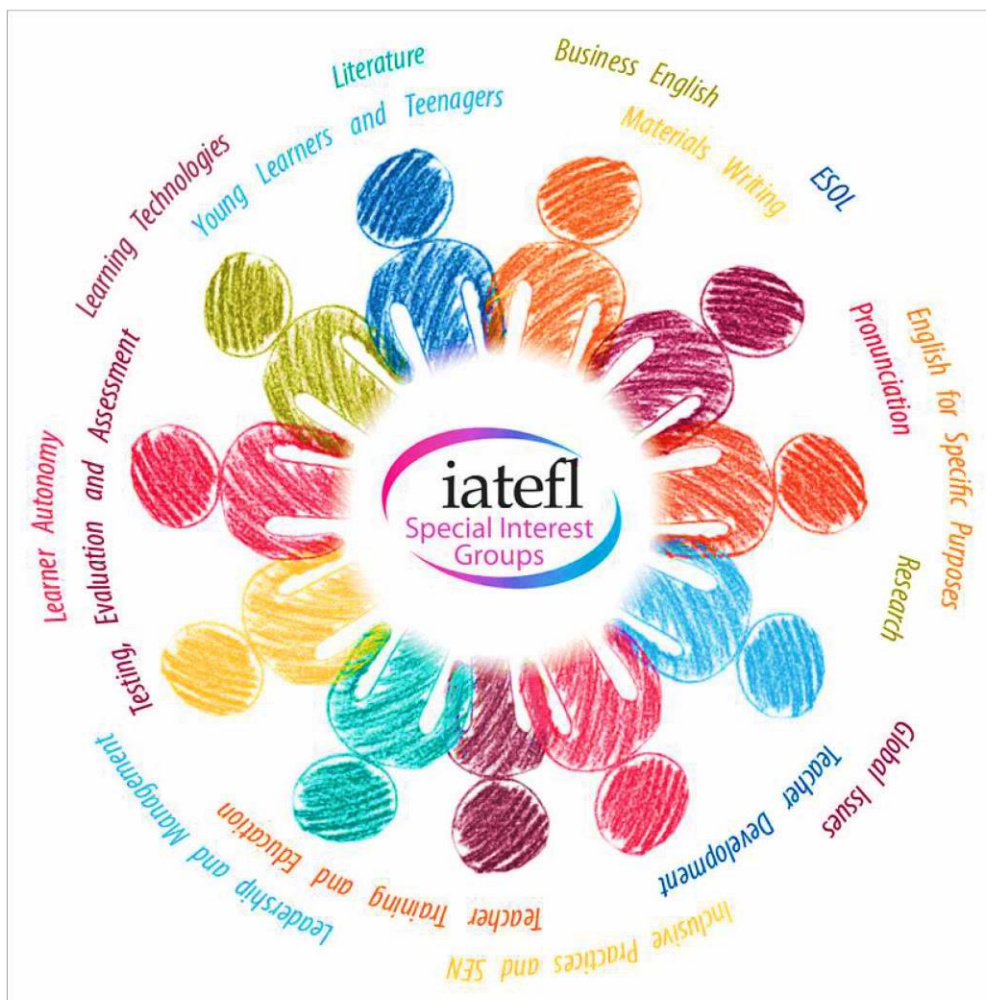
In many bars and pubs in the UK, staff are trained to offer discreet support to any customer who needs help to get out of a difficult situation. If they ask to speak to 'Angela', they will be helped to leave the establishment and get home safely.

## **#ELTtoo**

<https://elttoo.wordpress.com/>

#ELTtoo is a movement set up to raise awareness of harassment and bullying in the ELT profession. If anyone is being harassed or bullied, they can send their story to ELTtoo anonymously and ask for it to be published. No names are disclosed but by sharing their story it empowers the victim to speak up and gives them their voice back.





