

# From Principles to Practice in Education for Intercultural Citizenship

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## 9 Language and Intercultural Citizenship Education for a Culture of Peace: The Malvinas/Falklands Project

Melina Porto and Leticia Yulita

### Planning the Project

The Malvinas/Falklands project aimed to create a culture of peace amongst undergraduate students learning foreign languages in higher education institutions in Argentina and the UK. As defined by the United Nations, a culture of peace is 'a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations' (UNESCO, n.d.). The idea for this project grew and developed between June and December 2012 as part of a call by Michael Byram to create a network of projects on intercultural citizenship. A partnership was quickly formed between Melina Porto in Argentina and Leticia Yulita in the UK. Two reasons motivated us to choose the topic of the Malvinas/Falklands war. Firstly, this war is seen in strongly nationalist terms both in Argentina and the UK and, because of this, intercultural and citizenship issues are clearly involved. Secondly, the year 2012 saw the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the war and in this sense the topic was timely and significant in the political agendas of both countries.

It was relatively easy to plan this project, not because it was simple but because we understood each other well and we had similar work styles and shared the same interest in this research area. In addition, both of us were Argentinean and Leticia had lived in the country until 2004 when she emigrated to the UK. This gave us a unique perspective from where to explore intercultural citizenship in connection with the conflict. The three-month planning stage was intensive, comprising email conversations and Skype

meetings, and resulted in a detailed week-by-week plan of shared tasks as well as tasks that would be specific for each country. Each of us had specific course requirements that we had to respect, and which we needed to build into the project. In addition, it was hard to accommodate the different academic schedules to fit the project. The academic year finishes by the end of November in Argentina while in the UK it starts at the end of September. We were aware that this gave us little time for the online communication phase, and that the students would have to work against these time constraints too. During this phase, we opened a wiki, which we used as a shared virtual classroom.

## The Socio-historical Context

Any choice of topic has social and historical significance, but in this case we knew we were dealing with a very sensitive issue and it is important to explain the context before we move to the detail. The following two subsections provide a brief overview of the dominant governmental messages in Argentina and the UK in relation to the Malvinas/Falklands conflict.

### The Malvinas/Falklands conflict from an Argentinean perspective

The Malvinas/Falklands war was fought in April 1982 between Argentina and the UK over the Malvinas/Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. The islands are known as the *Islas Malvinas* in Argentina, formed by Gran Malvina, Soledad and several other smaller islands. The history of the war is part of *Efemérides*, an official document that outlines national historical facts to be taught in primary schools nationwide. In the secondary education sector the Malvinas/Falklands conflict is taught as part of a subject called 'citizenship education'. The overarching aim of primary and secondary education in Argentina as in many countries is to create and develop an Argentinean identity. The Ministries of Education at provincial and national levels include *Efemérides* related to the conflict (for instance, Portal Educativo del Estado Argentino, n.d. and Ministry of Culture and Education of the Province of Buenos Aires, n.d.).

Argentina has claimed the ownership of the Malvinas islands since the nineteenth century and, more emphatically, since the beginning of democracy in 1983, and although it was defeated in the 1982 war, the *Efemérides* present the islands as Argentinean. What is interesting here is that the dispute over sovereignty is generally not addressed at schools. The motto *Las Malvinas son argentinas* [The Malvinas islands are Argentinean] can be frequently seen or heard, and has become a feature of noticeboards in schools and in the media. There is a strong patriotic sentiment in the country, which is often revealed in discourses of territorial ownership and nationalism that

focus on the conflict, and 2 April, which represents the day that the Argentinean troops disembarked on the islands to reclaim them, has become a national bank holiday in memory of the veterans of the war.

The war and its consequences are multifaceted and involve military, political, economic, diplomatic, cultural and ideological dimensions. The war is usually associated with colonialism and imperialism on the part of the UK (Borón, 2005; Borón & Vlahusic, 2009). Furthermore, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the President of Argentina, and David Cameron, Prime Minister of the UK, have engaged in verbal confrontations in local and international media. For instance, Kirchner accused Cameron of running a 'crude colonial power in decline' and has dismissed Britain's position as 'mediocrity bordering on stupidity' (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/17/kirchner-cameron-falklands-british-row>). Different newspapers in each country reflect different attitudes and positionings towards Kirchner and Cameron, and towards the Argentinean and British perspectives on the conflict.

### The Malvinas/Falklands conflict from a British perspective

The islands are known as the Falkland Islands in the UK, and in April of 1982, most British people would only have had a vague idea of where the Falkland Islands were; somewhere close to the South American continent, nearest to Argentina, would have been the best guess of many British citizens. That was to change very suddenly when news broke of an invasion by Argentinean troops, taking everybody by surprise – including most of the UK Government. Historical arguments over the sovereignty of the Falklands were thrust into sharp focus as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher mobilized the Armed Forces in an eventually successful attempt to 'win back' the islands.

Previously, the Falklands were another of those far distant outposts (such as Hong Kong and Gibraltar) that had once belonged to the British Empire and had occasionally been the subject of national interest when other countries made claims upon them. Now they had become a focus of renewed national pride as the supposed Argentinean 'imposters' were duly removed by British troops; hundreds died on both sides but the 'natural order' was restored. It would have been very unlikely for any British Prime Minister not to have responded militarily to the invasion, but Thatcher took political advantage of the war to increase her standing in the opinion polls to remain in Office until 1990 when election defeat in 1983 seemed more likely. This is evidenced by the MORI Polls (n.d.): February 1982 showed Conservative 30%, Labour 33% compared with June 1982 – Conservative 48%, Labour 28%. Today, despite a costly military presence maintained on the islands, the 'ownership' issue does not remotely affect British people in their day-to-day lives. This does not mean that they would 'give them away', especially after the financial and human costs in reclaiming them, but they prefer to let the

islanders themselves choose their own future. This attitude is, naturally, antagonistic to Argentina's desire to own the islands.

