

mELTing Pot

The magazine of the
International Association of
Teachers of English as a
Foreign Language - Hungary

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EDITORS



Beatrix Price

László Zsolt
Zságer



From the editors

Dear Readers,

The school year is underway, the 24th IATEFL-Hungary Conference is not long gone and most of us are carrying on Teaching English as a Foreign Language, right? At this time of the year, we are happy to present the 2014 Autumn digital issue of our mELTing Pot magazine, full of flashbacks on prominent ELT-related events, experiences, plans and dreams that have come true.

This edition is crammed with articles about high-profile professional events such as our annual IATEFL-Hungary conference in the City of Queens, the 2014 Summer Course held in Kiskunhalas, the ever-successful Creative Café and the Mentor Teacher training course, along with pieces on cross-border ELT projects taking place in the form of eTwinning or international competitions, and exemplary in-school or out-of-school projects chiefly – though not exclusively– relying on and centered around the implementation of CLIL and cross-curricular teaching. These pieces are accompanied by invaluable thoughts and ideas concerning the incorporation of global issues, drama, science and culture into the curriculum. We are very pleased to inform you of the launch of our Business English SIG and the activities undertaken by our existing SIGs. Should you have any requests, questions or ideas to share do not hesitate to contact us.





Highlights of the Global issues SIG

This was the first time the Global Issues SIG (GISIG) had a session at an IATEFL-Hungary Conference. Actually, there is no IATEFL-Hungary GISIG yet, but all interested IATEFL-Hungary members are invited to join us! Also, our [Facebook page](#) is open for everyone.

As we told participants during our session at the Conference, our SIG is for teachers who see themselves as educators in addition to being teachers of the language. We believe that ELT has wider educational aims, such as developing critical thinking, learning to collaborate with and respect others, becoming reflective and seeing the 'big picture'.

We were very pleased that the theme of this Conference was 'English for a change' as this is our logo, as well (without the 'a'). We believe that through teaching English, we can bring about

change: teachers can widen horizons, raise curiosity, inspire, empower and mobilize!

To find out more about us, please visit our website: gisig.iatefl.org. Below are a few highlights of what you can find there:

E-LESSON INSPIRATIONS

Here you will find a collection of powerful videos with ideas for using them in the classroom. Watching the clips offers a fresh look at global issues drawing on creativity, poetry, imagery, and gives voice to alternative viewpoints. Units include 'Football Mad', a poem performed by Benjamin Zephaniah with activities that invite students to explore its message, 'Pale Blue Dot', in which astronomer Carl Sagan offers a cosmic perspective on our world, and 'Black Friday', featuring Kalle Lasn taking a critical look at our consumerist society.



'HOME AND SHELTER' ISSUES MONTH

We're focusing on interesting and challenging ways of working with the topic of 'home and shelter' in your classrooms. Have a look at what others have contributed and please add your own ideas.

PODCASTS

Listen to thought-provoking podcasts on the role of Educational Technology.

Together with the Learning Technology SIG, we are organizing an exciting month-long online event in November. It will feature a series of audio interviews with experts in the field of educational technology. You can get involved by taking part in discussions, or leaving your own audio comments. For more info, go to edtechconcerns.com.

English for a Change.

Lindsay Clandfield sharing his thoughts

He is an award-winning writer, teacher, teacher trainer and international speaker in the field of English language teaching. He has written more than ten coursebooks for language learners and is the co-author of various methodology books for teachers. You can find out more about him at his website:

www.lindsayclandfield.com



Please reflect on the theme of the conference. What does “English for a Change” mean to you?

'Change' in this sense is a very powerful and positive word I think. It would be easy to think that English for a change automatically means a positive thing and making the world a better place. I want to believe that it can be, but we all know there are different kinds of change. My hope is that we think about what kind of change we really want, and how English is a part of that.

Can you tell us something about your presentation?

I am going to be talking about one area in education that is constantly talking about change, and that's education technology. My talk is about the power of words and messages. It's about other factors that may be at work when we embrace edtech for change. And it's a love story. I won't say any more!

How green do you consider yourself to be?

Quite green, certainly compared to generations before. But there's always room for improvement.

What impact do you think teachers can have on shaping students' attitudes towards global and environmental issues?

I think the potential is there for a lot of impact. We can all remember a teacher who had a very profound influence on us. I think many of us want to be that teacher, and if we care about those things then it could be transmitted as well.

What has changed recently in your own professional life?

There have been lots of changes within the publishers that I have

written for. Some of this has been great, other parts have been quite traumatic!

What changes do you see coming for you and your profession in the nearfuture?

As a writer, the big question I find myself asking is how far down the digital road are we really going to go.

What change would you most like to see in the world of education?

A big question. Recently I see that more and more people and governments have changed their view of education as more of a business and an industry now. Everything must be measured, have outcomes and then ranked in comparison to each other. I am not fond of this change at all, so I guess I'd like to see a change in that way of thinking.





Mentors-in-the-making: stepping stones along the way



JUDIT RÉVÉSZ

UWE POHL

Between January and June 2013, a group of eighteen English teachers from Hungarian primary and secondary schools did a 120-hour mentor and trainer training course organised by IATEFL-Hungary. Among the initial applicants were teachers at state schools, private language schools, free-lance teachers and teacher trainers. Their reasons for applying seemed to be just as diverse, as became clear from their motivation letter and follow-up selection interviews. Some were simply looking for a new professional challenge and expecting to learn the ‘nuts and bolts’ of mentoring trainee teachers. Others were hoping to pick up on the ‘latest’ EFL methodology, develop their English or saw the completion of the course as a professional career move.

Here is what some of them wrote:

“I applied for this mentor course a year ago, because after teaching for 26 years, I wanted to find new ways of professional development.”

“Working as an untrained mentor I felt that I needed some help myself, I did not have clear-cut ideas concerning my needs but felt helpless in some situations with my trainees and it made me feel disappointed.”

“I started the mentor training course right after returning to the field of teaching after a long ‘holiday’ at home with my children. Thus, now I am in the middle of redefining myself as a teacher, I need to regain my self-confidence in this role and I have to relearn a number of things. It is quite hard to think of myself as a potential mentor at the moment.”

Over time, however, it became apparent to the participants and to us as course tutors that they had actually embarked on an exciting if demanding journey of professional and personal discovery. Here we would like to present some of these discoveries because we feel they make up a fascinating record of the mental and emotional shifts involved in becoming a mentor.

A close reading of the participants’ reflective writing on the course, that is, regular feedback and two development reports, revealed a number of interesting clusters. We called them *stepping stones* because, taken together, they constitute an articulation of the teachers’ ongoing personal and professional development during the course. But before we can present and discuss these ‘stepping stones’, here is a little background to the mentor training course.

Aims and structure

This course was designed and taught very much in line with the blueprint for ELT mentor training courses in Hungary developed many years ago by Caroline Bodoczky and Angi Malderez (Bodoczky/Malderez 1999). Its aims were two-fold: in terms of *mentoring*, the participants were to learn how to support teacher trainees as well as colleagues at every stage of their development from planning through post-lesson discussions to appraisal.

Continued

This is based on the realisation that appropriate mentor preparation is at least one strong prerequisite for successful mentoring (Hobson et al 2009).

Regarding *training*, they needed skills that would allow them to identify training needs, provide in-service workshops or give conference presentations.

All in all, the course consisted of three main components. The first component focused on learning theories and the notion of reflection in teacher education. In the process the teachers were encouraged to make explicit their values and underlying beliefs about teaching and learning. They also started working on interpersonal awareness, mentoring skills and special intervention or feedback techniques mentors can use in post-lesson discussions with trainees (Heron 2001).

Following this, a series of in-service methodology workshops were set up in which pairs of trainer trainees taught their participant colleagues. Each pair chose an area of ELT methodology for which they prepared a 40' workshop. Two of their peers on the course acted as 'mentors', helping the workshop presenters at the

planning stage, observing the workshop session and leading a post-session discussion. Following the mentorial, the whole group discussed training and mentoring issues that emerged from the experience.

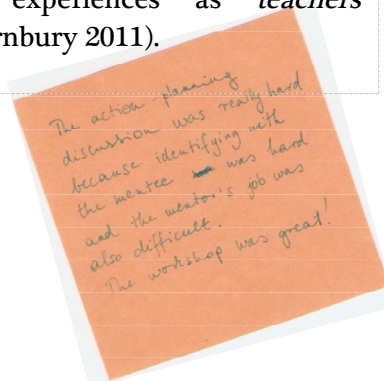
Towards the end of the course the participants continued to practise interventions and worked with training situations they found particularly challenging. They also dealt with the thorny issue of teacher evaluation and assessment in theory and practice. Figure 1, below illustrates the time frame and the shifting focus of each training phase.

Approach to training

This training sequence was intended to trigger a learning process that would lead participants to experience mentoring as a distinct extension of their professional identities as language teachers. For us, this implied an approach to training based on the idea that all meaningful learning starts from where people are, with their constructs, not where we would like them to be (Richardson 1999; Matei 2008:9). For this reason much room was given to awareness-raising activities, many of which were built around the metaphorical representations of the participants' values, beliefs and experiences as *teachers* (Thornbury 2011).

Reflection on shared experience was another key element of the training process. This happened on the basis of video recordings of beginning teachers' classes, real and role-played mentoring scenarios and various training activities which were analyzed in detail and discussed. Course readings and the writing of two development reports also ensured that the participants engaged in different modes of reflection as a matter of routine.

