



An Ode to Creativity

Helena Čas

Turning Dictation into a 21st Century Classroom Activity

Lee Shutler

Difficult Learners or Difficult Learning?

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The Inescapable Interplay Between Language Learning and Self-Confidence

Marina Siskos

Critical thinking at a glance (9)

Case Study: Does resilience really matter or is it just another catchphrase?

Nada Đukić

Life is not supposed to be easy. But if one takes it too seriously, it loses all its charm and there is no space for the lightness of being. Either heaviness or lightness in their pure forms seem to void life of its juicy and healthy essence. But it still dances just in the middle of both extremes and proves to be inexplicable to the human being. When life is good, it should be savoured. And when it is not, it should be endured in a resilient way by bouncing back each time when it becomes so hard that one thinks that their end is just in front of their eyes.



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Editorial

I am sitting on the balcony while writing this editorial, just a few days before the end of a very challenging school year and wondering how to encompass it in a few words. I have decided to wrap it up with a list of words that sum up my experiences and hopefully, you will be able to find yourselves in them as well.

“Why words” you might ask? Well, words carry tremendous power: they lead our thoughts and emotions and can either lift us or bring us to despair. Obviously, I have decided to do the former.

Forbes Magazine’s word for 2021 is resilience because it implies hope, faith and possibilities. The Oxford Dictionary defines resilience as the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness. The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity; Those are the qualities that have enabled us to face all the challenges this year and, if I may say, teachers were under a lot of pressure, constantly in the public eye, and we have done an amazing job. Not only did we have to conquer the world of online teaching and ICT skills in a matter of days, but we also had to show amazing flexibility and offer support to our students, parents and colleagues. After the lockdown period ended, we had to reinvent teaching due to the new circumstances ranging from different mental states of our students to newly gained habits, and the inability of some students to concentrate and even communicate like in the past. First, we had to find our way back to the hearts and minds of our students, so they allowed us to be taught again. Most of all, we had to regain their trust, give them support and find a way to motivate them again because the old methods just didn’t add up to their newly created expectations. Teaching will never be the same again. Yet we should not dwell on it and we should not look on it as a burden, but as a possibility for us and our students to grow. We had to adapt to this new world of quarantine, COVID, masks, etc. quickly, and flexibility is the word that, in my opinion, deserves to take second place. To be a teacher and not be flexible is simply a paradox. Flexibility is defined as the ability to be easily modified and the willingness to change or compromise. All of the definitions provided above chime with being a teacher in the 21st century: flexible in terms of knowledge, skills, space, equipment, mindset and much more. Effective teachers are great at being flexible, balancing several responsibilities at once and still making students smile and feel appreciated.

Perseverance is the quality of continuing to try to achieve a particular aim despite difficulties. Only through dogged perseverance were we able to bring this school year to an end. Countless times, we thought about giving up and sinking into despondency, but our work ethic made us persevere until we reached our goals. We encouraged our students to persevere through challenges, knowing that struggle creates opportunities for growth. This year, we had a wonderful opportunity to learn how to respect and praise effort and process, not only intelligence. Perseverance is one of the vital qualities for every teacher and student because it builds a character that keeps on no matter how tough things get. People who persevere have the inner strength that helps them overcome obstacles and keep moving towards their goals.

A word that I have come across recently is grit. The firmness of mind or spirit; unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger; strength of character. Psychologist Angela Duckworth shows anyone striving to succeed—be it parents, students, educators, athletes, or business people—that the secret to outstanding achievement is not talent but a special blend of passion and persistence she calls “grit.” A person with true grit has passion and perseverance. Goals are set and followed through thick and thin. What is the magic formula that keeps us all going? How can we encourage our students to use a bigger percentage of their resources and push them from their comfort zones to their limits? The term grit might give you some answers to those questions. We should have the courage to follow long-term goals and the endurance that will keep us going. We should let optimism, confidence and creativity be our guides. Failure should not be a sign of lack of success, but merely a symbol of not giving up, because the time for our success has simply not come yet. When it does, we will be able to embrace it with open minds and hearts and indulge in it with all of our senses.

May this summer bring you new goals, bright ideas and the self-confidence to achieve great things. May the grit be with you!

Melanija Majdič Zupančič
Editor

An Ode to Creativity

by Helena Čas



Helena Čas has a degree in English and German. She completed her Master's Degree in American Literature in 2002. She has been working as an English teacher at Grammar School

Ravne na Koroškem for more than two decades. Her professional interests lie mainly in teaching literature and working with advanced students.

'We stigmatise mistakes. And we're now running national educational systems where mistakes are the worst thing you can make – and the result is that we are educating people out of their creative capacities.'

Sir Ken Robinson

There is not a single teacher among us who would not at least twitch at the quote above and start rewinding and probing their own assessment strategies trying to determine to what extent they follow Sir Ken Robinson's premise. Is it really our *déformation professionnelle* to fish for the mistakes in tests and essays thus squeezing creativity out of our classrooms? And now that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to move our lessons online, is creativity given its due?

Creativity has always been an important part of our society—the driving force moving society forwards. It can be regarded as a by-product of evolution—humans have always had to be creative to adapt to the everchanging environmental conditions. The bigger the crisis, the more creative the people have had to be to overcome the obstacles and move society forward in a progressive way. If creativity thrives in times of crisis (and the current coronavirus crisis would certainly qualify), then we should definitely try and make the most of it in education as well. Is this really happening?

Creativity in education has always been a very controversial issue and there is a

vast body of research that shows that creative capacity declines with age, the decline being most evident from the ages of 5 to 15, thus implying that education straitjackets students and robs them of their creative capacity. The reasons are definitely more complex—from cognitive and societal to psycho-emotional and anthropological. The latter recognise humans as creatures of habit and when we establish a certain routine, we rarely change it. We are also expected to follow certain rules and regulations for society to function normally. Schools share part of the responsibility as they enforce this routine even further, drilling conformity into our students' minds and teaching them that there is one right answer to every problem. Students are often taught what to think and not how to think. In recent years, the situation has become even more alarming and has culminated in the phenomenon often referred to as the 'creativity gap'.

The creativity gap is a paradoxical situation when there is more creativity occurring outside of school than within it. Many studies have shown that the creativity that students show in school is much lower than the creativity they manifest in their everyday lives. However, this is not the only discrepancy when creativity is in question. One cannot ignore the double standards our society has towards creativity. Creativity is much talked about and said to be the most desired

work-related skill of the 21st century. If we really value it so much, what do we actually do to promote it? How could we bridge the gap between the students' creative potential and the actual realisation of that potential? As long as there are no concrete plans and guidelines to resolve these discrepancies, we cannot expect any change for the better in our education system.

It is true that our education system has never had creativity at the top of its agenda, it has rather focussed on factography and memorisation. Some of us can still remember the days when we had to learn whole units by heart and then *regurgitate* them verbatim in our oral exams. While such rote learning or cramming may be beneficial in some ways, it certainly is not an adequate replacement for meaningful learning, associative learning and active learning. Despite the efforts to promote these latter ways of learning, there is still a long way to go and if we submit our school curriculum to scrutiny, we realise that it often neglects creativity at the expense of other, lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. As a result, our graduates often do not acquire adequate work-related skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. Although we are constantly reminded of the importance of these skills, it seems that our education system still cannot break free from the past teaching practices,



including traditional assessment methods.

There is a general consensus among educators that assessment should be an integral part of the teaching-learning process and that without it teachers and students would not be able to teach and learn effectively. Assessing students' knowledge, skills and progress becomes problematic only when it centres around a single assessment method (summative assessment) thus ignoring all the other alternatives (e.g. formative and interim assessment). We teach our students that being wrong is 'wrong' and by doing so we are forgetting that taking risks (being prepared to be wrong) is the prerequisite of creativity. By promoting such fear of failure and uniformity in assessment practices, we put those students who do not respond well to traditional assessment methods at a disadvantage. The one-size-fits-all principle should be replaced by a more diverse approach which includes open-ended tasks, experimentation, multiple answers, project work, discovery and innovation. This approach can be further justified by the theory of multiple intelligences, which describes the different ways in which students learn and acquire information. If there are as many as nine different intelligences, then this calls for some more diverse, perhaps even personalised assessment modes. Perhaps the time has come to finally question the existing grading system (number/letter grades) for it cannot capture the complexity of learning. And now that school closures and distance learning make traditional assessment methods hard to carry out, we could seize the opportunity and put some new ideas into practice.

The coronavirus pandemic has made us stop and rethink some of the teaching practices that we have been using for years. It has put the current assessment methods to the test and possibly paved the way for the future of assessment, which will most certainly have to be more varied and less rigid. It has also highlighted the need for a more creative-oriented teaching-learning process. It is up to us, educators, to respond to this challenge in the best way we can.

Language Courses for Adults or How Life Takes Unexpected Turns

by **Tamara Merlini**

Every time I start teaching an English course for adults, I experience unexpected emotions as, on the one hand, I know that another fulfilling adventure awaits me, but on the other, I am fully aware of the fact that numerous obstacles will have to be overcome.

Teaching adults with different experiences and expectations always turns out to be anything but easy and the first classes always stick with me for a long time as I almost physically feel the students' confusion and see the fear showing in their eyes giving away thoughts like "What on Earth do I need this for?", "Everyone is better than me" and "This isn't how they used to teach".

The scepticism usually fades after a couple of classes, the energies get balanced and we start earning each other's trust. Soon enough, I receive as much as I give. In exchange for a couple of English sentences, the learners enrich me by unveiling the depths of the souls who have dared to start learning a language after years of neglect and deficient self-care.

Teaching adults is unique in every aspect and over the years, I have gathered

the following common points from every course I have carried out.

1. Self-doubt

At the beginning, learners face (sub)conscious fear and usually, they are anything but eager to stand out. Frequently, there are pleas like "Please, do not ask any questions today, I am not feeling well" or "Today, I would only like to observe". During the first classes of the course, a teacher regularly notices the existence of the most primal fear, which is verbalized thorough "What will the others say?"

This damaging Slovene mindset is directly challenged at an English course. The whole process of English learning first starts with the identification of the damaging thinking patterns and their consequent confrontation. More than occasionally, I have witnessed a complete mental makeover of individuals who have succeeded in cutting loose from the destructive social mindsets, which has enabled them to speak aloud with certainty and self-determination.

2. English now & then

When teaching adults, the ruinous con-

sequences of “school English” cannot be overlooked. In the midst of the 20th century, English was taught very structurally since the language learning process consisted of rigid assembling of words with its result being a meaningful sentence where any kind of grammatical deficiency was utterly unacceptable. The fear of making even the smallest of mistakes has unfortunately been incorporated into the souls of former students, now adults. Consequently, adult learners of English still dwell on insignificant mistakes and are dissatisfied with their English until every word, grammatical ending or even punctuation mark is brought to perfection. In my opinion, perfectionism is damaging to learning real English as all effort is being spent on less important aspects of a language. During all English courses, an omnipresent feeling of “getting that tense right” is present at all times. Therefore, my goal has always been to befriend the learners with the mistakes they make and to make clear that meaningful spoken content is far more important than impeccable grammar structures.

3. The rooted learning methods

Adults usually have a clear vision of how to tackle different kinds of challenges. Adult learners are mostly very rigid with their planning of gaining a new

level of language expertise. Frequently, the expectations of the learners are so very rooted that their teachers face the learners’ unwillingness to learn English differently than anticipated. Over time, when the students realise that English tenses are not utterly significant when trying to master a certain level of English, the students experience an overall sense of confusion. A sentence like *“But what are we going to do then?”* is frequently asked. And from this moment on, English learning takes on new perspectives and may those be analysing current national/world affairs, discussing certain literary characters or simply chatting away.

4. Tea party

When eventually all the beginners’ uncertainties are dealt with, it is difficult to call these “gatherings” a language course, which at this point sounds too formal and dull. A teacher starts to feel like the host of an English tea party (albeit without sandwiches and scones) where the guests share their life stories and exchange different opinions. It may be true that it is all done in a foreign language and is therefore a bit broken and stuttering, but the outcome is similar to the one in the Slovene counterpart: a lot of good humour and laughter. Over the years, the tea parties have even been upgraded as we have also

carried out different social activities, for example doing a tour of Ljubljana in English, visiting an art exhibition with an English-speaking guide and even managing to visit London and Edinburgh. For all the non-believers, believe me; the majority of knowledge was acquired while seemingly not learning at all.

5. Friends

The most rewarding part of every course becomes evident after a few years when the boundaries between oneself, one’s classmates and their teacher fade away and one is left with the concept of “us”. The energies intertwine, all the former nervousness disentangles and all that is left is the pure joy of learning or even better, mastering a foreign language. All the modern methodology is still at our disposal but at this point it serves as an auxiliary tool supporting more significant elements of learning, such as laughter, good will and spontaneity of speech, which are the necessary bases of every natural learning process, which precedes all other methods of foreign language learning.

Dear reader, keeping in mind only tiny bits and bobs of the afore-mentioned and daring to try some of it out may cause lifelong learning to be taken to another level, so go ahead and enjoy the ride!



English for Specific Purposes in Vocational Education and Training

by **Tina Rajhman**, School center Kranj, Slovenia

Tina Rajhman holds a master's degree in translation (Slovenian-German-English) and a master's degree in a double-major pedagogical study programme (Teaching English, and German as a foreign language). Her teaching experience embraces various educational programmes, from teaching primary school pupils and secondary school students as well as adults. She has conducted several international and mobility projects with partners from Austria, Belgium and Slovakia. Her goal as a teacher is to provide language learners with useful knowledge and skills required in their future educational programmes or employment.

Does the VET mobility offer enough time for students to make progress in English? Who should be offered the opportunity to participate in mobility programmes—advanced language learners or students with weaker language proficiency? What kind of exercises might be helpful when preparing students for mobility in vocational education and training? In order to find answers to these questions, some helpful information was gathered through an interview with students who had returned from their VET abroad.

