

**Friday, 18th February &  
Saturday, 19th February 2022**

online via Zoom

# TAKING ACTION

CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE  
IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS  
AND TEACHER EDUCATION



**Book of Abstracts**

## Programme Schedule

Time	Day 1: Friday, 18th February 2022
15.00 – 15.15	Conference opening and welcome Albert Biel, Mary Berheim & Susanne Ehrenreich
15.15 – 16.15	Keynote 1: <b>Social justice in the language classroom: Theory, research, and practice</b> <b>Stacey M. Johnson &amp; L.J. Randolph Jr.</b>
16.15 – 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 – 17.00	On promoting social justice in the privileged social space of the university language classroom Eva Seidl
17.00 – 17.30	The ethics and politics of ‘taking action’: Reflections from a research engagement project in Delhi, India Katy Highet
17.30 – 18.00	“We are unempowered”: Exploring how world language teachers understand and integrate social justice in language classrooms Kaishan Kong
18.00 – 18.15	Coffee break
18.15 – 19.15	Keynote 2: <b>Queering the EFL classroom: Addressing challenges and needs in teacher education</b> <b>Thorsten Merse</b>

Time	Day 2: Saturday, 19th February 2022	
8.50 – 9.00	Welcome to Day 2 Julia Elisabeth Kulpa & Stella Munkes	
	Social justice issues - Conceptual discussions	The role of social justice in language education
9.00 – 9.30	Understanding the learning strategies of language students from oral cultures: Can dismantling language boundaries enable knowledge co-construction? Tania Douek	Addressing queer identities in German as a second language teaching: Development of readiness in adolescent and adult learners Rrivu Banerjee
9.30 – 10.00	No class! On the disappearance of socio-economic inequalities in German <i>Fremdsprachendidaktik</i> Matthias Grein	Anti-fatness and fat activism: Pedagogical approaches for addressing structural discrimination in language teaching Natalie Langensiepen & Mareen Lücke
10.00 – 10.30	“We need a new vision” – Managing linguistic diversity in educational institutions of South Tyrol, Italy Dana Engel	English language education for socio-environmental justice Ricardo Römhild
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee break	
	Social justice issues - Conceptual discussions	The role of social justice in language education
10.45 – 11.15	Critical intercultural understanding for social justice: EFL teachers and university professors’ beliefs and practices Hamza R’boul	Celebrating cultural diversity – A unit from eighth grade English Annika Berg
11.15 – 11.45	The national and spatial epistemologies of language in place Ahmad Al Shahma	Poetic justice for “submerged population groups”? Global education and public reasoning with Irish short stories in the EFL classroom Jürgen Wehrmann

Time	Day 2: Saturday, 19th February 2022	
11.45 – 12.15	Working towards social justice in and through English language education Elizabeth J. Erling & Anouschka Foltz	
12.15 – 12.45	Infusing social justice into the classroom through plurilingual education: A research and professional development initiative from South Tyrol (Italy) Marta Guarda & Gisela Mayr	
12.45 – 13.15	“You posted what?” Digital citizenship education for young learners Annkristin Schwalb	
13.15 – 14.15	Lunch	
14.15 – 15.15	Keynote 3: <b>Labouring together towards a socially just English language education</b> Khawla Badwan	
	<b>Researching classrooms</b>	<b>Applying social justice to the classroom</b>
15.15 – 15.45	Challenges faced by female students with visual impairments in learning English as a foreign language: A narrative inquiry study Waad Abdullah Almalki	yourintuitionpodcast: A podcast about individual experiences with social injustice Niklas Collissi
15.45 – 16.15	Taking action in precarious spaces within privileged institutions: Volunteers teaching English to migrants. Who benefits? Rommy Anabalon Schaaf & Jiayin Li-Gottwald	Picturebooks as prompts for taking action: An analysis of teacher-made materials Sandie Mourão, Nays Ibrahim & David Valente
16.15 – 16.45	Coffee break	

Time	Day 2: Saturday, 19th February 2022	
	Researching classrooms	Applying social justice to the classroom
16.45 – 17.15	Awareness raising of social justice issues among EFL students in a Colombian private university Jhon Eduardo Mosquera Pérez, Flor Angela Torres Hurtado & Daniel Elias Pérez Díaz	Taking action: A lexical approach Chris Richards
17.15 – 17.45	Novice teachers of English in Chile: Language teaching capabilities in marginalized school contexts Gloria Romero Villarroel	Gender-based hate speech in sport: How to tackle it starting from the language classroom Fabio Caon, Sveva Battaglia & Annalisa Brichese
17.45 – 18.15	Conference closing Marie Eppinger, Lisa Weichsel & Albert Biel	

## Keynotes



Dr Stacey M. Johnson,  
Vanderbilt University, US



Prof L.J. Randolph Jr.,  
University of North Carolina Wilmington, US

### Keynote 1: Social justice in the language classroom: Theory, research, and practice

Social justice, critical pedagogy, and transformative learning in language education have gained traction over the past several years. What is not always clear, however, is how these theories play out in the day-to-day learning experiences of the language classroom. LJ and Stacey will walk participants through how and why to include transformative and social justice goals in the language classroom. Through big ideas, practical examples, and resources for ongoing support, we will explore how to take small, thoughtful steps toward a more critical classroom.

#### Bionote:

Dr Johnson is Assistant Director at the Center for Teaching, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and Affiliated Faculty in the Center for Second Language Studies at Vanderbilt University. She is also the editor of the journal *Spanish and Portuguese Review* and the producer and host of the podcast “We Teach Languages”. She has published books and articles on topics related to postsecondary language classroom practices, hybrid/blended instruction, and adult learning including transformative learning and critical pedagogy.