We also believe, as Bolitho/Wright (2007:34) put it, that "the bedrock of a training course" is *the group of people who experience the course together*. To use this potential to the full, regular group-building exercises and a range of collaborative tasks got the course participants to experience working with partners whose communication styles, views and preferences were often very different. In addition, a so-called 'feedback dialogue' gave everybody a sense of how individuals felt about their personal and professional learning in the sessions. At the end of each six-hour training day we asked participants to write feedback on a small slip of paper and started every new block of sessions by reading out and discussing the notes.



Continued - Developmental stepping stones

As trainers, we had the feeling that for many if not all of these experienced teachers this long and intense mentor training experience became a veritable journey of discovery. We have given each cluster of personal discoveries a heading and will back up our impressions with a selection of quotes taken either from participant feedback (dates) or development reports (names). This will be accompanied by some minimal comment on our part.

What does it mean to be a mentor?

"In my first development report, referring to my mentor metaphor I explained that I wouldn't be able to climb the mountain without being the leader all the way. A lot of issues have been clarified since then and working with mentees in a cooperative way is something I would really like to try." (...)

"I'm becoming more and more aware of what a responsibility it is to be a mentor." (1 Feb)

"[our attention] was called to how our brains perceive what is 'there' as invisible or what is 'not there' as an existing reality. For me, these awareness-raising demonstrations and activities formed the basis of being able to see different perspectives." (?)

"The 'butterfly and caterpillar' metaphor is fantastic. The activities designed around this topic really made me think about the role of the mentor: Do I change the mentee or do I help them to develop? (8 Feb)

"It is not easy to be observed by a group of people. It develops empathy and hopefully we will remember these feelings when we have post-lesson discussions [with our mentees]." (8 March)

"I am more and more convinced that there are no perfect methods in mentoring. I'd say there are different techniques and different people involved. If there is harmony between them, the results will be optimal." (17 May)

"I'll have to concentrate on restraining myself and helping trainees to discover things for themselves by just listening and helping them self-reflect [...] I believe it is very easy to give in when they actually ask for advice. So I will need to be really conscious of my aims and act accordingly." (Petra)

"I'm glad that I can ask questions, have doubts, feel free to disagree and am never discouraged. You really show an example." (8 Feb)

"A mentor is 'less of a star and more of a silent business partner.'" (Regina)

I feel that the discussions after the video lessons are getting more and more professional. We have improved a lot, haven't we? :)

These quotes illustrate well some key changes in how the teachers answered this question. The changes involved taking on different perspectives, unlearning habitual ways of seeing and an appreciation of a mentor's multiple roles and responsibilities. As a result, the mentor concept became not only richer but also more flexible and individualized. This process reflects what Malderez/Weddell (2007:89) describe as the move towards a more facilitative, interpersonal understanding of the helping relationship.

The value of special mentoring skills

"I liked being made aware of the differences between judgments, observation and interpretation." (22 Feb)

"I found it really beneficial that we got insights into more forceful and directive intervention techniques such as action planning and confronting and how to be authoritative without being authoritarian when necessary." (...)

"The session on questions and their effect was really interesting. Again it drew my attention to how important questions are." (22 March)

"I felt that paraphrasing is a bit unnatural, I probably need more practice and routine." (15 Feb)

"Before actually watching the video I felt quite confident about what an I-statement was. It all collapsed when I had to do it. Formulating a non-judgmental question out of my own statement seemed impossible." (15 March)

"Watching the video, I was thinking how terribly difficult it is to be a beginner and that empathy is a very important skill." (1 March)

"In my first development report I expressed my doubts about applying the right intervention technique at given situations, I wrote that I felt more confident about identifying the different techniques than about actually using them. I still don't think that I could use them perfectly in a real post-lesson discussion, but somehow, I have become more relaxed about the whole issue as we have had some chances to see the different techniques working parallel, as an organic system." (KKati2)

What the participants discovered, then, was that an effective mentor can draw consciously on a range of intervention techniques, has a good grasp of the effect of their questions and an empathetic understanding of the trainee's situation.

However, they also realized that this complexity can only be handled well if there is a transfer from *knowing* to *doing* and the 'doing' itself becomes intuitive and automatic as the building blocks that make up mentor competence blend together seamlessly (Schön 1987:158).

Picking up useful jargon

"I also deepened my theoretical knowledge. I found the articles very useful, and I am really glad that now I have a lot broader professional vocabulary to use." (Éva)

"I will have to concentrate on restraining myself and helping the mentees to discover things for themselves by just listing or 'holding up a mirror'." (Petra)

"The participants of this course worked together as a community of practice and it helped me to gain more practical knowledge. At the same time they provided a supportive atmosphere where we shared our very valuable experience that had accumulated over the years." (Ibolya)

"I am the kind of person who prefers teaching to speaking about teaching. Consequently, it has always been hard for me to speak about theories and principles of teaching. The course inspires me to articulate my beliefs, ideas, values, concepts, methods in my teaching." (Kati)

Our course participants found some professional terms related to mentoring quite useful in order to read, think and talk about learning theories, reflective teaching or counselling skills. What is more, over time they themselves started to use such concepts from the trainers and the reading materials. Examples are the names of feedback or intervention techniques and metaphorical expressions such as 'holding up a mirror' and 'communities of practice'. This process is what Bodóczy/Malderez (1999 p. 13) called turning 'capital T theory' into 'small t' or personal theory.

So if you are **currently mentoring** in your school, **interested in mentoring** or **peer mentoring** and a **current member** of IATEFL-Hungary join us here.

<http://www.iatefl.hu/?q=node/147>

We can offer you **regular events** to boost your mentoring skills membership in an enthusiastic mentor community

Visit our blog

at mentorsig.wordpress.com and send us an email to receive more information or to **become a member**.
tothveraeva@gmail.com

**The Mentor SIG
of
IATEFL-Hungary
is looking forward to
welcoming
new members.**

A more comprehensive paper by the authors, which describes their project in more detail, will be published in Working Papers in Applied Linguistics (WoPaLP), issue 8, 2014.

Continued - Beyond mentoring

"The learning by doing approach encouraged me to try to use it more [when teaching]." (25 Jan)

"it's good to be aware of our body language even in teaching situations" (8 Feb)

"It was interesting to see how listening 'works'. I guess I should be more aware of how I listen to others every day - not only in a mentoring situation." (8 Feb)

"I also just love all these energizers we do ... I'm never ever going to have another lesson without at least one." (8 Feb)

"Self-reflection done through the 'iceberg' activity was really useful. I had never thought about my teaching from that perspective." (1 March)

"The deepest and most intimate conversation of the whole course came with this session for me. The questions related to the 'onion' model [of change] led our small group to the interpretation of 'the meaning of life'. (31 May)

"Révész] Judit emphasized that the whole mentor/mentee relationship should exist within a culture of encouragement and I feel it is the same with all our relationships." (Balázs)

"When I shared with my husband what I learned about observation interpretation and judgment, he agreed that using less judgmental statements would improve my communication. He welcomed my desire of practising active listening as well." (Ibolya)

These quotes reveal that the course did contribute to the participants' development as language teachers as well. For example, the participants were quick to spot the potential of some training activities for teaching purposes. Gradually, the teachers also seemed to recognize how conscious reflection can add focus and depth to their abilities as classroom practitioners. It is also interesting to see how the participants transferred some of their learning on the course into their everyday lives. Examples are the value of attentive listening, the importance of being encouraged in our efforts as learners and the ability to relate to others with patience and empathy.

Experience of a professional community

"I think we can learn the most from each other if we share ideas, think about questions together. The reading task, for example, made much more sense after we've discussed it." (18 Jan)

"I really enjoy that we have somewhat longer breaks now, also because we have so many ideas to share. Today, as well, we continued talking about the workshop and using drama throughout the break." (10 May)

"The discussion of the linguistic differences between interpretation and judgment was nearly a revelation...and knowing that others struggle with similar problems and finding out about the solutions they have worked out is encouraging." (1 Feb)

"In this mentor group there has been team spirit, collaboration and fantastic comradeship. I am starting to realize that teachers, just like students, need an environment in which they can flourish and develop - as we have done."

"We as a group collected a large amount of knowledge and combined with our experience started to construct new knowledge." (17 May)

"The workshop was a real energizer! I crossed all my fingers (and toes) for Myrtil - she did a great job as a 'mentor'. I learnt a lot from her and from our discussion of the mentorial." (22 March)

"I love how the group gives feedback and reacts to the others' comments with genuine interest." (24 May)

mentor

First and foremost, this selection of quotes underscores the value of *talk* as a valid professional activity. This experience seems to have been especially powerful for participants who had had little experience of what is sometimes called *collaborative peer conversation* (Mann 2004:111).

In such conversations professional issues are talked about and thought through together. These discussions were also an important because the meaning of many concepts became clearer and personally meaningful as they got negotiated and clarified. Some central elements of this group's identity are also noticeable. Real interest in each other, readiness to disclose doubts and difficulties and pure enjoyment of togetherness are examples of this. To this day, the work of teachers and mentors in Hungary tends to be rather solitary and tied to concerns of their individual institutions (Pohl 2009; Révész 2011). This is perhaps why these teachers found the experience of their group's professional muscle and camaraderie so invigorating.

Putting the puzzle together again: learning the hard way

It is difficult to say how exactly learning on this mentor course progressed. For the individual course participant development probably did not mean a neat, linear trajectory but must have occurred in leaps or loops. But it seems most teachers did experience similar and more distinct *phases*, not unlike the cyclical stages of competence development described in Underhill (1991:76). They had to explore their professional selves and (re)integrate their insights, new knowledge and unfamiliar skills in a way that allowed them to function in a new role. To us, this process was very much like taking apart a puzzle and recombining old and new pieces into an integrated whole.

