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Dear Readers,

This edition appears at a time when preparations are in full swing for the 1st FIPLV East European Regional Congress and the 26th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference (22nd-25th June 2017, Varna). The event will provide a platform for about 120 speakers from 35 countries on six continents, and we are all looking forward to a vibrant exchange of ideas and experiences. The conference theme is Learning and teaching languages: Creating bridges to the future. It is therefore not surprising that the bridge as a metaphor of removing barriers, shortening distances, connectedness is woven into the contributions to this pre-conference issue.

We start with a follow-up to an article published in the 26th edition of the BETA e-newsletter. Mark Bartholomew develops further the discussion in What Not to Do to Get Students Reading, this time focusing on what teachers need to do – he emphasises the need for building stronger links between students’ world and the written word, and shares insightful tips for more effective student engagement in reading.

Two contributions to this issue can stimulate you to explore your ELT situation: Valentina Georgieva considers the potential of qualitative research procedures for bridging the gap between teaching and research, and provides examples of her own
practice; Boryana Rogozherova discusses the implementation of cognitive procedures in her context of teaching English for specific purposes.

Next you can find Galina Velichkova’s account on the TESOL Northern Greece Convention, where she shares her experiences of connecting with ideas, people, places, cultures. The thread of connectedness is continued in Tanya Bikova’s interview with Diane Larsen-Freeman – enjoy the opportunity to read Prof. Larsen-Freeman’s views on different aspects of learning and growing before her plenary talk in Varna.

As a continuing special feature, the Poetry Corner offers you a moment of artistic delight – this time with David A. Hill and his *Suddenly It’s Summer*.

We hope you find food for thought in this collection. Happy reading!

Zarina Markova

Issue Editor
Mark Bartholomew has worked in many areas of education from EFL to vocational training, universities to secondary schools, and in just as many locations: Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka, Thailand and Turkey, to name but a few. At present, he is a consultant to Nisantasi University in Istanbul and working on his website www.readlistenlearn.net, which offers free online materials to promote reading and listening in English among (young) adults. Mark can provide free help in setting up reading programmes. Email: bartholomew.mark@gmail.com

How to Get Students Reading

Extensive reading is a hot topic these days. There is much debate about the do’s and don’ts of assimilating it effectively into university prep courses and high-school reading programmes. That said, teachers are often left wondering how to get students reading in the first place. If they do not pick up books outside school, if reading remains a burden to them rather than a pleasure, then discussion about the rights and wrongs of writing journals about their reading, say, is irrelevant. So, in this article, I look at how we can introduce students to reading anything other than textbooks. First, though, why should students read outside the curriculum?

Unsurprisingly, most research into the effects of reading on educational achievement has focused on primary school children and programmes. The idea, of course, is to address the situation when they are young before it becomes a
problem. In an attempt to redress the balance, Slavin et al. (2008) surveyed the literature on the effectiveness of different programmes in US high schools. This was urgent as The American Diploma Project (2004) had already shown that poor reading skills were an obstacle for university students who could not cope with the complex texts they had to deal with. To make matters worse, inability to read comfortably was one reason for these students dropping out of courses. Slavin et al. (2009), looking at high schools, found this affected not only social science and humanities, but also maths. In other words, reading difficulties were hampering attainment in just about every subject. Alarmingly, Joftus and Maddox-Dolan (2003) concluded that 6,000,000 high-school students were reading significantly below their expected levels and 3,000 kids were dropping out of high school every day due to their inability to cope with their studies. And this in the most developed country in the world!

Findings such as these are an important tool in persuading parents and students that reading is not just an optional add-on to specialised studies at school. After all, educational excellence is seen by parents as a necessary step along the road to secure, well-paid employment.

But, to return to the question we started out with: how to get students reading in the first place? Slavin et al. (2008, op. cit.), having surveyed many, many different reading initiatives in high schools, concluded that the single most important factor in students embracing reading for pleasure was not a particular methodology or high-tech input, but teacher training. Teachers needed to be convinced of the benefits of reading outside the curriculum and to act as reading role models for students.
If teachers carry novels or self-help books around, leave them lying on their desks, and sometimes talk about what they are reading, it motivates students to follow suit. Without trying to influence students’ choices of reading material, if they occasionally ask whether they like a book or not and what they are planning on trying next, it inspires students to read more.

But perhaps we are getting ahead of ourselves. How can students who have never read for pleasure decide what they want to read? It is not as easy as it seems. The back covers of novels are all littered with praise and teachers’ recommendations are not always trusted either, as reluctant readers recall that it is these very teachers who have forced them to struggle through boring and difficult texts.

One way round this is to ask students who have read something to pen a few words about a book, whether it was interesting, thoughtful or boring; what it was about: science fantasy, gang warfare or romance; and so on. In many countries, book stores ask their staff to recommend works in this way and then display their hand-written cards on the shelves where the books are situated. It is not foolproof but it might be a way in for some.

Just a quick word of warning, though. Some teachers urge students not to choose something that is too challenging. The ‘five-finger test' is one way to do this. The student opens a book at any page and holds up five fingers, lowering one every time she encounters an unfamiliar word. If she has not reached the end of a page with at least one finger standing, the book is probably too hard for her.
Failing that, teachers can make very rough notes along the lines of ‘sci-fi, action-packed, shocking ending, easy vocab’.

Another way is to introduce a DEAR programme (Drop Everything And Read) into school or university, so that everyone stops what they are doing and reads as part of the timetable. Teachers, principals, cleaning staff and students – everyone! DEAR programmes share the following qualities: they encourage as many as half the students who participate to read more outside school; they engender confidence in reading abilities; they offer opportunities to share reading experience with communities of students similarly engaged; and they also impact positively on writing skills (Sheldrick Ross, et al. 2006).

Then there are reading circles. People disagree about whether students should be able to choose their partners or if stronger readers should be matched with weaker ones so they can act as mentors. Whatever the arrangement, reading pairs and groups can work well. It is important to make sure each group member has a clearly defined role, though: researcher, leader, presenter, time-keeper, and so on. Students can also start a reading journal and record their thoughts – without these being graded, of course.

There are many other schemes, programmes and initiatives I could look at, but I hope that these few ideas get you on your way. And, by all means, let me know what you think of this article.
References:


Qualitative Research Methods and EFL Teaching

Valentina Georgieva

This article is aimed at inspiring fellow English language teachers to frame their everyday experience into a valuable research conducted in compliance with the qualitative methodologies. I personally got motivated to write it after attending the 5th Annual Qualitative Research Conference as a visiting Fulbright scholar. The conference was hosted by the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education and School Psychology (CLAS) at Texas State University on the 4th of February 2017 and included multiple dialogue sessions with some of the university’s leading researchers in education. It featured Johnny Saldaña as the keynote speaker. Saldaña, a Professor in the School of Theatre and Film at Arizona State University, is an author of multiple books on qualitative methodologies and ethnodrama/ethnotheatre. After listening and, actually, actively participating, in his two-hour presentation, I was driven to read his book called Fundamentals of Qualitative Research (Saldana, 2011) and some more articles on the specifics of qualitative research (QR) versus the more widely spread and believed to be more ‘academic’, objective, and trustful method of quantitative
research. The result of this small-scale research was my decision to put my previous personal experience as an EFL teacher and the experiences I got and learned about during this conference into a coherent whole and to present it to the readers of the BETA journal. The presented bibliography is very limited, but many other books and articles on QR are accessible and could also be considered.