L. J. Randolph Jr., Ed.D., is an Associate Professor of Spanish and Education and coordinator of the World Language Teacher Education Program at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. He teaches courses in Spanish language, contemporary Latina/o/x cultures, and second language teaching methods. His research focuses on various critical issues in language education, including teaching Spanish to heritage and native speakers and incorporating justice-oriented and anti-colonial pedagogies. Dr. Randolph is a co-editor of the forthcoming book *How We Take Action: Social Justice in K-16 Classrooms*. He is a past president of FLANC and AATSP-NC, and he currently serves on the ACTFL Board of Directors.



*Thorsten Merse,  
University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany*

## **Keynote 2: Queering the EFL classroom: Addressing challenges and needs in teacher education**

This talk aims at conceptualizing much-needed interventions into teacher education that empower foreign language teachers for queering their classroom practices and diversifying their teaching in view of LGBTIQ+ perspectives. I will retrace how foreign language education has time and again been charged with reproducing a bi-gendered and heteronormative view of the world, while a rigorous strand of critical research has spearheaded a queer-informed renegotiation of the discipline. Drawing on this research and on my own experience as a teacher educator, I will highlight what EFL teachers perceive as needs and challenges to live up to this diversity-oriented development. Against this backdrop, I will argue how a queer lens can be applied to issues such as task design, text selection, classroom methodologies, or using ('un-queer') coursebooks. The talk will close with suggesting possible and promising avenues of research that also students at university can apply to their own research projects.

### **Bionote:**

Thorsten Merse is Professor of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Education at the University of Duisburg-Essen (UDE). In his research and teaching, he explores inter- and transcultural learning, pedagogies of teaching literature, and digital education in EFL. He places particular emphasis on engaging with LGBTIQ+ diversity and Queer Theory in EFL education and on researching teachers' developing digital competences. He joined the University of Duisburg-Essen in October 2021. Previously, he held research positions at the University of Münster (WWU, 2011-2016) and the University of Munich (LMU, 2016-2021).



*Dr Khawla Badwan,  
Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom*

### **Keynote 3: Labouring together towards a socially just English language education**

In this talk I discuss different approaches to social justice and how they are relevant to English language education, arguing for the importance of widening the scope of relevance to include crucial social, cultural and political issues of our time. After that, I demonstrate examples of dominant discourses of racial discrimination and White normativity in language education and the winners and losers they create. The talk then presents examples of, and thoughts on, doing things differently in the classroom, with some pedagogical recommendations for problematising 'English', the 'curriculum', the 'worldviews' through which education is approached, and the 'assessment'. I end my talk by highlighting the importance of exploratory participatory pedagogic practice that engages language teachers with the very difficult question of, 'how do we work toward change in the contexts of our work, where issues of language sit at the heart of forms of inequality' (Pennycook 2021: 21).

#### **Bionote:**

Dr Khawla Badwan is a Senior Lecturer in TESOL and Applied Linguistics at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her research interests include language education, social justice, mobility, identity, place, sociolinguistics, and intercultural communication. Her most recent publication is a book entitled *Language in a Globalised World: Social Justice Perspectives on Mobility and Contact* (2021), published by Palgrave.



## Abstracts

[In alphabetical order]

### **The national and spatial epistemologies of language in place**

**Ahmad Al Shahma**

Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

Despite the consensus on the vital role of ESOL in refugees' sociocultural resilience and citizenship, it is argued that ESOL provision may promote certain ways of being and becoming that conceal massive social injustices (Cooke & Peutrell 2019). These injustices become salient when ESOL provision approaches the concepts of integration, linguistic diversity, socio-cultural resilience, and citizenship as places on maps that are tied to pre-established sociolinguistic profiles and attached with a symbolic power that may not allow ESOL learners to be active constituents in the (re)construction of their being and becoming, and consequently, make them vulnerable to symbolic violence (Kramsch 2020).

In my proposed presentation, I will uncover the different forms of stigmatisation and symbolic violence that may result from the disproportionate symbolic power attached to refugees' sociolinguistic profiles in their host communities (Badwan 2021). Then, I will show why ESOL provision should be ingrained with participatory practices that ontologically approach classrooms as sites for meaning construction in a way that is responsive to the coming and going of mobile individuals. Moreover, I will show how Canagarajah's (2018) perspective of spatiality can help in converting classrooms into community spaces where learners can use English as a tool to perform hybrid identities and engage in democratic acts of citizenship.

#### References

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- Canagarajah, S. (2018). Translingual practice as spatial repertoires: Expanding the paradigm beyond structuralist orientations. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 31-54.
- Cooke, M., & Peutrell, R. (2019). *Brokering Britain, Educating Citizens: Exploring ESOL and Citizenship*. Multilingual Matters.
- Kramsch, C. (2020). *Language as symbolic power*. Cambridge University Press.

### **Challenges faced by female students with visual impairments in learning English as a foreign language: A narrative inquiry study**

**Waad Abdullah Almalki**

Taif University English Language Centre, Saudi Arabia

The English language is an international language used to enhance communication in all parts of the world. Countries that do not use English as their first language experience challenges while on international forums as their ability to communicate is curtailed. Females, especially those with visual impairment problems, are mostly affected. This study aimed to investigate the challenges faced by visually impaired female students when studying English at Taif University. The study adopted a narrative inquiry approach. The

researcher randomly selected the study participants from visually impaired female students who had an average understanding of English. Data were collected by administering structured interviews. Online questionnaires were used to collect data from foreign language instructors. The study finding indicated that learners found learning English easy, though faced with challenges in the classroom, curriculum design that is not wholly inclusive of the visually impaired, and lack of learning materials such as PDFs, audios, and visuals. Simultaneously, foreign language instructors had not attended any course to teach English to the visually impaired. Based on the study findings, teachers and students required training to understand and handle the VI (visually impaired) students with more attention since there is no direct provision in the department.