We have tried to find a headword for each of the three phases. They are, of course, very subjective but we believe that the following labels reflect the overall experience of the learning process relatively well.

Intuitive confidence

At this point, around the start of the course, the participants drew very much on their confidence as teaching professionals:

“When I entered the course, my intention was to become a mentor with high expertise and I thought all I would have to do was to learn the necessary skills and theoretical knowledge (T)”

“Having learnt that I registered for IATEFL's Mentor Course, the head teacher of the secondary school where I work expressed his utmost approval by allocating a teacher trainee to me for the spring semester. The opportunity thrilled me, and I felt rather confident that I was suitable for this new role. After the first few weeks of the course, however, I am losing ground.”(Reg1)

Constructive disorientation

As the last quote already suggests, this short phase was soon followed by a kind of *normative crisis* (Erikson 1968). This may involve, temporarily at least, acute feelings of *destabilization* in one's sense of self. For the course participants, this meant uncertainty and self-doubt as regards their ability to become the kind of mentor they envisaged for themselves. As a crucial developmental step, this phase is probably inevitable and 'constructive' in the sense that real learning and change can only happen in this way.

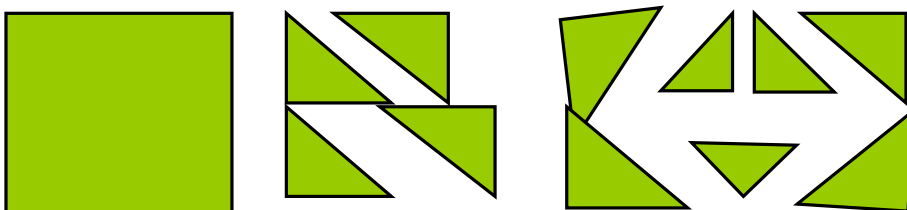


Fig. 2 From whole to parts to re-constructed whole

“Being a trainer felt as though I was a tribal healer who suddenly found herself at the medical university.” (Myrtill)

“A thought-provoking session on how difficult mentoring is; there are more and more uncertainties.”(24 Jan)

“The more we analyse mentor behavior the more insecure I feel. Will I ever get better at it?” (15 Feb)

“I have been thrown into the pool at the deep end but I cannot swim!! That’s how I felt when I started the (mentoring) role-play today.” (1Feb)

Reconstructed professional confidence

Very slowly and at different points, most participants were beginning to believe in their ability to acquire the necessary competence to become good mentors. But, for some, it took months to articulate that they had (re)gained a fair degree of confidence and were, in fact, ready to start mentoring:

“Slowly everything is making sense. That’s great relief after the confusion with I-statements and paraphrasing.”(22 Feb)

“So far I have been enjoying the sessions for all sorts of reasons (opportunities for professional development etc.). But today I feel I’ve made it to a higher level as to my mentoring competence.”

“I have become much more conscious about how to work with and talk to mentees and why to choose a certain intervention or a course of interventions. I am also beginning to see this communication as a process and as a complete system, not just particles of a mess.” (Petra)

“I went from being an experienced teacher with a strong desire to grow professionally and help others but whose teaching was mostly based on routine to becoming a methodical helper, aware of her strengths and weaknesses and who can ensure her own professional growth while helping others to do likewise.” (Anna)

“All in all, I feel ready to start working as a mentor.”

In this article we have tried to capture the personal and professional development of a group of Hungarian EFL teachers during their mentor training.

The *stepping stones* we identified describe key changes in the way these teachers defined their expanding professional identities and the degree to which they became fully conscious of what is involved in working as a mentor.

But going through these changes was not a walk in the park. It also meant some confusion, self-doubt and even loss of confidence before their new role as mentors started to become integrated with their personalities and teaching selves. And, of course, this integration process will likely continue once the newly qualified mentors start working with real teacher trainees or colleagues. With this in mind, it is good to know that the shared discoveries of this small *community of practice* (Wenger 1998) have also led to the creation of a *Mentor SIG* of IATEFL-Hungary. <http://mentorsig.wordpress.com/>. Using this platform, the mentors will continue developing and reach out to others who share their concerns and passion for the job of a mentor.

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Shall I ever be a 'ready man' by Bacon's standards?



EDIT KOZMA works as a secondary teacher, teacher trainer and mentor teacher at Madách Imre Gimnázium in Vác. Besides this, she is a core volunteer of IATEFL-Hungary.

Nothing makes a volunteer happier than launching a project which cherishes both her personal dream and her TA's strategic plans.

When Nóra Tartsay asked me to coordinate this in-service teacher training I was in the right place, at the right time, as they say, so let me be frank with you. IATEFL-Hungary events keep me sailing the rough waters of the sea and serve as an anchor when those administrative tasks and puzzled faces in the staff room seem to slightly annoy me. It was the second time IATEFL-Hungary had the privilege to organise a summer course for teachers of English between 15-18 July 2014 at István Bibó Gimnázium, Kiskunhalas.

The aim of the Visual Arts in TEFL course was to promote content and language integrated learning (CLIL), which is nothing new in Hungary as bilingual schools were introduced here back in the 1980s.

The innovative aspect of the course was to bring together teachers and educators from all segments of the Hungarian educational system from lower primary to tertiary, and experience the things we would like our own students to experience when in school, namely, that we all have something to add to the whole, we are all capable of creating art, and artistic self-expression is a natural way of exploration and communication.

Accordingly, we invited teacher trainers from various fields: Litza Juhász, a museum educator from the Museum of Fine Arts, Júlia Nagy, an artist and art teacher from secondary education.

Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man, and writing an exact man."

Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Of Studies

Márta Ispánovity, a historian and rising mentor from ELTE Radnóti practice school and some charming ex- and present committee members of IATEFL-Hungary: Bea Price, László Zsolt Zságer and Edit Kozma were also invited.

Talking about innovations, one must not leave out the technical innovations either. Márta was kind enough to lead us into the world of Fakebook, a free online educational tool.

We worked together from 8.30 am until late night to make sure we exploited every minute of our being together. During the eleven 90-minute workshops(!) we created fakebook profiles, made paraphrases of American street art and neo-expressionist pieces of art and even displayed an exhibition. We had the chance to learn about the present American civilisation through Obama



collages, or learn some Inuktitut language and build a teachers' totem.

Thanks to Zita Gergely's wonderful contribution, the participants and the trainers could also experience the joy of collaborative art when we were handed out a slice of a circle mandala to colour and then put the pieces together as a farewell act.

"The IATEFL-Hungary summer course 2014 gave me a great amount of inspiration and energy. It has just made me fall in love with teaching again." Erika Tari, Békéscsaba, Kemény Gábor Logisztikai és Közlekedési SZKI

The approach was most pragmatic and hands-on but the 34 participants did not only spend 3 nights and days together but shared knowledge, attitudes and inspiring moments also. When a rarely seen colleague greets me with a smile and congratulations on the summer course I start tending to believe, reluctantly though, that something good has happened there. Even one of the teacher trainers, Júlia admits that it was a turning point in her professional life, and she will go back to adult education again, which she had been neglecting for a while. (Now she asks me every second day when the follow-up event will take place and talks about what she plans for the big occasion.)

Referring back to Bacon's thought, I can consider myself to be a 'ready man'. Ready for the next conference or the next summer course indeed.

All this could not have been realised without the generous sponsorship of RELO, and its representatives George Chinnery and Gergő Sántha.

"When I realized I got the opportunity to participate in the IATEFL-H summer course I felt delighted and extremely enthusiastic. So far my experiences with RELO have been more than pleasant. Visiting another country, mingling with professionals from different educational systems and expanding my personal learning network (PLN) had a great impact on me. I enjoyed the variety of demonstrated activities that can easily be integrated in all teaching levels. The session topics were carefully selected and aimed both at teachers and students. The presenters were professional, highly effective and sociable. I'm looking forward to using most of the activities in English lessons as well as passing them on to my Croatian colleagues. Compliments to the whole organizational team!"

Suzana, Croatia



“In primary school I used to have an amazing Art teacher who made me believe that I can create beautiful things with the help of art. At the beginning of the Kiskunhalas summer course I had to face the fact that this confidence has faded away. I had feelings of uneasiness when trying my hand at the visual arts. However, thanks to our excellent trainers and my enthusiastic course mates, I had regained my confidence by the end of the course.

I realized that art can appeal to everybody and enrich everyone if we have an open-minded attitude towards it. Art activates our playfulness and willingness to experiment, and it develops our creativity.

During the course of the varied and colourful workshops I could learn that teachers can integrate art into their teaching in many different ways. We can describe, analyze, interpret, re-interpret and paraphrase works of art or use them as a source of inspiration with our students. We can do art projects, in which we create a work of art together, for example, a mandala, as a group.

I feel motivated to use the visual arts in my lessons because one can develop not only language skills but also the whole personality through art.”

Ágnes Zsófia Cseke, Budapest

Vecsési Halmi Telepi Általános Iskola



CHRISTINA REBUFFET-BROADUS works as a freelance business communication trainer in Grenoble, France and also contributes to several language-learning magazines. She likes to find ways of bringing creativity and the arts into the business classroom to help trainees meet their objectives while having a bit of fun. She's a member of IATEFL and TESOL France and recently published *Experimental Practice in ELT: Walk on the Wild Side* with Jennie Wright.

The book is available at the-round.com.

