



Fernanda Lee



Laura Baecher



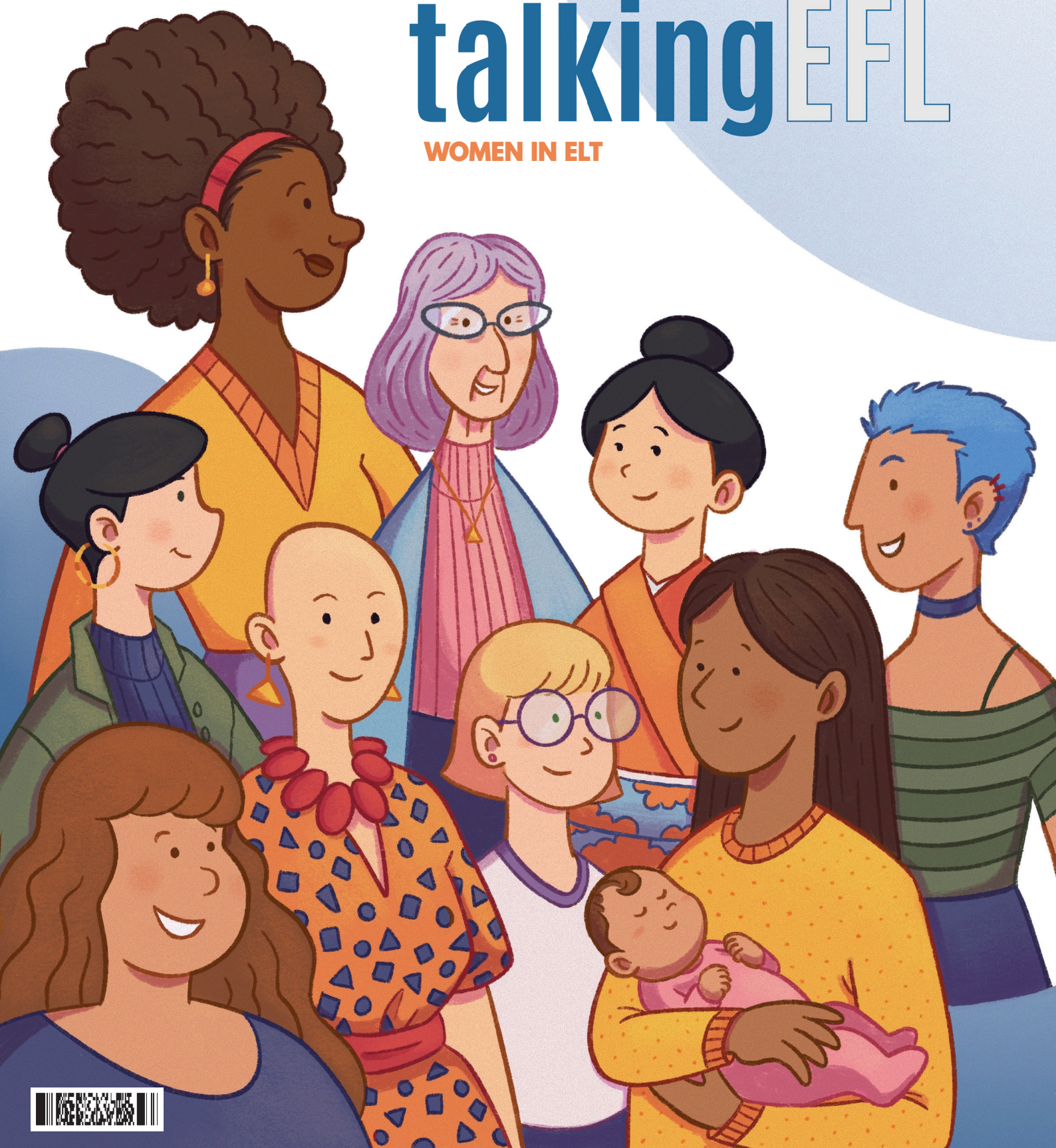
Marcela Cintra



Rachael Roberts

SPECIAL EDITION #3 - MARCH 2021

**talkingEFL**  
WOMEN IN ELT  
Catherine Johnson





Dearest,

We cannot thank you enough for accepting our invitation!

Inviting you was as easy as understanding that, whatever you would share, it would certainly have a deep impact in whoever reads it.

This publication is the minimum we can do to acknowledge the importance of having a woman like you in our community.

Our most sincere and heartfelt, thank you!!!

team talkingEFL!

**talkingEFL**

# PHENOMENAL TEACHER, THAT'S YOU!

I turn to poetry whenever I feel I need to get inspired, and since I'm writing for a women's magazine it was only fair I looked for female poets. I immediately thought of Sylvia Plath. I've always liked her unapologetic criticism of gender roles. The poem I read is called *The Applicant* and it's narrated by a salesperson that is selling a wife. But not everyone can afford this wife. No! It is the perfect archetype of a woman that is being sold and in order to deserve this woman the applicant should also be the perfect archetype of a man, dominant in all areas of life. Nevertheless, with such narrow gender ideals, the speaker denies both of them, their individual identities and right to self-determination. Despite being a very crucial topic, that was not the inspiration I was looking for. So I turned to another poet.

The poet this time is Maya Angelou. The poem I read is called *Phenomenal Woman* and the contrast to Plath's poem couldn't be greater. In Angelou's poem, the narrator is a woman and as the poem progresses, she also talks about how women are expected to behave in society and the pressure imposed by beauty-standards. But, at the end of each stanza, after describing the confused looks and stares she receives for being so comfortable in her female skin, she states "I am a woman, phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, that's me". Not only does the woman have the right to self-determination this time, but she does it phenomenally. She's an extraordinary woman. When you think of an extraordinary woman, that's the speaker.

While the silent present of Plath's wife is depressing, the confidence in Angelou's woman is empowering. Having a voice is powerful! Mainly because it's through your voice that you speak your mind, tell your story, share your beliefs and opinions. A great deal of this power doesn't come from the voice itself, it comes from being heard. That is precisely why the *Women in ELT* magazine is on its third edition. Because unlike the salesperson in Plath's poem, @TalkingEFL doesn't wish to speak on behalf of women. It wishes to be a vehicle for female voices in the ELT world. And to honor and acknowledge women's achievements in our community, we asked our phenomenal female professionals in the field of Education to determine themselves, whether in a story, an activity, a topic they have studied... or any facet of them they'd like to share.

Being part of this process and watching this magazine come together has been an amazing experience. From the day we posted the call for papers I offered to help women brainstorm ideas for their texts. I wanted to be helpful but as I talked to them and heard their stories, how they've reinvented themselves as they became mothers, teachers, trainers, coordinators and businesswomen, I was the one being inspired. I felt prouder than ever to be part of this incredible community filled with outstanding professionals that helped and motivated one another.

Phenomenal teachers, that's you!



**Thais Olivieri** Literature and English teacher, passionate about reading and how it appeals to students' imagination, develops cultural awareness, and encourages critical thinking.

# IN THIS ISSUE CONTENTS

8

Laura Baecher

**Editing and Rewriting: Examining  
our careers at every stage**

11

Ana Clara Castilho

**How motherhood has impacted  
my career**

12

Marcela Cintra

**How can collaboration benefit  
our profession?**

14

Renata Lauzem

**Fábrica na prática**

15

Fernanda Lee

**Leadership strategies to apply at  
home, at school, and in life**

16

Beatriz Fabro

**Scaffolding for social-emotional  
competencies: guiding our pupils the  
Positive Discipline way**

17

Êmilli Grassi

**Women who inspired women**

18

Thais Malagoli Braga

**5 things I learned about myself as  
a Young Learner teacher**

19

Andie Noronha

**How to find yourself when the  
world is completely lost**



**20** Isabela Villas Boas  
Showing their work or showing off?

**21** Taíza Lombardi  
On why we should talk about our students over 50

**22** Priscila Vicente & Cintia Rodrigues  
A humanistic approach to diversity & inclusion

**24** Lorenza Aildasani  
My love story

**25** Isabel Badra  
What is your next move?

**26** Júlia Gobbi  
School of life

**26** Rachael Roberts  
'That group of crazy women'

**28** Kathia Candido  
My Delta experience

**30** Evelin Soldera  
Time for a challenge

**31** Marisa Bernardes  
Fábrica na prática

**32** Hemylle Oliveira  
Three things I wish I had thought of from the start

**33** Josiany Rocha  
Are we culturally competent teachers?

# WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Dare to dream!

The time has come to launch the 3rd Edition of our Special Magazine devoted to celebrating Women in ELT: phenomenal professionals who dedicate their lives to better the lives of others. We strongly believe that giving a voice to such professionals is one way, among many, to contribute to our beloved ELT community.

We had the exciting opportunity to invite inspiring women to contribute as special guests as well open for all female professionals who wished to share their stories. And once we started receiving contributions, we could hear so many different powerful voices, and we have to say that it was truly an honour to put it all together as the magazine came to be!

We are never alone!

All the stories, all the dreams, all the hopes and battles... we somehow experience all of them, and by sharing our words, we strengthen this invisible bond that unites us all towards a common goal: Women supporting women can be incredibly profound, because your success is my success, and vice-versa.

We would very much like to thank all Phenomenal Women who took the time to contribute to this 3rd Edition! You represent the voice of so many more women who share similar stories, and your inspirational words can change lives by simply fostering that sought-after Sense of Belonging!

To all the readers, we truly hope this Magazine speaks to you, and who knows... Maybe next year you will be part of our 4th Edition!

To all women, dare to live your dream! And count on us!



**Lenora Haranaka** *Passionate about CPD, Design Thinking, Leadership and Positive Discipline, she has been an English language teacher since 1998 and currently works at Cultura Inglesa-SP as an Assistant Manager and Headteacher.*



# MEET THE TEAM

SPECIAL EDITION #3 - MARCH 2021

## talkingEFL

WOMEN IN ELT



### FABIANA MULITERNO

Holds a CPE and a CELTA and ICALT. She's currently taking her DELTA. Passionate about CPD, Fabi has presented in Braz-Tesol, ABCI and IATEFL conferences.



### LENORA HARANAKA

Passionate about CPD, Design Thinking, Leadership and Positive Discipline, she has been an English language teacher since 1998 and currently works at Cultura Inglesa-SP as an Assistant Manager and Headteacher.



### THAÍS OLIVIERI

Literature and English teacher, passionate about reading and how it appeals to students' imagination, develops cultural awareness, and encourages critical thinking.