**Autoethnography as a valuable Qualitative Research method**

My passion for QR developed after listening to and participating in J. Saldaña’s presentation. In his session, he not only briefly introduced ethnography as a research method, but also made the participants get involved in his autoethnography experience as a 1st-grade student of Hispanic origin with the *Dick and Jane* series of books which were used in the mid-50s and 60s at state schools in the USA. The presenter started with a task for his audience, asking us to create and mime the image of what everyone wanted to be as a child. Then he asked us to create and mime a second image – of what our parents wanted us to be. The next image was of everyone at present, followed by an image of what everyone is most likely to be in five years’ time, and the final image of what everyone would be if he/she could be that person. These tasks did not make much sense to me until the moment the presenter started revealing his own desire as a child to become a scientist, which confronted his parents’ wish to continue family hot-dog selling business, and the impact of *Dick and Jane* books in the whole process of his becoming a literate boy with big dreams. His presentation was a hands-on lesson of autoethnography which he defines as a ‘reflexive, cultural reporting of self, most often through narrative [...] Autoethnography incorporates not just personal experiences but personal ways of living and one’s inherent value, attitude, and belief system.’ (Saldana, 2011:15). It the background of images and texts from his
1st-grade beloved books, Saldaña told us the story of his life: a story about not only what helped him learn to read, but also how actually his belief system was shaped as a result of living the life of Dick and Jane series characters, which created in his kid’s mind the image of a perfect life in a perfect family.

**Phenomenology as a research method**

The next presentation I attended during the conference was by a researcher from Texas State University about her PhD dissertation written with the application of QR. Dr Naomi Garcia told us the story of her qualitative study which examined the intercultural experiences of three American EFL teachers who taught English in Istanbul, Turkey. ‘Using transformative learning theory as a starting point, and phenomenological research methods to gather, analyze, and synthesize the data, I found three composite themes: motivation to live and teach abroad; identity issues and transformation; and negotiating the intercultural experience’ (Garcia, 2016).

She used a phenomenological approach which Saldaña defines as ‘the study of the nature and meaning of things – a phenomenon’s essence and essentials that determine what it is’ (Saldana, 2011:6), while Garcia justified her choice of this method to her ‘study of people’s subjective and daily experiences’ because it ‘is an understanding of meaningful, concrete relations, implicit in the original description of experience in the context of a particular situation.’ Garcia collected data through the use of interviews in order to obtain descriptions of the experience of her three participants in the study, applying informal interviewing, open-ended questions, and topic-guided interviews. She underlined the importance of her QR for Adult Education Theory and Practice: ‘Educators require specialized training on how to handle some of the classroom issues faced by the research participants. There is a demonstrated need to develop more thorough programs in Teacher of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certification programs/online TEFL programs, to address
multicultural issues in the classroom’ (Garcia, 2016). Her qualitative research proved to be valuable on the basis of her interviews with three fellow colleagues only – something which is not common for the Bulgarian academic context, which is prone to rely on quantitative data and statistical analysis unlike research in similar areas done in the USA. As a comparison, some of the conclusions in my PhD dissertation, which examines Bulgarian and English military terms for peace support operations, are grounded on a questionnaire which comprised both questions with multiple-choice answers and open-ended questions, and which was answered by 109 (not only three!) Bulgarian peacekeepers.

Methods of Qualitative Research

Garcia’s dissertation and findings prove Saldaña’s definition of QR as ‘an umbrella term for a wide variety of approaches to and methods for the study of social life. The data collected and analyzed are primarily (but not exclusively) non-quantitative in character, consisting of textual materials such as interview transcripts, field notes, and documents, and/or visual materials such as artifacts, photographs, video recordings and Internet sites that document human experiences about others and/or one’s self in social action and reflexive states’ (Saldana, 2011:3-4). Actually, at the CLAS Department at Texas State University, which organized the conference, a brief review of the dissertations defended in the last years shows that QR is favoured over the traditional for us quantitative approach. Some examples of defended dissertations at Texas State University include: P. Rocha: “Stories of school and the storied lives of Latino/a Elementary principals: a narrative inquiry” (2016); R. Pena: “Creating an “Ecological Fit” through supportive teacher-student relationships” (2009); D. Janysek: “The value of a career in teaching: the development of a survey to examine the reasons why veteran teachers remain in
the classroom” (2007). They are conducted with the application of one or more of the genres of QR that we regularly use with our students without being aware that if we add some further structure and analyses to them, the findings of our everyday teaching practice might be useful to other colleagues as well. However, in the real teaching situation, when, for example, we try to figure out why one of our classes does better than the other(s) despite the equal efforts we put in preparation, we do not think that we can summarize and present our findings as a case study, which as a genre of QR ‘focuses on a single unit for analysis which permits in-depth analysis, e.g. a highly successful secondary school in a lower-income neighbourhod’ (Saldana, 2011:8).

In his book, Saldaña encourages us to ‘think qualitatively’ – to arrange our data which typically includes interview transcripts, field notes, visuals and documents, in a coherent collection and to look for and construct patterns out of it. We can do this with the application of the methods (or, in Saldaña’s terminology, “genres”) of (auto)ethnography, phenomenology, case study (as mentioned above) as well as through one or more of the QR methods of ethnography (i.e. the observation and documentation of social life in order to render an account of a group’s culture), grounded theory (a methodology for analyzing qualitative data in order to understand human processes and to construct theory – that is, theory grounded in the data or constructed “from the ground up”), narrative inquiry (a variety of approaches with the goal of transforming data from, by, and/or about participants into literary story formats – also called “creative nonfiction”), evaluation research, which systematically examines people, programs, organizations, and/or policies to assess their quality, merit and effectiveness, or action research, whose purpose is not just to observe social life, but also to reflect on one’s own practice of working collaboratively with participants to change their setting and circumstances for the better (the definitions are taken from Saldana, 2011:4-20).
Qualitative Research Methods and EFL Teaching

If I decide to relate these QR methods to my own teaching practice, it turns out I have done quite a lot of QR without articulating my activities as QR. To start with, all of us, EFL and FL teachers, do huge amount of **ethnographic work** in the classroom when we explore cultures we encounter during our lessons and compare our culture to the culture of the target language we teach. We often assign additional activities to our students aimed at exploring English, American and other cultures, so next time I give activities of preparing posters or presentations of English/American lifestyle, I can take the next step – to attempt to cluster the repeated patterns in the visuals (posters or PPPs) into groups, probably to ask my students why they presented the culture in this way and how they feel about the other culture and also to draw some conclusions not only about how my students feel about the foreign culture, but also about the way I teach them and introduce them to the culture(s).

