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Objava tekmovanj IATEFL Slovenia

Mojca Belak and Brighton Shock

Evropski dan jezikov

Some reflections on different projects

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Editorial

Dear readers,

So our new issue is hot off the press. We've got plenty of interesting articles for you, and I hope you will find some of the teaching ideas useful in class.

This issue of IN also unveils our plans for a brand new competition for primary schools. More information about this is also available on our website.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to send us your articles with teaching ideas and reflections for the next issue, which is due out in December.

Have a great new school year; over and out for now!



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Social Psychology and ELT – THE HALO EFFECT

Nick Michelioudakis (B. Econ., Dip. RSA, MSc [TEFL]) is an Academic Consultant with EDEXCEL. He has worked in the field of ELT for many years as a teacher, examiner and trainer. He has written more than 50 articles and regularly gives talks to both private and state school teachers. He likes to think of himself as a 'front-line teacher' and is particularly interested in one-to-one teaching and student motivation. He also has a keen interest in Social and Evolutionary Psychology. When he is not struggling with students, he likes to spend his time in a swimming pool or playing chess. For any questions, comments or feedback, you can contact him at nickmi@ath.forthnet.gr. To see more of his published articles you can visit his site at www.michelioudakis.org.



How important is one's handwriting? Hardly at all you might say, especially today when most people use a computer. Yet research shows otherwise. In a revealing experiment, a number of exam scripts were copied twice – once in good handwriting and once in bad handwriting. They were then passed on to two groups of examiners who were told to mark them and were specifically instructed to mark for content. Amazingly, the neatly-written scripts got significantly higher marks than the others (*Sutherland 1992*). Why did such a thing happen? The answer is that very often when we have to assess someone (*or something*) and this person has a salient, positive feature, the latter colours our judgment, so we tend to make all kind of positive attributions about this person, judgments which are at best only marginally related to the quality which stands out. This is called the 'Halo Effect'.

An experiment: One would expect the scientific world to be less susceptible to such an effect. Not so. In 1982, two psychologists decided to try out an interesting experiment. They selected 12 well-known journals of psychology and to each one they sent an article to be considered for publication. These articles are routinely checked by two authorities on the particular field as well as the editor. The results: in 8 out of the 12 cases the articles were deemed unworthy of publication. Out of 16 'evaluators' and 8 editors who (*presumably*) read them, not a single one had a different view. Well, one might say, not all articles submitted are up to par. This is true, only in this case these particular articles had been published by the very same journals, under the same title only a few months previously!! The only thing the two psychologists had changed were the names of the authors (*eminent university professors*) to imaginary ones and their affiliations (*originally such prestigious universities as Harvard or Princeton*) to non-existent (*and by definition obscure*) ones! Well, you might think, at least 4 of the articles were thought to be good. Not quite. In 3 out of the 4 cases someone simply realised that they had published this material before... (*Sutherland 1992*)

Why did such a thing happen? The answer is probably that journals like the above are probably inundated by submissions from academics on the make who are anxious to add yet another entry to their CV. It is equally likely that many of these articles are run-of-the-mill, with little to recommend them. This being so, it makes sense for the 'evaluators' to resort to 'shortcuts' (*Cialdini 2001*) – rather than scrutinize each script, they look at the name of the writer first. If s/he is a famous professor from an Ivy-League University, then the article is more likely to be worthy of publication. But if we start thinking like this, then an amazing change happens: as Sutherland (1992) points out, when faced with a

piece of work by an established writer, we tend to look for its positive aspects, while if the writer's name rings no bells then we start looking for flaws!

Still not convinced? Here is another example. In the mid-70s, someone sent a book to no less than 27 different publishers and literary agents. No marks for guessing what happened. All 27 rejected it. Yet this book (*'Steps' by Kosinsky*) had actually been published in 1969 and had won the American National Book Award! All that had been changed was the title and the name of the writer. What is more remarkable is that one of the publishers who rejected the 'new book' was 'Random House' – the ones who had published the original one!! (*ibid.*)

Lest you should think that this phenomenon is restricted to the world of books and publishing, here are some more examples to show you just how widespread it is: Good-looking people are universally thought to be friendlier, more intelligent and more humorous, tall people are thought to have all kind of leadership qualities, they are clearly favoured in job interviews and make more money than people like me who are slightly challenged in the vertical dimension, and, of course, men of a high social status are judged as more attractive by women... (*Brehm, Kassin & Fein 2002*).

Applications in the field of teaching: If we can create for ourselves this 'aura' of the competent/charismatic/special teacher, then we are halfway towards winning the battle for the 'hearts and minds' of our students. Here are some ideas:

Friendliness: When I ask my students to describe the best teacher they know, they almost invariably mention someone possessing this quality. When I try to probe deeper to see what it is about their method that is so special, my students are often stumped. It is because attitude is such a salient feature that it colours the students' perception of the teacher both as an individual and as a professional (*for research on this very theme, see Alberson, Frey & Gregg 2004, p. 8*)

First impressions: Teachers often 'save' their best techniques for later – a big mistake in my view. By using your favourite materials/techniques early on, you create a positive impression in the students' minds which will pre-dispose them favourably towards all your subsequent lessons. The tendency of first impressions to 'stick' has been demonstrated again and again (*Fine 2005*)

Professionalism: Little details like being prepared, giving an outline of your lesson in advance, revising what you did the previous time, showing students that there is a continuity in your sessions – all these create an impression of 'professionalism' and they are more observable than, say, a profound activity sequence (*Lewis & Hill 1992*). The point is that once you have acquired a reputation as a 'true profession-

al', this reputation precedes you and everything you do will then be seen in this light!

Success: Unfortunately perhaps, teachers too are judged by results. This is particularly true in the case of 1-1 lessons. Consequently, there is a lot to be said for 'blowing your own trumpet'. This will create an expectation of success which boosts the students' confidence and acts like a self-fulfilling prophecy (*Dornyei 2001*).

Titles: As I have said in other articles and as the above experiment clearly demonstrates, titles like 'MSc', 'PhD' etc. never fail to impress people about your competence – so if you have them, flaunt them! (*On how effective this 'aura' can be, see also Goldstein, Martin & Cialdini 2007*). Similarly, if you happen to work for a prestigious institution, then mention it to your students. I remember how people's faces used to light up when I told them I was an Oral Examiner for the British Council!

Looks: At the cost of repeating myself, the importance of being good-looking can hardly be exaggerated. Not only does this quality affect the 'marks' one gets in virtually all other fields, but there is evidence that this positive pre-disposition of others actually elicits all kind of positive behaviours from them (*Aronson 1999*). The moral is clear: it pays to work on your appearance!

What about ELT? So, what about our field? Are there any elements which can create a 'Halo Effect'? Yes, there are – two of them: **a)** Your passport and **b)** your accent. Let me explain. I believe that if would-be employers receive 2 identical CVs, one from a native speaker and another from a Greek teacher, there are many cases when only the former will be short-listed. I believe that if two Greek EFL teachers go through an interview and one of them has a native-like accent while the other one does not, then the former is far more likely to be hired, even if the latter has better qualifications/more experience. And I am certain that (*ceteris paribus*) native speakers are on average better paid when it comes to private lessons. Now, I do not have any hard evidence for all this, but I am prepared to bet good money that all 3 hypotheses are true. Anyone for research?

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Brighton Shock

by **Mojca Belak**

Mrs. Lewis said I would like Brighton because it was so old-fashioned. That was back in mid-eighties, when I went to London to work as an au pair and learn a bit about the British, as well as finish my final paper. Instead of getting a lot of conversation with native speakers of English I ended up looking after Henry, a clever but totally lazy sausage dog who was not particularly fluent in the language I was to teach when I'd graduated. Anyway, during those few months I still managed to get occasional insights into the British culture, and one of them was "the Brighton Experience".

On my first visit the town was even more old-fashioned than what Mrs. Lewis had described. There were vintage cars everywhere, women wore 1920s and 1930s clothes, complete with hats and long cigarette holders, and brass bands played near the pier and in the park opposite the Royal Pavilion. This first impression of Brighton stuck firmly in my mind, even though I learned later that I'd happened to first visit it on the day of the grand London to Brighton Veteran Car Run that takes place once a year.

Brighton and I go back a long way. I got to know it well when later I lived in London and paid occasional visits to the south coast to spend a day by the sea with friends I had there. The last Saturday before Christmas 1989 I happened to visit Brighton when Robert, my friend, was getting ready to take part in a gay and lesbian protest against Section 28 of the Local Government Act which – among other things - prohibited gay people to publicly express their emotions. The protesters put up a small podium at busy Churchill Square, kissed and snogged there and carried some banners expressing their views, while I was asked to hand out leaflets to passers-by. A while later there appeared a group of skinheads looking rather displeased with the demonstration, so they started throwing eggs. Of all the twenty or thirty people protesting I was the only one they managed to hit with their missiles. Churchill Square always brings back these memories; I still look upon taking part in the protest as my small contribution to making the world a better place.

Brighton has hosted quite a few IATEFL conferences, and since it is only half an hour away from Gatwick airport, I've often chosen to attend the big ELT get-together when it took place in this town simply because it was easy and quick to get to. I mean, if you take the morning flight from Ljubljana, you can be in Brighton for the opening plenary. This April, too, it was IATEFL conference that made me return to Brighton, but instead of finding it the way I'd kept it in my memory, things seem to have changed there considerably in the past few years.