English for specific purposes

English in vocational or technical upper secondary programmes presents some challenges for both students and teachers. Firstly, the curriculum is divided into general English, and English for specific purposes (ESP). Secondly, a considerable number of students might decide to enrol in vocational programmes because they struggle with general school subjects such as foreign languages. And finally, English teachers working in these educational programmes need some additional language knowledge because this area of English is mainly left unexplored during studies due to the numerous ESP sub-groups. For example, an English teacher in working in woodworking programmes is expected to know that a *plane* can be an aircraft or a hand tool used in carpentry. Obviously, the content of English in vocational or technical upper secondary programmes is much more work-oriented, and consequently, ESP is an integral part of the English curriculum in certain educational programmes. Fortunately, the English curriculum allows teachers to decide when and how they are going to incorporate ESP into English lessons.

How to convey ESP

Since choosing suitable learning material and presenting it the right way is very important, teachers can find some guidelines in the characteristics of ESP courses identified by Carter (1983, as cited in Gatehouse, 2001). He suggests using authentic learning materials, which can be very motivating when the students reach an intermediate or advanced language level. Note, however, that authentic materials might need to be modified or only used as a basis for the teacher's own material because many examples of authentic texts are too demanding for students with weak or mediocre language knowledge. On the other hand, original authentic texts are suitable for senior year students, since they possess prior ESP knowledge and have already undertaken work placements in various companies.

Another characteristic of ESP courses or lessons that Carter points out is their purpose-related orientation. He suggests the simulation of communicative tasks taking place in target setting. The tasks depend on the context of a communication situation, and could, for example, include a simulation of a conference, design and presentation of a business venture, etc. For example, it would make a good practice if senior year students in woodworking educational programmes presented workshop safety rules to first year students or their final exam products to visitors of an exhibition or an industry fair.

Vocational education and training abroad

The EU understands the long-term benefit of international projects and is consequently ready to establish and fund various programmes for individuals as well as institutions, one of the most well-known being the Erasmus+ programme. With the help of Erasmus+, schools were offered the possibility to send vocational education and training (VET) learners abroad. The project enabled mobility in VET providers or companies from two weeks to less than three months or a long-term mobility (ErasmusPro) from three to twelve months. According to the Erasmus+ programme guide (European Commission, 2018a), the main targets were "apprentices and students in vocational education, professionals and trainers in vocational training, staff of initial vocational education organisations, trainers and professionals in enterprises" (European Commission, 2018a, p. 20). Such programmes allow various mobility options. The learners can do a full work placement in a com-

pany or at a VET provider that offers a combination of school-based learning and a work placement. (European Commission, 2018a, p. 49)

Each mobility project consists of three stages: preparation, implementation and follow-up (European Commission, 2018a, p. 30). In the preparation phase, the participants are selected and prepared for departure. In the follow-up, the mobility activities are evaluated, so that the results can be disseminated and used in future projects. Last but not least, the learning outcomes of participants are formally recognised.

Students' feedback on VET abroad

A useful way to analyse the language experiences of students who have taken part in the Erasmus+ exchange programme is via an interview. The interview with students who did their VET abroad offered a comparison between the students' communicative competences and technical vocabulary knowledge before and after the mobility. Another purpose of the interview was to analyse the influence of the students' vocational training abroad on their foreign language competences. The language most used in mobility programmes is English, which is also the first foreign language of the students who participated in the study. However, they spent their mobility in countries where English is spoken as a foreign and not as a native language. The question that arises in such situations is to which point students can improve their English if both them and their hosts speak it as a foreign language. Analysing the VET abroad with the students can also show whether vocational training abroad brings more benefits to the students' general English or English for specific purposes. Finally, it also helps identify students' communicative competences that benefit the most from vocational training abroad.

A case study

The purpose of the case study was to analyse the influence of the students' vocational training abroad on their foreign language competences. The aim of the interviews with students was to show whether the English curricula of vocational and technical

upper secondary programmes provided the students with the language knowledge they needed during the VET abroad.

The first hypothesis suggested that students cannot improve their English to a notable extent if the VET mobility lasts only four weeks. The hypothesis was disproved since only two out of seven students stated that the mobility programme was too short to improve their English, whereas the other five students noticed that in four weeks their L2 had indeed improved. The second hypothesis proposed that students with weaker L2 knowledge would feel they had improved more during the mobility than advanced students. The hypothesis could not be confirmed because the majority of both weaker as well as more proficient students included in the case study noticed progress in their vocabulary and communication skills. The third hypothesis proposed that students need more listening and speaking activities that would prepare them for the VET abroad. This hypothesis could be confirmed because all seven students stated that they spoke and listened to English throughout the whole mobility period, whereas not all of them needed to read or write in English that often. Further confirmation was given by a couple of students who stated that the VET abroad showed they would have needed a broader vocabulary in ESP.

Using students' feedback to prepare exercises for ESP

In our case, the results of the study conducted in the mechanical engineering programme were going to be used in the wood engineering programme. Obviously, English lessons in both programmes combine general English and ESP. Since there are no student's books that include both types of English, the teachers prepare their own study materials and add them to the general subject matter that already includes grammar and everyday vocabulary. The ESP study materials are typically based on older study materials, DIY videos and on the content of webpages concerning trade and industry.

The ESP in technical secondary and vocational technical woodworking programmes includes the following topics: hand tools, power tools, safety at work, tree parts, tree types, wood



(characteristics), job description (joiner, carpenter, upholsterer, roofer), work instructions, classification of materials, deforestation, and final exam product.

The above-mentioned ESP is part of the open curriculum, which means that the teacher is autonomous in terms of the order of topics and the level of difficulty. Typically, first-year students learn the English expressions for hand tools and power tools. In the second year, they read and speak about safety at work, and add some vocabulary concerning tree parts and tree types, which is usually joined with characteristics of various types of wood. Third-year students are able to give work instructions and describe their work placement as well as their future job. In their final year, the students focus on general classification of materials and environmental issues, e.g. deforestation. The most important and challenging topic concerning ESP is the students' final exam product. Each student prepares a presentation of their final product for their last oral grade. The English teacher usually only helps with tips concerning grammar and the presentation itself, whereas the students decide on the ESP level and on the content of the presentation.

Usually, a lesson focused on ESP starts with a conversation in which the teacher guides the students towards a certain topic. Then the students read a text or watch a video which contains new vocabulary and do various exercises that help them memorise new expressions, their pronunciation and spelling. Finally, the students try to incorporate the newly learned words when they talk or write about a certain topic.

Conclusion

The findings of the case study offer a starting point for further research that can include a larger number of students which could be tested before and after the VET mobility. Those results might help standardise the number of lessons dedicated to ESP, which would unify ESP teaching in various programmes. According to the results of the study, it can be confirmed that the English curriculum in upper-secondary programmes and the VET abroad offer a good platform for a student's L2 improvement. The results have shown that students do not necessarily need to spend time in a host country where English is spoken as L1 – they can practice English anywhere, e.g. during the vocational training. Furthermore, students can improve their communicative competences even if their hosts are not proficient speakers of English. Last but not least, in order to make the communication during mobility as easy as possible, ESP needs to stay incorporated in English lessons.

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Reach the Sky



by **Maja Belej**, Franjo Malgaj Primary School



About Reach the Sky

The Reach the Sky project was conducted in the framework of Erasmus+, Key Action 2: Strategic partnerships between schools. Project partner schools were from Poland (Gorlice), Slovenia (Šentjur), Romania (Pecica), Turkey (Gaziantep) and Spain (Tenerife). The programme lasted two years, and our main topic was astronomy. The overall project coordinator was Jure Radišek, our Geography teacher. I was included in this project as an English teacher. The programme actively involved the students of the ninth and eighth grade, teachers, mentors, scientific and cultural institutions and the local community.

1st transnational meeting in Šentjur/Slovenia

In the week from 23 to 30 November, Franjo Malgaj Primary School hosted the first international project meeting. In addition to a number of our students from the 9th and 8th grades, 21 students and 12 mentors came from Poland, Romania, Turkey and Spain.

In accordance with the programme, we have implemented a variety of astronomical content such as astrophotos, analysis and the competition for the best photography in the context of the Sally Ride EarthKAM programme, astronomical observations and workshops in Prevorje and Kurešček, the Stellarium programme, astronomy lectures at AOG Golovec and AD Labod, the presentation of the Solar System and the participating countries, tours of Ljubljana and Celje, a visit to KSEVT in Vitanje, preparation of multimedia materials (website, FB, interviews), visiting the planetarium and social events, etc.

Day 1

First, we started with school tour. The visitors were amazed by our school decorations which were really wonderful. Thereafter, the presentations of the partners' countries took place. We also had an official reception with a cultural programme. We ended the day with social evening.



Day 2

The next day we had lectures at the Astronomical Geophysical Observatory in Golovec. Then we continued with sightseeing in Ljubljana. We had a lecture and a workshop at Kurešček - Labod Astronomical Society. They are one of the most active Slovenian astronomical societies because they organise fascinating lectures.



Day 3

On Wednesday, we mainly focused on a workshop in the Stellarium programme. We also chose the official project logo design. Afterwards, we had astronomy workshops and demonstrations in Prevorje with the Kosci Astronomical Society. The lecture was followed by observation, where the members of the Society placed telescopes in the school yard.



Thursday was the most active and creative day. They were given two tasks, which had to be completed by the end of the day. The first task was the Sally Ride EarthKAM photos competition. The second task was to give presentations about the Solar System. We finished off the day with another social evening.

Day 4



On Friday, we visited the Cultural Center of European Space Technologies, better known by its Slovenian acronym KSEVT. At first glance, some said that the building itself looked like a flying saucer had landed near the village of Vitanje. They presented the history of space exploration from a new perspective. We also visited Celje Old Castle and the Celje Regional Museum. We ended the day with bowling in Celje.

Day 5



The first national meeting Erasmus+ concluded. We all experienced the education in a different way. We had an opportunity to meet other cultures, habits and languages. The special bonds we developed enriched our future. And this is education/school as well.

Day 6



Comenius Assistant – a Unique and Enriching Experience

by **Barbara Levstek**

There are many programmes that allow international cooperation and exchange in the field of primary education, including the Comenius Programme. A great deal has been written about the Comenius Project (Lifelong Learning Programme, CMEPIUS) so far. A large amount of information can be found on-line, e.g. various plans, goals, evaluations, opinions and experiences of assistants, students and teachers. They all present the Comenius Project in innovative ways. I would like to show how the project came to life at our school and how it has gone beyond school practice and come to life outside of school since then.

COMENIUS ASSISTANT – OUR INTENTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

Poljane Primary School is quite a small country school in the village of Poljane, in the middle of the Poljane Valley. Our school district includes children from three local communities (42 villages altogether).

The area is quite closed. Most of the students are commuters; many of them live on farms and have no real contact with other cultures, habits, tolerance, or even a foreign language. In the Comenius Project – Lifelong Learning, we therefore saw an opportunity to get an assistant from abroad, a Comenius assistant who would bring wider dimensions (language, culture) to our school.

Our objective for the assistant was to take part in all levels of primary education, in as many subjects as possible (beside languages). Since there is a kindergarten attached to the school, the assistant would also be introduced to younger children and take part in all aspects of school life. However, our primary objective was to help our pupils with an awareness of English as an international language, and encourage them to be more relaxed and self-confident at communication. Our goal was also to broaden their horizons and their sense of diversity and tolerance in the world. The assistant would present her or his own culture, mother tongue, history, etc.

OUR COMENIUS ASSISTANT FROM POLAND

After a successful candidacy, a Polish English teacher, Aleksandra Pudełko, joined us in October and stayed with us for 10 months.

Our teaching staff and students had been previously acquainted with the entire Comenius Project and completely prepared to accept the foreign teacher.

Miss Pudełko quickly adapted to her role and the new school surroundings. At first, she was mainly involved in English lessons but soon she took part in other subjects. She was involved in working with students with special needs and in some special school days (culture, sports, science). Her contributions were always interesting and her ideas were fresh and innovative, introducing “European” dimensions into school life. She was also involved in some projects, took part in the pupils’ community and helped present the Comenius Project in the local media.

Miss Pudełko presented various topics of her own choice to our students and teachers, e.g. teaching Polish, comparing Polish and Slovenian grammar, translation, European studies, and film education. Above all, we all learnt a lot about Polish culture and, last but not least, about Polish cuisine. She even prepared a tasting of Polish national dishes for the teachers, which she had cooked at home and brought into school.

We helped her integrate into the life of Slovenian young people and introduced her to our families, friends, relatives, etc., so she experienced a little of our way of life.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

I spent a lot of time with Miss Pudełko, first as a Slovenian language teacher, and secondly because I am very interested in foreign countries, cultures, peo-

ple, languages... I really had something to learn from Miss Pudelko! At first, I was not very confident speaking English, as there had not been many chances to speak the language I had learnt in primary and secondary school. It was a bit frustrating for me at first but then I realised that it was a great opportunity to use English again. In doing so, Miss Pudelko encouraged me, making me confident and more fluent in English day by day. I learnt about the Polish nation, culture, school system, history; we discussed our values, young people's opportunities, etc.

Miss Pudelko's portrayal of life in Poland was vivid and fascinating. Together with Aleksandra's mentor, Mrs Bernarda Pintar (our English teacher), the three of us were constantly in touch regarding our daily planning and activities at school. Moreover, we also spent time together outside school, in the afternoons and during weekends. Mrs Pintar and I wanted Miss Pudelko to discover our country as thoroughly as possible. Throughout the school year, our relationship grew into mutual friendship. We all shared many subjects of interest such as linguistics, literature, education, teaching, the history of the Slavic nations... During such informal chats and discussions, my English was getting better, as was Aleksandra's Slovenian. We sometimes spoke English, sometimes Slovenian, so each of us derived great benefits from one another. The project moved outside the bounds of school practice and the friendship between us grew even stronger.

The following summer, Mrs Pintar and I paid our friend a visit in her birthplace, Bielsko-Biala, in the south of Poland. Her family, especially her parents, were so hospitable and kind that they invited us to their home to stay with them. We learnt a lot about the Polish school system. Namely, Aleksandra's mother used to be the headmaster's assistant in a primary school and she generously took us to her former workplace. Aleksandra's guiding around cultural sights, such as museums, galleries, and cinemas, in Bielsko-Biala and Kraków helped us to familiarise ourselves with Poland's distant and recent history, culture and all the great and bitter experiences of the nation.