### RODRIGO CORREIA

He's taught English for about 10 years and holds a CPE and Anaheim TESOL certificate. Rodrigo is passionate about inclusive education and students with specific needs.

#### Team talkingEFL

Fabiana Muliterno, Lenora Haranaka, Thaís Olivieri and Rodrigo Correia

#### Editor

Lenora Haranaka

#### Proofreading

Team talkingEFL

#### Collaborators

Ana Clara Castilho, Andie Noronha, Beatriz Fabro, Cintia Rodrigues, Êmilli Grassi, Evelin Soldera, Fernanda Lee, Hemylle Oliveira, Isabel Badra, Isabela Villas Boas, Josiany Rocha, Júlia Gobbi, Kathia Candido, Laura Baecher, Marcela Cintra, Marisa Bernardes, Priscila Vicente, Rachael Roberts, Renata Lauzem, Taíza Lombardi and Thaís Malagoli Braga.

#### Advertisers

Faculdade Cultura Inglesa, i-Study Interactive Learning, Priscila Vicente and Taíza Lombardi.

#### Layout and Graphic Design

Rodrigo Correia - Illustrations, including the beautiful cover, by Júlia Fioretti

talkingEFL Special Edition #3 is a yearly digital edition aimed at celebrating women's achievements in ELT, as well as giving the opportunity for others to share their stories with our community.

talkingEFL is an online community that welcomes teachers of English from all contexts, providing them with content in video, text and publications such as this one.

If you want to know more about us, please visit our website: [www.talkingefl.com](http://www.talkingefl.com) or if you want to have access and get informed about future content, subscribe to our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/talkingefl](https://youtube.com/talkingefl).

If you want to talk to us, send us your text or share some of your work, please send an email to: [talkto@talkingefl.com](mailto:talkto@talkingefl.com) or talk to us via whatsapp: +55 11 95941-5996

The texts and articles in this publication, do not necessarily reflect the opinion of our editors or any of the talkingEFL members. The same applies to the adverts shown here, whose owners are fully accountable for.

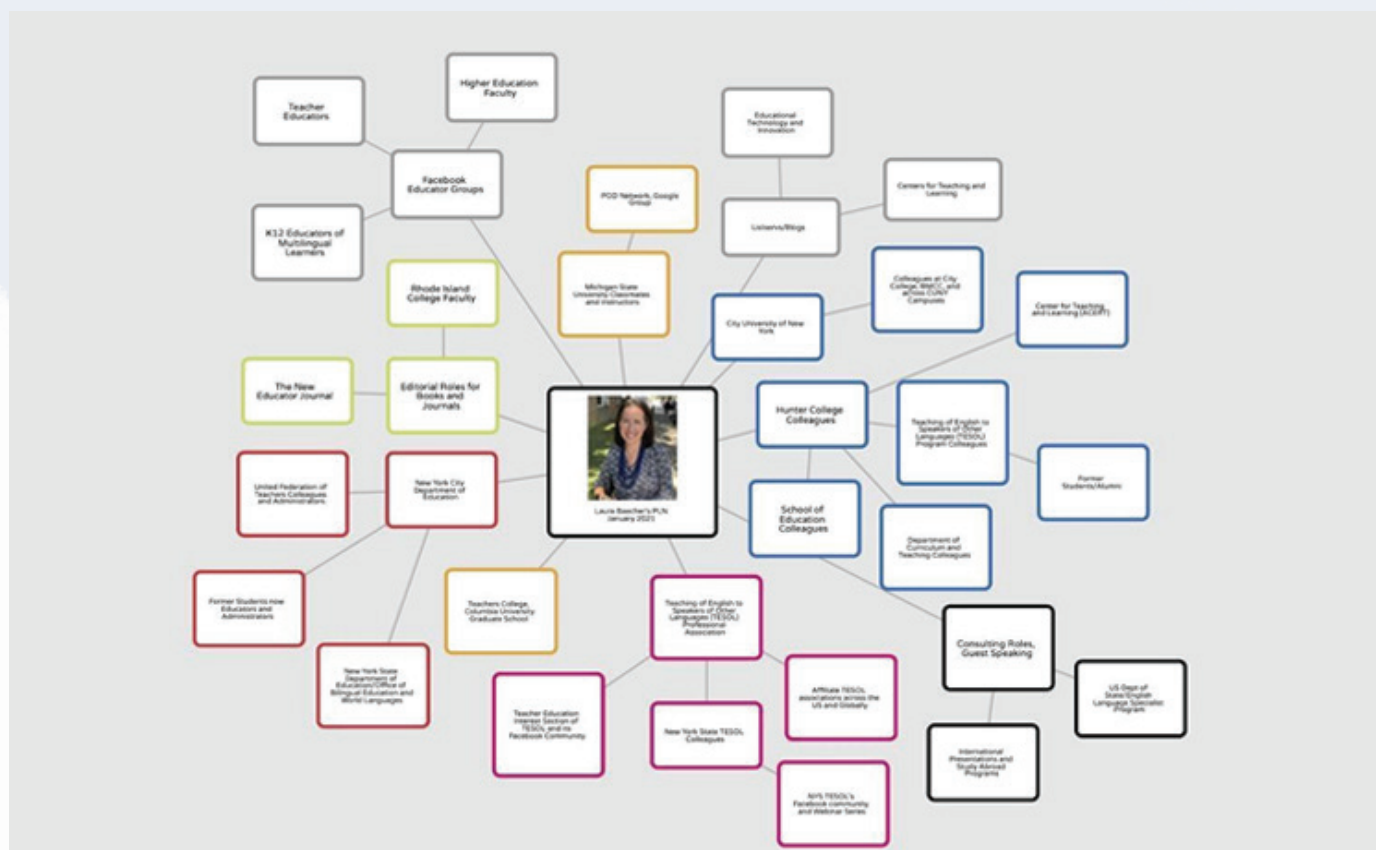
# EDITING AND REWRITING: EXAMINING OUR CAREERS AT EVERY STAGE

by Laura Baecher

Recently I have been ruminating (love that word!) a bit about where I will want to find myself as the credits roll on this cinema noir of the past year, when this all-remote, all-distanced period of our professional lives recedes. I think about the massive “edit” that Covid-19 has caused. From loss of colleagues, to ending activities that were routine, to removal of aspects of our existence we didn’t even consider noteworthy, all of us have had chunks of our former working lives forcibly removed from our schedules. When this period ends, what do we really want to bring back? After this huge edit, are there parts of our lives--people, tasks, priorities--that we don’t plan to re-insert into the narrative essays of ourselves?

At odds with the idea of our professional lives being sharply red-lined are the numerous carets inserted. Most of these inserts have been related to some sort of digital technology. When before we may have Skyped or face-timed, tweeted or been Pinterested, now our work as educators and colleagues depends on these tools, and these tools have in turn transformed our work in ways we cannot even yet imagine. Since editing involves deletion as well as insertion, as well as a lot of ruminating (there I go again!) and reflection, perhaps we can use them to rewrite our own next chapters.

To brainstorm your career thus far and where you want to take it, try for instance a tool like Popplet.



This image by Laura Baecher is licensed under CC by 4.0



I was asked in a course I am taking, to create a visual web of my professional learning network (PLN). Starting with my workplace, where I studied, the professional associations I have volunteered for, colleagues, and more, I could visualize all of the richness in my map and observe many connections I could strengthen. I could see places where there is a lot of detail and where I have gaps (just like reflecting on writing). The process (just like the writing process) is really about clarifying one's thinking. Taking some time to create your professional visual web of people, ideas, or places could be part of your career examination process too.

In another course, this time as the instructor, I asked my students (experienced teachers) to develop an interactive resume. Using any tool they preferred, teachers in the group used visuals, links, videos, and in reformatting that stale old resume, found themselves re-igniting their spirit of fun and learning, of exploration and discovery, with their own careers as central theme (to keep up the writing metaphor). Here is an example shared by Yumiko Bendlin, created in Google Slides:



This image by Yumiko Bendlin is licensed under CC by 4.0

She is actively seeking a new position and the process itself helped her re-live past successes, own her many achievements, and put her creative stamp onto a product that can feel very controlled by others.

As a young professional, one of the many sage pieces of advice my mother shared was that "your job security is your resume". In other words, don't wait for opportunities to be given

to you, don't expect promotions in title or increases in recognition--doing so gives away your power.. Always learn, seek opportunities to grow, regardless of whether those activities provide income at the time or even if they cost you an expense. When you find ways to advance yourself, your resume will grow, and that in turn will lead you to your next position or opportunity. We know teachers are lead learners, but we may neglect to take the time to edit, revise, brainstorm, reflect, and re-write with our careers as subject



"Musings of a dark overlord: Leveraging 21st-century education with open source" by opensourceway is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

This whole career editing process dovetails with a period of my career that I can sense is evolving; or perhaps, it is evolving because of the editing process. I know for sure that I want to always feel I am learning, leading my own learning, and encircling myself with ideas and people who are gentle editors. Like writing, the process is never really complete.







# i-Study is Specialized in Distance Learning and Teacher Training

For ELT Professionals and  
Teaching Institutions

## DEVELOP AND BOOST YOUR CAREER IN 2021

*"Professional  
mentoring with  
i-Study has been  
a game changer  
in my life."*

*Natália Português*

- > **Teacher Training - ONLINE**
- > **The Mastermind Teacherpreneur Program**
- > **Mentoring and Coaching - ONLINE**
  - Analyze and Redesign your Career
  - Solutions to Overcome Challenges
  - It is also for those who want to migrate to Distance Learning and Entrepreneurship

[www.istudy.com.br](http://www.istudy.com.br) 

[contato@istudy.com.br](mailto:contato@istudy.com.br) 

[@istudy\\_interactive\\_learning](https://www.instagram.com/istudy_interactive_learning) 



# HOW MOTHERHOOD HAS IMPACTED MY CAREER

by Ana Clara Castilho

Becoming a mother is always a transformative experience and when you're 20, unemployed and without a degree, it can be paralyzing. But I couldn't afford to be paralyzed anymore, I had a baby now. And even though my English was very rusty, I was hired as a teacher by a woman, a woman who saw something in me that goes beyond the English I could express at the moment. This opportunity was crucial because it was the first of many changes and challenges I would face and despite...no! **because** I am a mother, lots of great things have happened to me.