When I got to Barceló Old Ship hotel, described as 'the most historic hotel in Brighton' on the internet, and told the receptionist my name and explained that I had a room booked there, she typed something in the computer, then gave me a surprised look and said 'Eeeeeee, giu are not on de list. De hotel is fully booked. Eeee sori.' The conversation went on and we both found it more and more frustrating – I because I didn't understand her thick Spanish accent and didn't quite fancy being homeless on day one of the conference that I was helping to organise, and she because she didn't understand much English. A young man turned up at the desk, so I tried my luck with him. 'Eeeeeee. I can ask mayer when she comes,' he said, trying to help. I thought that was rather cute – I pictured a family-run business with a strong female presence at the lead. How unusual, however, to have a grown-up young man admit that he wanted to wait for his mother before he tried to solve a problem with a guest. When Ana, the first unhelpful receptionist, joined in and suggested that yes, I should wait for the mayer, my hypothesis was confirmed, it was a family business, and those two young people at the desk were siblings. How cute. I ventured one more question and inquired about the time 'mother' was to get to the reception. José gave me a blank look. 'Mother?' he repeated, then added after an uncomfortable pause, 'No, no. Manayar.' Aha. Not mother but manager. Well done, me, I said to myself. I'd come to England to join the two-thousand strong English teachers' conference and had just failed the first, although rather unexpected, pronunciation test.

My brief dialogue with Ana and José reminded me of a stereotype that the English loved so much in the seventies, when TV sitcom *Fawlty Towers* introduced the character of Manuel, a Spanish waiter, whose most frequent reply to any question was '¿Qué?' (What?), accompanied with a totally bewildered, rather stupid facial expression. Mr. and Mrs. Fawlty (John Cleese and Prunella Scales) used to justify the unintelligent behaviour of their waiter by catchphrase 'He's from Barcelona!' That, apparently, explained everything, and it took Barcelona years to correct the stereotype. In fact, it was only after Olympic games in 1992 that many Brits stopped equating the Spanish (or the Catalan) with Manuel. Now, it seems the old stereotype is more than in place again. When Ana as well as José, not getting what I was saying, looked at me intensely with their round Spanish eyes, the kind of eyes that Engelbert Humperdinck most probably got so enthusiastic about back in 1969, I couldn't help remembering Manuel. The facial expression was there, all that was missing was the proverbial '¿Qué?'

Brighton is a lively town, teeming with tourists, but what was relatively new for me on my last visit is groups of girls coming to the south coast for a hen party. Now, this is definitely something I shall have to remember – instead of elegant

women in the 1920s outfits from my memory number one, the town is full of loud, fat, sweaty girls in mini skirts and high heels, often drunk or pretending to be drunk. I can, however, quite understand the reason for celebration – it's a mystery to me how these obese females ever manage to find men to marry them, so I guess when they do, the world has to be made aware of this. I wonder what their gentlemen are like – the male counterparts of the said partying hens often sport

place I couldn't think anybody else would fit: The Mock Turtle, an old-fashioned tea room where you could easily imagine Miss Marple sipping a cuppa with one of her friends. The furniture as well as the selection of teas and cakes there make the visitor forget about today and transfer them at least half a century in the past. The Mock Turtle used to be run by two little old ladies that matched the place beautifully. They'd probably retired by now, but I still expected another pair of little old ladies to take their place.

Wrong. When I sat down and looked around the place, greeting every nook and corner of the tiny crammed room I used to know so well, a young, broad-faced girl came to my table and said something like 'Vat do you vant?'. After I ordered and handed her back the little menu, she uttered a thank you with that typical Slavonic falling intonation (low fall) which an English ear simply translates as 'at last'. I had my tea and my scones and even though they were fine, something was still wrong. I knew well that it wasn't the Polish waitress' fault I felt that way, but I still



beer bellies and are tattooed all over. Not all people in Brighton are like that, though. What this town still prides in, what hasn't changed from the late eighties and early nineties when I was a regular visitor there, is a big gay community. After seeing fat, loud, pale-skinned and scantily dressed young girls and guys all over the place, it's utterly pleasing to rest eyes on their complete opposite: well-groomed, well-dressed and well behaved gay men.

didn't give her a tip. If even The Mock Turtle was run by immigrants, there seemed no place in Brighton I, an English teacher, could go to get the regular fix of the culture I teach along with the language.

The clubbing tattooed population starts partying in the afternoon, which then goes on through the night, often on the beach. As a result, an early morning walker or runner would come across a totally littered beach, accompanied with smells of spilt cheap wine and beer as well as vomit. Cleaners, all native English by the look and sound of them, start working as early as six in the morning to make the town more or less presentable by the time tourists have had their breakfast and come out of hotels and guesthouses.

So, what does this happy international almost-no-English-speaking workforce that invaded Great Britain mean? I first noticed it last summer, when I had to go to five shops on Portobello Road in London before I finally found a person who spoke enough English to understand that I was looking for a particular shop in the area. Now it's all coming back loud and clear: the British haven't gained anything from the EU or globalisation. On the contrary, they are losing in a big way. People come to their country, take their jobs even though they can't speak English and have no idea how to behave in the host culture, while the native population is left with cleaning streets or hotel rooms and making breakfast for tourists. The fact that English is now a world language actually damages the native tongue of Shakespeare, twists it into a warped version of a lingo, devoid of the culture it sprang from, simplified enough for even the most stupid foreigner to master. And this, ladies and gentlemen, is ELF for you - but I shall tell you more about it next time.

Speaking of hotels, I'm returning to Old Ship again. After a rather unpleasant first impression I noticed that while better paid and more responsible positions there are held by the Spanish, the cleaners and kitchen staff, like rubbish collectors, are British. At least there I could communicate without an effort.

Although it would be unwise to expect all waiters in cafes and restaurants in Brighton to be fluent in English, there was a

Critical reading in a primary school EFL class

by **Mag. Agata Krizan**, *Filozofska fakulteta Maribor*, e-mail: agata.krizan@uni-mb.si

1. Introduction

People learn languages to interact with other people. Interacting with other people means making and exchanging meanings in social contexts. In our daily communication and lives we express attitudes, views, opinions and beliefs all the time. The aspect of 'interpersonal meanings' in a clause or in a text includes the way in which speakers/writers interact with one another, influence the behaviour of others, construct and fill social roles, adopt attitudinal and evaluative positions, and form bonds, relationships and alliances (Halliday, 1994; White, 2000:4). As can be seen, this aspect of social life is very active and carries a "heavy semantic load" (Fowler in Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard, 1996:77). This 'interpersonal' aspect of language is therefore worth examining in an EFL classroom. In this paper I will try to illustrate briefly how this social aspect of language can be explored in an upper primary school EFL classroom by focusing on attitudes in a text.

2. Attitudes and critical reading

One significant aspect of interpersonal language is the appraisal system developed by Martin and White (2005). The system is divided into three sub-systems: (1) Attitude, (2) Graduation and (3) Engagement. Attitude is further divided into three semantic categories: (i) Affect, (ii) Judgement and (iii) Appreciation.

Affect is a resource for expressing feelings (*sad*), judgement for judging people's character and behaviour (*honest*), and appreciation for valuing the worth of things, objects, products, events and phenomena (*interesting*). Engagement is about the communication with 'other voices' introduced into the text. Graduation is about amplifying attitudes (*intensification*).

Being able to notice various attitudes expressed in a text is important for the development of a critical reader. 'Critical' means many things in an educational context, but here, in the wider sense, it means 'explaining how the world and our relationships within it and to it are constructed through reading' (Goatley, 2000:1).

It is important to note that one of the main components of modern teaching is to emphasise the active role of the learner in the process of learning through the development of his or her personal cognitive abilities, which adds to the development of both explicit and implicit knowledge. What is important is that a pupil becomes actively involved

in the process of learning through the stimulation of his or her thought and creativity. The teacher, on the other hand, should take on the role of a facilitator of knowledge, leading and guiding a pupil to certain conclusions. In an EFL classroom in Slovenia, this component is mostly included in teaching materials, which usually use a text-based methodology – the unit is centred around the text, with certain notions and/or functions foregrounded. The text provides the basis for activities, discussions, grammar and vocabulary. Besides learning the vocabulary and grammar in a text, it is also important that pupils recognise some of the interpersonal elements it contains. Being guided to the identification of such elements is part of consciousness-raising (C-R, see Rutherford, 1987:189; Skehan, 1998:139). C-R is about exposure to the material with certain elements highlighted but without an expectation to 'know' or use them immediately in communication. It covers techniques from just noticing to concluding. This can be used as a complementary activity to the texts in textbooks, or to short texts the teacher selects and brings into the classroom (e.g. advertisements, short stories or letters).

3. Exploring attitudes in a text

In the following part of this paper, I will try to illustrate how attitudes can be explored in a short written text, using one used as part of a comprehension test in the 8th grade of a primary school (*where pupils have been learning EFL for 4 or more years*). The pupils have English three times per week. The test checked comprehension of the text through a variety of questions (*expository and true/false*) and a multiple choice task. Besides the general and more detailed understanding of the content of texts, the emphasis was also on checking the understanding of vocabulary. Two out of the 18 questions asked about the taste of food and the difficulty of exams, thus foregrounding the attitudinal aspect.