A valuable method of QR is the **content analysis** – “the systematic examination of texts and visuals (e.g. newspapers), media (films, internet sites) and/or material culture to analyze their prominent manifest and latent meaning” (Saldana, 2011:10). This method was applied some years ago by the National Helpdesk for Learning Materials when we, a group of EFL teachers, applied our own framework for critical analysis of the content and visuals used in a number of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education. Our aim was to analyze them from an anti-discriminatory point of view and in accordance with the objectives of intercultural (IC) education. The Helpdesk formulated the following ten objectives of IC education:

Educational materials should:
• reflect and construct the social diversity of societies
• be inclusive of all social groups
• enable pupils to feel comfortable with their own complex and developing identities
• encourage pupils to empathize with the complex and developing identities and situations of others
• provide multiple perspectives on the subject matter
• challenge stereotyping
• promote the acceptance, in a spirit of equality, of the social diversity of societies
• promote respect for otherness
• promote non-discriminatory perspectives
• promote active citizenship.

We prepared our textbook reviews with a focus on four zones of the evaluated resources: content, activities, language, and visuals. When evaluating the potential of an educational document, textbook, reader, workbook, teacher’s book, etc, a teacher can help her/himself evaluate this material the way we did it – by answering the following questions and relating them to the IC objectives. For example: Do the language/visuals/content/activities of the teaching material support the principles of IC education? What opportunities are there for strengthening the linguistic/non-linguistic support for the principles? What linguistic/non-linguistic areas are problematic in relation to the IC principles? What opportunities are there for strengthening the students’ experiences of cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement with the subject matter in an intercultural way? What areas of the learning materials are problematic with regard to the students’ experience of an intercultural orientation to the subject matter? Does the content of the textbook support the objective of challenging stereotyping? Do the
visual and other non-linguistic aspects of the teaching material support promoting respect for otherness? Do the activities suggested in the teaching material encourage the learners to think, feel and behave interculturally? etc. By applying similar content analysis of the materials they use with their students, language teachers can identify problematic areas in which instances of discriminatory attitudes and practices can be detected, but more importantly - they can effectively build upon the intercultural potential of the existing resources.

Upon formulating some troublesome trends in the state textbooks, we used evaluation research to assess the quality and effectiveness of the Bulgarian National Requirements and educational policies in order to initiate debate and changes in our society (National Helpdesk, 2006).

An example of action research from my teaching practice is when I asked my students to reflect on their intercultural experience of visiting a foreign country. They were asked to tell a story about an incident they had had abroad caused by cultural misunderstanding. Since most of the EFL textbooks offer texts or activities based on the topics of visiting cities and countries in English-speaking countries and around the world, customs and rules in different countries, eating habits, and shopping, students could easily relate their personal experiences to typical situations of a visit abroad. The class discussion provided a deeper insight in the intercultural dimensions of EFL teaching. After getting my students familiar with, or at least aware of, some of the intercultural issues, I was curious about their reactions, feelings, and behavior when dealing with people from other cultures. Most of the students had experienced some challenging situations. In fact, the majority of incidents involved communication problems, based on language differences. Some students shared their experience in using different “compensatory” techniques to get/receive the message in situations when their or
their interlocutor’s English knowledge was not sufficient. For example, one student said, “We communicated with them [the Turkish] with hands, legs, Bulgarian words, imagination and so on”, and another student admitted, “We had to use signs and gestures to do this [to communicate].” However, for me as their teacher, it was reassuring to deduce that, actually, nobody had been into any serious troubles caused by intercultural misunderstandings. In addition, I received enough evidence from students’ stories which helped me to define clearly the priorities of my future teaching actions: supplementary activities for further exploring the intercultural issues in the classroom are necessary, because some of the intercultural competences are impossible to be developed without special training.

In conclusion, my appeal to FL teachers is not to be timid when they reflect on their teaching practice, but, instead, if they want to make positive changes in their classroom and the society as a whole, to start documenting and popularizing their observations and insights with the help of the qualitative research tools.

References


Implementation of Cognitive Teaching Procedures in ESP Teaching: The Case of a Course on Overhead Contact Lines

Boryana T. Ruzhekova-Rogozherova

Introduction

ESP teaching issues (English for specific purposes) have become more and more crucial over the last years as a result of constantly growing requirements to specialists in many branches of economy and science. ESP curricula set the objective of endowing learners with specific communicative competence relevant to their specialized field of work (Anthony, 1998; Dudley-Evans, 1997) through carefully examining language needs and putting corresponding methodology into practice (Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2015a). The current paper will, first, present cognitive teaching approaches as fundamentals in the formation of EFL knowledge (English as a foreign language), and, second, examine crucial LLS (language learning strategies) implemented in the context of teaching core ESP vocabulary and grammar within a course on overhead contact lines at the Todor Kableskiov University of Transport. Finally, conclusions will be made with respect to the importance of cognitive approaches to learners’ understanding of taught categories.
Language learning strategies and cognitive teaching

As it has already been revealed on many occasions, the construction of general as well as specific EFL knowledge (English as a foreign language) is preconditioned by cognitive (or conscious language awareness (LA) enhancing) procedures. (Davidko, 2011; Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2015a, 2016).

LLS use across all levels of general and ESP teaching proves to be of key relevance to language development due to the underlying role of LLS in noticing, observing, perceiving, and analyzing taught language material features (Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Mayer, 1988; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1992/1993, 2003; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). The lines which follow will briefly refer to LLS essentials and their types and subtypes implemented in overhead contact lines ESP teaching.

LLS and their subtypes in overhead contact lines ESP teaching

Notwithstanding the importance of all types of LLS (though a type or another is often predominant with respect to teaching circumstances), their interrelatedness and complementariness (Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2014) often generate difficulties in strictly differentiating the proportions of LLS application. The author’s experience has revealed cognitive and metacognitive LLS as crucially important in teaching. The remaining strategies, i.e. memory-related, compensatory, affective and social strategies (see Oxford, 2003 for the LLS subdivision), turn out to be strongly dependent on acquired competence in the process of training cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Underlying cognitive LLS are, among others, pattern study, analysis of examined categories, prior knowledge inferences, creation of knowledge
schemes for the purpose of revealing the interconnection of language categories, conscious practice of structures, NL/FL1/EL contrastive teaching (CT) frequently accompanied by comparative teaching (CpT), examining identical or similar language categories in terms of form and semantics. Approaches such as learner needs self-identification, self-organization of study materials, self-assessment, hardships understanding and objectives setting belong to essential metacognitive LLS. Cognitive procedures description within the examined in this paper ESP training will thus focus on both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, due to their tight interrelatedness, both types of approaches mutually contributing to the multi-stage building and elaboration of knowledge. Learner self-evaluation and goal setting, for example, are impossible without LA enhancement, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, they precondition the higher level of application of cognitive LLS.

