Chapter 6
Humanizing the English Language: Sustaining the Global South through Teaching*

Dora Renna
University for Foreigners of Siena, Italy.
dora.renna@unistrasi.it
ORCID: 0000-0001-8618-6376

Annarita Taronna
University of Bari, Italy.
annarita.taronna@uniba.it
ORCID: 0000-0002-6974-4484

DOI: https://doi.org/org/10.54103/milanoup.213.c409

Abstract

In an era of global crises, there is a growing call for translingual and transcultural approaches to teaching humanities, particularly English. This contrasts with the prevalent view of English as a neutral, culture-free tool for professional success. This chapter examines how an English language university course for Prospective Primary English Teachers (PPETs) can shape theoretical assumptions on complex discourse constructions and address problematic (de)colonial relationships. It advocates for integrating migration narratives into ELT classes to re-position English in the global context, centering on human speakers. The analysis of two children's books selected from the PPET ELT syllabus as a case study is carried out with a transdisciplinary approach, and the methodology draws from multimodal critical discourse analysis to understand the potential of these readings to transform ELT by fostering deeper cultural and linguistic understanding.

* This chapter is the result of the joint efforts by the authors. In particular, Annarita Taronna authored the sections: "Introduction", "Theoretical Framework", "Materials and Methods: The Course and the Texts", and "Concluding Remarks", while Dora Renna penned the sections: "Materials and Methods: The Multimodal Analysis" and "Results and Discussion".

Keywords

ELT; multimodality; critical discourse analysis; decolonial studies; pedagogy.

Introduction

In an era of global crises on multiple scales (environmental, social, economic), there have been calls for an increasingly translingual and transcultural teaching of humanities, and in particular of the English language (Yazykova et al. 2020), against the view of English as a neutral, culture-free tool for professional success. This more "transactional" view of English Language Teaching (ELT) is nonetheless still widespread, as it is often expected to merely offer «the means to get what we need in the here and now or give service to another» (Chapman 2021: 92). Against this background, this chapter sets out to examine how an English language university course for Prospective Primary English Teachers (henceforth PPETs) could be a place for shaping theoretical assumptions on complex discourse constructions, framing deep and problematic (de)colonial relationships. Additionally, it proposes the reading of new teaching materials within ELT classes, i.e., migration narratives that could help re-position English in the global world, with the final aim to bring the human speakers back to the center.

First, the theoretical framework informing our work is outlined, in order to build a transdisciplinary context for our study on ELT. Following, the teaching context and the reading methodology, based on multimodal critical discourse analysis, are presented along with the two children books chosen as a case study. The case studies are explained and discussed in detail in the results and discussion session. The chapter closes with brief concluding remarks.

Theoretical Framework

The discussion around a pedagogy that is less concerned with learning as the acquisition of a semi-material good (which, in the case at hand, would be the English language) that can be tested and measured, and more with the potential of learning as a form of liberation is only relatively new, as it stemmed from Marxist philosophy starting in the last century. An example is Antonio Gramsci, who insisted on the fact that education cannot be neutral, but it must be critical and argumentative in order to be able to change reality, to have as an output individuals, rather than mere copies (1975 [1948-1951]). This idea of transformative action can be found in the work of Paulo Freire who, in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, explored the notion of *praxis* as reflection and action that transforms reality by developing in the interstitial spaces between action, policies, critical thinking, and relearning (1970: 100-101). This is very much in

line with later works by Gloria Jean Watkins, known with the pseudonym "bell hooks" (1994), encouraging teachers to be aware of themselves as practitioners and as human beings by enacting productive ways of constructing «progressive, holistic education, 'engaged pedagogy'» (hooks 1994: 15). She advocates for a concept of *praxis* that merges reflection and action. This approach necessitates that teachers recognize themselves both as professionals and as individuals. To educate students in a supportive and inclusive manner, teachers must focus on self-awareness. Therefore, the primary objective for educators should be to foster self-actualization and intercultural competence. This can be achieved through the «decolonization of ways of knowing» (hooks 2003: 3) and ongoing self-critical examination. The conceptualization of decoloniality in pedagogy is a thread that joins Freire's and hooks' work, and can be also found in Walter Mignolo's approach to education, which envisages and elaborates a decolonial epistemology. Known as «border thinking», it is the long and continuous process whereby one can pass «from imperial and territorial epistemology (e.g. global linear thinking) to an epistemology emerging from the places and bodies left out of the line (e.g. the Anthropos, the Orientals, the Third World, etc.)» (Mignolo 2011: 91-92). Border thinking is fundamental as a method to unveil the unspoken entanglement of modernity and coloniality (Quijano 2000). This decolonial approach is the ideal starting point for an investigation of the case studies at hand from a perspective of «epistemic disobedience» against the oppressive ways of knowing and imagining (Mignolo 2009: 159). Accordingly, in his view «education is a battle ground» between competing epistemologies for decolonization (Mignolo and Walsh 2018: 241). He argues for the decolonization of education both inside and outside schools, with a shift from imperial and territorial epistemologies to those that emerge from marginalized communities and perspectives. This involves rethinking and reshaping the categories, entities, and objects that populate Western epistemologies, such as the concept of "representation", which has long been used to regulate social and environmental life, as well as language.

In particular, a key concept for this work is Mignolo's (2009) distinction between "representational" and "relational" knowledge. The former is rooted in European modernity and relies on macro-narratives and fixed principles that aim to categorize and control the world. Representational knowledge prioritizes static, hierarchical, and often oppressive structures, starting from the very concept of "representation", key in preserving colonial power dynamics. On the other hand, relational knowledge emerges from decolonial epistemology. This approach values the interconnectedness and interdependence of different ways of knowing and being. Relational knowledge emphasizes adaptive, generative processes, and prioritizes the creative and contextual responses of individuals and communities to their unique circumstances. This form of knowledge challenges the fixed categories and normative rules imposed by Western thought,

advocating for a more fluid and inclusive understanding of reality that respects and incorporates diverse epistemologies, particularly those marginalized by colonialism. His promotion of a knowledge that is relational and adaptive, with an emphasis on the creative and generative dispositions that students can use in diverse and unpredictable communicative situations, is key in our approach to this study. In fact, a knowledge thus structured recognizes the value of the new linguistic models that arise around English and other languages, which reflect the creative power and agency of those who have historically been left at the margin.

