

IATEFL Slovenia Newsletter

AUTUMN ISSUE 2009, no. 46



2009

Impressions from summer schools for teachers
Some classroom secrets revealed - part 1
Teaching ideas
Conference announcement

Conference announcement

17th **annual IATEFL Slovenia conference**

Coping with Generation Z

will be held in

Terme Topolšica, 11th – 14th March 2010

With key speakers

Sheelagh Deller, Joanne Collie
and others to be confirmed

For updated information on the speakers,
registration forms and speaker proposal forms
please check our website

www.iatefl.si

As every year, the conference will provide
superb education, socializing, relaxation, and fun.
We are looking forward to seeing you all again.

Registration is open to any member of the public who wishes to attend the conference. Registration fees differ depending on when you register and the delegate's membership of *IATEFL SLOVENIA* or *IATEFL*. We strongly recommend that the delegates register early and take advantage of the early-registration and member rates. In order to register, conference participants should send a completed registration form and a completed *IATEFL SLOVENIA* membership form (if they wish to join *IATEFL SLOVENIA* and be entitled to member rates) together with proof of payment to the address on the registration form.

Editorial

Welcome back to school, our dear readers!

It seems to me that every summer holidays end even more quickly than they did last year. Or is it just me feeling this way? Well, as we, the teachers, know, everything is possible.

As you will see, we have some very interesting articles for you to read again. It is great to notice some of you found the time to help us create this autumn issue – thank you all for your contributions!

In this issue, you will find the announcement for our next conference. You can read more about our IATEFL and its work on our web page: www.iatefl.si. There you can also find all the necessary information about the competitions that will be held this year. You and your students are kindly invited to take part in it.

Dolores Malić



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Christmas time activities

by **Cilka Hančič**

I have been teaching English for more than twenty years. My students are mostly disabled teenagers, who are either on their wheelchairs or have other health problems. Some of them also cannot write themselves, so they use a computer or they have an assistant who writes and makes copies for them.

Our classes are smaller; there are not more than 12 students in each class. But otherwise they are not different from all other students of their age.

I try to make our English lessons more agreeable in the last week before Christmas. We listen to traditional English songs, in some classes they like to sing them too. Jingle Bells, We wish you a Merry Christmas, Santa Claus and If you're happy are some of the most popular.

We also talk about traditions in England at Christmas time, the food, the presents, the decorations, Christmas tree. I usually give them copies from a book or a dictionary about traditional celebrations in England. They have to make posters about this celebration for their homework and then we choose the most beautiful one to be put on the wall.

We can also play some games, for example »the coach ride«, which we practised several times. The teacher reads the story about a coach ride. Whenever one of the characters is mentioned in the story he/she has to stand up and walk around his/her chair. The term coach applies to all of the wheels and the horses. As some of my students are on wheelchairs they cannot stand up and walk but they move round on their wheelchairs. They have a lot of fun with this game.

A game where we read aloud certain conversations (Buying a jumper) is also very interesting. We need a shop assistant and a customer. The sentences can be read in many ways, you can shout, cry, whisper, your mood can change from pleased, angry, sad etc.

Students practise the vocabulary used in a shop and also have some fun. For this year I have decided to use the song Last Christmas. Most of my students know this song already, so it won't be difficult for them to find the right words.

Before we're going to listen to it in class, I have prepared some activities to do with it.

First I'm going to leave out some words and I'm going to ask them to complete the gaps. In some classes students will try to fill the gaps without any help. Later on when they've found all the missing words, we can explain some phrases that these words complete. Then we'll listen to the song and they can check what they've done.

With weaker classes I can do the same task differently. First I can give them a list of words that are missing in the mixed order. They will have to choose the right word. I can also write the words on small pieces of paper, and give each student about five words. They will try to complete the gaps first with their own words, and then move around the class, communicate to each other and find other missing words. They will ask questions as:

What is this word? – Is it a noun (verb, adjective)? – Is it a person (animal)? – Is it a part of the body? etc.

When they find all the words, they'll complete the song, and we'll listen to it and sing it at the same time.

The words I have chosen to leave out are the following: heart, year, tears, special, shy, eye, surprise, sent, fool, kissed, again, room, eyes, ice, rely, shoulder, apart. Some of the words appear in the song more than once, so I'll have to leave them out each time they appear.

When they find all the words and have their complete songs we can also discuss the meaning of some phrases that are used in the text as the following: **to catch sb's eye, to be a shoulder to cry on, to have a fire in one's heart, to tear sb apart.**

HEART	YEAR	TEARS	SPECIAL	SHY
SENT	FOOL	KISSED	SURPRISE	EYE
AGAIN	ROOM	EYES	ICE	RELY
SHOULDER	APART			

This can also be an opportunity to talk about feelings that are expressed in the song, their opinion about special holiday time, how do they feel about the time they spend together with people they care about etc.

I've got the ideas for these activities on the seminar The freshness in the learning of English, by **Branka Božič**, prof in the year 2000.

Last Christmas

[Chorus:]

Last Christmas

I gave you my **heart**

But the very next day you gave it away

This **year**

To save me from **tears**

I'll give it to someone **special**

Once bitten and twice **shy**

I keep my distance

But you still catch my **eye**

Tell me baby

Do you recognize me?

Well

It's been a **year**

It doesn't **surprise** me

I wrapped it up and **sent** it

With a note saying "I love you"

I meant it

Now I know what a **fool** I've been

But if you **kissed** me now

I know you'd fool me **again**

[Chorus]

A crowded **room**

Friends with tired **eyes**

I'm hiding from you

And your soul of **ice**

My god I thought you were

Someone to **rely** on

Me?

I guess I was a **shoulder** to cry on

A face on a lover with a fire in his **heart**

A man under cover but you tore me **apart**

Now I've found a real love you'll never fool me **again**

[Chorus 2x]

A face on a lover with a fire in his **heart**

A man under cover but you tore him **apart**

Maybe next year I'll give it to someone

I'll give it to someone **special**.

Mind the book

by **Anže Perne**

The purpose of this short piece of writing is to give teachers some food for thought and also to think closely about what our class books project to students. This year's School Parliament offers a very current topic, which should be dealt with in any school – STEREOTYPES, RACISM, and DISCRIMINATION. We live in the society where racism is unacceptable, stereotypes unfavourable, and discrimination something we should all (try to) prevent.

A form of discrimination that is very topical in Slovenia this year is homosexuality, because the government has proposed changes to the Family Code, suggesting that same-sex marriages be enacted. I believe the role of schools is crucial in this respect as students learn what basic human rights are at various school subjects. We, as teachers, should (or even must) promote these rights and make sure that our students do not only understand this only on a superficial level, but really comprehend what these rights mean and what discrimination means.

But unfortunately I came across a problem in consistency. I'm not exaggerating if I say that it shocked me how we as teachers try to promote one thing and some of our class books try to do the exact opposite. For example, a certain English class book includes a text about a French festival called Solidays. This festival is about the fight against HIV/AIDS, which is also a very important topic for students. But the shocking part is that the author of the book (assuming the author wrote it,

because the source cannot be found) felt compelled to tell our students the following information about the festival organizer: "He is not infected and he is not gay." I was completely flabbergasted that such a connection could exist in a 21st-century class book. Do I need to point out why this is problematic? Many students discriminate homosexuality as it were, but to tell them that there is a connection between HIV/AIDS and homosexuality, is downright "vulgar." I apologize if I seem to be upset, but such implications in class books make it hard to deal with such topics with our students. Of course, we tell them they should ignore such sentences and why they should so, but the class book and this particular sentence won't simply go away. Once they read it, it's hard to forget it. Especially because you put emphasis on it by discussing it in detail.

I hope teachers recognize such problematic notions and react accordingly. As Francis Maude, a British politician, once put it: "It always seemed to me a bit pointless to disapprove of homosexuality. It's like disapproving of rain."

Source:

"Quotes about Homosexuality." Quote Garden. 30 January 2008. <<http://www.quote garden.com/homosexuality.html>>

Classroom secrets: How Slovenian teachers teach English

Part one: The teacher's use and knowledge of language

by **Mojca Belak**

I teach Practical English Classes at the Department of English, and for a few years now I've been getting very shy students who not only keep very quiet in the first few months of their studies but generally seem unfamiliar with new approaches – 'new' sometimes also meaning the communicative approach. When asked why they do not take a more active part, students usually claim that they are not used to speaking in class and are not familiar with a different sitting arrangement (circle), working in pairs and groups, and so on. All this led me to wonder what teaching English is really like behind the closed doors of Slovenian classrooms.

