

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Exeter
Unit of Assessment: Education
Title of case study: Global Partnerships, study visits and intercultural learning in post-colonial contexts
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research by Martin & Griffiths has had an impact on public and professional understanding of donor-recipient relationships and neo-colonial power structures in global education partnerships and has fostered understanding of global partnerships and study visits as sites for intercultural, transformative learning. Specifically, it has had impact by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> the use of research findings by professional bodies to inform best practice in global learning; <input type="checkbox"/> stimulating practitioner debate about global partnerships; <input type="checkbox"/> developing resources to enhance professional practice in the teaching of geographical and intercultural education.
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Dr Fran Martin, Senior Lecturer (2006-present), Principal Investigator Dr Helen Griffiths, Associate Research Fellow, (October 2009 – January 2013)</p> <p>Since 2000, Education policy in England has encouraged schools to establish partnerships with schools in the Global South as a means of developing pupils' intercultural understanding and global citizenship attributes. For many teachers, taking part in a study visit is a form of professional development that enables them to develop their understanding of intercultural learning and global partnership at first hand. Between 2002-2006, Dr Martin co-led study visit courses to The Gambia and became aware of how entrenched donor-recipient relationships are between countries that had a former colonial relationship, and the profound impact of this on intercultural understanding (Martin, 2013b; Martin & Griffiths, 2012). She developed a study visit course with <i>Tide</i> global learning that aimed to challenge old power structures and develop more mutual, reciprocal relationships.</p> <p>During her first year in Exeter, 2006-07, this became the focus of a pilot study supported by internal funding (Martin, 2008). The outcomes of the pilot were used to inform a consultation process with key stakeholders, supported by a British Academy grant (2007); this helped Martin to develop a successful application to ESRC for a major study (2009-2013) to investigate two educational partnerships as sites for intercultural learning through North-South study visits. Several stakeholders involved in the consultation phase became members of the project advisory group.. The ESRC study gave equal weight to the learning of visitors and the impact on host communities, and gathered longitudinal data to investigate longer-term impact of study visits on professional practice. The international research team, including Dr Raja (India) and Dr Sidibeh (The Gambia) worked with participants to adapt the research methods to be culturally appropriate, and continued to work with participants throughout the project: these were four organizations in two global partnerships (<i>Tide</i>~ global learning UK, with The National Environment Agency of The Gambia; Canterbury Christ Church University, with Goodwill Children's Homes, Tamil Nadi, Southern India). This involved 8 people in lead roles (2x each organization), and 100 participants (visitors and hosts) in study visits held in 2009-10 and in previous study visits (2002-2009).</p> <p>The cumulative findings of this body of research has shown that the intercultural nature of experiences in educational partnerships and study visits requires a refocus on the 'inter', the space for learning <i>between</i> cultures. Work with key stakeholders indicates that such a refocus shows rich potential for changing practices in the areas of intercultural learning and study visits (section 4). The study shows that in addition to the importance of communicative competence, what is learnt from intercultural interactions is strongly influenced by the histories of the societies of those engaging in dialogue (Martin & Wyness, 2013; Martin & Griffiths, 2012). The study also challenges the belief that intercultural communication requires a focus on cultural commonalities and shared goals; findings show that if this is over-emphasised, it avoids the more challenging work of learning about and from differences. Engagement with difference is crucial to the process of better understanding one's own and others' cultures and identities (Martin, 2013a and 2013b). Global partnerships and study visits therefore need to be seen as relational ventures – where spaces of encounter become spaces of negotiation and discussion, and where questions of history and</p>

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power are raised and openly discussed (Martin & Wyness, 2013; Martin & Raja, 2013). This requires that time be built into the process for reflective and reflexive sessions, facilitated by 'differently knowledgeable others' (Martin & Griffiths, 2012). It is proposed that intercultural learning through study visits could be usefully framed by a transformative, relational pedagogy informed by postcolonial perspectives.

3. References to the research

Key Outputs

1. Martin, F. (2013a) Same Old Story: the problem of object-based thinking as a basis for teaching distant places. *Education 3 – 13*. DOI: 10.1080/03004279.2013.819619
2. Martin, F. & Raja, L. (2013) Transformative learning: Indian Perspectives on a Global Partnership. *Indian Journal of Adult Education*. 74(1), 59-80 ISSN 0019-5006
3. Martin, F. & Wyness, L. (2013) 'Global Partnerships as Sites for Mutual Learning' in *Development Education Review: Policy and Practice*, 16 (Spring), 13-40 <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue16-focus1>
4. Martin, F. & Griffiths, H. (2012) 'Power and representation: a postcolonial reading of North-South study visits' in *British Educational Research Journal*. DOI:10.1080/01411926.2011.600438
5. Martin, F. (2008). Mutual Learning: The impact of a study visit course on teachers' knowledge and understanding of global partnerships. *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practice* 2(1), 60-75. <http://www.criticalliteracy.org.uk/>

Key Grants:

- July 2007: £1,740, British Academy small grants scheme: The Impact of Study Visit Courses on Teachers' Knowledge and Application to Practice of Sustainable Development and Global Partnerships.
- August 2009: £323,000, ESRC First Grants scheme: Global Partnerships as Sites for Mutual Learning: Teachers' Professional Development Through Study Visits.