### **Addressing queer identities in German as a second language teaching: Development of readiness in adolescent and adult learners**

**Rivu Banerjee**

Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany

One of the foremost criteria when it comes to asylum in Germany for migrants or victims of civil unrest in other countries is that they must be able to understand the new society's history, culture and values (cf. BAMF). One of the ways that this is possible for adults is to participate in integration courses offered the *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, and for adolescents and school children to participate in German as a Second Language classes in their respective schools. This is further underscored by the curriculum for German as a second language at the secondary level, that requires German as a second language classes to provide students with the opportunity "Offenheit, Toleranz und Akzeptanz gegenüber anderen Menschen und Kulturen zu entwickeln und Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen der eigenen und anderen Kulturen zu erkennen, aber auch bestehende Unterschiede zu verstehen" (Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung 2020: 63).

The principles of methodology and didactics (cf. Funk 2010: 940-952) echo these same tenets and require language teaching to be focused on the requirements and the personalities of the learners and their societies. Given that sexual identity is an intrinsic part of one's personality (cf. Rubin 2006: 143), conversations around it within the classroom are to be expected.

The following project focuses on this exact measure. This project aims to create a framework within which queer identities can be discussed both with adolescent as well as adult learners within the language classroom, as well as to gauge to what extent such learners are ready to confront themselves with questions of sexual identity, and of course, what factors are responsible for their choices and decisions. For this conference, I shall present the roadmap for this project as well as the instruments for data collection, alongside theoretical groundwork that shall form the foundation of this project.

#### **References**

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Rubin, G. (2006). Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality. In: R. Parker & P. Aggleton (eds.), *Culture Society and Sexuality – A Reader*. Routledge. 143-178.

Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport (2020). *Lehrplan für allgemeinbildende Schulen Sekundarstufe I: Deutsch als Zweitsprache*. Thüringer Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport: Erfurt.

### **Celebrating Cultural Diversity – A Unit from Eighth Grade English**

**Annika Berg**

Mercator-Gymnasium Duisburg, Germany

In addition to their individual personal differences, students necessarily bring their socio-cultural background with them into the English language learning classroom. These backgrounds reflect ever-greater diversity, with a widening range of different countries, languages and religions being represented in the typical school. Theoretically, this diversity offers an opportunity to address intercultural communicative competence in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. The reality in the urban areas of North Rhine-Westphalia, however, is that this multiculturalism is rarely addressed in the EFL classroom. One reason for this stems from the fact that, generally, these students are not from anglophone backgrounds. In light of this, it can seem challenging to consider the students' Turkish, Moroccan, Tamil or Somali cultures or languages.

This presentation will show, using practical examples from a unit “My Dream Job”, how the cultural diversity of the students can be contextualized in the EFL classroom as a key element of a didactic commitment to seeing such diversity as a resource.

The interdisciplinary unit “My Dream Job” makes use of digital tools to facilitate reflection about students' individual and situated sociocultural backgrounds and how these shape their intended career paths. An obligatory topic in the 8th grade, the lessons are based on a model unit of the North Rhine-Westphalia State Institute for Schools and Professional Development (QUA-LiS NRW), and were developed and piloted in cooperation with the Leuphana University Lüneburg for use in teacher professional development. The structure of the unit and the illustrative materials will show how the cultural, linguistic, and personal identities of the students can find a prominent place in the EFL classroom. Using these lessons as a basis, the presentation will identify relevant principles that lend themselves to application in other EFL classrooms and curricular contexts.

#### **References**

Elsner, D. (2015). Inklusion von Herkunftssprachen - Mehrsprachigkeit als Herausforderung und Chance. In: C. M. Bongartz & A. Rohde (eds.), *Inquiries in language learning*. Peter Lang. 71-94.

### **Gender-based hate speech in sport: How to tackle it starting from the language classroom**

**Fabio Caon, Sveva Battaglia and Annalisa Brichese**

Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

The paper describes some of the first findings of a European project about hate speech in sports and, on this basis, it proposes a possible approach for the language teacher to

create a culture of respect, starting from the language-classroom. The contribution is basically divided into 3 sections.

In the first part, the findings of the research project will be presented: namely, a “map” of hate speech in sports created by analyzing 46 interviews collected by the European Partners of the project. The stories collected have been analyzed according to the definition of hate speech provided by the European Council and a model of intercultural communicative competence (Balboni & Caon 2015). Particular attention will be given to hate speech which targets women in sports (denigration, vilification, harassment, negative stereotyping, threats).

The second part deepens the sports dimension, for different reasons. Firstly, sport is a right. Secondly, being bearer of values such as fairness and respect, sport has a fundamental educational potential (although this potential is threatened by waves of hate speech). Thirdly, sport is transversal: people of any age and any nationality play sport. In addition, sport is generally motivating, especially among children and teenagers. For these reasons, sport can be a meaningful means of inclusion, also at linguistic and intercultural level.

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the third part of our contribution presents strategies for the language teacher to tackle hate speech (in particular that against women), by using sport-related topics and counter or alternative narratives. The aim is dismantling stereotypes and prejudices, which are at the base of hate speech and which undermine the chance of living in an equal and respectful society.

#### References

Balboni, P. E., & Caon, F. (2015). *La comunicazione interculturale*. Marsilio.

### **yourintuitionpodcast: A podcast about individual experiences with social injustice**

**Niklas Collissi**

TU Dortmund University, Germany

This presentation aims to introduce my podcast and to elaborate on my journey of creating and executing the first social justice project of my life. The podcast provides an opportunity for people who have encountered any form of social injustice to talk about their experiences authentically in a one-on-one conversation. The main goal of the podcast is to provide a platform for brave people willing to talk openly about their stories and to have their voices heard. Of course, it is also essential in raising awareness among the listeners.

The so-called yourintuitionpodcast has two episodes so far. The first one is about the everyday racism we still encounter in Germany today, and the second one deals with discrimination based on a sexual orientation other than 'exclusively heterosexual.' For each of the two episodes, I had a conversation with a fellow student. Furthermore, I will share my observation and explain how such a project has helped me and my guests deal with and reflect on these complex topics.

