Episode 1: How can I integrate global issues into my teaching?
Show notes
Episode overview

The Teaching English with the British Council podcast launches as COP26, the crucial UN climate change conference, draws to an end. In our first episode, we explore how teachers can effectively integrate teaching global issues in the language classroom. Initially, we'll examine this question from the perspective of one of the most pressing global issues of our time, namely the climate crisis, in particular the British Council's podcast series The Climate Connection. We'll then interview Fadidac Jules Champrien, a young and dynamic Cameroonian educator, about how teachers in any context and any situation can use language teaching as a way of raising global issues.

In this episode

- It's actually seeing direct behaviour change as a result of English language education
- Young people are going to be the people who are going to be coming up with the solutions
- We make each child name their plant, and there’s something about it's your plant, you know, they get really excited when their spider plant’s having babies
- They were getting the children wild swimming, cooking food, digging gardens, lots of practical, engaged, and all of the whole upper school was involved in this
- We try to integrate the nature education curriculum into indoor classes
- Creating awareness of local issues as trivial or as small as they may appear to be, is a starting point to engage the learners into thinking about what is happening around them
- They made declarations like 'we are aware the problem is real, we are conscious of our responsibility, we’re fighting against it, we pledge to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.'
Classroom application

Think about how you could use the ideas in this episode in your own teaching.

Think about your own practice

- How often do you teach global issues in your classroom? Could you do it more?
- Do you have a good knowledge of global issues? Could you develop your own understanding?
- What would be some of the challenges teaching global issues more? How could you overcome these challenges?
- How can you link global issues to language learning?

Ask your students these questions

- Are they any local issues or campaigns which are directly affecting your community?
- Do you have any experience of campaigning on social issues?
- Are there any global issues or campaigns which you are interested in, or passionate about?
- What positive differences could your class – or school – make locally or globally?

Try this classroom activity

Ask students to look at the following list of global issues:

- Drug addiction
- The climate crisis
- Poverty
- Hunger
- Lack of clean drinking water
- Mental health
- Lack of education
- LGBTQIA+
- Refugees / migration
- Terrorism

You could then either:

1. Ask them to select the six which they are most interested in / think are most important; or
2. Ask them to rank the issues 1-10 in order of interest / importance.

You can use the *snowball* approach to get students to share their ideas, meaning:

1. They do the task by themselves and write their own list.
2. They share their list in pairs. The pair must reach a consensus / agreed list.
3. Combine two pairs. This group of 4 must now read a consensus.
4. Continue to ‘double up’ each group until the discussion is at the whole-class level.
Social media

Please share your views about this episode, and the series as a whole, on social media using the hashtag #TEBC. Let us know your thoughts, reflections, comments and whether you have been able to use any of the ideas in your teaching.

Detailed notes

Use these notes to find out more about the contents of Episode 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Explanation and Further Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field Report: The Climate Connection</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“The Climate Connection”</td>
<td>You can listen and download this podcast at <a href="https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/action-language-education/podcast">https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/action-language-education/podcast</a> and through usual podcast providers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“We’ve made them put the plants in a white pot”</td>
<td>You can find out more about the Bring Your Own Plant initiative on Stephen Heppell’s website by <a href="https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/action-language-education/podcast">clicking here</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The desertification process in Sahel”</td>
<td>Discover more about this environmental problem in this region at <a href="https://www.bbc.com">this BBC page</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Eco Awareness Day”</td>
<td>When an educational institution focuses all the lessons on one day on the environment.</td>
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<td>“Wild swimming”</td>
<td>Outdoor swimming, for example in rivers, ponds and lakes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Scandinavian language learning in the wild”</td>
<td>You can discover more about this at <a href="https://languagelearninginthewild.com/">https://languagelearninginthewild.com/</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Methodologies which are more immersive”</td>
<td>Scott talks more about teaching methodology at this <a href="https://www.cambridge.org">Cambridge University Press blog</a>.</td>
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<td>“We’re following nature’s lifecycle and introducing the Content Language Learning based on the lifecycle of edible fruit and vegetable plants”</td>
<td>Angelica is talking about the <a href="https://www.gardenproject.com">Garden Project</a>, the first Project Based Learning curriculum to apply the STEAM framework to study nature’s life cycles, from seed to table to seed again, in an innovative multidisciplinary exploration of nature, starting at age 3. This nature-inspired program is based on the principles of sustainability and encourages children to learn about their natural environment. Visit</td>
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### Learned helplessness

Learned helplessness is a state that occurs after a person has experienced a stressful situation repeatedly. They come to believe that they are unable to control or change the situation, so they do not try — even when opportunities for change become available.