I fell in love with teaching and by believing in my students' potential, I started to believe and invest in myself again. I wanted to be a better teacher, for my students and for me. So I went to university, took the CELTA and other outstanding courses that taught me so much, I made my dream come true by going to London and studying at IH and I also joined an amazing community of teachers, that later became friends, who have taught me that teaching doesn't need to be a lonely profession.

Since where I live doesn't offer the kind of learning experience I wanted my son to have, I founded my own school. The first language center for children below 5 in my city. I have developed my own learning program, designing projects based on authentic storybooks for very young learners. And this program enabled me to both present and write to IATEFL and Troika, which has been one of the greatest opportunities of my career.

I have learned and grown so much and I know that it all started because I became a mother. And now, If I could give you seven pieces of advice, they would be:

**1** It doesn't really matter where you are. I come from a city of 70 thousand inhabitants in Minas Gerais and drive has guided me to different places, people and experiences.

**2** Don't be afraid of taking chances. Start small, it's ok to become a teacher after studying at a language course, but don't stop there. Invest in yourself!

**3** Strike a balance, you don't need to do everything at the same time. Think: what are your goals? How can you achieve them?

**4** Don't compare yourself to others. Everyone has

their own journey.

**5** Find yourself a community that will help you grow and improve.

**6** Be humble, but don't let people step on you, know your worth, establish your boundaries.

**7** Believe in what you do, mashing up Mandela and Gandhi; Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world, and we must be the change we wish to see in it.

Believe in yourself! For you, for your students and for other women around you! We are stronger together.



Ana Clara Castilho has been in ELT for over a decade, she has worked with a wide range of ages and teaching contexts. After becoming a mother, she fell in love with early years and founded Imagine Education. Always curious and eager to learn, she decided to take the CELTA, and went on to the CELT-P, TKT YL and the IH Teaching YL Certificate. Understanding the importance of quality education for children, she obtained the Train the Trainer certificate and has been working with teacher education in (very) young learner contexts.

# HOW CAN COLLABORATION BENEFIT OUR PROFESSION?

by Marcela Cintra

In March last year, Lizika Goldchleger proposed a discussion about what our profession will be like in 30 years' time. This text is an attempt to keep the discussion alive and a hopeful message for a possible development in our profession. We do not know for sure what it will be like, but perhaps we all expect it to grow into something stronger. From that perspective, it seems that collaboration is key to our collective success, especially in challenging times during the global pandemic.

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) report (2018) lists collaborative work among teachers as one of the five pillars of teacher professionalism and quality education. The importance of building the profession and

teaching practices together may also affect the learning of a foreign language. Considering that many of our learners need the language for communication purposes and that global cooperation may positively change the world, a collaboration model from teachers may emulate future change. Consequently, this may influence how our profession is perceived and contribute to shaping not only the future of teaching, but also the world. What are some practical ways to start collaborating among teachers?

We may start by building relationships with peers. Whether you work on a school or as a private teacher, establishing a community of practice may contribute to collaboration, to the sharing



- **Online courses and mentoring for teachers of Older Learners**
- **Conversation Club for teachers (practice and teaching insights)**
- **Courses for schools - Teaching and Assessing adult students**

✉ [taizalombardi@gmail.com](mailto:taizalombardi@gmail.com)

☎ (41) 99108-2565

📷 @taizalombardi



of ideas and the construction of new ones, to planning lessons, courses, to solving complex classroom challenges. Establishing connections and groups can even be done across boundaries as we put technology to work in our favour. Then, a few other actions may illustrate the collaborative work a group of teachers may lead:

- **Listening** in a non-judgemental way. This may demand a humble attitude that promotes learning together what we may still ignore.
- **Embracing** conflict and **communicating** in a non-threatening, non-violent manner. A group will not agree on everything and it is healthy not to if the discussion is respectful.
- **Asking** more questions than providing answers. We tend to take things for granted and provide answers based on our repertoire and experiences. To prompt collaboration and develop professionalism we need to try to better understand other situations.
- **Planning, studying, discussing lessons, promoting small events** to generate creative problem-solving in teaching may be advantageous.
- **Offering help** to peers who may need support to look at a situation from different perspectives.
- **Having** frequent **constructive conversations** with peers about learners' successes.
- **Talking** about the teaching profession in general (and about fellow teachers) with attention to ethics, diversity. What we say about teaching resonates in the society, reflecting how we are perceived as a professional group. We are all accountable for the future of our profession.
- **Supporting women** in our professional circle – there may be more of us in many schools around the globe, but we still have a long way to go in being respected as professionals. Promoting collaboration and a support group with other women may empower more teachers to join and grow within the profession.

Some of us may believe that as individuals we achieve higher, and that collaboration does not really impact their success. It is perhaps debatable. However, there are advantages to teachers who collaborate with their peers:

- If teaching in general is developed through collaboration, our profession grows in importance and respect. It is a collective benefit.
- Creative problem-solving through collaboration may take education towards innovation, thus enhancing our goal of shaping the future.
- Collaboration may increase teacher motivation and morale as we bring skills and repertoire together to find solutions to the challenges faced.
- Collaboration helps teachers develop and promote empathy.
- If collaborative work becomes a habit, it may save us time to find solutions or plan individually, consequently reducing stress levels.
- A routine of collaboration may help us build positive work environment – in face-to-face or remote teaching.
- Learning from others and helping others learn

influences professional development and on strengthening teaching skills and knowledge, for instance.

A provocation comes to mind at this point: what are the actions we can take locally to ensure a collaborative atmosphere among teachers and the growth of our profession for the next 30 years?

### References

- Goldchleger, L. (2020) 'What will our profession be like in 30 years' time?'. Talking EFL Special Edition #2. March, 2020. p. 9.
- TALIS report (2018): <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/> (Accessed on 02nd March 2021).



**Marcela Cintra** is the Head of Products in the Academic Department at Cultura Inglesa São Paulo. She has been working with English language teaching for over 20 years, been involved in teacher training and development programmes and presented in ABCI, LABC, BRAZ-TESOL, TESOL and IATEFL conferences. A CELTA, ICALT and Delta tutor, she has an MA in TESOL. She is the current president for BRAZ-TESOL.



# Mini courses for **TEACHERS**

*Seu time + preparado!*

**Leve** para a sua  
**noossos**  
**curros**  
**escola**

*Saiba mais*

[rebrand.ly/minis\\_na\\_sua\\_escola](https://rebrand.ly/minis_na_sua_escola)

Ou



## FÁBRICA NA PRÁTICA

by Renata Lauzem

For 13 years working at a language school, which is a social project, I realized the need that most students have to put into practice what they had learned in theory. Many have never been in an airport or even have a routine of eating in restaurants. As we believe that the world belongs to everyone, we started to design some projects to give students the opportunity to live new and pleasurable experiences practicing the language. That was when the idea of setting up a “fake restaurant” in the classroom came up. Styrofoam hamburger, a portion of fries made with a bath sponge and a portion of fried onions made with a roll of toilet paper, were some of the ideas we had. Combining recycling with crafts, thematic classes have been a huge success for all age groups.

I also have taught English to flight attendants and then we decided to create an airplane in the classroom. I dressed as a flight attendant and the students were our passengers. Speeches in English, on-board service and flight simulator, were tools we used to make the lesson as close as possible to reality. Result: ALL other students

want to have the same class.

From these two classes, we have already created a cruise ship, also with thematic environments and the mini city, with a garage sale, pharmacy, exchange school program, tourist office and grocery store.

Many people ask me how I develop the classes because of my duties at school as a coordinator and a teacher. I always answer them that it is such a pleasure to prepare everything thinking about the students and how those moments will be remarkable for them! Of course it takes a lot of work. Some classes take 6 months to be prepared, but seeing happiness in their faces, the joy and excitement when they come into the school and see everything different, is priceless !!!



**Renata Lauzem** has been an English teacher for 13 years and a Coordinator for 9 years at CLLI, a social project that has been in existence for over 20 years. Graduated in Business Management, she has always been interested in entrepreneurship and finance. In 2019 she launched her newest project - Fábrica da Prática - a company focused on practical lesson solutions for language teachers.



# LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES TO APPLY AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AND IN LIFE

by Fernanda Lee

Leadership is often associated with a person at the top of the pyramid. But for me, leadership is about **how I lead my life** and how I can be a **positive influence** in a collective effort. It is common to underestimate the power of your own leadership, but to be a leader is to have influence over others, independently of your hierarchical position. Here are **three** questions that helped me tap into my power, and maybe they can help you, too.

**How can I serve?** As a school counselor I witnessed first-hand the various challenges and needs of both students and teachers. With technology taking on ever-greater importance in our schools and society, the craving for human connection has been made explicit. As I become aware of the psychological impact of high workload, depression, anxiety, and the quest to always be at peak performance output I can serve as a leader by **building connections with my students** (e.g., fun warm-ups in the beginning of a session and leading classroom meetings to address concerns), **opening space for dialogue with families** (e.g., offering regular workshops for parents to learn about parenting tools), and **adding practical tools for teachers** (e.g., problem solving and listening skills).

**What is the shared vision?** As you collaborate online and in-person, you send and receive a great volume of information through e-mails, texts, and meetings. Each collaborator is moving so fast that you often forget to ask: **Where are you going?** A shared vision is the destination of your collective journey. Is this destination defined or agreed somewhere? Have you involved your students in the shared vision of today's lesson? Have you discussed the shared vision with staff in your school? Have you talked about what you want with your family? **A shared vision includes what you do, how you do it, and why you do it.** Here is my business shared vision: "We believe that through education we can cultivate peace and connection in homes, schools, and organizations. We do this through experiential activities, inviting parents, students, teachers, and collaborators to sit in a circle and reflect on different perspectives." Now, it's your turn!

**Why belonging and significance?** Because every human being has these two basic needs: to feel that they both belong in their social group and can somehow contribute to the common good. **At**

**one point in your life you have felt hurt, left out, or awkward in a social situation.** When you feel that you belong in the family or workplace, you show the best versions of yourself. You are kind, efficient, and patient. On the other hand, when you feel as if you don't belong, it hurts like a physical pain, which can lead you to lie, cheat, withhold information, or simply refuse to participate. **Authentic leaders are aware of the triggers that make them feel as if they don't belong or contribute.** Then, they learn to ask questions that invite a dialogue: "I'm curious about...", "Tell me more about...", "What problem are you trying to solve?", "Tell me why this doesn't work for you...", "I'm working from this assumption. What is yours?"

