E-Newsletter

Bulgarian English Teachers' Association

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CONTENTS

Editors' Corner

Dear Readers,

Marjana Hvalec stresses the importance of awareness of the everchanging characteristics, interests and needs of students. This read can be of help to both beginner teachers and those with serious experience. This paper informs on what the 'new generation' or 'generation Z' is like. What their interests and needs are, so you can adjust your strategy and methodology accordingly.

Mariya Neykova teases out the ways in which recent advancement in mobile technology has influenced the teaching of translation classes. She discusses machine translation, innovative techniques and resources. Putting all of this useful information aside, what might be of particular interest is what students themselves find useful (cat tools or mobile apps).

Milka Hadjikoteva discusses the concept of global competence, its importance and poses the question of the type of activities we need to use (both curricular and extra-curricular), in order to develop this competence in our students.

Read up to find out more!

In the concluding pages, you can find details about BETA's Annual Conference. Don't forget to have a look at the available information and see you in Plovdiv!

Happy reading!

Polly Petcova

Issue Editor

A New Generation Challenges Teachers

Marjana Hvalec

Marjana Hvalec has a degree in English language and Sociology and has worked as an English teacher in Slovenia for almost 19 years. She has taught English to adults, secondary level pupils and now primary school pupils aged 10 to 15. Her professional interests are focused primarily in the field of English language teaching.
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A good teacher should be able to motivate and inspire his/her pupils for learning. This is hard to achieve if a teacher is not aware of the pupils' characteristics, interests and needs. I am sure that most teachers, those that are beginners in teaching as well as those who have many years of teaching experience realize that they will have to engage in lifelong learning and come up with new ways of teaching methods if they want to stay in touch with the generations entering primary and secondary education. What is the new generation like? What is it called?

It is called generation Z. This is a generation of children/adults born between 1995 and 2012. This generation is now actively involved in education either on primary, secondary or tertiary level. This generation will be the largest in history ever (McDowell, 2018).

Generation Z has grown up having access to more information than any other generation at their age. Anything they want to know is only a click away. That is why these pupils prefer to engage in hands-on learning where they can immediately apply what they learn to real life. When searching for information or learning they are first observers. They prefer to watch someone do something first (e.g. watch a YouTube video instead of reading a recipe from a cookbook) and then try it themselves. They prefer individual learning because they can focus and set their own pace. They view peers and instructors as valuable resources and like to have the option to work with others on their own terms, often after they have had a chance to think through a concept, problem, or project on their own. (Seemiller & Grace, 2017)

They are creative but feel less confident. They have authority issues and say whatever is on their mind straightforwardly. Their respect needs to be earned. They express a lower level of persistence and patience but are able to multitask. (Anderson, 2014)

When teachers share and talk about problems that we are faced with in the classroom we often mention pupils' lack of patience, short attention span, hyperactivity, interest in themselves and their world, lack of interpersonal communication, etc.

So, what do the generation Z pupils need?

Auditory learning, such as lectures, is disliked by this group, whereas interactive games, collaborative projects, and challenges, are appreciated. Generation Z

pupils are kinesthetic, experiential, hands-on learners who prefer to learn by doing rather than being told what to do or by reading text. They prefer random access, graphics first, connected activities. They are in need of continuous grading, instant feedback, clear goals, rewards, challenges, and positive reinforcement. They may be hard to teach, easily bored and ready to move into the next thing because of their short attention span. Due to this, learning needs to be delivered in smaller sections. Teachers should offer them opportunities to express opinions in small group discussions. They should focus on critical thinking and problem solving instead of memorizing information. Creativity and collaboration are natural to them, whether it is a spontaneous or structured activity. They need options to choose from, so learning can be personalized. (Rothman, 2016).

Changes I have made in my teaching

I have been a teacher of English language for almost 19 years. Based on the gathered knowledge of generation Z I have now put more emphasis on:

Methodology changes

Because of their decreased attention span I would structure my lesson plan into 3 to 4 different sections, depending on the lesson aims and whether the lesson is teacher directed. To get their attention instantly I would sometimes start a lesson with a guided debate, watch a YouTube video, watch a scene from a movie, or start with some news from One-minute World News BBC. During a lesson I would show them a nice short video that summarizes the aims we are trying to achieve

connected with the topic of our discussion or grammatical explanation, etc. To end the lesson, we shortly summarize what has been learnt in the lesson.

I try to include pupil directed learning which will lead to critical thinking. For that reason I love to bring debates into my lessons. Debates make them realize that the world is not just 'black and white', that they need to take a deeper look into a problem and that their arguments should be supported with facts. Depending on my pupils I would let them choose the topics, for example:

- Are mobile phones safe?

- Is homework beneficial?

- Should pupils wear uniforms?