Although the whole system of appraisals is a large one, there is no need at this level to 'dig deeply', just to recognize the explicit ones and 'discuss' them with pupils. One is often very pleasantly surprised how explorative pupils at this age and with this level of knowledge of English can be.

The text used was the following (*without the marked attitudes*).

30 boys and girls who took part in an experiment to find out what school was like in the 1950s say they prefer today's schools. For four weeks the 16-year-old students, who came from all over Britain, at-

tended 5th year classes at the Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe, near London. They had to sleep in the school and were not allowed to communicate with the outside world, except by writing to their parents. They couldn't watch television or use mobile phones, and they had to wear grey uniforms. The boys all had to have short hair.

While they were at the school, they studied maths, English and history, and took 1950s exams in these subjects. After the experiment, they were able to compare the results with their own 21st century GCSE exams – and they found the modern exams easier.

The hardest rule to keep to was the 'six inch rule' – boys and girls could never be closer to each other than six inches (about twenty centimetres). But school rules and lessons weren't the only bad things. 'The food', one girl wrote to her parents, 'is terrible'. And I smell because there is no deodorant and we hardly ever change our clothes.

The teachers enjoyed the project, which was later made into a television programme, more than the students. The 'headmaster', who was a pupil at High Wycombe school forty years ago, said that it gave him lots of happy memories.

When exploring attitudes (*appraisals*), it is a good idea to somehow mark them in the text (e.g. *different colours for different attitudes*). Or one can put the items into a table. Here, appraisals are marked bold (*explicit attitudes*), italics (*graduation*) and underlined (*engagement*).

Firstly, pupils try to recognise all the explicit feelings/emotions mentioned in the text through words. Here they try to recognise both the emoter of the feeling and the appraised item (*target*).

There are two explicit emotions expressed in this text (*prefer and enjoyed*). Emoters of these feelings are pupils (*prefer*) and teachers (*enjoyed*). Emotional attitudes are expressed towards the modern school (*prefer*) and the project (*enjoyable*).

Secondly, pupils try to recognise explicit attitudes which refer to people's behaviour (*judgemental values*). There are no such expressions in this text.

Thirdly, pupils try to recognise attitudes which refer to things, objects, events or else (*appreciation values*). There are 5 such instances: easier, hardest, bad, terrible and happy.

The targets of these attitudes are modern exams (*easier*), school rules and lessons (*bad*), food (*terrible*) and memories (*happy*).

There are two instances which are slightly problematic for the coding system. Happy, as a semantic item, could be identified as an expression of feeling, since this adjective is most frequently associated with people (*being happy*). When

someone has happy memories, this usually triggers happy emotions in a person. And indeed in this case, the emoter is a person (*the headmaster*). However, in the text happy memories are stressed, so happy is also being used, in reference to memories, in terms of appreciation (*happy instead of nice*). When there are attitudes expressed towards things as an emotional reaction (*How does it grab me? How do I find it?*), then this is more a matter of appreciation. At this point it is important to note that if pupils are in doubt and express this through their opinions and examples, this actually reflects progress in noticing things and thus progress in the development of critical reading, in other words something positive. In such cases both interpretations, if reasonable, should be allowed for the sake of further motivation and encouragement.

Another 'problematic' item is smell. When one smells, this is usually associated with something negative and not really accepted in our society (*see adverts for hygiene products!*). Although in terms of its semantic meaning alone, smell cannot be regarded as an instance of explicit attitude, the word nevertheless has some association with it. The evoked attitude would probably be something like 'I do not like this – this is not good', thus a negative appreciation or even an emotion.

Although implicit attitudes might be too difficult to be dealt with at this level, it is certainly not a waste of time if they are included in a discussion to stimulate pupils' thought. A 'correct' guess might even pop out, which is a further step in critical reading.

Once the explicit attitudes have been dealt with, pupils try to recognise graduation and engagement items in the text. Graduation includes mainly intensification (*very, completely, totally*) and quantifiers (*numbers, size, mass – first, near, great, huge*).

Instances of graduation recognised in this text are:

30, in the 1950s, today's, for four weeks, all over, near, watch television or use mobile phones, all, own, 21st century, easier, the hardest, six, never, closer than, six, about twenty, only, one, terrible, no, hardly, ever, enjoyed, more than, forty years ago, and lots of.

It is important for pupils to notice, for example, lexical intensification – enjoy (*more than just like*) and terrible (*more than just bad*) – and comparisons – the hardest, easier.

Instances of engagement items in this text:

Projected words (*reported speech*): *say, said, found*

Direct reported speech: *wrote + quoting*

Modalised obligation: *had to, not allowed*

Modal expressions: *couldn't, able to*

Denial: *never, no, not*

Counter-expectancy: *but*

Pupils would probably not be able to find all these instances on their own, so a teacher should guide them to those unrecognised/overlooked items before giving the answers. This way search and thought are stimulated once again.

Once various attitudes are found together with graded forms and engagement, one can, for example, discuss the prevalence and types of attitudes. In this text appreciation is foregrounded, stressing attitudes towards rules, food and exams. There are also some emotions expressed towards memories and the project itself. The author interferes in the text by using denials, modal verbs and some numbers which are time- and distance-related. Comparisons are also present. Even such a simple synopsis can be useful and a step towards critical reading.

On the basis of gathered appraisal items, several other activities can be compiled by the teacher, either more 'vocabulary' or 'grammar' oriented.

Some suggested activities follow.

1. Fill in the gaps with other possible words:

in the 1950s say they _____ today's schools.
(like ... more, enjoy, love, dislike, hate, resent)

and they found the modern exams _____
(more interesting, enjoyable, great, difficult, challenging)

The teachers _____ the project, (liked, hated, ignored)
it gave him _____ happy memories. (many, several,
few, a number of, numerous)

2. Write negative forms of the following words:

Happy: _____ (sad, depressed, tearful)

Terrible: _____ (wonderful, amazing)

3. Write the opposites:

All: _____ (none)

Never: _____ (always)

4. What does the underlined word refer to: feeling (F), human behaviour (HB) or evaluation of thing (T)

- a) This is a fascinating product. (T)
- b) He is a coward. (HB)
- c) Her eyes were full of tears. (F)
- d) We were frightened. (F)

5. Underline instances of graduation in the following sentences:

- a) She's a brilliant player.
- b) This is rather annoying.
- c) Every member should pay.
- d) He was all alone.

6. Underline instances of engagement:

- a) Perhaps he will come.
- b) This could mean something.
- c) She didn't bring the paper.
- d) They believe she did it.

4. Conclusion

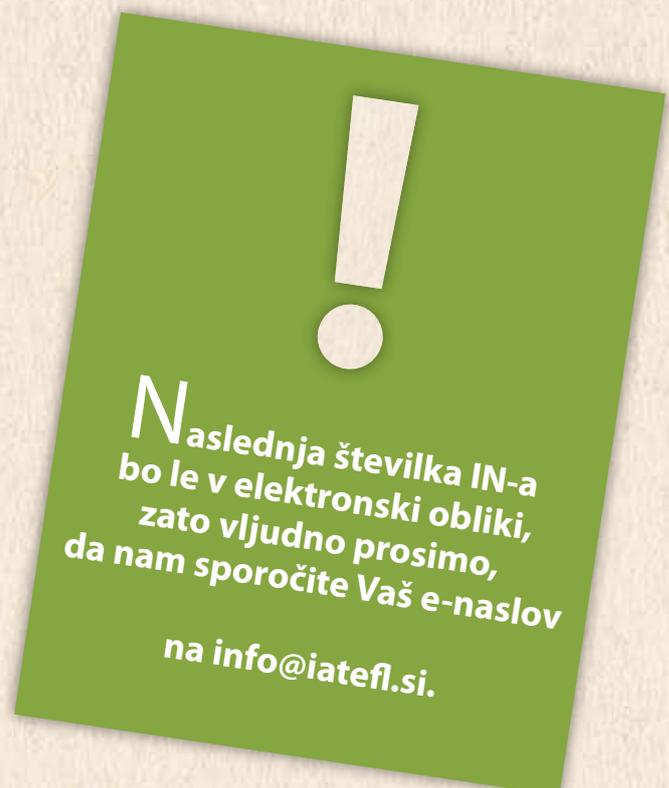
With an overview of attitudes in a text, pupils can gain insight into the particular choices that were made by the writer. Such an overview also offers pupils an insight into the language as a system – how individual choices in a text achieve certain purpose and effect.

It is important to stress that teachers do not need to operate with metalinguistic expressions and explanations (e.g. *appraisal or appreciation*). What is important is that pupils think, combine their knowledge of Slovene and English, explore, observe, and search. Sentences for further activities can be taken directly from the textbook or can be made up and adapted to the level of knowledge of English. Through activities such as those above, new items can always be introduced to enrich pupils' vocabulary. Although at first sight all this might seem difficult, practice as ever is important, and here it really pays off, since the more pupils see, the more they remember.

If nothing else, it's something different for a change!

