

Treasure Island Pedagogies Episode 41

Podcast Transcript

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Tünde Varga-Atkins

Hello everybody, this is Tünde Varga-Atkins. And this is episode 41, treasure island of pedagogy podcast today from the Centre for Innovation and Education at the University of Liverpool where we share our lightbulb moments, teaching props and pedagogies. As we cohabit our Treasure Island, the space for contact time for study. Our three guests today are Hilary Briffa, Luciana Brondi, and Gustavo Espinoza Ramos. So can I ask each of you to introduce yourself briefly and your original degree, subject and current role? Yeah.

Hilary Briffa

Thank you so much for inviting us 10 days. I'm really looking forward to this conversation. My name is Hilary Briffa and I'm senior lecturer in national security studies in the Department of War Studies at King's College London, where I run the MA and National Security studies. My original routes were in international relations, and then I came on. Through into war studies, but I've also got a secret second life where I'm midway through a second part time doctorate in higher education research, evaluation and enhancement at Lancaster University. So that's my 2 hats on.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Wow, lovely. I love. I love that secret line for lifelong learner. Then yes, yes, student who went to school and refused to ever leave. Brilliant. Luciano, can we come to you next?

Luciana Brondi

Hi. Hi. I'm I'm I'm a lecturer in global health and developing development in the Institute for Global Health and Development in Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh I. Lead the sexual and reproductive health hub as well in our Masters degree. And my original discipline was medicine. I'm a medical

doctor by background, and I also have a specialty infectious diseases clinical specialty. I also have a master's degree in epidemiology. In the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine years ago. And yes, I came to the field of global health and development by, you know, a quite unusual trajectory, because I I had my clinical background, went a little bit into public health and then it started working internationally in. Many different countries, you know, across the globe. And then I landed. On this so.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Brilliant. Brilliant. Thank you, Luciana and Gustavo.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

Hello. Hi. Yes, I'm Gustavo. I am a senior lecturer in the in the School of Management and Marketing at the University of Westminster. And my original kind of studies were in business management. Although then I. Kind of move around business and IT mining engineering now back to to business again. Thank you.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

And and thank you. So welcome all. All three of you. And let's start with talking about light bulb moments. So this would be little moments when you felt your students were getting it. What? What? Whatever. And whoever your students may be. So what made this happen? What made this light bulb moment? Things happen.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

Yes. Well, my light bulb moment was about when I I was giving a lecture. No, she was in sustainable business class and as a way to revise the concept I tried. OK, let's try this. No, it was. I tried to do like a fun care about exams, right. At least in business studies, so say OK, but let's do something fun with the with the exam. Let's make it an in class test, but very informal. So I use this software called. Everywhere called competitions, it's similar to another tool called Kahoot, on which students put their names and at the end they need to answer some questions they want to gain some points, which is based on the gamification of learning. So I try to do so. Let's see what happens, right? So and. For it was very interesting because some students, some of them, were more engaged, very passionate about that, OK. And when they compared the answers, you can see the leaderboard. Who is winning after each question. So I I designed 5 questions. OK. And I increase

the level of difficulty. So the light bulb moment comes when. Every questions when we have the leaderboard, it was interesting, the revision moment after this question. Why this selected some specific answers and then because it seems like in my feedback from my students verbal feedback, they kind of enjoy or like it or said OK, that's it. I want to use it more often. So what I decided is in 12 weeks. Classes I used it maybe 8 times. OK so it was a bit difficult just to have competitions in eight weeks. And I asked my students to put the same name that they used the first time, so I organised at the end of the these 12 weeks in week 11, I think, or 10. I have my last kind of competition. So I said OK, let's have a winner. 2 winners. The winner of the day and the winner of the winners. So I have to sum all the points in the times that we play. So. So the idea was to to reward consistency in participations, but also in the last day when we do it so, so that so for me it was a very interesting that also the student model evaluations reflects that the students liked it in the lectures. Actually they asked me why you don't do this in the seminars as well. No, the the little issue is like I I this is a model. For 340 students. So might be difficult to I and I manage a team of 6 lectures so might be difficult, but we still I'm still doing it little by little. Try to take my train, my team as well and and and and and do it. So isn't very interesting. Let's see what happens next year. Maybe I want to improve it somehow. That's fine. Yeah, thank you.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

And you said this, this was about consistency as well. Did you notice anything in terms of the students achievements or academic understanding as a as a result of this consistent approach?