For a week, we stayed among Polish intellectuals (Alexandra's family) who

kindly hosted us. We tasted typical home-made dishes and learnt the basics of Polish by practising the pronunciation of phonemes that do not exist in the Slovenian language. We learnt about Polish film and animated cartoons, especially from Alexandra's father, who was one of the creators of the famous Polish cartoon Lolek and Bolek. We enjoyed natural and historical sights. No tourist agency can offer as many rich and unique experiences as spending time with a hospitable and friendly family!

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The ones who gained a great number of benefits from the Comenius Project were our pupils. They experienced new forms of teaching approaches, they became more confident and fluent in speaking English, and they learnt about other school systems, habits and people across Europe, especially in Poland. Their motivation to learn foreign languages increased, the classroom atmosphere was relaxed, and the pupils used English with greater ease.

Having a Comenius assistant can be a great privilege for every school. However, it is even more interesting for smaller country schools. In larger cities, students have more opportunities to meet foreign people and communicate in a foreign language, while in the country this is more difficult.

The school year we hosted a Comenius assistant enriched our school life, brought a lot of positive impulses, new mentality, fresh ideas and creativity. It stimulated pupils' and teachers' curiosity, broadened everyone's horizons and increased our interest in the assistant's native country. The project brought a European dimension to our school.

MY FINAL THOUGHT

The Comenius Project positively contributed to raising the multicultural competence of the participants, and to better communication in a foreign language.

My experience of hosting a Comenius assistant was unique and inspiring. It started as a project but it has turned into so much more – a true friendship.

iatefl Slovenia
www.iatefl.si

At a recent board meeting we decided to hold 2 conferences in the next school year. One (national) on 1st and 2nd October, which will be held online. And the big international one from 10th to 13th March in hotel Vivat in Moravske Toplice. We are keeping our fingers crossed for both to go through, especially the F2F one in March.

We will be sending out speaker proposal forms soon.

We are also planning an excursion for teachers to London, including sights you don't normally see when travelling with students.

More info will be available in August and registrations will follow in the first week of September.

Mladinski natečaj za kratki film

Britansko veleposlaništvo v Ljubljani v sodelovanju z British Councilom, Zavodom MEPI – Mednarodno priznanje za mlade in WWF Adria razpisuje

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Videoconference Lessons Can Be Fun, Too!

by **Lea Blažič Lipoglavšek**, Šmarjeta Primary School

My name is Lea Blažič Lipoglavšek and I graduated in English and German language at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. I have worked as an English teacher at Šmarjeta Primary School for more than 11 years. My work experience is connected to teaching children who start learning English at our nursery school Sonček as an extra-curricular activity, although mostly to students of all the nine grades of primary school. Besides English, I have taught German for the last two years, too. I enjoy realising arts and crafts ideas in which I can express my creativity and step out of the box.

When the coronavirus suddenly closed down schools and required distance learning, we didn't know what to expect. Yet teachers have always been the most adaptable, innovative and persistent group of people. Come what may, we always find a way to pass learning material and knowledge to our students. I remember the hours and nights spent during the first lockdown browsing through multiple webpages looking for interesting learning material, new apps, educational tools and online games. I imagine the majority of English-teaching night owls felt the same.

Teachers have gone beyond sending lesson instructions and PowerPoint presentations via email. Instead, we're turning to interactive online lessons, chats, making our own videos, online classrooms, to video conferencing, specialised apps and tools to keep students engaged and help them complete assignments.

Not only teachers, students were certainly more prepared for the second lockdown as well. Step by step, they have been developing IT skills and competences, including through the means of online classes. The greatest advan-

tage of distance learning that I can find is that now practically every student can operate with a gadget connected to the internet, which was usually not the case in the classroom. This enables us teachers to get to choose from a different range of (online) activities to plan distance-learning lessons.

And when (especially younger) students mastered the use of online classroom and videoconference programs, I started thinking about how to make our Zoom lessons more interactive, innovative and fun. I have always been a person of action rather than theory. My classroom lessons are mostly a mixture of games and songs in the warm-up and follow-up part, intertwined with the main topic explanation. And so, I searched for fun activities to implement in our videoconference meetings.

Before our videoconference session, I always send students instructions for the upcoming lesson in the online classroom. The method is based on the *Flipped Classroom model* which means that students know the content and structure of the lesson before starting it. They can open links, prepare things or do tasks beforehand. In this way, they are ready for our activities. Well, at least they should be.

Gamification of a videoconference lesson normally does take some time when planning compared to plain boring explanation and revision. But your students make up for it with their happy faces and desire for more. I divided activities into two groups—classic games with an online twist and those based on online apps and tools.

Thumbs up

This game can be used as a warm-up activity to revise vocabulary or to check

comprehension in the follow-up part of a lesson. I tell them a few sentences. When a sentence is true, students click the thumb-up button or show theirs on the camera. If a sentence is nonsense, they don't react. It is slightly reminiscent of the *Simon* says game.

1 minute rule

I show students a photo/picture with the target vocabulary for a minute (the duration can, of course, be adjusted according to different criteria). Then I hide it. Students type as many words as they remember using private chat. The one with the most entries wins. Their cameras must be turned on in order to avoid cheating.

Go and get

The game works best with younger students and is excellent to revise a lexical set on a particular topic. The teacher starts the instructions with *Go and get* and adds a noun e.g. *Go and get a T-shirt / a teddy bear / butter, etc.* Be careful to choose basic things that usually all the students possess. They are proud to show their belongings to their peers and teacher.

What's in the box?

Instead of them running around their flats and houses, you can fill up a box or sack with things representing the topic covered. In particular, teachers with young children can easily relate to this activity. You reveal one item after the other while students name them or describe the vocabulary the items relate to.

Pictionary

One of the games adapted for online use is Pictionary. Students guess the word or phrase being drawn by a chosen

student using the Zoom whiteboard tool. The teacher can suggest words or phrases to the student in a private chat so that others can't see. Don't forget to share the whiteboard and enable students to annotate.

A blank page

Similarly, the whiteboard can be used in the introductory activity as a blank page on which students can type how they feel today, the words or phrases they remember from the previous lesson, etc.

Charades

A basic game adapted for online lessons in the way that the target vocabulary is sent to the presenting student via private chat instead of whispering into their ear. It's fun to observe them expecting who will get the message. The students guessing can shout out the solution or, if you don't want the chaos, tell them to type it to you in the chat.

Breakout rooms

Have you tried putting students into separate groups? In my experience, this activity works best with older students. It's perfect for dividing them into small groups in order to discuss a particular topic or do a task. The host (teacher) can separate them automatically or manually. The best feature for me is that the teacher can visit the rooms and switch between them at any time supervising their work. I also like the peace and silence, which is almost impossible to achieve while carrying out similar activities in a classroom.

To gamify my lessons and supplement distance learning, I also use a variety of websites offering an extreme amount of useful and fun activities. I'm sure you've become familiar with *Kahoot!*, *Mentimeter*, *Padlet*, *Quizlet* and many more. Some quick research on the internet can result in finding a new useful resource each time. Apart from those I've mentioned, let me suggest some free tools which don't need much preparation.

Wheel of names

(<https://wheelofnames.com/>)

The wheel is a great tool for choosing students randomly. By inserting names of your students on a list, you get the

wheel of fortune which picks participants for different activities instead of you. It is possible to arrange students according to the classes you teach and once you do it, you can save wheels for further use. It's accessible also Slovenian.

Bamboozle

(<https://www.baamboozle.com/>)

The site contains a library of games to revise as well as teach vocabulary. You can split students into groups to compete or work with the whole class. Search the library for *Odd-one games*, *Simon says*, *Find it*, *Stop the bus* and many more. Can't find a suitable game for your topic? No problem, make your own.

Virtual bingo

(<https://myfreebingocards.com/virtual-bingo>)

When it comes to teaching numbers, bingo is one of the most popular games to use. This online version allows you to deliver a different bingo card to each student, whereas you, the caller, get an easy-to-use platform to pick out numbers and also check if a player has won. The website provides videos with instructions and is easy to use. You can choose from ready-made bingo cards or make your own using a bingo generator. The best thing is that you can also play with words, not only numbers, thus practising the target vocabulary. If you send the virtual link for bingo cards before the videoconference lesson, stu-

dents can prepare themselves to follow whether on their computers or mobile phones.

MindMeister

(<https://www.mindmeister.com/>)

By sending the link of a blank project to your students, MindMeister lets the whole class capture, develop and share ideas visually. The students can collaborate on the same mind map simultaneously. The tool is very easy to use and students don't need to register. By making a print-screen of it at the end, you can deliver the finished mind map to your students as learning material.

However, I need to add that, especially at the start of using the activities, not everything went as planned. A teacher should study tools and try them out before a videoconference lesson in order to be able to carry it out properly. I often spent a lot of time explaining how to manage Zoom tools, online apps or even basic computer functions. Learning from home also allows for a greater chance of distractions due to students' home or peer surroundings. But step by step, they learn to master the basic functions and rules to cooperate in activities. Believe me, they will lick their lips when you mention them next time.

Note: My school uses Zoom video conferencing client; therefore, I based my activities and writing on it. I'm not familiar with other clients but they probably provide similar options.



Turning Dictation into a 21st Century Classroom Activity

by Lee Shutler

Lee Shutler is the Principal / Head of Teaching at Hilderstone College, Broadstairs. He has been in the EFL industry as a Teacher, Trainer, Author and Manager since 1991, working in Italy, The UK and, Korea and Japan. He has appeared in conferences around the world, including Slovenia and was due to give a presentation workshop at IATEFL Slovenia in March 2020. When the world returns to “normal”, he hopes very much to return.

In his free time, he runs marathons and enjoys long distance cycling. In a world of balance and compromise, he says the beauty and freedom these sports give him is often offset by a sore bum after 6 hours on a bike!

When I think of my schooldays learning French and German in the 1970s and early 80s, I shudder at the memory of the teacher reading a dead, meaningless text that I would have to write out. She would read it at normal(ish) speed while we just listened. Then she would read it again, chunk by chunk, and we would write down what we heard. If we were lucky, she would repeat it. Then she would collect our work and mark it. Half a point was deducted from a score of 20 for each mistake. In my memory, I always seemed to score 15.

I always felt it was a negative learning experience that added no value to my learning except to give the teacher a number which she could put in her book.

Like many of us, when I became a teacher, I drew on my experiences as a

learner. The best experiences to learn from were the negative ones! So I have been exploring dictation and have continually tried to morph it into a positive and interactive classroom experience that students can gain from.

My first *rule* is that the text has to have some meaning or purpose. This leads to a set of questions we need to ask ourselves:

- Will we discuss the text?
- Will we decide what happens next in the story?
- Will we analyse the text for particular language points?
- Will it be a springboard for new language?
- Will we have to act on the information? Perhaps a set of instructions
- Will we need to produce a parallel or responsive text?



Therefore, in my experience, the dictation process works more efficiently as a launchpad to greater development rather than being merely a summative exercise.

In order to understand how we can manipulate dictation in a modern and communicative way, we need to ask ourselves some questions.

- **What does dictation offer us?**

Firstly, in the dictation process, students are active – both during the dictation and afterwards. They are practising listening and de-coding skills and they are focusing on accuracy and content. As a result, it can be good for mixed ability groups. A good text will provide a challenge for the good learner to aim for near-perfection while those at the lower end of the class can focus on task achievement. Because of this, I will never “mark” and grade a dictation. I will look at it for diagnosis purposes only.

In terms of classroom management, dictation can be a good calming activity for “energetic” groups although “Running” or “Shouting” dictations may not be the right choice for these sorts of groups. We will discuss these later.

- **Who reads?**

The traditional answer would be the teacher. But why? Why can't the students take it in turns to read the text? This will help them focus on chunking and pronunciation skills. While not everyone agrees on the benefits of reading aloud, it does allow us to change the dynamic of the class and the rest of the class are focusing on a task. Therefore, the reader has to learn to be empathetic to what their audience are trying to do. Some education systems have speech-reading as part of the final assessment, so this can give students some practice at this skill as they need to chunk the text so that students can write their words.

- **Who chooses the text?**

Again, why can't the students have the opportunity to choose a text that they can rehearse at home. It can be a text that has meaning for them – whether it is a short description of their sporting hero or a short description of a news event. As mentioned above, the choice will be guided by the potential to exploit the text after the dictation process.

- **How long should the text be and what types of texts are useful?**

A paragraph of about 80-120 words is enough for a B1 class. However, why should it be a formal text? It could be sentence stems, it could be numbers, spelling. It could be a dialogue with two people reading. Allow your imagination to run free.

- **What is the voice?**

The first and final readings should be at normal(ish) pace while the one or two readings in the middle should be slower and paused after each chunk. Look around you and see if people are nearly finished writing. You can speed the process up as students get used to the activity.

- **What does the listener do?**

The listeners' job:
Listen → Write → Think → Check → Think again → Collaborate!

- **Who corrects?**

Collaborate! Firstly students should compare their ideas as a matter of course while the teacher monitors and makes their own notes on what students found difficult. After students have done this for a few minutes, just show the text on the board and students can correct their own.

I am not a fan of marking and grading dictation. This should be a stress free stage of the lesson.

- **Styles of dictation**

We have the standard teacher → student style of dictation but how else can organise this stage of the lesson?

- **A. Back to back**

In the old days, this used to be the way we teachers practised telephone conversations. The students work in pairs (let's call them A and B) and sit back-to-back while one of the students (A) dictates their text to Student B. Afterwards, the other student dictates their text. The teacher can re-work the pairs so that two Student As can compare their version of the text, while the Student Bs, in pairs, compare theirs.

While some countries remain in tight grip of the pandemic, this exercise can indeed be done through mobile phones if students are willing to exchange mobile numbers for classroom usage.

- **B. Shouting Dictation**

Perhaps better suited to Friday afternoon and if your classroom does not back on to neighbouring classes.

Here is the procedure for this activity

1. Put the students into pairs A and B.
2. Organise the room thus:

A1	>>>		B1
B2		<<<	A2
A3	>>>		B3
B4		<<<	A4
etc			

The students would be, ideally, 8 – 12 feet away.

3. Give the text to the A team.
4. Student A dictates the text.
5. Student B writes the text.
6. With a new, short text, students swap roles.