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Evropski dan jezikov

V okviru Evropskega dneva jezikov smo septembra 2010 povabili k sodelovanju osnovne in srednje šole in sicer tako, da so učenci prevajali dve pesmi v različne jezike, ki jih znajo, lahko pa tudi v različne pisave. Odločili smo se, da bodo osnovne šole prevajale pesem »**I'M DOING MY HOMEWORK**«, srednje šole pa pesem Shela Silversteina »**FORGOTTEN LANGUAGE**«. Učitelji mentorji so pošiljali prevode pesmi na elektronski naslov društva, nakar smo prevode uredili in objavili na naši spletni strani.

Tako smo na dan 26. septembra objavili prispele prevode in sicer:

- V kategoriji osnovnih šol smo objavili 16 prevodov, od tega jih je bilo 11 v slovenščino, 3 v nemščino in eden v hrvaščino. V tej kategoriji je sodelovalo 6 osnovnih šol in 8 mentoric. Za slovenski prevod pa je poskrbela tudi naša članica.
- V kategoriji srednjih šol je prispelo več prevodov, prav tako pa je bila pesem prevedena v več različnih jezikov (slovenščina, francoščina, italijanščina, španščina, ruščina, hrvaščina, nemščina, albanščina, in turščina). Sodelovalo je pet šol, največ prevodov pa so poslali iz Poslovno – komercialne šole v Celju. Sodelovalo je več kot šest mentorjev (nekateri niso bili omenjeni), kar pa je pomembno, pa je pestrost jezikov in idej. Prevajali niso samo dijaki, temveč tudi njihove profesorice. Lotili so se tudi prevajanja s prevajalnikom Google, profesorici z Gimnazije v Murski Soboti pa sta presenetili z »slikopisom«. Ruski prevodi so bili napisani v cirilici. Nikakor pa ne smemo pozabiti, da je tudi to pesem prevedla članica IATEFLa Jasna Džambič.

Vse prevode si lahko preberete in ogledate tudi na naši spletni strani www.iatefl.si.

Tudi letos nameravamo obeležiti ta dan. Tema letošnjega dneva jezikov so različne Evropske pravljice, zgodbe, legende. Dan jezikov smo zastavili tako, da bodo lahko sodelovali učenci od nižjih razredov osnovne šole pa vse do srednješolcev. Natančnejša navodila boste prejeli po elektronski pošti. Prispevki vaših učencev in dijakov bodo tudi tokrat objavljeni na našem wiki prostoru. Želimo vam veliko ustvarjalne žilice.

Dragi učitelji in učiteljice

26. septembra poteka Evropski dan jezikov. Kot osrednje združenje slovenskih učiteljev angleščine vas ponovno vabimo, da se nam pridružite pri praznovanju tega dneva.

Letošnja rdeča nit bodo Evropske pravljice, pripovedke in legende. **4. in 5. razredi** (lahko tudi 6., odvisno od znanja vaših učencev) poiščejo do 10 različnih naslovov evropskih pravljic, pripovedk ali legend. Naslove zberejo v izvorniku nato pa poiščejo angleški (nemški, francoski...) prevod izvornika, odvisno od jezika, ki se ga učijo. Temu dodajo tudi slovenski prevod naslova. Prevode lahko opremijo še z ilustracijo prizora izbranega dela. Učitelji mentorji izmed vseh prispevkov na posamezni šoli izberejo največ 5 in jih pošljejo na spodaj priložen naslov.

6., 7., in 8. razredi bodo izdelovali stripe. Učenci izberejo eno (ali več) evropskih pravljic, pripovedk, legend in jih predstavijo v stripu. Pri tem uporabljajo različne jezike, lahko tudi slovenščino. Vsaka šola lahko pošlje največ 3 stripe, izbor pa je na Vaš.

9. razredi (lahko se jim pridružijo tudi 8. razredi) **in srednje šole** pa bodo pisali spise na zgoraj omenjeno temo. Učenci izberejo eno ali več del in napišejo drugačen konec zgodbe, pri čemer naj ne uporabijo več kot 60 besed. Tudi tu lahko vsaka šola pošlje največ 3 spise po Vašem izboru.

Želimo si čim več različnih v čim več različnih jezikih. Izbira jezika je Vaša odločitev, in je seveda odvisna od znanja Vaših učencev oz. dijakov. K sodelovanju lahko povabite tudi učitelje in učiteljice drugih jezikov na Vaši šoli. Na spletni strani boste med priponkami našli tudi uradno vabilo.

Vsaka šola lahko pošlje po **en dokument, ki vsebuje vse pričakovane izdelke**. Pričakujemo, da boste vaše izdelke **do vključno 23. 9. 2010** objavili na našem wiki prostoru, katerega povezavo boste našli na naši spletni strani www.iatefl.si. Lahko pa vaše izdelke pošljete tudi direktno s klikom na spodnjo povezavo:

<http://iateflsloveniadanjezikov.pbworks.com/w/page/44785143/FrontPage>.

Lep pozdrav, Vaš IATEFL Slovenia, Ljubljana, 31. avgust 2011

Project week – an opportunity for interdisciplinary cooperation

by **Cilka Hančič**, SŠ CIRIUS Kamnik

In our centre – this year for the fourth time – we devote one week, which we call “project week”, to different activities. Students from the new secondary vocational and technical programmes also participate in the activities.

The week is usually organised at the end of September. Students don't go to usual lessons in their classes; instead, they are grouped according to their interests and abilities in different project activities. The main activity of this year's project week was the Mini Olympic Games, where the students competed in a variety of different sports.

But in the meantime students also participated in other activities such as:

- Making lists of participants
- Invitations and the preparation of the demonstration
- The opening and closing performances
- Photography and recording the events
- Analysis of the results
- Journalism workshop and school radio
- The preparation and presentation of the project
- Presentation of the results on the centre's internet page
- Making the awards
- Making the final publication

The activities took place mainly in classrooms where several computers were available, so that students could work more effectively. All the teachers and students were involved in the activities. Our aim was for students to learn:

- Designing and making invitations, brochures and bulletins
- Receiving and sending documents by email
- Working in teams
- Writing short texts in Slovene and English
- Getting to know digital photography
- Presenting the project with the help of the presentation programme

The Mini Olympic Games opened on the second day of the project week. Fourth year student Haris Muratović, who is already a very successful swimmer, lit the Olympic Flame and the sports activities began. We also had two mascots, 'CIRIUS' and 'CIRIUSKA', who spent their time happily running around and supporting the athletes.

This was also the opportunity to meet students with special needs from two other centres, The Centre for Children with Hearing Problems from Ljubljana and The Educational Centre from Višnja Gora. Students competed in sports such as volleyball and table tennis. After lunch the guest students also visited the old town centre of Kamnik. Some of our students turned out to be excellent guides, telling out guests everything they needed to know about the important historical buildings and events of Kamnik.

The group of journalists conducted many interesting interviews with our guests and recorded them for the radio. The guests told us about life in their respective schools and – nice to hear! – also expressed happiness and satisfaction after a day full of exciting events.

The journalists and the radio reporters also presented all the sports that were played during the week. One of them, Boccia, is a traditional recreational sport (*similar to bowling*) appropriate for wheelchair-bound athletes. It can be played individually, in pairs or in groups of three. Our students are particularly keen on Boccia, and of them are even playing it at international level, where they have been achieving remarkable results.

On Thursday, students played another interesting game, wheelchair hockey. Their opponents were a team called the Trouble-Makers, many of its members being ex-students of ours. Unfortunately the Trouble-Makers were rather better than us on this occasion!

After the games, the winning groups received awards and medals that were made specially for the occasion by the students and their teachers.



In other workshops, students made posters in English to show their guests what was going on in the different classrooms.

The electrical programme and computer science students made some very interesting photos and a film; these were shown at the end of the programme.

On Friday, we got together in our new gym. We had a short final performance, a group of students put out the Olympic Flame and the games were over. We also made an analysis of the whole week's activities. Not surprisingly, we found more positive than negative things. Students pointed out the following positives:

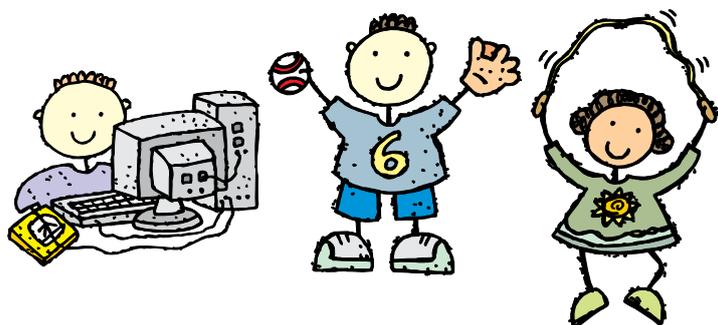
- Good cooperation
- Having a lot of fun
- The mascots
- The competitive spirit
- Perfect organisation
- The visit of our guests
- The school radio

The students' minor complaints were first about the swimming pool being out of order (*unfortunately it was not usable due to flood damage*), that we didn't have our own anthem and that the choice of sports was not diverse enough.

Personally, I think that Project Week is a very good thing – it's an opportunity for cooperation between students and teachers from different programmes and areas of education. The atmosphere is more relaxed than it usually is in classes and it's a chance for students to reveal some of their hidden talents.

Those who know more about computers, for example, help others who are not so capable. In other words it's a big opportunity to learn from others, to help each other to succeed and in the mean time to have fun. Students also use foreign languages more confidently, because there is no one there to correct them when they make mistakes.