Cognitive and metacognitive LLS subtypes applied in the course on overhead contact lines. Procedures exemplification

The basic LLS subtypes implemented in teaching overhead contact lines are:

- word-formation procedures examination (frequently accompanied by translations of word-formation vocabulary items into the native language NL) aimed at better clarification of meaning of taught terminology;

- elucidating the semantics of language items with respect to the grammar categories they pertain or are related to (likewise accompanied by NL translation for verification);
• revealing form/semantics convergences and divergences between the frequently implemented in technical literature categories of passive, -ed adjectives, -ing adjectives, present participles, gerunds;

• commenting on active/passive diatheses in terms of similarities and differences in the form and semantics;

• facilitating learners through appropriate questions and explanation aimed at raising their awareness of experienced hardships as well as of easily understood/applied items, degree of mastering taught categories, and at making plans for overcoming problems.

Below attention will be drawn to the illustration of the above referred to cognitive procedures. The analyzed language material will be presented within excerpted from technical literature instances, considered items being given in italics and bold. An example or an utterance is often a source for the explanation of several items; in addition, it should be also taken into account that cognitive procedures are frequently jointly applied, albeit with a specific focus. This is the reason why the order of exemplified sub-strategies will not strictly coincide with the one above.

Exemplifying instances

1) “Power is taken from the National Grid at feeder substations located next to the transmission lines, which reduce the voltage to 25,000V and transmit the power to the OLE.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 8)
2) “The power is transmitted from the contact wire to the train by a sprung ‘pantograph’, which is attached to the roof of the moving train.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 8)

3) “Power is generated at an electricity generating source – normally a power station - and then transmitted via transformers into overhead transmission lines at high voltage ...” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 8)

4) “Earlier overhead electrification projects have frequently used a system of wires spanning between masts either side of the tracks to support the OLE catenary and contact wires. These are known as ‘headspans’”. (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 16)

5) “The contact wire also runs in a zig-zag path above the track to avoid wearing a groove in the pantograph.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 13)

6) “The use of track slab ... can allow the rails to be lowered by 50–100mm, due to its thinner construction and its more accurate control of the track position” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 34)

7) “To run OLE under some low bridges, extended versions of the short neutral section have been employed using an insulated rod or cable ...” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

8) “In addition, the system needs portal type OLE supports immediately on either side of the bridge. These supports may need to anchor the contact wires ....” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)
9) **Neutral sections are formed by inserting** short electrically-*isolated* or *non-conducting elements* between lengths of live contact wire, and *fitting* the catenary wire with *insulators*. (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

10) “Neutral sections are electrical “gaps” in the OLE *wiring*, used to isolate sections of *wiring* for maintenance purposes … “(Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

11) “This is necessary to avoid power from one feeder inadvertently *passing* via the OLE to another and thus *bypassing* National Grid’s *switching* systems.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

12) “To ensure a continuous supply of power when a train *switches* from one track to another across points, or cross-overs, additional wires *are provided*.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 19)

13) “There are two basic types of neutral sections, which *are illustrated* on the following page. The first is a full, *“switched”* neutral section.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

14) “The insulated neutral sections *are connected* to the normal contact wires by *switches* which *are operated* automatically by *passing trains*, thereby *maintaining* an unbroken electrical supply.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)
15) “A full switched neutral section consists of an extended set of overlaps...” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

16) “This can be combined with automatic switches to isolate the train’s pantograph so that it can coast beneath the bridge.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 21)

17) “An emergency call must be made to the Electrical Control Operator (ECO) straight away if you see or are told about something which requires the electricity to be switched off.” (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 80)

18) “The biggest engineering challenge to installing OLE on historic railway lines is fitting it under the existing bridges over the line.” (Network Rail Guide to Overhead Electrification, 2015, p. 32)

19) “Signals are usually attached to posts alongside the track but can also be found on overhead gantries or on the ground.” (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 17)

20) “The most common are lineside phones (usually found near points) and signal post telephones (SPT).” (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 24)

21) Crossing the line (subtitle) (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 44)

22) “If you need to cross the line, use a bridge, subway or level crossing if there is one.” (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 44)
23) “You’ll be required to wear a blue safety helmet until you and your sponsor agree that you are sufficiently experienced.” (A Guide to Personal Track Safety, 2013, p. 38)

Substrategies implementation

The elucidation of word-formation procedures (for word-formation in detail see Plag, 2003) is highly cognitive as it contributes, first, to base word value understanding, and, second, to the better comprehension of the function of affixes. Thus, for example, learners are shown the following relationship: feed – feeder (1), transform – transformer (3), transmit – transmission (1), safe – safety (23) and are provided with information about suffixes leading to noun formation; students are told that awareness of word-formation procedures facilitates them in recognizing grammar functions of an item within specific context, and, this awareness promotes adequate understanding. Word-formation elucidation is frequently accompanied by the translation of derivative items, which contributes to the understanding of affixation, and the analysis of the NL grammar. The analysis of grammar functioning also facilitates comprehension, equally promoting translation, e.g. in “track” (5), “track position” and “track slab” (6), where learners realize that “track” performs as noun and as adjective and extend their knowledge in adjectival noun behavior, which is rather frequent in science literature. Students likewise become aware of the fact that the manifestations of word-formation types do not appear ubiquitously, e.g. an adjective such as “trackful”* does not exist.

For the more accurate grasp of the meaning of derivative items, attention is also drawn to “overhead transmission lines” (3), where learners are shown the English noun ability to function as adjective (“transmission”), as well as to “The power is transmitted from the contact wire to the train by a sprung ‘pantograph’ ....” (2),
where emphasis is laid not only on “transmit - transmission” derivative connection, but also on *active/passive diatheses distinctions* in terms of form and semantics, along with the use of passive voice in the technical literature (for teaching procedures of passive diathesis, see Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2012a). Hence, learners realize that in “The power is transmitted ... by a pantograph” emphasis is laid on “the power” (the passive grammar subject assuming through *be + past participle* an activity result) and not on “a pantograph” (the semantic doer, reduced to an instrumental object). Students acquire ideas on *active (AV) ↔ passive (PV) transformations* stemming from the passive voice (PV) structure formula (Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2015a) and the active voice (AV) structure, on conferred AV/PV values. Taking into account the prevailing use of passive diathesis in technical sources, more or less identical instances (full or truncated passives, deprived of a *by + doer* component) are likewise analyzed and elucidated, e.g. in (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), (9), (12), (13), (14), (16), (17), (19), (20) and (23).