## The Project

About 80 language undergraduates in two Argentinean and British higher education institutions participated in our project. In Argentina there were 50 future teachers and translators learning English as a foreign language in their second year of undergraduate studies, while in the UK there were 30 first- and second-year undergraduates (some of whom were international students) learning Spanish as a foreign language at BA (Hons) level. All of the students were aged 18–22 and had a B2/C1 language level, as per the Common European Framework of Reference. This project, also described in Porto (2014), was planned as a case study research with elements of action research and had linguistic, intercultural and citizenship learning objectives. On successful completion of the project, we aimed for the Argentinean and British students to be able:

- To analyse and understand the power of the media in constructing stereotypical images of otherness, and its impact on one's thinking and behaviour towards 'others'. Media here refers to any 'text' that can be 'read' and 'interpreted', in a variety of sign systems and mediums, including print, non-print, visual, digital, multimodal or others (Hagood & Skinner, 2012; Handsfield *et al.*, 2009). The students should explore a historical event using varied texts, mediums and resources.
- To read critically media of all kinds (involving processes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Waters, 2006)). In particular the students should challenge taken-for-granted representations of others constructed by the media in each country.
- To produce 'text' critically (Handsfield *et al.*, 2009), for instance PowerPoint presentations, posters, advertisements, leaflets, videos, etc.
- To use contemporary media to engage in intercultural dialogue with others.
- To interact with others on the basis of values of respect and mutual understanding, allowing others to express their viewpoints, avoiding hostility and confrontation and resolving conflict cooperatively when necessary.
- To engage in civic participation in their local communities.

### The first stage: Introductions and attitudes towards the war

The project began by encouraging students in each country to reflect in writing, in their foreign language, on the preconceptions they had of each other, and on their perspectives on the war. This initial writing task revealed

that, at the start of the project, the Argentinean students' prior knowledge of the Malvinas/Falklands conflict was considerably higher than that of the UK-based students. Evidence of this can be demonstrated by the fact that six out of 30 students in the UK stated that they 'knew nothing about it', while the remaining 24 made comments such as follows:

No sé mucho sobre la Guerra de las Malvinas. Pienso que fue entre los británicos y la gente de Argentina. Es todo. [I don't know much about the Malvinas War. I think that it was between the British and the Argentineans. That is all.]

Sé que fue un conflicto entre países. Creo que los ingleses querían tener las islas. No sé nada más. [I know that there was a conflict between countries. I think that the British wanted to have the islands. I don't know any more.]

Hubo una guerra en las islas Malvinas. Eran parte de Argentina, pero ahora son parte del Reino Unido. [There was a war on the Malvinas Islands. They were part of Argentina, but they are now part of Great Britain.] (Initial written reflective task, UK-based students)

On the other hand, the Argentinean students had previous knowledge from school and considered the project as an opportunity to learn more about the conflict, in particular about different positions and viewpoints, as can be gleaned from the following data:

Este fue un tema en el que siempre estuve involucrado y siempre me interesó. [This is a topic I have always been involved in and interested in.]

El proyecto me sirvió para volver a repasar los temas sobre Malvinas vistos en el secundario. [The project helped me revise the issues relating to Malvinas that I had learnt at secondary school.]

In class discussions, the students speculated about the possible attitudes that the English and the Argentineans might have towards each other today, whilst reflecting on the role of the media in shaping those attitudes. Students considered how those media representations and images would affect communication with each other during the online communication exchange.

After this, a research phase followed where students learnt about the conflict using a wide range of texts (magazines, documentaries, interviews, videos, newspapers, etc.). Guided by their teachers' questions, students analysed not only the current media coverage of the conflict in both countries, but also the historical media coverage at the time the war took place, with a

specific focus on viewpoints from the younger generations, including those of the islanders. All of these tasks were done in the students' foreign languages – English and Spanish. To prepare for their class discussions, the students watched the film *Iluminados por el fuego [Blessed by Fire]* (2005) by Tristán Bauer as well as BBC documentaries, and worked with the song *Brothers in Arms* by Dire Straits, the *Time* magazine cover of 31 May 1982 and a variety of media resources.

This stage aimed to familiarize the students with the Malvinas/Falklands conflict given that it had taken place before they had been born and they knew little about it, particularly the UK-based students. On the basis of this research and discussion stage, the students designed PowerPoint presentations about the war and posters using Glogster, Prezi and Mural.ly and uploaded the outcomes to the wiki. The Argentinean students completed the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM; Council of Europe, 2013), which encourages reflection on intercultural encounters experienced through visual media such as television, magazines, films, the internet, etc.

This stage reflects the first level of pre-political engagement, defined in the Introduction to this book as learners engaging with others, and reflecting critically on their own assumptions, and those of the other. Here, the students engaged with others using the resources, documents and artefacts mentioned above. During the dialogic and cooperative work online, described in the next section, this first pre-political level of engagement was achieved by the online exchange between the Argentine and UK-based students (virtual engagement with others) and also by interviews with war veterans (engagement with others in person).

### The second stage: Dialogic and cooperative work online

The second stage was the exchange, whereby the Argentinean and UK-based students communicated online, following written guidelines, using Facebook and the chat option in the wiki but mainly using Skype and Elluminate live! (a web conferencing program that works as a virtual classroom, made available for the project by the University of East Anglia). After an initial period in which they got to know each other, groups of mixed nationalities, of between four and six participants, were formed. The groups explored the influence that the mass media have in forming and perpetuating stereotypes and their impact on intercultural communication. The main task for each group during this dialogue phase was to collaboratively create an advertisement for peace aimed at bringing a point of contact between the Argentinean and the English positions over the conflict. All of the advertisements were uploaded to the wiki.