All in all, we were satisfied with what we'd achieved this Project Week, but we also promised each other that we'd make even more effort next year and try to make Project Week number five even better.



International projects – Erasmus Mobility

by Milena Štrovs Gagič

We have had an Erasmus Charter for a few years now, and our coordinator, Karmen Grudnik, has always managed to find new partners to work with. One of the possibilities this year was Langside College in Glasgow, Scotland.

My colleague Majda Bukovnik and I went there on 5th February and stayed for a week. She took part in the Staff Mobility, while I, as usual, participated in the Teaching Mobility. The host school had prepared quite a full programme for the both of us, so we spent a lot of time there. I was lucky enough to get to teach some of the ESOL classes, which take part in their brand new school – a beautiful building with all the latest equipment, such as smart boards, and facilities which attract students to spend more time in school than is compulsory (*pool tables, fitness, a wonderful gym, a modern and cheap café...*). ESOL involves all foreigners (*most of them from Pakistan, Ghana, Congo and other Asian or African countries, but also a big number from Poland*) who come to Glasgow and whose English is weak (*or sometimes even non-existent*). Glasgow has also been chosen as the city for all asylum-seekers in the UK. I had my five lessons with various groups: from elementary, where we learned about question words, through intermediate, where we talked about hot verbs, to upper-intermediate, where we talked about advertising. They mostly use Headway books, so the teaching was not that difficult – although I should mention that they were not keen to let me know upfront what my topics would be! Luckily I have been teaching for quite some time now, so even so it was not that demanding.

As is my habit, I also took the opportunity to present our country, our school (*Vocational College Slovenj Gradec*) and our town, as most of the students had no idea where Slovenia was!

All in all, I have to say it was a very pleasant experience, as I had never before worked in a multinational class where the students were of all ages – from the very young to the over-50s. The students welcomed me really warmly, said hello when we met on later occasions and were extremely interested in our country and our school.

An additional benefit of the project was the return visit of David Marshal, who taught 5 lessons in Slovenj Gradec – the students were thrilled and would like something like it again in the future.

Praise abundantly and scold sparingly

by **Renata Bok Zelenjak**, *Gimnazija Jesenice*

There is definitely some truth in my title, but having said that, there is more to it than meets the eye. Being a teenager is a complex situation, and in this day and age, teenagers not only have to deal with their hormonal issues but also with a decaying society, where communication and values seem to be at a low ebb. This essay will use generalisations for the sake of clearer understanding of the problems, while stressing that there are still precious gems among the modern youths.

Firstly, though, I believe that the praise that we hear is so needed for self-esteem and personal growth has lost its value and indeed can have quite the opposite effect on teenagers. Allegedly, praise should encourage students to work harder, achieve more and build a positive self-image, but more often than not this technique backfires, as the adolescents interpret it in the most complacent way – ‘I’ve done enough and there is no need to strive for more’ – which can be lethal in our dog-eat-dog modern society. To succeed in the flood of high-fliers, overachievers and work-driven young adults, is tough, and one cannot but wonder what will happen to these youngsters on entering the global work market, where mediocrity is just not good enough. Yes, it is vital to have healthy self-esteem, but it does not suffice.

On the other hand, it needs to be said that teenagers themselves are quick in judgement and prone to criticising and protesting loudly if something is not fair in their egocentric world, regardless of any lack of substantial knowledge or evidence. They have no qualms about talking back to adults, egocentrically seeing the world as unfair to them even when they know their performance is below their capacities and the amount of work they’re putting in is close to nothing.

Furthermore, as the adults who are in everyday contact with these students are being brainwashed into blindly praising their young charges instead of pointing out the flaws in their work, such praise has become just a cliché that nobody believes in. The praxis has shown no substantial improvement when excessive praise was given. Consequently, more from frustration than noble motives, teachers try to shake the students up by pointing out their mistakes, poor working habits and slack attitude to schoolwork, strongly believing and hoping that the shock therapy might just work if praise fails. But the reaction is the same to that to praise – pure 100% numbness, apathy and no visible progress achieved.

Another issue which needs to be discussed thoroughly is the problem of modern society and the lack of moral and ethical values. This society does not condemn cheating, lying, slacking, irresponsibility or lack of interest. Photocopy-

ing cheat-sheets, missing deadlines, copy/pasting assignments from the web, not doing homework, expecting second and third chances when they have not applied themselves the first time, lying about their whereabouts and truancy seem morally wrong neither to students nor to their over-protective parents, who, even when aware of their children’s actions, support them in a desperate chase for high grades and good reputation, not considering the damage done to their children’s knowledge, academic horizon or moral values. What happened to real parental support and sentences like ‘as long as you have tried and done your best, I am proud of you’? The line between real life and an imaginary one with bogus personalities in an online virtual world is blurred. And nobody says anything, because it all goes unnoticed in families where 24/7 jobs leave little time for communication and even less patience and willpower for soul searching. I do not dare to ponder on what will happen to the children of these children.

So where do we stand? It is a vicious circle harming our youths. The parents and teachers are left helpless and frustrated, because they are unable to help those who need sound advice. Nobody believes anybody anymore, and frankly our praise is not even noticed, whereas every tiny remark on poor academic performance or moral values is blown out of all proportion and comes back to haunt not the student, but the teacher who dared to speak candidly and point out the flaws with their charge’s intentions at heart. And who is to blame? “All of us” would be the proper answer, as all of us form society, but the bottom line is that those who do not want to help themselves cannot be helped by others, regardless of their status or age. They can be encouraged, praised or scolded, but until the words reach their hearts, there is not much that can be done. Having said that, I still promise to myself to praise and to scold and above all to support anyone who is willing to change and implement good “old-fashioned” values into their life. Diligence, honesty and hard work seem to be out-of-date characteristics, rarely appreciated or valued.

And if I touch one heart per generation, I will be doing more than I could ever hope for. After all, fellow adults, how often is it that we are praised for doing something that is our job and responsibility?

OBVESTILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠKEGA JEZIKA 2011/2012 ZA DIJAKE DRUGEGA LETNIKA

Spoštovane kolegice in kolegi!

Tukaj je nekaj osnovnih informacij v zvezi s tekmovanjem v znanju angleškega jezika za dijake 2. letnika za šolsko leto 2011 / 2012.

Dijaki naj v skupini od 3 do 5 dijakov posnamejo IGRANO-DOKUMENTARNI PRISPEVEK v angleškem jeziku, na temo DICKENS AND HIS TIME, v katerem morajo uporabiti predpisanih deset besed glede na kategorijo. Prispevki naj govorijo o Charlesu Dickensu IN/ALI njegovem življenju/obdobju v katerem je živel, ustvarjal/njegovih delih itd.

Dijaki bodo tekmovali v štirih kategorijah:

- A** za tekmovalce drugega letnika, ki se učijo angleščino kot prvi tuji jezik in obiskujejo katerokoli gimnazijo vključno z evropskimi oddelki
- B** za tekmovalce drugega letnika, ki se učijo angleščino kot prvi tuji jezik in obiskujejo katerokoli 4-letno strokovno šolo, ki se zaključí s poklicno matura
- C** za tekmovalce drugega letnika, ki so več kot eno leto bivali na angleško govorečem področju in tiste, ki so v oddelkih mednarodne mature
- D** za tekmovalce drugega letnika, ki se učijo angleščino kot drugi tuji jezik in obiskujejo katerokoli gimnazijo ali 4-letno strokovno šolo.

Dijaki, ki tekmujejo v kategoriji **A** ali **C**, naj uporabijo naslednjih deset besed:

TABOO, FICTITIOUS, TO INTERFERE, TO RELEASE, THE INTERNET, TO DEVOUR, ECLECTIC, STANDSTILL, VIRTUE, DAUNTING

Dijaki, ki tekmujejo v kategoriji **B** ali **D**, naj uporabijo naslednjih deset besed:

INDUSTRIAL, AWKWARD, MODESTY, SEVERE, TO PREDICT, TO DISTINGUISH, CROSSROADS, TO SPOIL, TEMPER, CARELESS

Predpisana dolžina prispevka je 4 minute, z ali brez uvodne in odjavne špice.

Kriteriji pri izbiri najboljše skupine (tako na šolski kot na državni ravni) so naslednji: pravilnost uporabe podanih besed, ustvarjalnost pri uporabi podanih besed, jezik in izgovorjava, informativnost prispevka, splošni vtis in tehnična izvedba (uvodna in odjavna špica, kvaliteta posnetka (fokusiranje, osvetljava, zvok, razumljivost/razločnost), časovna omejitev, prehodi med scenami in spremljevalna glasba/zvok).

Predlagamo, da na šolskem tekmovanju, ki ga izvedete sami po zgoraj omenjenih kriterijih **najkasneje do 14. oktobra 2011**, izberete največ sedem skupin, ki jih prijavite na državno tekmovanje **najkasneje do 21. novembra 2011** in sicer tako, da pošljete na naslov **IATEFL Slovenia, p. p.1677, 1001 Ljubljana:**

- posnetek na CD/DVD mediju (označite ime šole, naslov prispevka in kategorijo)
- scenarij/besedilo v tiskani obliki
- izpolnjeno prijavo (v prilogi)
- izpolnjeno izjavo (v prilogi)
- potrdilo o plačilu prijavnine (za več informacij o načinu plačila obiščite našo spletno stran!).