Over the past thirty years, research on the evolution of English by scholars such as Alan Firth (1996), Suresh Canagarajah (1999, 2013), Juliane House (1999), Jennifer Jenkins (2000, 2007), and Barbara Seidlhofer (2004, 2011) has recognized the creativity and legitimacy of new English forms in our postcolonial, globalizing world. They note that non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers, significantly shaping English's international use (Seidlhofer 2004: 211-12). In this context, teachers and students can then relearn the knowledge and languages that have undergone centuries of systematic suppression and imaginatively construct pluriversal social, communicative, and educational institutions that will prove to be more inclusive and fairer for everyone. Such a pedagogy will require preparing students for lifelong learning, rather than giving them the false hope that a set of grammatical norms will help them. The aim of an ELT course for PPETs would be to cultivate in them dispositions that can be a support throughout a life of constant negotiation of meanings in diverse environments for social becoming and bonding. Consequently, we are guided to perceive and recognize the creative power of the English used in transnational contexts — a language that is becoming less and less monolithic and more adaptable for negotiation and for stories that come from all over the world. This was powerfully outlined by Canagarajah, who has long worked to apply decoloniality to ELT (1999, 2007, 2013, 2023). In his introduction to the special issue on "Decolonizing ELT" (2023), he redefines pedagogy as an expansive practice that transcends traditional classroom boundaries and conventional knowledge frameworks. He describes pedagogy as a *praxis* that adopts an ecological orientation, emphasizing the importance of incorporating diverse resources within the learning space that extend beyond the prescribed syllabus readings and, as previously proposed by hooks (1994), sees the teacher as a professional and a human:

> Many teachers consider cultivating ethical or cultural values extraneous to teaching, preferring an instrumental pedagogy focusing on language norms. However, Southern orientations to embodiment and relationality question such separation. Learning will always be ecological, drawing from all the available resources both inside and outside the classroom, both those prescribed by policymakers and those that are not. (Canagarajah 2023: 291)

Canagarajah also proposes a dialogical pedagogy, where interactions between students and teachers actively develop stances against dominant language ideologies and narratives. He critiques traditional, codified versions of pedagogy found in textbooks, handbooks, and other published materials that often treat teachers as mere technicians implementing knowledge created by experts. These conventional pedagogies focus on norms and grammars for teaching one language at a time, which Canagarajah argues are ineffective in multilingual contexts where diverse languages coexist and interact. In terms of teaching models, Canagarajah points out that many educators view the cultivation of ethical or cultural values as outside the scope of their teaching responsibilities, and would rather focus on an instrumental pedagogy centered on language norms and predefined materials. However, the Southern perspectives on embodiment and relationality brought forward by Canagarajah challenge this separation, advocating for a more integrated approach. Ultimately, the current state of the world calls for a pedagogy of "becoming", where students are encouraged to develop and adapt their skills by creatively negotiating communicative practices that reflect emergent repertoires, contexts, and meanings.

One thing that emerges clearly from this perspective on language teaching is the key role played by the physical world in a pedagogy based on "ecological learning". In order to save ELT from the abstract idea of language as a set of fixed rules and from the decontextualized and de-historicized concept of English as a neutral tool, it is crucial to bring language and its teaching back to the real world, where such a conception of language may not be enough to investigate and learn it. Indeed, other conceptualizations may be more helpful here, like that of "languaging", as it is

> a concept that gestures at large to dimensions of linguistic behaviour that cannot be captured by, or are purposefully excluded from, approaches focused on delineating language primarily as a rule-driven formal system. These aspects include embodied processes of sense-making wherein relational negotiation of meaning, attunement to context, and the non-linear unfolding of implicit assumptions demonstrably enact the constitutive entanglement of language use in the situational dynamics of its enactment. The gerund declension of "language" into 'languaging', which draws attention to the verb-like quality of the concept, provides the most important clue to its dynamic conceptual deployment, which has traversed a number of fields since the 1980s. (Basile 2016: 83)

As seen, viewing language in terms of languaging or translanguaging (Canagarajah 2013) is intrinsically linked to ecology through its entanglement with the environment. Another crucial link between languaging and ecology is emotion, given the «culturally/ecologically embedded, naturalistically grounded, affect-based, dialogically coordinated, and socially enacted nature of languaging as a form of whole-body behavior or whole-body sense making» (Thibault

2011: 211). The social and ecological spheres must not be seen as separated, as the environment is more than just a container for people to act socially that can be placed within an inner/outer dichotomy (Jensen and Cuffari 2014). In fact, there is also another element that comes into play when taking into consideration language/languaging, migration, and ecology, and it is the fact that they all belong to a world of actual people moving from one place to another for various reasons. Migration is a crucial force that redesigns global spaces, both physically and linguistically, and both globally and locally[1]. The environmental crises yielded by climate change are increasingly cause for people movements across the world, and what has been defined as "environmental migration"[2] is actively contributing to the re-shaping of physical space, while the arrival of migrants from the Global South contributes to the emergence of new worldviews and stories.

The power of these stories and worldviews is at the core of the work by Arran Stibbe who, in his seminal works (2015, 2024)[3] has explored ecolinguistics with a specific attention to narration[4] and metaphor. Their importance lies in the fact that they have the power to (re)shape and promote certain attitudes and behaviors, as well as to establish and subvert power relations — a concept drawn from critical discourse analysis (CDA) — to the point that these are «stories-we-live-by», i.e., «stories in the minds of multiple individuals across a culture» (Stibbe 2015: 6). Stibbe attributes immense power to narration at the intersection of language and ecology:

> The link between ecology and language is that how humans treat each other and the natural world is influenced by our thoughts, concepts, ideas, ideologies and worldviews, and these in turn are shaped through language. It is through language that economic systems are built, and when those systems are seen to lead to immense suffering and ecological destruction, it is through language that they are resisted and new forms of economy brought into being. (Stibbe 2015: 2)

1 A fascinating study on how urban spaces can determine different attitudes towards migration was carried out by Cristina Cassandra Murphy (2018), who advocates for a re-design of cities that disrupts segregation, since «'in-between' spaces foster opportunities for positive encounters among different groups in public spaces» (Murphy 2018: 159).

2 The term can be found on the website Environmental Migration Portal of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), «a one-stop service website to promote new research, information exchange and dialogue, intended to fill the existing data, research and knowledge gaps on the migration, environment and climate change (MECC) nexus» (EMP 2024).