In this presentation, I would like to talk primarily about these conversations' learning effects on both sides. Furthermore, as I am currently in my teacher training, I would like to share how such a project has helped me in my personal development and preparing for

future teaching situations. The podcast was initially started as part of the Applied Linguistics 'Understanding Discrimination and Privilege in ELT' and can be taken as an example to show how such a project can generate various beneficial outcomes for future teachers and educators.

Concluding, I will talk about the podcast medium itself and explain its advantages and disadvantages and what to look out for if any of you are interested in starting your very own podcasts.

**Understanding the learning strategies of language students from oral cultures:  
Can dismantling language boundaries enable knowledge co-construction?**

**Tania Douek**

UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

In this presentation, I discuss the injustices of formal language education faced by adults who have learned orally throughout their lives. Since success in language education hinges on prior experience of formal schooling, adults who have not been to primary school are prevented from accessing higher level language courses, regardless of the level of oral fluency they may achieve in the target language. Systemic injustices at policy level feed into accreditation and curriculum structures. Classroom materials either exclude these adults or assume what their needs may be, reflecting the lingering colonial mindset that governs language education (Flores 2013).

This presentation highlights the ethical paradox of my study, which seeks to understand the learning strategies of plurilingual adults in London and asks whether it is possible not to frame their perceptions with print-centred assumptions. My intention is to co-construct knowledge with participants, surrounding their perceptions of connecting with print. Rooted in the understanding that all languages spoken by participants are assets in classroom learning (Cenoz & Gorter 2021), and that language boundaries are colonial constructs that conceal the depths of linguistic knowledge (Garcia & Wei 2014), I have developed a research tool called Multilingual Transliteration (MT). The aim is to stimulate dialogue with participants around whether transcribing familiar phonemes – as opposed to the phonemes of the language being studied - can lead to deeper understanding of Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence.

Several orthographic decisions need to be made when using MT as a research tool. Although the English orthography may seem a logical choice for adults living in London, it is a deep orthography and one which embodies the systemic injustices that this project seeks to confront. This presentation will address whether research can uncover the learning strategies of adults from oral societies, or whether the process perpetuates exclusion through a print-centred research culture.

**References**

- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2021). *Pedagogical Translanguaging*. Cambridge University Press.
- Flores, N. (2013). Silencing the Subaltern: Nation-State/Colonial Governmentality and Bilingual Education in the United States. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 10(4), 263-287.
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“We need a new vision”

– Managing linguistic diversity in educational institutions of South Tyrol, Italy

Dana Engel

Centre for Teacher Education, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany / Institute for  
Linguistics, University of Vienna, Austria

Today, multilingualism in South Tyrol neither only refers to the presence of the three historical and officially recognized linguistic groups (German, Italian and Ladin), nor is it limited to formally taught languages such as English, French, Spanish or Russian. It also comprises an increasing presence of heritage languages of students whose families have rather recently come to this part of Northern Italy – a European border region characterised by a long history of (not only language related) challenges and a very diverse social and linguistic fabric. In contrast to this increasing diversity, the educational sector of South Tyrol features three different and rather closed systems with very separate structures, all with their own models for teaching and managing multilingualism.

My study starts out from the question ‘How do educational authorities and practitioners manage the challenges of integrating all forms of multilingualism?’. So far, previous studies on multilingualism at South Tyrolean schools were mostly based on traditional theories of bilingualism that do not take into account the recent linguistic diversity. My qualitative study aims to provide a timelier, more accurate framework for describing and systematising multilingual didactics in educational institutions of all three linguistic groups of South Tyrol. My data comprises 35 in-depth interviews with key educational actors and representatives of 12 schools throughout South Tyrol, which allows for a qualitative assessment of the current state of affairs and the elaboration of a Grounded Theory on managing multilingualism – and also increasing linguistic diversity.

Following a grounded theory approach, the analysis has been shaping the issue into a more pressing question of ‘How much (linguistic) diversity is accepted and cared for in rather exclusive multi-monolingual systems?’ and does not stop at a descriptive level or at comments on further developing empirically-based and integrated didactics of multilingualism. Basing my endeavour on Hadley (2017) and Piller (2016), I put my grounded theory on linguistic diversity in South Tyrol to a test and critically discuss its implications with regard to indicators of social (in)justice.

## References

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- Engel, D., & Niederfriniger, I. (2016). Zum Umgang mit (migrationsbedingter) Vielfalt in Südtirol – eine mehrsprachige Region entwickelt ihr Profil. In: H. Faßmann, C. Reinprecht, J. Schellenbacher Carvill & J. Dahlvik (eds.), *Migration und Integration – wissenschaftliche Perspektiven aus Österreich*. Vienna University Press. 277-294.
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### Working towards social justice in and through English language education

Elizabeth J. Erling<sup>1</sup> and Anouschka Foltz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Vienna, Austria / Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany; <sup>2</sup>University of Graz, Austria

National standardized assessments for English language learning in Austria reflect a trend found in many other contexts, in that there is a considerable achievement gap between bilingual students with immigration backgrounds and their monolingual peers (BIFIE 2020). This is particularly so when students come from families with low socioeconomic status. In line with previous research investigating the role of teachers' beliefs in underachievement (Haukås 2016; Heyder & Schädlich 2014; Jakisch 2014), our work so far has shown that teachers' beliefs about their multilingual students' backgrounds and practices relate to lower levels of achievement in English (Erling et al. 2020, 2021). In this presentation, we add insights to the picture emerging by reporting on a questionnaire study with multilingual middle and high school students who live in a historically exceptionally multilingual town. Contrary to studies conducted in other contexts, we find that these students perform above average in English, in stark contrast with German LX students nationally. Using descriptive and inferential analysis, we identify a number of factors that may be contributing to these students' success. Students reported feeling comfortable in the English classroom and participating actively in class, and this mostly related positively to their English grades. They further reported that their teachers knew which languages they speak, suggesting teacher awareness of their students' multilingualism. Interviews with six English teachers of these students complement the data. While analysis of their narratives display some deficit perspectives, more dominant are discourses of possibility, suggesting that teachers have adopted a 'translanguaging stance' (García & Kleyn 2016) and rudiments of plurilingual pedagogies (Erling & Moore 2021; Lau & Van Viegen 2020). Building on these results, we consider how these positive trends might be harnessed and extended to work towards social justice in English language education– in Austria and beyond.

