



Working with Intercultural Communities of **English** Language Teaching



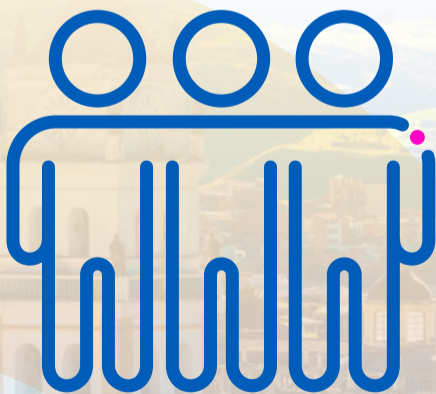
Mariella Condorena Mamani (Peru)

Works at José Gálvez High School,
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Rodrigo Guimarães Prudente Marquez Cotrim (Brazil)

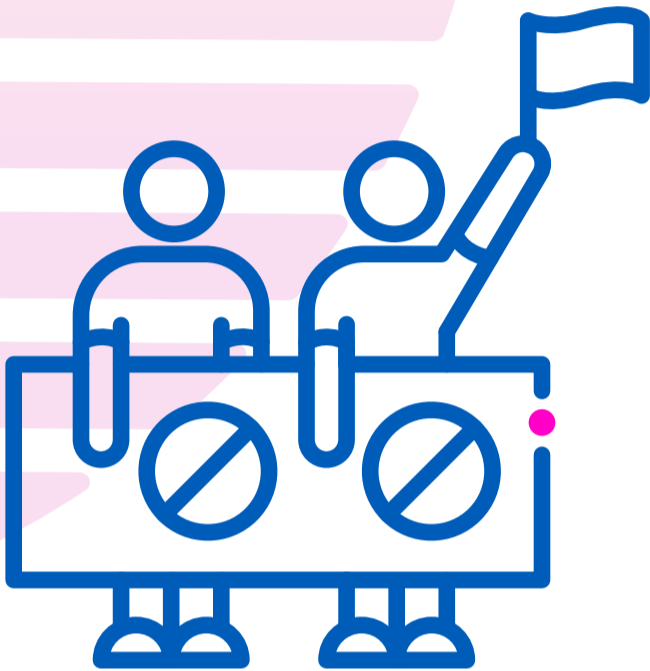


Both **Peru** and **Brazil** are multilingual and multicultural countries. In the past in Peru there were estimated to be over **300** different indigenous languages, however now there are only **50** different languages left, **72** if you consider different dialects.



There are three official languages with Spanish (**spoken by 80%**) and Quechua of different types (**around 14%**) being the most common. Aymara (**around 2%**) spoken in the mountains on the borders with **Bolivia**.

In **Brazil** there are around **2018** different languages, most (**201**) of which are indigenous, but some western languages, like German, have official status in some states. Although there are differences in the number of languages, the issues in the classroom are similar.



In **Peru**, Mariella is interested in trying to get the students who are in her classes attracted to learning English by getting to know their local culture and language (Aymara) and developing with other teachers learning materials that promote different aspects of their local culture including local celebrations, foods, and cultural practices, examples include All Saints Day and Aymara New Year.

Rodrigo made similar points about cultural diversity in classrooms in **Brazil** pointing out there could a number of different language backgrounds in the classroom. He wants to emphasise the multilingual nature of the context in the materials the students produce. However, he pointed also out that all classrooms are intercultural, and we need to deal with the students as people taking into account how they identify themselves. We need to teach with a knowledge of who our students are, not simply the lesson plan that is in front of us.

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Key points around intercultural teaching

1

Listen to the students

Get them to tell you more about their customs and cultural background.



2

Develop trust by showing the students you are prepared

to take into account their needs as learners.



3

Develop strong relationships

Building, appropriate meaningful relationships with students has been shown to be very helpful in student development.

4

Engage

with and respect local cultures and traditions.



5

Agree with students and teachers

on the languages you will use to translate unknown words, or to explain tasks when students are low level.

6

Share ideas and work with other teachers

work together on creating materials and discussing classroom practice.

For further information on all aspects of NWOT see:

<https://americas.britishcouncil.org/new-ways-of-teaching>