

ELT RESEARCH

£4.50 / free for ReSIG members

The newsletter of the IATEFL
Research Special Interest Group

February 2024 - Issue 39



Contents

Contents	iii
Editorial	iv
Ernesto Vargas Gil: A note from the Research SIG Coordinator	vi
Meifang Zhuo: IATEFL 2023 ReSIG Pre-conference Event: a reflective report	1
Laura Ferroglio: Yes we can! Bridging the gap between research and practice at the ReSIG Showcase at IATEFL 2023: a report	4
Asli Lidice Göktürk-Sağlam, Richard Smith and Zening Yang: Reflecting on Teachers Research! Online 2023: a conference report	8
Cemile Buğra and Mark Wyatt: OURstory of collaboration	15
Jan McArthur and Elena Ončevska Ager: Authentic assessment to nurture students' self-worth: interview with Dr Jan McArthur	23
Lance Cummings: Analyzing student reflections with generative AI: an experiment with ChatGPT	29
Suyog Dixit and Inga Haselmann: MA ELT / TESOL Quick Fire Hybrid Event 2023: a reflective report	37
Chan Pek Si: Investigating teachers' perceptions and practices of written corrective feedback	41
Dandan Zhang: L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC): an investigation of factors influencing Chinese international students' WTC in a UK higher education context	44
Gabriela Madlo: Is it in my head? What challenges have 7 novice ESOL teachers experienced in the first years of their teaching career?	46
Anna Szegedy-Maszák: Book review: <i>Mentoring Teachers: Supporting Learning, Wellbeing and Retention</i> (2023)	51
Regina Corona Gala: Book review: <i>Decentring ELT: Practices and possibilities</i> (2023)	55
Omid S. Kalantar: Book Review: <i>The Future of English: Global Perspectives</i> (2023)	59

IATEFL 2023 ReSIG Pre-conference Event: a reflective report

Meifang Zhuo

University of Warwick

This year's PCE focused on the topic 'Teacher research and inclusion and social justice in language education'. It was a well-organized and thought-provoking event, not only providing a valuable opportunity for participants to learn, to network and to exchange their views on various aspects of teacher research but also prompting their further thinking on inclusion and social justice issues in language education and language teacher education, enabling the conversation to continue after the event. I was more than delighted to be part of this event and I felt honored to be invited, as the ReSIG PCE scholarship winner, to contribute my reflective report on this wonderful one-day event.

The PCE took place in person on April 17th, 2023, in Harrogate, a beautiful Victorian spa town situated around 20 minutes by train from Leeds, UK. The event consisted of four main parts, a workshop, a showcase, a poster presentation section, and a panel discussion.

The workshop, conducted by Peter De Costa, impressed me as a comprehensive and successful session. With the assistance of technology, participants were invited to take part in real-time discussions throughout the session. Topics discussed included teacher wellbeing and emotional labor, action research as a form of teacher research, and autoethnography as a framework for critiquing issues in TESOL. This session has offered plenty of food for thought for me personally and motivated me to develop my interest in researching teacher psychology in China to better understand and support in-service teachers during their engagement with and in research.

The showcase shared the teacher research stories from India (Rama Mathew), the Teachers for Teachers network (TfT Network) from Nepal (Prem Phyak), an exploration of mentoring in Africa (Eric Ekembe) and a Laos-German project (Isabel Martin). Similar issues were identified in different contexts, like teachers' resistance to innovation and low motivation in engaging with/in research. Voices from different contexts were always thought-provoking and reassuring. I have realized from this session that we as teacher educators/teacher-research mentors are never alone and there are always lessons we could learn from a similar or a different context.

The posters were presented by four experienced researchers, including Gary Barkhuizen, Jason Anderson, Celia Antoniou and I-Chen Hsieh. Each of them

illustrated the PCE's topic of teacher research and/or inclusion and social justice from a distinctly different perspective. Gary introduced an innovative way to plant the seeds of inclusive language education in pre-service teacher education by employing the methodology of recurrent restorying (Golombek & Johnson, 2021). The way Gary used it was (personal communication, August 9, 2023):

Students wrote a series of four narratives during the course. After having written 2 of these, they submitted them to me and I read them and gave them feedback in the form of 5 questions for them to consider when writing the next two. The 5 questions is a form of 'mediation' (from sociocultural theory – see Golombek and Johnson, 2021). The students then analyze the 4 narratives and write an assignment in which they make meaning of them in terms of their developing teacher identities, which was the topic of the course (the analysis and the writing is the restorying).

Moreover, in this session, Jason recalled his study on partially participatory research with experienced teachers from India as a way of making researcher-led projects more equitable. Celia shared her experiences of taking part in an online English language teaching volunteer project for Ukrainian pupils based in the UK and I-Chen argued for the discursive power of language teacher identity and agency for social justice. Regarding this session, I am particularly interested in Gary's restorying narrative writing approach to enhance pre-service teachers' awareness of inclusive language education. I am also wondering about the possibility of employing this technique in in-service teacher training to promote teachers' reflective recall on their own professional development experience or to evaluate the impact of a teacher training program.

The panel discussion, which involved Peter, Rama, Isabel, Eric and Prem, was led by Richard Smith. Panelists shared their views on research updates on and current challenges for teacher research and mentoring teacher research. Panelists discussed the significance of offering long-term teacher support by storytelling and webinars, employing a blended approach by keeping an eye both on the local and the global, as well as the need to attend to teacher wellbeing and resilience. It was concluded that although the work we, teacher educators/teacher-research mentors, have done so far is only a drop in the ocean, it is still a substantive drop and could be an eye opener for many teachers. Therefore, the efforts are worthwhile, and further efforts should be made to expand the impact of engaging teachers in research for their own betterment.

All in all, this has been an exciting and interesting learning journey for me. As a novice teacher-research mentor, I am thrilled to see how teacher research flourishes in many parts of the world and how it draws attention to some fundamental issues in education, including teacher wellbeing, inclusion, and social justice. Speaking from the perspective of a teacher-research mentor in Chinese context (Zhuo & Huang, 2023), I firmly believe that teachers' engagement with/in research could play a vital role in their professional development and ultimately contribute to their wellbeing.

Therefore, I am determined to continue my teacher-research project in China and bring more voices from China to the international teacher research community, since currently they are missing in many major teacher research international events.

Once again, I wish to thank the IATEFL ReSIG Members Committee for choosing me as a scholarship winner for the 2023 ReSIG PCE.

References

- Golombek, P. R., & Johnson, K. E. (2021). Recurrent restorying through language teacher narrative inquiry. *System*, *102*, 102601.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102601>
- Zhuo, M. & Huang, J. (2023). Using exploratory practice to teach: An innovative way to explore students' speaking difficulties. *TESOL Journal*, *00*, e746.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.746>



Meifang Zhuo, a PhD candidate in Applied Linguistics and ELT at the University of Warwick, is a passionate teacher educator and teacher-research mentor. She is currently conducting a teacher-research project with experienced EL teachers in China, supporting them to research their own classrooms and bringing them to the international community to share their research to develop professionally and improve their wellbeing.

meifang.zhuo@warwick.ac.uk

[Back to Table of Contents](#)