- Should grades be abolished?

- Can we reverse obesity in society?

I would also make sure that each pupil has the experience of being on the affirmative and the negative team alternately. I would introduce debates in the 8th and the 9th grade (pupils aged 13-15) because they start to understand the concepts of critical thinking, their language levels are good enough and because the language classes are smaller in Slovenia in the 8th and 9th grade (around 15 pupils per class). Some pupils get so excited in debates that they start taking part in national and international debate competitions.

Interpersonal changes

Because these children spend so much time in front of screens, they lack social interactions. In our traditional classrooms pupils don't have eye contact during the

lesson, so I have introduced U shaped desks with some desks in the middle of the U for larger classes. This helps me to retain their attention and I am able to move around the classroom freely.

Luckily, being a teacher of English language, I can plan many real life dialogues and have pair or group discussions. I would let them work with different schoolmates and would let them stand up, move around the class, sit in the corner, sit on the floor to get them active and moving and create new interpersonal situations to communicate and cooperate together. The relationships should be encouraged between pupils as well as between a pupil and a teacher.

To build their confidence they need to be praised for the work well accomplished. But they also need the teacher to guide them during their learning process. For example, once a year pupils need to do a 5 min oral presentation. I would let them choose a topic and would try to offer topics that are of interest to them: favourite film, book, sport, describing a family member, pet, presenting a country of their choice, introducing a recipe, planning a healthier lifestyle, etc. Since the goal is not that children go home with basic instructions and are then left on their own, which usually leads to their parents helping them or even doing the work instead of them, I would take at least 2 - 3 lessons to help them come up with the strategy on how to organize themselves, so they don't get frustrated by the bulk of information available online. During draft preparation and after they have a draft ready and I would give them feedback and help them with tips to improve their presentation. They need to feel safe in their learning process and need to feel they are able to complete the assignment. Inspiration, encouragement and guidance will lead to motivation in learning a language and create memorable relationships.

Technological changes

I have to admit I am not in favour of using technology in the classroom at all costs. I try to use it purposefully and efficiently. I would mostly use it with creative, collaborative projects or assignments. We take part in e-Twinning collaboration projects because they enable real life communication with pupils from different parts of Europe. Pupils can use ICT tools they are familiar with, they are eager to learn new tools to achieve better results, they improve language input and communication strategies. Being immersed in real life situations, pupils increase knowledge, cultural awareness, teamwork, etc. Sometimes we just find pen-pals and exchange letters, e-mails, organize a Skype conference or use other social media to get to know each other.

Depending on the pupils I would do these activities with the whole class in the 8th or 9th grade or I would organize an extra-curricular class, which interested pupils from different classes can join.

As a teacher I also try to teach my pupils how to learn outside the classroom, how to actively use information and communication technologies to encourage self-directed learning outside school by showing them useful apps, games, videos and sites.

Conclusion

Traditional educational methods require thoughtful change in order to meet the needs of this generation. The pupils of today want to be part of the process of learning, not passive bystanders. With pupils' creativity and the ability to process

information quickly the teacher should: provide real world experiences to them; prepare lessons that are - versatile, encourage relationships, improve critical thinking, foster communication; show pupils how to find useful information; help them organize themselves; and offer them challenges that encourage their learning. At the same time, the teacher should provide constant feedback on how to improve learning and praise pupils after goals have been achieved. This will lead to a meaningful learning relationship. As this generation will be exposed to lifelong learning, we need to do the same if we want to stay in touch with them.

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Mobile Translation Apps in a Translation Class: The Future in Our Hands

Mariya Neykova

Mariya Neykova, PhD, is a chief assistant professor at New Bulgarian University. She teaches various courses in the area of foreign language teaching methodology. Her current research interest is focused on implementing an action-oriented approach in the context of blended learning.

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The recent developments in the world of mobile technologies have influenced most spheres of our lives today. It is a fact that both adults and children tend to use wearable devices in their everyday lives for various purposes. Although mobile applications are mostly used for pleasure, they are likely to become an indispensable part of the process of education and the most convenient solution for the modern translator working outside the office.

Traditionally, university students in a translation class rely on different kinds of dictionaries. Paper dictionaries have served translators well for centuries. However, the modern translator relies heavily on online dictionaries, which offer unquestionable advantages like quick access to the content that is needed, various contexts in which the lexical item is used and hyperlinks, to mention a few. What is more, machine translation seems to give the

answer to all translators' troubles. Computer Aided Translation (CAT) Tools are improving at a fast rate and are widely used in most modern offices.