3 In this analysis we used his least recent work as a reference because, at the time the course was delivered, the most recent one was not available yet.

4 Stories are here intended as cognitive structures in the minds of individuals which influence how they perceive the world and make sense of their existence through narration (Bruner 1987).

He uses the tools of CDA to reveal underlying ideologies that perpetuate harmful ecological practices, and demonstrates how language can be used to challenge and change these ideologies, and introduces the concept of positive discourse, which involves using language to promote sustainability, respect for nature, and ecological harmony. His analysis identifies various forms that stories can take and their linguistic manifestations (Stibbe 2015: 17), which are particularly important for this study, and deserve some explanation. The first form is *ideology*, which consists of stories about how the world is and should be, shared by members of a particular group. These ideological stories are manifested in language through discourses, clusters of linguistic features that are characteristically used by the group, helping to maintain and reinforce their shared beliefs and values. Through specific choices of words, phrases, and structures, these discourses perpetuate the worldview of the group, influencing how its members perceive and interact with the world around them. Next, *framing* involves stories that use a frame — a structured set of knowledge about one area of life — to shape understanding in another area. Linguistically, this is evident through the use of trigger words, which bring the frame to mind. These trigger words help listeners or readers quickly and effectively apply the established frame to new information, thereby shaping their understanding and reactions in a predictable way. Closely related is *metaphor*, a type of framing where a frame is used to structure a distinct and clearly different area of life. Metaphors are also linguistically manifested through trigger words that evoke a specific and distinct frame. By describing one domain of experience in terms of another, metaphors enable people to understand complex or unfamiliar concepts through more familiar terms, thus facilitating communication and comprehension. *Evaluation* stories focus on whether an area of life is perceived as good or bad. These stories are reflected in language through appraisal patterns — linguistic patterns that represent areas of life positively or negatively. These patterns influence how people judge and evaluate different aspects of their lives, guiding their attitudes and behaviors toward those aspects based on the language used. *Identity* stories describe what it means to be a particular kind of person. In language, these stories manifest as forms of language that define the characteristics of certain kinds of people. Through specific descriptors and categorizations, these linguistic forms construct and convey social identities, shaping how individuals see themselves and how they are seen by others. *Conviction* stories address whether a particular description of the world is true, uncertain, or false. These stories are linguistically represented through facticity patterns — linguistic features that express descriptions of the world as true, uncertain, or false. Such patterns are crucial in establishing the credibility and reliability of information, influencing how people assess the truthfulness of various claims. *Erasure* stories suggest that an area of life is unimportant or unworthy of consideration. Linguistically, this manifests through patterns that fail to represent a particular area of life

or that background or distort it. These patterns can marginalize or completely ignore certain aspects of life, leading to their social invisibility and diminishing their perceived importance. In contrast, *salience* stories imply that an area of life is important and worthy of attention. This is manifested in language through patterns that give prominence to an area of life. Such linguistic patterns highlight and draw attention to certain aspects, making them more noticeable and significant in social discourse.

Part of Stibbe's work is dedicated to the discussion around the practical implications of ecolinguistics across society — including its potential application in education. That is why, for our analysis of children's books proposed as learning material for PPETs, we wanted to draw the necessary analytic tools from critical discourse analysis as utilized within ecolinguistics, expanding their scope to our conceptualization of ELT pedagogy as Southern critical thinkers. In fact, the term "Global South" extends to contexts like Italy, a crossroad of migration flows, challenging traditional language understandings and fostering new models of linguistic and cultural interaction. By reading children's migration literature, PPETs can develop intercultural competence, recognize the role of language in acculturation, and understand how migrants influence culture in Italy and worldwide. This approach aims to dissolve stereotypes, foster inclusivity, and challenge traditional views on language, community, and citizenship, foregrounding relationality and developing ethics for negotiating meanings with all parties in the environment. Deviating from language purity, native speakerism, and language ownership, they help students develop critical thinking. Decolonization as pedagogy is at the core of any transformative politics. Not just multilingual students in ELT or PPETs classrooms, but everyone in society can learn how to communicate in more inclusive, diverse, and ethical ways.

Materials and Methods

Our methodology represents an attempt to build a complex bridge across ecolinguistics, migration, critical discourse analysis, and ELT pedagogy. Our aim was to implement a course for PPETs that would abandon the reified view of ELT, passed on without questioning its role in history and in the current state of the world that ultimately perpetuates its use as a tool for discrimination and oppression. With the increasing changes in classroom configurations, the urgency of re-thinking language teaching and environment becomes unescapable. In this sense, our research attempt is to make more evident and explicit the intersection between migration narratives/stories and ecolinguistics by analyzing language patterns in the texts selected to reveal the underlying stories-we-live-by.

In particular, our work is divided into two parts, the first concerning implementation of a syllabus mirroring our conception of decolonization as

pedagogy and the selection of texts to deliver a PPET ELT course based on the students' needs and familiarity with English, and the second being dedicated to the textual analysis of the books through an ecolinguistics and CDA framework.

Materials and Methods: The Course and the Texts

Our work was focused on the course "English Language Laboratory II" for PPETs at the University of Bari in the academic year 2022/2023, where Annarita Taronna was the main instructor and Dora Renna participated as a guest lecturer. Most of the course was dedicated to the reading and understanding of transethnic literature for children with the purpose of encouraging the use of narration as a pedagogical tool in the PPETs' future profession. Since the course was a laboratory, most of the time was dedicated to practical activities, which included both individual and group work. Rather than passive receptors of notions, the students were expected to be an active part of the learning process as future teachers. Each lesson (each lasting two hours), co-constructed with the students, included collective debates around issues relevant to the text presented, reading, and activities that ranged from comprehension questions to proposal and implementation of learning activities for primary school English students, which were then presented and discussed with the class.

The students in the course (about 125) were mainly (but not exclusively) women-identifying and, while many of them were in their early twenties and with no professional background, a considerable number of them already had some teaching background. Some were actually rather experienced teachers looking for a professional upgrade, and generally older than their colleagues. As for their language competence as determined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the landscape was rather varied, ranging from A2 to (less frequently) C1. According to the Degree Course guidelines, the expected achievement for students had to be at least a B1 competence in both comprehension and production. Despite the limited grammatical competence of many students, we noticed a widespread and remarkable (cross)cultural sensitivity and understanding, as well as a disposition to translanguaging, all of which emerged clearly both in their enthusiastic reception of the course materials and in the insight revealed across the course activities.