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

I see it's something very interesting. Some students who tend to be very quiet in the lecture, they perform very well in this in this game. So for me was another interesting thing they discovered was this. Giving spaces from the students. Maybe I don't like to talk, but I'm very performed well in in tests, otherwise performs better. Maybe in in written assignments. Also for me also very interesting way that OK, that's interesting if dividing spaces and would be interesting if if one of my assignments will be in class test for example or example would be very interesting. I I don't have it right. It's just reports, but for me it helps me just to prepare the students when they have to work for the assignment.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Great. Thank you. Anyone, any thoughts or reactions or do you want to share your light bulb moment?

Luciana Brondi

I I I really think that this is this is great when you introduce game and as I've been teaching in higher education in the UK for 20 years as of. April this year I'm quite old and is always a little bit you. So unsettling for you when you start introducing something, and you always think ohh, this is grad grad students kind of material or even primary school. So I'll tell you about something. I I teach a module that is quite broad and it's called global public health and social policy. Very ambitious. We aim to form the basis for the students that come to our masters. So they know everything, but the base is at least of what is international health or otherwise called the global health these days, and one of the classes is about a subject that I'm a specialist in, but I only have that session to give to the students, and it's about infectious diseases. So I always struggled because the students seem to listen to me, you know, and I I would give them a lot of information about how this disease is are transmitted, what are the public health measures, etc. But I never saw a lot of involvement from them, so I had a light bulb moment during a Christmas time because my daughter was playing a game and I'll I'll show it here. And you probably know it. It's called headbands, which is putting something on your head. And then you don't know what it is and you. You know you have to ask your audience, what is it? But you can't. It's only yes or no questions. And so I thought. Ohh, that's it. So what I did was to before the class started. I sent to the students. We're going to have a little game here. And you have to sit in groups and get this out and ask your fellow colleagues. The right questions. If they can only answer yes or no and you have to guess which microorganism I'm talking about. And I said, well, you have to think about the right questions and that's that's what I want to teach you is not about how much you know about it as a public Health Protection or because you're not going to be. See, you're not a specialist, but if you write, if you have the right questions, you can get to it, and then the students, you know, a little bit shy in the beginning, we started doing it and the class came into. So I I I felt like, OK, I'm I'm really rewarded. There was a great engagement and also. This this feeling of autonomy and you know that the students taking a little bit the initiative and they discussing between each other and and in a ludic kind of game type environment. So a little bit like Gustavo has said. Because it's it's also very important sometimes to take away the the pressure from them so they can. And so lots of things we could think about it first, you know, bringing a game which looks something quite maybe childish, but at the same time, you know, you're dealing with something important. Second

thing, they are assessing each other. And third thing, like small groups. So I thought was quite nice and that they taught me a little bit. But I mean, I had this light bulb moment and you know, when I was at home anyways.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I love that serendipity of a Christmas conversation or Christmas game. And and I think for our audience, I don't know if. Like I forgot now what the game is called is when you practically like have a post it note on your forehead and you can't see what what's written on it. But yeah, you, we we have a photo as well for our audience on the blog. But yeah. Thank you Luciana for sharing that. That sounds great. Hillary, what's your Libo moment?

Hillary Briffa

Yeah. First, they'll come in at this stage because I think on a podcast, people obviously can't see us. So I will say Luciano. 'S not always. Because she said that before. Yeah. And you can't see her, but she.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I like to say that. Was willing to come in me when? You already started me on the sentence.

