

# Rethinking pedagogy in the context of the English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum: towards 'transformative internationalisation'

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# Introduction

- What does transformative internationalisation mean:
  - a) For teachers and learners
  - b) For departments
  - c) Institutions
  - d) Wider society?
- Action research project with Newcastle and Northumberland universities and with the *International Institute for Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Leadership*
- Partially funded by HEA.

## 'Symbolic' v. 'transformative' internationalisation:

- Frequently symbolic e.g 'ticky boxes'
- 'Doing without thinking'
- Physical presence in classrooms does not equal cultural interchange
- 'There may be a semblance of change but not really'.
- Transformative is two-way: actors AND institutions are transformed.

# Dilemmas for practitioner researchers engaged with international courses and/or institutional internationalisation:

- Compliance around economic incentives; neo-liberal imperative
- *'Survival of the fittest'*
- Uneven awareness across institution
- One-year MA programmes 'ghettoised' within university culture.
- Communitarian around critical pedagogy
- Opportunity to develop constructions of knowledge that are 'generative, critical and dialogic'
- *Fitness for purpose.*

## Freirian principles and social constructivist methodology:

- Problem posing pedagogy
  - Knowledge-generating curriculum
  - Self-examining institution
  - Questioning organisation
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- Holistic interpretations of learning/teaching/research/theory; but also participation (activism)/governance; i.e. not separate spheres.

## Collaborative action research methodology:

- A frame and structure: for supporting the articulation of ontological and epistemological beliefs
  - A lens: a process through which different ideas and understandings about practice and enquiry can be shared
  - A scaffold: a way of capturing change that has occurred
  - A catalytic tool: for professional learning.
- (Robson et al)

## Experience and inspiration: drawn from three intercultural research projects at KU...

- McNerney, K.: *Lessons from the field: What can we learn from the early childhood education practices of Wales and New Zealand?*
- Moehrke, D.: *Intercultural learning as a key educational element in a neoliberal setting. A case study of the perceptions and challenges of intercultural learning at a UK private sector college.*
- Struthers, D.: *Towards pedagogical partnership with teachers; Professional Learning Schools and the challenges for a Schools Partnership*

## ...and ELT programme data:

- 5 years, 65 students, 24 nationalities, of which

EU (non-UK) = 29

UK = 11

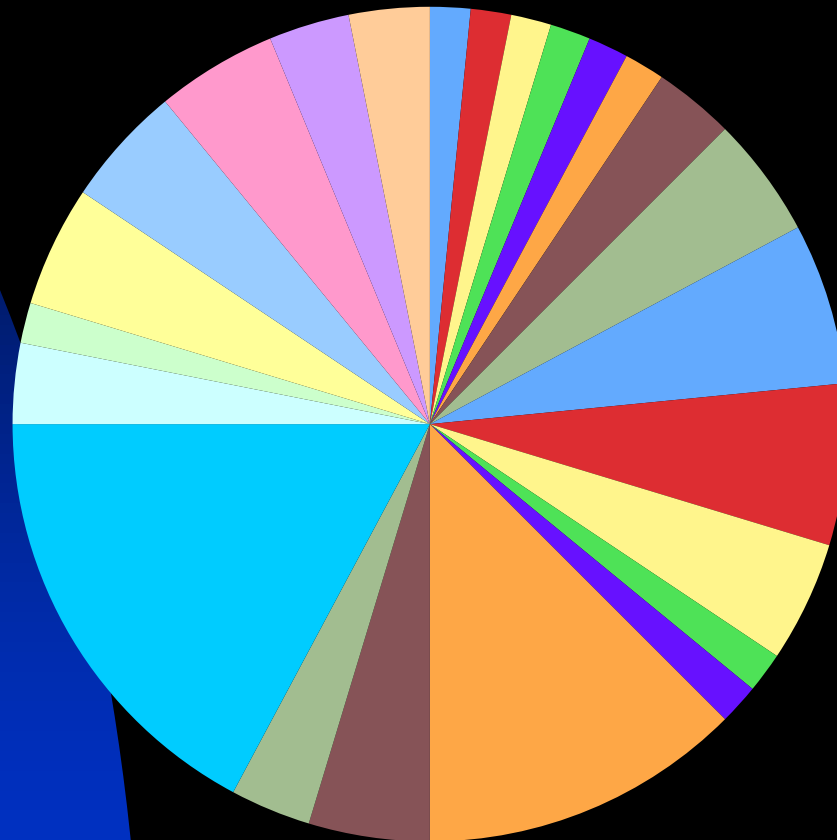
International = 25

- Male = 9, Female = 56

*MA Education (English Language Teaching)*. Joint project, School of Education and School of Humanities