As for the texts proposed, they were selected according to a set of evaluation criteria adapting the work of Lee Galda and Bernice Cullinan (2002), Wendy Kasten et al. (2005), Wilma Robles de Meléndez (2004):

– The story and the characters are free of any historical distortions, gender or ethnic stereotypes. Messages about the cultural group, including gender, race, and social class, are free of any bias.

- Characters are portrayed according to the time and setting. If set in contemporary times, characters reflect current lifestyles.
- Characters reflect a variety of physical diversities.
- The story presents people with disabilities in a positive, non-stereotypical way.
- Female and male characters are presented in a variety of roles that exemplify non-stereotypical tasks.
- Roles of females and males are equal and consistent with those in their cultural groups.
- Roles and the importance of families are reflective of views held by the cultural group.
- People from diverse groups are portrayed in positive and leadership roles.
- Illustrations depict the culture and people in culturally accurate ways.

While the proposed stories were quite numerous (15 in total), here only two of them were selected, in order to allow for a detailed analysis. The case study consists of: *The Day War Came* (2018), written by Nicola Davies and illustrated by Rebecca Cobb, winner of the 2019 Honor Book for Younger Children, and *The Journey* (2016) by Francesca "Frenci" Sanna, winner of the 2017 Ezra Jack Keats New Author Honor and New Illustrator Honor Awards. Both books relate the stories of children who, alone or with their family, have their happy lives disrupted by war and are forced to flee their countries.

Materials and Methods: The Multimodal Analysis

Before exploring the methodology, it is important to note that children's books have specific features that are intrinsic in their genre and must be taken into consideration when analyzing them. First, their limited length should not be mistaken for superficiality or simplicity. In fact, they are rather short forms of communication where verbal and non-verbal communication condense to shape messages that can be resonant and even ideological:

> Picturebooks express the ideology of a society both verbally and visually. Ideology may be expressed as social ecology or habitus in such a way that it permeates visual and verbal discourses without becoming overt. Because ideology is not fixed, the function of stories both to make the world intelligible and to shape it in desirable forms must necessarily be fluid and flexible. (Stephens 2017: 137)

The role of images should not be underestimated, as they are an integral part of the narration, and they have a much more immediate impact on readers (especially younger ones), thanks to their ability to make a story relatable in terms of personal experiences but also of values shared across families

and communities (Mantei and Kerwin 2014). For these reasons, a satisfactory analysis of children's illustrated literature should be both multifaceted and multimodal.

As for the analysis, we devised a methodology that applies multimodal CDA qualitatively, so as to allow an in-depth reading of the case studies. The methodology draws from Stibbe's story forms (2015: 17), described in the theoretical section.

Given the dense content of these books and the importance of their non-verbal content, we looked for both verbal and non-verbal manifestations of all the story types simultaneously. In these books, images are rarely in stark contrast with their textual counterpart, as they mainly depict the text illustratively or expand on it. That is why an analysis based on intermodal relations (Renna 2021) would perhaps not be the most revealing, and we decided to treat verbal and non-verbal as equal contributors in the story construction. The resulting scheme of analysis that we proposed to our students added a small edit to Stibbe's (2015), in that we worked to find both verbal and non-verbal manifestations of the abovementioned stories-we-live-by and, overall, we expected to find some degree of positive discourses of inclusion and harmony. Here, the two short picture books are analyzed qualitatively page by page, focusing on both verbal and non-verbal, and identifying instances of any type of story we could find.

By applying Stibbe's framework to these stories, we encouraged a critical examination that could lead to a fair use of migration narratives in children's books within the context of ELT. Our final aim was to enhance language learning but, even more, to promote critical thinking, empathy, and a decolonial understanding of migration, preparing PPETs and their future pupils to be more inclusive and informed global citizens.

Results and Discussion

The Day War Came

As mentioned in the previous section, this book tells the story of a young girl who has to flee her war-torn country in search for a new home. The illustrations by Rebecca Cobb recall children's drawings, which could further convey the idea of a relatable story told in first person by a child like any other. The book cover already condenses some of the crucial elements of the story: the title contains the word "war" and separates the girl from her chair, pencils, and drawings, while she runs away in distress. Written in dark letters, the strong impact of the words in the title are magnified by the increasing size of the font as the words get closer to the girl. A first instance of visual negative *evaluation* of war can be seen here, as it is driving a little girl away from typical objects of a child's life. An aspect that must be noted immediately — and will be recurrent throughout

— is the use of the verbs used to describe the war, which enact a *framing* of the war as a living being, actively chasing the girl wherever she goes, e.g. come, bring, take, follow, take possession, etc.

The story then opens with the description of the day war broke out in her town (and life) which, as often happens, had started just like any other day of her life (Davies and Cobb 2018: 4-7).

Visually, the peaceful morning starts in a well-lit kitchen with bright «flowers on the window sill» (4-5) and other everyday elements like food on the table and laundry hanging right outside the window. The whole family is smiling as they share their morning routine. The presence of natural elements will return across the book, in some cases as symbols of peace, in some others accompanying war and escape. After the flowers, nature is again present in a positive light as the little girl is at school learning about volcanoes, frog life cycle, and birds, all of which are both mentioned in the text and portrayed in the illustration (6-7). School appears in the light of a clearly positive *evaluation*, as it is the place where she learns things that she still remembers (at the time of narration) and where she feels at ease. In fact, she is seen smiling in both scenes, and in both scenes her day is characterized by singing (her father at home, herself in class). Peace is in both cases symbolized by bright colors, but in the second scene the disruption can be seen looming behind the peaceful scene in the form of three little, black figures that look like war helicopters crossing the sky (6).