I have spent the past 15 years dedicating time and energy to understanding and practicing one passion in my life: relationships. I have shared what I have learned during my journey as I became a **master trainer in Positive Discipline**, which has given me opportunities to travel to multiple countries and certify thousands of educators (regardless of whether they have their own children), because what Positive Discipline focuses on is the creation of safe spaces to build respectful relationships in any context: parenting, classroom, workplace, early childhood, and couples. Turn mistakes into opportunities to grow. Discover who you are becoming in the context of relationships.

Whether you are a solo mother raising children, a teacher at a school, or collaborator in a company, **you are leading all the time**, and there are respectful ways to live and work that can bring out the best leader in you.



**Fernanda Lee** holds a B.A. in business administration and previously worked at international consulting firms and investment banks before becoming a mother. She also holds a M.A. in Education and has served as a school counselor in elementary and middle public schools in California.

She is a lead trainer in Positive Discipline, serving parents, psychologists, teachers, early childhood educators, couples, and workplace professionals in the United States, Brazil, Portugal, and Luxembourg. Fernanda enjoys going on outdoor adventures with her family, exploring trails, canyons, and whitewater rafting.

These days, her kids are teenagers who serve as inspiration for many of the activities and conversations she leads in her classes. She is very thankful to be raising her two teenagers with Positive Discipline, as without it she would already have pulled out all of her hair. To learn more about Fernanda and her work: [www.filosofiapositiva.com.br](http://www.filosofiapositiva.com.br) @filosofiapositivaoficial

# SCAFFOLDING FOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES: GUIDING OUR PUPILS THE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE WAY

by Beatriz Fabro

A child who is enrolled at a full-time six-hours school program from pre-kindergarten to the last year of primary school will have spent about 12,000 hours away from home and inside a classroom by the time she enters elementary school. The amount of time children spend with educators has been increasing during the past decades. That might be related to changes in the structure of family routines, but also the availability of a rising number of extracurricular activities and all sorts of complementary programs, both frequently held inside a school environment. On top of that, teachers have been required not only to teach an information-centred curriculum but also to innovate by scaffolding for life-long learning skills, teaching towards social-emotional competencies such as relationship skills, responsible decision-making, self-awareness, social awareness and self-management. Hence, it's our call as educators of our times to act for change and merge both things, aiming for a generation of whole-hearted citizens.

Naming the five essential social-emotional competencies like that might leave us on the verge of including them in our (very busy!) lesson plans for the twelfth of never, but they are quite achievable targets. The educational works of Dr Alfred Adler, Dr Rupholf Dreikurs and Prof. Jane Nelsen prove it and have resulted in what is called the Positive Discipline approach. This relational approach aims to build strong relationships and fix damaged ones with tools that do not cause harm, pain, shame or guilt. Its five fundamentals are: mutual respect; the sense of belonging and importance; strategies that are effective in the long run, social competencies that will influence the personality positively and, last but not least, child empowerment.

Before we untangle each of the five fundamentals, a teaching growth mindset is a must-have. Each fundamental should be part of our class atmospheres, not through endless overwhelming

social-emotional lessons plans, but in a smooth and gentle union of actions that are part of how one lives together with another inside this tribal classroom.

To begin with, mutual respect is about a continuous attitude started by the teacher and, with time, mirrored by the pupils as it solidifies as the only means of communication. Leading a class based on mutual respect means that teachers' and pupils' voices are heard and regarded, and different points of view are pondered and equally valued. This takes us to the second fundamental: the sense of belonging. The feeling of connectedness is a powerful tool that influences the level of involvement and attachment a pupil has towards her peers, her teachers and her school community. It is built when one's importance to the group is communicated, recognized, and daily practised. Children will do better when they deeply and really feel better about themselves and the environment they are in.

Subsequently, it's essential to highlight that the Positive Discipline classroom strategies are effective in the long run. When a teacher faces a conflict in which she can either solve the problem for the children and end it all quickly, or solve the problem with the children's help and ideas, she must consider what option is more likely to build life-long problem-solving skills. Teachers who are scaffolding for social-emotional competencies should keep a big mental note saying: "how does it build a life-long skill?". As adults, we are entitled to the responsibility of taking care and supporting our children, but not entitled to shield them from challenges and take the easy way out of ordinary school conflicts.

A final point is how such strategies will affect a pupil's personality positively and empower this child to act and contribute to society accordingly. When we teach, we may think that we are planting seeds which we will never see bloom, but when



we teach the Positive Discipline way we see them blooming right in front of us every single day. In a child-centred Positive Discipline classroom environment, teachers will see simple but huge evidence that her pupils' personalities are being shaped towards respect and cooperation, as well as children being empowered to solve their conflicts, share their feelings and support one another in an evergrowing learning curve. It's vital that teachers start looking at their pupils through new lenses, seeing possibilities for social-emotional growth that can be found from a quotidian playtime at the playground to facing academic challenges such as grammar and mathematics.

Where did we ever get the crazy idea that in order to make children do better, first we have to make them feel worse? - Prof. Jane Nelsen



**Beatriz Fabro** has been teaching full-time for 14 years across language institutes, early childhood centres and primary school. She holds a B.A. in Education and post-grad courses in Psychopedagogy (CENSUPEG), Innovative Educational Practices (PUC-RS), Neurosciences & Learning (CBI of Miami, Citectomus Institute) and also Bilingualism, by the Harvard University's online program.

She attended the University Of Oxford's English language Summer Programme and was granted honours at Christ Church College/Rewley House's course for teacher's continuing education in 2012. Her ELT certifications include TKTs 1,2,3, CLIL and Oxford Teachers' Academy.

Nowadays, she is a Teacher Trainer, Positive Discipline Certified Educator by the Brazilian and American Positive Discipline Associations, Educational Consultant in Social-Emotional learning and the lead classroom teacher at a British school in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

## WOMEN WHO INSPIRED WOMEN

by Êmilli Grassi

We all grow up under the influence of people around us and, **thereby, become** who we are today. This March I think it's important to honor and remember the women who inspired me to want to be a better person and encourage me until today to get where I want! Lately, in the world we live in, being a woman is often not easy, **but to know** that we have each other to **support each other and rely on each other** brings hope and encourages me to pass everything I have learned forward, inspiring others.

I am thankful that I have role models in my life who teach me, even though I'm already an adult and **how necessary** it is to have women who inspire women from **(a young age! In that sense,** I'd like to thank my grandmother and mother for teaching me to be a kind and empathetic person towards everything around me, my aunts who are extremely independent, my friends who exchange personal experiences and grew up with me and all my female teachers who have either taught me topics that I lead to life and study until today, or that were examples of empowerment and showed me how far I can go as a businesswoman. In addition, as I grew up, all the films, books, actresses and models who were world examples,

showing us where we can get and the **spaces we can occupy**.

In such uncertain times and in a still very **male-dominated** world, having women around you that inspire you, in any area of your life and make you grow in wonderful ways, gives me the certainty that everything will be fine and that together we are much stronger. Women are and were essential to make me evolve as a human being and be proud every day of the person I am, and mainly women were essential to make me proud of, today, being one too. And I hope that one day I will be able to inspire girls the same way they inspired me!



**Êmilli Grassi** is 23 years old and I have a degree in international affairs and work at a insurance broker. Also I'm a former cultura inglesa student!

# 5 THINGS I LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF AS A YOUNG LEARNER TEACHER

by Thais Malagoli Braga

I teach English to 4-year-olds at a public school. In my first year, I had around 20 students per class, no assistant, and not much clue of what was going on or more importantly, why.

After some reflection, here's what I could gather.

**1** I'm not that patient. When there are 20 children gathered around us, shouting out "prô", "teacher", "tia", we can barely hear ourselves think. Throw in a hot day, a PE class just before mine, and you might picture my first classes. I sat down on the floor, 15 children rushed over, arguing to get the small spot next to me while another child was rushing off somewhere else, throwing random objects around.

I often left that chaotic classroom environment completely drained.

Patience is not a gift, but a learned trait. Just as children learn how to interact with each other, with the school environment, I too had to learn how to take deep breaths, talk softly, practice call and response songs. I had to reeducate myself as to the role our bodies play in learning. Still, there were times it did not work and that's ok.

**2** My voice: my most important instrument. I lost it numerous times, had to avoid savoring an ice-cold beer at weekends, till I learned: drink lots of water, articulate your words better, pause more. Breathe more. We now have masks over our faces, which makes it ever more straining.

**3** I'm a Pinterest teacher. I often found myself worrying about WHAT would come out of my lesson plan. Would the final product be as beautifully crafted as I had pictured it? I wasn't too concerned with WHY I was doing what I was doing. This may (mis)guide us to a practice which prioritizes language as a fixed structure, repetition for the sake of repetition. When planning a birthday party with learners, should we value a perfectly sung 'Happy Birthday' over their active participation (boys and girls) in building up the setting, making the costumes? I find it more relevant to consider language as social practice, to better understand WHY it is we're teaching English to such tiny bodies. We should go beyond

a sense of "preparation for the future" and not take for granted what the children already are and the array of potentialities they can develop.

**4** I'm a control freak. Not only as a teacher, but in life, we must learn how much is out of our hands. As a young learner teacher I had to learn it overnight. A tough lesson I haven't mastered yet.

**5** I'm not alone. As English teachers in regular schools, we are put into boxes, in my case, a "especialista" category. This means we often don't get enough pedagogical support, being met with discourses like "I can't help you, I don't know English" from coordinators, principals, fellow teachers. 2020 proved an incredibly lonely year. I was lucky to come across professionals in and outside school who, when I needed, cared. It's of great importance to make sure we work on our sense of belonging as much as we do with our students.

These are some of the humbling lessons I've been learning. Stumbling here and there in the process of questioning, of learning to unlearn.



Passionate about education, **Thais Malagoli Braga** has been an English teacher for 8 years. A Languages and Literature graduate, she holds a CELTA and a CPE. She's currently doing her Masters in education – teaching English to very young learners in public schools – at USP.



# HOW TO FIND YOURSELF WHEN THE WORLD IS COMPLETELY LOST

by Andie Noronha

If you are reading this article, congrats! You survived 2020! Not that all the problems around the world have miraculously vanished in 2021, but at least... we are alive and so ready to move on. It's still hard to tell what life will be like after everything is over, but we can already see how it has surely changed our mental and social skills.