Play, fail, have fun: Improvisational theater activities in business English training

Business English trainers sometimes see themselves as a sort of jack-of-all-trades. In just a single day, we may have to teach a one-to-one elementary learner how to handle a basic telephone conversation, a group of advanced learners how to diplomatically handle negotiations and then we may do some training on presentation skills and finally on writing clear technical specifications.

The variety of skills that a business English trainer needs can seem mind-boggling.

One key skill to have, in my opinion, is that of improvisational dramatist. It may sound a bit extreme and even irrelevant. "Trainers as dramatists? Theater in the workplace? But I'm a language trainer, not an actor!" some may scoff. But improvisational theater techniques lend themselves perfectly to both the business and language training contexts.

In this piece, I will present some reasons supporting the use of improvisation in both a business context and for the purpose of learning a foreign language, based on both my own experience and current literature on the subjects.

Then, we will look at some things

that should be considered when working specifically within a business context (as opposed to a traditional classroom setting). Finally, I will share a few ideas that have worked for me, hopefully encouraging you to add a little improv to your already-brimming trainer toolbox.

Why use improvisation in business training?

One of the most obvious reasons for incorporating improvisation activities into training courses is this: life is improvised. As our trainers go through their daily on-the-job interactions, they are not following scripts. They do not have a few minutes to prepare what they are going to say before acting it out. They must listen, understand, and react appropriately to accomplish whatever professional goal is at hand.

"The techniques of the theater are the techniques of communication" Viola Spolin

They may know the context, several possible reactions, and the objective of the communication, but they do not know exactly how the situation will play out. This mirrors the information actors have when improvising on stage. Actors train to be able to handle such “pressure” and business people also benefit from training and practice in spontaneity. After all, what is improvisation if not the mere “conscious amplification of strategies people use every day to achieve objectives of varying importance”? (McNeece, 1983:830).

As Koppett (2001:4) points out, “Increasingly, the world of corporate America is looking like the world of improvisational theater.” Professionals have less time to plan projects and fewer guarantees that things will go as planned. Of course, we could extend this beyond the borders of the United States and increasingly, companies are realizing the value of developing employees’ creativity.

In doing so, they aim to create teams that can react flexibly in quickly-changing situations. Improvisational activities provide opportunities for trainees to incorporate body, voice, emotions, and imagination into the activity at hand.

They can get up and moving, try out new things in a safe environment, and stretch their capacities further than they thought possible.

Finally, if we consider learning styles, improvisation and drama techniques in general offer opportunities to use all of the multiple intelligences: visual/spatial, musical, kinaesthetic, inter-personal, intra-personal, linguistic, and logical. Jackson develops training suggestions for each one in his book *The Inspirational Trainer*, but here it is sufficient to say that by incorporating a wide variety of drama and improv activities into the program, a trainer should be able to cater to multiple intelligences within a group.

How can trainees improvise with limited language?

One of the first questions trainers often ask when considering improvisation in language training is “How can trainees improvise when they only have limited knowledge of the target language?” This is to forget that improvisation is not only about language. Acting out scenarios means relying on both physical and

verbal expression.

In some contexts, actions can emphasize or even substitute for words when words fail. This “failure” to communicate verbally can then become the opportunity for language learning in the de-briefing stage of the cycle of activities described in the last part of this article.

Restricting the possibilities for action and language is another way of making improvisation achievable for lower level learners. Rather than asking trainees to improvise a scene in which they welcome a foreign visitor, the trainer may simply ask them to improvise greeting a visitor. This can then be followed by subsequent improvisations of asking about the visitor’s trip, offering a cup of coffee, discussing the weather, etc. The key is to break down scenarios into achievable mini-interactions with limits that prevent the trainee from feeling overwhelmed and which allow them to focus only on the task at hand. Spolin (1999:3) reminds us that “we learn through experience and experiencing, and no one teaches anyone anything.” This will seem obvious to many trainers, who know how much more trainees benefit from using language rather than listening to explanations of how to use language.

Although the trainer does still play a role in teaching when trainees' language knowledge reaches its limits, trainees are also capable of learning through their own experiences and observations with language. Improvisational activities offer opportunities to experiment and observe in a safe environment, where failure becomes the chance to extend knowledge.

But really, improv in business training?

As mentioned above, companies are beginning to realize the benefits of encouraging spontaneity and creativity in their staff. This is good news. However, this doesn't necessarily mean the trainees in front of you are just going to magically become gung-ho improv actors. They may already feel self-conscious about speaking English in front of their colleagues, especially if there are differences in level (both linguistic and hierarchical). They may feel they're hopelessly uncreative. They may be afraid of doing or saying the wrong thing.

If you plan to use improvisation techniques regularly or are doing a session that includes a lot of improv activities, it's worth taking some time to diffuse trainees' inner mental gate-keepers (Johnstone 1981:79).

These are the invisible guardians inside the mind, who filter ideas and discriminate against anything that might sound the least bit silly or absurd. These mental guardians are especially active in business contexts, so you may need to remind trainees to:

1. Let themselves fail. Not only is failure integral to learning, but in improve, it doesn't matter if something fails. The scene can simply start over. That's the worst that happens and it isn't necessarily a bad thing.

2. Play. This means just enjoying an activity for the sake of enjoying it, because it's fun. It also means being totally present in the activity. Imagine a little kid, how immersed he is in building a castle in the sandbox. Make the training room your trainees' sandbox.

3. Play the game. Your improve activities will all have rules, just like games. If the trainees play by the rules (that you, the trainer, set), they'll have the freedom to focus on the task (and language) at hand.

4. Say "yes!" Not literally all the time, but for an improvisation activity to work, each player must accept the idea of the other and work with it. Having to react to what is given develops flexi-

lity and reactivity. It also advances the scene so the players create collaboratively.

5. Relax and have fun. As hard as it is to believe, people need to be reminded of this. If trainees feel comfortable—because they're ok with failing, they're playing, they're obeying the rules, and they're open to others' ideas—they'll be in prime condition to improvise to their full potential.

So how does it work?

I feel that when introducing improve activities, it is a good idea to take trainees through a cycle of activities to put them in the right mind-set to play but also to help them in their language and communication objectives. This cycle includes four stages:

1. Non-verbal warmers: these can be based on sound, mime, or physical interaction. Common examples include conducting a piece of classical music (possibly with eyes closed for a group), passing an imaginary ball between partners in a circle, and mirroring a partner's movements). The aim is to lower inhibitions while raising awareness of others' actions.



2. Verbal warmers: a traditional staple of language classrooms, these are short activities, often with simple language help trainees ease into using English. They may include activities such as word-association games and milling & greeting (possibly with imagined identities). Many warm-up activities can be found on the website improvencyclopedia.org.

3. Playing: the heart of the session, this is the improvisation activity. To help trainees focus, give or elicit limits (the “rules” from above) by defining the who, where, and what of the scenario. There are many sources of activities, listed below, where you will find a variety of activities developed in all the detail necessary to implement them in training sessions.

4. Evaluation: not evaluation in the sense of ‘good’ or ‘bad’, but rather in response to questions such as ‘Was communication successful?’, ‘Did they communicate in the way they intended to?’, ‘Did they show *and* tell, with both words and body language?’ Elicit participants’ feedback before giving your own and be sure to praise and encourage their efforts.

It is important not to force unwilling participants. If they truly feel uncomfortable performing, give them a role that is less “in the spotlight.” Perhaps in seeing their colleagues perform in the first rounds of improvisations they will be encouraged to join the fun, but if they do not wish to do so, don’t make a big deal out of it. Instead offer them different ways of participating. They can become observers, looking out for use of particular language, watching for physical interaction between players, or how the players use the space around them. They can also become helpers, prompting players from the sidelines. The important thing is to include them in the activity, even if they are not ‘on stage.’

If trainees prefer to stick to situations relating directly to their work context, you can build your improvisations around this. We tend to think of wacky comedy when we hear the word ‘improv,’ but improve isn’t all about being funny. It’s about being spontaneous and reacting to what is given to you.

Business people do this all the time: solving problems, participating in meetings, taking phone calls. Elicit the who, where, and what of these situations and use them as the basis of third stage of the cycle above.

Curtain call

One last reminder, you need not be an experienced improv actor to use these techniques. The sources listed in ‘Activity Resources’ provide enough information to be able to implement the activities without any prior drama training. The books listed under ‘References’ are great for exploring the notion of improvisation and improvisation as a training technique even further.

Hopefully you’ll feel encouraged to try some of the techniques and activities to draw out your trainees’ creativity and spontaneity. Create a relationship of trust in a relaxed atmosphere and both you and your trainees may be surprised at just how fun (and effective) improvisation in language training can be.

Activity resources:

Maley, A. and Duff, A. (1985). *Drama Techniques in Language Learning*, new ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Wilson, K. (2012). *Drama and Improvisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 Bernardi, P. (1992). *Improvisation Starters*. Cincinnati, OH: Betterway Books.
<http://improvencyclopedia.org/>

References

Jackson, P. (2001). *The Inspirational Trainer*. London : Kogan Page Limited.
 Johnstone, K. (1981). *Improv: Improvisation and the Theatre*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
 Koppett, K. (2001). *Training to Imagine*. Sterling, VA : Stylus Publishing.
 McNeece, L. (1983, May). The Uses of Improvisation: Drama in the Foreign Language Classroom. *The French Review*. Vol. 56, No. 6. pp. 829-839.
 Spolin, V. (1999). *Improvisation for the Theater*, 3rd ed. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.



ENGLISH FOR A CHANGE

24th IATEFL-Hungary conference

Veszprém 2014



A couple of thoughts on why English and science go well together when teaching YL

At the very beginning I need to state that what you are about to read is nothing more than my own experience and conclusions; no quotes from professional literature or studies, just genuine day to day reflections based on my work.