#### References

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### **No class! On the disappearance of socio-economic inequalities in German *Fremdsprachendidaktik***

**Matthias Grein**

University of Tübingen, Germany

In German speaking *Fremdsprachendidaktik* an increased focus on heterogeneity can be remarked that paradoxically comes along with a disappearance of socioeconomic differences, with a few exceptions in CLIL (Dallinger et al. 2018) and multilingualism (Krumm 2014) research. This contrasts strongly with the discussion of the 1970ies and 1980ies (Candelier & Hermann-Brennecke 1993; Düwell 1979). The conference call provides an example of the non-attention accorded to socioeconomic differences or economic questions at all, even though it is explicitly “not limited to” the topics mentioned. While all these topics are without any doubt important, they can all be understood to be possible inclined or intersected not only by each other but also by socioeconomic questions.

Inspired by discourse analysis (Foucault 1973; Marten 2020), I will trace the disappearance of socioeconomic differences from the German discussion.

In that regard, German *Fremdsprachendidaktik* is in good company by e.g. German school pedagogy (Kramer & Helsper 2011) and international applied linguistics (Block 2015). Some categories (gender, migration, able-bodiedness) seem to be more fashionable (cf. Erixon 2009) than the socioeconomic questions; there are difficulties in theorizing “class” (Block 2015); and the large (new) key concept of competencies can in itself be understood to be part of the individualization of more social and economic differences (Kramer & Helsper 2011).

Drawing on own research projects, I further discuss how socioeconomic differences can disappear and reappear in empirical studies (Grein 2020) and continue to be a blind spot in *Fachdidaktik* research – but can function easily as a productive irritant when pointed out, e.g. in university teaching. Thus, a first step of taking action is easily done, but has to be followed by reflection and more focused action in teaching and research.

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**Infusing social justice into the classroom through plurilingual education:  
A research and professional development initiative from South Tyrol (Italy)**

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Schools in Italy, as elsewhere in Europe, are becoming increasingly multilingual. This is also true for South Tyrol, Italy's northernmost province, in which institutional trilingualism (German, Italian, Ladin) and diglossia now coexist with new languages and varieties brought into the area thanks to migration flows. The increasing linguistic and cultural diversity of the province has had a strong impact on everyday school life and poses new challenges to teachers. The inclusion and valorisation of all the languages that students bring into the classroom, as well as the mobilisation of their entire linguistic repertoires for learning, in fact, are considered ways to infuse more social justice into the classroom (Cummins 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2009), yet require specific skills, attitudes and knowledge on the part of teachers.

In our talk, we will describe *COMPASS* (Didactic Competences in the Multilingual Classroom), a research and professional development initiative embedded into the project *One school, many languages* (SMS 2.0) promoted by Eurac Research. The initiative aims to support teams of teachers from German and Italian-speaking primary schools in making the most of the increasing linguistic heterogeneity of their classes, and to accompany them on their way towards an increasingly inclusive didactic practice.

In our contribution, we will first provide our understanding of the skills, attitudes and knowledge that teachers involved in plurilingual education should possess. For the purposes of this talk, we will focus in particular on the attitudinal component, that is on teachers' proactive capacity to mobilise their knowledge and skills so as to act as social agents of change, to advocate for plurilingual students, and to take responsibility for

their students' development as plurilingual speakers. This description will be then followed by an overview of the two main components of the COMPASS initiative, namely a two-year professional development course geared towards issues related to plurilingual education, and a longitudinal research study on teachers' attitudes, knowledge and reported practices.

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### **The ethics and politics of 'taking action': Reflections from a research engagement project in Delhi, India**

**Katy Highet**

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While questions of 'taking action' have been addressed at various moments in the history of Socio- and Applied Linguistics (e.g., Cameron et al. 1992), this has noticeably intensified in recent years, with an increasing acknowledgment that, as researchers, we are duty-bound to put our expertise in service of positive social transformation (Roberts 2021). If this notion of duty to our communities, to our participants, and to social justice more widely is gaining traction in our field, it is not, however without complication. Given the intensely unequal and complex societies within which we conduct our work, discussions of what the researcher can and indeed should do are fraught with tensions (Kraft & Flubacher 2020). Drawing on a collaborative engagement project in which I co-analyse research findings with teachers and curriculum designers at an English-teaching NGO in Delhi, India, in this paper I offer reflections on the political and ethical dilemmas encountered in the project. Firstly, I address the challenges of navigating collaborative engagement between differently positioned actors within unequal political economic conditions of knowledge production. Secondly, I raise questions about the possibilities of resisting the co-optation of 'taking action' by hollow neoliberal discourses of 'impact' (Salisbury & Connelly 2021). Finally, I explore the tensions that emerge from anxieties over taking action that supports individuals in the short term, but which ultimately reproduces wider structures of inequality. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate how forms of 'taking action' must be subject to the same critical approach that we adopt in other stages of our research.

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**“We are unempowered”: Exploring how world language teachers understand and integrate social justice in language classrooms**

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Although social justice has received growing attention in world language research in recent years (Glynn, Wesely & Wassell 2018; Osborn 2005), the volatility caused by the political climate and the social movements over the past five years has amplified the urgency of this topic. In particular, the disheartening Anti-Asian violence in the United States was a wake-up call, compelling world language teachers, especially Chinese language teachers, to not only reflect on their feelings, identities and positionality, but also actively incorporate social justice in their curriculum and instruction.