A substrategy to be referred to is related to the teaching of *–ed/-ing words*, these categories being frequently not differentiated by learners in terms of form and semantics, and, similarly to the passive voice, typically used in scientific and technical sources. As mentioned, this procedure not only involves semantic differentiation through translation, but also comprises *CpT methodology* aimed at elucidating form/semantics similarities, connections and differences between, first, *–ing words* (continuous periphrasis components, participles, adjectives and gerunds), and, second, between *–ed forms* (adjectives and participles treated in Huddleston’s perspective as passive or perfect participles, Huddleston, 1984).

To illustrate the examined substrategy, the following instances may be analyzed: “*a sprung ‘pantograph’*”, “the roof of the *moving* train” (2); “wires *spanning* between masts” (4); “*extended versions*”, “an *insulated rod or cable*” (7); “*inserting* short
electrically-isolated or non-conducting elements ... and fitting the catenary...” (9); “... “gaps” in the OLE wiring, used to isolate sections of wiring” (10); “passing via the OLE ... and thus bypassing National Grid’s switching systems.” (11); “full, “switched” neutral section” (13); “passing trains maintaining an unbroken electrical supply” (14); “A full switched neutral section”, “an extended set of overlaps” (15); “The biggest engineering challenge to installing OLE ... is fitting it ...” (18); “Crossing the line” (21); “level crossing” (22), “you are ... experienced” (23).

Learners are shown through teacher-guided analysis based on pattern observation that –ing adjectives, e.g. “moving” (“moving train”), “non-conducting” (“non-conducting elements”), “switching” (“switching systems”), “passing” (“passing trains”), “engineering” (“engineering challenge”) are semantically connected with a process, and, quite often, this process may be expressed through the progressive (a train which is moving; trains which are passing). The –ing adjectives characteristics of verbality and processuality are examined through appropriate examples within the framework of present participle – ing adjective – gerund gradation, which testifies to the constant permeation of verbality, on the one hand, and, to the decreasing, though present, verbality, on the other (see De Smet & Heyvaert, 2009; Pullum & Zwicky, 1999; Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2012b as to present participle, -ing adjective and gerund features). To enhance understanding, learners’ attention is directed at the use of present participles, also referring to processuality (“wires spanning between masts” are “wires which span between masts”; “power ... passing via the OLE ... and thus bypassing ... switching systems” equals “power which passes ... and thus bypasses ...”), and is next drawn to the much lowered, though still existing, verbality in gerunds (the names of an activity characterized by varying activeness with respect to gerund types, see Pullum & Zwicky, 1999 as to types of gerunds), e.g. in “inserting...elements” and “fitting the catenary”; “OLE
Teaching the differentiation between -ed/-ing words, as mentioned, also involves the elucidation of -ed adjectives features in terms of CpT (Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2015b). To provide contextualization, learners’ attention is focused on the above instances, e.g. “sprung” (sprung pantograph), “extended” (extended versions, extended set), “insulated” (insulated rod or cable), “electrically-isolated” (electrically-isolated elements), “unbroken” (unbroken electrical supply), “switched” (switched neutral section) and “experienced” (experienced worker), and they are asked to reveal the common features of these examples. Learners are shown the form/semantics relatedness between –ed adjectives, the passive and perfect (Huddleston, 1984, in Ruzhekova-Rogozherova, 2012b) by means of transformations, such as “An insulated rod or cable is a rod or cable which has been insulated” or “Unbroken electrical supply means supply which has not been broken (or interrupted)”.

This procedure leads students into finding out the common and underlying feature not only of the –ed adjectives, but also of the perfect and passive – resultativeness. Thus, learners with no difficulty comprehend the “switching” (“switching systems”) / “switched” (“switched section”) discrepancy with respect to form and meaning, perceiving –ing adjective “switching” activeness and processuality contrasting to –ed adjective “switched” resultativeness. The NL translation (“превключващ”, “включващ”/“превключен”, “включен”) likewise confirms the above analysis result as the corresponding Bulgarian forms reveal rather similar values.

The metacognitive LLS applied are mutually complementary with the cognitive ones, involving appropriate questions and explanations aimed to facilitate learners’ awareness of difficult to master categories as well as of easily comprehensible
language items, and, consequently, to contribute to the setting of feasible learning objectives and the adoption of correct strategies. Students are helped to consider hardships and their potential reasons through questions (if needed, asked in Bulgarian), such as: “Which of the above examined topics in the course of our work (word-formation, -ed/-ing words, etc.) did you grasp faster?”; “How can you evaluate to what extent you have understood -ed/-ing words differences in meaning?”; “Do you think you can correctly use them in sentence building?”, “How many correct answers did you have on your -ed / -ing words assignment?”; “What are your mistaken answers due to?”; “Can you establish any regularity with respect to errors?”; “Which related category (the passive, perfect, present participle, gerund) explanation has been most useful in grasping the meanings of -ed/-ing words?”; “Can you explain why?”; “Has passive voice formula elucidation been helpful in AV ↔ PV transformations and transformations, respectively, in the understanding of passive components?”; “How has this contributed to your comprehension of the voice category?”; “Have you become better at correctly implementing voice category knowledge?”; “What type of learning activities do you need most, in your opinion?”, etc.

Needless to say, learners’ answers are usually beneficial not only to learners, but to lecturers as well, providing the latter with valuable ideas as to LLS teaching peculiarities in ESP as well as in general ELT.

**Conclusion**

Cognitive procedures applied in the outlined above context prove to be valuable to learners as they promote understanding of taught categories, and, consequently, their practical implementation. LA improvement can be testified through the enhanced quality of learner activity, improved desire to deal with tasks, increased
numbers of reactions, comments, questions, and motivation to participate in making conclusions and translation. Quite often, students enthusiastically offer their own translations of terminology, phrases, sentences or even small paragraphs; having already identified and analyzed taught categories, structures and patterns, they contextually justify their choices. Learners demonstrate heightened EFL and ESP motivation along with improved self-awareness and responsibility for learning.

References


The TESOL MThNG Conference – New Trends in Teaching in an Ancient City

Galina Velichkova

The TESOL Macedonia, Thrace and Northern Greece conference was held in Thessaloniki, Greece, in the beginning of February, and it was an amazing, inspiring start of the year. The venue – the American College of Thessaloniki and the Bissell Library – is in one of the most scenic fancy neighbourhoods of Thessaloniki – Panorama – ensuring the creative, academic atmosphere, among cypresses and olive trees.

It is a place rarely seen by tourists who are mesmerised by the amazing historical sites and the vibrant life in Thessaloniki city centre. However, as an official representative of BETA Bulgaria, I had the unique chance to pay my first visit to this beautiful city, seeing its rather unknown face, and more importantly, taking part in a rewarding and eye-opening experience, among high-class professionals.