Whether you are expected to teach CLIL or 'regular' English classes, science is your best friend. For various reasons. First of all, it is a subject which, just like art, is ideal for introducing some hands-on experience in the classroom. Learning by doing helps retaining and understanding not only scientific facts, but also new vocabulary and chunks of language. It creates an almost instant connection between the task and the language. Science gives an opportunity to experiment, observe and discover, which apart from being great fun, develops reasoning and critical thinking.

Children are naturally curious about the world around them and making that knowledge available in your English class, will surely boost their motivation.

You may think the subject-related vocabulary and its content itself will turn out too difficult for young learners, but we can always adapt both to our students' age and language level and, most importantly, we need to have a little faith in their possibilities. I have been teaching science or its elements to different kinds of groups, and I was surprised to discover that young non-native English speakers actually manage to follow a British curriculum based science program, including some, as it would seem, complicated subject-related vocabulary, if it's well adapted. Just imagine how much can be done in an English class with 6 years

AGNIESZKA KRUSZYŃSKA

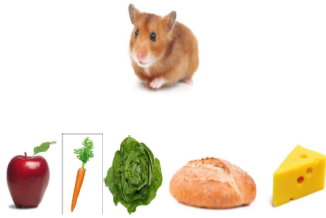
is a graduate of Primary Education with Early English Teaching (Pedagogy) at Warsaw University. After six years of working in language schools, she became a lower primary tutor for bilingual education in 2012, and has been working as such ever since in Spain and Poland.

olds, even if their knowledge of L2 is pretty basic. Let me give you some examples.



Conference.
Community.
Creativity.

Animals



This is such a brilliant topic, already used in many English textbooks. Ask your kids to write down the names of animals they would like to learn about, then choose the ones that appear the most times (3-5). Do you want to revise food vocabulary? No problem. Prepare flashcards with your animals and 3-5 products that they eat (you can also cross out one they should never be fed with, e.g., chocolate or potatoes for dogs). Hang them around the classroom, read the out with the children, let them go around and have a good look at each picture. Get a recipient with a picture of each animal. Give out pictures (or names) of different food items, including the ones animals shouldn't eat. Children have to pick the right recipients to put their pictures in. At the end, you check with the whole class whether they managed to match the animals with their food correctly. It is a good idea to bring a real pet to the classroom (e.g., a hamster or a guinea pig) and let the children choose the right products to feed it.

Food pyramid

Show the food pyramid and explain its meaning. Bring real products, make a pyramid shape on the floor/table (e.g., using strings or colourful sellotape) and ask the kids to fit the items into the right level. Make sure they say the name of their item before placing it inside of the pyramid. If you can't bring the real thing, make flashcards. I had a pyramid painted on the window and my students were sticking their pictures with bluetack. Later on I would ask them: what should we eat every day? What should we eat once a week? And so on.

Water

Experimenting with water is fast, easy and awakes a vivid interest among the children. All you need to explain evaporation is a mug, hot water and a mirror. Make them observe what water vapour is, how it goes up and stays on the mirror. Can they see how it changes back into little drops of water? It is a good way to start the water cycle topic.

Where will the ice melt faster? In hot or cold water? Where does it disappear? What happens if we put it into the freezer and take it out the next lesson? Prepare a follow up worksheet with things that melt turning into water (e.g., a snowman, ice-cream, snowflakes) and others that don't.

Make your students fill in the gaps according to the pattern: A snowman melts. A crayon doesn't melt, etc.

Another idea is to check which objects float and which sink. I guarantee that the kids will want to try it out. Bring a piece of wood, metal, a candy, a cotton pad and whatever else you want. Let the little ones bet on which item will float and which will sink. Were they right? Prepare a follow up worksheet: pictures-words (floats, sinks) matching, gaps filling, finishing sentences, etc.

All those ideas create countless possibilities to practice and revise vocabulary, sentence structures and grammar rules, apart from teaching about the real world instead of focusing only on the language itself. If you lack ideas, I personally recommend to make use of Usborne's Activity Cards: 50 Science things to make & do (available on Amazon or Usborne webpage). I hope this short text will encourage you to give science a chance in your English class.





ÁGNES CSEKE

graduated in English Language Teaching from Eötvös Loránd University in 2001. Later she obtained a complementary degree in English Literature as well as Scandinavian Studies. She used to work as a freelancer teacher of English and Swedish at several language schools for ten years. Then she felt she had a calling for teaching children and she started to teach in a primary school. She is glad to be the member of the teaching staff at Vecsési Halmi Telepi Primary School at the moment. She participated in a Comenius teacher training course in Portsmouth, England, where she learnt how to teach English to pupils with special needs.



Connecting classrooms through eTwinning

One of the most important qualities in all of us involved in education is definitely enthusiasm with a touch of curiosity. That's what pushed us into the world of exploring the possibilities of EU projects in education and collaborating with teachers across the continent. Feeling free to use our creativity and combining it with students' interests to improve their language skills, as well as our teaching competences, is like a freedom of speech.

How it all started?

Wanting to continue collaboration between two teachers which started in Roma and Friends summer camp 2013 held in Balatonlelle, we discussed the idea of finding penfriends for our students to inspire them to practise their English. From this small seed grew a fantastic flower as this idea gradually grew into a complex project work among the students of five primary schools from four different European countries.



SUZANA MESIC

teaches English at Vinica Primary School in Croatia. She holds a bachelor's degree from Teacher Training College - University of Zagreb, Croatia. In 2013 she discovered the Regional English Language Office (RELO) in Budapest where she applied and got accepted as a counsellor at Roma and Friends Balatonlelle summer camp. Having brought some great experiences from Hungary, a year after she joined her Hungarian colleagues again in a summer course on American Visual Arts in TEFL, Kiskunhalas. She is interested in using technology and Web 2.0 in teaching, enjoys planning and guiding classroom online projects and leading drama lessons in English.

A quick survey

Since our students were very eager to work with other European children they started asking lots of questions about the types of activities we were about to work on. At first we wanted to find out about our students' expectations so we did a survey about their interests and preferences regarding the types of project activities. We decided to include the use of digital tools since our students showed interest in them. Of course, most of the answers included playing (computer) games, as expected. Guided by the survey results, we started exploring the *eTwinning* platform and its possibilities. It's an online platform for school staff working in European countries used for communication, collaboration and development through short or long-term projects. You can register yourself and your school among the users and find partners for your project idea among the other members. The Portal provides online tools for teachers to find partners, set up projects, share ideas, exchange best practice and start working together using various customised tools available on the *eTwinning* platform. After finding three more partner schools that were interested in project partnership we immediately started the wonderful task of

brainstorming the possible project activities and tools we will be using. We started an exciting adventure with teachers and students from Hungary, the Czech Republic and two Polish schools. We wanted to draw up a plan about the project activities but it was difficult to communicate through email so we set up a skype group for the five of us, and also used the forum on the *eTwinning* platform. The project platform was very convenient for keeping track of the project activities. We could add our activities and the related files under the appropriate menu headings. Students could keep in touch by visiting Twin Space and chatroom. After writing the programme description and getting it approved by our National Agency we took our students on a wonderful journey - a three month long project called *The Magic of European Christmas*. The groups co-operated on a weekly basis. Their motivation for the project was immense since they were free to communicate with their foreign peers.

The collaboration lasted from November 2013 to January 2014 and it was divided into several working categories.

All the groups presented their country and school, prepared a PPT presentation about Christmas traditions in their country and presented themselves as a working group using digital tools such as Glogster, Voki and video making. You could see the motivating spark in children's eyes while performing digital tasks, playing and learning English at the same time, as well as meeting new friends and cultures on the way. "At some times they were even more competent than me in mastering ICT tools- no wonder their generation is called *digital natives!*" –says Suzana. Glogster was a new digital tool for them but they were astonishingly quick at mastering it. Hungarian students embedded text, pictures, photos and even a video clip in the poster. "We were fascinated by the Croatian students Voki sound files and avatar pictures, and decided to use this tool in the future." – says teacher Agnes.



Students worked on introducing their countries' special traditions connected to winter holidays, especially Christmas and New Year. Students contributed with photos taken by themselves in their schools or in their homes. This made the PPT presentations more personalized and captivating. It was exciting for the students to compare the traditions and find similarities and differences regarding celebration of winter holidays in the four different countries.

The third type of activity was making a Christmas greeting card by hand or using digital tools, writing a personalised greeting with holiday wishes, and posting it to one of the five groups of children. Groups enjoyed making personal artistic Christmas postcards and digital cards. The Croatian group exchanged cards with one of the Polish schools, the Hungarian one with the other Polish school, while we all shared digital ones on the platform spreading our jolly wishes. Our groups decided to arrange a Skype meeting with the same student group



they exchanged greeting cards with. The meetings were planned ahead with a handful of our students' ideas. We gave our students language support by revising and developing vocabulary connected to the preferred topics. They acted as professional journalists by preparing sets of meaningful questions for the other group and taught one another their

mother tongue children songs, talked about favourite hobbies, music and even delicious meals they get in the school's canteen.

The finishing activity for the groups was to learn and rehearse a traditional English Christmas carol, *Silent Night*, in a band-like manner using accompanying instruments, as well as a well-known Christmas song in their own mother tongue. The groups made a video recording of the performance and shared it with the other groups via the project platform. You can imagine that this definitely put the participants in a holiday mood. The groups showed all their talents and imagination through their brilliant act and awoke the joy of the forthcoming Christmas time.