Hillary Briffa

But I I loved what you were saying about gamification. In fact, when I was 18, my first ever, you know, proper job as a when I was growing up in Malta, I was working at a language school and I got the teaching English as a foreign language qualification and we used to do so many interactive activities, in part because. You want to keep hungover Spanish students awake when they'd rather be on the beach than in the classroom, but I think a lot of those principles about how to make sure they're at the time enjoying their summer while learning, but actually derive to our classroom too, and learning should be fun. That's why we should have. Them in in the classroom. So I'm so on board with that and I've never tried the the exact activity you've talked about. So I'm already excited to go back to my classroom and do that well. If I I share a little bit about my light bulb moment and this didn't happen exactly in a classroom. It happened on a plane. So I'll take you back later. I'll tell you a short story as well. So a couple of years ago when. I started teaching my course at the beginning of the academic year. I had this student who used to turn up in his hoodie, sit at the back, hood up chewing gum. I'm not saying

anything and I thought, Oh my goodness, you know, this this guy was clearly so cool and doesn't want to get involved. Anyway, what can you do and sort of went ahead and about a month later my 2 colleagues and I had this crazy escapade where we took 100 students on a field trip overseas, and so we had to get them all on a plane. And so I got on this on this flight, this long haul flight, and I could see there's nobody sitting next to this student. And so I looked at him. He looked at me. You know what you can see in. Somebody's eyes that they're going toward sit. Cloud so of course I sat down next to him and we started talking and I got to know him a little bit on the flight. So he grew up on a farm. He was really overwhelmed by life in London. He was working at a supermarket to pay for his degree. And the more we talked him, I realised he wasn't at all disinterested. He was really shy and he was just trying to cope in London. And he was really thoughtful. Really sharp. Anyway, we went on this trip, and then afterwards we got back to the class. I'm not going to say, you know, his entire personality changed, but I knew a bit better how to bring him in on topics he was interested in and to try to engage. Engage him in the discussion and at the end of the year I got this e-mail out of the blue where he said, you know, thank you so much for taking the time to get to know me, he said. I really struggle with social anxiety and but you created this environment where I felt I could contribute to class and he said I didn't contribute to every seminar, but you helped me grow academically. And personally, and for me, this was my light bulb moment because it wasn't about when he finally got it, but it was when I did I really realised, like how easy it is to overlook the quiet students to think that because someones quiet, they're disengaged. And I really liked what Gustavo just said about creating that space for people who have different ways of learning to show up. And so I think this is always what I kept. I know it doesn't exactly answer your question, but it's what I kept coming back to when thinking when I was thinking about a light bulb moment because it showed.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

That's beyond sensitive.

Hillary Briffa

Me. That education isn't just about getting the content across and we always say that, but we do tend to focus on it naturally. But rather I'd say it's about it, really. Show me it's about that environment we build that trust that we earn and sometimes you can have the most powerful learning journeys that are actually happening very quietly so. That's something that I was really grateful for.

Speaker

Sure.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, that is so powerful and it's exactly this kind of light bulb moments that we are after and. And so as you said, making that that those connections with the students is so important and that and it seems to be that that seems to be a theme from all your conversations and creating that space for learning. Since China. Outside the classroom or where where it starts, it can start in Christmas or it can start on an aeroplane.

Hillary Briffa

Yeah.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

It doesn't matter, but all all leads to.

Hillary Briffa

That it's a it is increasingly, I think a challenge, you know, with the size of our classes, with the pace of higher education, to actually have the opportunity to get to know these students properly. And if we hadn't gone on that field trip, I don't know if I'd have had that opportunity to really make that meaningful connection, which then had such an impact on the pedagogy on the classroom. Experience. And so it's one of the things that. That I'm increasingly concerned about with the pace of everything we have to balance in in higher education. So there is also a reminder to me when I get very busy with all this admin and all these other things, well, what do I need to prioritise to make time for it to actually be able to have a meaningful impact. Luciano.