Galina Velichkova is an English teacher at New Bulgarian University and a freelance translator. Her professional practice and research interests cover a variety of fields such as teaching English for Specific Purposes, Soft-Skills Training and Translation Theory. Her translation experience includes both contemporary literary works and specialized, non-fiction texts. Galina’s educational background includes Linguodidactics and British and American Literature. Email: gv0879@gmail.com
enthusiastic to bring and keep ESL teaching and teacher training abreast with the demanding future of education.

The conference started on the Friday night with an opening ‘teaser’ lecture by the keynote speaker, Professor Sugata Mitra, who set the tone of the conference - hinting why and how teachers should follow the new techniques and trends in education. After the opening session, there was a welcoming dinner in a taverna in downtown Thessaloniki - with exquisite food and warm Greek hospitality.

The framework of the next two days was set by the plenary sessions of the four plenary speakers who outlined the main problems the conference had set out to find answers to.

The key note speaker – Professor Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University, UK – described his Hole in the wall experiment, and revealed the results from conducting it in India and the UK, showing that groups of young learners who have access to the Internet are capable of learning anything they set out to learn. By revealing the outcomes of his experiment, Professor Mitra suggested that the role of the teacher has to be redefined and already is changing in the direction of facilitating the self-organised learning taking place in the modern learning environment and challenging learners with provocative questions.
Following lead, Marisa Constantinides – a teacher, teacher educator, and ELT author, Director of Studies of CELT Athens – offered a range of techniques and activities helping teachers inspire creative learning in creative ways. The talk was organised in the form of a workshop demonstrating the creative teaching approaches that ensure creative learning environments.

Another one of the plenary speakers – Leo Selivan, a freelance lecturer and blogger involved in teaching courses in Second Language Acquisition, ELT methodology and Vocabulary teaching – pointed out the gap between research in the field of theoretical and applied linguistics, and the teaching practice, and suggested ways of bridging it such as using horizontally, rather than vertically, organised vocabulary lists.

As a conclusion of the plenary talks, on the last conference day – Sunday – was Marina Mattheoudakis’s talk. Marina Mattheoudakis is a tenured Associate Professor at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and she talked about the problems that the Greek educational system is facing after the long period of various educational reforms. Although the talk was factually based on the experience of the Greek teachers, it did have an international appeal as the changes in educational needs are not limited within a country.

As about the concurrent sessions, the choice was wide and tough as the programme offered a range of sessions on various topics covering talks about teaching various
age groups and levels, and most prominently, there was a range of talks concerning teacher training.

Some of the most interesting sessions I attended were that of Rob Howard, the owner of Online Language Center, teacher and writer, founder of EFLtalks, who presented his new project in EFLtalks – the teacher video glossary. EFL talks is a platform for teachers providing video lessons to other teachers within ten minutes and on ten slides. It was a very inspiring idea, which attracted many new followers who were willing to join the list of teachers providing 10-minute videos for the platform, sharing their expertise and best practices to ensure the seamless induction of newly-fledged teachers, as well as the crucial teacher development in the light of the new trends of teacher training.

Another interesting talk I visited was Vanessa Antoniadou’s session about using Microsoft for teaching. The lecturer provided interesting details about the opportunity provided by Microsoft for teachers to use Office 365 for educational needs for free, as well as new organisation and interactive tools provided in the package.

Another talk that shed some light into interesting teaching methods was that of Dimitris Tzouris - Learning Technologist at Anatolia College, Advisor on Social Media and Learning Technologies at AMICAL, EdTech columnist for TESOL Macedonia-Thrace Northern Greece. The talk was called Explore & Imagine: Google Arts & Culture in Education and the lecturer presented a myriad of ways to use Google Arts and Culture in the classroom, and to
offer students imaginative experiences and a number of ways to learn through exploring art.

There was also a pronounced interest in the methodologies for working with dyslexic students. One of the most prominent lectures on the matter was delivered by Daniella De Winter - teacher, specialist in reading instruction and supporting dyslectic readers.

For better or worse, the sessions of all representatives from Bulgaria were at the same time, and it was impossible for me to attend the Bulgarian colleagues’ sessions.

My own session, *The importance of being (an) earnest (peer) assessor,* was in one of the most favourable slots, late in the afternoon, on the second day. It was intended to pave the way for justifying and determining the role of the teacher in peer-assessment sessions, and thus to ensure the balanced use of this rather controversial classroom technique. Owing to the responsive, interested audience, the talk turned into a lively discussion, which was hopefully as useful for the audience as it was for me.

Later the same night was the amazing performance of Luke and friends, ‘Us and them’, which not simply brought out many questions about learning from mistakes and the mistakes of learning, but also brought a fruitful day to a serene and pleasant conclusion. After that, the semi-improvised musical performance set the tone for the next day of even more productive and engaging sessions.
Overall, the conference was a fruitful and memorable experience, an inspiring start for the year of changing trends and a pursuit of higher expertise in teacher training and development.
Tanya Bikova is a teacher of English at the High School of Mathematics and Sciences, Blagoevgrad. Since April 2014 she has been a co-opted BETA-IATEFL Committee Member. Email: tanyabikova@abv.bg

Diane Larsen-Freeman (Ph.D. in linguistics) is Professor Emerita of Education, Professor Emerita of Linguistics, and Research Scientist Emerita at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is also a Professor Emerita at the Graduate SIT Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont and a Visiting Senior Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. She was the Editor of the journal Language Learning and is currently Chair of its Board of Directors. Professor Larsen-Freeman has been teaching for fifty years and is still learning.

Tanya:

Prof. Larsen-Freeman, thank you very much for agreeing to this interview. You say in previous interviews that you started your career in teaching with the Peace Corps in Malaysia in Sabah, Borneo. Being a psychology major can you identify a turning point for staying in this profession?
Diane Larsen-Freeman:

I am not sure that I can identify a turning point for staying in the profession, but I can say what made me want to stay. I studied psychology during my undergraduate years because I was interested in theories of learning. The only problem was that psychologists couldn’t agree on what the object of learning was — was it human behavior or was it cognition, etc.? When I discovered language, by teaching English in Malaysia, I became fascinated with how language was learned. It was my hope that if I could understand language learning better, I could teach in a way that was harmonious with the natural learning process.

Tanya:

With all the developments that have taken place in language teaching over the past years, and the impact of globalization, mobilization, and technology on foreign language acquisition, can we keep up with educating teachers who are well aware of new technologies, and prepared to meet the demands of digital natives? Do you think the learning process has changed somehow because of new technologies? I mean the need of or the addiction to clicking and getting the right answer on the spot, which makes everything else boring, especially for teenagers and younger learners.