Zbrane posnetke bo komisija, ki je sestavljena iz treh članov odbora IATEFL Slovenia in enega ocenjevalca ustanove British Council, pregledala, ocenila in v predpisanem času javno objavila rezultate na spletni strani IATEFL Slovenia www.iatefl.si.

Prosimo, obiščite našo spletno stran www.iatefl.si, kjer boste našli obe izjavi, navodila za plačilo prijavnine in ostale dodatne informacije in navodila, ki jih morate upoštevati ob prijavi tekmovalcev. Za kakršnekoli dodatne informacije smo vam na voljo na telefonski številki 041 907 065 oziroma na elektronskem naslovu info@iatefl.si ali direktno na elektronskem naslovu koordinatorice tekmovanja Jasne Džambič (jasna.dzambic@iatefl.si).

Veselimo se vašega sodelovanja in vas lepo pozdravljamo.

Jasna Džambič, prof.
koordinatorka tekmovanja



Jasna Cepuder Sedmak, prof.
predsednica društva



A Comenius project: European Babel Tower – What about Tolerance?

International school partnerships – a great motivational tool for foreign language learning

by **Petra Fošnarič and Stanka Veršič**, *Videm Primary School*

Comenius is part of the Lifelong Learning programme of the EU, which is one of the most important EU programmes in the field of education and training. The programme is designed to contribute to the development of society through creating more job opportunities and to ensure greater social cohesion for future generations; to these ends it promotes exchanges, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems in Europe. Comenius school partnerships enable both pupils and teachers in different countries to work on topics of mutual interest and at the same time improve various skills, such as teamwork, social relations and the use of information and communication technology. Another objective is to increase motivation towards language learning. With this in mind, we decided to take part in a project called “European Babel Tower – What about Tolerance”. We formed a school partnership with schools from Poznan (Poland), Seville (Spain), Tavira (Portugal), Evrichou (Cyprus), Monopoli and Capo D’Orlando (Italy), which took place from 2009 to 2011. Through the various project activities, we wanted to provide our students with opportunities to practise English, their first foreign language.

We began the cooperation among teachers of the partner schools by making contacts via email, while students – enthusiastic Facebook users that they are – made friends with their peers from partner schools in this very popular social network. That is why we also created a joint Facebook group, where we chatted and exchanged materials and photos of our products

and from our meetings. Students prepared presentations of themselves, the school and Slovenia, which were shown to students and teachers during the work visits. At school we also organised video conferences, which encouraged students to communicate with their friends about the topic of the project and of course everyday things that interest them.

The most exciting of all the project activities were definitely the so-called “mobilities”. The short-term exchange programme focuses on home-stays, school activities, language skills and increasing the understanding of other cultures. Our students visited partner students and stayed with their families in Cyprus, Portugal and Sicily. The benefits for the students were extensive: educational, personal and long-term. Language acquisition is achieved through practical immersion. On the personal level this type of exchange enhances self-confidence and self-esteem while creating challenges outside the comfort zone.

In the first year of the project, every partner school made a booklet in order to provide an insight into the culture of each country. Our cultural guidebook to Slovenia presents different elements of Slovenian culture, such as Slovenian customs and traditions, music, cuisine, notable authors in our literature and other notable Slovenians who have in their own way contributed to the culture of our nation. At the end of the booklet there is also Slovenian alphabet with some words and their pronunciation and of course a glossary of useful Slovenian expressions.



Comenius “Dream Team”.



Our young students inviting guests to the exhibition of Slovenian souvenirs.

One of the project activities was the so-called European Day. We organised a number of different workshops at school, which our students took part in according to their interest. We have learnt a lot about the countries of our partner schools. Our students participated in workshops on areas such as cuisine, geography, music, flora and fauna, art, crafts, sports and language (we even invited some outside help – native speakers of Portuguese, Spanish and Italian). The younger children were also very creative and learnt about the partner countries through typical children's games, songs and dancing, and arts and crafts.

After learning a lot about other cultures, we focused on the term tolerance itself. There was a round-table discussion organised at our school with the title "All Different, All Equal". Representatives of classes 4 to 9 joined in on a debate about tolerance. Students thought about the reasons for intolerance and in what forms it appears in our school hallways and classrooms. Students and people in general are very different and we have to respect that. We must not give in to bullying, isolation and insults, which are all forms of intolerant behaviour. So, what can we do? Students suggested that those who feel oppressed should inform someone about the bullying. Furthermore, everyone should try to imagine how it would feel to stand in such a person's shoes.

We also organised a competition in knowledge and understanding of human and children's rights. Ninth class students were invited to compete and the winner of the competition was rewarded with a trip to Strasbourg. In the beginning of March 2011, mentors and the awarded students from partner



schools met in Strasbourg and together we visited the European Parliament for a guided tour and a presentation by a member of staff on the role and work of the Parliament. After that we attended a plenary sitting and observed the MEPs' debates. Full of impressions, the students wrote a declaration in which they declared to respect particular rights and thus spread tolerance in their communities and contribute to freedom and peace. This declaration was later signed by all the students involved in the project.

The declaration, written and signed by students.

The greatest task that we had to do in the second year of our project was a war diary, where we explored the history of the Second World War, the consequences of intolerance and children's rights in the past and today. The students visited the National Liberation Museum in Maribor, watched the film The Great Dictator and read Partisan poetry and the story Ali si videl Kolomana Giderja? What followed was student creativity at work. Students took advantage of their own strong areas, and the results included photography, songs, acting in a photo story and scripts for a radio play. Our working language was Slovenian, but we translated everything for our Comenius partners.

One of the liveliest activities in the final stages of the project was col-

laboration with our music teacher, which resulted in an attractive songbook of Slovenian folk songs. It includes some general information about Slovenian folk music and the lyrics and music of the chosen songs. Our school choir learned all the songs and recorded them on a CD. At the final Comenius



Slovenian and Cypriot students at an art workshop.



A sports day in Videm – foreign teachers discussing football strategy with our students.nian souvenirs.

meeting, we exchanged CDs so we could listen to the songs of all the partner schools and enjoy their native languages through music.

Before hosting the teachers and students from our partner schools, we decided to make a leaflet about life at our school. As this was done by the students themselves, it expresses their view on activities occurring during a school year. The leaflet contains topics our students thought would be of interest to our guests. Combining teamwork, the English language and ICT, it offered new possibilities for students to learn tolerance as well.

Our school held the final meeting of the partner schools from 18th to 22nd May 2011. We hosted 30 guests – some teachers and some students. The latter stayed with host families and together with their Slovenian host students attended lessons and a special art workshop. The visiting teachers had lessons at our school and thus our students got opportunities to speak with them and ask plenty of questions. Besides the formal project evaluation meeting, we also prepared many pleasant, more relaxed activities, such as a trip to Bled for all the guests and the host students, an exhibition of typical Slovenian products, a Slovenian evening, which was organised in cooperation with the local folklore and ethnographic societies, and a sports day for everyone at school, all the students, teachers and students' families, including siblings and grandparents. These fun activities provided many opportunities for our students to practise their English and were perhaps even more efficient in that regard than more formal events, where inhibition is usually a problem.

The students and teachers involved in this project all acquired a lot of knowledge about tolerance and about the partners' school systems and cultures in general. But perhaps most importantly, when visiting or hosting Comenius partners, everyone actually practised tolerance themselves. With everyone being so friendly, helpful and kind, all the students got along with each other perfectly. Indeed many participants struck up lasting friendships. And another, perhaps less expected, benefit was that, through the project, the exploration of our own Slovenian culture also became an important aspect. Becoming aware of our roots makes us stronger and more confident as a young country building our position in the EU.

Being a two-year project, Comenius required a lot of extra work on the part of students and teachers alike. Nevertheless, everybody enjoyed the team work – so different from the usual curriculum-based lessons. And the participating students gladly welcomed the foreign students into their homes and offered them hospitality and friendship. Indeed we also noticed some students not directly involved in the project also making contact with the foreign guests during their stay in Slovenia, many of them still staying in touch via Facebook. We strongly believe that our goals have been achieved and hope that they prove an inspiration for others.

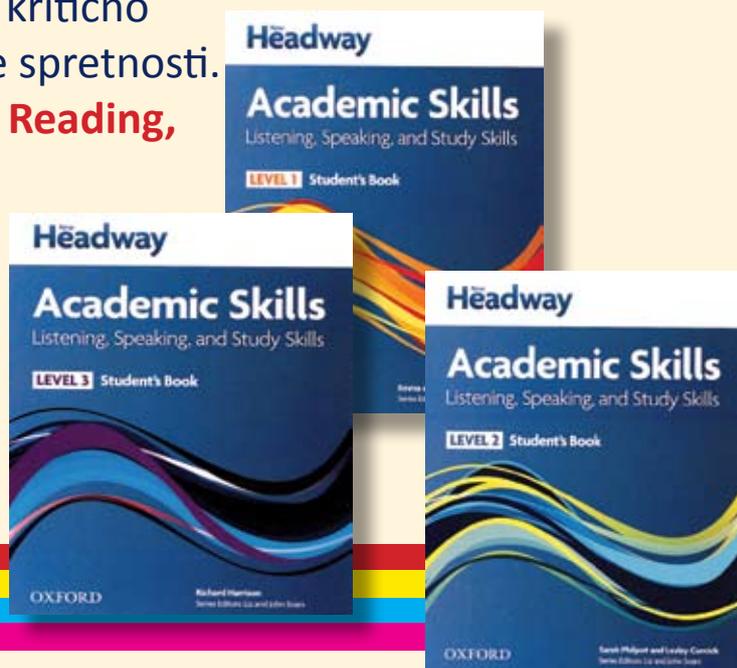
For more information, check out our blog at <http://osvidem-comenius.blogspot.com/>.