Luciana Brondi

Yeah. I just wanted to comment on your lovely experience. I think it's really important and I I think it was Paul afraid. You know you you were you. You both are more into the education side. So the guy who wrote the pedagogy of the press and. So I think one of the things that he said was, you know the the real educators, so he he liked to contrast the teacher with the educators. So we've we've got loads of teachers, but we have a few educators, people who really bring, you know, education to people in, in the sense that it should be. And I think 1. Nice phrase he had and I hope I'm not translating in a funny,

cumbersome way to English, but he said. The the real educator is that one that all of a sudden learns. And I think that that was what happened with you because you know it, it didn't come like, oh, I need to take this and I'll, you know, learn about this with this guidelines or take a course. But I think the practises as. That Fraire says as well. Which is important in education, you know, taught you and that interaction with the student is is beautiful.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

Yeah, yes. And also something that maybe to to to to add that I remember when exploring these moments, I discovered something called class assessment techniques. Which basically includes and I see the similarity with gamification and this kind of in class test, right? So techniques or cats, right? That's something actually touch my attention. And sometimes when they have to give some training to their colleagues or I always mention cats. No. But now because I I talk about. That's very off. I don't know. Sometimes, maybe maybe I should adopt A cat. Maybe. I don't know. Maybe it's a sign.

Hillary Briffa

Definitely, definitely a doctor cat that's going to be the main recommendation to everyone listening to this podcast.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I think people might need to know a bit of contacts for that that we had. We had some lovely pet visitors before we started recording, so that's where the cat is coming from. But maybe, I mean we know it as well. The benefits of of pets in the classroom and especially since school with the benefits of of pets in. In a higher education environment, in virtual ways, it's definitely have enhanced our experience as educator. And and students. So OK. So we have had some brilliant light bulb moments and we're now rolling over to our Treasure Island and we want to take some teaching props or pedagogies with us in addition to what you've discussed so far around playful techniques and beer techniques and and. Other approaches and connecting with our with our students and creating space for for people to engage. So what would be your teaching props or pedagogies that you would add and bring along to the island?

Hillary Briffa

I can go first this time, so we reverse it because I think it builds quite well on a on a similar thing that. Gustavo and Luciano, we're doing, which is also a

means of having active learning, SO11 teaching approach that I use quite often is a trial format. So in our in almost all disciplines, you'll study big thinkers or historical figures and we often. Have want to get students to discuss the advantages or drawbacks of their arguments, and so I love to to put these figures on trial and I've printed out a sheet which says, you know. They've accidentally landed in this time machine on the roof of kings. And are we going to send them back for being outdated or are there? Is there thinking relevant today or something to that effect and so assign students roles as defence prosecution witnesses? Which is a great opportunity for them to get in the spirit of thinking about the pros and cons of the arguments and the ideas of people like Klaus Fitz or two sides, or Machiavelli in a in a more engaged way. But I also use it as a chance to then. Support them with how these skills will translate into their essays afterwards, so they have to call witnesses for the prosecution rates over. So I tell them this is later in the debrief. I'll tell them, OK, this is how you bring other sources into support for, you know, or critique. And I I really enjoyed this exercise because it combines research. There's argumentation, there's. That the and it really encourages critical engagement not only with the content but with the assumptions and the values that underpin the different topics that we discussed in our field. And it's also a very good leveller because again students with different abilities can shine in different ways. So some might be stronger. In writing the defence or the the concluding remarks on very confident ones really stretching the cross examination and they really get into the spirit of we've had, you know, all sorts of witnesses getting cold through time and. So I'd say that's an approach that works really well even in a short amount of time and and it works very well online because you can structure how long everybody speaks, how long the the rounds work and and the very first time I trialled it was actually when I was on a an American fellowship and the. Leads. We're worried about me trying, as I said, you know, it's a bit complicated, I don't think.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

We'll we'll get.

Hillary Briffa

It in quick enough and and I really stood by with that. I thought this was a good idea and against actually their recommendation I did the class and then it was a massive hit. And so I think the the reason I mentioned this was to tell people not to be afraid, to experiment and to try things even as long as you've planned it properly. You believe in it. Because. And and not to underestimate the students because they didn't think the students would be able to to do it,

but actually they can really surprise you. And in the trial you also often have students that you think are the quietest and shiest who come up with the punchiest argument. So I definitely would encourage that too.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Sounds amazing. Hillary, can you just run us through the as you said, if people are listening to this and may want to try it, just run through a very brief timeline, let's say of this activity. I mean, how many weeks or would week 1 would be handing out the roles or what what would how would that? Just I just.