### Interview with Fadidac Jules Champrien

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“From my findings, drug addiction is a crisis affecting every part of the world. So I decided to address the issue in a series of lessons with my students”</th>
<th>Fadidac has written an article about these lessons entitled <em>Weeding out the weed: How English language lesson can become a clarion call against drugs in school</em>. It can be accessed, for free, in “Creating change – global ELT issues in Africa”, created by GISIG. <a href="https://gisig.iatefl.org/wp-content/publications/GISIG_CREATINGCHANGE.pdf">https://gisig.iatefl.org/wp-content/publications/GISIG_CREATINGCHANGE.pdf</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I thought this was a time to address this issue before we hear of another person dying in my own school, or because of drugs.”</td>
<td>In the article mentioned above, Fadidac explains this in more detail: “As I listened to the unfolding debate and the finger pointing between various stakeholders, I pondered over my role as an English language teacher in tackling this issue. How do I lend my voice to that of the entire education community to help learners navigate through the dangers of drug abuse in society? Is it really my business? Why should I care? Shouldn’t it be the responsibility of parents to teach their children about drugs?”</td>
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<td>“And did you feel that your students were more willing to talk about these issues in a second language rather than in their first language?”</td>
<td>This article, <em>How to address the effects of trauma in the English language classroom</em>, on the Teaching English website talks more about this issue.</td>
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### “Pidgin language”

[Click here](https://www.britishcouncil.org) to find out more about Cameroonian Pidgin English,

### “Lingua franca”

A language or dialect systematically used to make communication possible between groups of people who do not share a native language or dialect, particularly
when it is a third language that is distinct from both of the speakers' native languages.

| “Tsunami” | A tsunami is a series of ocean waves that sends surges of water, sometimes reaching heights of over 100 feet (30.5 meters), onto land. These walls of water can cause widespread destruction when they crash ashore. Find our more here. |
| “Bamenda” | Discover more about Bamenda here. |
| “The rains were supposed to come back” | Read more about how the climate in Cameroon is changing at this UN website. |

**Useful links**

- Integrating global issues in the creative English language classroom ([British Council Publication](http://www.britishcouncil.org))
- IATEFL Global Issues Special Interest Group
- Teaching Global Issues in the Classroom
- Why global awareness matters to schools ([newspaper article](http://www.britishcouncil.org))
- Global Issues in the ELT Classroom
- Why teach Global Issues in ELT? ([academic paper](http://www.britishcouncil.org))
The following words at the B2, C1 and C2 level (according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*) are used in this episode.

**B2 level**
- absorbing
- abuse
- adapt
- adapted
- addiction
- additional
- affect
- affecting
- affects
- agents
- apparently
- aspects
- aware
- basically
- basis
- beyond
- came across
- causing
- climate change
- cloth
- come to
- come up with
- coming up with
- communities
- community
- concern
- conscious
- consequences
- constructing
- container
- content
- context
- contrary
- council
- counter
- crisis
- critically
- crucial
- currently
- cut down
- cut off
- depressing
- didn’t
- drug
- eager
- educate
- educating
- effective
- effectively
- emerged
- ensure
- episode
- error
- essentially
- examined
- expansion
- express
- extracts
- feedback
- first language
- focusing
- get out of
- get to
- getting to
- global
- global warming
- globally
- got to
- graduate
- highlight
- host
- ideal
- identify
- image
- impact
- incidents
- inspire
- interactive
- learners
- linked
- listed
- major
- make a difference
- management
- masters
- melting
- mere
- nations
- official
- open up
- polar bear
- positively
- practical
- primary
- process
- publication
- reaction
- reality
- reflect
- reflecting
- reflections
- relevant
- researchers
- resources
- respond
- response
- responsibility
- rights
- scale
- seek
- specific
- stabbed
- statements
- strategy
- stretch
- structures
- substance
- substitutes
- successfully
- survive
- sweeping
- task
- theme
- themes
- throughout
- to do with
- traditionally
- trivial
- tropical
- try out
- uncertain
- underestimate
- unique
- united
- vast
- visible

**C1 level**
- addressed
- angles
- assumption
- awareness
- collaborate
- component
- declarations
- duration
- dwell on
- edible
- engage
- engaging
- evaluate
- happen to
- inclusive
- indirectly
- initiative
- integrate
- interactions
- listeners
- make it
- overwhelmed
- provider
- related to
- resolve
- shortcomings
- subsequently
- when it came to

**C2 level**
- backward
- clinging
- core
- drought
- frameworks
- heritage
- let go
- parallel
- peer pressure
- practitioner
- scarcity
- so to speak
- talking about
- vow

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