The following pages show the war outbreak (8-12). From a verbal perspective, war is, too, initially understood in natural terms that are familiar for the girl, i.e., hail and thunder, but soon after it is clear to her that war is nothing like she had seen before: «smoke and fire and noise *that I didn't understand*» (8). This lack of comprehension leads the protagonist to personify war as a living being that covers distances («came across the playground»), kills people all of a sudden («came into my teacher's face»), and purposely destroys the child's environment — thus disrupting nature, too (10). Visually, the war is not illustrated with clear images: in its place, a dark cloud of smoke and dust, a visual *metaphor* of the devastation brought about by it. In the first illustration representing the outbreak (8-9), a dense cloud looks like it is obliterating the previous, colorful tranquility: chairs, pencils, and drawings are swept away, while the girl tries to hide her face in her little desk, which also looks like a last, *metaphorical* handhold of what used to be. In the following illustration, the dark cloud has spread across the scene and has removed all color and life. When the dust settles, there is nothing left of what she used to know, and the reader can recognize the «blackened hole that had been my home» by the remainder of the flowers on her windowsill (12-13), now trampled on and similar to the flames in the background. The negative *evaluation* of war is here evident, as the helpless little girl cries before the devastation of her home, now gone along with her family — she states she is «all

alone» (13). Here, the dark cloud that replaced her home creates a non-verbal continuum with the columns of smoke scattered across the bombed town.

In such a landscape, the girl cannot do anything else but try and escape from war (14-15). The pages portraying the escape are divided horizontally into three parts, which represent various moments of the girl's journey, described in the text: nature is now hostile, as fields, mountains, cold, mud, and rain are obstacles to her escape. The recurrence of the verb "run", used three times in a few lines, triggers the *framing* of immigration as escape, a difficult and desperate race against time a person like any other is forced to join in order to leave war behind. This also expresses part of a migrant's *identity*, which is not that different from that of any other people, who by pure chance can enjoy a life of safety in their homes. Such framing and identity, which may seem obvious to some, go against common anti-immigration ideologies, like the recurring argument that sees migrants as people who come to a new land to commit crimes (Lopez 2024). The little red shoes that «lay empty in the sand» (15) strengthen the sense of tragedy, as they represent the people who lost their life during the crossing, emphasizing the high cost of migration in terms of human lives.

The following illustrations represent the arrival to the refugee camp, which is seen from above, in faint colors that alternate with darker shades of black and grey that remind of the previously seen dark clouds (16-17). The verbal description of the refugee camp features an explicit negative *evaluation* of its inhumane conditions: «a row of huts […] a corner with a dirty blanket and a door that rattled in the wind» (16). In such precarious and lonely conditions, it is inevitable for the girl to be unable to start a new life, as it seems to her like war has followed her all the way there and is now inside her body and mind, «underneath my skin, behind my eyes, and in my dreams. It had taken possession of my heart» (17). While she is now away from the actual war, it has remained with her in the form of trauma haunting her dreams — its pervasive nature transcends material consequences and marks forever those who live it — which adds to its negative *evaluation* and gives it the further *framing* of a stain that does not easily come off.

However, the war is not just in the little girl's hometown and in her heart, as it continues in the place of arrival in unexpected ways. In fact, as depicted (18-19), as she keeps on escaping («walked and walked») from war both inside and outside of her, looking for «a place it hadn't reached», she notices a different manifestation of war, i.e., social stigma and exclusion («doors shut when I came […] people didn't smile, and turned away»). This passage illustrated the crucial *framing* of exclusion as a form of war, as it reiterates and reinforces war trauma, and does not allow the little girl to rebuild some form of happiness. Following, she comes across a school (20-23), which back home used to be a safe and happy place for her. Here, she sees a classroom full of bright colors and pictures of birds and volcanoes, while she says that the kids are singing and drawing (just

like she used to do). School is once again *framed* as a safe haven, and its *salience* is evident in that it is the first time she finds something that can, at least in part, bring back her previous life — and it also stands out as the proper place for a child to spend her days. Another part of the *identity* of unaccompanied minor migrants emerges here both verbally and non-verbally: loneliness. In fact, the illustration shows the lonely girl looking «through the window» (20) from the outside and, when she walks in, she can hear the echo of her steps (23). Despite the courage she shows by entering the school by herself, she is faced once again with exclusion, as the teacher (wearing a dark sweater) does not let her in because «there is no chair» for her to sit on (23). The chair is then a powerful *metaphor* of inclusion, of finding a place in the country of arrival, and the fact that the girl is not given one leaves her alone with this new form of war, visually represented by the darkness covering the door and herself (22). Here, the teacher does not stand out as a memorable character, a brave activist fostering relational pedagogy — rather, she seems to blindly reiterate a harsh policy of exclusion based on material possessions or lack thereof. In this new, sly form, war has crossed the boundaries of the girl's town, as has now «taken all the world and all the people in it» (24), so that she can only go back to her squalid hut and hide under a blanket. The hope for this tormented little girl does not come from formal institutions (the camp, the teacher), but from fellow children, who do not follow the negative *ideology* of exclusion: they simply see an obstacle and find a solution.

A little boy comes to the girl's hut while she does not expect anyone, and «thought it was the wind» (27), and brings her a chair, *metaphorically* offering her the inclusion she was denied by the formal educational institution. Visually, the boy is wearing bright colors, and he is surrounded by a light that melts the darkness that engulfed the little girl (26), representing her hope to finally be able to «learn about volcanoes, sing and draw birds. And drive the war out of my heart» (27). It must be noted that the boy is not a lone hero, as he is part of a broader grassroot initiative of schoolchildren who decided to bring chairs to the camp so that the excluded kids «can come to school» (27). From an *ideological* point of view, it proposes a society in which each person can (and should) contribute to inclusion, another *salient* element for a peaceful existence. Thanks to the local children's openness, the refugee children are now able to use their agency and enter society, in spite of the institutionalized exclusion: the initial lonely run of the little girl is replaced by a confident, collective parade, as they all «walked together […] pushing back the war with every step» (29). In the final illustrations, all children have their own chairs to sit and rebuild their lives (32-33).

In summary, this story contains a series of important features for fostering a pedagogy based on praxis. First, the negative *framing* of war in all its forms: actual war devastating lands and societies, war trauma in migrants (especially children), and exclusion in the land of arrival. From an *ideological* perspective,

the story proposes an inclusive society where the contribution of each person counts, even against relentless regulations. A crucial element is school, which assumes a *salient* role as agent of personal and social realization: a place where a child can learn about nature and life is a safe and desirable place. Overall, *The Day War Came* can be considered a positive discourse, as it encourages each person to be part of a better society. It can also be used to encourage PPETs to reflect about the teacher's negative behavior and to think of ways in which they could be agents of a decolonizing pedagogy. However, one may argue that the fact that the girl had to be 'saved' by a local boy can be seen as a deprivation of agency, and that this could be seen as an instance of «white saviour complex» (McCurdy 2016). Nonetheless, it was the girl's brave entrance in the school to start the whole process, and the story concludes with the refugee children who walk towards school together. This potential issue may stimulate critical thinking and trigger a discussion on the meaning of inclusion and participation, as well as on the roles each of us can have striving for a better society.