Hillary Briffa

Do it at the start of the at the start of the seminar, at the beginning. If students know we're going to be discussing the ideas of Bismarck, for example, at the beginning of the session, I hand out a sheet of paper that actually sets out what everybody's roles are, how long they're going to to speak for. I give them a. About 10 minutes in groups to prepare their. Prosecution and defence. And then there's time to for each side to ask each other questions and time to wrap up at the end. And I always make sure that the simulation doesn't run the entire hour, but. That I've left. 15 minutes at the end to debrief because it's important that students don't leave. Just thinking I really had a good time. But we just played a game. You want them to, to have had a chance to think about what are the key content points we could take away from this, but also what are the skills? So like I mentioned before with calling witnesses and and so on. So you could adapt it to different kinds of modes of teaching. I've only ever done it where you've got that one hour session and I give it to them then and there at the beginning and but I could conceivably see a way where you could give them the instructions and the rules the week before and then run it the week after and give them longer to prepare. And it just depends. On on on what you're trying to accomplish so you know we always start with the learning outcomes and then with things backward design, we just go back and see. What? How do we design the activity? But I found it can work really well and you can put almost anything on trial. We've put people, but I've also put the liberal international order on trial so that and I'm sure that.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I was just gonna say this probably could work with concepts as well, or some. Yeah, that would be really interesting. Yeah.

Speaker

Thanks.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Really. And that that's thanks for sharing that, Hillary. OK, Gustavo. Luciana, have you got?

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

Teaching prop that I would like to reflect on is it's not about. A practise I follow may maybe might not be pedagogical, but I think so we can. I believe that we can teach students when we create this foundation which is emotional connection. That's that's how I call it. Maybe have a different name in a conceptual name. But this emotional connection, how do they this emotional connection? Remember their names of the students in math sounds a bit. Wow. How you can remember the names, right? I teach. As I mentioned before, 340 students in my in my in my module daily. But in a week I have maybe 4 seminars classes, 25 students each and it is in the seminar class where I practise this. How? Well basically I print an attendance list per seminar. So when the students attend when they have to do a thing, activity in the second hour. Especially is where I take attendance and I go to each table. OK, what's your name? Take. So I try to remember their names and what I notice from that is it's kind of different things sense of belonging, because the students realise, OK, he remembers my name. So I need to engage when it's about, for example, who don't engage very often, somebody maybe a student who start attending. And week Week 7 or 8 for any reason I I said well, I cannot see you here, but try to include it in this way. I'm very sorry. Not that maybe I don't remember your name. But as you will more often I will remember your. Name. For sure so. Maybe as as a way that maybe in college. OK, maybe I should attend, right? But also is that accountability? Because when the students they don't provide in my in the the right answer, maybe it's a way that OK that's a very good point. Let's build on that. So but calendar name so make the students to engage more customised I don't know if the right term the class. OK. And secondly, 25 students, well, not only 25 attends the class 1010 years of of teaching, I never seen 25 in one class, usually 15 names, 15 students. So maybe I need to remain 15 names in in the four similar classes No 15, four times 15 students. And how I try to remember and I I don't think I have a very good memory, but they have some some techniques, right? I tried to associate their name with something close to me. I don't know. Maybe a a famous actor actress, a movie, an uncle. My brother, my family member or friends and also. You may notice I have Australian

accents. My mother Tony is Spanish, so I tried to. I told the students this. No, I will try to remember your name. How I pronounce it in Spanish, so next to the attendance list I wrote it. How to pronounce something Spanish, right? So they notice my effort to do it. So sometimes if their names might be in my case, not nobody common names they I see that you have no call me like this. No, but the short name. No. OK, is that you want to call you? OK, that's how so. And again, this kind of very implicit, informal kind of connection with the students made them to engage. A bit more and then from that is the foundation I can teach them. I think different type of parts. In addition to that, it's not only just remember my name or remember my students names an activity that I think I should do more often is is an activity that I gather from from clown from clowning and stand up also. Techniques which is when they work in small teams, imagine six students OK or five. Imagine so the first class. OK, now I remember your name. I will let you remember the name of. The. Other ones. So let's see with different people who you don't know. And does the thing OK everyone in that team is going to say their name. No. Hello. I'm Gustavo. This Sunday. No, everyone. OK, now the person is going to repeat the the the name of the previous person until we finish the circle. If somebody make a mistake, we rotate again. The small team of five and we need to say again each name and then the second round is OK. You need to repeat the name of the. Person. So it's a very interesting way that they tried to remember their name, my name as well is a fun way. Might takes or between maybe 30 minutes, 40 minutes. And it's the big one, which usually is more introduction about the model. OK, so it's a fun way and again create sense of belonging somehow. And the students especially imagine second year. Like interest students who they don't know. Otherwise it's it's a kind of interesting way that they can engage in in the class. So that's kind of my my proof that I recommend not easy. I know maybe they consuming sometimes, but I don't know. I think it's the foundations just to then start teaching them something. More.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