Diane Larsen-Freeman:

Well, I don’t think the learning process has changed, but I do agree that our approach to it has changed, and certainly our technological devices have trained us to expect immediate answers — at least answers to simple questions. Technology has afforded us much more, of course, and it is incumbent on all of us to learn how to use the tools of our trade. However, developments progress so rapidly; it can feel overwhelming at times. I think my students are always going to be more
comfortable with technology than I am. As you say, they are digital natives. So, my solution is to learn the basics of a newer technology and then to give my students the latitude to explore it further.

**Tanya:**
I like what you say about teachers: “Creating one’s own teaching approach and experimenting with techniques are ways to keep one’s teaching practice alive and to keep one from getting ‘burned-out.’” In order to avoid asking oneself questions like: “Am I good enough at this job? Am I sufficiently conversant with methodology? Do I know my students well enough?” can we say that a key quality for being a good teacher is the constant desire to learn and improve oneself?

**Diane Larsen-Freeman:**
Yes. I have always said that everyone knows there is no perfect language teaching method, but we must continue to seek one. The ongoing striving to come up with the perfect solution – to serve our students as best as we can – will mean that our teaching will never grow stale.

**Tanya:**
You say that teachers never stop changing and pass through different stages. What stage are you at now?

**Diane Larsen-Freeman:**
In an article I wrote a few years ago, I distinguished between the use of the infinitive and the gerund. I wrote that the first stage is “Learning to Teach,” preparing ourselves for the classroom. The second stage is when we are less concerned about coping, and we are better able to be present for our students. I called this stage
“Learning Teaching” — learning the craft of responding to one’s students’ as the need arises. Both of these stages can go on for a long time, of course, and sometimes I return to the first when I try something new for the first time. However, I identified a third stage in my own development — neither the infinitive nor the gerund, but simply the participle “Learning.” I feel that I am learning all the time — learning my students, learning my subject matter, learning ways to connect the two. It is a wonderful stage to be in.

**Tanya:**
You have spent a great deal of time researching grammar. One of the reasons for this is, as you say, what is called “the inert knowledge” problem — a timeless problem, especially applicable to learning grammar. It is the idea that our students can recite all the grammar rules and do all the grammar exercises, but cannot really use what they have learned for their own purposes. It is one of the reasons that you coined the term “grammaring.” Still, there are fossilized errors in lexis and pronunciation too. Why focusing on grammar mainly?

**Diane Larsen-Freeman:**
To me, grammar is more than the skeleton of the language. It is what gives language life. It enacts culture, it nurtures relationships, it helps us make meaning, and it helps us to present ourselves in a way that we wish to be seen. Besides its centrality to all this, I coined the term grammaring to be reflexive. I wanted to make the point that grammaring is a creative process — one that extends beyond applying rules in a mechanical fashion. I recognize that lexis and pronunciation are also important areas, but they have not ignited my passion to the same extent.
Tanya:
Maybe we have become teachers because we like learning and we love watching others learn (as you say). However, what about students who don’t want to learn or have learning problems, and then you are judged how good you are as a teacher by their success at exams/school?

Diane Larsen-Freeman:
Yes. It is unfortunate in these days of accountability that a teacher may be judged by the success of his or her students. This is unfair, in my opinion, because we work with those students we have been given—some may have learning difficulties or not be motivated. Nevertheless, I do believe that we have a responsibility to all our students. It seems to me that the issue is that of having the same “bar” for all students. I would prefer for my teaching to be assessed by how far each student I have worked with has come — what he or she can do as a result of our partnership that s/he couldn’t do before. It seems to me that this gets us around the deficit problem — always assessing students for what they don’t know or can’t do.

Tanya:
You say you have traveled to many countries (around seventy), mostly to speak at national conferences. How has this experience enriched you personally and professionally?

Diane Larsen-Freeman:
Yes. I have had a wonderful opportunity to learn from and with teachers around the world. Perhaps the most important lesson that I have learned is that teaching can take many forms. The way that I teach may not be appropriate in all contexts. What is truly important is the nature of the relationship between teacher and student.
Tanya:  
Having written more than 120 book chapters and journal articles, what are your future research and publication plans?

Diane Larsen-Freeman:  
I have been attracted for some time to a theory called Complexity Theory. It is a systems theory that encourages us to look at interactions that lead to emergence — the arising of something new, something unexpected. I have been thinking about this theory for 20 years, and yet I have just finished authoring a book chapter called “Complexity Theory: The Lessons Continue.” When you find a good theory, it can help you ask new questions and deepen your understanding about older ones. I expect that I will continue to find this theory fertile ground for exploration.

Tanya:  
Do you have any other hobbies/interests outside your teaching and publishing career?

Diane Larsen-Freeman:  
Well, I have three grandchildren, whom I enjoy being with very much. I love watching them develop into their own beings, at the same time that I watch my sons become good fathers, following the lead of their own.

Tanya:  
We are really delighted to welcome you as a plenary speaker at the 1st FIPLV East European Regional Congress and 26th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference
- 22nd – 25th June, 2017 in Varna. Is this going to be your first visit to Bulgaria and how do you feel about it?

Diane Larsen-Freeman:

Yes. I have never been to Bulgaria before, although I have heard a great deal about it from my friend and fellow plenarist, Elka Todeva. I am looking forward to entering a new culture with fresh eyes. Thank you for your invitation.
I am an ESL teacher who believes in the positive education and we, teachers, are our students’ role models. That is why I carefully plan my lessons and make sure they foster creativity, collaboration and at the same time are fun and useful. As a busy teacher any tool/material that can make my work easier is always welcomed.

About a month ago I found out that Heart ELT was going to publish a new book, called A-Z of Hope, which consists of 26 fun activities for children. It has been created by leading ELT authors and teachers. I was really eager to order the book because I knew it could be a great time-saver. We, teachers, love this, don’t we? When the book arrived, it didn’t let me down.

I personally believe ‘A-Z of Hope’ is a treat for every ESL teacher around the world. To begin with, the resources have been created in such a way that they can easily be adapted to any level. I like the fact, that I can make little tweaks here and there and use most lessons with my students. Secondly, there are beautifully designed photocopiables, which can be used in the classroom. However, if you do not have access to a printer or a computer, the publisher has provided a few ‘Zero-resource’ lesson plans. Additionally, let’s not forget the useful tips that some of the authors

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Marusya Hristova

Marusya Hristova is an English teacher from Bulgaria, who lives in England. Her teaching career started in the High School of Kneža and the local Europe School. Currently, she is teaching online, designing a free monthly e-zine ‘Inspirational English’, and working on her website [http://www.englishwithrussie.co.uk/](http://www.englishwithrussie.co.uk/). Email: info@englishwithrussie.co.uk
have left for us, giving us some advice on changing the activity in order to suit our students’ needs.