More and more scholars explore what social justice looks like in language classrooms (Pantić 2015; Douglas Fir Group 2016), and investigate teachers’ positioning in justice-orientation work (Maddamsetti 2021; Wassell, Wesely & Glynn 2019; Wesely, Vyn & Neubauer 2021). To this end and building on recent work on teacher agency (Marlatt & Barnes 2021; Peña-Pincheira & De Costa 2021), this project investigated world language teachers’ view on social justice and their instructional approaches.

This study examined how K-16 world language teachers (N=22) within the United States perceived social justice as an individual and as an educator, and their teacher agency to (re)construct their curriculum and pedagogical approach. Two research questions guided this research project: (1) How do these world language teachers understand social justice in teaching? (2) What do these world language teachers do to integrate social justice in teaching? Findings revealed that various elements (community, curriculum, and culture) influenced these teachers’ agency, both facilitating and impeding their teaching for social justice. This presentation will share common themes across the participants, and will elaborate on the findings among the Chinese language teachers. This research project aimed to contribute more knowledge to the field and offer implications for integrating social justice in language classrooms and teacher education.

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### **Anti-fatness and fat activism: Pedagogical approaches for addressing structural discrimination in language teaching**

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Addressing topics of social justice and working against discrimination are becoming increasingly important in language classrooms around the world (Crookes 2021; Gerlach 2020). *Anti-fatness* (Gordon 2020) as a form of discrimination has long been neglected in the discourse on social justice (and language teaching), although it is omnipresent in our society. To draw attention to anti-fatness in language classrooms, we focus on the phenomenon by defining it and giving an outline of its history and intersection with racism and misogyny.

Embedded in the context of critical language teaching, critical literacy, and critical pedagogy (Crookes 2013; Gerlach 2020; Norton & Toohey 2004), we will exemplify the relevance of anti-fatness in language teaching and discuss pedagogical implications for addressing anti-fatness in language classrooms. To illustrate these implications, we will provide a practical example and point out adequate curricular topics to connect anti-fatness to e.g. beauty ideals and body norms (König 2020).

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### **Awareness raising of social justice issues among EFL students in a Colombian private university**

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This presentation proposal intends to give an account of the preliminary findings obtained from the implementation of a participatory research study that is being currently developed within the context of a Colombian private university. By combining principles of social justice and critical literacy, as the main researchers involved in the realization of this study, we designed a series of workshops revolving around themes such as

homophobia, child labor, prostitution, ableism and disabilities, among others, as a manner to raise among a group of EFL students a higher degree of awareness in regards to the just mentioned topics as we could establish that despite the fact we had been teaching English for institutional purposes, we had been following what authors such as Kumaravadivelu (2003) and Reagan (2004) have regarded as instrumental and objectifying perspectives that is no other thing that disregarding within the classroom context the problems that exist and affect societies at large. In total, 4 workshops were designed. However, as it is an ongoing research study, we have only implemented 2 of them. From such a process, and through the implementation of the data collection instruments selected for the study which consist of the students' journals, some guiding questions posed within each of the workshops, and a semi structured interview, preliminary findings suggest that when exposed to these types of interventions, students respond positively to the information presented and commence to reflect critically upon their own contexts and on the social problems surrounding them. Likewise, it has been found that as part of the research process they have been involved in, the participant students have been able to detach from a limiting view of language and have instead developed a more open and critical perspective of what it means to be language learners and proactive citizens who through their own course of action might contribute to the improvement of overall social dynamics.

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### Picturebooks as prompts for taking action: An analysis of teacher-made materials

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Intercultural Citizenship Education (ICE) combines the intercultural communicative competence of language education and civic action of citizenship education (Byram 2008). It requires that teachers and their children take action beyond their classrooms and, through English, engage with other teachers and children to 'reflect together, propose and instigate change in their respective societies' and become a 'community of intercultural citizens' (Byram *et al.* 2008: xxii-xxiii). Picturebooks, a form of children's literature where pictures and words interanimate to create meaning, often touch on relevant topics and themes which prompt meaning-making, reflection and discussion (Mourão 2015), and facilitate access to the concepts of interculturality and citizenship education in the classroom (Bland 2018; Short 2009).

Intercultural Citizenship Education through Picturebooks in early English Language Learning (ICEPELL) is an Erasmus+ project which aims to support practitioners to confidently integrate ICE into their EFL lessons and library sessions with children aged 5 to 12 years old. One of its intellectual outputs is a collection of ICEKits, teaching packs developed by practitioners for practitioners, around picturebooks. This paper presents a small piece of research that takes a close look at a corpus of 15 practitioner made ICEKits, with a view to analyzing how they support mediation of the picturebook as a scaffold for interculturality and citizenship, as well as how successfully they integrate the taking action



component. The results point to all ICEKits including well-structured mediation strategies, however taking action is less successfully employed. We will discuss possible reasons for this and outline implications for teacher education and materials development.

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## **Critical intercultural understanding for social justice: EFL teachers and university professors' beliefs and practices**

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The interlacement of power imbalances between the Global North and South and the supremacy of Global English warrants a nuanced understanding of interculturality in ELT. This presentation emphasizes problematizing intercultural understanding in ELT; it argues that (a) 'understanding' does not imply the simplification of ideas and attitudes to generate easy-to-grasp and tips-oriented perception of interculturality in ELT and (b) argue for the importance of anchoring intercultural communication in ELT in the critical literature on power relations and the supremacy of Global English. This presentation focuses on Morocco since its linguistic dependency and its struggle to reinforce its cultural sovereignty is illustrative of the Global South's postcolonial malaise. An important assumption in this presentation's reasoning is that teachers are key agents in the reproduction of/resistance to hegemonic cultural discourses. This is why it is important to pay attention to their perspectives and practices. Teachers' contribution to challenging hegemonic discourses is an essential part of promoting intercultural understanding in ELT. The idea that teachers are positioned at the nexus of ideological tensions is critical to the very endeavors of undermining power inequalities and imbalanced interculturality. Focus group discussion and classroom observations are used to explore teachers' perspectives and practices. Data analysis focuses on pinpointing intercultural goals in teachers' perception of intercultural understanding with regards to the supremacy of Anglophone cultures and perspectives input. Within this frame, Implications are teaching practices are presented to promote the development of critical intercultural understanding in ELT.

