

Best practices when “making meaning” through the English Language in an international academic context

Why English, why Southampton, why me?

Experience of FMI
many, many years ago.....



**English?
Who needs that?
I'm never going to England.**

~ Homer Simpson



 Grammarly Quotes

 /grammarly

English as a lingua franca (ELF)

“any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often only option” (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Centre for Global Englishes

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/cge/>

21st century audience ⁽¹⁾

- Student mobility (physically):
 - joint programmes;
 - exchanges eg Erasmus;
 - reasons of cost eg British students going to study in Holland.

21st century audience (2)

- Academic diaspora:
 - lecturers wish to gain experience;
 - travel;
 - build their reputation;
 - work with international peers.
- “Sojourners”.

Growth

“OECD statistics (2014) for student mobility reveal the increasingly international make-up of HE institutions globally with over twice as many tertiary students enrolled outside their country of citizenship as a decade ago”.

Baker (2016)

Virtual encounters

- Physical travel not required:
 - Skype presentations at seminars and conferences;
 - MOOCs with global audiences.

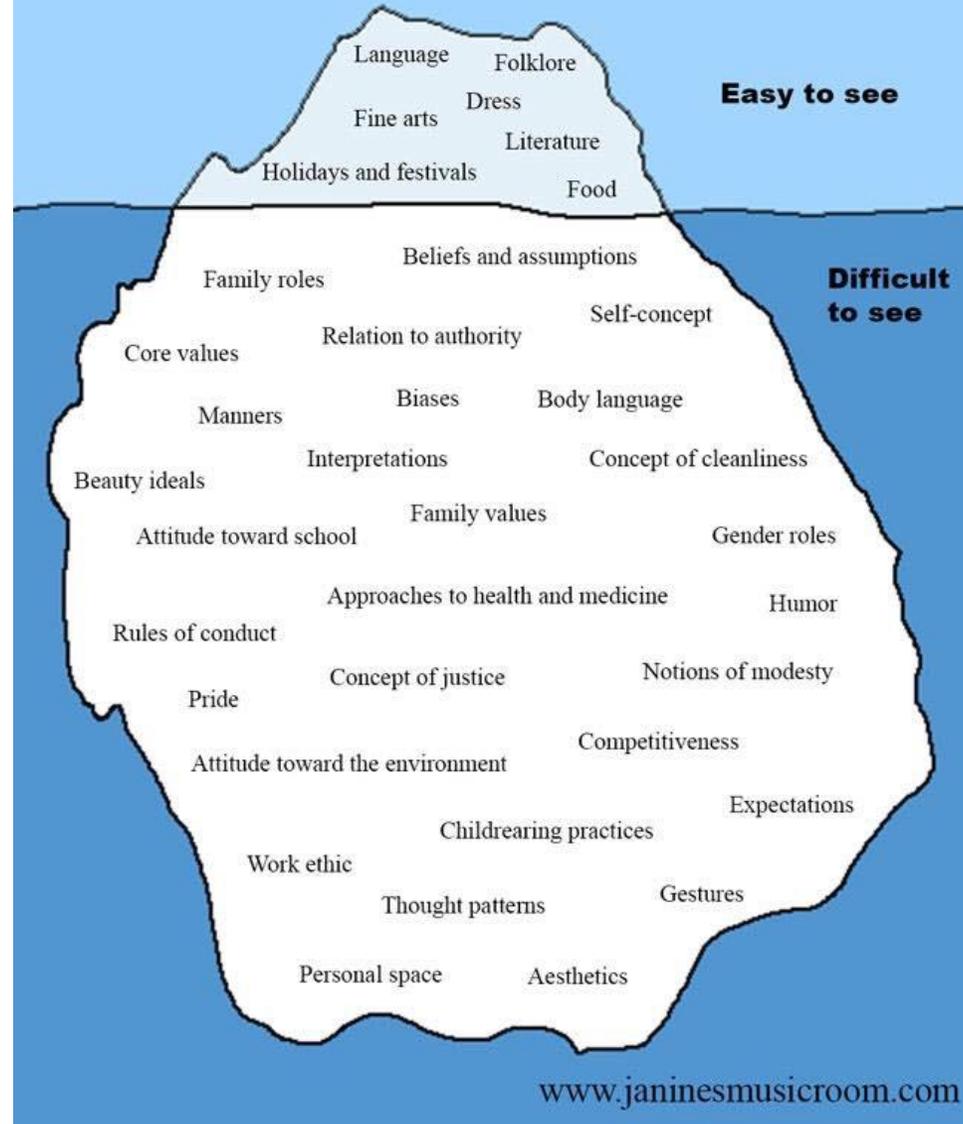
English as global academic lingua franca

- Not just a question of getting the words right (as we have learnt from our co-operation with TPU);
- But rather: good lecturing skills (signalling etc);
- Confident delivery/voice projection/pace;
- Cultural awareness as our audience becomes more international.

What do we mean by ICA (intercultural awareness)?

- What aspects of life/ways of living (and learning) immediately come to mind?

The Cultural Iceberg



Follow-up to this presentation

- Look at the diagram of the “cultural iceberg” and discuss with your peers.
- Are there any aspects of “culture” which may impact on your academic practice in an international context and which you may not have considered before?

ELF and ICA in progress

- Just as ELF and ELF interaction **transcends** the variety of English associated with any Anglophone country or group of speakers, as users negotiate and co-create their own meaning, similarly the intercultural experience is negotiated and shared by the users, **transcending the culture** of any host university or platform.
- **ELF** now being seen as a **multi**-lingua franca;
- **Intercultural** communication now being seen as **transcultural** communication.

Professional development

- What can I do for myself?
- What can I do for my colleagues?
- What systems of mutual support can we set up?

Best practice ⁽¹⁾

- Help the audience to tune into your accent;
- Use your normal speaking voice, as if you were speaking to a friend;
- Be careful of English technical words that also exist in your language;
- Try not to think about your English or correct yourself if you make a mistake;
- Try to prepare your lecture in English from the start (avoid translating);

Best practice ⁽²⁾

- Avoid unnecessary cultural references: double-check understanding of essential cultural references and **write** names;
- Avoid idiomatic expressions (these are ephemeral).

We are not seeking “perfect” English, but rather successful communication of knowledge

Best practice ⁽³⁾

- Exploit the moments of high audience attention:
 - Beginning;
 - End;
 - Audiences remember things said more than once;
 - They remember curious facts;
 - They remember personal anecdotes and stories;
 - They remember things said with humour!
- Let your personality shine through!

References

- Baker, W. (2016). English as an academic lingua franca and intercultural awareness: student mobility in the transcultural university, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, DOI: 10.1080/14708477.2016.1168053
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- Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- The cultural iceberg <http://www.janinesmusicroom.com/the-rest-of-the-iceberg.html> [accessed April 18 2016]

Thank you for your kind attention!

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If you have any comments or would like to contact me, I will be delighted to hear from you:

Mary Page
mwp@soton.ac.uk