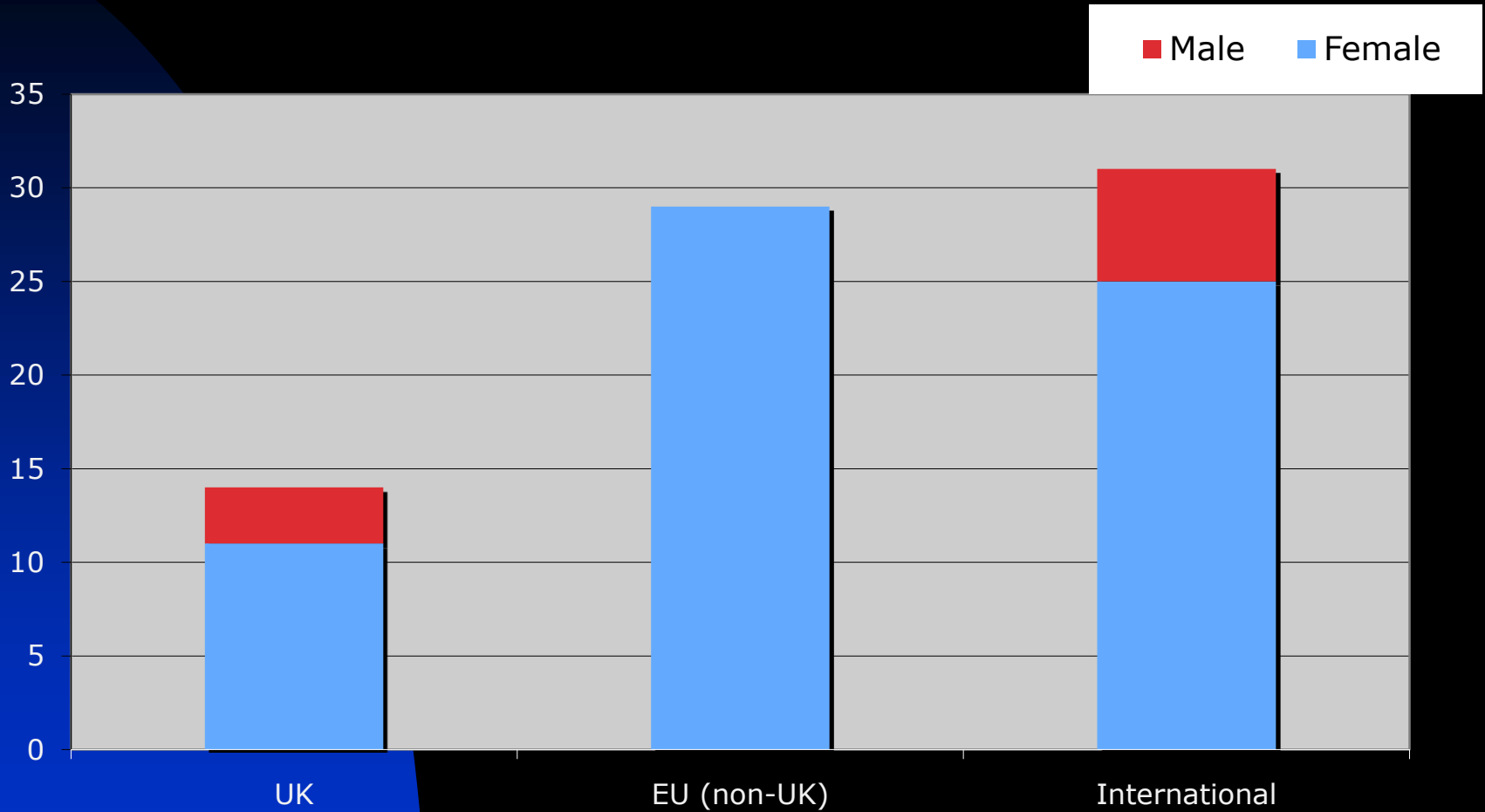


# MA Ed. (ELT) by Nationality



- Mozambique
- Libiya
- Kuwait
- Iran
- Cyprus
- Spain
- Russia
- Germany
- UK
- Japan
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Egypt
- Lebanon
- Pakistan
- Tukey
- Greece
- Bulgaria
- Poland
- Austria
- USA
- Korea
- China
- Chile

# ELT 07-11 by Region and Gender



## Known destinations:

- ELT Teacher, College of Business Administration
- Marketing Manager, International Office, Further Education College
- Graduate Student, MBA in Business Studies
- Graduate Student, Graduate Diploma in Law
- English Teacher and Tutor of Infant Education
- English Teacher, Girls' School, 3rd & 4th Grades
- Part-time Higher Education Lecturer and PhD Student
- English Teacher, Primary, Secondary and High School
- Lecturer in English and Head of English and Communication dept. Polytechnic Institute
- Teacher: General and Business English
- PhD Student, ELT
- PhD Student, School of Education, Kingston
- Teacher, English for International Students, Further Education College
- Administration, publishing company.
- PhD applicant, ELT.

## Recognised need to beware false dichotomies e.g. 'home'/ international students.

- What is meant by 'home' students?
- Issues of sexism: 'the elephant in the room'
- Power dynamics – 'rigid views'
- Confucianism v. critical thinking?
- Important to resist reductive thinking and definitions e.g. difficulties not (merely) attributed to language and culture
- An *intercultural learning* model, not a deficit model.

## **Foci of the Action Research:**

- Problematised context of ‘home’ students on ‘international’ courses
- Problematised wider university as ‘third space’ (Whitchurch, 2012) where professionals work across administrative and teaching boundaries
- Develop concepts, tools and methods for transformative internationalisation.

## A theoretical and empirical basis for curriculum development (e.g. move from 15 to 30 credit modules)

- That recognises the complexity of the issues
- That considers educative value of postgrad. qualification in and beyond its immediate content/subject matter
- That prioritises the intercultural learning opportunities that internationalised courses (should) provide
- ‘Third space’ opportunities within wider university?

## Ongoing, shared dialogic themes:

- Difference / Dissonance
- Policy / Politics
- Organisation/ Institution
- ‘A home for research and writing’
- ‘Systematic enquiry made public’ (Stenhouse 1981)
- Academic curriculum embedded in and created through its socio-cultural context
- Change agents in curriculum development/changed actors in the field?