This game produces a lot of noise. If you have overly boisterous students, you may decide that the activity is not suitable. If you have a headache, migraine, sinusitis or a hangover, you may not wish to do the activity either!

Variation: instead of shouting, you could get the students to whisper their text. This puts a greater onus on the listener.

Ideally, for both variations, the text should be 50 – 75 words. This is not an activity for a long text.

If your school policies indicate a need to remain Covid-safe, this activity may not be ideal as by shouting, they will be forcing their breath to travel further. This is where the whispering alternative could be safer.

- **C. Running dictation**

For shorter texts – perhaps only two sentences, a running dictation can often work well.

1. Put the text(s) to be dictated around (or outside) the classroom.
2. Put the students in pairs – A and B.
3. A is the secretary.
4. B is the runner.
5. B has to 'run' to the text, read and memorise a chunk.
6. B then returns to A and recites what they have remembered.
7. A writes text.

8. A and B swap roles until text is completed (Perfectly).

Although this is a good “Friday” type of activity inasmuch as it is energetic, noisy and fun; be aware of classes around you.

I tend to use this activity where the short texts to be dictated are the answers to set questions so that when B dictates a short chunk of text, A must decide which question the text is answering and write the text next to the right question..

Again this exercise may not be Covid-friendly.

While the last three sections gives ideas on how to transfer the text, the following sections look at what we can dictate.

i. Info + re-ordering

In this exercise, the information to be dictated will be individual sentences given out of order. Once the sentences have been dictated the students have to re-order the sentences so that the text makes sense. This gives the students good practice at how sequencers and signposting language works.

ii. Part of a tapescript

One activity after a listening exercise could be to play part of the tapescript again – perhaps a short paragraph. This paragraph might highlight a grammatical form or even a pronunciation feature.

The teacher will need technology that allows the stop-start mechanisms of the listening device to be smooth and unobtrusive.

iii. Stems

The teacher dictates the stems of, perhaps, 5 sentences. After the dictation stage, the students have to complete the sentences. *Grammar in Action Again* by Frank and Rinvolucri (1991, 87) develops this idea by asking students to create a context around the sentences by asking the students to think of a favourite or special place, of which they draw a basic sketch. They use the activity to practise the present perfect so the dictated stems are similar to:

- I’ve known this place since....
- In this place I’ve never.....
- In this place I’ve often....

- I’ve always liked this place because....
- I’ve.....

This is a favourite activity because after the controlled work of the dictation, the discussion between students about their “favourite place” can develop

iv. Stressed form dictation

In this dictation, you give the students the nouns, adjectives, verbs etc within the text. After the dictation, the students have to decide which unstressed words to add to give the sentence/paragraph some meaning. I make the exercise more manageable by adding punctuation.

v. True / False dictations

Dictate a series of sentences (let’s say 6 or 7), of which 4 might be true. The students then have to read the sentences and decide on the false sentences. This encourages the students to see the exercise as more than just language on a page.

At a teacher conference in Switzerland in 2019, I gave the following sentences for the participants to discuss:

- I started my teaching career in Italy.
- In Italy I had to teach English to an Italian porn star.
- When I lived in Italy I had a cat who ate my hamster.
- I didn’t speak Italian very well before I moved there.
- In Milan I would walk to my school every day.
- I used to watch Inter Milan

The sentences’ primary *linguistic* focus was to analyse used to, would and past simple. The content allowed for discussion. (The false sentences were 4 and 5).

Dictogloss

No discussion of dictation would be complete without mentioning Dictogloss. In dictogloss, students are encouraged to note take and rebuild the text in collaboration rather than write down every word they hear.

When I do it, the steps are thus:

- Teacher reads a short text – students just listen – no notetaking
- Students share what words they picked up
- Teacher re-reads at normal speed – students make notes

- Students compare notes to start the process of completing the text
- Teacher re-reads texts – students fill in more gaps
- Students compare notes and collaborate again.
- Repeat if necessary

By the end of the process, the students will have a version of the text that is very close to the original. There has been collaboration, task achievement as well as listening skills and grammar manipulation.

Here is a text I use with CEF A2 levels to practise and recycle irregular past forms:

“I was in town yesterday and met my friend. We went into the coffee shop at the bottom of the hill and I bought a large black coffee. We saw a table in the corner, went there, sat down and chatted for about an hour. We spoke about a lot of things – our families, pets, free time and jobs. It was very relaxing. Then her phone rang. She began to cry and told me she had to leave.....”

After the dictogloss stage, the students, in pairs, complete the story – and can choose whether to concentrate on “her” or on “me”, or create a dialogue.

Conclusion.

Dictation and dictogloss are classroom activities that I encourage teachers to revisit and free up. They can be high energy or calming. They can be analytical of language or they can be the springboard to letting the imagination roll.

Most importantly, for busy teachers, they can be preparation-efficient activities, creating a lot of language and fluency action in the classroom from relatively minimal preparation. Give them a try!!

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The Inescapable Interplay Between Language Learning and Self-Confidence

by **Marina Siskos**

Teacher of English as a Foreign Language

Can high-quality lesson content reinforce L2 learners' self-confidence?

Can demanding subject matter contribute to learners' long-term establishing of self-esteem?

Solid language foundation is a long-term development and so is the quality of self-belief, at least for a respectable number of second language learners.

The two entities are inherently interlaced.

Offering challenging educative content can drive to the realization that the learning process is brimming with difficulties, mental toil, misunderstandings-even subversions along the way.

Therefore, learners are to be accordingly armoured in the linguistic (i.e. grammar/syntactic, phonetic, semantic, pragmatic) and content area.

Interestingly, Leslie (2012) introduces the idea of "ease of use" which an artist should constantly be escaping in order to remain creative.

During the teaching practice, are there times wherein you feel compelled to compromise the linguistic challenges in fear of cracking your students' confidence and halting their momentum?

In the event of a positive nodding of your head, rest assured, as this is a legitimate and prudent thought for the

educator during the decision-making process. This is also substantiated by Tunçel (2015), who informs that "at least, due to low self-confidence, the student will not be able to make a good start in foreign language learning, because low self-confidence affects students' learning motivation (Bong, 2008; Pajares and Miller 1994). An individual who lacks in self-confidence will most probably have a negative bias towards the course and the classroom [...]".

According to Tunçel, the negative consequences of low self-confidence might culminate in "the foreign language learning abilities of students lacking self-confidence [not being] revealed".

The most meaningful practice would be to leverage second language content and material towards learners' confidence-building.

Have you ever strived to adjust and fragment the layout and the content of the lesson (maybe resorting to overreliance on external aids, realia and props) instead of genuinely placing trust on the learners' potential?

What would an earnest decision involve?

Do teachers oftentimes step on eggshells in the face of discouraging the learning endeavor, rather than choosing to familiarize them with every challenging aspect that the English grammar customarily takes?

Acknowledging the real value of the present difficulty might offer a vent this dilemma.

A part of the learners today, will eventually (whether as an outcome of a future career path or a life choice) encounter their share of inexplicable linguistic discourse.

What feelings would that future difficulty stir to your past students- who by then would probably be beyond your physical reach?

Would they reflect that "*my teacher was proactive enough to ferment me with pretty challenging language content. By now, I trust myself enough to fulfill the communicative challenge before me*"?

Because the definition of self-confidence does envelop the element of trusting one's own strengths and abilities to meet the challenging occasion.

Alternatively, the present learners, in a future difficulty would think: "*My teacher has never suspected me of this form the target language would uptake. There seems to be an unrealistic distance between English learnt at school and meaningful English*".

The core meaning of self-confidence explicitly includes the element of difficulty (followed by its successful overcoming).

Difficulty and challenges should come in manageable doses and they are integral

part of steadfast confidence-building and language development.

Courtesy, uncompromised acceptance and genuine respect to each learner are qualities to permeate the language setting.

Those are ingrained alongside the language development through challenges.

Feels of discomfort before the plentitude of intricacies the English language has to present can be effectively managed; embarrassment might arise, and its recognition and acceptance is best to be transparent and honest. Welcome all negative reactions.

On the other side of the present challenge, learners should be always reminded, that on the other end of the challenge lies personal growth and well-deserved language development.

The mental, cognitive labor that is exercised in order to reach the understanding and knowledge, is complementary to the obtaining of an unflinching sense of confidence. The kind of confidence that derives from the self and the personal achievements, rather than from external, provisional sources: appraisal and teacher validation.

Surprising as it might strike at first, the heart of the matter is that learners wel-

come challenges and are not discouraged by difficulties. What might act repulsively to them, is the sentiments around the challenges and difficulties-pessimism, high expectations followed by disappointment, inappropriate teacher-and parents' reaction to occasional poor or below-the-bar performance.

As Leslie (2012) informs his readers, "our brains respond better in difficulty than we imagine. In schools, teachers and pupils alike often assume that, if a concept has been easy to learn, the lesson has been successful. But numerous studies have now found that when classroom material is made harder to absorb, pupils retain more of it over the long term, and understand it on a deeper level".

Is there a golden ratio that ensures that challenging content will not damage, but would rather enhance learners' confidence?

It is suggested that there is no absolutist response to this question-as it is a perpetual balance-retaining tightrope. One effective strategy is to present the difficulties and resolve them in attainable, digestible proportions each time.

Robert Bjork, of the University of California, coined the phrase "desirable difficulties" to describe the counter-intuitive

notion that learning should be made harder by, for instance, spacing sessions further apart so that students have to make more effort to recall what they learnt last time.

Psychologists at Princeton found that "students remembered reading material better when it was printed in an ugly font" (Leslie, 2012).

The afore-mentioned psychological conclusion is cited only to highlight the pedagogical significance of certain extents of difficulty.

There is an odd satisfaction in fending for oneself and there is a touch of magic in comprehending what originally seemed beyond understanding: a divine feel of epiphany, all learners should be entitled to.

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Difficult Learners or Difficult Learning?

by **Nada Đukić**

The difference between guilt and shame will be presented in terms of the factors that trigger one and the other and the negative effect they have upon learners' self-confidence and identity. These processes are not straightforward and, to a great extent, they can be sub-conscious. Guilt is still less damaging, as it involves the possibility of an individual's active response in the form of a behaviour change. Shame is more damaging, as it affects an individual's personality on the level of identity, and that can be extremely painful.

We will look at some tools of restorative practice that can be applied when we face difficulties in learning and teaching. The procedure to restore the damage caused will be presented as a series of case studies,

The content of this paper is based on the Teaching Difficult Learners course that I took in part at Pilgrims (the University of Kent, Canterbury) in summer 2019.

The Difference between Shame and Guilt

It is a very tough thing to start with. Why do we start with something like that? Because it is very important in the teaching practice. Teachers might not be aware that they can trigger shame in their students. Unfortunately, when they do it, students feel a need for revenge, and that is not really a good place in. It cannot be pleasant for any of them.

When we talk about guilt, it means that a person has done something that was not, to put it mildly, acceptable. But if we have done something, we have the possibility to change our behaviour. So, when we talk about guilt, we are talking about something that can be changed in our behaviour, and we are in the so-called growth mindset. When we are in the school environment or context, we are also talking about *developing* our students' behaviour. What does that mean? We expect them to behave in a certain way, but we do not tell them in advance what that way is. We need to tell them how we want them to behave, rather than punishing them when they do not do something right.

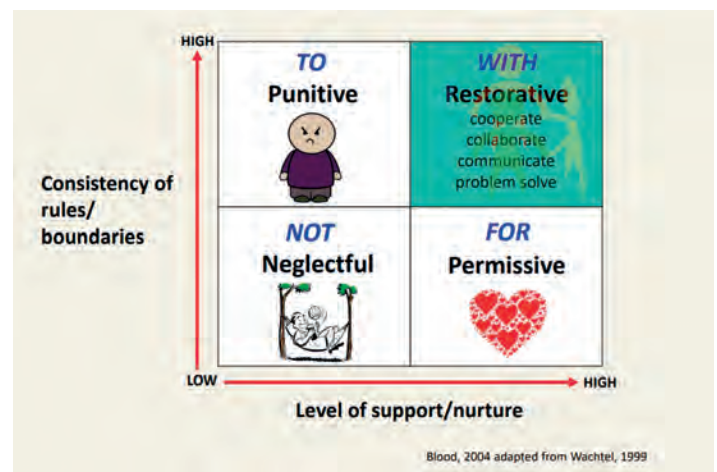
On the other hand, when we talk about shame, it means that we feel as if we are a failure. In that case, nothing can be done, and that is extremely painful. That is why it is connected to the so-called fixed mindset, where no solution is offered. When a student does something that is not acceptable, we do not say, "You're bad!" We say "You did this, and it is not OK!" And then

we lead them in the direction in which we want them to proceed.

We teachers tend to think that our students are doing something that irritates us or that is disruptive on purpose, but that is not the case. Every human behaviour has a cause, and they do it because some of their needs have not been met. Only when we go deeper and find out what those needs are, can we continue our teaching. This is also similar to us teachers. Every teacher—maybe more experienced ones can deal with that a bit better—at least intuitively knows what they need to be in an optimal state for teaching. And when the teacher's needs have been met and they are in that optimal state, they can deal with any challenge that they are faced with when they are in front of a class or in front of a student if the class is one-to-one, etc.

If a student has done something that was disruptive and unacceptable, then they need to know that there will be consequences. At the same time, that does not mean that we teachers "attack" because we are still an authority figure. So, it is not that we "attack", "dump" their personality, but we try to analyse their behaviour and what they did. It is very important that we do not show them up and tease them. They need to feel that whatever we say or do, it is because we care. One of my favourite quotes is "When the teacher takes care of their students, the learning takes care of itself." There should be always that element of care behind every action that a teacher takes or chooses.

The Social Discipline Window



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On the one hand, the so-called social discipline window shows the level of support or nurture and on the other hand, the consistency of rules or boundaries. When we go to two extremes, it is not okay. And the two extremes are these: When the consistency of rules or boundaries is too high and the level of support or nurture is too low, we are punitive, which means that we do something *to* the students. The other extreme is when the level of support or nurture is too high and there is almost no consistency of rules or boundaries. The teacher does everything *for* the student and also instead of them. When the level of support or nurture is very low and the level of consistency of rules or boundaries is also very low, there is neglect. The teacher does not really care about their students. The ideal model would be one in which the level of consistency of rules or boundaries is high and the level of support or nurture is high too. This is the so-called restorative model where there is a lot of cooperation, collaboration, communication and problem solving. In this case, we are doing things *with* our students. We are relentlessly consistent, but at the same time caring.