But what happens when the translator has to travel and leave the comfort of their office, when there is no computer or laptop around, as for example in critical situations like natural disasters? Or even when they have to interpret from/into a language that they are hardly familiar with? A possible solution seems to be the use of wearable devices – tablets, phablets, mobile phones – equipped with effective mobile translation tools. Although the new technology is still improving, there has been a growing interest on the part of service members, medical personnel, diplomatic workers, etc. to use mobile technologies as a means of overcoming interpretation difficulties (cf. Schwartz, 2013).

Today there are a number of translation apps and devices available to choose from. Kroulek (2018), for example, offers a list of fifteen translation apps and devices for travelers in 2018. His choice of the best translation apps includes *Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, iTranslate Voice, SayHi, WayGo, TripLingo, Speak & Translate, Papago* and *Textgrabber*. The new translation devices for 2018 that he analyses are *The ili*, *The Pilot*, *Travis the Translator*, *Google Pixel Buds*, *Bragi Ear Translator (featuring iTranslate)* and *Lingmo Translate One2One*. The comparative outline offers a general description of each app/device, some 'cool tricks' that make it stand out, the languages for translation and clues how one can get the particular app/device. Still, the review does not focus on security.

Security issues seem to be of primary importance for certain professionals. Translation of business documentation, communication between governmental officials, involving machine interpretation – they all require higher levels of security. As Schwartz (2013) points out: 'While many commercial mobile translation options are effective, they often cannot provide the capabilities or security levels that federal agencies require. Most text-based mobile machine translation solutions call out to unsecured servers in the cloud over unencrypted phone lines — a serious issue for translating sensitive data' (Schwartz, 2013).

Most of us would agree with Kroulek's opinion that the human 'will always do a better job of translating your documents' (Kroulek, 2018).   But the above considerations call for a change in the traditional translation and interpretation class of the modern philology student. Alongside the conventional resources used in the work of a translator, the students have to get acquainted with effective CAT Tools. The benefits for them are manifold – the students not only acquire the skills of a 21st century translator, but they also improve their language competence. Machine translation can be viewed as a way to combine the potential of translation in foreign language learning and the implementation of up-to-date state-of-the-art technology, which runs in accordance with the attitudes and practices of today's young people and professionals. The translation process is faster and more efficient with CAT Tools, since the focus of the activity changes from the classical idea of translation to editing.

Mobile translation tools deserve their fair share of attention in the classroom. In foreign language university education, they can be viewed as a component of m-

learning, which is rapidly gaining popularity in Bulgaria. As a pioneer in that field, New Bulgarian University has integrated m-learning in the courses of English as a foreign language. The innovative technique thrives upon the increasing number of language learning apps designed by institutions and publishing houses with long-standing traditions in the development of FLT coursebooks and resources. The students accept it with enthusiasm because they can easily see its potential for their academic, professional and personal development (Neykova and Hadjikoteva, 2017).

But in university education the intrinsic sphere of mobile translation tools implementation is in the translation and/or interpretation classes. Mobile translation tools are introduced in the practical training of students in the Bachelor's programme Applied Foreign Languages for Administration and Management (in English and a Second Foreign Language) at New Bulgarian University. Within the framework of the 5th semester course 'Language Resources and Computer-Aided Translation (in English French / Italian / Spanish / German)' the students make their first steps in translation with wearable devices (tablets and phones). Their level of English is C1+ and the level of their second foreign language (French, Italian, Spanish or German) is B2+. After having worked with a CAT tool for about 10 weeks, they are given the task to translate a text from their second foreign language into English using this CAT tool and a translation app they have not worked in class with. Then they are asked to compare their experience with the CAT Tool and the mobile app (Appendix 1).

Among the advantages of CAT tools, the students mention that they are better suited for office work, more comfortable, secure, and, what is more, there are practically no limitations as to the length of the text for translation. On the other hand, translation with mobile apps is considered to be more flexible, faster and convenient for working outside the office or when travelling. As a major drawback of mobile translation apps the students point out the limitations concerning the length of text that can be translated at a time.

Translation has always been a very important part of communication throughout man's history. Alongside the excellent command of at least one foreign language, translators rely on a vast array of reference sources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias and the like. Today CAT tools offer great help by saving time and effort and shifting the focus of a translator's work to editing. The use of mobile translation apps enables the modern translator to have access to advanced technological support whenever and wherever they need it. The increasing possibilities for application of mobile translation apps provide the necessary prerequisites for its inclusion in the professional training of the modern students of translation.

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Appendix 1

Comparison of CAT tools and mobile translation tools			
CAT tools		mobile translation tools	
advantages	disadvantages	advantages	disadvantages

Raising Intercultural Awareness

Milka Hadjikoteva

Milka Hadjikoteva, Ph.D, is a chief assistant professor at New Bulgarian University, Sofia. She teaches ESP and EFL courses as well as courses in the field of linguistics and the methodology of foreign language learning. Her main research interests are in the field of teaching foreign languages, rhetoric, semiotics, interpretation, translation and philosophy. She has specialized in a number of foreign universities and taught at the University of Macerata, Italy, and Leeds Beckett, UK.