Initially we decided that the Spanish and English languages would be used on alternate days but we discovered that this was beyond our control

as the students chose the language they wanted to use on each occasion and generally used both languages during each Skype session. Each Skype/Elluminate live! session was recorded and uploaded to the wiki.

Furthermore, the Argentinean students interviewed an Argentinean war veteran in Spanish, who visited their classroom. The interview was recorded and uploaded to the wiki. Similarly, the UK-based students interviewed an English war veteran in person and used Elluminate live!, which allowed the Argentinean students to participate virtually and ask questions. This interview was also made available in the wiki.

After this stage, the Argentinean students completed the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (Byram *et al.*, 2009) individually – a resource designed to encourage people to think about and learn from intercultural encounters. As noted before, this dialogic and cooperative stage of the project is a realization of level 1 of pre-political engagement, which means that learners engage with others to reflect critically and propose/imagine possible alternatives and changes. The collaborative leaflets for reconciliation provide evidence of their imagined alternatives, and some of these leaflets can be found at the following websites:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0twTAmpTno&feature=youtu.be> (accessed over 380 times at the time of writing);
- <http://www.glogster.com/sofigeido/malvinas-ad/g-6l5ivb3voi3c1ssvleap1a0>;
- <http://youtu.be/cIWCCXHMUsW>;
- <http://thefalklandsmalvinasproject.blogspot.com.ar/search/label/Home>.

### The final stage: Intercultural and citizenship dimensions

The final stage of the project was the citizenship phase, during which the students became involved in civic action in their local communities. It is important to note that none of the students who participated in this project had prior experience of intercultural citizenship in their language study. The experience reported here is a first attempt at embedding these dimensions in the English language course in Argentina and in the Spanish language modules in England. Although the students were made aware of the intercultural and citizenship dimensions implicated, they were not required to become familiar with the theoretical framework underpinning the project.

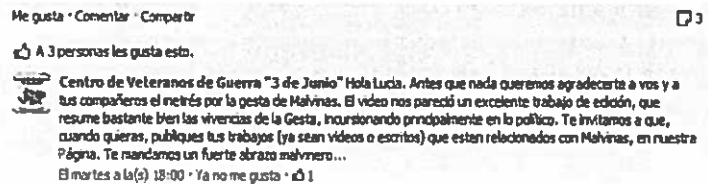
The UK-based students as one whole group planned an event showcasing the Malvinas/Falklands project as part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the University of East Anglia in 2013, but for reasons beyond their control it was cancelled. As a result of this, the UK-based project partners were unable to develop the citizenship dimension of the project, and there are no examples of civic action from them to report. On the other hand, the

Argentinean students participated in a variety of civic actions, such as uploading materials to the wiki (e.g. videos and photographs) describing their experiences, examples of which can be found online (<http://thewarwasalie.blogspot.com.ar/>; <http://www.facebook.com/TheWarWasALie>). The impact of these students' community engagement activities can be gleaned from the Facebook comment made by an Argentinean war veteran shown in Figure 9.1.

Other students planned and taught lessons about the war in diverse educational settings. For instance, one group taught a class in a local English language school (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvXTV5ZwQiY&feature=youtu.be>), whilst others engaged the academic community through lectures or delivered talks in a poor neighbourhood in cooperation with 'Un techo para mi país' [A roof for my country], an NGO that teaches adults to read and write (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wx3z6FTknyY>). Another group created awareness-raising leaflets about the war, which they distributed in their city (Figures 9.2 and 9.3), and uploaded photographs of their civic action to the wiki as testimony of their experience.

Other students engaged in civic action by raising awareness of the war in a radio programme called *Alerta Cotorra*, broadcast online every Thursday evening from 7 to 9 pm using a video as a trigger for the discussion. Others developed teaching materials about the conflict, which were later used by a primary school teacher.

We will present further details later as we analyse the nature of these actions. However, for the moment it should be noted that these civic actions are a realization of levels 3 and 4 of political engagement, defined in the Introduction to this book as 'learners engage with others seeking their perspective/advice, reflect critically, propose change and take action to instigate change in their own society' (level 3) and 'learners create with others a



#### English translation

**War veterans centre 'June 3<sup>rd</sup>'.** Above all, we would like to thank you and your classmates for your interest in Malvinas. We thought your video was an excellent piece of edited work, which summarises the experiences of the war quite well, touching upon the political aspect mainly. You are cordially invited to publish your work (whether videos or written) related to Malvinas on our webpage, as and when you wish. Please accept our strong Malvinas-like hug ...

Figure 9.1 Facebook comment made by an Argentinean war veteran



Figure 9.2 Awareness-raising leaflet about the war created with Glogster

transnational community, reflect together, propose and instigate change in their respective societies' (level 4).

## Analysing Intercultural Citizenship in this Project

Given that 80 students participated in the project, large amounts of conversational and documentary data were produced. Conversational data comprised the chats in the wiki and on Facebook as well as the conversations in Skype and Elluminate live!, whilst documentary data comprised posters, PowerPoint presentations, written reflection logs, videos, advertisements, the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) and the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM). We looked at these data focusing on the questions important to the topic of this book as laid out in the Introduction, although we are aware that there are other ways to analyse the data, such as looking for changes in language competence, analysing changes in attitudes or analysing the nature of the cooperation. In particular, our analysis involved finding evidence for the key components of



Figure 9.3 A student distributes a poster resulting from the project in Plaza Rocha, a centrally located square in La Plata

intercultural citizenship in foreign language education as described in the Introduction, namely:

- (1) an international identification among the Argentinean and UK-based students, different from their national or regional identifications;
- (2) challenging of the 'common sense' of each national group within the international project, through the skills involved in intercultural competence such as observing, discovering, describing, analysing, comparing and contrasting, relating, interpreting, perspective taking and de-centring; and
- (3) criticality involving not only new ideas gained through the project but also substantial changes reflected in concrete actions as per the domains and levels in Barnett (1997), described in the introduction to this book.