For introverted people the change of place to working at home was a relief. However, for us, the extroverted, changing our busy social life to full-time-home-office-high-tech-teachers was almost unbearable. And let's face it: the biggest struggle for our profession was not about adjusting to all the tech we had to learn to use in two weeks. It was the lack of perspective. At some point, alone in my apartment with my cats, I started questioning everything I've ever worked on. Why would anything I do be relevant to anyone? **How can one be heard when there's nobody around?**

Since I was a child, people have always told me that my laughter is heard from miles away. I am an extroverted, friendly, loud and bold person. **You know the neon sign with flashing letters? That's me.** When I was younger, that bothered me deeply. Now, I embrace it and use it in my favor. As a teacher, being surrounded by people is extremely important for my creativity. I am more productive when I am able to externalize my thoughts and see them reverberate in my peers. And if there was one thing 2020 has shown us it is that we had to learn once again how to express ourselves and translate our feelings and words through machinery, otherwise we would face too many communication breakdowns.

After five years teaching EFL, I still think of myself as a novice, as someone who still has so much to learn. And I feel you, novice teachers, where can we get advice from and share our worries when we are not at the teacher's room? I truly believe that everyone has something to say, so I did the only thing I thought possible: I talked. To everyone and anyone: The school's manager, the supervisor, the receptionist, the mentors, the teachers, my personal friends, my parents and my therapist... Phew! If I hadn't voiced my own doubts, I would have given up on everything. When I finally identified everyone was suffering from the problem of this millenium, the Fear Of Missing Out, I engaged more people into

talking. We exchanged advice, feedback, book recommendations, courses, discussion groups, workshops. And that fear drove me forward and gave me purpose again.

What I didn't expect was the overwhelmingly positive feedback to my simple action of talking. I am still figuring out my own path, but at least I got some reassurance that keeping on with my personal beliefs is a good way to figure out who I really want to be. Don't ever assume anything and ask all the questions, even if you think they were already answered, ask again, to different people. They will give you a different perspective on the matter.

When peers tell you that everything will be okay, believe them. That doesn't mean there won't be rocks on the way, it just means that *a happy ending cannot come in the middle of the story*. Oh no, I quoted Shakespeare! That's enough.



**Andie Noronha** has a background in drama and has been teaching for 5 years. She holds a BA in English Language and Literatures at Mackenzie, as well as a CPE, a CELTA and a Anaheim TEYL. She is currently pursuing teacher training and language content creation. She has been a teacher at Cultura Inglesa Campo Limpo since 2018.

# SHOWING THEIR WORK OR SHOWING OFF?

by Isabela Villas Boas

One might think, “Well, the field of English-Language Teaching is dominated by women, so there is no sexism in ELT, and there are plenty of female leaders out there.” Think again... look around! Though I have not conducted a formal study on this, I can safely argue that the number of women directing large English-Language-Teaching Institutes in Brazil is disproportionately lower than the number of women in teaching, supervisory, and academic coordination positions. Likewise, the most visible and sought-after teacherpreneurs and authors in the field are men. This is the classic glass ceiling! It is like saying that there is no racism in Brazil, where over 50% of the population is black but a much, much smaller proportion is represented in the mainstream media, in leadership positions, in course books, etc.

Why is this so? Why is it harder for women, even in a field dominated by women, to reach the top of the ladder? The reasons are basically the same for all types of businesses, and Carol Sandberg brilliantly discusses this in her book *Lean In – Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. Sandberg addresses the leadership ambition gap that needs to be narrowed so that girls can have ambitions and know that it is okay to want to be a leader. She talks about the fact that women need to sit at the table, and not just be invited into the room. She also sheds light into the negative bias against successful women in that they are less likable than men. Another very relevant aspect brought up by Sandberg is our choice of partner, as it cannot be denied that working women can only reach leadership positions if they choose a partner that will share the housework and the parenting tasks with them.

As a female leader in ELT – and just the fact that I am stating bluntly that I am a leader in ELT will raise some eyebrows –, I would say that I have not had much trouble with most of the aspects Sandberg discusses. However, in our specific culture, there is one particular barrier that leads women to be less sought-after as leaders: lack of visibility. I have always known that to be relevant in any field, and ours is no different, we must be visible, not be afraid to show our credentials, and be ambitious. This is easier said than done because these characteristics are seen by some as a no-no for women.

I have never been afraid to do any of this in my career, certainly influenced by the way I was

brought up, my choice of relationships, and my background in journalism, a field in which being visible is a must. I publish photos of my presentations in events, with other colleagues in the field, with the books I have published, and the compliments I have received, among others. However, I have been constantly criticized for it, and not usually by men, but by other women. I have heard through the grapevine that I am “too out there”, “too visible”, that I am “showing off too much”, “que eu me acho” (think too highly of myself), that I “expose myself too much”, and the list can go on and on. Some have even indirectly suggested that I do this to gain male fans. I wonder if I would have heard all of this if I were a man. I wonder if my wonderful male colleagues who are “out there”, showing themselves off – in the good sense – have received the same criticisms.

As Sandberg argues, stereotypes and biases cloud our beliefs and perpetuate the status quo. I am sure my well-intentioned critics have never pointed out the concerns above with the conscious awareness that it is because I am a woman. This is an example of one of the many unconscious biases that permeate our personal and institutional relationships. And there is an unconscious bias against women being too visible. However, not being visible leads women not to be sought-after for higher positions in our ever-connected world. Sandberg ends her book calling all women to work together to change this perspective. We really need to bring to light the unconscious biases we have against each other in our field in order to change the status quo. We can only start changing how men view women if we start by changing how women view each other.



**Isabela Villas Boas** holds a Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language from Arizona State University and a Doctorate in Education from Universidade de Brasília. She is currently a Managing Partner at Troika. Before this, she was the Corporate Academic Manager at Casa Thomas Jefferson, Brasília, where she worked for 34 years. Her main academic interests are second language writing, teacher development, leadership, and assessment. She has presented in various local, national, and international ELT conferences and published articles in journals and book chapters for over twenty years.

Her latest book is *Getting into ELT Assessment*, with Vinicius Nobre. She also supervises distance M.A. dissertations for the University of Birmingham.



# ON WHY WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT OUR STUDENTS OVER 50

by Taíza Lombardi

From the moment I chose to start working with older learners, I embarked on a brand new journey in my life. A truly rewarding – and challenging – one. A journey that required me to adapt myself to a new reality.

I must confess that, at first, I felt inadequate. Being a woman, having a big age gap, choices to be made and little literature to be studied caused loads of challenges and doubt: how much English should I use? What is the best approach to Grammar? How much do students actually need to know? Granted, none of these apply exclusively to this age group. And even though I had taken up the task head on, there was always that little pinch of doubt hanging over me: will the students really be able to learn?

Let me break the news: these students DO learn. Their progress may take more time when compared to younger adults, but experience has shown me that it happens – consistently. We notice students' struggles become less frustrating and their initial fear of failure turns into bright-eyed conversations in a language they so look forward to mastering.

As teachers, one thing we always have to keep in mind is the WHY. Why are our students here, studying a new language?

When asked this question, many reasons arise. Most likely, traveling will come first. Communicating is key to their motivation. Feeling confident and independent when abroad leads us to their most resounding why.

However, another important underlying reason is exercising the brain. Learning has become a synonym to preventing degenerative disease and keeping active so as to fight this major stereotype that aging is bad and means staying home, watching TV.

Another key factor: socialization. It is hard to make friends when you leave the circles you used to belong to. You may even suffer a shift in identity, a sense of not belonging anywhere. Therefore, many of these people want to make new friends, take part in new activities and have fun in a safe space: a place to be themselves and become a new person – developing another life

project, searching for an identity that fits their new lifestyles in a society filled with stereotypes which they are trying to break.

All in all, looking back at these all the years I spent teaching 50+ students, I have realized that there is a series of advantages in starting a new language course (or any course, for that matter) later in life. Time has shown that challenge does exist, demand is high, failure can be a reality and, altogether, it is a tiresome endeavor. Exhausting at times, but nothing short of thrilling and rewarding.

For this reason, my objective here is to invite people into the conversation. Not many people are talking about these students. Are you? Let's share experiences, learn from each other because the future is older and the more we prepare, the better it becomes.



**Taíza Lombardi** is a teacher and teacher trainer in Curitiba, PR. She was a partner and Academic Director at Tea Time - English School for people over 50 years of age and worked exclusively with this demographic for 8 years. She is an ECPE and CELTA holder and she has a post-graduation degree in English Language Teaching and Translation from PUC-PR. She is also Cambridge Train the Trainer certified. She has been teaching since 2002 and, for the past 6 years, she has been delivering sessions and courses on teaching older learners.

# A HUMANISTIC APPROACH TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

by Priscila Vicente and Cintia Rodrigues

According to *Discrimination in Education* (1960) event, UNESCO “promotes inclusive education systems that remove the barriers limiting the participation and achievement of all learners, respect diverse needs, abilities and characteristics and that eliminate all forms of discrimination in the learning environment”. However, 60 years later diversity and inclusion are still seen as controversial topics and are hardly addressed in teacher education courses.

Why is that? Here are 2 possible reasons: anti-discrimination laws are very recent in Brazil (2015); people are led to believe that we need magical tools to create a safe environment for all.

Conversely, we believe that, although it is not easy, it is not impossible following more humanistic approaches like Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) and UNESCO 4 pillars of education. UNESCO 4 pillars of education walk along with the 5 SEL competencies and, together, they have everything we need to learn and develop in ourselves and in our students to ensure everyone gets the most of what the educational system has to offer.

Due to the scope of this article, we won't be able to describe neither the 4 pillars of education nor the five SEL competencies, but we will guide you using UNESCO 4 pillars of education. We strongly recommend you check some of our references to learn more about them.

## LEARNING TO KNOW

According to Nanzhao “‘learning to know’ (...) enables the learner to experience the pleasure of knowing, discovering and understanding as a process.”

Creating a bond between students and learning may be challenging. As suggested by the SEL framework, developing our student's self-awareness, might help them find pleasure in the learning process.

Students need to understand what's going on with their minds, behavior and feelings so that they can accept themselves first. One can't build confidence and interest in the classroom if students are not familiar with their strengths and limitations. Only by helping them understand how learning might impact their lives will you be able to effectively include students.

## LEARNING TO DO

Learning to do means transforming a skill into a competence. Jorgensen points out that [...] “a growing number of students and adults who were diagnosed with an intellectual disability have shown they are competent when they have a means to communicate, and the opportunity to learn”.