The Principles of the Restorative Approach

There are three important principles of the restorative approach, that is three stages that need to be acted out. The first is reflecting on what has happened, the second one is repairing harm caused by an incident, and the final and very important one is reconnecting relationships, so that the two people can work together again.

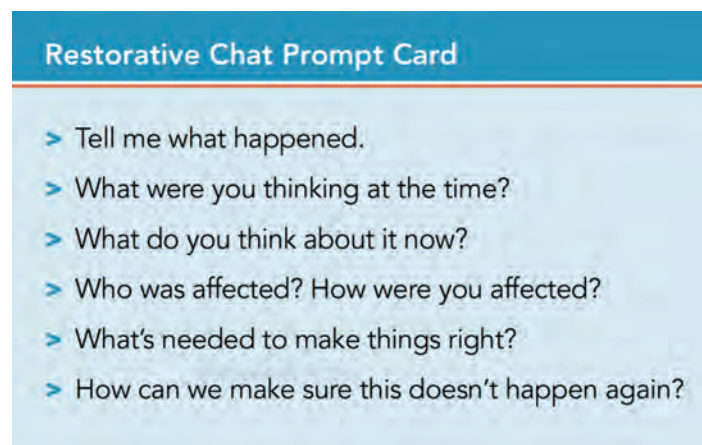
Every behaviour has a reason. If the behaviour is disruptive, then the reason behind it is a need that was not met. The person on the receiving end of harm and the person who caused harm, that is psychological harm, both have their needs. When we compare what each of the people in this case need, we realise that these needs are also completely the same. Each of them needs somebody to listen to their story. Each of them has their point of view. The one who has been harmed needs time to calm down, and the one who has caused that harm needs time to think. The person on the receiving end of the harm needs the opportunity to acknowledge the impact it has had on them ("Why me?"). The person who caused harm needs the opportunity to apologise ("Why did I do what I did?"). There needs to come a point when each of them can continue to communicate, or to put it simply, they need to have the opportunity to move on. That conflict cannot remain there forever.

The Restorative Questioner

When we use so-called restorative practice, three people are involved. The first one is the questioner. This is the person who was on the receiving end of the harm. The second is the person who caused that harm, and the third is the observer. How is this done? It is done outside the classroom and not in front of the whole class. The reason is so that the student is not publicly humiliated. How is the teacher in the role of the restorative questioner supposed to act? They should appear curious and ask open questions, that is they ask questions in such a way that they do not expect only yes and no answers. Apart from open questions, they should also use open body language and have good eye contact. The teacher and the student need a good rapport for the whole time. The attitude of

the teacher is neutral and non-judgmental, and that is very important. The teacher is "gently relentless", so that they are putting discipline in a nurturing context. They are kind, but not too kind! They expect compliance. The teacher also makes a very sensible use of silence. When they ask a question, they do not snap or immediately ask another question but wait for the answer. What they are asking the student—if they have done something that was not acceptable or that was hurtful to them as teachers or even individuals—is not very pleasant or easy. That is why the student needs time to think, to ponder, and then to give the teacher some deep and sincere answers.

The Restorative Chat Prompt Card



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When a teacher is having that important restorative chat with their students, they are asking only the questions from the prompt card. Why is that so? That is precisely to make it neutral and non-judgmental. Because they do not want to trigger guilt or shame. If they trigger guilt or shame, the students will not cooperate, they will not be open enough. Then the context will not be nurturing enough, and also very important, they will not be able to cooperate after the incident. The questions are very simple. It is useful for teachers to have cards on them at first these, and then to know the questions by heart, so that they can ask them in such a way that they appear to come naturally to them.

The Observer

The role of the observer is also very important. They need to pay attention to the set-up of the restorative chat, and especially to the quality of questioning and presence. The teacher needs to be really "there and then" with the student. The observer also follows the pace of the restorative chat, the conversation, the use of silence, and asking from the teacher's side and telling from the student's side. The observer focuses on the needs of both parties and on the outcome that they reach or that they have in mind beforehand.

The Observer Feedback Guidelines

When the observer gives feedback to the questioner, that feedback needs to be constructive, and it needs to make the questioner aware of their strengths and of how they can build on them. The observer also helps them to become aware of the

areas that need more attention, so that the questioner maintains their confidence. The feedback needs to be delivered in a way that the observer would like to hear him/herself.

The Scenario A: Jacob

You like to make people laugh – it makes you feel good. You also love it when other people join in with you as it means the fun goes on for longer. More fun means less time for the work in the lesson, which you find hard, especially writing. You find it hard to organise your thoughts and remember what to write.

You can tell that your teacher is getting annoyed but you can't seem to stop yourself from interrupting. Today you think you might have gone a bit too far when you told her to »keep your hair on or you might have a heart attack« loudly in front of the whole class. She didn't look very happy.

The teacher has asked to speak with you after the lesson.

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This is an example of a case study. First, we need to identify and analyse Jacob's unmet needs. The main cause of students' disruptive behaviour is boredom. But in this scenario, it is not so much that the student is bored and does not have anything to do. In a way, he is covering up his academic difficulties and that is why he creates all the "fun" in the class. The real reason that he cannot follow or that he cannot excel is that he is not good at writing, and to distract from that, he is being disruptive. What he said to his teacher should also be addressed. Jacob and his teacher would go through the whole events of that day. The teacher would use the questions from the prompt card. They would then come to some conclusions and agree how they can get along better in the future, etc.

The Teachers' Questions Answered

Is it good practice to label learners as difficult?

Of course, labelling is not acceptable. There is a debate there whether we are talking about difficult learning or difficult students. And the premise is that there are no difficult learners, only difficult learning. So, why difficult learners? Another term would be disruptive students. This is viewed from the teacher's perspective. They are difficult for the teachers to manage. It does not sound very nice, I know. But that is how they appear to the teachers. And yes, it is not good practice to label students, but that is how they appear to us teachers. The best way to avoid using labels is to be non-judgmental because being non-judgmental means that we do not use labels. As teachers, we need discipline, compliance and cooperation from our students, but at the same time, we are the ones who provide and create a safe and nurturing environment or context in which learning can take place.

What if problematic students do not have the ability to communicate – have not acquired the language yet, or they come from a foreign country, for example?

On the one hand, we see or witness our students' academic progress. On the other hand, there is their behaviour, emotional states, and everything else that is connected with them. When it comes to the academic part, even though it can be also connected to the social, emotional and behavioural part, I found

everything from the area of special educational needs very useful. Regarding migrants in general—the students who come from other foreign countries—it depends on the country in which they are based, because each country has got its own policy and they themselves then decide how they deal with these students. But I found it very useful to have a team of educators who collaborate when it comes to that student. There should be at least one person whom that student can trust, one educator who is their tutor. Because the solution is not—the same holds true for disruptive students—to just make them drop-outs. Taking into consideration the psychological point of view, we can say that if a student has one educator who cares about them, it is enough. Sometimes we think that we need to have all the materials and so on in place. More important than that is the rapport between the educator and the student.

I am an advocate of humanistic pedagogy. When you see the student as a human being first, you realise that, despite the fact that they are of a different nationality, they are still human beings who have more or less the same needs as you. Then you can find the things that you have in common and you do not to see them only as foreigners or somebody totally different from you and to whom you cannot relate.

Can you recommend some classroom management techniques?

Yes, I can. I would really recommend anything that you can get by Marie Delaney. Because what I really love about her approach is that it is very down-to-earth and effective. One of the very effective techniques is to set just a few rules and stick to them. Another technique that she suggests (and that might be even connected to NLP) is this one:

If you want your students to calm down, then you cannot be running around. You need to stand still and really feel your feet, as if you were glued to the floor. And you need to have yourself in control, basically. Consistency is also crucial because when the students see that you are setting the same rule every time in the same way, it sticks and becomes a routine that is easy to follow. Establishing routines is very important for the students because they feel safe as a consequence. Although they will not admit it, when there are clear rules, they feel safe, and they do not feel safe when there is chaos or anarchy. Another model that I would also suggest is "positive discipline". It is not far away from the school context but rather practical and useful. When it comes to any technique, method, approach or model, you must be critical. You need to know yourself and choose what suits you best. I think that is very important. But those two—Marie Delaney's work and positive discipline—I would highly recommend.

Conclusion

When Marie Delaney worked as an educational therapist, she had to deal with students that nobody else could. At the end of every week, she used to feel really down, to put it mildly. And then she realised that she was feeling, or she was affected by, all those feelings of her students. That is why it is also very important to distinguish between what is really "ours" and what is "theirs", so that the teacher does not take too much responsibility upon themselves.

Lesson plan

by **Urška Zupin**

Urška Zupin has a degree in English Language and Sociology. She has worked as an English teacher for almost nine years. She has taught adults as well as kindergarten children in different language schools and currently teaches primary school pupils aged 9–15. In her free time, she loves baking cakes.

Name: Urška Zupin	Lesson title: She Knows Me		Topic: Present Simple
Type of lesson: (Reading/ Grammar / Listening/...)	Student level: (according to CEFR) A2	Student type: (Primary /Secondary/Adult)	Length: 45 min
Lesson aims: Pupils will be able to recognise the third person singular form of the verb in the Present Simple tense and transform the affirmative into negative and question forms and vice versa.			Teacher comments:
Materials: computer, overhead projector, worksheets, YouTube, smart phones or tablets, Nearpod			
Lesson procedure:			
Time	Procedure		Teacher comments:
Introduction 5 min	<p>Introduction Warm up</p> <p>The following words are written on the board: than, knows, she, me, know, myself, I, better. Students are asked to form the longest sentence they can using only the words from the board.</p> <p>Students will find at least one of these three versions: She knows me. I know myself. She knows me better than I know myself. I know myself better than she knows me.</p> <p>This leads us to the song title.</p>		
Development 15 min	<p>Development</p> <p>The teacher plays the song by <i>Bryan Adams: She Knows Me</i> (once or twice, depending on students' needs). The worksheet is given to the students and the students are given instructions to listen to the song and circle the correct form of the verbs.</p> <p>The answers are checked using the projector.</p> <p>Students continue with the exercises 2–5 on the worksheet. Again, we check using the projector and students' solutions.</p>		
Application and assessment 20 min	<p>Application and assessment</p> <p>Students work in pairs. They remember the previous lesson and the song and teach each other about the forms of Present Simple tense.</p> <p>One of the students volunteers to revise the tense (the form and the use) in front of the class.</p> <p>The students are then asked to fill in the missing forms of the sentences on the second page of the worksheet. Each of the students puts one sentence into the missing forms. The teacher gives the feedback and the correct forms are projected on the board.</p>		
Conclusion 2–5 min	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Students use their phones or school tablets to participate in a collaborate board in Nearpod. Students are asked to write one sentence about what they have taken from today's lesson.</p>		
<p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bryan Adams: She Knows Me: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjHJEDGnjv0 Nearpod: https://share.nearpod.com/llyyTIK8Udb 			

Present Simple

1. Listen to the song and choose the correct version of the verbs in bold.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjHJEDGnjv0>

Bryan Adams: „She Knows Me“

Winds will come and winds will go
And the seasons always **change/changes**
But the light that **shimmer/shimmers** in her eyes
stays the same

Yeah, the sun will shine and the moon will glow
And the world will always turn
There's a constant fire inside of her
That always **burn/burns**

She **know/knows** me
Every corner of my soul
She knows me
The way I **come/comes**, the way I go
She told me
There's nothin' I can show
That she don't know about me

Round and round and round we **go/goes**

Neither _____ or neither _____
All I **know/knows**, without her in my life
I'd be nowhere

Well, feelings **come/comes** and feelings go
But some things never **change/changes**
Like the light that shimmers in her eyes
It **stay/stays** the same

Oh, she knows me

When I'm _____ or when I'm _____
She knows me
In the middle of the night
She **hold/holds** me
And I **don't say/doesn't say** a word
Cuz words could never save me

She's got a permanent hold on my heart
And I'm learning to live with the loneliness
When **we're/we's** apart

Every little way
She knows me
When there's nothin' left to say

She holds me
And time just **fly/flies** away
Cuz bein' with her **are/is** so easy

Oh, she knows me
Better than I know myself...



2. Find two words that can answer the question: How often?/
Zapiši besede, ki so lahko odgovor na vprašanje: Kako pogosto?

3. Find one BIG grammar error and write it here./
Najdi VELIKO slovnično napako in jo popravi:

Wrong: _____

Right: _____

4. Write four opposite adjectives on the lines./
Na črte v pesmi vpiši nasprotno pridevnike.

5. Find and write possessive adjectives./
V pesmi najdi svojilne pridevnike.



6. Put the verbs in the missing forms./ Zapiši glagole v manjkajoči obliki Present Simple-a.

Positive form (+)	Negative form (-)	Interrogative form (?)
Seasons change.		
The light shimmers.		
The light stays the same.		
The fire always burns.		
She knows me.		
I come.		
I go.		
	She doesn't know about me.	
We go round and round.		
I know.		
Feelings come.		
Feelings go.		
Some things never change.		
She holds me.		
	I don't say a word.	
We're apart.		
Time flies away.		
I know myself.		

A Detective Story

Jiayuan Angela Chen and Lucija Meglič, 8.a, Fram Primary School

Mentor: Simona Napast

It was a dark stormy night, when Ana stepped out of the shadows into the lights of an incoming car. The car stopped next to her. There was a woman in it. She had blond hair, her eyes were big and scary. Her curly hair was full of blood. There was dried blood on her cheeks, too. She got out of the car. Her dress was all torn. She quickly opened the trunk and pulled something out. It was a large black bag which she dragged into the woods. Suddenly another car drove up and stopped right next to the first one. An older man got out of it, with a hatchet resting in his hand. Both, the woman and the man, walked up to Ana together. (author: Angela)

The woman stabbed Ana and drove off with her husband. The end of the story. (Just kidding). Ana screamed in horror. Her heartbeat began to hurt in her chest, it was like the fear made her ribcage break. She ran as fast as she could. Her muscles hurt so much, but she could not stop running. She paused only to catch her breath, since she was pretty far by now. Ana took a quick glance behind her. She had no idea where she was. It was dark, and quite late, around 9pm. All her senses went mad, she did not know what to do. She eventually started walking onwards, trying to at least come somewhere....does not matter where just...somewhere.