Final words

Project-based learning is not just a way of learning – it's a way of working together, bringing real-life context into curriculum through taking responsibility for their own learning. The expected results of a three-month project were to present Christmas traditions in these countries, get acquainted with Christmas traditions around Europe and awaken the Christmas spirit by sending our warmest wishes.

Reflecting on the whole project experience, we believe that the greatest experience for our students was meeting children from foreign

countries and other cultures, either through the creations of the project, through postcard correspondence or through communication on digital platforms, such as *eTwinning* chat room or a Skype meeting. “They were thrilled when they from the Polish and the Croatian group and they worked with a whole-hearted enthusiasm on their own greetings cards using origami art and even graffiti drawing.” – says Agnes. Additionally, students made new friends, boosted their communicative and co-working skills, used ICT tools in a creative manner and improved their English speaking and writing skills. Furthermore, by presenting their country and background in an attractive way for tourists and experiencing other countries they became

aware of the strengths in using English as an international language. If interested, feel free to visit our Twin Space Profile on the following link:

<http://new-twinspace.etwinning.net/web/p99795/welcome>

We truly hope you have by now become inspired to present your students with this opportunity of meeting other children and their culture. “According to my pupils’ opinions, after completing the project I can only establish that my students are thrilled and eager to start another one!” – Suzana says. Personally, we are looking forward to our next project with foreign students and their teachers.



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ÁGNES DUNAI has been teaching English for 11 years. Currently she is teaching upper-primary and secondary school students in Karolina School, Szeged. Being a Geography and R.E teacher as well, she is particularly interested in CLIL.

Science through English

In the previous school year, my colleague, Tóth Károlyné, and I launched a cross-curricular elective in Karolina School in Szeged. The primary aim of the course was to use English as a means of communication outside the English language classes; in addition, we wanted to experiment with Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

My colleague teaches Physics and Chemistry and I teach English, and therefore, we decided upon having weekly sessions where we performed experiments together with fifth formers of the eight-year secondary school. Most of the kids taking part in the classes had been learning English for a year or maximum two years, which would make anyone presume that their level of English is insufficient for learning science through

English. Being aware of this, we carefully tailored the material to their age and English language competence. My colleague and I chose experiments which are ‘child friendly’ and do not require a lot of material and preparation, or in other words, which can be carried out in a sixty-minute session and the end product is something interesting and exciting.

At the beginning of each lesson there was an approximately 20-minute-long language input, where the teacher presented vocabulary, content, objectives, and the steps to conduct the experiment. As we were very careful about our choices, the kids never got overloaded with new words and grammar structures. They learnt three or four vocabulary items at a time, and we used only imperatives to write down the

steps. After the introduction, the pupils performed the experiments, mainly in pairs or sometimes on their own. It was always great fun and very exciting to see who managed to achieve the expected result, for example whose potato fish could float on the surface of the water or who managed to write a secret message with milk, or lemon. Finally, each lesson was rounded off with a scientific explanation of the experiment, which happened in Hungarian.

Right now we are working on the syllabus for the upcoming school year. Our plan is to keep the hands-on activities, and make the sessions a bit more challenging language-wise. As the students’ English language competence improves and they have wider scientific knowledge, we will focus on extending their science vocabulary and switch from the Hungarian explanation to English.

All in all, we firmly believe that CLIL can broaden the horizons of our students and open new channels through which they can discover not only the language but themselves as well.



JUDIT RÉVÉSZ is a teacher trainer at the Department of English Language Pedagogy, ELTE, Budapest. She teaches methodology and classroom studies and has been training mentors since 2003. She also teaches in Apáczai Grammar School part time. She has trained internationally in Turkey, Germany and Great Britain. Her professional interests include the sociology of teaching, teaching young learners and drama techniques in both ELT and teacher training. She enjoys looking after her grandchildren and singing in choirs.

MENTORS IN ACTION



UWE POHL is a German-born teacher and teacher trainer in the Department of English Language Pedagogy of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. He is a lecturer in language pedagogy with a particular interest in the areas of intercultural communication and trainer training. Uwe Pohl has also worked in a wide variety of international contexts doing training in, for example, Hungary, Poland, Germany and the USA. Most recently he has been involved in large-scale trainer training projects in Ethiopia, Turkey and China. His non-professional passions are singing and table-tennis.

ÉVA KOVÁCS graduated as a Maths and Physics teacher from ELTE. She taught for 4 years in Budapest, then she came to Boronkay György Technical Secondary and Grammar School in Vác, and since then she has worked here. She has taught in English since 2005 (Science of Nature, Physics, Maths). In 2007 she graduated as a bilingual teacher at ELTE. Thanks to scholarships from Tempus Közalapítvány (and with the help of Sheatland Language School) she could participate in different teacher training courses in England.



My first encounter with CLIL

Ever since I started teaching my subjects in English, I have always wanted to improve my language skills and wanted to know more about how I can teach more efficiently through a foreign language. (It is difficult enough in our mother tongue as well!) Hoping that I find answers to my questions and problems, I applied for a scholarship to take part in a general teacher training course in England and luckily I got it, so I could spend three weeks in Southampton. In our group I was the only Hungarian and

the only “not English teacher”! Although I was scared to death to be among them I was also very glad. I knew I would see and learn a lot about the basic ideas, concepts, methods and problems of teaching English. I could get a view of what abilities and knowledge I can build upon or rely on for my Maths and physics lessons. The course was as hard and tiring as I expected; however, I enjoyed it and I have learnt a lot. At the end of the course we had to “pass the exam”: we had to make a peer-teaching, showing how we can use the

newly learnt things in our lessons. This task was a real challenge for me. How could I teach in English for those who speak at a much higher level? And what topics to choose so that they would follow, understand or enjoy besides giving new information? (Usually people freak out when they only hear the names of my subjects!) Finally, I decided to give my mini-lesson about the most popular topic in England: the weather, more precisely, the change of phases, starting from the everyday sentence: “it is raining today.”

Some useful resources about CLIL:

Mehisto, P., Frigols, M-J, & Marsh, P. (2008). *Uncovering CLIL: Content and language and multilingual education*. London, UK: Macmillan ELT.

Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

The sketch of the lesson was this:

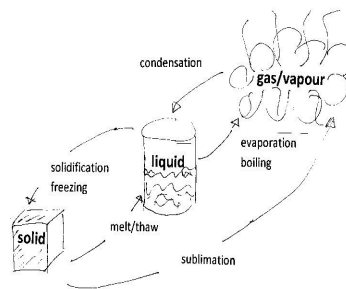
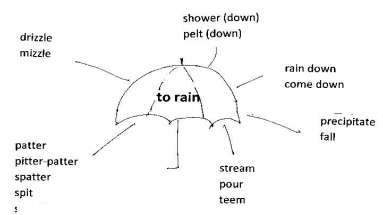
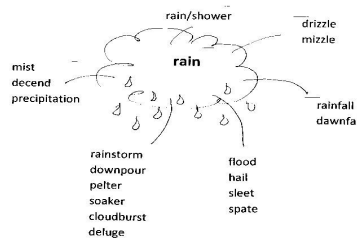
1. Brain storming/vocabulary building (using mind-maps):
2. phases and their changes:
3. the physics behind it (temperatures, they are constant while change, they depend on..., change of the structure, energy...)
4. expressions/idioms
5. sing with me: Singing in the rain... (CD+text needed)

To my surprise – and to everyone else’s – the lesson was a great success. No one expected a physics lesson like this. They really could understand and enjoy it, and moreover they heard new facts!

To my surprise – and to everyone else’s – the lesson was a great success. No one expected a physics lesson like this. They really could understand and enjoy it, and moreover they heard new facts!

After this experience I decided to learn more about combining the teaching and learning of the content and the language.

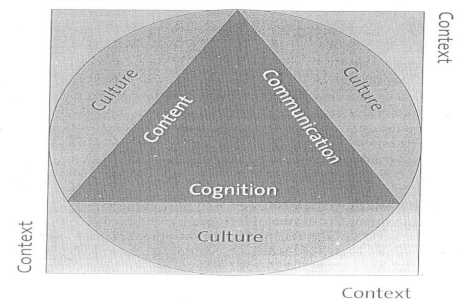
At that time I did not know that there already existed a scientific field called CLIL, which deals with these questions. On later teacher



training courses I could learn about the basic ideas of the Content and Language Integrated Learning in general and using it subject-specifically (e.g., about the core features of the methodology, the 4C-s, the importance of cooperative learning and the work between language and subject teachers, the need for the basic knowledge of the mother tongue, besides sources, games etc.) Although I know the changes in our educational system nowadays do not really support bilingual teaching because we teachers are overloaded and the curriculum is very strict and condensed, I deeply believe in the importance and success of this kind of teaching and learning, not to

mention its necessity, importance and useful outcomes.

The 4Cs Framework Context



CLIL – Teaching Other Subjects Through English

From: CLIL, Coyle, Hood and Marsh

- Links:**
- www.onestopenglish.com/clil
 - www.onestopenglish.com/clil/methodology/articles
 - www.onestopclil.com
 - www.ccn-clil.eu
 - www.scienceinschool.org
 - www.collaborativelearning.org
 - www.grahamworkman.com
 - <http://grahamworkmanbili.wikispaces.com/>
 - www.clilnl/online/materials/search/html
 - www.euroclil.net
 - www.scienceineurope.net

SO(U)L camp, Čadca – a summer school with a difference

ERIKA TARI is an English teacher at a secondary school in Békéscsaba, south-east Hungary. She firmly believes that education plays an important role in the development of a region. As most of her students come from underprivileged families and have learning difficulties, her main aim is to teach not only English but also the importance of learning languages. She is specifically interested in improving students' intercultural competences. She sees teaching not only as her job but also her hobby, and therefore she likes attending teacher trainings in her free time. Besides working as an English teacher, she has studied Economics and spent about three years at different universities in Germany. As a teacher, she strives to find the often hidden talent in each of her students.