Differently from what one might suppose, having knowledge is not the same as acknowledging it. Following this line, by acting according to the ideals of social-awareness and responsible decision-making, learners will understand their weaknesses and strengths, develop empathy and play their role in society fairly.

## LEARNING TO BE

Learning to be is “learning to be human through acquisition of knowledge, skills and values conducive to personality development in its intellectual, moral, cultural and physical dimensions” (Nanzhao). Through learning to be, students develop both self-awareness and social-awareness.

Why is it important? Because our students need to understand their strengths, weaknesses, privileges and limitations in order to perceive the others' individualities critically. Once we know who and where we are, we are able to form our values and morals, and, perhaps, notice when we're being prejudiced or biased. Acceptance of the self and the others is step number one for inclusion.



# LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

Any of the pillars mentioned so far means anything if we do not Learn to live together, a UNESCO pillar which implies the development of: “knowledge and understanding of self and others; appreciation of the diversity of the human race and an awareness of the similarities between, and the interdependence of, all humans” (Nanzhao). This dialogues with at least 2 SEL competencies: social-awareness and relationship skills. According to CASEL, the latter “includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve, and negotiate conflict constructively”.

In a group, if one person is going through a hard time or has specific needs, everyone will be affected by that in different ways (remember we are all different). As much as we need to learn to use the strengths of each element of a group, we also need to listen actively, and communicate our feelings and needs effectively in order to accept and embrace diversity.

In conclusion, if we talk inclusiveness, we must talk about ourselves, communication, teamwork, and acceptance. Furthermore, studying humanistic approaches we might find accessible answers to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment in the classroom.

As UNESCO puts it:  
“Education is not only about the acquisition of skills, it is also about values of respect for life and human dignity required for social harmony in a diverse world.”

## References:

- 1) <https://casel.org/sel-framework/>
- 2) <https://www.erasto.com.br/noticias/pilares-da-educacao-da-unesco>
- 3) [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/archive/cops/Competencies/PillarsLearningZhou.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/cops/Competencies/PillarsLearningZhou.pdf)
- 4) <https://www.eccnetwork.net/sites/default/files/media/file/109590engo.pdf>
- 5) <https://unevoc.unesco.org/e-forum/RethinkingEducation.pdf>
- 6) <https://peaunesco.wixsite.com/website/temas-2021>
- 7) <https://www.intervention.com/social-emotional-learning-for-students/>
- 8) American Psychiatric Association. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder. United States: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013.
- 9) Jorgensen, Cheryl M.. It's More Than "Just Being In" Brookes Publishing. Kindle Edition, 2018.



**Cintia Rodrigues** has been an ELT professional for 16 years. She holds an MA in Applied Linguistics, a BA in Linguistics, CELTA and CPE. She is the Foreign Languages Coordinator at Instituto Sidarta and is passionate about inclusive practices and diversity. She volunteers for English to Trans-Form (Casa 1) and Voices BRAZ-TESOL SIG.



**Priscila Vicente** has been an English teacher for 18 years now, having worked in regular and language schools. She holds the CPE, the Celta, has a degree in Languages, postgraduate in Educational Psychology and is taking a post-graduation in Psychology of Learning and Development. She is the Academic Director of Start Idiomas and the current president of BRAZ-TESOL SP Chapter.

# MY LOVE STORY

by Lorenza Aildasani

I remember being no older than seven or so, I would finish my school work in a rush, eager to immerse myself in my own little world. As I closed the door to my dollhouse, class would begin. All my toys sat promptly in their little desks as I took my place by the board. I spent hours there, blabbering on and on about senseless things, -though they didn't seem quite as senseless to me- teaching things I had yet to learn. And even if I hadn't quite realized it at the time, something inside me felt warm, even if I hadn't realized it yet, I had found my passion.

As I grew, this passion swiftly followed. I saw how the thing I held so dear to my heart could be stitched to my daily life. It started off slow, I would teach myself the school material as a form of study, then I began offering after-school lessons to my close friends, and by thirteen I had full classrooms- only this time with people and not toys- for my English seminars.

Before I knew it, I was applying for a big chain-company job, and soon after, opening my own school. It seemed all barriers were simply steps I had to take. I was so utterly moved by all the great things English teaching had brought me, I couldn't even phantom the idea of living without it. Through the ups and downs of the job, I began to appreciate the little things. The care I poured into each lesson plan, the pride in seeing students slowly progress, the stories that were shared and the community I helped build.

ELT has touched and guided my life in so many ways, as I know it has done for others. It has been a source of love and frustration as well as fulfilment and friendships. But mostly love. Now, as a 44 year-old, I tell my story to find others like me. I want to be heard by the little girls who play school, I want to inspire novice teachers who sometimes doubt their choice of being a teacher. I want to appreciate the efforts of all teachers and I want us to learn from each other. Being an English Teacher entitles so much more than just walking up to a board and talking, and I am reminded of that each day.



**Lorenza Aildasani** has been an English teacher for over 24 years. It is also Academic Director for Winner Idiomias and Cambridge Certified Examiner



# WHAT IS YOUR NEXT MOVE?

by Isabel Badra

If you are a woman, I am fairly certain that at one point or another you have pondered about how the decisions you make in your personal life could potentially affect your career. You are not alone. Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook and author of international bestseller “Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead” has continually championed for women to stay in the Workforce.

Please allow me to explain: in 2010 Sheryl delivered an electrifying talk at Ted where she discussed how women unintentionally hold themselves back in their careers. Additionally, she provided three pieces of advice for women: sit at the table, make your partner a real partner, and don't leave before you leave. I promise you this text is not going to be about her talk (but you should watch, it is indeed life-changing) but I do want to focus on her third piece of advice: don't leave before you leave.

I first watched this video in 2019, whilst designing a lesson for one of my business English students. The student in question is a woman who is head of Global Diversity and Inclusion at a big company and mother to two small children. In other words, a true badass. We were going to discuss about women in the workplace and practice functional language for agreeing and disagreeing. It turned out that on that day I learned more than my student did.

When Sheryl talks about not leaving before you leave, she goes into detail about how women start thinking about having kids way before it could even happen and start making space for that still hypothetical decision in their lives. As parents out there know, a kid requires space and time. Consequently, women take fewer promotions, raise their hands less, lean back from the table. Slowly this has a trickling effect as women start leaving the workforce. And we all lose.

Ever since I watched Sheryl Sandberg speak, I could not stop thinking about how that reality affects women outside of the corporate world as well. Since I started my teaching career, back in 2017 (for the second time; the first time was a frustrated attempt at teaching where I had no clue what I was doing and very little support. After a year, I quit only to come back many years later) and came across the CELTA, I knew in my heart that I wanted to invest all the time and resources I could to develop myself professionally. The CELTA would just be the starting point. Call it

serendipity: not only did I take the CELTA, but I did it during my first year of teaching. Afterwards, I set goals for myself. What would be my next step? I decided upon taking the CPE. This was in 2018. Furthermore, I had my sights set on the DELTA. I knew that sooner or later I would muster the courage to face it. In the meantime, once I got engaged and started thinking about marriage and kids, a funny thing happened. I began worrying about how I would balance my time between my professional and personal lives.

Mind you dear reader, our wedding has been pushed back because of the pandemic. I have no plans of having kids for the foreseeable future. So what am I worrying about? Sheryl was right. I was unconsciously leaning back before anything even happened. That is utterly unacceptable! How could I, after being so determined and ambitious, start to push back my hopes and dreams for my career? That is not what I had envisioned for myself. Essentially, Sheryl's words were a slap in the face. I try to no longer worry about things that haven't happened yet and keep pursuing my goals despite where my personal life is headed. I am adamant that once the time comes for such decisions, my partner will support me every step of the way. As of yet I haven't taken the DELTA. I'm still going through my CPD options.

For the time being, I will keep doing my job, developing professionally and plotting my next career move. And I urge you to do the same. In Sheryl's words, don't lean back, lean in.



**Isabel Badra** is a teacher and an English Language Consultant. Focused on teaching Business English and Exam Preparation Courses. Graduated in Business from FAAP and holds a CELTA and Cambridge Proficiency Certificates

# SCHOOL OF LIFE

by Júlia Gobbi

I will forever remember when one of my middle school teachers - who had a master and a doctorate in language - called me as his "favourite little big writer" when I didn't even know I was dreaming of being one. It has to be noted that, at the time, I wasn't good at writing. I mean, I recently re-read one of those old tales that I wrote and I burst out of laughter on the many - and painful - grammar mistakes I made. So, at first, you can imagine my confusion with the compliment, but today, because of who I have become, I realised it's importance and I am grateful for it.

He was not the only teacher I crossed paths with that showed belief in me. Art, drama, english, science and literature teachers along all my school experience have demonstrated their affection and faith not only in me, but also in my hopes and dreams. Which one of them did it in their own manner, contributing to particular areas of my upbringing. However in a sum of all, they guided me into finding myself and who I wanted to be despite external social interferences. If it weren't for my teacher's compliment and the other's support, maybe I would have taken longer to realize that writing was way more than just a pleasant homework, that it was and is a long career dream.

Remembering all of these moments of encouragement brings me such joy, yet such sorrow because I am conscious that not every student has this very same opportunity. Either for having bad and uncooperative teachers or not having at all, children all around the world are unable to pursue their dreams. I shall never forget the sadness on the faces of some colleagues that didn't get the same treatment as I did from some of our teachers. I wonder if they did, they would have had a future more loyal to their inner desires. This thought weighed on my head for quite some time, until I finally decided that my life mission should be to pass on what I have learned with my teachers and become one myself.

I do have the tendency to idealize life, so I don't know if it is possible, but I truly aspire to help which single soul I cross paths with. I am aware that maybe it won't happen because it's an action that requires the willingness of two and, sometimes, there will be only one. However, I must try because it is my time to multiply the good I have received, such was the role my teachers had in my life.



**Júlia Gobbi Grieco** is a multi-artist who works with photography, painting and poetry. In addition to her aspiration for an artistic career, she is studying Literature at the University of São Paulo to become a teacher.

# 'THAT GROUP OF CRAZY WOMEN'

by Rachael Roberts

That's how I recently heard someone (who should know better) had described my Facebook group, Lightbulb Moments: Helping ELT Professionals Manage Stress and Gain Balance.