This paper is based on research carried out among students of English at the Department of English, University of Ljubljana between 6 and 10 October 2008, the first week of studies. Out of 296 students, who took part in it, 96 were first-year students, fresh from their secondary schools, 84 were in the second year of their studies, 55 were in the third and 61 in the fourth year. They shared experiences in English lessons which they were given in primary schools in 126 different places around the country, from Ajdovščina to Žužemberk, in 39 grammar and 20 other secondary schools

The questionnaire I handed out consisted of 27 questions which checked various aspects of English classes in primary and secondary school, namely the teacher's use of English and knowledge of culture, the use of audio and visual materials, teaching methods and rapport with learners. At times students were also asked to give feedback on their practical English classes at the Department of English.

The teacher's use and knowledge of English

Teachers need to know the subject they teach well in order to be able to pass their knowledge to their pupils. Besides, as culture and language are never separate (in this series of articles I shall deliberately leave out the current ELF debate), the teacher's knowledge of the cultures that are behind the target language is very important. This doesn't mean that the teacher is expected to spend every other summer in an English-speaking country, but an interest in cultural issues and sharing cultural knowledge with their students can be very important not only in making the language interesting but also in breaking up the usual classroom routine with some first-hand information which can be immediately compared to Slovenian habits and culture. Observing the language together with its culture gives students a better insight into the language-culture interaction in the case of English as well as their mother tongue, Slovenian.

1. What was the ratio between teacher talking time and student talking time?

Teachers in primary school seem to speak quite a bit. According to the results of this research most spend 70-90% of their time in class speaking. This makes sense especially at the lower levels of teaching English when students acquire the basics of the language and are not yet able to produce much speech. Besides, teachers are models, and listening to them is learning, too, often even better and more effective than listening to audio material, simply because students can see the teacher as well as hear them and therefore get information also from the non-verbal part of the message. Despite all this, 90% of TTT on the whole may be rather a lot of speaking from the teacher's side in primary school. Secondary teachers rely more on class participation – their most frequently stated talking time is 60% followed by 70%.

2. How often did the teacher use Slovenian?

It is true that primary teachers need to spend a lot of time explaining basic grammar points and introducing new vocabulary, and that students learn the target language also by simply listening to them – but in this case teachers have to mainly speak English. Practice shows that this is not always the case. How can a child in primary school learn a foreign language if it is the teacher who spends most of the time speaking, and they practically always speak Slovenian? Do learners then still learn English or are they simply informed about it?

According to students of English, as many as 40% of primary school teachers spoke Slovenian practically all the time, while almost half of them used it only to explain grammar, as it is recommended in the curriculum. 10% used it in emergency only.

The situation with secondary teachers is very different. More than half (54%) used Slovenian only in emergency and 25% to explain grammar. 10% didn't use it at all, and to balance this, the same amount of secondary school teachers used it all the time. It would be interesting to know the impressions of students who were taught English in the total absence of the mother tongue. Very recent research shows that using mother tongue is important up to a point and should be present in teaching foreign languages. Overdoing this, however, can lead to diminished exposure to the target language and results in unsuccessful students.

3. How often did your teacher tell you about novelties in English, e.g. new words such as *flexitarian*, *earworm*, or adjective “sad” meaning “beden”...?

This question explored how interested Slovenian teachers of English are in the development of the language they teach. English is changing the same as any other language and if a teacher doesn't keep their language up to date, they can end up teaching what native speakers stopped using a while ago. Their learners, however, belong to the new generations and are entitled to learn the English of today.

According to the results, almost half of primary school teachers (48%) never ventured into the wild field of new vocabulary, while their secondary school colleagues managed to rather regularly inform students about novelties in English. Table 1.

Table 1

When I mention novelties, I don't really refer to very new changes in the language. I am interested in the shifts that happened in the last few decades, possibly after the present teachers or their teachers graduated, which may mean that those now teaching may never have really registered them, especially if they lost direct contact with the language and do not immerse themselves in present-day English by reading newspapers and magazines, watching films, documentaries, and the like.

The novelties I have in mind are the following:
It is still very rare for first-year students of English to be familiar with the use of *they* meaning *he* or *she*, for example.

If you call someone a *swot*, you disapprove of the fact that they study extremely hard and are not interested in other things. (Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, 1987).

They has been used instead of generic '*he*' for more than two decades now. It was first used in a Cobuild dictionary back in 1987, which means that the change has been around for a bit longer, probably at least a quarter of a century. This, again, means, that teachers who are younger than 50 should be familiar with the '*novelty*'. However, from my own experience, during the first few weeks of practical English classes, first-year students still feel the

urge to change *they* into *he* (or sometimes *he* or *she*) in sentences such as *At this stage, a student can share their understanding of text with another student while working in pairs.* When I talk to teachers, they seem to be well familiar with this '*new*' use of *they*, so how come the learners are blissfully oblivious of the change that happened before they were even born?

Another bit of language that should get updated is dates. Our students tend to stick to writing dates in an old-fashioned way instead of embracing changes that happened quite a while ago. I'm writing this on 8 Aug. 2009, but if first-year students wrote down the date, they would more likely than not write 8th Aug. 2009. This, of course, is not wrong. From a teacher's point of view, it is also highly useful, as it gives class an ideal and almost only chance to practise ordinal numbers. However, life goes on, and English has moved a step forward into simplifying this, namely the '*th*' got dropped. Writing the date '*fully*' is still perfectly all right, just quaint and maybe a bit surprising, especially if the person who uses this form is rather young. Miss Marple would happily write it traditionally, while a native English speaker teenager would not.

Another common out-of-date expression that Slovenian speakers seem to lovingly cling to is "*centigrade*" instead of "*Celsius*" when talking about temperature. The entry from wikipedia explains it all: The Celsius temperature scale was previously known as the centigrade scale in some countries. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celsius>) '*Previously*' doesn't give a precise time when this word stopped being used. Another definition, this time from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/centigrade>, is more explicit: Because of confusion over the prefix *centi-*, which originally meant 100 but developed the meaning 1/100, scientists agreed to stop using the term *centigrade* in 1948. The term *Celsius* is now standard. "*Centigrade*" hasn't been standard for more than sixty years, yet it is not just Slovenian teachers of English that stick to it. *Adria Airways* crew use it regularly when addressing travellers on their flights. (I shouldn't be too harsh on *Adria Airways* though. They did learn to pronounce *comfortable* rather well over the last two decades. In the eighties, they still insisted on pronouncing it as a four-syllable word, with '*table*' in it.)



Speaking of mistakes, I think it is important to let students know that it is not only learners of a foreign language who make mistakes. Native speakers can sometimes be pretty good at that, too. And as Slovenians repeated the wrong case for "otroci" so often that now half of us cannot really tell whether to use "c" or "k" when we say pri otro_ih, z otro_i, for example, native speakers of English started doubting "its" and "it's". I got the following example in an email from a colleague, a native speaker teacher of English: /.../ we ended up with responsibility, more or less, for a session each and somehow for me it lost it's holistic feel /.../ (email on 18 Nov. 08). It's a mistake that would make any decent Slovenian teacher of English jump.

4. How often did your teacher tell you about cultural differences between native speakers of English and Slovenians?

Language goes hand in hand with culture and intercultural awareness seems to have become a buzzword at ELT conferences in the past five or ten years. How do our teachers cope with this? In primary school intercultural matters are not high on agenda.

One third (33%) of teachers never touches on this topic while 38% dedicate culture a bit of their time once to three times in a school year. I find this particularly interesting because most student's books nowadays also include culture pages or a culture section at the end of each unit and some of those published abroad even have Teachers' Notes written specifically for Slovenian teachers.

The situation in secondary schools (I assume they are mainly grammar schools – 'gimnazije') is very different. Almost 39% of teachers discuss cultural issues once a month, which is rather impressive. 27% include culture in their classes once to three times per year, and as many as 20% mention culture once a week. (Table 2)

Table 2

The question to ask here is what students understood under the term culture. It may well be that more culture is taught in primary school, but it is so well woven into the fine structure of an English class that learners don't even realise when they deal with it.

No matter how important teaching culture seems to be, it has come under a bit of criticism lately. Its opponents claim that by learning about the culture/s of the target language, students are exposed to the so-called cultural depositing, the almost unnoticeable influence of the culture of the target language on the learner. This, clearly, refers to coursebooks with material about English and American cultures, and not to those with material promoting intercultural awareness and stressing the importance of comparing and contrasting the culture of the learner with the culture/s of the target language. Such approach helps raise awareness of the learner's own culture so that they may see it in a different, hopefully wider perspective.