The Journey

In this story, too, the tranquility of a peaceful life is suddenly interrupted by the outbreak of war, which forces the protagonists to leave their home. The drawings by Sanna are 2D illustrations that remind of old fairytale storybooks, which could help visually *framing* this story of migration as a universal and timeless tale. *The Journey* also starts with a scene of a family's life before war but, rather than a specific episode, it refers to their summertime habits (Sanna 2016: 4-5). While in none of the analyzed books there is specific reference to a country, in this story we find clues that lead the readers to identify the protagonists as coming from the Global South. Verbally, the child's narrating voice says: «a city close to the sea […] we used to spend many weekends at the beach» (4), while the opening illustration shows a landscape of bright, warm colors, with architectural hints suggesting a Middle Eastern country, along with the protagonists' phenotype: dark hair and fair complexion. The warmth of the landscape is interrupted by the sea, represented by a pitch-black spot at the right of the illustration (5) that seems to be pre-announcing the impending darkness of war and death. Just like with the looming helicopters in Cobb's illustration (Davies and Cobb 2018: 6), these dark omens in an otherwise serene landscape could be visually *ideologically* presenting peace as fragile, and war as something that could happen anywhere, at any point in time. In fact, the following scene turns the landscape upside down, as war has come to change the family's life forever.

From a verbal perspective, the following illustrations (6-11) are accompanied by brief but strong sentences, which condense a negative *evaluation* of war from the simple perspective of a child: «every day bad things started happening around us and soon there was nothing but chaos» (7). Then one day this chaos touches the family directly as the war, once again personified, kills her father

and disrupts their existence, making everything «become darker» (9) and weigh on the mother, who loses her inner peace. The visual aspects are here richer in detail compared to the text. The illustration showing the start of the war is a powerful subversion of the previous one, where the sea is replaced by long, supernatural dark hands that wreck the city, forcing the family to escape (6-7). Those hands, which visually personify the war, can be directly linked to the dark cloud of the previous story (Davies and Cobb 2018: 9), in that they are both visual *metaphors* of the devastation brought about by war. The following illustrations show that those dark hands reached her family: first, her father's death is visually represented by objects that belonged to him engulfed in darkness (8-9). Then, her father re-appears an image on an old and bright family portrait, but is no longer with them (11). From a visual stereotype perspective, the look of the father, who has a peaceful smile in all scenes and wears glasses may hint at the fact that, rather than dying while actively participating in combat, he may have been killed either because of his ideals or in a desperate attempt to protect his family. The red flowers next to the family portrait, just like the ones in *The Day War Came* (Davies and Cobb 2018: 4, 13), are a visual *metaphor* of the warm and peaceful past that is now only a memory. In fact, dark hands have entered through the window (11) and now surround the family, while the children are only protected by the hug of their mother. Here an important point of the narration emerges: the *salience* of family throughout the life of the protagonists, and in particular the crucial role of the mother. *Ideologically*, this presents a society where family bonds are pivotal. While in the previous story the girl is soon stripped of her family and therefore experiences loneliness and abandonment, in this case, after the loss of the father, the rest of the family remains close together. Such an *ideology* can be seen as opposite to that of the policy promoted by the previous US administration, by which «between 2017 and 2021, former President Donald Trump's administration separated at least 3,900 children — some only a few months old» (Halpert 2023: n.p.).

Apart from family, the role of community also appears *salient* in some important occasions. The first is when a friend tells the family about a possibility to leave war behind that many seem to be opting for (12-17). Both verbally and non-verbally, this possibility appears as a migration to the Global North, «a country far away with high mountains […] strange cities, strange forests and strange animals» (13-15). The illustration shows a fantasy-like forest materializing in deep green and bright gold, with plants and animals that are common in northern mountains, e.g. deer, bears, wolves, barn owls, rabbits, weasels, and pine trees (15). The smallest child is seen trying to hold onto the family cat in both illustrations, even if the text does not mention explicitly that they must leave this familiar creature behind. As for *evaluation*, the Global North is seen under a positive light, as the friend verbalizes the *conviction* that it is «a safe place» where they will «not be frightened anymore» (15). On the other hand, going

there means to leave their old life behind potentially for good: there is no enthusiasm in a journey prompted by necessity, as the friend herself sighs as she tells the family about it. The following illustration (16) elaborates on the same themes, as the imaginary forest enters their home in the form of its animals, which seem to be waiting for the family as the mother packs their suitcase. In this story, too, nature has a certain visual *salience*: here, it is the detail that strikes the children the most about the new land, and they become the visual *metaphor* or, better, synecdoche of the Global North — later, it will be the scene of their escape. The children do not have positive feelings about leaving as the narrating voice says: «we don't want to leave» (17) and the smallest child cries holding the family cat. The enormous upheaval of their life and the sense of uprooting is condensed in the sentence «we put everything we have in suitcases and say goodbye to everyone we know» (17). Migration is *ideologically* considered as a necessity that still generates a deep suffering in those who leave. The mother, however, tries to boost the children's morale by telling them that the journey will be «a great adventure» (17) and, after that, the images assume increasingly fairytale-like shapes.