How can teacher use the resources from ‘A-Z of Hope’

- To practise basic vocabulary with young learners. There are a few resources which are specifically designed for kids and include activities on topics such as Colours, Daily routines, Numbers, Food, etc;
- To encourage students’ creativity;
- To bring fun into the classroom, for example, students can design their own robot after practising question forms;
- To build awareness of language through sounds and rhythms;
- To make use of spare minutes at the end of the class by using any of the zero materials;
- To develop the students’ deductive skills by solving a crime;
- To learn the art of story-telling;
- To use various methods to practise new vocabulary.

What I particularly love about ‘A-Z of Hope’ is the fact that some of the lesson plans are dedicated to positive topics such as Love, Empathy, Gratitude and Friendship, to name but a few. I have already used a couple of the lessons which my students thoroughly enjoyed. I have to admit though that my favourite lesson so far is ‘Journal of Joy’. It is an activity which focuses on things that make learners happy. I have used it with a few students who are of varying ages and levels of English. Not only did the lessons bring smiles to my students’ faces but also encouraged them to be creative, collaborative
and design wonderful Journals of Joy. I used the programme Serif Plus to create lovely posters which illustrate what makes the pupils happy. Of course, we don’t need sophisticated software to design posters in class. You could try these websites: https://www.canva.com/ or https://spark.adobe.com/, which can be used to serve the same purpose. Or just a plain sheet of paper, some crayons and pictures from a magazine could come in handy as well. Finally, I was also pleased that I was able to tailor-make the lesson plan and save some time in my busy lifestyle.

I would definitely recommend ‘A-Z of Hope’ to my fellow-teachers because of the wide range of interesting activities and the ability to adapt them. In my opinion, the book could successfully be shared by all the English teachers in a school. Last but not least, it is important to mention that teachers can also find free resources online but we should not forget the great cause behind the book. Heart ELT intends to raise funds for children, living in refugee camps, who have been displaced by the civil war in Syria and provide educational supplies to volunteer teachers working in camps in Greece, Iraq and the Lebanon. The organisation provides resources and support to children who have no access to education due to war, poverty and natural disasters.

We, English teachers, and ‘A-Z of Hope’ can make a difference in teachers and students’ lives.
Suddenly It’s Summer

David A. Hill

How this sunshine week has swept away the Spring!
The cherry tree’s christening dress on Monday
Is covered now in leafing’s cloak of palest green.
The croaking jay hops hidden in the poplar’s veils,
Where all had been just pointed sticks and hints of change.
The trees’ wild burst towards their photosynthesising sun
Has hidden hills whose banks I’d viewed with pleasure,
Fencing off the distance and the changing light
That subtly stalked their slopes through day and night.
A week, I say, but no, it’s just four days!
By Thursday it’s into summer that I gaze.....

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DEAR COLLEAGUE,

The International Federation of Language Teacher Associations (FIPLV), Bulgarian English Teachers’ Association (BETA-IATEFL) and “Konstantin Preslavsky” University of Shumen, are pleased to invite you to the 1st FIPLV East European Regional Congress and the 26th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference, which will take place from 22nd to 25th June 2017 in Varna, European Youth Capital 2017.

The Congress aims to inspire and motivate teachers to exchange experience and ideas about interesting and innovative ways of teaching and creating bridges to a future learning environment where students feel confident and inspired to explore and create. We would like to offer you the opportunity to share your professional experience, expertise and insights into the fascinating world of language teaching and research. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to Teaching Young Learners and Teenagers; Teaching LSP; Teacher Education and Development; Bilingual Education; Literature, Media & Cultural Studies in LT; Global Issues; Content and Language Integrated Learning; Blended Learning; Applied linguistics; Research; Testing, Evaluation and Assessment, First/Second Language Acquisition, Foreign/Second Language Teaching, Language Education Policy, Quality in Language Education, and Multilingualism.
PLenary and featured speakers

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The working languages of the Congress will be English, Bulgarian, German, French, and Russian. For application forms, fees and accommodation check [http://www.beta-iatefl.org/annual-conference/conference-call/](http://www.beta-iatefl.org/annual-conference/conference-call/). For further queries, contact beta.iateflbg@gmail.com.

We very much look forward to seeing you in Varna.

Best regards,
The Conference Organizing Team

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6 May 2017

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http://www.iatefl.org/web-events/sig-webinars

TESOL Online Courses & Virtual Seminars

For information visit:

http://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/online-courses-seminars

BETA Partners’ Forthcoming Events

BETA members can attend the conferences for the registration fee paid by the members of the Host Associations

- 15th ELTA Serbia Conference *Awaken Your Curiosity*, 19-20 May 2017, Singidunum University, Belgrade.
Have you ever wondered if you should write an article for the E-Newsletter of BETA?

- Please DO! Your contribution may act as a springboard for discussions, inspiration for colleagues or facilitate the work of fellow teachers!

What exactly do you have to do?

If you feel you have something you would like to share:

- Send us your article in MS Word format.
- Send us a photo of you (in jpeg format) and short biographical information (about 50 words) which will accompany your article.
- You will receive feedback from us within 10 days of your submission.
- Please, check the deadlines and the topics of the forthcoming issues. Note that the topics announced are just illustrative; if you would like to submit an article on a different topic, please do. It will be considered for publishing.
- We are looking forward to your contributions.

For further information contact: beta.iateflbg@gmail.com
Notes for Contributors

- Your article must have not been previously published and should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- The length of your article may vary - short contributions of 300 – 800 words are as good as long ones.
- Electronic submission of your article is preferred to the following e-mail address: beta.iateflbg@gmail.com
- Text of the article: Calibri, 14 points, with 1.5 spacing.
- Headings and subheading: Calibri, 24 points, bold, centred; first letter capitalized.
- Author names and title as well as contact details should be submitted in a separate file accompanying the article.
- About 50 words of biographical data should be included.
- New paragraphs – to be indicated with one separate line.
- Referencing should follow the APA referencing style.
- References in the text should be ordered alphabetically and contain the name of the author and the year of publication, e.g. (Benson, 1993; Hudson, 2008).
- Quotations have to include the relevant page number(s), e.g. (Peters, 2006:76).
- Tables, figures or diagrams should be numbered accordingly and included in the relevant part of the text. Each should have an explanatory caption.
- The editors will not return any material submitted, but they reserve the right to make editorial changes.
Established 1991 in Sofia, BETA seeks to build a network of ELT professionals on a national and regional (Southeast Europe) level and establish the association as a recognized mediator between educators and state bodies, public and other organizations.

BETA members are English teaching professionals from all educational sectors in Bulgaria – primary, secondary and tertiary, both state and private. BETA activities include organizing annual conferences, regional seminars and workshops; information dissemination; networking with other teachers’ associations and NGOs in Bulgaria and abroad; exchange of representatives with teachers’ associations from abroad.

We are on the web:

http://www.beta-iatefl.org/

Thank you for your support!

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