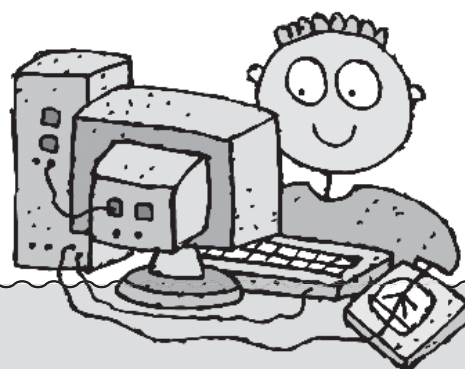
5. What accent of English did your teacher have?

There's a constant gap in Slovenia between teachers in primary and secondary schools, who predominantly speak British English (this, I think, is mainly due to the fact that RP

is taught at the Department of English) and students, who have obtained some American accent through various TV channels, one of their first being Cartoon Network. The results of the research confirm that British English is still more popular among teachers than its American version, especially at the secondary level. Primary school teachers apparently speak either British English (36%) or something between British and American English (37%), while as many as 53% of teachers in secondary schools speak British English. At 28% the level of "something between British and American English" is rather high at the secondary level, too.

Not surprisingly, respondents provided fewer results for primary school teachers' accents than for those in the secondary school. As many as 10% of students claimed truthfully that they didn't know what accent their teacher had in primary school, but even though they had a chance to tick the 'don't know' answer, as many as 31% failed to reply to this question altogether. Could this mean that Slovenians don't like to admit that we don't know something? Interestingly, it was more than once that this research revealed some Slovenian cultural traits that were not consciously included in the questionnaire our students filled in.

In this article I dealt with the first aspect of Slovenian English teaching, teachers' use of English and their knowledge of culture. The next article will show how keen Slovenian teachers are on using audio and visual materials in class.



IATEFL's web page

www.iatefl.si

As you probably know, we have our own website.

There is a lot of useful information for the English teachers, including some ideas you can use at your work.

We would also like to point out this is the place to go when you want to find out about the upcoming events, the conference and competitions, organised by our IATEFL.

You can share your opinion, give suggestions, share your ideas or find some new and fresh information to try out or simply come in contact with someone that shares your interests.



OBVESTILO
O DRŽAVNEM
TEKMOVANJU
V ZNANJU
ANGLEŠKEGA JEZIKA
ZA UČENCE
8. RAZREDOV
OSNOVNIH ŠOL

Spoštovani kolegi!

Radi bi vas opozorili na novost, ki jo uvajamo v tem šolskem letu, in sicer tekmovanje za učence 8. razredov osnovnih šol.

Pravilnik in vse podrobne informacije si lahko ogledate na naši spletni strani (<http://www.iatefl.si/>).

Na kratko: Do zdaj je bilo tekmovanje iz znanja angleškega jezika le v devetem razredu, in sicer v povezavi z izbrano literarno predlogo.

IATEFL Slovenia je za šolsko leto 2009/2010 pripravil tekmovanje iz znanja angleškega jezika tudi za osmošolce. Tekmovanje ni vezano na določeno knjigo ali učbeniško gradivo.

V njem so pokrita različna področja, s poudarkom na kreativnem pisanju in uporabi lastnih idej in domišljije.

Če bo novost pozitivno sprejeta, pa se lahko v prihodnjih letih tekmovanje razširi tudi na nižje razrede (najprej sedme).

Tekmovanje se bo izvajalo na dveh ravneh:

šolsko (16.10.2009)
državno (20.11.2009)

Tjaša Lemut Novak, prof.
koordinatorka tekmovanja

Sandra Vida, prof.
predsednica društva

The IATEFL Saturday seminar

By **Marša Meznarič**

On Saturday, 5th September, Slovene teachers of English decided to ignore the rain as Gene Kelly did back in the 1950, took their umbrellas, strolled the streets of Ljubljana and sang:

*Doo-dloo-doo-doo-doo-doo...
I'm learnin' in the rain
Just learnin' in the rain
What a glorious feelin'
I'm happy again
I'm laughing at clouds
So dark up above
The sun's in my heart
And I'm ready for love
Let the stormy clouds chase
Everyone from the place
Come on with the rain
I've a smile on my face
I walk down the lane
With a happy refrain
Just learnin',
Learnin' in the rain...*

And learn we did. Five amazing teachers: Andreja Lakner, Alenka Baškovič, Mojca Belak, Tadeja Helena Andoljšek in Helena Žnidaršič Seme, and Mateja Kores let us in on their ways of teaching vocabulary, listening, speaking, and grammar. The day was about creative games, funny stories, and above all about interesting ways of bringing the English language closer to our students.

With Andreja Lakner, we discovered how to teach grammar with games, such as chess, monopoly, cards. The key to having a successful collection of games and other home-made didactic accessories is to be organized: when you cut little pieces of paper for a speaking exercise, why not stick them on pieces of carton and then (watch out! This is the important part!) put them in a box which says "Speaking games – Present Simple".

Every teacher in the classroom was thrilled about Lakner's ways of teaching, and honestly wished of having a similar collection of games at their homes.

Mojca Belak showed us of how important and how useful stories are when it comes to developing skills of listening and speaking. Belak introduced a new way of presenting tradi-

Andreja Lakner



Workshop: It Works for Me-Why wouldn't it For You, Too?



Welcome speech by the President



Alenka Baškovič, workshop Isle of Innesfree

tional stories, such as Little Red Riding Hood, to students. She wrote down only the important verbs that appear in the story and we had to create our own sentences and make the story sensible.

The other activity was about creating your own story within a group – we received a small piece of paper with 4 important pieces of information on it: who the good guy is, who the baddy is, where it is all happening and what is the one thing that is magical in the story. The stories were hilarious, and it worked - we were all talking like crazy. The other activity was about decoding. That's right! Half of the class had to step outside for a few minutes until Belak explained the rules to the rest of the group. On the board, there were the 4 important pieces of information and the group that was outside had to figure out what the story is about. The teachers that waited in the classroom were told to only answer 'yes' and 'no' to our 'Yes/No' questions, but in a code, for example: 'yes', 'yes', 'no', 'yes', 'yes', 'no', 'yes', 'yes', 'no', or any other pattern. In this way, the other part of the class would actually create their own stories through their questions. Many different follow-ups are possible.

Mateja Kores proved that Tic Tac Toe is an appropriate game for all levels, you only have to adapt it. The competitive atmosphere created with such games motivates the students and consequently they are more likely to participate. 'Ladder' is a game for revising vocabulary. Students stand in line in front of the board and try to climb up the imaginary ladder by writing down words on each step. The teacher draws a ladder on the board, and invites 2 groups of students in front of the board. Each of them is to write a different vocabulary item on each step – line. The group that reaches the top first wins.

And to not brag about how well the conference went, I would like to cite one of our colleagues:

Firstly, congratulations for a splendid seminar. Everything was superb: the place, the atmosphere, the organisation, the programme, the socializing, the lunch, the publishers. I was a bit sceptical about the long break at the beginning, but time literally flew – we could have talked for hours. And, this is not my opinion alone, all of the colleagues agree with me. Keep up the good work.



Mojca Belak, workshop Stories for the story-hungry right brain

Developing oral fluency in the secondary language classroom, Exeter 27/07 – 07/08 2009

by **Nataša Malnar Bregar**, *Ekonomška šola Novo mesto*

Games in the secondary language classroom

Do not expect a magic wand which will turn your students into respectable speakers of English. Learning to speak a foreign language with confidence is hard work and it takes some time. Even teachers of English as a foreign language who are supposed to know the traps of the language better than an average student have difficulties expressing their thoughts, opinions, beliefs. But as the proverb says Practice makes perfect do not give up and use different techniques to make your students like the language they learn. Here is a list of some games the teachers of English as a foreign language used in the teachers' training course: Developing Oral Fluency in the Secondary Language Classroom.

Mark Hancock is the author of most games we used in our sessions and you can find a lot of photocopiable materials in his Pronunciation Games.



1. **Getting to know each other** (by Alison McLaren) **In pairs students talk about four or five topics in the bubbles e.g.:**

- my most memorable holiday
- What would I take with me if there was a big fire in my house?
- my hero
- my favourite season
- my biggest extravagancies

If there are not too many students in the class you can ask them to choose a corner in the classroom e.g. winter, spring, summer, autumn corners and then they have to explain why they have chosen that corner. Instead of seasons you can use more abstract words like hope, adventure, love, confidence, etc.