Like in *The Day War Came*, the journey to the frontier is represented by seeing the protagonists boarding onto different means of transportation and at different times of the day, but with some crucial differences. The girl in the previous story is alone in a mass of people in similar conditions, some alone and some in small groups (Davies and Cobb 2018: 14-15). She is occasionally helped by someone, but she mainly travels by herself, so that the sense of community is not as *salient* as the experience of loneliness as part of the girl's migrant *identity*, at least until she finds a new community in her peers. In this case, the family never separates and, after losing their car and most luggage, they are helped hide by local people who are not escaping (it is oil and fruit vendors; Sanna 2016: 19-20), and this reinforces the *salience* and *ideological* role of community even at difficult times. The mother always looks out for the children, and she guides them in the dark, using any means to bring them to safety. This sense of closeness across family and community is opposed to the following encounter with formal or informal authorities (22-31). This part, too, has minimal verbal descriptions and strongly relies on images. The family encounters two figures that represent respectively formal and informal power: a border police officer and a people smuggler. The first one is guarding «an enormous wall» (23) that the three are meant to cross, but the «angry guard» (24) shouts at them they need to go back. The guard, looming over the harmless family with his fear-inducing size and monster-like appearance (25), visually represents a negative *evaluation* of border patrol as an unjust authority pushing back people who have already lost their home, «have nowhere to go» (24), and cannot do anything but try and move forward. The family is then forced to hide in the forest (26-27), where the *salience* of the mother emerges again, this time showing her strength

in looking after her children, but also her fragility as a human who is going through unspeakable hardships. The first half of the illustration (26) features the mother once again protecting the scared children with her hug and helping them fall asleep by showing she is not scared, to the point that the narrating voice states that «mother is with us and she is never scared» (27). Nonetheless, when the children fall asleep in her arms, the forest becomes much darker and scarier, with dangerous red eyes staring at them and the hands of war emerging again among the leaves, a *metaphor* of the fears and trauma haunting the mother. In fact, she remains wide awake and cries in silence, her tears flowing endlessly.

Later, the children are woken up by the guards shouting and appearing among the trees like gigantic, monster-like creatures (28), so they have to «run and run» (30) to escape. In the following illustration (30-31) they are surrounded by darkness, where the leaves of the forest are barely visible, when another inhuman figure takes shape as part of the forest itself: the people smuggler. This time, this informal power figure is silent, almost one with the environment and, while the children «have never seen him before» (30), the mother understands immediately, so she «gives him some money and he takes us over the border» (30). There is no specific positive or negative *evaluation* of this man who, just like the guard, is enormous, even larger than the officers, as he literally picks the family up with one hand to take them across the border. The size of both guards and smuggler shows their power, and they look like each other's complementary figures: as long as one exists, shouting and stopping people, the other will silently allow the passage. From an *ideological* point of view, this hints at the fact that a militarized border cannot stop people in search for peace and safety. The smuggler, however, is not depicted as a hero — he does the job for money and shows no feelings — but more as a direct consequence of his patrolling counterpart. However, as the mother says, «our journey is not over yet» (33), as the sea crossing awaits. In both stories, adults that represent institutions do not enjoy positive *evaluations*. The forest is now behind them, and the family can embark in the sea crossing (32-39). Once again, the family find more people trying to cross the sea just like them and, despite the limited space and the bad weather — «it rains every day» (35) — the crossers build a new community (whose *salience* emerges again here) by telling each other stories. The fact that the story contains stories could be seen as a meta-diegetic reflection on the power of narrations, or their *salience*, to find strength at difficult times and uniting people throughout their shared predicaments. The first stories represent an attempt at teaching the children to avoid sudden movements on the boat while making this dangerous journey sound like a fairytale adventure. In fact, they use the *metaphor* of «terrible and dangerous monsters» beneath the boat that are «ready to gobble us up if the boat capsizes» (34-35). As they approach the coast, the stories change, and they express the *conviction* that a happier life is waiting for them on

the other side, as the Global North is a land where «big green forests are filled with kind fairies that dance and give us magic spells to end the war» (36-37).

The last illustrations concluding the narration have an open ending, as the readers do not see what happens to them when they arrive, but are left with a reflection on the nature of migration (38-43). The *salience* of the family and its importance for migrants is condensed in the mother's statement that «we are lucky to still be together» (39), as none of them died at sea and they succeeded in some of the most dangerous parts of the journey. Her «tired smile» (38) is visually represented by her glance looking at the bright horizon, a visual *metaphor* of her hope to find a new life ahead. Birds cross the sky and are going in the same direction as the family. As they keep on travelling «for more days and nights, crossing many borders», the protagonist notices the birds that «seem to be following» them (41). They are migratory birds, whose migration appears, however, much easier than theirs, as «they don't have to cross any borders» (42). This manifests a negative *evaluation* of border patrolling and borders in general, and *frames* migration as a necessary and natural phenomenon for any species looking for a safe environment to thrive. Nature, which was initially the welcoming beach and then had become a scary forest and a dangerous sea, is now source of solace and hope. In fact, the orange train transporting the family followed by migrant birds visually transforms into a bird in the following illustration (43), so the family can fly along with the migrant birds and, just like them, head towards «a new home» (42).

Overall, the narration of the dangers faced by this united family during their crossing may elicit a sense of identification in the readers, who can recall a time when they were scared, and they were protected by their family or community. In fact, while this story makes no direct reference to school and education like the previous one, it offers important considerations about the *salience* of family and community for migrant children in particular, but in general for all children, as their role is to «guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way», as established by the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child[5]. The same text affirms that those minors «who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country», which is the *ideological* core of the story: children who flee their war-torn country (war receiving an extremely negative *evaluation*) have a right to help, protection, and equality. Another aspect that emerges here is the *salience* of stories in all aspects of life, from community building to trauma overcoming, which is perfect to trigger a reflection with both PPETs and their future pupils about the way stories can be used in the classroom and beyond.

5 The integral text can be found on the UNICEF website (UNICEF 1989).

Concluding Remarks

To conclude, it is essential to clarify that the conceptual framework provided in this study is not intended as a conclusive or prescriptive way to practice ELT in PPET education programs, nor does it present itself as universally optimal. There are no universal solutions, best practices, or teaching models that apply uniformly across different schools, communities, cultures, subjects, purposes, and home-school relationships. Our work aimed to contribute to the ongoing re-evaluation of readings and representations concerning the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers, fostering a continuous process of reflection on the complex issues inherent in translingual and transcultural teaching practices.

One significant finding of this study is that training PPETs on children's migration-related content is an inherently challenging form of *praxis*-building. This work is deeply practical, embedded in the daily realities of classroom decisions and actions, including teachers' interactions with students and their families, selection of materials and texts, and use of formal and informal assessments. Thus, effective training involves developing a pedagogy that co-constructs knowledge and curricula with students and teachers, aiming to support children in becoming proactive citizens in a pluralistic society.