In August 2014, the second SO(U)L camp in Čadca, Slovakia took place, with 26 participants from 8 different countries: the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. Our tutors were Mark Andrews, Frank Prescott, and Rakesh Bhanot – all very well-known and experienced teacher trainers, and Josephine Devi-Knight who is the course director at SOL.

I heard about this camp at the 23rd IATEFL-Hungary conference in Budapest, and even though I read all the

information about it on the Internet (<http://soulcamp.eu/>), I never thought that it would be such a unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

On the certificate that we received at the end of the training it says: “a course aimed at refreshing mind, body and soul”, and I think it perfectly describes the SO(U)L camp.

The camp was refreshing for the mind because we had very thought-provoking sessions and activities during the course. If I had to summarize what we have learnt in one word, I would say “D.I.T.O.W.”,

meaning: “Do It The Other Way”. The whole camp made us think, try out new things, and step outside our own comfort zones. We had some special tasks even before the camp started, for example “bring a handful of beans uncooked” or “bring some favourite smells with you”. Then, during the course we continued with tasks that we have never done before, for example, the field work activities in the surrounding areas in the Czech Republic and Poland, as well as in Čadca. Besides this, we learnt about how to use simple things around us – like



pebbles, an onion, or a pomegranate –, how to use songs, poems and paintings for teaching English, and how to rely on our students' and also on our own creativity. We also had the first SO(U)L international film quiz night. And as it was during the camp that the death of Robin Williams was announced, it led us to watch and then have a discussion about *Dead Poets Society*.

The course was refreshing for the body because of the special food and the special yoga classes. Regarding the food, we were lucky to have a chef who prepared very healthy food for us every day. Also, there were yoga classes every morning, starting at 7:30. We learnt the basics of yoga, and some special techniques about how to calm down after a stressful day at school. Our yoga teacher, Peter, had a very nice personality, and his presence made not only the yoga classes but also the camp

special. Moreover, as the camp was on a hill next to the forest, we could go for relaxing walks whenever we wanted to while enjoying the fresh air and the beautiful view over Čadca. On one of the afternoons we also had a special dance course thanks to one of our tutors, Josie, who introduced us to the world of ecstatic dance.

The name of the course is the SO(U)L camp and I think it is truly the perfect name for it because it was also refreshing our soul. The people who participated in this course were all very open-minded and positive people, respecting the others, and it was a key feature to create a peaceful and stress-free atmosphere. Besides the participants, the tutors' different personalities also greatly contributed to this environment. I think Mark, Rakesh, Frank and Josie complemented each other very well; each of them represented a different aspect of teaching, and if one of them had been missing, this camp would not have been the same. We got so much positive feedback from the tutors and from each other that not only our mind but



also our soul could grow and develop during the course. Thus, the training made us more confident, not only as teachers but also as human beings.

For me, the camp was really special and my life would be less if I had not participated in this course. It contributed greatly to my development as a teacher, because after teaching for 7 years, I really needed this refreshment. The whole camp was thought-provoking, definitely out of my comfort zone in many ways, and therefore very inspiring and unique. As a teacher and also as a human being, I have become wiser and more confident. The course convinced me that I am on the right path as a teacher, and it is good and important to trust students and treat them as human beings first – as one of our tutors put it.

**PETRA PARTY****LILI KENÉZ****ALMA MÓRITZ**

World Water Prize Competition – National Final – Hungary

PETRA PARTY has been studying in the Boronkay György High School since 2011. She goes to an environmental specialized class. Her favourite subjects are biology and chemistry. She reached the second place in a national competition on environmental protection in 2013. She took part in the Stockholm Junior Water Prize.

ALMA MÓRITZ attends the Boronkay High School in Vác. She has been going to a biology and chemistry class and has studied English for 12 years. She would like to be a veterinary surgeon and will apply to a veterinary university next year. She participated in the Stockholm Junior Water Prize.

LILI KENÉZ, student of the Boronkay György High School, has been studying in a specialized biology and chemistry class. She would like to study and work in the field of natural sciences in the future. Lili wants to do research abroad, so she has been studying English and Japanese. She has participated in national finals such as the Georgikon Biology Competition and the Conference of Scientific (TUDOK).

"Disappearing Water - The Decrease of Groundwater in Mount Naszály region"

An excerpt from their research paper:

A decline in groundwater levels can be experienced worldwide due to global warming. We browsed through related literature available in Hungary, and we realized that nobody had ever paid attention to our region. We looked for a place not yet largely influenced by urbanization to find out if this problem exists in our surroundings, too. We chose the outskirts of Vác, which stretches around Mount Naszály.

Our original idea was to measure the decline in groundwater levels in the region by the monitoring of the dug and drilled wells, and with the data acquired, we wanted to draw a conclusion. During our research, we made interviews with local people. Their observations served as a basis for our project. With our research, we wanted to confirm or refute these observations. In most of the cases we could support our hypothesis comparing data downloaded from CarpatClim. We collected data from 1961 to 2010. We also did research in the Archives of Vác to find

earlier descriptions and pictures.

Then we recognized that we have to deal with a more complex problem. Here, it is not only global warming that has caused the decline. Mount Naszály is still a mining site. This activity is considered the primary reason for the change in microclimatic conditions negatively impacting groundwater levels.

The first problem is that the barren rock surface absorbs and emits heat. Therefore, there is a large difference between temperatures measured at the mountain

and in the city. Consequently, the effect of global warming is augmented. According to a local resident, during the last 20 years the temperature has risen approximately by 15 degrees. We could verify the rising tendency in air temperature with data from CarpatClim, but probably it is mostly due to the global climatic change.

Secondly, the changed wind and air flow conditions are believed to have caused the 'hot-eye' above the mountain. The rising hot air mass, created by the vast barren surface of the stone pit, disturbs the Foehn wind



carrying precipitation over the mountain. Due to this phenomenon, the type of the precipitation has changed. According to the data of CarpatClim, the snow water equivalent values of this area have decreased. This means snowfalls have been replaced by quick, heavy rainfalls. The problem is complex because water cannot be retained.

Moreover, due to an apparent absence of flora that disappeared from the area, precipitation simply pours down to the foot of the mountain, as there are no plants that could halt its flow.

The slopes of the mountain have been inhabited since the Middle Ages, and people have always been engaged in subsistence agriculture. In the previous century, fruits grown here were traded all across

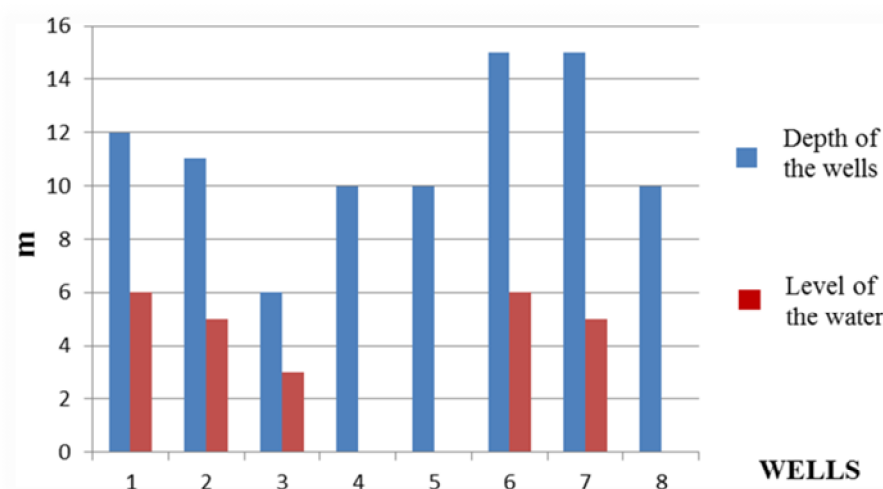
Europe (e.g., Munich, Vienna). Besides this, growing flowers also used to be significant. With the opening of mines, these were gone and farmers looked for other subsistence activities. In this way the fruit-trees and vines, which could absorb the water, disappeared too. The situation has even been aggravated by the decline in groundwater levels. The only place where there is enough water is the foothill region, which is called Well Valley.

We propose that the only viable way to solve issues related to Mount Naszály is to recultivate and revive the region. Locals have to face huge difficulties like frequent landslides on the steep slopes and financial problems. Moreover, it is not just an environmental and

agricultural problem, but also a cultural one. Due to the huge and constantly growing generation gap between our generation and our grandparents' one (who are maybe the last farmers here) we probably will not replace them.

We did this project for an international competition for high school students, the Hungarian sorter of the Stockholm Junior Water Prize. We heard about the groundwater level problems in Hungary so we started to study an enormous amount of literature. We saw experts about the problem and then found the perfect topic, the decrease of groundwater in Mount Naszály. We would like to help with improving the situation in our region in an economical and environmental way and draw the inhabitants' attention to the local problems.

After the fieldwork we started to write our twenty-page-long essay. We sent it to the organizers of the competition and after a month we had the result; we were in the best six from 33 competitors. Then we had to make a presentation



and a poster. We summed up the essence of our work and made diagrams and photos to make our poster interesting. The English language played a very important role during our work. First, we wrote our essay in Hungarian and then we had to translate it, but it contained many geographic and hydrographic technical terms. Our class mates and teachers helped us too. We owe a lot to our willing lector, a geography and English teacher in our school. For the final we had to study it in a shorter form and practice a lot because of the pronunciation. We never thought that the most difficult word would be "water". Finally, we did our best and made a great presentation. Our opponents were very well prepared; we heard some fantastic ideas. The judges were fair, and the atmosphere was very friendly. Of course, we are a little bit



frustrated that we came second; it was a really close contest.