We obtained permission and ethical approval to reproduce student material and to illustrate the findings with data excerpts from various sources through the use of pseudonyms in order to ensure confidentiality and non-traceability.

### International identification

As part of the online communication stage, the Argentinean and UK-based students had to design an 'advertisement for peace' collaboratively. As they created their adverts in small groups of mixed nationalities, they considered

its purpose and intended audience, its topic and main structure, the content (the message, using both English and Spanish) and para-textual information (e.g. the visual or audio-visual components of their advert). For instance, one group (comprising three Argentinean and two British students) began the discussion of some of these aspects during a Skype conversation in this way:

- ARG1:** About the advert I think *we should stand for something very clearly, because it is for peace-making. It should be very visual because we want it to be striking.* I think that *we should stand for the end of the conflict.*
- ENG1:** *We could make a video? We could create a script all together, and then each record our own section, and put it all together at the end.* (Skype conversation, October 2012; emphasis added)

The international identification among group members emerged from the beginning of this collaborative work and is reflected here, for instance, in the use of first person plural pronouns (in bold). At the same time, there is evidence of the students' critical evaluation and reflection (underlined in the extract), a component of intercultural competence, in the use of modals like should. The use of should in the underlined expressions simultaneously reflects the first level of criticality in Barnett's terms, 'critical skills', in the first domain of criticality, 'knowledge'. The group was evaluating critically their position towards the conflict. In addition, the group may have unwittingly intended to de-centre the audience of the advert, in other words, encourage them to distance themselves from their own perspectives, and this is reflected in the use of the adjective *striking*. The students appeared to wish to 'strike' their audience.

In the continuation of this conversation, the group made several decisions related to the content and structure of their advert. The international identification is pervasive and we highlight it in bold. The students decided to include quotes from the Argentinean and English veterans that they interviewed during the project (in italics), and at this point the extract reveals the true collaborative spirit of the task as, for instance, one of the students wished to include some words by a veteran but had not realized that they could draw from the existing interviews:

- ENG1:** So how much speaking are **we** having? I would have thought the 'less is more' thing would be better in an advert?
- ENG2:** Not a lot, I think. A bit of background in English.
- ARG2:** Ok.
- ENG2:** Reasons why the war was a bad thing... And then **what we need to do now to change the prejudices.**
- ENG1:** Ok, sounds good.
- ARG2:** *Maybe we could put something an English veteran said in English ... and something an Argentine veteran said in Spanish ... related to peace, of course.*

ENG2: *Do we have those quotes?*

ENG1: *How do we get hold of an English veteran?*

ARG2: *I remember the English veteran you have to interview, he said something like 'there are no winners in war'. That's short and effective.*

ENG1: *I like it. What are we going to get from an Argentinean veteran?*

ENG2: **Could we** have that as text over the pictures?

ENG1: Yes, that's a good idea.

ENG2: Ok. Awesome. (Skype conversation, October 2012; emphasis added)

The group planned the focus of their advert to be on 'reasons why the war was a bad thing ... and then what we need to do now to change the prejudices'. The idea of 'change' is significant because the aim of any intercultural citizenship project is not only to facilitate intercultural citizenship experience but also to foster analysis and reflection upon it. These competences in turn encourage changes of different kinds on the individual as well as changes in the relationships that each individual has with others. The students themselves underwent different types of changes, as we will illustrate later, and in their advert they aimed to instil change in others, in this case by proposing the need to overcome people's prejudices about the war.

In another Skype conversation, the same group identified the main idea they wanted to convey, namely that despite differences, people have a lot in common (in italics). This focus on what brings human beings together, and on commonalities, is again a key tenet of intercultural citizenship. Evidence of the international identification is highlighted in bold and evidence of criticality and reflexivity in Barnett's sense as mentioned before is seen again in the use of the modals should and must.

ENG1: It would be more effective if **we** have a few statements that make an impact, rather than lots of smaller ones.

...

ENG2: Are **we** still going to record **our** voices or will it just be text over pictures with the music?

ARG3: What are **we** going to communicate? I mean are **we** going to talk as Marisa [ARG2] said about prejudices? I think that is a great idea.

ENG2: Yes the prejudices bit will come into the '**what we need to do**' section. Like, 'in order to change the preconception **we** hold of each other' ... etc.

ARG2: Ok, do you want to record **ourselves** or do you think that the texts and the song are enough?

ENG1: I think the texts and song might be enough. I'm not sure you would be able to put the speech in over the song, and still be able to hear both.

ENG2: I agree. White text on the black and white photos with John Lennon over the top will be perfect.

ENG1: Yes, that sounds good.

ARG3: *I think **we should** try to say that, after all, we are all the same.*

ENG2: If the picture fades really slowly into one another...

ARG3: Yes, I like that.

ENG1: Yes, and that's a good idea, Pfa [ARG3].

ENG2: **We** could kind of end on that ... like: '*the war has created this boundary between **our nations** due to prejudice. **We must** end this because we are all the same.*'

ENG1: Yes. (Skype conversation, October 2012; emphasis added)

Evidence of an international identification can also be observed in advertisement for peace shown in Figure 9.4, revealed once more through the use of first person plural pronouns, such as 'nuestra generación' [*our generation*], 'entre nosotros' [*between us*], 'we', 'us', 'for all of us', words like 'generación' [*generation*] and 'together', and first person plural verb forms in Spanish 'nacíamos' [*we were born*], 'tenemos' [*we have*], etc.