So she was walking on and on. She was still nervous, and extremely terrified. Her motivation to come somewhere started to vanish. It all felt worthless. Suddenly a bush rustled, Ana got scared, she screamed. What came from the bush surprised her... it was her friend! Alex, from the hospital. Ana hugged Alex, desperate to find comfort. Alex was shocked at first, as she did not instantly realize it was Ana, but when she did, she also embraced her tightly.

Alex asked: "What are you doing here?" Ana told her what happened, and began

to sob, softly, like a little girl, which made Alex worry so she stopped her friend from talking and picked her up (horse-back ride style). Ana was so tired that she fell asleep on Alex's back. Alex smiled, she had a weird fuzzy feeling around Ana, but she hated it, it felt wrong....

They finally arrived to the apartment and Alex gently put Ana on the bed, and let her sleep. Ana gained her consciousness and woke up after some hours. She did not know where she was, her head hurt, and she felt dizzy. "A hangover perhaps?" Ana thought. She got up from the bed and looked around. The room was very big, better to say spacious. The white and light grey paint on the walls were a great combination, she especially liked the greyish line in the middle. She noticed a wooden chest-of-drawers on the other side of the room, sequoia timber perhaps? She was not sure. Next to the bed, there was one night stand on each side. On the left there was a big window and an entrance to a small balcony, full of succubus plants. There was also a small circular table, with two chairs.

Ana felt stupid for being there, she thought she didn't deserve to sleep in such a nice room, on such a soft bed. Then Alex came into the room to check up on Ana, it surprised her that she was awake already just like Ana was surprised that she was actually in Alex's apartment. Alex smiled, walked up to Ana, sat on the bed next to her, and kissed her forehead. Alex realized what she had done, she blocked her mouth with her hand and apologized to Ana. She was about to get up but Ana grabbed her hand and told her it was okay. Alex still felt embarrassed. She offered Ana breakfast, who (the food-loving person she was), of course, happily agreed. Alex smiled again, and went to make some food. After they finished, Alex suggested to go into town and do something. Alex gave Ana some

of her clothes, showed her to the bathroom and told her to get ready. While Ana was in the bathroom, Alex was also getting dressed. When Ana walked out of the bathroom, she saw Alex wearing only her panties and a bra. Her body was athletic, it really looked nice, Ana thought. Ana closed her eyes while Alex was making funny faces.

After 20 minutes of preparation, out of the apartment they went. "ONWARD WE SHALL GO! TO THE STORE!" Alex screamed in her dramatic British accent. Ana laughed heartily.

When they got to the store, people in there were chattering, and picking things to buy. That store wasn't very big, but it had nice things and discount prices. Alex offered Ana she would pay for anything she wanted. Ana tried to decline, but Alex was too persistent. So she just agreed (again).

When Ana was walking around the store and looking at things, she suddenly bumped into a woman. She looked familiar. Then it hit her - it was that woman with blond hair from yesterday. She restrained from screaming, she quickly ran to Alex, trying to hold her as tight as possible. While Ana was choking Alex and squeezing her, the lady approached them. She spoke coarsely, staring at them with a deadly look. Alex pushed Ana behind her back and said to the lady: "Would you mind considering some personal space?" But she came even closer. At that moment, Alex lost her mind and punched the lady who hit her back without hesitation. Alex shouted at Ana, and told her to call the cops. After ten long minutes of Ana crying and Alex fighting the lady, the police finally arrived. They arrested the lady, they also caught her husband harassing the cashier. They both went back to the mental hospital.

The police officer praised Ana and Alex's bravery and expressed many thanks to

them explaining: "This woman and her husband escaped from the mental hospital, and they are responsible for over 36 murders!" Alex was curious: "How did they get in the hospital in the first place?" The police officer frowned and lowered his eyes. After a few seconds he spoke in a sad tone: "Well, she suffered a depression which deepened day after day. However, she declined any treatment, so she eventually developed a psychopathic behaviour, and later a severe mental illness. She had three kids whom she drowned in the nearby lake, only one managed to survive. That one... was me, she drowned my two little sisters. In the mental institution, where he was sent, she found a matching partner."

Alex looked at the ground and apologized for his loss and for opening old sores. The officer reassured her that it was okay, and thanked both for their courage.

Their shopping day ended without shopping bags. The only thing they got was Alex's black eye and Ana's trembling body. At home, Alex served some snacks and suggested to watch a movie. Ana (as usually), agreed. While watching Alex apologized to Ana for getting into a fight with that woman but Ana told her to shut up. Instead, she grabbed her face and kissed her. Alex felt as if God slapped her. She was confused. But Ana broke the ice: "This was the only option, you just wouldn't shut up."

And the story continues... They started dating after that. For three weeks. What happened after that you may ask.... Well, they married, of course, and lived happily ever after.

A Survival Story

Lucija Meglič, 8.b, Fram Primary School
Mentor: Simona Napast

It was a peaceful morning when I opened my sleepy eyes. I did what I usually do. I got up, got dressed, better to say dolled up because I had to look pretty, since we were going to the airport. Yes, people, the airport. A trip, planned long ago was finally becoming real. Anyway, I got myself ready, grabbed my suitcase and rushed to the car.

At that time, cosily sitting in the car, and driving towards the giant mechanical bird, the so-called plane, I knew not it was a start of a horrible but educational adventure. Let us get back to the story.

As we were driving, I was so exciting and hardly waiting to reach the goal, that everything looked boring to me. It was a long, mind killing drive, but when we reached the site and got inside, I was shocked. To be honest, I had never been inside an airport. Everything seemed so amazing to me.

As we entered the giant building, a woman came up to us and asked a few questions, then wished us a good flight. Well, the staff here sure had no social anxiety. Good for them. As we got rid of our luggage on a track that looked like a moving counter in a supermarket, we walked through some door frame which looked like a scanner or an x-ray machine, I had no idea what it was. They explained it was a security tool. All right then, I was thinking, when I was putting my belt and shoes on and grabbing the personal bag. The next step was to approach the correct gate. Which number was it again? 7 or 9? I checked the ticket. Ok, 9 it was.

We boarded the plane, relieved from the stress that something might have gone wrong. Anyway, we were all aboard and the plane started moving. Forward, faster and faster. When it went up, I was stuck on the seat. The plane-driving dude, I mean the captain, took off and we were in the sky. It felt like a rollercoaster, but better, because we were so

high I could touch the sky if I opened the window, but the flight attendants would not be happy about it, though.

The flight was calm and comfortable. I even took a short nap till... the alarm went off. I heard the captain: "Dear passengers, this is your captain speaking. There is nothing to worry about, we have some technical difficulties which will be fixed soon." He told us to stay calm and not to panic. But it is easier said than done. You know something is definitely wrong when the captain says there is not. The other people on board were panicking and had frightened expressions on their faces. All but me. I was the only idiot remaining calm unlike others who watched (too many) movies and took them (too) seriously.

Anyway, I was just sitting there, thinking. I had two options: either do something smart and responsible or use dark humour. I chose the second one (it is my nature). As soon as I moisted my lips for a good joke, the plane all of a sudden started losing height. The captain said nothing more, no response from him, nothing, nič, niente, rien, nada. (Yes, that means nothing in 5 languages). We started falling. Not as if I fell in love with that nicely-looking girl in front of me, but we were literally falling, like we were going to die. I said to myself: Goodbye marriage and kids.

While flying closer to the ground, the people were going crazy, I was just nailed to my seat, refusing to be normal and freak out. My left side of the brain was telling me: Hey, dude, you should freak out, you are about to die, you know? But the right side was relaxed, saying: Nah, you are going to be fine. I did not believe either and just in case I set up a timer. I looked at it: we were falling for 2 minutes, then 3 and after the 4th one it went BOOM.

We hit the ground. Silence. Silence and besides it, the most horrible thing a hu-

man being could ever see. It was utterly terrifying. Dead bodies everywhere. Fresh blood on the floor was what really got me. So many innocent people, just because of someone being negligent and not doing his work properly. My first estimate was that a quarter of the crew made it. They were alive, like me. But we had a problem. The plane was stuck in a tree. A very tall one. There was a hole in the plane though, big enough to easily squeeze through. So me and a couple of other people climbed off. There was a risk of falling, but we were ready to take it. Luckily, the tree had a lot of branches, therefore we reached the ground safely and I kissed it gratefully.

First, I inspected the surroundings and looked for the co-climbers. Obviously, only four made it, the other two seemed to die while ascending the tree. We introduced to each other.

One was Ellie, a girl of my age. She had short chestnut hair that covered half of her face, and piercing blue eyes. I found her sweet, but quite shy.

The young man's name was Yuto, aged around 20-25. He was Japanese, but spoke English fluently. His hair was black and he had dark brown eyes, almost black. We took him for a mother figure because of his gentle nature.

A 15-year-old Adora declared as a nonbinary. We addressed 'her' as they. No matter what, they were honest, helpful and easy-going at the same time so I liked their company a lot, except their exceptional laziness.

The last of the team was Charlie, a typical 21 year-old gay, the diva of the group, the one who spilled the tea, was super cheerful and would inspire or comfort anyone.

Anyway, I agreed on joining them, we all needed as much help as possible. Like the saying goes, more heads together have more ideas and views on what to do. But the brain was not the only thing we needed, skills and strength were even more useful in our situation. We joined our forces and started our exploration.

Luckily, we soon found some water and decided to settle down and make a fire.

I made myself a nice hammock so I could flex on the others. Yet, it did not last long until it was stolen by Charlie. I did not care but just walked away and found my little lonely place where I prepared a performance in Slovene. I was cursing and slandering, using mime and pulled faces. And after getting tired of it, I returned to the camp and fell asleep.

When I woke up next morning, I felt every bone in my body. I had no idea that sleeping on the ground could give you even butt cramps. I was limping the whole day but still managed to gather some wild berries to fill my stomach and branches to make a theftproof shelter. The rest of the team did exactly the same. The men made spears and bows and even caught some small mammals and fish.

A week passed by. We built a strong relationship; I especially got along well with Ellie. She became very clingy and, to be honest, I rather liked it. It was a nice feeling to know you were a source of comfort and warmth to someone, the feeling of being needed by someone felt special to me.

Our skills improved every day. We mastered surviving techniques. One day, we even caught a deer. It was an interesting event, indeed. I was on a tree with my bow, on guard as usual. A deer came grazing right under my tree. I aimed and the arrow slid right through its neck. It all happened in a split second. To my misfortune, the deer ran off, with the arrow in its neck. Of course, I ran after it like any normal predator would. Eventually, the poor animal collapsed due to blood loss and exhaustion. I happily brought our meal to the camp, like a joyful dog bringing its owner a surprise. The next thing I remember was Charlie running up to me, screaming about a shame about killing that deer as we had fish and so on. Adora interrupted our lovely conversation and just said: Dudeeee, we gonna eat good tonight, I'ma just watch though. Charlie would definitely kill me if Yuto would not prevent it. He did not say anything, just showed Charlie to leave. I sat on the deer as if I wanted to protect my food from it being taken away from me. Yuto stretched out his arms and hugged me. While doing so, he was uttering high-pitched words. I think he was praising me. I bit his hand because I did

not like hugs and I knew Ellie had separation anxiety so I went back to her. I let the men take care of the meat, my job was to comfort Ellie. The day ended with a great meal Yuto cooked and I drifted off instantly.

Every day seemed the same and living somewhere in the middle of nowhere became a routine. Wake up, make a fire, gather water, food and fire-wood, comfort Ellie, eat, crack jokes and go to sleep. Life was not that bad after all.

The third week brought a change. We heard a loud noise, after that a plane appeared. I started waving and shouting, soon the others joined me and we were like children, jumping and screaming, running up and down. The pilot had to see us because the plane started lowering and approaching the bare terrain.

When it landed, the captain kindly greeted us and introduced himself. His name was Chad, I would say about 45 years old and 175 cm tall. We all thanked him for rescuing us. We soon took off with the plane. This was the day we all got saved, but that also meant we were going to separated and continue four different lives. Ellie pulled my sleeve in the middle of that thought: Are we going to split? It was the saddest tone I had ever heard. But truly, I did not have the slightest idea what was going to happen next. She held onto me, and I held onto her. Everyone else joined the hug, remembering everything we went through for the last three weeks. It was an amazing feeling that we survived and built such a strong relationship.

The next thing I remember is that I woke up in a comfortable bed, with Ellie. I was confused, but soon we were informed that they put us into an orphanage, because we were too young to care for ourselves as our parents died in the crash. Ellie looked very happy and it felt nice not to be separated from Ellie whom I got attached to. The orphanage remained our home for some years. Adora was also there, since they were also a minor. Charlie and Yuto came to visit us as often as they could.

The orphanage set new challenges for us, but its stories will be revealed on another occasion.

To Go or Not to Go, That Is the Question

Danny Singh

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The IATEFL Slovenia conference in Topolšica back in 2013 was where it had all begun, my first presentation at an international teaching conference, a one-off experience I had assumed. Little did I know that I'd be back the next year and almost every other year, plus have attended several other conferences in the meantime, as I entered this endless spiral of travelling to conferences, month after month.

2020 had begun with a couple of TESOL conferences in Greece, Thessaloniki in northern Greece which was a regular for me, six consecutive years and Athens which was a novelty for me. The Thessaloniki conference took place in the third weekend of February. The Coronavirus was already causing damage in the north of Italy, but in the rest of Italy and in the rest of Europe, we looked on and held our breath. By the time, the Athens conference came around at the beginning of March, there were strong rumours of Italy closing its borders with the rest of Europe. I was petrified about

missing out on my one and maybe only chance of getting to the conference in Greece, they had rejected previous proposals from me three times already, but I insisted in my own stubborn way of submitting proposals, until they were finally forced to either accept me or call the police!