Research quality: the research was peer-reviewed and funded by the ESRC and all articles are in peer-reviewed journals.

4. Details of the impact

Use of research findings by professional bodies to inform best practice

The research findings have been used by *Think Global* (The Development Education Association), a key mediator between government policy and practice in the UK to inform their work. *Think Global* commissioned an article for a practitioner audience (<http://bit.ly/1cdh4YS>), drawing on the findings and proposing a new way of developing pupils' understandings of cultural similarity and difference based on a relational logic. This was circulated by *Think Global* to its network of BNGOs, Development Education Centres, Trade unions etc. Martin presented these ideas to the advisory group of *Think Global* in October 2012, followed by a webinar on December 4th 2012. Reading and discussing this article '*has been included as a recommendation within the School Action Plan, for schools taking part in the Global Learning Programme where we consider them to have 'embedded' policies on diversity and cultural difference*'¹. *Think Global's* submission to the national consultation on the proposed new National Curriculum (<http://bit.ly/16XKtHV>) noted the importance of teaching '*the need for mutual respect and understanding*' and critiqued the Brito-centric emphasis of the curriculum, arguing instead that teaching should be '*fostering a greater understanding of Britain's relationships with the rest of the world and the contribution of ideas, knowledge and people from beyond Britain*'¹. Martin was subsequently appointed as a trustee to *Think Global* in July 2013¹.

Tide, a teachers' network promoting young people's global learning through engaging with global perspectives (<http://www.tidec.org/>) has been a key stakeholder² in the study from the outset and has used the research findings to inform its own materials and activities. The research is reported on their website (<http://bit.ly/19HmMxM>) and has informed their development of ethical practices in North-South study visits. For example, they have written online guidance for leaders of study visits (<http://bit.ly/1hN06kH>), informed by the research and in which the phrase '*differently knowledgeable other*' (introduced by Martin & Griffiths, 2012) is used: "*Being supportive is one thing, but we have also had a crucial role to play in moving learning on, and that means offering a challenge as a "differently knowledgeable other."* For example, where an issue has come up,

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where there has been conflict in the group [for example, around child sponsorship or charitable giving], then we have had to think hard about how best to intervene". Tide's Director has noted that Martin's research 'challenged our thinking about commonality, difference and global learning, and influenced the way we explore these ideas, particularly with primary teachers' and 'has significantly influenced²' their approach to facilitating DFID 'Global School Partnerships' courses and subsequent 'Connecting Classrooms' courses. Tide has recently secured a major European Community grant with University of Potsdam, Germany, and Federación Española de Religiosos de la Enseñanza – Centros Católicos, Spain: "Young people on the global stage; their education and influence". Martin's research was 'significant in shaping our successful bid' which 'will draw heavily on thinking around intercultural and transformative learning'.

In addition, Martin has begun collaboration with three other organisations on developing approaches to leading study visits based on ethical, relational pedagogies. *Lifeworlds Learning* (a Community Interest Company) and *DEC South Yorks* (a development education centre) both run yearly study visits for teachers to locations in the Global South. Along with Tide and the *Geographical Association*, they worked with Martin between November 2012-January 2013 to develop ideas for working together to enhance practices in ethical study visits; plans for putting ideas into action are ongoing. *Intercultural Youth Exchange UK* is a GAP year organisation that invited Martin to present findings of research at their AGM October 2012, attended by 50 people.

In Europe, Martin was invited, on behalf of the European Commission Department of Culture and Education, to be a member of a 'diverse group of leading scholars / experts from around the world' to take part in consultation process developing common ground and strategic thinking about 'intercultural competences' and related applied fields. This forms part of the European Union Delphi consultation, the outcomes of which will inform future policy.

Currently, Martin is working as consultant to a CBeebies programme³ for 3-6 year olds that is in formation, and is using the research findings to influence young children's perceptions of cultural diversity. She is advising on how to avoid conveying unintended messages that reinforce stereotypes (environmental, cultural, social) through the series and merchandise.

Stimulating practitioner debate

An interim conference (2011), and four end-of-project conferences (<http://bit.ly/168yaT5>) were held in 2012 in Exeter; Birmingham; Banjul, Gambia; and Gandhigram, India, bringing together academics and practitioners to consider the implications of the research findings. These were attended by 300 stakeholders, representing interests from e.g. government departments for education and curriculum development, the British Council, Development Education Centres, Teacher Unions, NGOs such as the Red Cross and Oxfam. The conferences involved presentations from northern and southern researchers, and workshops led by those [e.g. the Project Manager of Tide, members of the National Environment Agency EfSD sub-committee, TORP Project leader Tamil Nadu] involved in the project. They engaged practitioners in interpreting the research findings from their own perspectives through a focus on the intercultural relations; transformative learning; living with difference; and mutual partnerships.