Undoubtedly, learning a foreign language not only develops cognitive abilities but provides a broader horizon. Learning English as foreign language provides better opportunities to people, enabling them to become part of a global community of English speakers who may benefit from communicating worldwide, finding better jobs and providing better future to their children. However, knowing more about the culture and traditions of English speaking countries does not exclude the ability and willingness to discuss native traditions and cultures. On the contrary, the modern globalized world needs more and more educated, intelligent and motivated young people from various countries who share a common language and values, but are open to talk about and discuss with their peers their native traditions, languages and cultures.

The [Programme for International Student Assessment](#) defines global competence as 'the capacity to examine global and intercultural issues, to take multiple perspectives, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with

people from different cultures and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development' (cf. link). It is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that has already announced that the modern world needs not only to assess knowledge and skills in the fields of mathematics, science and reading but to focus on assessing global competence as well. The question is what type of curricular and extra-curricular activities to use in order to prepare our students to develop global competence.

The task-based learning serves the purposes of mastering the skills necessary to students to perform curriculum activities in order develop their global competence very well. It goes along the line of the need for authentic communication in and outside the classroom by setting reading, listening and problem-solving tasks, using role-plays, working on questionnaires, preparing presentations, etc. The three stages, namely the pre-task stage, task cycle and language focus stage represent the logical sequence of introduction to a topic, its implementation and summing up. Having been introduced to a topic and given guidelines how to deal with it, it is the students' responsibility to work usually in pairs or in groups not only in class but in their leisure time as well. They are supposed to prepare either a report or a presentation on a certain topic, elaborating on their arguments and summing them up. Finally, they present their findings to the whole class. As Neykova (2012) points out 'the value of the task-based approach lies in its potential to stimulate language learners to use the target language in real life communicative situations'. The language focus stage presupposes to focus on some specific language features from the task and work on them. The approach integrates the four skills, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking, using authentic materials, as well as a strife for fluency combined

with accuracy. 'The use of authentic materials is an important principle of communicative language learning and it contributes to the development of an individual learning style and learner autonomy' (Neikova 2005: 1). It is possible to develop learner autonomy through setting tasks and if the topics are related to cultural issues, the pairs (or groups working on them) will be led to explore different cultural perspectives, which is a first step to developing global competence.

Extra-curricular activities may focus on the outcomes of tasks set during the course and performed in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere of an event, organized in order to celebrate a particular holiday, author or tradition. Students may be encouraged to deliver presentations, read poems, play music, discuss topics of their interest, etc. The aim is not only to master speaking skills but to inspire interest in different cultures and traditions as well and to stress on the importance of a dialogue and collaboration between representatives of various countries. Hadjikoteva (2018) elaborates on the importance of being 'personally involved in the topic, to be flexible enough to adjust to the culturally-specific requirements that are set when presenting in English and to be aware of the fact that it is the process of preparation which counts most'. In case the group comprises of students from different countries, it is a good idea to organize events dedicated to their countries, traditions, holidays, music, dances, etc. Such a seminar held in the beginning of December at NBU brought together students from Bulgaria, Cameroon, Greece, Iran and Nigeria. The students performed songs about Christmas in Bulgarian, English, French, German, Russian and Spanish as well as traditional songs of Cameroon, Iran and Nigeria. The pleasant and friendly atmosphere as well as the enthusiasm and the spirit of collaboration during the

event testified that the local traditions are not considered to be obstacles to understanding and appreciations of different cultures, but they enrich the knowledge and horizon of the young people today.

Wrapping up, fostering global competence has become one of the goals of the teachers of English as a foreign language throughout the world, many of them being non-native speakers of English themselves. It is of crucial importance to share how to implement tasks and activities aiming at developing students' abilities to critically examine contemporary local, global and intercultural issues and to help them respect and appreciate cultural differences.

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BETA Partners' Forthcoming Events

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

- 17th National ATECR Conference 'No Limits', Hradec Králové, 14-15 September 2018

- 27th IATEFL Poland Conference 'Wrocław 2018 – the Meeting Place for Experts', Wrocław, 21-23 September 2018

Writing for the BETA E-Newsletter

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 in a separate file.
- 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 publication.
- 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 last name of the author, the year of publication, and exact page number e.g. (Benson, 1993; Hudson, 2008). A complete reference should appear in the reference list.

- Quotations have to include the relevant page number(s), e.g. (Peters, 2006, p.76).
  - According to Gabel (2012), "marriage has changed because America has changed" (p.76).

- o She concludes that "marriage has changed because America has changed" (Gabel, 2012, p. 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 reserve the right to make necessary 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.

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