This advertisement also challenges the 'common sense' of each national group, which together with the international identification is another characteristic of an intercultural citizenship project as outlined in the Introduction. This occurs in this case through the skills of comparing and contrasting, done visually by colouring the Malvinas/Falkland islands with the flags of both nations and by combining both languages, English and Spanish. It is also done by juxtaposing quotes from the two veterans of the war, as well as quotes by John Lennon (English) and José Luis Perales (Argentinean). This juxtaposition shows that, despite the confrontation represented by the location of both



Figure 9.4 Collaborative advertisement for peace

flags in the advert, there is a message of peace and harmony stressing that the Argentinean and British peoples can live together harmoniously. A distinction is also pointed out between governments on the one hand, and people on the other (*'The governments can do whatever they want but don't let them determine what you think'*; emphasis added). At this point, the advert adopts a general and impersonal tone – *'Si ellos pueden, todos pueden'* [If they can, everyone can] – and speaks to a general audience.

The advert simultaneously speaks directly to its reader: *'don't let them [the media] determine what you think'*. The words of the students, in the initial fragments in Spanish and in English, reflect their views as an international group (in bold):

Para **nuestra generación** ésto es algo que pasó antes de que **naciéramos**, y, por lo tanto, no **tenemos** razones para tener malos sentimientos entre **nosotros**. [For people of **our generation** this is something that happened before **we were born**; therefore there's no reason for **us** not to get on **with each other**.]

**We** shouldn't let the media tell **us** what to think, what to say, what to do, **we** shouldn't continue arguing. It makes no sense at all. The governments can do whatever they want but don't let them determine what you think. **We** can be together and create a better future for all of **us**.

These extracts also show evidence of other skills of intercultural competence, necessary in intercultural citizenship, such as observing, describing and analysing (*'Para nuestra generación ésto es algo que pasó antes de que naciéramos'*) as well as criticality and reflexivity (*'por lo tanto, no tenemos razones para ...'*; *'We shouldn't let ...'*; *'we shouldn't continue arguing'*; *'It makes no sense at all'*; *'We can be together and create a better future for all of us'*). The use of *should* in the sense illustrated earlier in the Skype conversations is to be noted again. These skills of observing, describing, analysing and reflecting critically simultaneously reflect the first level of criticality in Barnett's terms ('critical skills') in the first domain of criticality ('knowledge'). There is also a very critical attitude towards the media (*'We shouldn't let the media tell us what to think, what to say, what to do'*) that shows that this group of students were able to analyse and understand the power of the media in constructing stereotypical images of otherness and their influence on people's thinking and behaviour towards others, which was one of the aims of the project.

In short, the collaborative work involved in the creation of the advertisements resulted in an international identification, where the students from both countries, in groups of mixed nationalities, became a 'transnational community'. Through processes of comparing and contrasting, the groups engaged in initial forms of political engagement, in particular the first two levels called 'pre-political'.

### Challenging 'common sense' and national perspectives as a path to intercultural citizenship

Through processes of comparing and contrasting, the students challenged their own presuppositions and beliefs, and the national basis of many of these, a characteristic of intercultural citizenship outlined in the Introduction to this book. The next data sample is part of Camilo's AIEVM. He chose a cartoon, which was published in *The Sun* on 18 June 1982, four days after the war had finished, and entitled it 'The political grief the Falklands left'. The cartoon shows Leopoldo Galtieri and Michael Foot sobbing for being so unpopular in their countries. Camilo added the caption 'I know your feelings, Leopoldo, no one loves me either!' and remarked that 'They resemble the stereotype of the military leader and a politician, especially by their clothes'. When reflecting upon the image, the processes of comparing and contrasting clearly emerged (in italics):

They are male, both politicians. *One of them is British, the other Argentinean.* The fact that they are together, drowning their sorrows in the 'Lonely heart's club' is an ironic way of expressing that *they are in the same position*, or at least that *now they have the same reputation*. For Galtieri, the fact the Argentina lost the war was like touch paper to a wave of hatred towards him. For Foot, on the other hand, winning the war meant the victory of M. Thatcher and, by extension, the Conservative party, which reduced the Labour party's hard-won popularity. (Camilo, AIEVM, November 2012; emphasis added)

The word 'striking' in the next extract shows evidence of de-centring, which begins when something attracts our attention and we realize that other positions exist apart from our own. As Camilo expressed:

*It was a striking image.* Although one reads about the British views regarding Argentinean politicians, I think the effect of a cartoon like this is stronger. At a glance, the image gives you lots of information. I have seen this kind of image before, but *this one really caught my attention*. The comparison between a British and an Argentinean politician, both suffering for the political effects the war had left, is brilliant. (Camilo, AIEVM, November 2012; emphasis added)

This extract simultaneously shows the processes of comparing and contrasting previously mentioned and underlined in the extract. Additionally, the de-centring observed here began with the discovery of the stereotype of the military leader and the politician: *'They resemble the stereotype of the military leader and a politician, especially by their clothes.'* Later in his AIEVM, Camilo talked about feeling 'astonished' by his own discovery as he engaged



in the intellectual exercise of comparing the two politicians, whose countries had just been at war, now together grieving over the effects of it, as again evidence of de-centring.

De-centring leads to perspective-taking, which is essential in intercultural citizenship as students move away from their own positions and place themselves in 'somebody else's shoes' in an effort to see things from new points of view. In the following example, Camilo says how he thinks other Argentines would feel towards Leopoldo Galtieri and how some British people might feel towards him, whilst he considers English attitudes towards Michael Foot. It is interesting to see that Camilo devotes a few lines to focusing on 'young people' like him, bringing in an intergenerational dimension.

*At the time, I think most Argentinean people would agree that Galtieri is object to mockery for being such a bad national leader have led the country to a state of general backwardness: economic recession, political uncertainty, a sense of dilapidated patriotism and social distrust of the national leaders.*

*Some British people would adhere to this feeling. As for M. Foot, I believe that those who supported him might have felt sorry for him and angry towards the conservatives, who, in turn, must have enjoyed it very much.*

...