2. **Find someone who** (by Martin Hodge)

You have to have a list of questions. Students need to write at least one name for each question. Here are some examples of the questions. My advice is do not use more than ten questions. With this exercise students learn more about each other and practise the

- Thinks he / she is a good cook.
_____ (name)
- Collect something as a hobby.
_____ (name)
- Has more than three forenames.
_____ (name)
- Can say »I love you« in three languages.
_____ (name)
- Can waltz.
- Is left-handed.
- Knows 4 synonyms for awful.
- Can read backwards.

3. **Change places**

Students are sitting in chairs placed in a circle. There is one chair fewer than students. One person is standing in the middle and gives instructions: Change places if you: have a dog / wear glasses / go to work by bike / love cooking / etc. Students change places if the statement applies to them. The one who does not get a place goes into the middle and has to give instructions.

4. **Back to the board** (by Martin Hodge)

You can use this exercise if you want to revise vocabulary or phrases. Two or more teams, each with one member »in the hot seat« with his/her back to the board and facing other team members. The teacher writes a word or phrase on the board. Team members give explanations of the word/phrase for a hot seat person to work out. The first hot seat person who says the correct answer wins a point for his/her team.

5. **Word order**

Students work in groups. They get words on separate cards which they need to put in the correct order to make a logical sentence. Each student takes a card and puts himself / herself in the right place. This exercise is suitable for elementary to upper-intermediate level. It might be a good idea to make it into a competition.

6. **True or stereotype** (by Alison McLaren)

Write about ten statements which can be true or a stereotype of different nationalities, countries.

Example:

1. British police are not armed – the policeman on the street never carries a gun.
2. The British are not very sporty but they like football. It's their most popular participatory sport.
3. The English male spends a lot of time and money on DIY, etc.

These statements refer only to the British but you can use them for other nationalities too.

7. **Which definition is correct?** (by Alison McLaren)

You might want to use this exercise to revise vocabulary, phrases. Students work in pairs or small groups. Give a word and three definitions of which only one is correct. Students decide which definition is correct.

Example: tittletattle

- a) toddler's speech b) gossip c) very little

8. **A hot air balloon game**

Imagine there are 10 very important people travelling by hot air balloon when the balloon suddenly starts losing height. You need to throw three passengers out of the balloon otherwise everyone will die. Decide who to keep and who to throw out. Present your arguments. 3 passengers who get most points from other passengers are thrown out of the balloon.

Games can be educational and fun not only for students but also for teachers.



OBVESTILO O DRŽAVNEM TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠKEGA JEZIKA ZA DIJAKE DRUGEGA LETNIKA

Spoštovani kolegi!

Radi bi vas opozorili na novost, ki jo uvajamo v tem šolskem letu, in sicer tekmovanje za dijake drugega letnika. Pravilnik in vse podrobne informacije si lahko ogledate na naši spletni strani (<http://www.iatefl.si/>).

Na kratko: Dijaki naj v skupini od 3 do 5 dijakov (vsaka šola lahko prijavi največ 5 skupin) posnamejo skeč / komični film v angleškem jeziku, v katerem morajo uporabiti naslednjih deset izrazov:

ANCIENT, RECHARGEABLE, THE NINETIES, KNOWLEDGEABLE, VEGETABLES, VELOCITY, INTIMIDATED, INDUSTRIOUS, LENGTH, HOMESICK.

Video ne sme biti daljši od 4 minut.

Predlagamo, da na šolskem tekmovanju, ki ga izvedete sami po lastni presoji, izberete (največ) pet skupin, ki jih prijavite na državno tekmovanje najkasneje do **20. novembra 2009**.

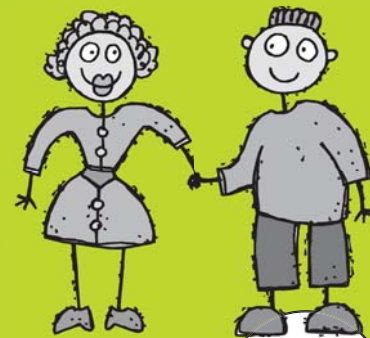
Beti Kerin, prof.
koordinatorka tekmovanja

Sandra Vida, prof.
predsednica društva

A game: Let's hear about...

by **Dolores Malić & Sandra Vida**

When a student is given the task **"Ask a question!"**, they can ask a question themselves or some other player can ask them something; choose the option that you prefer.



Want to go another round?

...your best friend

Go back 2 places

...things you like

Ask a question!

...this year's holidays

...your first love



...how do you get to school

...a thing that drives you crazy

...your favourite toy

Go forward 3 places.



Throw the dice again!

...your favourite group/singer

Ask a question!

Go back 2 places.

...the best present you've given

...some food you prepare well

...the city you want to visit one day

...what you think about smoking

Ask a question!

...what you daydream about

...earning pocket money

...what you do every day

Ask a question!

...things that make you scared

Go forward 3 places.

...a happy day you had

Throw the dice again!

...your favourite season



...a game you often play

Go back 2 places.

...summer romance

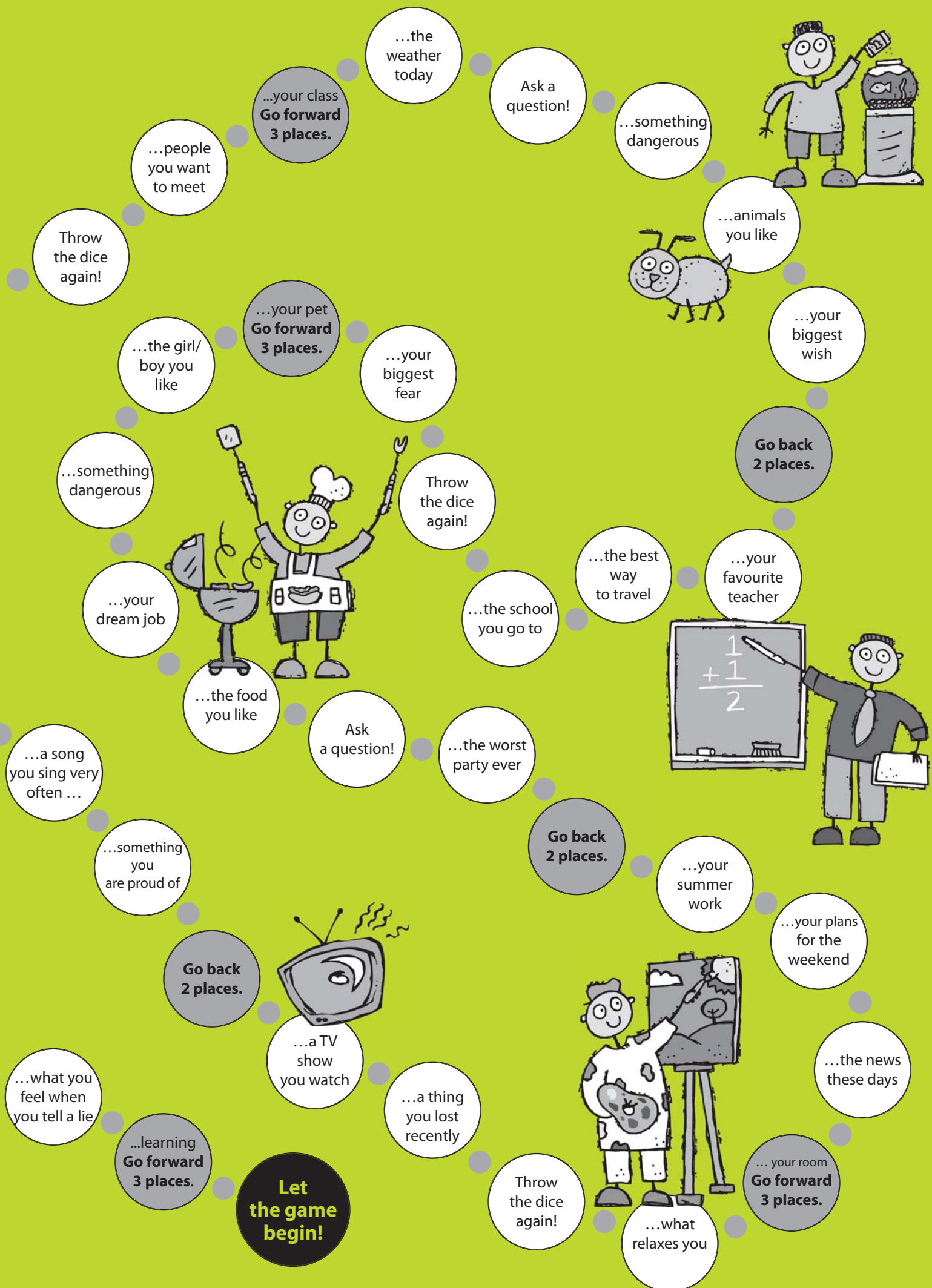
...learning foreign languages

...staying in a hotel or in a tent

...a sport you don't like

Throw the dice again!