I made it to Athens and discovered a really interesting city. The conference itself was full of cancellations. For every two workshops which went ahead, three were cancelled. Nonetheless, those who did attend, including several from abroad enjoyed themselves immensely. As the diffusion of this virus had increased dramatically, the flights were half-empty which suited me, as I had more space to make myself comfortable, stretch my legs and get up to go to the toilet whenever I felt like it. The University location had made provisions, as there was hand gel on every corner and signs up reminding everyone to wash their hands regularly, however, there was no physical distancing or mask wearing as



yet. As I watched the Italian news in the evenings, the situation was getting worse, they might close the borders immediately, leaving me stranded in Greece! How would I then get to Slovenia the week after for their 2020 conference? They had confirmed that they had no intention of cancelling the conference despite all the pressure to do so, other conferences taking place later in the year had already been postponed. I must get back to Rome, empty my case then repack and eventually make my way to Slovenia.

As it was, I made it back to Rome and roughly an hour after getting home, heard the Italian Prime Minister declare that from midnight, Italy was going to close its borders and we were not to go out or travel anywhere, unless it was absolutely necessary. It was 9 March and I had to figure out a way of getting to Slovenia for the conference, I would not be denied that easily. As I sat there planning my journey and what to say if stopped and questioned, the news came through from Slovenia that the conference had been postponed as gatherings of large groups were now not permitted. I slumped back in my chair, eyes closed, head in my hands, this had to be a nightmare. It was a living nightmare, as day by day, countries all over the world began to close their borders and a new way of life began, physical distancing and mask wearing became the norm, touching, kissing and hugging were considered a crime and teaching was all about scheduling meetings, muting participants and screen sharing.

As 2020 progressed in what seemed to be the longest year ever, conferences left, right and centre were being either cancelled or transferred online. This had some advantages of course. You could attend two or more conferences at the same time without suffering jetlag, click in and out of workshops without offending anyone, make yourself a coffee and switch off your camera, so no one could see how awful you looked. As we approached the long-awaited summer, most of the world slowly began to reopen, though with caution, distancing, masks and quarantines.

The Slovenia conference now due to take place in October still hadn't been cancelled. In September, the decision came through that there would be no

international conference as originally planned, however, in its place there would now be two national conferences, each with a maximum of 50 participants in this new location that had been proposed. It would be risky, I was in the UK at the time, I'd have to fly to Trieste, then travel by car for about four or five hours from the West to the East of Slovenia finally arriving not far from the Hungarian border. The situation in Europe was beginning to get worse again, as the threat of a second wave approached. The conference might end up being transferred online at the last minute, then I'd be stuck in Slovenia with no conference, the borders might shut again, there were an array of infinite possibilities that something could go wrong. The first conference was directed towards primary teachers, the second towards secondary. I chose the first, not because my work is aimed more at primary teachers, but simply because it was the first one and with the benefit of hindsight, what a fantastic choice it turned out to be!

I realised that this was the only physical-presence conference I was likely to grace in the near future, having not been to one since early March, so decided it was worth the risk. It was one hell of a journey, as I left the UK early in the morning and arrived late in the evening at the new location, the Hotel Vivat. After a good night's sleep and a hearty buffet breakfast, healthy fresh fruit, cereal and yoghurt, followed by some slightly less healthy sausages, eggs and other pleasures that I won't mention, I staggered along to the green room, where things



were beginning to unravel. Instead of the usual four workshops going on at the same time, there were only two, or in some cases only one, which made the choice a whole lot easier.

I attended some great workshops on different online learning tools which I knew little about, but seemed potentially useful, some sessions on using our senses and mindfulness and of course, my favourite ones where I had the chance to stand up, move, dance, run around and cause trouble. My session which I had been giving online at several other conferences went quite well and there was a feeling of liberty, as I was able to stand in front of an audience (albeit at a distance) without a mask in front of my face and communicate both verbally and non-verbally jumping around like an excited rabbit. Interspersed with these great sessions were real coffee breaks with coffee and an assortment of cakes provided and real people that I could look at and talk to, exchanging ideas and opinions, able to observe their wide range of hairstyles, the colours of their clothes, their shoes, but most of all, the expressions on their faces. That made it all worth it, it almost brought tears to my eyes, as real human contact was brought back to reality, at least for those two days, before the nightmare of 2020 returned and even mask-wearing outdoors became the norm.

I may have been almost the only man, certainly the only non-Slovenian present, but none of that mattered, neither did the absence of my favourite social activity, the international evening, where I generally got to sample culinary delicacies from all over the world, combined with an array of home-made alcoholic beverages, while taking my linguistic skills to another level. As usual, I popped into Trojane for a doughnut, then on to Ljubljana for a one-night stay before heading towards the coast of Slovenia, where I could reflect on what had been yet another amazing IATEFL Slovenia experience before I headed home to Rome. When the news came through that the second conference only a week later was to be transferred online, I breathed a sigh of relief, as I realised how lucky I had been and how right my decision had been to be there at all costs, as I wait patiently for the next "physical presence" conference, whenever and wherever that might be.

POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA UČENCE 7. RAZREDA OSNOVNE ŠOLE

Letos je že desetič zapored potekalo tekmovanje v znanju angleškega jezika za učence 7. razreda. Tekmovanje je bilo organizirano na dveh ravneh, šolski in državni. Šolsko tekmovanje je potekalo 15. marca 2021, državno pa 15. aprila 2021. Vsaka šola je lahko na državno tekmovanje prijavila največ tri skupine, vsa priznanja (bronasta, srebrna in zlata) pa smo podelili na državni ravni. Letos je bilo na šolski ravni – v primerjavi z lanskim šolskim letom – manj udeležencev, in sicer 233 sodelujočih učencev, od teh je 190 napredovalo na državno tekmovanje.

Letošnje tekmovanje smo naslovili HOME ALONE. Šolski leti 2019/20 in 2020/21 sta bili polni nepredvidljivih sprememb v našem delu z učenci. Učenci pa so se večkrat znašli v situaciji, ko so ostali sami doma. Učence smo želeli spodbuditi k ustvarjanju videoposnetkov o tem, kaj počnejo doma, da preženejo brezdelje in kako lahko vključijo svoje prijatelje/sotekmovalce v dogajanje tudi, če niso v istem prostoru. Učenci so v svojih videoposnetkih prikazali različne zanimive domislice za krajšanje časa, ko so sami doma. Takšna tema je omogočala fleksibilnost pri izdelavi videoposnetkov tudi v času nepredvidljivih in nenadnih sprememb v šolstvu glede na epidemiološko sliko, ki bi lahko otežila ali celo onemogočila tekmovanje. Datum tekmovanja smo na obeh ravneh zaradi epidemioloških razlogov in sprememb v izvajanju izobraževalnega dela prestavili iz prvotno predvidenih terminov za šest tednov. Tekmovalci so vsem letošnjim izzivom navkljub izkazali veliko mero kreativnosti in naredili čudovite izdelke. Nekateri tekmovalci so posneli prispevke tako, da so nastopali v istem prostoru, drugi tekmovalci so posneli kadre vsak pri sebi doma, nekateri pa so inovativno posneli videoposnetke z uporabo spletnih orodij, kot je Zoom.

Tudi letos je bila obvezna uporaba aplikacije Videoshop – Video Editor, ki je bila lani dobro sprejeta. Da je delo s kriteriji lažje, je IATEFL Slovenia letos kot novost besedilo kriterijev prečistilo in poenostavilo, prav tako pa se je zaradi zagotavljanja večje objektivnosti uknila postavka »splošni vtis«. Nekateri skupine so letos po nepotrebem izgubljale točke zaradi vertikalne postavitve snemanja in neurejenega scenarija, nekaj prispevkov pa je bilo žal diskvalificiranih. Eden od izdelkov ni bil narejen v predpisanem programu Videoshop, en prispevek je tekel več kot 30 sekund neprekinjeno brez govora, en

prispevek ni vseboval scenarija z zapisanim govorom, trije izdelki pa so bili diskvalificirani zaradi nepopolne prijave na državno tekmovanje.

Na državno tekmovanje smo preko uveljavljenega spletnega odložišča prejeli 58 izdelkov, ki so jih pripravile dve- do petčlanske skupine. Prispele izdelke je tekmovalna komisija ocenjevala glede na naslednje kriterije: vsebino oz. sporočilno vrednost, slovnično oz. jezikovno pravilnost, besedišče, izgovorjavo, strukturo izdelka, ustreznost njegove dolžine, urejenost scenarija ter tehnično dovršenost prispevka.

Za bronasto priznanje je bilo treba osvojiti 70 % točk, za srebrno 80 % točk ter za zlato 90 % točk. Bronasto priznanje je letos osvojilo 37 tekmovalcev, srebrno 36 tekmovalcev, zlato priznanje pa 18 tekmovalcev. Zmagovalni prispevek letošnjega tekmovanja je bil »Problems at Home«, ki so ga ustvarili Rok Lavrič, Jure Markelj in Lan Štimec z Osnovne šole Toneta Pavčka pod mentorstvom Klemna Kramarja.

Statistika na kratko:

Število sodelujočih šol:	38
Število izdelkov, ki smo jih prejeli za državno tekmovanje:	58
Število vseh tekmovalcev:	233
Število bronastih priznanj:	10 skupin (37 tekmovalcev)
Število srebrnih priznanj:	14 skupin (36 tekmovalcev)
Število zlatih priznanj:	5 skupin (18 tekmovalcev)
Število mentorjev:	42

V imenu tekmovalne komisije vsem tekmovalcem iskreno čestitamo za njihove dosežke, mentorjem pa se najlepše zahvaljujemo za njihovo sodelovanje in se jim priporočamo za povratne informacije. Potrudili se bomo vaše predloge čim boljše upoštevati in oblikovati tekmovanje, ki temelji na skupnem, vzajemnem trudu. Vabimo vas, da se nam ponovno pridružite prihodnje leto.

Patricija Frlež
koordinatrica tekmovanja

POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA UČENCE 8. RAZREDA OSNOVNE ŠOLE

V šolskem letu 2020/21 je Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika latefl Slovenia organiziralo dvanajsto tekmovanje v znanju angleščine za učence 8. razreda.

Pravilnik in razpis tekmovanja v tekočem šolskem letu sta bila objavljena na spletni strani društva. Tekmovanje je bilo sistemsko podprto in izvedeno preko strežnika DMFA. Tekmovanje iz znanja angleščine za učence 8. razreda je dvostopenjsko, na šolski ravni tekmujejo učenci za bronasta priznanja, na državni ravni pa za srebrna in zlata priznanja.

Zaradi razglašene epidemije in posledičnega šolanja na daljavo sta bila datuma šolskega in državnega tekmovanja prestavljena na marec in april.

Tema letošnjega šolskega tekmovanja je bila **“Slovenian tales, myths and legends – When we lose our myths we lose our place in the universe.” (Madeleine L’Engle)**.

Šolsko tekmovanje se je odvijalo v ponedeljek, 8. 3. 2021. Zaradi epidemiološke situacije je bil v letošnjem letu spremenjen format tekmovanja, in sicer je bilo tekmovanje prirejeno za reševanje na daljavo preko strežnika DMFA. Naloge se je reševalo z dopolnjevanjem besedila z namigom, dopolnjevanjem brez namiga, izbiranjem iz spustnega menija, in označevanjem trditev (true, false, not given). Tekmovanje na šolski stopnji je program v celoti samodejno popravil in ovrednotil. Izvedba tekmovanja preko spleta je omogočila vsem učencem, tako tistim, ki so bili prisotni v šoli kot tistim, ki jim je bila dodeljena karantena, da so

se lahko udeležili tekmovanja. Na dan tekmovanja so se tekmovalci v svojem znanju pomerili na matičnih šolah ali od doma.

Šolskega tekmovanja sta se udeležila 3902 učenca. Tekmovalci so se pomerili v bralni spretnosti, uporabi jezika v sobesedilu in znanju besedišča. Bronasto priznanje je osvojilo 582 učencev. Tema državnega tekmovanja je bila **„Tales, myths and legends – All those old myths and legends and fairy tales didn’t just appear out of nowhere for no good reason, you know. (H. M. Forester)“**. Na državno tekmovanje se je na podlagi rezultatov šolskega tekmovanja uvrstilo 474 učencev. Organizirano in izvedeno je bilo v ponedeljek, 19. 4. 2021.

Tekmovanja se je udeležilo 465 učencev, 9 jih k tekmovanju ni pristopilo.

Zaradi epidemiološke situacije je bil tudi format državnega tekmovanja prirejen za oddaljeno reševanje, in sicer tako da so učenci odsek A in B (besedišče in poznavanje kulture) reševali kot spletne naloge preko strežnika DMFA, odsek C (kreativno pisanje) pa so pisali v fizični obliki. Izdelke so nato poskenirali in naložili na strežnik DMFA.

Kljub oddaljenemu reševanju so bili učenci vodeni v »virtualnih učilnicah« na svojih matičnih šolah, za učence v karanteni pa so bile dodeljene posebne učilnice, kjer so lokalni organizatorji državnega tekmovanja tekom tekmovanja preko aplikacije ZOOM vodili in nadzorovali tekmovalce v karanteni. Lokalni organizatorji državnega tekmovanja po regijah so bili:

lokacija	Šola	organizator
Celje	OŠ Mozirje	Petra Šavc
Koper	OŠ Dušana Bordona Smedela - Koper	Tanja Nedeljković
Ljubljana - jug	OŠ Sostro	mag. Maja Primožič
Ljubljana - sever	OŠ Šmartno	Maja Pogač
Maribor	OŠ Gornji Petrovci	Ivana Zidanšek

Zlato priznanje je osvojilo 54 učencev, srebrno priznanje pa 98 učencev.