All in all, we really enjoyed it, and it was a great challenge to us. In our opinion everybody of our age who wants to make something worthwhile in the future should make no scruples and start practicing right now. It is important to get used to the taut situations and teamwork.

To find out more
about Global Water
Partnership,
visit
[http://www.gwp.org/
en/GWP-CEE/the-
challenge/](http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-CEE/the-challenge/).





"I'm never bored, never ever bored. If I've got a day off, I'll sit in a cafe and watch and observe. I'm a great observer" – David Suchet

ÁGNES SCHWARCKOPF works as a teacher at Kempelen Farkas Grammar School in Budapest. She teaches History and English. Feeling the need for professional development she frequently goes to conferences and teacher training courses. She and her colleague Ágnes Igaz became regulars at Creative Café last year.

Come and join us not just watching and observing us but participating in great presentations, workshops and chat. On the first Friday of each month from 16:00 to 18:00 we would like to meet you for a 2-hour discussion and networking. Our

meetings are at the Libra Foreign Language Bookshop in Budapest. Each month a different topic will be discussed, and participants will have a chance to win free copies of books from Libra Books. Furthermore, Libra Books is offering an all-time 20% discount for all members of IATEFL-Hungary. Please show your membership card in the shop or add your membership number to your online orders to receive the discount.

As an enthusiastic regular I would like to run back over the last two years and give a brief insight into these events. Last **March** Judit Kovács-Molnár talked about how to teach poems for teenagers using the Read Me

series and the MacMillan Children's Book series. Frank Prescott looked at some ideas for using paintings as a basis for classroom language activities. In **April** Mary Sousa shared her ideas and tips on storytelling using planted questions and participatory story-telling techniques and offering a hand-out with websites for stories, story outlines with teaching ideas, and book references. Peter Szabó conducted a treasure hunt, entitled "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about ELT but Never Dared Ask". We explored the most comprehensive collection of foreign language books and course books in Budapest. Participants won great prizes on the Libra Books ELT Quiz. In **May** Csilla

Járay-Benn offered a list of methods and apps she uses with her one-to-one business English students. Cili Gall introduced Australia to the participants with a short Australia quiz and a bunch of plush animals from down under, and invited participants to the Australian film club, as well. In **June** with Beatrix Price we celebrated the end of the school year with a great afternoon playing board games!

In **July** in the first session we heard about teaching English in China, in a talk entitled "Truth never grows old. Chinese schools - English factory." The second half was a creative writing workshop where we explored the language together.

In **November** Judit Fehér, course book author and international teacher trainer, did a workshop on music entitled "Music to your (students') ears", where we did activities with classical music. In **December** we had fun with Nora Tartsay Nemeth looking at Xmas applications for mobile devices – I tried these activities and did have fun in

and out of the classroom. Bea Price taught us how to make Christmas Crackers with the students!

For the next Creative cafe Edit Kozma and Ildikó Csősz invited us into a thoughtful discussion on mentoring and coaching. Edit Kozma showed some activities that could help us to further discover our teaching self and our students learning self. Ildikó Csősz talked about how coaching can be used in the classroom to help our students become self-motivated, responsible and autonomous language learners.

In February two experts, Eszter Kéthelyi, from Tempus, and Anita Förster, from ViaLingua, were invited. Anita Förster, Grant Writing Advisor of Hungary Expert, gave us a short introduction into the new system of the grant applications for individual mobility of teachers and on how to find a suitable course. In March István Dezsényi let us learn more about language exams and offered practical tips to show how we can prepare students for the exams. We looked at some excerpts from oral and written

exams, books and materials that can help in the preparation.

In April Ágnes Igaz and I invited the others to try out some practical ideas for Children's summer camps. The others had to create the ghost of the bookshop and introduce it to us. Litza Juhász from the Museum of Fine Arts presented a range of ideas we can use with students of all ages and levels about paintings, drawings or sculptures. In May Tamara Matic Cvejanov shared her English language quiz with us and Enikő Öveges talked about the recent changes and developments in the relevant legislation, aims and objectives set in the new National Core Curriculum and the frame curricula and the new ways in the Year of Intensive Language Learning and the national-level language proficiency surveys in preparation.

In June Zsófia Menyhei's workshop (British Council) explored various ways in which IWB software can be used in the YL classroom. She offered ideas on how flipcharts with images, sounds and short videos can contribute to fun lessons

involving hands-on learning. Péter Szabó (Libra Books) showed us the most exciting ELT resources of the year. In July with Zsuzsa Lindner (Szabó Lőrinc Kéttannyelvű Gimnázium) we discussed the problems our students faced during their Matura English exam this year. Our other guest, Brendan Kenneth Duprey, presented the Green Pack, an educational tool for

sustainable development and showed us how this can be done in practice. He also introduced the Regional Environmental Centre to the participants.

As you see, we had teachers and speakers from very different backgrounds. We always had very creative afternoon cafes thanks to Péter Szabó, who provided the

venue, and the participants. It was so good to get together with most of the IATEFL committee and with other teachers too. Please join us for an afternoon coffee, a relaxing presentation or a great workshop and a chat at our next event, and feel free to share your ideas, as well.

To learn more about our **Creative Café** events taking place on the **first Friday of each month** at the **Libra Foreign Language Bookshop** (Budapest, Kölcsey u. 2.) visit <http://www.iatefl.hu/?q=node/202>.

Hooray!

Announcing the birth of the **BUSINESS ENGLISH SIG**, a joyous if rather quiet event at the 24th IATEFL-Hungary conference in Veszprém (3-5 October 2014)!

Five people attended the kickoff meeting of the group. Participants hammered out a concept of what the SIG should aim for, and decided to "test the waters" by producing a Facebook Group.

There is a gap in quality training of business English teachers in Hungary which our SIG will respond to. Moreover, we want to give business English teachers venues where they can communicate with each other.

Concrete plans: viewing and discussion of an archived webcast from the international BESIG website at Libra Café in Budapest, and in addition, an activity at one of the upcoming monthly Creative Café events.

If you are one of the many teachers involved in teaching business English, we welcome you! Watch for announcements of our events coming soon.

Contact: marysou@gmail.com



STUDENTS IN ACTION



Finnish Week Kemény Gábor Secondary School, Békéscsaba

The last week of May 2014 was all about Finland at our school. Students could learn about Finnish culture, architecture, sports and music. The programme was based on the cultural relationship between the two countries, following the traditions of the Finnish-Hungarian Association.

It was the first Finnish Week ever at our school and the main idea behind the whole project was to improve our students' understanding of other cultures. Our school can be found in Békéscsaba and many of the students come from the surrounding small villages where they

hardly have any options to experience something which is related to another culture. Thus, it is our responsibility to bring foreign cultures closer to them and thereby improve their intercultural competences and help them to become more open-minded. It was the first Finnish Week ever at our school and the main idea behind the whole project was to improve our students' understanding of other cultures. Our school can be found in Békéscsaba and many of the students come from the surrounding small villages where they hardly have any options to experience something which is related to another

culture. Thus, it is our responsibility to bring foreign cultures closer to them and thereby improve their intercultural competences and help them to become more open-minded.

Before the Finnish Week actually began, a poster competition had been announced, so students prepared posters in different topics related to Finland, for example, Finnish inventions, Finnish language, History of Finland, Finnish architecture. The posters were then displayed on the walls as decoration during the Finnish week, and in the end, the students who made the best

posters were awarded. Of course, even the prizes were related to Finland: special sauna tickets to the local spa. The Finnish Week started with the exhibition of Martta Wendelin's Kalevala-pictures, provided by the Embassy of Finland. Then, students could participate in the lecture "Tove 100" by Judit Freisinger-Bodnár. The lecture was about Tove Jansson who was born exactly one hundred years ago and she was the author of the famous *Moomin* books. During the following days, students could attend more lectures about Finland, organized by the members of the Finnish-Hungarian

Friendship Circle-Békéscsaba. There was also a very successful presentation about Finnish architecture by Roland Nemes and Béla Szabados architects. The Finnish Week ended with a special run, commemorating the famous Finnish Olympic champion, Paavo Nurmi, nicknamed as the "Flying Finn". The participating students and teachers had to do a short run, from the school to the town centre where the representatives of the town hall welcomed the group, and organized a little commemoration ceremony about Paavo Nurmi, the Helsinki Olympics, and the

relationship between Békéscsaba and Mikkeli (sister towns).

Besides all these programmes, students could listen to Finnish songs on the school radio during the week, read more about Finland in the school website, and learn about Finland even in the Literature, History, Physics, and also in the English lessons.

The Finnish week was a great success, the participants and even the organizers had a lot of fun. Besides, the students learnt more things about Finland than ever before. We hope to organize another international week in this school-year as well.

*Erika Tari, Kemény Gábor
Secondary School, Békéscsaba*



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IATEFL – Hungary

Supporting quality language teaching

MISSION STATEMENT

We (IATEFL-Hungary – International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language - Hungary) believe in a future where quality, professional development and equal opportunities in English language learning and teaching are properly appreciated in Hungary.

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office@iatefl.hu

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mELTing Pot editors: László Zsolt Zságer and Beatrix Price

Language editor: Frank Prescott

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