Report about the state competition in English as a foreign language for third year students in the school year 2008/2009

by **Maja Sedmak**

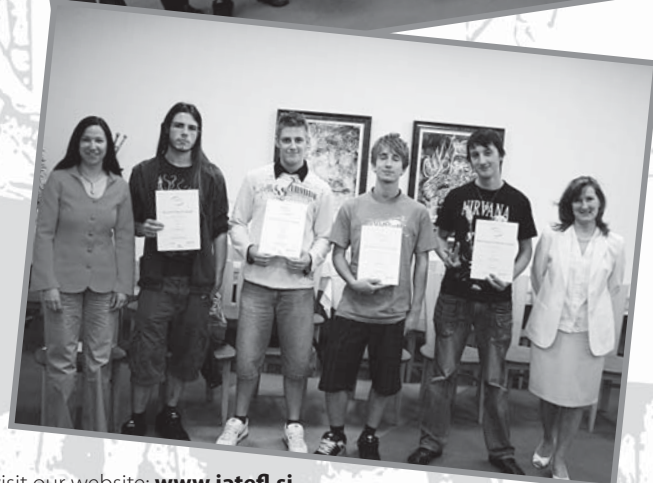
The English competition consisted of two levels: the regional and state level. The latter included also an oral exam for the students in top places. Students competed in three main categories: English as the first foreign language in grammar schools which was further sub-divided into three sub-categories (A1 - regular grammar school, A2- technical grammar schools, A3 - International Matura and European classes), English as the first foreign language in technical secondary schools and English as the second foreign language.

Of all students competing in category A at regional level, 90 students qualified for the state competition. In sub-categories A1, A2 and A3, 65, 14 and 11 students respectively qualified for the state competition. In categories B and C, 25 and 11 students respectively competed at the state level. The students in the top three places were then invited to come to the oral part of the competition. They were asked to choose in advance three topics they feel passionate about so as to discuss them with the examiners. This year the topics were even more interesting than in previous years and the examiners really enjoyed debating about them with the students who were able to show their mastery of the spoken discourse.

The winners were:

- **Pia Pirc Žagar** (*Gimnazija Vič, mentor Maja Gerden*) in category A1
- **Simon Orgulan** (*Srednja ekonomska šola Maribor, mentor Karmen Vršič*) in category A2
- **Jan Friderik Grant** (*Šolski center Celje – Gimnazija Lava, mentor Andreja Vipotnik Ravnak*) in category A3
- **Jan Švab** (*ESRS in Gimnazija Ljubljana, mentor Amanda Zupanc*) in category B
- **Andrej Kreslin** (*Gimnazija Franca Miklošiča Ljutomer, mentor Suzana Ramšak*) in category C.

The state competition closed with the awards ceremony which took place in the hospitable environment of Terme Topolšica on May 15 2009. This year the sponsors were really generous. Mint International House awarded the students in the first three places in each of the categories an exam of University Cambridge which they can choose from a wide selection of exams. The tourist agency TWIN awarded the winner in each category with a free 3-day trip to London, and last but not least, there was a wide range of books sponsored by Državna založba Slovenije and Rokus publishing houses. Of course, there were also a few surprises in the awarding ceremony as well, because we asked our contestants to participate in a fun and challenging game. Thank you very much again. Without you the ceremony and the awards for the winners could not have been what they were: extraordinary!



Being a group leader – a challenge for every teacher

by **Lučka Tirič**

As summer holidays can be long and we teachers never want to get bored I decided to spend two weeks in August in one of the summer schools in Great Britain. After some consideration I decided to go to Brookes University at Wheatley campus near Oxford. I went there as a group leader accompanying a group of ten students aged 12 to 15.

One cannot imagine what kind of difficulties one will encounter when you have to take care of a group of teenagers. One is even a bit anxious and afraid to take over the responsibility, but nevertheless it is a challenge. And I have to say it is worth taking it on.

So what is my experience of working as a group leader in an English speaking country?

Mostly positive. There are really several good points in it in spite of the responsibilities one has to shoulder. It means seeing and experiencing the country to the greatest extent. Literally it means speaking the language all the time with native speakers while shopping, finding your way round town, visiting museums and churches and reading the inscriptions in old language and even attending the service and the evensongs in English. On the other hand one is exposed to the latest expressions in everyday language in the newspapers, in the street, in the shops etc.

At the campus you come into contact with other English teachers from all over the world. This experience is pleasant and useful at the same time. This year I met groups of students from Spain, Russia, Germany, China and Korea. I had the opportunity to exchange views with their group leaders about almost everything. We had long discussions about teaching, education, sport, famous English weather, the way of life of the British and numerous other topics. In addition you work with the friendly and helpful campus staff and participate in all the activities. A full programme of activities was offered every day. On-site activities included sporting activities such as tennis, softball, uni-hoc, pitch and putt, aerobics and of course football and basketball. For those who were not keen on sport were show rehearsals, crafts and treasure hunts.

Our cultural experience would not have been complete without abundant sightseeing.

Twice a week excursions were organised into the city of Oxford. We went on various walking tours through the city and visited famous colleges such as Christ Church College, Trinity College, Merton College, then also Bodleian library, Natural History Museum, Botanical Gardens and the famous Covered Market. Students particularly liked punting on the river and seeing the famous dining hall and the staircase in Christ Church known from the movies about Harry Potter. It was interesting to listen to the stories about J.R.R. Tolkien who was Professor of English at Merton and wrote his famous book *The Lord of the Rings* sitting on a bench in the college garden. In fact one old tree in

the garden inspired him with the idea of the trees that move, and the little cottages at the end of the garden were his model for Hobbiton.

We also visited places of interest in the neighbourhood and beyond. We enjoyed walking in the parks of the beautiful Blenheim Palace in nearby Woodstock and took pictures of Bourton-on-the-Water with its pretty miniature village hand crafted from local Cotswold stone. And then of course London. London was on our schedule three times. On the first day we undertook London walking tour called Famous places, the next time we went on a shopping trip to Oxford Street and on the last day we visited Camden Town.

Another thing we particularly liked during our stay were the evening activities. We were never bored because we had so much fun when participating in various shows such as Karaoke, Fashion Show where boys dressed up as girls and girls as boys, Blind Date show, and International evening. There were themed quizzes and games like Millionaire, Brit Quiz, Round-the-World and Murder Mystery.

Being a group leader in a foreign country is a fruitful and rich experience. It does not mean only enriching your language skills but also developing your social and pedagogical abilities as well. It widens your horizon of working with people by managing the group work dynamics between the youngsters on one side and campus staff on the other. Of course it means taking over the responsibility for a successful stay of a group of teenagers, but this is in my opinion the only task you have to fulfil. It is a challenge worth accepting it.

Speaking from my own experience I could only recommend it to any language teacher.



Punting on the river in Oxford



Dining hall at Christ Church College



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An interview with Mark Andrews

by **Dolores Malić**

Mr Andrews shared his ideas in two workshops. I went to see both of them and I also enjoyed them both.

As he was one of my two partners in one of Mr Hardcastle's games, I can also say Mr Andrews seems to be a very trustful person (*my friend Maja and me had to swing Mr Andrews back and forth and catch him, of course, and he did not seem to have any second thoughts whether he will be all right at the end of this activity*).

How would you introduce yourself to those readers who have not had the chance to meet you yet?

Just a happy-go-lucky kind of guy who's interested in language teaching and spending time in Central and Eastern Europe where he's spent most of his life.

It seemed you really enjoy your work. What is the thing you like most?

Basically I've given up now on trying to understand how people learn languages after 25 years and decided that the most important thing is how a teacher behaves towards their students in the classroom, how kind they are, how much they give praise, how well they give feedback and how well they create a rich and relaxed learning environment. I guess this means that what I like most is encouraging people to learn better and encouraging teachers to teach better in the real sense of giving people courage to do things that they themselves sometimes think they can't do!

When did you decide you wanted to be a teacher? Was this your childhood dream?

No, but when I tried it out for the first time as a language assistant in Berchtesgaden in Bavaria, not a million miles away from Slovenia, I decided I enjoyed it.

How do you cope with any negative sides of this profession?

I concentrate on the positive things!