*I guess a lot of Argentinean people would have the same opinions as me. British opinions, on the contrary, may be more diverse. I suppose, anyway, that young people may find the need to look for some information about Galtieri, M. Foot, the war, and the history of both countries during the 1980s to fully understand the image. (Camilo, AIEVM, November 2012; emphasis added)*

This extract shows the central role of one's views and prejudices within these processes of de-centring and perspective-taking. Camilo cannot leave aside his personal opinions and evaluative comments about Galtieri and his government: 'Galtieri is object to mockery for being such a bad national leader ... a sense of dilapidated patriotism and social distrust of the national leaders'. At the same time, and at another point in this task, Camilo is able to question the national basis of his own views, an essential skill in intercultural citizenship: 'Because the opinions are generally shared, especially if those people belong to the same age group. *The role of the media and the way the topic is dealt with at school shape our ideas towards the issue.*'

Finally, as previously noted, the project encouraged students to research the conflict, on not only the basis of the initially described planned tasks but also out of their own curiosity. As part of writing his AIEVM, Camilo looked for information about Foot and the cartoonist, as we show below. Not only did he search for information, but he also explored the dictionary and other

internet sources to provide a detailed analysis and interpretation of three elements that appear in the cartoon: a bird holding an umbrella to protect itself from Galtieri's and Foot's tears, a dog and a creature (a female figure with a huge nose and frog's legs) mopping the floor.

*I didn't know who M. Foot was, so I had to research a little on the Internet.*

[Information about Foot and the cartoonist follows]

*Firstly, I think that thing mopping the floor is a supporter of the Tories, because of her (it looks rather like a woman) expression, which is somewhat triumphant and self-satisfied.*

*As for the dog, I believe it may be connected with the English term 'dogfight', which means (Oxford, 2010):*

- (1) a fight between aircraft in which they fly around close to each other
- (2) a struggle between two people or groups in order to win something
- (3) a fight between dogs, especially one that is arranged illegally, for entertainment

*Therefore, the dog could be an allusion to the air conflict during the war. However, in my opinion, the dog represents the task force, all those people who went to the war in order to 'win the islands' (similar to the 2nd meaning). If this is the case, the fact that the dog is crying implies that he also has suffered as a result of the conflict, although such suffering is different from that of Galtieri or Foot. Funnily enough, the cartoonist has decided to present these two as the main characters of the scene, going back to the importance of the political effects the war had had.*

*Finally, the bird (carrying an umbrella) is a frequent image in Franklin's work. (You can check it out here: [http://www.original-political-cartoon.com/gallery/artist/franklin-stanley-1930-2004\\_30.html](http://www.original-political-cartoon.com/gallery/artist/franklin-stanley-1930-2004_30.html))*

*I think that it epitomizes the members of the Conservative Party. In a more general perspective, birds represent:*

- endless freedom
- leadership
- strength in numbers
- hope

*These are the features we could relate to the Tories at the time. After the war had ended, they were immensely popular and a symbol of firm leadership and strength. (Camilo, AIEVM, November 2012; emphasis added)*

The project thus fostered research skills. Camilo, in his free time and moved by his own initiative, investigated two historical figures, in addition to the cartoonist. He used the dictionary, searched internet sites, provided alternative and simultaneous interpretations for the three elements in the cartoon ('the dog could be an allusion to... However, in my opinion the dog represents...'), hypothesized ('If this is the case, the fact that... implies that...'), evaluated those interpretations ('although... is different from...'), projected his own views ('I think that it epitomizes') and reflected and exercised his critical thinking ('These are the features we could relate to the Tories at the time'). Simultaneously these examples show that Camilo reached at this point the first two levels of criticality following Barnett (1997), i.e. 'critical skills' and 'reflexivity', but this time beyond the first domain of 'knowledge' (i.e. different understandings of the war) towards the second and third domains, namely 'self' and 'world', respectively. 'Self' is manifested here in Camilo's self-reflection processes and 'world' is revealed in his reflective research about historical events and figures.

Camilo did all of this using English, his foreign language, in a number of sophisticated ways, and it is feasible to speculate that he may have experienced some language development as a result of this project. However, we cannot ascertain this with confidence since students were not administered a pre and post language test.

### Criticality, reflexivity and critical cultural awareness

The conversational and documentary data revealed the criticality and reflexivity that the project stimulated in the students. The juxtaposition of the Argentinean and British perspectives on the war, on which all classroom tasks were based, brought to the fore diverse perspectives and attitudes and encouraged participants to question and challenge their own preconceptions, biases and prejudices. We have just illustrated how Camilo acknowledged the influence of the media and the school in the formation of the opinions that he and his Argentinean classmates held about the conflict. Another student, Marcia, in her final reflection log from December 2012, said: 'Aprendí que no tengo que quedarme con un solo lado de la historia ya que las versiones no siempre encajan' [I learned that I don't have to stick to one side of the story because versions don't always match].

More specifically, criticality in this project was achieved at three of Barnett's levels. The first level involves propositions, ideas and theories, and refers to what the students learned. This occurred in the first domain of criticality, 'knowledge', and within the first two levels, 'critical skills' and 'reflexivity'. For instance, the students learned about the war from a historical perspective, gained first-hand insights about it through the testimonies of the two war veterans, and also experienced communication with

members of another cultural group (in many cases, for the first time in their lives, especially among the Argentinean students). According to the students' own testimony in logs and feedback evaluation forms, their learning in the domain of 'knowledge' was broad and can be categorized in terms of (1) *Content*, (2) *Technology*, (3) *Language*, (4) *Intercultural communication*, (5) *Critical self-reflection* and (6) *Critical action in the world*, as follows:

- (1) *Content* – gaining knowledge about the war from the Argentinean and English perspectives and first-hand experience about the conflict. This is revealed in comments such as 'fue una gran oportunidad para experimentar una representación más viva sobre Malvinas' ['it was a great opportunity to experience a more vivid representation about Malvinas'] (Carlos, reflection log).
- (2) *Technology* – gaining knowledge and experience in using research and technological tools. For instance, one student said: 'Participar de este proyecto me dio la posibilidad de aprender a utilizar mejor la computadora y obtener otras herramientas para hacer más sencillo algunos trabajos. Es decir, por ejemplo aprendí a usar Skype y Elluminate live!, aprendí a utilizar algunas herramientas de PowerPoint o movie maker, etc.' ['This project gave me the opportunity to improve my computer skills and to use new IT tools, such as Skype, Elluminate live!, PowerPoint, movie maker, etc.']. (Lucía, reflection log).
- (3) *Language* – developing confidence in Spanish and English language skills, with a specific focus on gains in language use. Marta (reflection log) wrote: 'Respecto al lenguaje, logré un poco más de fluidez y seguridad a la hora de hablar y a la hora de escribir aprendí bastante vocabulario y a su vez, comencé a utilizar algunas estructuras que antes no utilizaba, por ej. inversiones, con el fin de hacer mis textos un poco más complejos y con un mejor manejo del lenguaje' ['As far as language is concerned, I gained fluency and confidence in speaking. As for writing, I acquired more vocabulary and started using structures that I had not used before, for example, inverted sentences, with a view to making my writing more linguistically sophisticated'].
- (4) *Intercultural communication* – gaining knowledge about and experience in intercultural communication. This is demonstrated in comments such as 'El proyecto me ayudó a ampliar mi contexto cultural. Me parece que ponerse en contacto con gente de otros ambientes, países o culturas siempre tiene un resultado positivo' ['The project helped me broaden my cultural context. I think that getting in contact with people from other contexts, countries or cultures is always positive'] (Luciana, reflection log).
- (5) *Critical self-reflection* – developing (self) awareness, de-centring from their own positions and being able to consider alternative perspectives. In addition to Barnett's first domain called 'knowledge', within which this type of learning can be framed, critical self-reflection in this category

also illustrates Barnett's second domain of 'Self', involving the students' internal world. The students reflected on their own values, prejudices and preconceptions and became increasingly aware of them. Evidence of this can be gleaned from Carolina's observations in her AIE: 'We were raised in very different cultures and we were taught very differently ... It helped me see the facts from a different point of view ... At the beginning all I had was a very partial view of things and now I can understand the opposite point of view.'

- (6) *Critical action in the world* – reflecting on the civic actions in their local communities that the students engaged in. This involved Barnett's third domain of criticality, 'the external world', at the two higher levels of criticality called 'refashioning of traditions' and 'transformatory critique in action'. We dwell upon this dimension in greater detail in the next section.

### Civic and political engagement

As noted earlier, the actions in the community that the students carried out are forms of civic and political engagement that can be understood within the notion of 'critical cultural awareness' or *savoir s'engager* (Byram, 1997, 2008; Byram & Guilherme, 2000). They illustrate the citizenship dimension of the project and involved the students acting collaboratively in their local communities in a variety of civic actions. Although time-consuming, the students welcomed this phase of the project and suggested some activities that reflect level 3 of political engagement as explained in the Introduction to this book: students working collaboratively with others, becoming familiar with their views and perspectives, and on the basis of critical reflection, proposing change and taking action in their own community. The lessons about the war that the students planned and delivered in diverse settings, such as language schools, universities and community centres, exemplify this. At the same time, these lessons illustrate Barnett's third domain of criticality, 'the external world', in the first two levels of criticality, i.e. problem-solving (how can we teach others about the conflict?) and reflexive practice (can we adapt what we learned to make it accessible to others?).

Level 3 of political engagement had unanticipated ramifications and the civic actions that the students planned illustrate again Barnett's third domain of criticality, 'the external world', but at the highest levels of criticality, namely refashioning of traditions (new and shared understandings of the war) and transformatory critique in action (transferring the knowledge and reflection gained to others). For instance, one group of students contacted and interviewed a primary school teacher who had also been working on the Malvinas/Falklands conflict with her pupils and they shared information and details about each other's projects. This is an example of Barnett's level of criticality called 'transformatory critique in action' within the domain

'world', i.e. the students proposed and carried out a civic action that implied a collective reconstruction of the war. In a reflection log, one of the students described the experience in the following way, showing that they were able not only to take action (do something with an impact in their society) but also to gain reflexive understandings about the war (the level of criticality called 'refashioning of traditions' in Barnett's terms):

I was told that there was another Malvinas project taking place at my city Daireaux and I decided to have a talk via telephone with the project leader. ... The project is called 'Ellos lo dieron todo por la patria' [They give it all for their country]. Here, students during free hours at school, made some cardboard flowers and a big rosary to send to Darwin's cemetery at Malvinas. They also met a number of veterans that are part of 'Asociación de Veteranos de la Guerra de Malvinas' (AVEGUEMA) in Buenos Aires. The objective of this conversation was to exchange our projects with those students involved in the project in order for them to be known by as many people as possible. They really like our Project; they thought it was a great idea to have information about British people, how they lived the war and which were their points of view in relation to it not only a few years ago but also nowadays. (Estefanía, written reflection about the action in the community stage, December 2012)

All the civic actions that the Argentinean students carried out in their community (sharing the project with social media, teaching lessons, distributing leaflets in public places, talking on the radio, etc.) are evidence not only of level 3 of political engagement as we showed earlier but also of levels 4 and 5 of engagement. In the Introduction, the editors define these levels as 'learners create with others a transnational community, reflect together, propose and instigate change in their respective societies' (level 4) and 'learners from two or more societies identify an issue which they act upon as a transnational group' (level 5). The key at these levels is learners from different social groups acting as a transnational group and while these actions were designed and carried out by the Argentinean students on their own, they would not have engaged in these actions without the previous work with the British students in the different stages of the project, which led them both, Argentinean and British, to develop a bond as a transnational group, evidenced in the Skype conversations and collaborative leaflets through the use of first-person plural pronouns.