I mean, it's just he while Hillary was talking about the emotional connection with the students making connections. So I was gonna ask, is there anything Luciano or Hillary you do about remembering me sends out such a it's a simple but very powerful idea. Yeah.

Hillary Briffa

Quite good with names, so usually it's it's not too bad, but I also. Teach hundreds of students. So I I can relate to this stuff. And So what I do is I do take it. I can't take attendance in lectures because there's too many students.

But in the seminars I do. And and and that helps me each week to try to learn the names because after Week 2 you can't keep asking somebody what's your name because it's quite awkward and I've got some colleagues who do get students to put their names on a card on the on the piece of tape on on a piece of paper on the table in front of them. What I try and do is and I'll take attendance at the beginning of every seminar and then I just try to use the names. As much as I can, because you know when you repetition helps with remembering and and I try to create some opportunities even beyond the, you know, that that allowed the students themselves to be in the driver's seat because then they often introduce. And the last time, introduce yourselves at the start and the opportunities even outside the former lecturer, to just get to know them a little bit because it's a Gustavo. So when you can associate people with with something about them or with you associate them with something, you know, where someone you know then that can help too. But it it can be a bit challenging. There a few weeks in and there's just that one student who's that you can't remember. So I think it's then just about trying to make that concerted effort. Luciana, what about you?

Luciana Brondi

Well, I can't say that I'm very good with names. I can't remember some names, but I do tend to remember more. The students that stand stand out for some reason, either because they speak more. Or because they? Don't come and I have to contact them. But I I I make an effort as well to, you know, as I'm asking to to to try and say their names if possible. My teaching prop would be drama and dramatisation because I I have you know, it's not. Long that I started teaching this discipline, this specific issue of sexual and reproductive health, and as you can imagine, it's not a a type of teaching or learning that is always easy to do that, and particularly when it comes to. Sexual health. And that's a big part of the whole module, is to introduce the the concept of sexual health. And make sure that people talk and discuss issues because you know it has been a big push recently in the field for for, you know, valuing sexual well-being rather than only reproductive health for instance. And one of the things I I did, and I think it worked very well, I had one quite controversial thing, which was which was you, you might have seen yourselves in the supermarkets. There are some sexual well-being items that have been recently. Put on the shelves and anyone can go and you know, reach for, you know, not only lubricants or preservatives, condoms and things like that, other things for pleasure as well. And this is a very difficult subject to teach for anyone. And So what I did was to project on. In the you know, screen a supermarket shelf with all of those items and make you know them to dramatise someone coming to the supermarket who was blind. And asking

for help to find this. And from that initial thing, we started discussing the the good or the bad of being able to. Autonomously or on your own initiative, rich and buy these products at you know. And it was I I teach. My class is usually like 80% international students from all different backgrounds, from different parts of the world. And it was quite interesting to see their response and it was easier because they would criticise the colleague there. No, you shouldn't. You shouldn't do that. I I'm. I'm against it. So it was easier because it was not me saying anything, but it was a great, you know, I I believe so much in this ice breaking thing. So you can start. Then discuss. Thing in a different level and I thought it was very good.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Umm I I I did wonder whether cultural differences might be also one of the reasons that this could help explore and things like that. So sounds like Greece area. Again it links back to Hillary your idea of role play so but from a sort of different perspective. Different purpose. So sounds brilliant. OK, so I mean, on this island, we've got lots of learning as well as your own learning that you're adding to this as well with your experiences. But then shall we do? Is there anything else before we talk about luxury items? We I think you already started bartering and we've already pointed out some of the connections between all of your teaching props and light bulb moments. So you've been very busy teaching and we just want to hear now your luxury items. So what what would be the thing to bring? To help you relax off duty from teaching.