Which age group do you like best and why? Which age group do you find the most demanding?

I like university students a lot because generally they are fun and doing something they want to. Otherwise I really enjoyed teaching 15 and 16-year-olds when I worked in a Secondary School in Budapest because they are in the process of finding themselves and it's good to be part of that process. On the odd occasions that I've found myself with 5 and 6-year-olds I found that pretty challenging!

Can you give us a piece of advice about teaching? Something you wish someone would tell you before you had to figure it out for yourself?

Well when I was doing my MA in ELT in Lancaster 18 years ago one of my teachers said: "Never do anything that you can get your students to do." I never forgot that and for developing responsibility it's very important.

Do you think your job could not be more perfect for you or would you change something? If you had the chance to choose whatever job, what would you do?

Am happy doing what I do but if I changed I think I'd like to act!

To bring this interview to an end, I would like to ask you only one more thing – can you please finish these two sentences?

I do not like it when people always try to find fault with things instead of concentrating on the positives.

If I could turn back the time, I would go to drama school and develop an acting career. Stephen Rea and Vanessa Redgrave would be my role models!

Thank you very much for taking some time to answer the questions. I wish you a lot of success and happy experience with your further work. I hope to see you soon.



A taste of Scandinavia – summer trip 2009

by **Jasna Džambić**

Leaving on a jet plane bus...

»All my bags are packed, I'm ready to go...«...10th of July, a nice summer afternoon and I am packing and unpacking and repacking my bag for the millionth time. We are leaving in two hours and I am still not done with the packing...should I take this, should I take that? Will I survive without this, will I have enough of that? It is kind of hard, you know, to pack if you know that you will be travelling around by bus for the next three weeks, sleeping in a tent, perhaps in the middle of nowhere, so...you can never be too careful! And there we went, me and my boyfriend, with all the bags and tents and sleeping bags and pots and pans and pasta sauces and soups and... to meet the other 36 people who we were going to share this Scandinavian experience with. We got to the meeting point, at the Ljubljana ZOO and the parking lot looked like a big garage sale: all the stuff people brought with them, all the camping equipment, food, bags – I bet we could make a fortune by selling all that, maybe even enough to pay for a one week stay in a 3-star hotel in Stockholm (although, as I later experienced, I would never have changed the camps for a hotel, solely for the excitement and the feeling of being part of a special community). I remember I said to myself: oh, my God, how on Earth are we going to pack all this into the bus?? But we did. Because the bus was kind of a jet plane (and kind of a 3-star hotel). And so the big Scandinavian summer adventure began. It would take a whole book to write down everything I experienced on my trip across Scandinavian countries – Sweden, Denmark and Norway. But after this trip I will certainly admire Scandinavia for three things: honesty, democracy and life in harmony and respect for nature.

The importance of being Earnest...

Du you remember when it was the last time you went to a museum and your ticket wasn't checked...by anybody? Well, I do...in almost every museum, gallery, etc. I visited in Scandinavia, nobody asked me to show my entrance ticket. At first I was shocked, since I've been to places in my life where they check you from top to toe before they let you in. And we all got used to that, didn't we? It's normal for us that sometimes we are treated almost like criminals in our paranoid world of today. But not in Scandinavia... I just couldn't believe it. The first museum we visited was the Viking Museum in Roskilde, where you get a label as proof of paying for the entrance. And, as usually, I lost it in 10 minutes, because it did not stick to my jacket. I was all nervous, but nobody even looked at me, let alone asked me where my label was... And to make it even more unreal, the museum is placed in an area, surrounded by a big lawn – and there is no fence, on any side. Basically everybody can take a walk across the lawn and enter the museum, free of charge (although the entrance fee is quite high). Maybe we would expect that some people would do that, but not

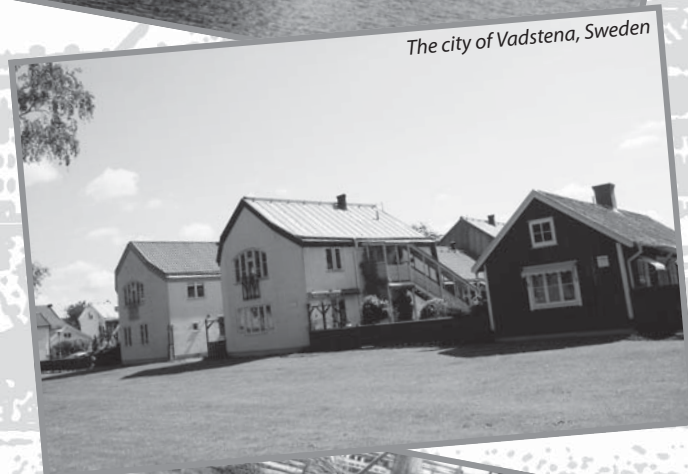
Stockholm



Typical scenery



The city of Vadstena, Sweden



A moos family

the Scandinavians - because they truly believe that honesty is the best policy. They trust that everybody will be honest and sincere. And so we also got used to that throughout our trip, because it was the same almost everywhere across the three countries we had visited. Everything is based upon honesty: I used a washing machine somewhere in Norway and I had to go to the reception – in another building – to pay for it. I said to the friendly receptionist: “Emmm, I washed two loads of laundry. Can I pay for it?” And I paid. And I felt good about myself. But then I wondered: where have we gone wrong? Where have we forgotten our honesty and friendliness and trust in each other? Can we ever gain it back?

Scandinavia: of the people, by the people, for the people

It is common knowledge that Scandinavian countries have some of the best democratic systems in the world. The difference between their democracies and others is that their actually work! It is amazing to see how most of the population is taken care of, on the financial and personal level. The welfare of Sweden, Denmark and Norway is on such a high level that it is hard to imagine how one would not want to live there. It is true that they have to pay a fair share of taxes, that they have high living standards, but they get a lot in return, too. It's “give a little, get a little” philosophy (or even “give a little, gain a lot”...). And everybody is happy and lives a quality life, with all the perks and benefits they get from the state's effective democratic system. Everybody has a chance to lead a decent life: the young, the old, the black, the white, the rich and the poor. It is hard to believe that there are gay performances held in the middle of Copenhagen on a daily bases and that there are no protests going on at the same time. Again something we could learn, don't you think? And again honesty and trust are put in the centre: people trust in the system, trust each other, hide nothing from each other – they even don't have curtains on their windows, so everybody is welcome to take a look inside. And I asked myself again, looking at all those cute little red wooden houses: How long will it take before we get to the same level? Can we ever get there with our way of living?

“Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher...” (W. Wordsworth)

The countries I visited during my Scandinavian summer trip (Denmark, Sweden, and Norway) can definitely be considered as jewels of nature, especially Norway. Of course, Denmark and Sweden have that special something that makes you want to stay there and enjoy the unspoilt nature of its never-ending fields, vast areas of green, green forests. And along come the giant windmills – you almost feel like Don Quixote, except that you don't want to fight them... And then you come to Norway, the land of the fjords, the countless lakes and extraordinary valleys and hidden paths in the woods, where nature still has the original smell and shape, where nobody tries to change and ruin it. In the contrary: the Scandinavians have enormous respect for nature and only try to benefit from it by exploiting mostly the alternative resources nature has to offer – water, wind, wood. I bet nature would give a big thank you to the Scandinavian people if she could speak – they have such respect for nature we cannot even begin to imagine. After looking at all the wooden houses, windmills, fields of oil rape, little trees being planted anew, clean cities where you could walk barefoot, etc. etc. I again wish to have the opportunity to live in such a country – where people still respect and praise Mother Nature and don't just take it for granted, as many of us do....

The Promised Land

Scandinavia proved to be the Promised Land for me. I could not imagine a better and more suitable place to live than in one of the countries had visited (if I had to choose, I would build myself a tiny little house in the city of Vadstena in Sweden). The friendliness, the honesty, the sincerity and the trust people show to everybody they meet, are just some of the qualities the Scandinavian people possess. They should be proud of themselves – and we can certainly look up to them. Tacksån mycket, Scandinavia, for a wonderful experience!