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## **Book review – Emma Fawcett**

**Irene Brouwer Konyndyk (2011) *Foreign Languages for Everyone. How I Learned to Teach Second Languages to Students with Learning Disabilities*. Grand Rapids MI: Edenridge Press. 195 pages ISBN: 978-1937532901**

This book is something of a hidden gem. In it, Konyndyk reflects openly and honestly on her experience of developing and teaching a modified language programme for French as a foreign language to students with learning disabilities at Calvin College (Michigan, USA). (In British terminology, learning *difficulties* would seem the more appropriate term; Konyndyk refers specifically to dyslexia, dysgraphia, and issues with memory, organisation, anxiety, attention and concentration.) It is full of tried and tested ideas and methods, all grounded in thorough research on language learning difficulties. While the methods described are for the teaching of French, almost all of them can easily be applied to the teaching of English, both with adults and with young learners. Alongside the book, readers are also invited to consult the accompanying website:

<http://www.foreignlanguagesforeveryone.com>

In chapter 1, the focus is on methods that engage auditory, visual, kinesthetic and tactile channels to make the presentation and practice of language accessible and memorable. Chapter 2 outlines the importance of providing structure for learning and takes a detailed look at the classroom environment, routines, homework, testing, presenting content, lesson planning, handout formats, and helping students to organise their work. In chapter 3, Konyndyk presents a questionnaire that she uses to get to know her students. This goes far beyond the usual needs analysis; indeed some of the questions seem rather too personal for use in most TEFL contexts. Nonetheless, the questionnaire could be adapted and many of the aspects covered are useful for assessing previous learning experience and raising learners' awareness of their goals, resources and preferred learning strategies.

The idea described in chapter 4 is journal writing, a tool employed to encourage students to reflect on their learning. While this method is the most novel, it may also be the hardest to implement, seeing as Konyndyk's students write these journals in English, rather than in the target language. It would certainly be worth pursuing how this tool

could be used in classrooms where writing in one's first language is not an option. Similarly, the call, in chapter 5, for 'direct and explicit instruction' as opposed to the communicative method requires at least the partial use of students' L1 (or a commonly understood language) as the language of instruction. This might not be viable in many TEFL settings, but certain aspects of the approach could be adapted for a monolingual classroom.

Chapter 6 comprises a review of the 'best practices' that have emerged in Konyndyk's years of teaching, and chapter 7 outlines methods and tools for teaching students how to learn independently. The short concluding chapter is an invitation to reflect on one's own context and reminds readers to 'Start small. Experiment. Be patient with yourself and your learners' (p. 162).

*Foreign Languages for Everyone* certainly makes 'starting small' possible, as many of the approaches described could be introduced into a teacher's repertoire almost immediately. The readable style and detailed, down-to-earth explanations are encouraging for all teachers, and both new and experienced professionals should be well-served with fresh inspiration.

A few aspects of the book that could be deemed worthy of criticism actually proved extremely fruitful. Firstly, there is the pervading feeling that Konyndyk is somehow cut off from wider discourses on inclusive education. The Christian ethos behind her working context may jar slightly with readers used to more secular, academic, human rights and social justice approaches to inclusion. Secondly, learning disabilities are defined as intrinsic to the individual and little conscious reference is made to disability as a social phenomenon. The result of these debatable weaknesses is, however, a refreshing, experience-based, single-minded focus on the specific difficulties that some individuals encounter when learning a foreign language.

Konyndyk is guided by her deep conviction that the possibility to learn a foreign language should be open to everyone, and makes clear from the outset that the onus is on teachers to change their practice. In her words: 'I never knew how smart such at-risk students are until I became smart enough to teach them as uniquely talented individuals' (p. xvii).

*If you would like to review a book you have appreciated, or would like to receive a free copy of a book you would like to read and review, then please contact us at [ipsensig@iatefl.org](mailto:ipsensig@iatefl.org)*



## CALL FOR ARTICLES

The IATEFL IP&SEN SIG invites the submission of original articles on various aspects of inclusive practice in English language teaching of both young learners and adults, including, but not restricted to research, methodology, lesson ideas, teaching materials and other resources. Reviews of books, webinars, courses etc. on this theme are also welcome.

Submissions may be in any of these formats:

- **Full-length articles:** Articles should not exceed 2,500 words but may be shorter, including references.
- **Shorter articles:** Articles should not exceed 1000 words but may be shorter, including references.
- **Reviews:** between 500-800 words, including references.

All manuscripts for the above categories should be printed across A4 pages upright and left justified, as Word document in a black, 12-point font of your choice. Please do not use columns or have hyphenated words at the line end. Diagrams should be formatted in Word (other illustrative material should be sent separately by mail).

Please do not use headers or footers. Please use the Harvard referencing system.

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All articles must be original. Articles that have already been published elsewhere, even in a slightly different form, cannot be accepted.

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