HEADWAY ACADEMIC SKILLS

Serija, podprta s temami, ki spodbujajo kritično razmišljanje, intenzivno razvija študijske spretnosti.

Listening, Speaking, and Study Skills in Reading, Writing, and Study Skills nudijo:

- tehnike pisanja zapiskov,
- pripravo predstavitev,
- argumentiranje stališč in prepričanj,
- modele vodenega pisanja in
- razvoj bralnih strategij.



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Mladinska knjiga
TRGOVINA

Developing as a teacher

This series of articles from the British Council aims to help you think about *your* teaching and bring new ideas and activities into your classroom. The series covers topics including homework, working with large classes and finding resources. Today we look at **developing as a teacher**.

Read these comments from teachers. Do you agree?

'I want to learn more about teaching and language learning but I'm not sure where to start.'

Yolanda, Mexico

'Developing as a teacher is important but I don't have the time or the money to do a course.'

Rashid, Pakistan

What can we do to develop professionally? Here are some ideas.

- Talk to other teachers. The staff room is a great resource – it's full of teachers with ideas that you can borrow to try with your classes.
- Keep a **teaching diary**. After each lesson makes notes on what you learned about your students, yourself, teaching, and the English language. List simple personal goals such as trying group or pair work.
- Read about your profession in teaching journals, books, online articles, blogs.
- Try a **blind observation**. This is good if you don't want someone to watch your class at first or if it's difficult to find a time when someone can watch you teach. The teacher tells the 'observer' (a colleague) about the lesson she is going to teach and describe one or two areas that she wants to improve, for example instructions. She then teaches the lesson (without the 'observer'). After the lesson, the two colleagues have feedback, paying particular attention to those one or two areas.
- Try **team teaching**. Plan and teach a lesson with another teacher. Decide who is going to teach which parts of the class. This is a great way to learn about different ways of teaching from each other.
- Give a session/workshop at your school. Choose a topic that interests you such as creating resources. Do some research and plan what you want to say to your colleagues. Give teachers ideas for activities to use in class.
- Start a **professional community** with colleagues. You can meet (in person or online) to exchange teaching tips, share resources, compare experiences, work on projects together, for example, improving English. The community can be just two people or as big as you like.
- Think about professional training. You could learn to be a teacher trainer or an online tutor. Perhaps your school can help pay for training courses. Some online courses are free!

Be open to trying new ideas and look for ways to learn more about your profession. Developing professionally can make your job more interesting and improve your teaching.

What do you think?

Osman from Turkey writes:

Do you know what a PLN is? It means Personal Learning Network. A PLN is a group of people, any people, that can help you to develop and learn.

Many people nowadays associate PLN with the connections made online with other teachers for example, through blogging, Twitter and Facebook.

However, we sometimes forget the most important people in our PLN - the people we work with every day! They know the context we work in and they can be the most useful source of advice and support.

A classroom activity - learner diaries

Help students to think about their learning and provide information on their progress. They can also help the teacher to see what activities work well and not so well in class.

- Students can use the back of their notebooks as a diary. Or fold a sheet of paper into a z-shape to make a six-page diary.
- At the end of each class give the students 5 minutes to complete sentences in their diaries, for example:

Today I learnt...

One thing I said very well in class today...

One mistake I made today...

One activity I liked in class today was...

In the class today I didn't like...

- Check the diaries as students are writing or collect them to read from time to time. Write comments if you like.
- With a large class, correction may be impractical but give students help with writing if needed.

Glossary

A **teaching diary** is a record a teacher keeps of his/her classes - what worked well and what didn't and notes about classes.

A lesson **observation** is where one teacher watches another's lesson to give feedback and advice to help the teacher develop. A **blind observation** is one type of observation.

Team teaching is when there are two teachers in the classroom teaching a lesson together.

A **professional community** is an organisation of teachers that lets them exchange information and ideas.

Think about

- Write a list of three ways that you want to develop as a teacher:

1.....

2.....

3.....

- Tick the boxes as you do them!

2nd EIA/IATEFL Teacher Development Programme in Slovenia, July 2011

by **Stephanie Clarke**

A shining IATEFL team Auspiciously, Monday, July 4 (American Independence Day) saw the beginning of the 2nd EIA/IATEFL Teacher Development Programme (TDP) in Slovenia. Thanks to Sandra Vida who organised the course and Jasna Sedmak, who kindly gave up her large, bright classroom at Srednja Ekonomska Sola, Ljubljana, to host it, 14 trainees from various parts of Slovenia were able to immerse themselves in English for an intense 4 days. Thanks also to Marsa Meznaric who attended as both a teacher and an IATEFL representative and humbly stepped in as my bright classroom assistant.

1st TDP 2010 with Sally Edge from EIA

My colleague at the English in Action office in Canterbury, our Senior Academic Coordinator, Sally Edge, facilitated the first, very successful, TDP in Ljubljana last August. Two of her trainees, Vesna Susnica Ilc (Srednja Zdravstvena Šola) and Petra Mikeln (OS Polje) caught the fire and have since hosted one-week English in Action courses at their schools for their students. One of Sally's trainees described the TDP week as 'a spiritual experience.' Her group relished the opportunity to be sitting in the 'other seat' in the classroom, to have someone else be responsible for the planning, preparation and delivery of each lesson, to share their challenges in their own teaching situations and access the massive resource of the entire group as a solution-generating genie – without any concern for professional vulnerability or staffroom politics. They also enjoyed having fun at the end of another demanding year and recharging their teaching batteries for the year ahead. Sally was looking forward to returning to Slovenia this summer – that is, until she discovered, happily, that she was pregnant and I was selected to facilitate the training in her stead!

2nd TDP 2011 and some TLC

Delighted and honoured, I set out with a clear intention to establish a Teaching Learning Community (this is how my former boss in Los Angeles, a corporate trainer, reinterpreted the famous acronym TLC which typically stands for Tender Loving Care). To this end, we spent a large portion of the first day establishing the tone for our work together. This included an oath that we would only speak English for the entire four days followed by a number of lively ice-breakers in which the trainees could get to know each other as human beings minus their teacher hats. Next came goals and expectations: the trainees had to get clear on their most important goal for the week and declare it to their classmates from the front of the room. Practising TLC ('Tough Love Coaching'), I would not let them sit down until they had articulated a goal that was measurable and therefore achievable. How exciting it was, when we checked in half way through the course at the end of Day 2, to witness that most of the learning goals had been accomplished

already! As well as covering topics such as 'Mixed-ability Classes', 'Integrating Pronunciation', 'Grammar Games', 'Vocabulary Games', 'Music, Song and Drama', we had fun in the afternoons with our focus on speaking practice – the most memorable of which, for me, was our 'Courtroom Drama'. One of the trainees was a serious John Grisham fan, and her comedic role-play as an American defence lawyer had us all in awe and in stitches!

The ending is just the beginning....

Our course ended with a circle of sharing in which we expressed our gratitude to each other for all the support and inspiration we had received and the progress we had made. I don't think I was the only one who was moved to tears. Thank you, my precious trainees, for trusting me and allowing me to facilitate this TDP. It changed me forever.

EIA Contact Information: sclarke@englishinaction.com



 **English in Action[®]**

OBVESTILO O DRŽAVNEM TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠKEGA JEZIKA ZA UČENCE SEDMEGA RAZREDA OSNOVNE ŠOLE

**Spoštovane kolegice in kolegi,
pošiljamo vam osnovne informacije v zvezi s tekmovanjem v znanju angleškega jezika
za učence 7. razreda osnovne šole za šolsko leto 2011 / 2012.**