The troll



The Little Mermaid



A windmill



A wind power station



Motivating materials for the secondary classroom

by **Petra Klobasa**

Every year when we're still wrapped up in coats I start making plans for the summer. And every year there's this fear that it'll be a long boring summer if I don't do anything about it. The idea itself becomes ridiculous in June when exhaustion and tiredness become a heavy burden to bear and just resting and doing nothing seem like the perfect way to spend the summer. But by then it's already too late because the plans have been made, tickets have been bought, reservations have been arranged, etc. This year I applied for the Comenius grant for in-service training courses intended for primary and secondary teachers. And I got it! I was really happy and excited when I received the news. So the summer came, the hustle and bustle at school ended, and soon came the time to leave. I have chosen an International Study Programmes course titled Motivating Materials for the Secondary Classroom in Southampton, where I stayed with a lovely host family that gave me and my 'housemate' an insight of how a traditional British family life is like; and attended a course comprising of some lectures and in my opinion more interesting and useful workshops lead by experienced teacher trainers such as Graham Workman, Lucy Norris and Chris Crofts that made the course educative as well as fun – a very important component in a learning process. Let me just end this introductory paragraph by saying that it was an extremely rewarding experience because of the above mentioned reasons and because I got to know 15 wonderful teachers from around the Europe who made me realize that our national differences are insignificant compared to the problems and challenges that we as teachers are facing and dealing with step by step no matter where in Europe we live. The world is becoming a global village, so it's wise to share, discuss, and look for the right answers together. That's why I'm sharing some of the ideas and materials gained at the course to make your life just a tiny bit easier when it comes to lesson planning. Here are a few activities that I adapted to my students' needs and knowledge. And I'm sure you'll do the same since you know your students best.

Lesson plan

(recommended level: intermediate)

1. Warm up

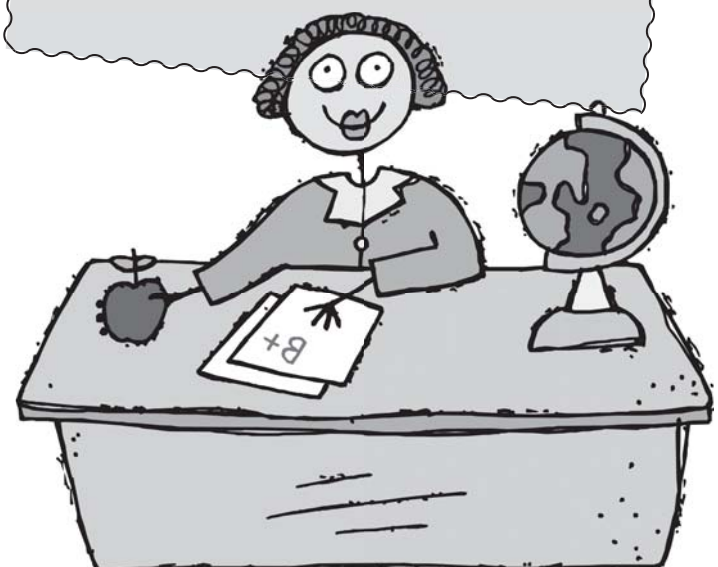
We can start the lesson with an activity called NUMBER QUIZ. It's a good beginning of this lesson because it involves revision of numbers and mathematical operations. I'd suggest working in small groups (two or three students).

Each group gets a worksheet with several 'strange' questions such as: B plus C = ... Give them a min-

ute or two to get an idea of what is asked of them but try to continue with instructions before you are bombarded with demands to tell them what's going on. So, here's what you have to do next: put the letter explanations (8 parts) all around the classroom so that students will have to get up. Give them 10 minutes to calculate as many lines as possible in that time. And then spend 5 more minutes on result discussion. If students have the numbers to replace the letters, but don't know the meaning of 'multiplied, divided, etc.' explain at this stage and let them do the calculating as you go through the results. Maybe you can also do it as a quiz, students say or write their result and then groups with the correct answer get the point.

NUMBER QUIZ QUESTION CARD

1. A plus T =
2. H divided by G =
3. F multiplied by O =
4. X minus W =
5. E divided by D =
6. N minus J =
7. V multiplied by O =
8. B plus C =
9. I divided by M =
10. P multiplied by S =
11. R minus Q =
12. U plus K =
13. L minus Z =



NUMBER QUIZ CLUE CARDS

A Snow White's dwarfs	B You can vote in Slovenia
I Legs of three spiders	J Dial for the police in Britain
Q Spots on a pair of dice	R Barack Obama is the ____th president of the USA
Y Seasons of the year	Z Months of the year
C Signs of the Zodiac	D Half a dozen
K _____ and one Dalmatians	L Sum of numbers on a phone keypad
S Consonants in the alphabet	T Months containing a 'U'
E Edges of three cubes	F Platform of the Hogwarts Express
M Sides of an octagon	N Last year of the 17 th century
U Total letters in this sentence	V Books in a trilogy
G Days in June	H Seconds in an hour
O The Queen's children	P Official residence of the British Prime Minister
W The number of strings on a standard guitar	X Planets in the solar system



NUMBER QUIZ - answers

A = 7
I = 24
Q = 42
Y = 4

B = 18
J = 999
R = 44
Z = 12

C = 12
K = 100
S = 21

D = 6
L = 45
T = 5

E = 36
M = 8
U = 26

F = 9 $\frac{3}{4}$
N = 1699
V = 3

G = 30
O = 4
W = 6

H = 3600
P = 10
X = 8

1. 12
2. 120
3. 39
4. 2
5. 6
6. 700
7. 12
8. 30
9. 3
10. 210
11. 2
12. 126
13. 33

2. The pre-reading stage

The next step would be a very short pre-reading activity. Write 'SURVEY' on board and elicit the meaning of the word. Ask about any previous experience they have had involving a survey, if they have ever participated in one and what kind of topics were they questioned about. Introduce the article titled 'Life through a lens: how Britain's children eat, sleep and breathe TV' (find it here: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/jan/16/television.socialnetworking>). Let the students guess the research area. Before reading the article students predict some of the numbers from the article connected with media use that you suggest and write it on board:

WATCH TV ? hours/day
ACCESS INTERNET ? hours/week
HAVE TV IN ROOM ?%
READ BOOKS ?%
- daily ?%
- once a week ?%
OWN COMPUTER ?%
HAVE PROFILE ?%
ON FACEBOOK/NETLOG/... ?%

3. While-reading activity

While reading the text students should look for the information that they guessed before. Let them do it on their own first.

4. The post-reading stage

After reading the article it's wise to spend a few minutes on vocabulary so that you make sure students understand words that are crucial for their interpretation of survey results. After you've done that you can give them a few minutes to discuss the numbers with their schoolmate before you put it on board. The trick is that results are given in different forms, for example: 63%, two thirds, four out of five. Consequently, they have to put in more effort to turn them into percentages (it'll be a piece of cake for future mathematicians). The other problem is a variety of language. English speakers are reluctant to repeat themselves in a text, so the text can be confusing for non-native speakers. Let's look at one of the paragraphs closely:

'The rise may have come at the expense of reading books for pleasure, which, in a development that will alarm many parents, continues to decline as a regular pastime. While four out of five children read books in their own time, only a quarter do so daily and 53% at least once a week.'

Question that may appear while reading this paragraph are 'How many children read books daily? A quarter of those four out of five children or a quarter of the entire interviewed group?'. Draw students' attention to the absence of language signs (such as '...a quarter of those do...') that would indicate that the latter answer is correct.

ANSWERS:

WATCH TV
USE INTERNET
HAVE TV IN ROOM
READ BOOKS

- daily
- once a week

OWN COMPUTER

HAVE PROFILE ON FACEBOOK/NETLOG/...

2.6 hours/day
8 hours/week
80 %
80 %
25 %
53 %
over 33 %
over 50%



5. Follow-up activity

There are several options of what you can do as a follow-up activity. Let me give you a few suggestions:

- Group discussion on pros and cons of "multitasking".
- Survey: Students prepare a questionnaire (in pairs or groups) to find out what their classmates' media habits are or they can do it for a larger group

of respondents using internet site <http://www.surveymonkey.com> where one can launch one's own survey for free.

- You can expand the topic by exploring the "new" vocabulary with your students. Look at the task below and see how up-to-date your English is:

NEW WORDS QUIZ

1. Match the expressions to their definitions.

a) emoticons

b) a gamer

c) snail mail

d) silver surfer

e) technobabble

f) dot-com

1) someone who likes playing computer games

2) an older person who uses the Internet regularly

3) a person who earns money with an Internet business

4) smiley faces added to emails, text messages,...

5) conventional way of sending post

6) talking about computer technology

NEW WORDS QUIZ

- answers

a) 4

b) 1

c) 5

d) 2

e) 6

f) 3

- And if you and your students start feeling tired or you don't have a lot of time to do anything else and there's a computer at hand you can always show them this amusing video clip - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pyjRj3UMRM> and have a good laugh.