There are nearly 700 ELT professionals in that group, and, yes, the vast majority are women. But crazy?

Is it crazy to want to have more balance in your life, to get better at setting boundaries and looking after yourself, to care about the kind of person

you are and the relationships you have?

Crazy not only stigmatizes real mental health issues, which it's estimated 1 in 4 people will experience each year, it's also a word that pretty much always gets applied to women rather than men.

It's shorthand for 'emotional' and it's far too often used to shut women up, or delegitimize their concerns.



Newsflash: everyone has emotions and shutting them down and pretending you don't have them does not make them go away.

Instead, I believe that we need to develop emotional agility, or the ability to acknowledge, accept and process our emotions in a way which helps us to move forward.

This isn't the toxic positivity of 'think positive', 'turn that frown upside down', 'no bad vibes here'.

Nor is it about seeing ourselves as a victim, and complaining to everyone who'll listen while not taking any responsibility ourselves for changing the situation. (I'd hate to be in a group of 700 people like that!)

It's about learning to notice your emotions and thoughts, as an observer, rather than being pulled along by them, almost as if we're sleepwalking. Rather than 'I'm useless at this', it can become 'I'm having a thought that I'm useless at this' Once we achieve that distance, even if it's after we've calmed down, then we start to have a choice about whether we want to fully believe and go along with that thought.

And that's where the magic happens.

As Viktor Frankl, survivor of Auschwitz said:

**'Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.'**

If we suppress those thoughts and feelings, believe that we don't have them (because we're not 'crazy' or emotional), or spend all our time and energy trying to get them to go away, then we also don't get to experience that growth and freedom.

I often hear people talking about trying to get their Inner Critic (or what I call the Inner Troll) to shut up and go away.

That's not how it works. In fact, the Inner Troll loves that game. Imagine it playing hide and seek with you round your brain, popping up when you least expect it, and laughing in your face. Then it starts telling you that there's no point in trying to change anything in your life because, as well as being useless at everything else, you are useless at getting rid of it. Everyone else can do it but not you.

Sounds familiar? Everyone's Inner Troll is a little different, but the one big clue to help you recognise it, is the language it uses. Watch out

for words like 'always' 'never', 'disaster', 'everyone', 'no-one'. The Inner Troll loves extreme, dramatic language.

Instead of trying to beat it, lock it in a box, or run away from it, try just not taking it so seriously. I love this quote from Elizabeth Gilbert's book, *Big Magic*:

Dearest Fear... I recognize and respect that you are part of this family, and so I will never exclude you from our activities, but still—your suggestions will never be followed. You're allowed to have a seat, and you're allowed to have a voice, but you are not allowed to have a vote. You're not allowed to touch the road maps; you're not allowed to suggest detours; you're not allowed to fiddle with the temperature. Dude, you're not even allowed to touch the radio. But above all else, my dear old familiar friend, you are absolutely forbidden to drive."

I'm seriously proud of the women (and men) in my Facebook group, and those who've gone on to work with me more closely, for the way they've learnt that they are not their fear, or that nasty little Inner Troll voice, and the way they've chosen to pursue growth and freedom.

And if that's 'crazy', sign me up.



**Rachael Roberts** coaches ELT professionals who find it hard to set boundaries and to say no, but end up feeling resentful and exploited; are prone to imposter syndrome and even self-sabotage; try to stay positive, but frequently end up exhausted and demoralized; and know they don't earn enough.

Her aim is always to help us earn more, work less and live more fully. She works with clients 1-2-1 and on her 12 week small group programme for ELT Business Owners (coaches, teachers, trainers, writers, editors), Switch off Stress, Switch on Success.

Her 30 years' experience within ELT as a teacher, trainer, manager, materials writer and business owner, her training as a psychotherapist, counsellor and coach, and her training and experience in running and marketing two businesses, makes her uniquely positioned to provide this support.

# MY DELTA EXPERIENCE

by Kathia Candido

This January, I decided to embrace the DELTA experience. Alongside the application form, there is a pre-interview task in which among the many items to be covered, you also have to produce a supporting essay on your reasons for the DELTA – not a big deal, right?

Well, I took the chance to forward my first version to a few friends, and as expected, all of them were super supportive, just a remark here and there, but one of them was chosen because I knew he would not spare me from the naked truth and he didn't let me down. Here's a bit of what he pointed out: "Why do you have to be so self-deprecating? I don't think this kind of approach leaves a good impression on your application, not to mention that it is a shame not to be able to acknowledge everything you have done; it is simply not true!". After facing a brisk existential crisis episode, it dawned on me my dear friend was simply right!

I dare say that we are culturally shaped so as to believe we are not good enough, we do not do enough, that nothing is ever good enough – especially if we are a woman. Have you ever felt this way or worked for a place that made you feel this way? My dear sister and EFL professional, if you allow me, I would like to strongly advise you to neither fall into this trap nor buy whatever ideas you may be talked into. These are words from someone who quit a "wonderful" teaching job and took a leap of faith.

Since my epiphany in 2015, I have run my own business providing classes to an audience whose interests truly resonate with me: people who want to be a better version of themselves, who are in dire need of a break from the madness our world oftentimes is. It has been a great opportunity to also hone other skills in terms of management and interpersonal communication and advertising my craft.

I am not here to advocate on how easy it is to work on your own; I can assure you it is a quite bumpy road. However, just like in many other situations in our life, we have got to take the rough with smooth, haven't we? What I mean to say is I am glad I have managed to find a crack in the system to make an honest and decent living as well as feeling fulfilled in the profession.

Today, 100% of my operations are on-line, which allows me to engage with students from different parts of the globe and the icing on the cake is I managed to leave the hustle and bustle of São Paulo and moved to the beach!

I hope this story may encourage you to go for your own crack in the system if that is what you want, of course. Good luck!

By the way, I was approved to do the DELTA.



**Kathia Candido** is the founder of Inglês com Café whose main goal is to offer online personalized one-on-one classes to adult learners. She is a CPE and CELTA certified professional and is currently taking the DELTA module 1. Apart from being an EFL teacher for 20 years, she has a degree in both Law and Pedagogy.





faculdade  
**cultura  
inglesa**



# DESIGN THINKING FOR EDUCATORS

Com Lenora Haranaka



Explore possibilidades de gerar inovação no ensino e aprendizagem de inglês nesse curso de Design Thinking com aulas ao vivo pela internet.

Entenda a abordagem, as etapas e ferramentas do Design Thinking e como aplicá-las em sua prática profissional.

As inscrições estão abertas para a turma de Maio.

**MATRICULE-SE JÁ!**

**Para mais informações acesse o site:**  
[www.faculdadeculturainglesa.com.br](http://www.faculdadeculturainglesa.com.br)



# TIME FOR A CHALLENGE

by Evelin Soldera

Back in 2012, I felt as if I were stuck in a rut, teaching over 10 hours per day and feeling weary. But as people say, life can be full of surprises and I had no idea what it would bring and how it would change and mold the professional I have become. After working non-stop for 18 years as an English Teacher I felt I needed a break or at least to reduce my workload, but that seemed impossible at the time.

We had always dreamed as a family to move abroad so that I could take care of our two-year-old daughter and have the chance to go back to studying. It all happened so suddenly that before I could notice we were already living in Austria and I was a full-time mother and housewife, enjoying my sabbatical year without work. However, I learned that what you truly love finds a way to get back to you, and soon after we arrived, I was invited to teach English to young learners in a program sponsored by the Austrian government. My first thought was: Me? Teaching kids? That do not speak the same L1 that I do? They do not even share the same L1 among themselves (many were refugees from different countries)! But then it struck me that when I decided to move abroad part of me wanted to chill out, but the other half was yearning for a career change, so I grabbed the chance and went for it!

That's what I've learned:

- You shouldn't say no to something you've never tried: had I said no to this opportunity I would never be the professional I am today.
- You don't need to speak your learners' first language: honestly, sometimes it is even better if you don't.
- You definitely don't need a coursebook to teach very young learners, but storybooks are of paramount importance: telling a story in any language is probably the most powerful tool we have as human beings
- You can make a career change (in my case start teaching a different age group) any time you want, and it doesn't have to be irreversible: I vehemently believe that we can niche the work we do, but we don't need to shut all the other doors, I still teach adults and I love it!
- Leaving your comfort zone in teaching can be the best thing you'll do in order to become a better professional (and here I risk saying even a better person)
- Techniques, approaches, and methods are necessary and invaluable to become a great

teacher, but they mean very little if you don't show empathy and respect to your learners and colleagues.

- Whatever path you choose never stop learning, the language we teach is our most precious tool, our learners deserve the best we can give them!

Looking back, almost six years after my return, I wouldn't have done anything differently. By taking on a tough challenge I ended up rewriting my story and reinventing myself both as an ELT teacher as well as a person.



**Evelin Soldera** has been an English teacher for 26 years now, having worked in a range of contexts in language schools, in companies, as well as abroad. She holds a TKT YL, a TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON Certificate in spoken English, has a degree in Languages from UNICAMP and she is currently taking the CELT-P course as well as preparing to sit for the C2 Proficiency Exam by the end of the year.



# CAN ANYONE HAVE A NATURAL TALENT FOR LEARNING A LANGUAGE OR DOES EVERYONE HAVE AN EQUAL POINT OF DEPARTURE?

by Marisa Bernardes

Some people can learn a foreign language faster than others, that is a fact. But why does that happen? Is learning a language a matter of talent?

My parents were born in Portugal and my in-laws in Spain. If it were not for the fact that my son used to spend part of his days with his grandmothers when he was 5 years old, these pieces of information would be irrelevant. The fact is that learning how to speak, read and write while being around people who spoke differently had a great impact on my son's foreign language learning process later in his life, his environment stimulated him to find patterns in what he heard. Back on one of those days, I was doing my nails when my son asked me; "Mom, do you want me to get you the nail polish remover?". The thing is that in Portuguese, polish remover is called 'acetona' and he said 'azetona'. At first, that was noted as a cute, funny mistake, but then, being a teacher enabled me to notice how smart his mistake, in fact, was.

My mother-in-law always pronounced /s/ when words had a /z/ sound in Portuguese. She would say Marissa (Marisa), aceite (azeite), acitona (azeitona), cassa (casa), belessa (beleza), etc... These Spanish interferences in my mother-in-law's Portuguese speaking were never ignored by my son. On the contrary, he found a pattern in my mother-in-law's way of speaking and reversed it. If she said Belessa, he should call acetona, aZetona. It makes sense, doesn't it?