V letošnjem šolskem letu so največ znanja pokazali naslednji tekmovalci:

tekmovalec	šola	mentorica
Katarina Kocbek	OŠ Bratov Polančičev, Maribor	Ana Perović
Martin Košec	OŠ Milana Šušteršiča, Ljubljana	Maja Ambrožič
Tanja Moe	OŠ Majde Vrhovnik, Ljubljana	Darinka Šaubah Kovič

Iskrene čestitke vsem tekmovalcem, ki so sodelovali na letošnjem tekmovanju, še posebej pa tistim tekmovalcem, ki so prejeli priznanja in njihovim mentorjem. Iskreno se zahvaljujemo vsem učiteljem angleščine, mentorjem in vodjem tekmovanja za vso pomoč in potrpežljivost, ki ste jo izkazali tekom letošnjega tekmovanja. Leto, ki se izteka, je vsem skupaj predstavljalo izjemen izziv, s katerim smo se zelo uspešno spopadli. Hvala tudi vsem popravljavcem državnega tekmovanja, ki so tokrat popravljali preko spleta, lokalnim organizatorjem državnega tekmovanja, organizatorjem šolskega tekmovanja in vsem mentorjem, ki so sodelovali pri izvedbi in vrednotenju. Želimo vam uspešen in miren zaključek šolskega leta in vas vabimo, da se nam ponovno pridružite v naslednjem letu in tako prispevate k širjenju zanimanja za učenje in večanje znanja angleščine.

Barbara Lukač Patarčec
koordinatorka tekmovanja

glavni sponzor tekmovanja



POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA 2. LETNIK

Slovensko društvo učiteljev angleškega jezika IATEFL Slovenia je v šolskem letu 2020/2021 že kar enajsto šolsko leto zapored uspešno izvedlo tekmovanje za dijake 2. letnikov srednjih šol. Razpis, pravilnik tekmovanja, navodila za tekmovanje in kriteriji za ocenjevanje so bili objavljeni konec julija na spletni strani www.iatefl.si. Dokumenti so bili poslani članom IATEFL Slovenia po elektronski pošti, prav tako pa tudi mentorjem in mentoricam dijakov, ki so sodelovali na dosedanjih tekmovanjih.

Tekmovanje je potekalo na dveh ravneh, in sicer je bilo na posameznih šolah najprej izvedeno šolsko tekmovanje (22. 2. 2021), nato pa so izmed prijavljenih izdelkov šole poslale najboljše na državno tekmovanje (29. 3. 2021). Zaradi epidemiološke slike v državi smo tekmovanje zamaknili za 2 meseca in s tem omogočili dijakom, da so lahko sodelovali v največji možni meri.

Letošnja tematika tekmovanja je bila »2030«. Določen je bil tudi žanr, in sicer so morali dijaki in dijakinje posneti FILM TRALIER. Predpisanih je bilo po 10 besed v posamezni kategoriji, ki so jih morali dijaki smiselno uporabiti v posnetem prispevku. Besede so bile naslednje:

KATEGORIJA A / C:

EXTRAVAGANZA (N), CAROUSEL (N), CODSWALLOP (N), GLEAM (V), FORETELL (V), UNFOLD (V), ASININE (ADJ), TRIFLING (ADJ), EERILY (ADV), ABRUPTLY (ADV)

KATEGORIJA B / D:

EXTRAVAGANZA (N), KLUTZ (N), HEYDAY (N), BREW (V), UNFOLD (V), GLEAM (V), JARRING (ADJ), UNCANNY (ADJ), PREPOSTEROUSLY (ADV), SEEMINGLY (ADV)

Kriteriji pri izbiri najboljše skupine (tako na šolski kot na državni ravni) so bili naslednji: pravilnost in domiselnost pri uporabi podanih besed, jezik, izgovorjava, splošni vtis in tehnična izvedba. Skupaj je lahko posamezna skupina dosegla največ 90 točk (60 pri prvih štirih kriterijih in 30 za tehnično izvedbo). Članice ocenjevalne komisije smo bile Jasna Šebez, Lea Koler in Hana Brezovnik.

Državnega tekmovanja se je udeležilo **16 šol**, in sicer je v **32 skupinah** v treh različnih kategorijah (A, C in D) tekmovalo skupno več kot **150 dijakov**. Zaradi neupoštevanja pravilnika in kriterijev je bilo diskvalificiranih pet skupin.

Zelo smo veseli, da je bila udeležba tako številčna, saj je bilo šolsko leto in leto nasploh zelo zahtevno in nepredvidljivo, tako da se res najlepše zahvaljujemo najprej dijakom za voljo in energijo in veliko iznajdljivosti, pa tudi mentorjem za potrpežljivost, motivacijo in spodbudo.

Število priznanj po kategorijah

Priznanje	A	B	C	D	skupaj
zlato	4	/	1	/	5
srebrno	9	/	/	/	9
bronasto	2	/	/	1	3
skupaj	15	/	1	1	17

Zlata priznanja so osvojile naslednje skupine:

KATEGORIJA A:

Gimnazija Poljane s posnetkom *The final decade?*
(Luka Južnič, Pija Marija Kopač, Mia Krčar, Andrea Novak)
mentor: Emil Lokar

Gimnazija Nova Gorica s posnetkom *Our sparkling future*
(Eva Cerkvenič, Klara Kofol, Aleksandra Postolov, Ema Šinigoj, Danaja Školaris)
mentorica: Martina Kobal

Gimnazija Ptuj s posnetkom *Unmasked*
(Rok Fakin, Miha Godicelj, Jan Miklošič, Nino Šegula, Filip Verdenik)
mentorica: Romana Zelenjak

Srednja šola Josipa Jurčiča s posnetkom *Every single one of them*
(Ana Adamlje, Nina Grabnar, Vanja Pevc, Žan Strmec, Maša Žnidaršič)
mentorica: Irena Mori

KATEGORIJA C:

Gimnazija Bežigrad s posnetkom *Hereafter*
(Val Jenko, Nikita Arefyev, David Safro)
mentorica: Tamara Bosnič

Še enkrat izrekamo iskrene čestitke vsem sodelujočim in njihovim mentorjem.

Nasvidenje do prihodnjega leta!

Jasna Šebez
koordinatorka tekmovanja

POROČILO O TEKMOVANJU V ZNANJU ANGLEŠČINE ZA 3. LETNIK

V šolskem letu 2020/21 smo kljub spremenjenim in oteženim epidemiološkim razmeram v državi uspešno izpeljali regijsko in državno raven tekmovanja, čeprav je bilo treba tekmovanje izvesti ob nadomestnem kasnejšem terminu. Regijsko tekmovanje je potekalo dne 22. 3. 2021 v spletni obliki preko InfoServerja DMFA. Državno raven tekmovanja je bila prav tako izvedena spletno in se je pod nadzorom učiteljev mentorjev v dogovorjenih spletnih konferenčnih srečanjih odvila 7. 4. 2021.

Razpis tekmovanja smo na naši spletni strani objavili konec julija 2020. Razpis je vseboval podatke o strukturi tekmovanja in tipu nalog. O vseh spremembah glede izvedbe regijske in državne ravni tekmovanja so bili mentorji obveščeni preko sistema DMFA ter z obvestili v zavihku o tekmovanjih na spletni strani www.iatefl.si.

Na regijsko tekmovanje se je prijavilo 674 dijakov. Letos je tekmovanje potekalo v 3 kategorijah – **A1** (splošne gimnazije),

A2 (mednarodni oddelki in dijaki, ki so več kot eno leto bivali na angleško govorečem področju), **B** (strokovne šole in angleščina kot drugi tuji jezik).

Na državno tekmovanje se je skupaj uvrstilo 118 dijakov, ki so tudi prejemniki bronastih priznanj. V letošnjem šolskem letu smo podelili tudi 25 srebrnih in 24 zlatih državnih priznanj. Spodnjo mejo točk za zlato in srebrno priznanje je določila Državna tekmovalna komisija, vsi rezultati pa so bili objavljeni na InfoServerju v sistemu DMFA.

Naloge s področja kulture so bile letos v vseh kategorijah vezane na literarno delo. V kategorijah **A1** in **A2** so se nanašale na dramo Agathe Christie *The Mousetrap*, v kategoriji **B** pa na zbirko kratkih zgodb pisatelja Roalda Dahla *Taste and other Tales*.

Najboljši dosežek v posameznih kategorijah so dosegli naslednji tekmovalci in tekmovalke:

Kategorija A1		
1. mesto	2. mesto	3. mesto
Urška Krumpak Škofijska gimnazija Vipava <i>Mentorica: Sonja Matelič</i>	Ena Ilievska II. gimnazija Maribor <i>Mentorica: Klavdija Krempf Slana</i>	Ana Stergar Gimnazija Vič <i>Mentorica: Maja Gerden</i> Ana Svenšek Prva gimnazija Maribor <i>Mentorica: mag. Irena Smole</i>
Kategorija A2		
1. mesto	2. mesto	3. mesto
Andraž Zihlerl II. gimnazija Maribor <i>Mentor: mag. Peter Cigrovski</i>	Maša Božjak Gimnazija Bežigrad <i>Mentor: dr. Mirko Mrčela</i>	Domen Lisjak Gimnazija Bežigrad <i>Mentor: dr. Mirko Mrčela</i>
Kategorija B		
1. mesto	2. mesto	3. mesto
Aiken Tine Ahac Elektrotehniško-računalniška strokovna šola in gimnazija Ljubljana <i>Mentorica: Hana Brezovnik</i>	Matija Peršak Gimnazija Ptuj <i>Mentorica: Brigita Vertič-Kumer</i>	Marko Stojanović Sukur Šolski center Ljubljana, Srednja strojna in kemijska šola <i>Mentorica: Vlasta Rudar Nenadović</i>

Ostali rezultati so objavljeni v sistemu DMFA na InfoServerju.

Vsem dijakom, ki so se udeležili letošnjega tekmovanja čestitam za uspehe in sodelovanje na tekmovanju. Zahvaljujemo se tudi mentorjem in popravilalcem na državnem tekmovanju ter vsem nadzornim profesorjem in organizatorjem, ki so nam pomagali pri izvedbi obeh ravni tekmovanja.

mag. Marija Sedmak,
koordinatorka tekmovanja za 3. letnik



TWin odlični izleti!

Turistična agencija TWIN se s kulturno-izobraževalnimi potovanji ukvarja že 20. leto. Ker v Veliko Britanijo potujemo pogosteje kot večina ostalih slovenskih organizatorjev potovanj, ponujamo odlično in preverjeno izvedbo. Naše cene tudi že vključujejo javni prevoz in obvezne vstopnine. Cene so odvisne predvsem od termina odhoda in vaše fleksibilnosti pri odhodu.

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www.twintur.com

Zakaj s Twin-om v London:

- 1 Pogosti in redni, zagotavljeni odhodi v London.** Twin organizira šolska potovanja v London že 20 let, v povprečju imamo na mesec vsaj 3 zagotovljene odhode v London.
- 2 Odlično vodstvo.** Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je odlično poznavanje običajev in turističnih znamenitosti Londončanov le prvi korak k odlični izvedbi. Naši vodniki imajo dolgoletne izkušnje pri vodenju šolske mladine, zato odlično poznajo vse sestavine programa, saj jih sami pripravljajo. Tudi zato je vodenje/izvedba toliko bolj fleksibilna glede na želje skupine. Naj še omenimo, da boste v Sloveniji težko našli vodnike, ki v London vodijo tako pogosto kot Twinovi vodniki.
- 3 Nastanitev, ki presega običajno turistično kategorijo.** Pri Twinu se zavedamo, da je dober spanec pomembna sestavina izleta. Vsi naši hoteli so hoteli s 3* in pri večini udeležencev presežejo njihova pričakovanja. Kot specialist za London lahko zagotovimo vsaj en bogat angleški zajtrk (običajnih zajtrki v Londonu so skromni kontinentalni).
- 4 Nikoli naknadno ne spreminjamo pogojev.** Naša cena je vedno znana že ob prijavi in se nikoli ne spremeni zaradi spremembe cen dobaviteljev, goriva oz letalskega prevoznika.
- 5 Vedno ponudimo kakšno dodatno storitev – brezplačno.** S program zagotavljamo minimalni obseg storitev oz. ogledov, vendar nikoli ne izvedemo samo minimalnega obsega – vedno, pri vsaki skupini dodamo nekaj posebnega, kar ni zapisano v programu. Prav tako v naših programih nikoli ne zapišemo "če bo čas dopuščal", kajti vse naše programe vedno v celoti izvedemo. In ker si London zelo pogosto ogledujemo, poznamo tudi optimalno zaporedje ogledov brez nepotrebnega hitenja.
- 6** Vsaj 183 osnovnih in srednjih šol je že potovalo z nami. **Z nami zelo malo šol potuje samo enkrat.** Če želite neobvezujoče vzpostaviti stik z organizatorjem na eni od šol, ki je že potovala z nami, vam bomo z veseljem posredovali kontakt.
- 7** Ponujamo 3-dnevni program, kjer za izvedbo ni potrebno delovnika.

Več informacij na www.twintur.com ali na 040 187 830 ali v poslovalnici na Zemljemerski ulici 12 v Ljubljani.

Osmisliti učenje je osnovna naloga vsakega učitelja in ni boljsega načina, kako priljubiti angleščino, od tega, da učence popelješ po svetu. V današnjih časih to ni enostavno. Šole in učitelji se bojijo odgovornosti, mnogi starši pa ne zmorejo ali znajo otrok odpeljati sami. Ni bilo lahko pred 15 leti prvič sestiti na avtobus in se podati z agencijo, o kateri nismo vedeli ničesar, na večdnevno potovanje v Veliko Britanijo. Bilo nas je strah pred odhodom, a takoj ko smo se podali na pot, smo vedeli, da je bila odločitev prava.

Po tistem, ko smo prvič potovali s TWINOM, smo vedeli, da nas ne bo več strah. Lani smo že desetič odkrivali Evropo in vsakič smo se vrnili ne samo zadovoljni, ampak tudi hvaležni za TWINOVO strokovnost, prijaznost, ustrežljivost ... Hvaležni smo celotni ekipi in nikoli ne bi izbrala druge agencije, saj sem prepričana, da niti cenovno niti strokovno potovanja ne bi mogla biti ugodnejše in bolj izpeljana.

Ta ekskurzija je postala stalna praksa naše šole in učenci komaj čakajo, da bodo dovolj stari, da se je bodo lahko udeležili. Nam, spremljevalcem, pa je v neizmerno veselje, ko jih opazujemo, kako polni vtisov in lepih doživetij še dolgo pripovedujejo o potovanju.

Ksenija Tripkovič, OŠ Selnica ob Dravi