Luciana Brondi

I would bring my running trainers. I relax. You know, doing that and also my swimming suit and my goggles to swim. So I'll be good. Sounds lovely. And I think there's probably lots of opportunities on the island to do that. I hope the sun is shining and is the water temperature is a bit warmer than Scotland. Not that it would put me off. I swim here but.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

But might be nicer. Yeah, Hillary.

Hillary Briffa

I'm not a a big runner. I have to say so. Hats off to you with with that one. A lot of my colleagues are very into into that, but I think I would probably bring my headphones if I had to pick a physical item because the way I decompress

is I love to go to. A lot of concerts and gigs, so anything from indie rock to dubstep. I think music really helps me to decompress, to reflect, to reset. I mean I love arts and culture more broadly, like music, theatre, art. That's why London is my favourite city in the world. But if I could only pick one. And I think that's what I'd go for, because I think there's something, you know, quite restorative after a long day of thinking about conflict and war and strategy that actually music is something that helps to relax and also brings people together. I think through I found in my life, in my time in the UK that it's at concerts or festivals that I meet people. All sorts of backgrounds and all over the world, and you're sort of united by this one thing that you have in common and and you know the the saying that music speaks across language and culture, I think really resonates with me. So I think that's what I would bring to the island.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, that's lovely. Your your work is conflict, and then your relaxation is uniting and yeah. Yeah, sounds sounds very pertinent, yes.

Hillary Briffa

Absolutely. Yeah. I mean, we do all say it is the thing we say more we study it, not because we're war mongers, but you have to understand it to be able to prevent it. And I do want to try and think about if there's a way that I can. Music somehow into my teaching, I've got a colleague who has a playlist on his morning every week. There's a different song, but I only managed to come up with one, which was for the week of intelligence. I was going to do placebo songs surrounded by spies. And then I just couldn't think of any. For all the other topics. And it sounds going to keep thinking about it and some friends and I are on this. App called Music League where he tweaked there. The theme and everybody picks a song that matches that theme and you can put it in and then everyone has to vote anonymously. So I'm thinking I might start something like that with students just as an ice breaker and and maybe come up with see if I have a theme related to the course each week and then they can come up with the songs for me rather than me just giving them the songs. I think we're good.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, it's not.

Hillary Briffa

So that's something I haven't tried it yet, but I think it might be quite fun. So I'm thinking of maybe trying to do that and then I can discover new music and they might enjoy it. 2.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, that sounds brilliant. It might even work with Gustar was name idea, because if they bring a song you, you will again might remember the name of who brought with song. But young Gustavo. What you're.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

No, actually in terms of what the Hillary mentioned, right, so something that I try in my class, my lecture is for final year undergraduate students, OK and my classes are Mondays, 9:00 in the morning until 11 and for my second year undergrads the module was on Fridays and Thursdays, 9 in the morning. As well. So something I was trying to kind of similar with with Hillary mentioned trying to put music at the beginning. But again, it depends on the music, because students have different kind of preferences, right? So some music maybe also depends of the day and the time of my classes. Just to maybe make thing alive. So for the morning I want, I would like them to be awake, so maybe whether it's electronic music or something that just to given that ending that. Boom, boom, boom. Boom music so they can just wake up. And then after 5 minutes of music Bang, I want to start my class, right? And try to use kind of that element but again depends depends of of of at the time. Imagine a class at 1:00 or 2:00 PM after the lunch time. So they want to falling asleep for sure. So maybe you find out the right music. It's very interesting. Still trying an error long time ago when I was a student as well. I was kind of digging. Letting letting parties in the University of Warwick. So maybe try to bring back that kind of memories. But but with related to the luxury item. Well, I I saw this this luxury item. If I will be in islands with other colleagues. No, I'm missing colleagues. Maybe try to know them a bit more. I was just thinking something like a stand up comedy guide. How so? Basically, imagine we have this guide, maybe I can facilitate that. So we'll be interesting. For me a fun way to know another colleague, another academic in a more fun way, you know, is a good way to practise storytelling. I can teach many storytelling techniques, so I can know the. Bit more and they can normally afford a bit more, right? So that would be an interesting way just to create a strong bond with us within us, not just referring in the in the usually not that the conversation about research no papers thing which is I always do it. Of course, but very interesting to know as a person, right? Using storytelling and the stand up comedy. So yeah, double kind of my my my luxury it.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Philly and stand up comedy, music and and sports to relax. Sounds like an easy link and the fun island as well, so thank you. That's brilliant. I think we've reached our end of of conversation. This has been fascinating. Thank you so much. Ohh yeah, sorry. Go go on.