Another episode related to patterns of language in speaking happened when he said; 'bees' are on the table' which in Portuguese would be 'As abelhas estão na mesa'. The curious fact is that he had noticed that the definite article in Portuguese (o, a) is used before singular nouns - , a vaca , a geladeira, a cadeira.. - So when he listened to people saying 'abelha' he inferred that the name of the insect was 'belha', 'a belha'. Therefore, the plural form would be "as belhas"!

I cannot say that my son's abilities to find patterns in languages is something innate or if it was developed by his exposure to different ways of communication. The fact is that being attentive to patterns and details is a fundamental skill in the learning process of a foreign language. Every language works differently. However, there are patterns, similarities and differences to be noticed. Developing this skill might be key to learn faster and more efficiently.

In short, the classic debate of whether people can have a talent for learning languages or if everybody has an equal point of departure remains. The truth is, learning a foreign language successfully depends on many factors (exposure level, learning environment, student's personality, teaching strategies...). Nevertheless, your willingness to notice, that is, your curiosity of the target language will always be the most important amongst them. Curiosity and creative thinking fuel the desire to look for answers and notice little things that make you more successful in learning. At the end of the day, attitude is more important than any predisposed talent.



**Marisa Bernardes** holds a B.A. in Language and Literature - Portuguese and English- from Universidade São Marcos, a Post-graduate in English language from Universidade de São Paulo- USP and a Proficiency certificate from the University of Michigan. Marisa also runs a blog and an Instagram page called @Entender\_pra\_Aprender.

# TEACHING: THREE THINGS I WISH I HAD THOUGHT OF FROM THE START.

by Hemylle Oliveira

I taught my first private students back in 2011, about a year after I kicked off my career. One of my colleagues had decided to move to another country, and kindly recommended my work to his former learners, who got in touch with me, et voilà! Our journey began!

At first, I have to say that I was a bit skeptical. I'd have to take some availability away from the language school I worked for at that time in order to aid these learners. I worried that they wouldn't stay for a whole semester at least. Besides, the only information I knew about this teaching freelance was taken from internet articles and books on teaching practice.

Well, as cliché as it may seem, I love what I do, so decided to give it a go. Why not, right? Living is choosing. I had great experiences overall, not only with those first students, but also with the ones that followed. They were committed, great fun, and provided me with the opportunity to teach in a different scenario, as we'd meet at their homes.

On the other hand, it obviously wasn't a walk in the park all the time. There were things I wish I had learnt or thought of before delivering those lessons. If you've recently become a freelance teacher, or would like to do so, here are some of the things I consider paramount when working in this teaching context.

When I first started meeting one-to-one students, I wish I had been attentive to the need of having a formal agreement with them, setting some boundaries in terms of scheduling and cancelling classes from day one, amongst other details. Some flexibility should obviously be part of it, after all, emergencies and unpredictability are bound to happen. However, a contract also serves to show clients how serious you are about your business and procedures that should be taken by both of you in order to guarantee the course is going to flow as successfully and smoothly as you all expect.

Prior to having formal agreements with my

learners, I would frequently struggle with meetings being cancelled out of the blue more often than not, and as I didn't use to charge learners in advance, they would generally ask for discounts in our package of lessons. Depending on my availability and theirs, there was just no way around it. That made my finances more unstable than I'd predicted.

Another aspect I should have considered (but that I totally wouldn't then for I was quite young and immature) was that having a framework of how my business worked would have come in handy. Should I offer a free lesson to prospect new clients? When and how would a placement happen? Should I have a presentation sharing details on my qualifications and how my lessons worked? Would I provide certificates and reports? If so, how often? How would assessment take place? And how would learners assess their own progress? How much would I charge for a lesson? What if they wished for a package of 10 lessons? Would there be a discount?

Well, you see. The questioning is endless. Having a bigger picture of your business is a step not to be belittled. Being a teacherpreneur, teaching is one of the many tasks that underlie your job description. It may be too much to consider at first, but do bear it in mind.

Finally, the way I see it, feedback is one of the most important moments in any lesson. I'm moved by it! Unfortunately, it didn't use to be part of my private meetings at first. I'd have planned a beautiful lesson, all set and relevant to my students' needs, but I wouldn't collect their takes on the meetings beyond a "How was class today? Did you like it?", nor clearly raise their awareness to what they'd be able to accomplish by the end of it through "can-dos", for instance.

Showing where they stand in their learning pathway, where we're going together, and what we're doing so as to attain their objectives is the least we should do. And so is providing training and prompts that enable learners to express their



ideas effectively during our feedback time. Despite facing challenging moments within 1:1 teaching in my career, most of my brightest, rewarding and thought-provoking memories happened whilst delivering lessons to private students.

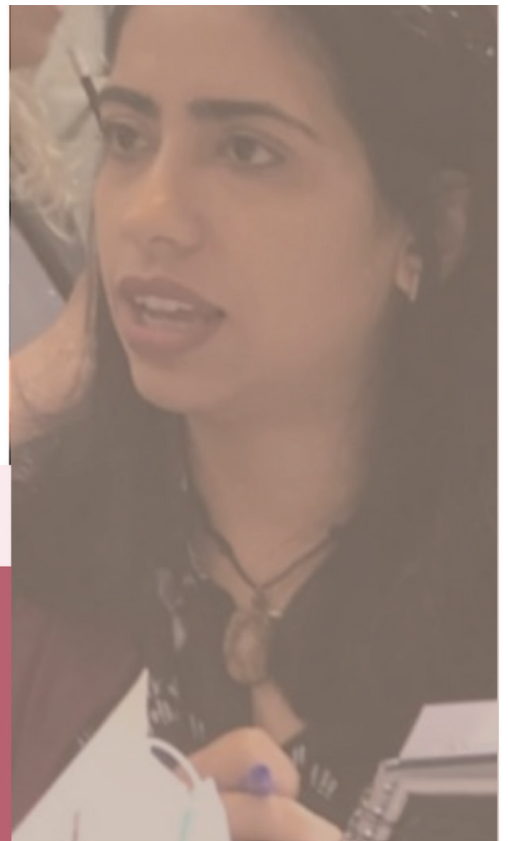
I have surely become a better teacher, teacherpreneur and person because of them.



11 98028-2841



@privicenteelt



CURSOS ONLINE & PRESENCIAIS;  
TALKS & WORKSHOPS PARA ESCOLAS;  
ADAPTAÇÃO DE CURRÍCULO ESCOLAR.



[priscila.startidiomas@gmail.com](mailto:priscila.startidiomas@gmail.com)



Priscila Vicente  
TEACHER TRAINING

# ARE WE CULTURALLY COMPETENT TEACHERS?

by Josiany Rocha

What makes a person truly competent in a language? Is it just fluency? I started asking myself these questions when I was a graduate student in the United States. I remember the first time a professor, whom I worshipped, gave me feedback on a piece of work. After offering a few compliments on my work, he said something like “You might want to change this paragraph.” I remember feeling content and reassured and thinking “Well, he really liked my job. As for that paragraph, I don’t really want to change it. It’s fine.” I sat down and observed the professor giving other students feedback in the same way. Later, as I talked to my new American friends, I noticed that they were not in the slightest reluctant to make the “suggested” changes to their work. That is how I realized that feedback is given differently by Americans, compared to how it is done in my home country. Now, imagine this situation happening in the workplace between an American boss and an employee from my country. Would the employee have the chance to realize that their work needs improvement or would they just be proud of their performance and decide not to make any adjustments?

You might be wondering what it has to do with a language teacher’s job. Well, shouldn’t we help our students become competent in the second or foreign language and function properly at the academic, professional and personal level? If so, we need to start raising their cultural awareness. Students should at least be exposed to situations that make them question the way they see and interpret things. Then, one might ask “How am I possibly going to know what cultural differences a student will face?” or “Do I know enough to help them become aware of cultural differences that might cause communication breakdown? These are valid questions and the point I make here is that it is important to start planning lessons that raise the awareness that things are done, communicated and interpreted differently in other cultures. You can start by showing them elements of their own culture that may not occur in other ones, and this can be done at every level, even at basic ones. For instance, you can show students a picture of what lunch typically is in their culture and ask what meal it is. Then, show a picture of what lunch is in different countries and ask the same question. This way you can start raising awareness of cultural differences from basic levels.

In a world where countries are getting more and more dependent on each other for commerce and finding solutions to global problems, it is crucial to make sure that teachers and students are not just fluent in a second language, but also competent communicators no matter the culture with which they are dealing. For that, they need to be aware of possible cultural differences that might result in misunderstandings or even communication breakdowns.



**Josiany Rocha** has a Bachelor's degree in Translation Studies from University of Brasília - UnB (Brasília, Brazil) and a Master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from Kent State University (Ohio, USA). She has been working as an English teacher and a Portuguese, English and Spanish translator for over 20 years. She has worked in renowned institutions such as Casa Thomas Jefferson (Brasília - Brazil) and Kent State University (Ohio - USA). She has also worked as a language consultant and a private teacher, helping students in several different fields learn and improve their English. She is currently interested in helping teachers and students develop cultural awareness.



# EVERYTHING YOU SAY DESERVES TO BE HEARD

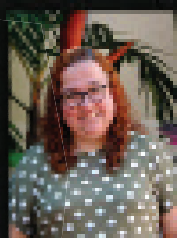
## WE CAN WRITE YOUR CONFERENCE REPORT

A conference is a unique environment of networking and exchange and we believe everyone can be a part of that. We want every educator to be able to follow the latest trends in research and take part in the discussion - even the ones that, for whatever reason, have not been able to attend. Also, we want to show our community the highlights of your event and how fruitful it was, thereby encouraging more people to follow, attend and speak.

## WHY US?

We are an enthusiastic group of experienced teachers that recognize the value of community work and exchange of ideas. We have been working with publications for teachers for almost and our videos and articles add up to +4,000 views. We aim at helping everyone in our community move forward because we know that access to information is the only thing that brings inclusive, sustainable progress.

## OUR TEAM



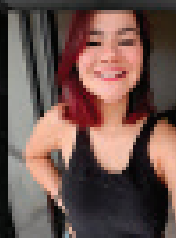
FABIANA



LENORA



RODRIGO



THAÍS

Contact us at [contact@talkingefl.com](mailto:contact@talkingefl.com)  
[www.talkingefl.com](http://www.talkingefl.com)

talkingEFL