The students were aware of their political activity and this means that they not only acted in the real world (i.e. carried out their civic actions) but also reflected on the political role they were undertaking. The following reflection log shows that they took action (i.e. they did something with an impact in their society such as sharing a video about the war in Facebook and

YouTube). This is evidence that they reached the third domain of criticality in Barnett's terms, 'the external world' ('we propose to...'), whilst at the same time they gained reflexive understandings about the need for them to engage in this form of political action ('Furthermore, we want to encourage its knowledge and its discussion through this short interactive video'). This illustrates the level of criticality called 'critique-in-action' in Barnett's terms (again within the third domain), or in other words, they engaged in a collective reconstruction of the world through the transnational work involved in the project and the transnational/international identification that they developed as a group.

We propose to show the global community a video which entails different points of view in relation to Malvinas/Falklands conflict. It shows different testimonies from veterans, ordinary people and the government.

The purpose of our proposal is to find out what ordinary people thinks about the considered topic. Furthermore, we want to encourage its knowledge and its discussion through this short interactive video.

This work is addressed to people who use social networks not only to socialize but also to inform themselves about historical matters.

The video has been uploaded in You Tube and then shared on our personal Facebook accounts to promote people to express their opinions about such an important event in the history of Argentina and UK. (Written description of the action in the community stage, December 2012)

## Conclusion

We feel that our first experience in implementing this type of project was a success but this achievement was not without its difficulties. Leticia Yulita's identity as an Argentinean national in the British context can be considered as both an advantage and a limitation that may have impacted on her students. Firstly, her Argentinean identity revealed itself in the choice of topic, for it reverberated with her personal life. The evidence in student feedback forms indicates that students highly valued the opportunity to have access to an insider perspective of the issue as provided by an Argentinean national. However, this same aspect of her identity can also be considered a limitation to the project. Since Leticia experienced the anguish of having a friend involved in the Malvinas war when she was a teenager, it is highly likely that her personal history may have affected

class discussions as a way to deal with feelings and thoughts that had greatly disturbed her as a young woman. This might possibly have led the students' thinking and discourses, and therefore there was a greater need on her part to become self-aware of her ideologies and honest about what she was avoiding and what she was foregrounding, what she was limiting and what she was broadening in her questions and comments in the classroom. This awareness that, potentially, she could have influenced students' thinking and discourses, made her careful about overcoming a potential limitation of the project as much as she could. However, it should be noted that, no matter how hard she tried to avoid bias in the classroom, she could not deny her Argentinean nationality, but tried to monitor it more closely and systematically, rather than intuitively, by carefully thinking and writing questions for class discussions prior to her teaching. This was seen as a way to allow for more control of her bias. However, now with the benefit of hindsight, we believe that keeping a journal and reflecting on it on an ongoing basis would have greatly assisted in making her national positionality less loaded.

On a pragmatic level, there were also a few difficulties relating to the logistics of the project. We were faced with the initial difficulty of accommodating two different academic schedules, which left us with little time for the online communication stage. In addition, given that there were only two months for this stage of the project, we overcame difficulties as they arose. For example, some students needed extra facilitation from us to carry out specific tasks, whilst others experienced delays or lack of replies from their project partners, which prompted our intervention by talking to individual students to ensure participation. Our teaching plans needed readjustment and required an amount of flexibility and versatility on our part. Furthermore, the civic actions in the community stage were time-consuming and required a lot of effort and hard work from the students. As a result of this, we, as their teachers, responded to these actions in equal measure by providing feedback. This involved long hours of reading, downloading project-related materials from the wiki, following internet links and writing our comments and words of appreciation on the shared wiki.

The Malvinas/Falklands project touched upon a topic that is inherently political in nature and in the last stage of the project we discovered that many of the students, in particular the Argentinean students, were themselves already politically active and committed to civic action in their communities. For instance, the action in the community that involved a group of Argentinean students teaching a lesson about the war in a local NGO was the initiative of one student who worked regularly as a volunteer in this NGO. This dimension was not anticipated, and with the advantage of hindsight, we now believe that we could have benefited from gathering data about the students' past experiences in political and civic forms of

involvement as Barrett (2012) suggests (for instance through initial surveys and questionnaires). Furthermore, we are currently refining this citizenship component in our planning of future projects along the theoretical framework of citizenship and human rights education described in Osler (2012a, 2012b, 2013), Osler and Starkey (2003, 2004, 2006) and Starkey (2002, 2005, 2008). One step in this direction, as Osler (Porto, personal communication, 2014) suggests, is to include an explicit citizenship and human rights framework within the project through prior specific consciousness-raising activities. The students' critical deconstruction of the notion of citizenship that we described earlier echoes Osler's notion of 'critical patriotism', which requires a critical stance towards the patriotic and the national within one's nation. Their analysis of this notion in the Skype conversations shows that they were ready for this explicit citizenship and human rights framework.

We are aware that the sensitive and political nature of the topic addressed in this project can make language teachers uncomfortable and wonder why this is their business after all. In this respect, we can bring in the editors' words from the Introduction when they argue that foreign language education can contribute to education by developing criticality and encouraging civic action in the community, or in other words, by combining foreign language teaching with the principles and practices of citizenship education. At the same time, it should be noted that the topic in an intercultural citizenship project of this kind does not necessarily need to be as obviously sensitive and political as here and this book illustrates other options.

Finally, this partnership between Universidad Nacional de La Plata in Argentina and the University of East Anglia in the UK, which grew and developed initially thanks to our personal and professional bonds, was formally acknowledged by our institutions. This formal support has contributed to the strengthening of this bond. After this first project, we also worked collaboratively in another one about the 1978 Football World Cup and Dictatorship in Argentina (reported in the following chapter) and we are currently designing a new project for the future. This is unique to our partnership and indicates that we have moved from an isolated implementation towards a broader approach in which we have adopted intercultural citizenship as a continuous *practice* in our foreign language higher education contexts.

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