### Taking action: A lexical approach

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It's likely that many of our students today receive some, if not most, of their language input not from the course materials we use in classrooms, but from songs, TV and film, and other online sources including social media. It's also likely that they will encounter many language items being used, but not be aware that they have a specific context that lends such terms appropriacy. As a result, many language educators will have a collection of anecdotes of students unwittingly saying highly offensive things during lessons without realising. In addition, the ubiquity of the internet and social media coupled with the rise of "fake news", "post truth" and conspiracy theories can leave competent, but inexperienced users of English dangerously vulnerable to online deceit.

If we want our students to be able to make lexical choices, and to use the words they choose to express how they actually feel about important issues, then they need to be properly informed about what those words can mean. Conceptual baggage (McConnell-Ginet 2014) is the meaning(s) that listeners or readers frequently infer on encountering a term, even when this is not meant by the speaker or writer. Additionally, as readers and listeners, our students need to be equipped to critically assess the subtext, and intended hidden meaning(s), of word choices made by native or fluent speakers.

This presentation will discuss teaching strategies and learning activities that will help practitioners aid their students' use and understanding of terms that are both in flux and at the core of social justice discussions.

### Novice teachers of English in Chile: Language teaching capabilities in marginalized school contexts

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Novice teachers (NTs) of English in Chile work in a school system characterized by privatization, segregation, and stratification between socio-economically rich and poor students. At the bottom of the educational pyramid, in vulnerable public schools, family violence, abandonment, drug consumption, and dropout are the norm. Drawing on Sen's (1999) Capabilities Approach and the notions of social justice, capabilities to formulate valued functionings (beings and doings), *control freedom* (an individual's free will to bring about valued functionings) and *effective freedom* (the choices of others -social relations and arrangements to bring about valued functionings independent of an individual's free will), this presentation reports on the experiences of a group of ten NTs teaching English in marginalized schools in Santiago, Chile.

Particularly, this study examined NTs' valued language teaching doings and beings within vulnerable school contexts and the interplay between NTs' control and effective teaching freedoms when working in schools at social risk. The data was collected through an open-ended online survey and semi-structured interviews and analyzed following a thematic approach based on emergent categories and subcategories. The findings reveal that: (a) NTs' valued language classroom doings and beings go beyond their English discipline; (b) they define their control freedom and work hard to take a step ahead of what

is valued by the social arrangements -or effective freedom (teaching English to achieve an international level in the students); (c) rather than instructional, their teaching self becomes formative, educative, and affective to help their students succeed at school but also in life; (d) NTs ease the tension between their freedoms and opportunities by adapting their language classroom practices and by organizing curricular and extracurricular activities to make their teaching meaningful to their students at social risk. This presentation calls for public debate and discussion around the experiences of NTs in marginalized school contexts.

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## English language education for socio-environmental justice

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If read through the lens of ecology, current social justice issues in the world, such as poverty, migration, and racism can be addressed as socio-environmental injustice issues (ecological poverty, climate migration, ecoracism). As such, environmental learning and learning for social justice are closely connected, if not inseparable.

This research project seeks to explore how (English) language education can contribute to addressing socio-environmental injustice issues from a theoretical, yet practice-oriented perspective in the sense of Misiaszek's (2016, 2018) ecopedagogies approach. His point of departure is his observation that while systemic thinking in the sense of "knowledges and understandings of how our actions cause environmental ill" (2018: 1) are being taught in environmentally oriented education, more essential questions are not being asked, such as why the deeper connections between social and environmental violence occur and what these socio-environmental connections are (Misiaszek 2018: 1). To engage with these questions, individuals increasingly need to consider their own citizenship beyond their nation-state (traditional citizenship) and to actively question where their citizenship belongs (Misiaszek 2016: 592). In educational settings, this translates to questions such as: what are we a citizen of and whom do we consider to be our fellow citizens?

To help approach these questions in the classroom, principles of human rights education (learning about, for, and through human rights) are applied to socioenvironmental justice issues (learning about, for, and through socio-environmental justice), and two central concepts of global citizenship education, 'the walk within' and 'the journey outside'



(Gaudelli 2017), are discussed as concrete practice in language education for socio-environmental justice.

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## **Taking action in precarious spaces within privileged institutions. Volunteers teaching English to migrants. Who benefits?**

**Rommy Anabalon Schaaf<sup>1</sup> and Jiayin Li-Gottwald<sup>2</sup>**

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This paper presents the challenges and opportunities encountered by a group of volunteer teachers (MA, PhD students and early career researchers) who participated as volunteer teachers of English for Latin-American migrants who work as cleaners at top universities in London and who are members of a London-based trade union. These challenges range from lack of appropriate teaching material to students' self-deprecation, and the consequences of framing classes as "voluntary work" for both volunteers and students. On the one hand, we claim that volunteerism, as Allan (2019) shows, reproduces the neoliberal logic by which volunteers access these types of programmes in order to develop their bundle of skills (Urcioui 2008) and networks which may (or may not) lead to secure employment. What is more, volunteers bring their own ideas of what it means "English" and how to teach it and, in many cases, these ideas clash with workers' expectations. For this group of workers, English is, fundamentally, built upon specific ideas about language such as standard English, nativespeakerism, among others, and they heavily invest in the concept of the promise of normative standard form of English as a key tool for upward social mobility and social inclusion (Park 2011). However, as many scholars have pointed out (Park 2009, 2011; Block 2017; Pujolar 2019) the promise of social mobility has always been determined by the position of individuals within the social space and therefore, it is hierarchized and stratified. These workers are trapped in precarious working and living conditions (outsourced, short and zero-hour contracts, heavy workload, lack of benefits such as pension, holidays and constant physical, verbal and psychological abuse from employers) which jeopardise not only their access to such English classes, but also their imagined better life.