Hillary Briffa

I know. I'm just wondering. It's not the part where we barter and think about what the island would look like where.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Do you want to do that? Yes, we can do well. Now I know what they're bringing to the island. So OK.

Hillary Briffa

I think we've got a a good. I think it sounds like we're all people who who would want quite a lively time, I think are you know, are would probably have quite some very dramatic games on the island during the day and then maybe some policy briefings around the campfire at night. You know, we can do your quiz, Gustavo, to pass the time. And then we can go swimming with Luciana and and play the game. I definitely think the thing I'd barter I can give some music recommendations, but I'd take in the. The game of putting that card on your head, I thought that's a really good idea to get students used to concepts. If you have a lot of vocabulary on the course and and I think you know with it if I brought in my trial it might be an island where you'd have like cows bits and bell hooks arguing on the beach while the rest of us could then go and have a jam session. Cool off in the evening, so I think sounds like a pretty good island to be actually I think would. Yeah. Gustavo can teach us some Latin means and as well. Yeah. We've got stand up. We've got music. We've got Latin dance moves. DJ, we've got everything. Who wouldn't want to come?

Tünde Varga-Atkins

And you're.

Hillary Briffa

To our island.

Luciana Brondi

Lillian. Luciana. Well, I think I'll have to take the the more boring role of chopping the wood and building the fire because you guys will be just like to crickets, dancing, singing and doing comedy. So. OK, fine, I'll do that. I don't mind you. Hilary sent me. Sunday send me a an axe please and I can sort it out.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Really. And you think of everything. Luciani, you clearly want to survive. And for this island to go and be sustainable as well, which is a very good thought, isn't it actually damaged?

Hillary Briffa

She'll make the boat to get us back to shore, but we'll entertain her the whole way.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

That could maybe the team to think about the theme of the island. No, the the one with the, the one with the drama or the one with the with the music or or the one with the cats. Right, that.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I think, yeah, you've you've really conjured up very vivid, vivid island experience. So thank you so much. Is there anything any final additions or any final thoughts before we sail away with the boat that Luciana builds and having fun in the meantime?

Hillary Briffa

I think this is just such a it's been so much fun. So just to say thank you for inviting us to be on this and it was really nice to meet you as well. Gustavo and Luciana, thank you for the inspiring ideas and I'm looking forward to our boat journey back to the Latin music and the comedy show on board.

Luciana Brondi

Thank you very much. It was very nice to hear your experiences as well. It's always good and exciting for me to learn about teaching. I love teaching. I have a long life and passion for it.

Gustavo Espinoza Ramos

And also it's it's great just to be in a place where I can be inspired with different colleagues that you think. That they're practising very wonderful techniques as well, and we're always learning right. Sometimes it's very energetic to to, to, to be around this very inspirational colleagues. So thank you for the invitation to to be part of this. Thanks.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yes, thank you. And I think that's why we are continuing with with these episodes because the you are the ones with your passion for education that keep these islands imaginations going forward. So thank you so much. It's time to sail away. But we're having fun. Thank you for our Deans for listening. If you enjoy the episode. Please subscribe to our podcast and you can also join as a guest. If you fill out our expression of interest form and goodbye for now. And finally a big thank you to our guests today. Thank you.