The SEETA online community

www.seeta.eu

by **Jasna Džambić**, *IATEFL Slovenia* representative on SEETA and member of the executive board of the SEETA Committee

SEETA is an online community; the acronym SEETA stands for »South Eastern Europe Teachers' Associations«. Its main aim is to join together teachers across South East Europe, since getting together face to face has become a luxury rather than something we, teachers, can often do. It was created by the British Council a few years ago exactly for this reason: to bring Teachers' Associations closer together in order to share knowledge, ideas and invaluable experiences in the field of education and professional development of EFL teachers. Currently there are 11 member TAs in the SEETA online community: ELTA Albania, BETA Bulgaria, ELTAM FYROM, TESOL Macedonia Thrace Northern Greece, ETAL Israel, ELTAM Montenegro, IATEFL Poland, RATE Romania, ELTA Serbia, IATEFL Slovenia and INGED Turkey.

SEETA uses a moodle platform to provide a wide range of activities to member TAs, from on-line events with guest speakers, informal discussions in the so-called SEETA weeks to social forums and more. A registration with the website is required in order to be able to participate in the discussions, courses and forums.

Anyone joining the SEETA online community can choose among and participate in the following activities:

1. SEETA World Open Forums

In the Open Forums different fielded discussion sessions are being held regularly with well-known professionals in ELT. Some of the previous open forums were held by Mario Rinvulcri, Chaz Pugliese, Luke Prodromou and many more.

2. SEETA Weeks

In SEETA weeks, informal discussions are held by TAs members on a topic of their choice. Problems and solutions are being shared with the community. The topic discussed in the last SEETA Week (held from 31st August to 6th September) was "The assessment of speaking skills".

3. SEETA Events

Here, information on different conference held by TAs is provided. Some TAs have already prepared special sites on the platform, offering presentation materials, video reports and comments, pictures from the conferences, etc. You can, for example, visit the area of IATEFL Slovenia annual conference 2009 (follow this link: <http://www.seeta.eu/course/view.php?id=17>).

4. SEETA Discussion Forums

Here a number of additional discussions is being held, for example the Social Forum (for general discussions of any kind), the Chat Room (for chatting on-line to other SEETA members who are logged in), etc. Additional discussions can be started to topics suggested by the teachers.

5. SEETA Articles

There is a collection of articles to be found on SEETA, covering a wide range of topics connected with ELT. The SEETA Articles Bank has been created in this section where you can find all

kinds of articles. Every one of them is first presented according to the age group, level and topic. There is also a short description of each of them.

6. SEETA Playlists

This is one of the three more "relaxing" facilities of the SEETA platform (besides SEETA Quizzes and SEETA Games). Here SEETA members can publish playlists of their favourite music.

7. SEETA Quizzes

Occasional Quizzes are being held on the platform. The winner of a quiz receives the baton and becomes the next quiz-master, preparing a new quiz. So far there have been many interesting quizzes and it is assured that members learn and have fun at the same time.

8. There are several networking games on SEETA

where the participants are given certain tasks to accomplish in order to win the game. It is a good opportunity to get to know other SEETA members and bring the community closer together.

As it can be seen, the wide range of facilities and activities offered on the SEETA platform enables TA members across South East Europe to share their knowledge and experiences in ELT with their fellow colleagues. The mission statements of the SEETA online community nicely sum up the main aim of the platform: to create a closer community of Teachers' Associations, to provide an ongoing and structured means of communication, to provide mutual support for participant TAs and to overcome time and geographical constraints. By striving to achieve and keep up with these missions, every TA and SEETA member will benefit from this project.

HOW CAN YOU JOIN ACTIVELY?

The success and development of the SEETA community relies entirely on the enthusiasm and dedication of all the volunteers who are prepared to commit some of their precious free time to make SEETA work. So if you want to join actively, there are several possibilities:

- send an article for the SEETA Articles Bank
- host a SEETA week on a topic you would like to discuss with other SEETA members
- share news with the community (about ELT related issues, events, conferences, etc.)
- participate in the discussion forums in SEETA world
- be part of the SEETA work team.

For more information on how to get active on the SEETA platform, please contact **Anna Parisi** at admin@seeta.eu or **Jasna Džambić**, the *IATEFL Slovenia* representative on SEETA at jasna@seeta.eu.

The SEETA online community is attracting more and more participants, so if you haven't done so already, come and join us in creating a wonderful link between TAs and share your enthusiasm, knowledge and experiences with other EFL teachers. Just visit www.seeta.eu, register and get active!

ESP – You are not alone

by **Keith Harding**

For many newly qualified teachers – and some very experienced ones – the acronym ESP can be a bit scary.

If general English is a clearly-signposted ramble across open fields, then ESP, with its bewildering terminology, is more like a series of dark paths leading into an unknown forest. Then path of 'specific purpose' can seem like a very lonely place.

Making ESP less scary and bringing it into the fold of mainstream English Language Teaching has been a personal aim of mine for several years. It helped when I first heard the description of general English as ENOP – English for No Obvious Purpose! And the fact that recent trends and studies which show that general English is being taught and learnt at earlier and earlier ages added to the sense that English with a Purpose (EWAR?) was a real future of English. One of the principal practical challenges, it seems to me, is to find the common purpose between the different specialisms in ESP, to find out what they have in common, to make connections, and to build generic approaches and activities. But what, for example, do a nurse, a travel agent, a technician, and a business person have in common when it comes to the English language?

Let's look at the *Oxford English for Careers* series for so-me answers. First, all those learners have specific needs which the teacher will need to identify and build into the course. They all need to:

- understand technical, specialized vocabulary and documentation
- use graphical, diagrammatic, and number-based information sources
- operate in an identifiable working environment
- use equipment and train people/be trained in its use
- know how to describe equipment and its purpose
- interact with the public in some way
- operate within health and safety and other legal constraints
- reflect on and evaluate their own performance
- work with other team members.

Then there are more basic things they have in common:

Language

ESP learners do not need to understand the entire language system in isolation. Instead, they need to use language that is relevant to their specialism or vocation – and this may not be in the 'logical' selection and order of the general English syllabus. For example, as far as the tense system is concerned, the travel agent inhabits and works in the future world; the past isn't so important. More important still will be the functional language like giving information, making recommendations, checking wishes, making a sale, etc.

People

All specialisms involve people, and the ESP learner can relate to these people. Whereas the general English coursebooks might feature some iconic or distant personality, the ESP book can profile real people who are like the learner, who could be them now or in the near future – or in another country.

Motivation

ESP learners, by definition, haven't chosen language as their vocation. They may be non-linguists. They may not be very motivated, either by the language or even the subject itself. Making the language activities purposeful and interesting is the common challenge for all ESP teachers.

Materials need to be relevant, but they also need to be bright and dynamic, snappy and zappy. Of course, having identified the shared features and approaches, it's then important to be aware of the differences – different needs, different learning styles, different register, different genres: the different paths through the same forest.

So we've returned to the country ramble metaphor. A walk through fields and forests is always easier with a map – it helps you navigate and find your 'specific purpose'.



Keith Harding is the author of *English for Specific Purposes: Resource Books for Teachers*, and a co-author of *Tourism* from the *Oxford English for Careers*.

If you'd like to meet Keith Harding in person and learn more about ESP teaching, join us on **23 and 24 September in Maribor in Ljubljana** at **OUP ESP event** for Secondary school teachers.










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At a glance – key business English and ESP series from Oxford

		Levels available	CEF range	Course length	English for...
Business Result		5 Elementary Pre-intermediate Intermediate Upper-intermediate Advanced	A1 – C1	50 – 100	practical, functional business communication skills in a work environment
International Express		4 Elementary Pre-intermediate Intermediate Upper-intermediate	A2 – B2	80 – 100	adult professional learners who work, travel, and socialize in English
Tech Talk		3 Elementary Pre-intermediate Intermediate	A2 – B1	40 – 60	hands-on occupations in the technical, industrial, and scientific sectors
Profile		3 Pre-intermediate Intermediate Upper-intermediate	mid A2 – B2	60 – 80	business communication between different departments and industries
Oxford English for Careers		3 Pre-intermediate Intermediate Upper-intermediate (Tourism, Commerce, Technology, Nursing, and Medicine)	mid A2 – B2	60 – 80	students who need vocation-specific English for their career
Express series		A range of titles covering different Skills, Professions, and Industries. See catalogue for more details	A1 – B2	25 – 30	people who need short practical courses in specialist English
Business one:one		3 Pre-intermediate Intermediate+ Advanced	mid A2 – C1	40 – 50	one-to-one learning and teaching

Dreaming of *going to*

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