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## “You posted what?” Digital citizenship education for young learners

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### How can the digital citizenship education (DCE) concept contribute to the expansion of children's digital literacy in English lessons in elementary school?

#### DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

“A digital citizen is someone who, through the development of a broad range of competences, is able to actively, positively and responsibly engage in both on and offline communities, whether local, national or global. As digital technologies are disruptive in nature and constantly evolving, competence building is a lifelong process that should begin from earliest childhood at home and at school, in formal, informal and non-formal educational settings.”

(DCE Handbook 2019: 11)

#### DIGITAL LITERACIES

“Digital literacies: the individual and social skills needed to effectively interpret, manage, share and create meaning in the growing range of digital communication channels.”

(Dudeney, Hockly, Pegrum 2014: 2)

The Council of Europe and the KMK both emphasize the importance of digital education for children. As early as 2016, the KMK called for digital education to be the common task of all school subjects from the first grade onward (see KMK 2016). But is that even necessary anymore? Aren't we all teaching digital natives who no longer need DCE? Studies clearly say no. Factors such as socio-economic status, education, place of residence, gender, language to name a few dramatically affect participation and reinforce the digital divide (see Dudeney, Hockly & Pegrum 2014: 10). Although access to the Internet has improved in recent years, there is now another problem “[...] the term digital divide has been repurposed to refer to the gap between those with the skills to make effective use of digital technologies,

and those who lack such skills.” (ibid: 15) Henry Jenkins speaks of a participation gap. Students on the wrong side of this gap have fewer opportunities in society. The digital divide thus increasingly becomes a factor that education must deal with.

This area of conflict is the starting point for my action research, which aims to show how children can be protected in the digital sphere, but also how they can be empowered to become positive “prosumers” (Schröder 2016: 209). The Council of Europe speaks of empowerment of children and names activities such as “[...] creating, consuming, sharing, playing, and socializing, [...] investigating, communicating, learning, and working[...].” (Richardson & Milovidov 2019: 12) children should be enabled at schools to do so successfully. Digitally literate students possess the individual and social skills to interpret information in digital communication channels, process it for themselves, share it responsibly, and create content (see Dudeney, Hockley & Pegrum 2014: 2).

Children, their “entanglement” (Becker 2019: 177) with social media and the opportunities which arise for English language teaching are a research desideratum. “Competent digital citizens are able to respond to new and everyday challenges related to learning, work,

employability, leisure, inclusion and participation in society, respecting human rights and intercultural differences"(Richardson & Milovidov 2019: 12).

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## On promoting social justice in the privileged social space of the university language classroom

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By analysing new pedagogical possibilities for the post-pandemic university, Peters et al. (2020) conclude that post-Covid-19 teaching and research need scholars, practitioners and educators to address “life sustain-abilities”. Burgeoning crises of climate, public health, economics, culture and politics – together with unjust power relations – call for graduates with citizenship capabilities to interact and collaborate for the caring of local and planetary futures. Consequently, responsible and transformative higher education pedagogies serve the purpose of educating civic-minded people for the world, for both work and life in local and global communities (Kreber 2016). Graduates should be able to deal in a resilient way with various forms of precarity, unpredictability and in a responsible way when encountering ethnic, economic, and social diversity. The multifaceted complexities of an increasingly uncertain and endangered world require graduates with global ethics and a sense of ecological self and planetary belonging, based on principles of equity, diversity, inclusivity and social justice.

However, the question remains as to how these principles can be promoted in a privileged social space such as the university language classroom that is closed to many people (Witte & Harden, 2021). I will discuss the role of social justice in language education in a

study abroad context (Seidl 2021a) and in translator/interpreter training (Seidl 2021b). Even if language teaching in mobility contexts means that students from diverse academic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds meet in an international environment, it too often misses the chance of addressing awareness of privilege (Hébert & Abdi 2013). I will, therefore, report on a questionnaire-based study with 30 international students, who attended an online-German FL course (B2) in summer term 2021, by presenting their perspective on global citizenship, socio-ethical competences and social justice. The results will be discussed in relation to pedagogical approaches that promote social justice in translator and interpreter education.

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## Poetic justice for “submerged population groups”?

### Global education and public reasoning with Irish short stories in the EFL classroom

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How to live together – Global North and Global South, human and other living beings, present and future generations? The question of global and intergenerational justice is at the core of the transdisciplinary pedagogic projects of Global Education and Education for Sustainable Development. Adapting ideas of Global Education for the EFL classroom consistently thus implies a shift in the key concepts of teaching culture and literature still dominated by the paradigm of Inter- and Transcultural Learning: from perspective and identity to situation and justice.

Based on the capability approach, the theory of justice she developed with Amartya Sen and others, Martha Nussbaum proposes a specific way of understanding and reflecting on literature. This paper aims for applying Nussbaum’s “public reasoning” with literature (1995: 8) to the EFL classroom. It connects a conceptual research project on Global Education with literature (Wehrmann 2019, 2021; Alter & Wehrmann 2022) to designing a teaching unit on Irish short stories for a German publishing house, building on practical experience in school as well as on research in Irish studies (Wehrmann 2020). Ireland – a rich European country with historical experience similar to many groups and cultures of the Global South (colonization, famine as well as ethnic/ religious conflicts) – has a great tradition of short story writing, offering odd, critical views on Irish society, its discourses

and narratives. As Frank O'Connor, one of the most important Irish short story authors, has argued, the genre often tells the stories that do not fit the official self-image of a society, focusing on "submerged population groups" (1963: 18). Therefore, the Irish tradition seems to be a suitable object to try out and develop Nussbaum's ideas.

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