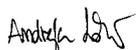
- Učenci 7. razredov bodo sodelovali tako, da bodo svoje prispevke sestavljali v aplikaciji VOICETHREAD. Podrobnejša navodila za izdelavo prispevka bodo objavljena na spletni strani **www.iatefl.si**.
- Učenci naj v skupini od 2 do 5 učencev izdelajo VOICETHREAD v angleškem jeziku na temo HOW TO LEARN ENGLISH SUCCESSFULLY. Izdelki naj bodo čim bolj poučni, slonijo pa naj na izkušnjah učencev – učenci svetujejo vrstnikom, kako se čim lažje in čim hitreje naučijo angleščine. Pri tem naj upoštevajo, da se morajo naučiti različnih spretnosti, (npr. govor, branje, izgovorjava, slovnica, besedišče, pisanje itd.).
- Izdelek mora imeti naslov, uvod, jedro in logičen zaključek.
- Vsak izdelek mora vsebovati najmanj 7 in največ 10 osrednjih slik, pri čemer je 1 osrednja slika namenjena naslovu, 1 uvodu, 4 - 7 osrednjih slik je namenjenih jedru izdelka, 1 pa zaključku. Vsaka osrednja slika, z izjemo prve (naslova), je podprta z besedilom, ki mora biti v povedih, skupno število besed posamezne osrednje slike pa naj bo najmanj 15 za uvod in zaključek in najmanj 20 za osrednji del izdelka.
- Vsaka osrednja slika naj bo pospremljena še z zvočnim posnetkom, pri čemer pa CELOTEN izdelek ne sme biti krajši od 2 minut in ne daljši od 4 minut.
- Kriteriji pri izbiri najboljših skupine (tako na šolski, kot na državni ravni) so naslednji:
 - Vsebina oz. sporočilna vrednost izdelka (10 točk)
 - Slovnicična oz. jezikovna pravilnost (5 točk)
 - Besedišče in pravopis (5 točk)
 - Izgovorjava in gladkost govora (8 točk)
 - Splošni vtis izdelka (9 točk)
 - Časovna omejitev izdelka (5 točk)
- Predlagamo, da na šolskem tekmovanju, ki ga izvedete sami po zgoraj omenjenih kriterijih izberete največ tri skupine, ki jih prijavite na državno tekmovanje najkasneje do 20. novembra 2011 tako, da na naslednjem spletnem naslovu objavite njihove izdelke: **www.iatefl.si**, poleg tega pa še:
 - Izpolnjeno prijavo
 - Izpolnjeno izjavo

Zbrane izdelke bo komisija, ki je sestavljena iz članov odbora IATEFL Slovenia in British Council-a pregledala in v predpisanem času javno objavila rezultate na spletni strani IATEFL Slovenia **www.iatefl.si**.

- Pravilnik o tekmovanju sedmošolcev v znanju angleščine, ki to tekmovanje natančno ureja, je objavljen na spletni strani IATEFL Slovenia (<http://www.iatefl.si/>) in vas vabimo, da si ga podrobneje ogledate.
- Prosimo, da seznanite učence, da bodo njihova imena in rezultati objavljeni na spletni strani društva. Če se kdo ne strinja z objavo, na tekmovanju ne more sodelovati. Da so o tem seznanjeni, naj podpišejo na priloženi izjavi, ki jo učitelji mentorji hranijo na svoji šoli do konca šolskega leta.
- Za kakršnekoli dodatne informacije smo vam na voljo na elektronskem naslovu **tekmovanje.sedmi@iatefl.si**.

Veselimo se vašega sodelovanja in vas lepo pozdravljamo.

Andreja Lakner, prof.
koordinatorka tekmovanja



Jasna Cepuder Sedmak, prof.
predsednica društva



Ljubljana, 31 avgust 2011

Memorize less, play more

by **Petra Cerar**, *Danila Kumar Elementary School International Department*, cerar.petra@gmail.com

Three brains are better than one. Integrate your brain, body and heart intelligences. Let your and your students' brains work for you, not against you. Read Tim Burns' tips on how to make this happen.

Tim Burns, an educator, author and presenter with a keen interest in human development, learning and creativity, works as an adolescent and family drug-treatment programme director, university instructor, and staff development specialist at the University of New Mexico. During his stay in Ljubljana (end of March and beginning of April), he shared his insights into brain research at his workshop at Danila Kumar Elementary School. He stressed the great importance of challenge, feedback, novelty, movement and play to achieve brain enriching environments both at school and outside.

Why play? Well, because it is one of the three non-negotiable requirements for healthy mammalian brain development, along with feedback and nurture. Play is defined as any freely chosen activity involving multiple possible outcomes, which can take place anywhere. So why not during lessons too? Since our (and our students' brains) work by the principle of focus...diffuse...focus...diffuse and thus switch between stages of full attention and absence thereof, it seems more than useful to use their downtime for silent reflection, a song, movement, or simply a didactic game. Elements of play are pleasure and enjoyment; its goals are not imposed from the outside and the motivation is spontaneous, voluntary and intrinsic. However, it requires active engagement on the part of the player and attention to the means to the end product of the action or activity. It is how the brain of a small child develops, so why stop when they reach school age?

In choosing games and activities for our children or students, it is essential to bear the differences between the male and female brain in mind. It is a fact that the male brain is 8% larger than the female, but the female brain allows 20% more blood flow and contains more white matter. On the other hand, the male brain has more gray matter and is better at spatial memory and tracking. Females use more areas of the brain and can be up to 6 years ahead in language development. While males are ahead in broad motor skills, females are better at hearing and fine motor skills. In group work, then, why not assign different roles to boys and girls in order to make the lesson more "natural"?

Speaking of natural requirements for the most successful learning, movement is an important one too. Coordinated moves (e.g. while doing sports or dancing) are very important when it comes to brain development, since they increase brain function and establish new connections between the left and the right hemispheres, thus enabling organised quality learning. In the classroom context, move-

ment contributes to concentration, because it activates the front part of the brain, causing the nerves to transfer information into higher brain parts responsible for full attention. Do students necessarily learn best if they remain seated the whole time? No. Organise station work, gallery walks, let your students change seats: increase the blood flow into the students' brains and all of you can enjoy the lesson all the more.

Movement is only one of the many efficient rehearsal strategies you can employ when you see that most of your students are in their "downtime mode". They can also be asked



to summarise key points, try to reteach something to their partners, create a slogan/song, use modelling clay, create a movie title, draw a symbol or other graphic representation or use quiet reflection. All of these enhance students' understanding of and ability to use knowledge by engaging them.

Do not blame your teenagers if their concentration spans still seem awfully short. Contrary to previous belief, our frontal lobes mature as late as between ages 23 and 25 and not in our teens, which means that the teenage brain is more like the child's brain and not as similar to the adult brain as it might appear. The teen brain is actually a "work in progress", as Tim Burns puts it.

So envisioning the future, setting goals and plans, consequential thinking and managing emotions (only some of the frontal lobe functions) can easily be postponed until our mid-twenties. Moreover, the idea that neurogenesis (forming of new neurons) stops in early life, which scientists still thought only some ten years ago, has now been shown to be wrong. New neurons are born every day, and it is up to us whether they connect and co-exist successfully with existing ones or not. That is why it is important to try to create brain-enriching environments for yourself and your students at all times. The key is absence of threat and presence of novelty, feedback and challenge. Always have high, but realistic, expectations!

Another great idea is engaging the heart. Literally! Molecular biology, neurocardiology and biophysics have shown that the heart too is an organ of intelligence with its own electromagnetic field. It stores emotional information, since ganglia in the heart communicate in the same way as those in the brain. So smile your way out of the lesson and stay in your students' hearts forever!

Sources:

- *Tim Burns' workshop at Danila Kumar Elementary (31 March–2 April 2011)*
- *internet site: www.TimBurnsEducare.com*
- *newspaper supplement Dnevnikov objektiv, Saturday, 9 April 2011 (pages 12 and 13)*

Read more:

Brain Basics and Beyond; Our Children, Our Future; The Brain in Motion (all by Tim Burns)

iatefl Slovenia

TEKMOVANJE UČENCEV 8. RAZREDA OSNOVNE ŠOLE V ZNANJU ANGLEŠKEGA JEZIKA

**IATEFL Slovenia skladno z 11. členom
Pravilnika o tekmovanju osnovnošolcev v znanju
angleščine kot organizator tekmovanja razpisuje
tekmovanje iz angleškega jezika za osmošolce
v šolskem letu 2011/2012**

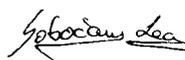
Organizator tekmovanja je na obeh ravneh IATEFL Slovenia.
Tekmovanje pripravi in izpelje tekmovalna komisija
z učitelji angleščine in vodstvi osnovnih šol.
Pravilnik, razpis in vse informacije v zvezi s prijavo
in izvedbo tekmovanja bo IATEFL Slovenia sproti objavljala
na spletni strani <http://www.iatefl.si/>.

V tekmovanje se pod pogoji, ki jih določa Pravilnik, lahko
vključijo učenci 8. razreda osnovne šole v Sloveniji.

Tekmovanje bo organizirano in izpeljano
na dveh ravneh: **šolski in državni**.
Vključitev učencev in šol v tekmovanje je prostovoljna.

- **šolska raven: 13.10. 2011, ob 13. uri**
- **državna raven: 21.11.2011, ob 13. uri**

Lea Sobočan, I.r.,
koordinatorka tekmovanja



Jasna Cepuder Sedmak, prof.
predsednica društva



V(ery) I(mportant) P(ages) Corner:

<http://www.englishcentral.com/> - whether a teacher or a student, there are many topics to choose from
<http://www.boomwriter.com/home/Schools> - to get your students to read and write in a different way than usual
<http://www.4shared.com/> - books and course books in .pdf format
<http://www.mindmeister.com/> - mindmaps online
<http://www.xtranormal.com/> - an easy-to-use movie maker

iatefl **Slovenia**

Conference announcement

19th

annual IATEFL Slovenia conference

CARE 2 SHARE ?

will be held at

Terme Topolšica, 1st – 4th March 2012

With key speakers

George Pickering, Noreen Caplan-Spence
and others to be confirmed

Speaker proposals accepted until 31st October 2011

Early bird registration until 31st December 2011

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.