Given this context, it is crucial for PPET educators to continue their efforts in designing syllabi that emphasize a decolonial and culturally responsive pedagogy. Using refugee narratives, as explored in this study, encourages metalinguistic reflection on language and its use in building reality, helping PPETs and their pupils engage with stories that challenge dominant narratives and foster a pedagogy of becoming that embraces diversity. Additionally, a critical understanding of language that goes beyond mere representation promotes a decolonial awareness of English as a translingual practice. This approach views English as a repertoire transcending native speakerism, aimed at achieving communication and community building in more inclusive, diverse, and ethical ways. By asking young learners to draw on previous knowledge and experiences to interpret the verbal and non-verbal sequences of the picture book, PPETs can engage in dialogic, intertextual, and multisensory reading, enhancing the visual literacy skills of the learners. This exploratory journey into the visual semantics of picture books highlights the discursive power of illustrative criteria such as iconography, iconology, and intertextuality, which enhance the hermeneutic possibilities of a visual text, eliciting an affective-emotional response in the reader and constructing meaningful relationships.

References

Basile, Elena. 2016. "Languaging and Emergent Scapes of the Intelligible: Thinking through an Experiment in Affective Mapping". *Tusaaji: A Translation Review* 5, no. 1: 82–98.

Bruner, Jerome. 1987. "Life as Narrative". *Social Research* 54, no. 1: 11–32.

Canagarajah, Suresh. 1999. *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Canagarajah, Suresh. 2007. "Lingua Franca English, Multilingual Communities, and Language Acquisition". *The Modern Language Journal* 91, no. s1: 923–939.

Canagarajah, Suresh. 2013. *Translingual Practice. Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. London: Routledge.

Canagarajah, Suresh. 2023. "Decolonization as Pedagogy. A Praxis of 'Becoming' in ELT". *ELT Journal* 77, no. 3: 283–293.

Chapman, Richard. 2021. "Questioning assumptions in English language teaching and ESP". *ESP Across Cultures* 18: 25–36.

Davies, Nicola, and Rebecca Cobb. 2018. *The Day War Came*. London: Walker Books.

EMP. 2024. "Who we are", International Organization for Migration (UN IOM), Environmental Migration Portal. Accessed June 30, 2024. https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/who-we-are.

Firth, Alan. 1996. "The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality. On 'Lingua Franca' English and Conversation Analysis". *Journal of Pragmatics* 26: 237–260.

Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.

Galda, Lee, and Bernice Cullinan. 2002. *Literature and the Child*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Gramsci, Antonio. (1949–1951) 1975. *Quaderni dal carcere*. Torino: Einaudi.

Halpert, Madeline. 2023. "'Like a kidnapping': Migrant family separated under Trump reunited after four years". BBC (official website), May 8, 2023. Accessed June 30, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64959802.

hooks, bell [Gloria Jean Watkins]. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. London: Routledge.

hooks, bell [Gloria Jean Watkins]. 2003. *Teaching Community: a Pedagogy of Hope*. London: Routlegde.

House, Juliane. 1999. "Misunderstanding in Intercultural Communication. Interactions in English as Lingua Franca and the Myth of Mutual Intelligibility". In *Teaching and Learning English as a Global Language*, edited by Claus Gnutzmann, 73–93. Tübingen: Stauffenberg.

Jenkins, Jennifer. 2000. *The Phonology of English as an International Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, Jennifer. 2007. *English as a Lingua Franca. Attitude and Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jensen, Thomas Wiben, and Elena Cuffari. 2014. "Doubleness in experience. Towards a distributed enactive approach to metaphoricity". *Metaphor and Symbol* 29, no. 4: 278–297.

Kasten, Wendy C., et al. 2005. *Living Literature: Using Children's Literature to Support Reading and Language Arts*. Hoboken: Prentice Hall.

Lopez, German. 2024. "The myth of migrant crime. Republicans suggest that immigrants are especially likely to be criminals. The data shows the opposite". *New York Times*, June 18, 2024. Accessed June 30, 2024. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/18/briefing/the-myth-of-migrant-crime.html.

Mantei, Jessica, and Lisa Kerwin. 2014. "Interpreting the images in a picture book: Students make connections to themselves, their lives and experiences". *English Teaching: Practice and Critique* 13, no. 2: 76–92.

McCurdy, Jennifer. 2016. "The Privileged Guardian Angel: An Examination of White Saviour Complex in Western Media". *Political Science Undergraduate Review* 2, no. 1: 23–32.

Mignolo, Walter. 2009. "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom". *Theory, Culture and Society* 26, nos. 7-8: 159–181.

Mignolo, Walter. 2011. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity, Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. London: Duke University Press.

Mignolo, Walter, and Catherine Walsh. 2018. *On Decoloniality. Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. London: Duke University Press.

Murphy, Cristina Cassandra. 2018. "The spatial impact of migration". *The Journal of Public Space* 3, no. 3: 159–170.

Quijano, Anibal. 2000. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America". *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3: 533–580.

Renna, Dora. 2021. *Language Variation And Multimodality In Audiovisual Translation – A New Framework Of Analysis*. Hannover: ibidem-Verlag.

Robles de Meléndez, Wilma. 2004. "Creating the Multicultural Environment". Annual Conference of the Florida Department of Education, Tampa.

Sanna, Francesca. 2016. *The Journey*. London: Flying Eye Books.

Seidlhofer, Barbara. 2004. "Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca". *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24: 209–239.

Seidlhofer, Barbara. 2011. *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stephens, John. 2017. "Picturebooks and ideology". In *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks*, edited by Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, 137–145. London: Routledge.

Stibbe, Arran. 2015. *Ecolinguistics: language, ecology and the stories we live by*. London: Routledge.

Stibbe, Arran. 2024. *Econarrative: Ethics, Ecology, and the Search for New Narratives to Live By*. London: Bloomsbury.

Thibault, Paul J. 2011. "First-order languaging dynamics and second-order language: the distributed language view". *Ecological Psychology* 23: 1–36.

UNICEF. 1989. "The Convention on the Rights of the Child: The children's version", UNICEF (official website). Accessed June 30, 2024. https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version.

Yazykova, Natalia V., Victoria A. Goncharova, and Alina A. Budnikova. 2020. "Transcultural Approach To Teaching English As An International Language: Goal Setting". In *Dialogue of Cultures - Culture of Dialogue: from Conflicting to Understanding*, edited by Elena Tareva and Tatiana N. Bokova, 1195–1202. Moscow: European Proceedings.