The view that global partnerships are in danger of being a form of neo-colonial activity was reported in the *Times Educational Supplement* 5/3/10 (<http://bit.ly/bEcauq>), stimulating considerable debate online and in the letters page the following week eg (<http://bit.ly/GM18lp>). Martin's research was cited in a further article in TES March 12th (<http://bit.ly/19vpLva>), using it to question the charitable and patronising practice of a Welsh school towards its African counterpart. Martin also contributed to a blog on the Development Education website (<http://bit.ly/1bnJoXr>), challenging government policy proposals on development education in the light of understandings gained through her research. The NAHT published a summary of the research in an issue, *Global Learners, Global Schools*, of their Education Leadership series (<http://bit.ly/H7ohhV>).

Martin also gave a keynote address for the practitioner network, *Teacher Education for Equity and Sustainability* (TEESNET) at their annual conference in July 2013 (<http://bit.ly/1ftMkXd>). The address explored conceptual ideas around knowledge, power and legitimisation in global learning and partnerships, and the conference was attended by 70 delegates from schools, development education centres and NGOs. Evaluations from delegates included: "Very thought provoking – need to read more, think more & talk more about her ideas. Will definitely go to website; Fran really made me question, again, my thinking on intercultural awareness. Made me think about the millennium goals with new eyes; This was so clear, it addressed power and discourse and our accountability as people of privilege in a way that challenged but drew us in.

Presentations in this area can be over intellectual and alienate; this was not, It was grounded and human”.

Close involvement with the Geographical Association (GA), including Martin’s role as President from September 2011 to August 2012 has also stimulated practitioner debate and engagement with the research. Martin’s Presidential Address at the Annual Conference in 2012 (<http://bit.ly/lz84En>), engaged the 470 delegates with ‘Geographies of Difference’, and was subsequently published⁵ in *Geography*, a journal for lecturers, teachers and students of geography. Examples of delegate feedback indicating impact on professional thinking and practice include one delegate who felt *‘inspired to go forth and try new things!’* and another who *‘felt reinvigorated to go back to my school and shake everything up!’* Five articles for practitioners⁶, written by members of the research team including the non-academic partners, have been published in *Primary Geography*, subscribed to by over 1800 teachers and teacher educators.

Developing resources to enhance professional practice

Drawing directly on the research findings and based on relational epistemology, an online learning resource (<http://www.gpml.org.uk/>), *Frameworks for Intercultural Learning* (FICL) has been developed in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University (GPML research participants). The resource aims to stimulate debate about issues that lie at the core of global intercultural learning and was launched during a presentation at the GA conference in April 2013. Subsequently, three secondary schools agreed to trial the materials with their students, and a link to the resource has been placed on the Department for International Development funded global learning site for schools, *Global Dimension* website (<http://bit.ly/19vyPQQ>). Analytics for the website show: 4,179 visits in the first 5 months. Top hits by country: USA 1,716; UK 763; China 221; Australia 81; Canada 26. Spikes in visits within the UK, Australia and Canada can be related to Impact and dissemination activity by Martin in these three locations.

Martin was invited by one of the trial schools, British School of Brussels, to give talks to parents (30+), senior students (200), Y10-11 students (100+), senior staff (25) and primary staff (10) on 19-20 September. The school has developed a scheme of work for their senior students modules on Ways of Knowing and Global Learning, based entirely on the FICL resource. The Head of Geography and lead tutor for International Baccalaureate⁵ has noted that how they will deal with similarity and difference through the module has changed as a result of Martin’s input, and that they are now reviewing their global citizenship practices through their partnership with schools in Northern Ghana. This has in turn led to an invitation to be a keynote speaker at the International Baccalaureate conference in Italy, October 2014.

Martin has also acted as a consultant to the British Council⁶: she advised on the development of an online CPD resource for teachers, *‘Education for Global Citizenship’* (<http://bit.ly/10tLkwj>), commenting on original ideas and reviewing materials pre-publication. The site is designed for use by teachers in all countries participating in the Connecting Classrooms initiative. Two of her publications are used in the CPD activities: one to stimulate thinking about neo-colonialism, and other to stimulate debate about what it means to be a global citizen.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (numbers below refer to superscript numbers above)

1. Factual statement from the director of Think Global
2. Factual statement from the director of Tide~ global learning
3. [Name supplied] Producer, BBC Children's Television.
4. Practitioner Publications

Martin, F. (2012) ‘The Geographies of Difference’, in *Geography*, 97(3), 116-122.

Ballin, B. & Sedgebeer, M. (2011) [The Same, But Different](#), *Primary Geography*, Spring: 22-24

Griffiths, H. & Allbut, G. (2011) [The danger of the single image](#), *Primary Geography*, 75:16-17.

Sedgebeer, M. (2011) [Little Changes Lead to Big Things](#), *Primary Geography*, Spring: 25-27.

Hamilton, M. (2012) [Images of India](#), *Primary Geography*, Autumn: 8-9.

Martin, F. (2012) [Geographies of Difference](#), *Geography*, Autumn: 116-122.

5. [Name supplied] Head of Geography and lead tutor for International Baccalaureate, British School of Brussels.

6. [Name supplied] Global Education Adviser, British Council