

Hrvatsko udruženje profesora engleskog jezika
Croatian Association of Teachers of English



inspire
& be inspired

HUPE *zine*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear HUPEzine readers,

HUPE is proud to present the twelfth issue of our magazine.

We hope you will enjoy the articles published in this issue and we also send a special thanks to all those among you who contributed to the winter edition of HUPEzine. HUPE is looking forward to receiving your feedback as well as articles for the next edition. This is an excellent opportunity to share your ideas and good practices with your colleagues in Croatia and abroad. The deadline for article submissions is May 1, 2020.

This issue brings you a text on teachers' motivation by **Ivana Bokavšek**. Ivana empathizes motivation as a key element to successful teaching. We hope that her article will inspire all of you since Ivana has won several awards this year including the one from the Ministry of Education.

Teacher counsellor and the winner of the Global Teachers' Award **Ivana Bašić** kindly shared an article on *Marking Children's Week*. *Love children first and foremost* was taken as the motto of the week and this leaves no doubt that all educators will enjoy the article and find inspiration and possibly some new ideas for themselves.

Ivana Gredečak offers an excellent description of her trip to the UK. The reason for her trip was an Erasmus+ project called *Ready, Steady, Change!* where the emphasis is put on mental health. The topic is proven to be among the most important ones in Croatian schools and, therefore, HUPE thanks Ivana for sharing new knowledge that will serve us all. Ivana also provided us with insight on how foreign languages are thought and learnt in different European countries in her article *Travel'n'share*.

Our Slovenian colleague **Gabi Čakš** shared two articles. The first one is about reading and learner motivation in the EFL Classroom and the second one questions coursebooks as a tool in our classrooms. Since this issue was often discussed in Croatia in the last two years as well, you will undoubtedly find the topic highly relevant.

Silvija Pošta from the Industrial-Vocational School Virovitica offers an insight into an Erasmus + 2019 KA101 project *Getting into ICT Shape*. The project focuses on the use of ICT in teaching and learning.

As one of the most popular trends in education in recent memory, you've undoubtedly heard of the flipped classroom. **Gorana Babić** from Franjo Tuđman Brela Primary School wrote an article for HUPEzine introducing the flipped classroom and the possibility of using new technologies (cell phones, internet, smart board) in teaching in order to increase students' motivation and achieve better educational results, as well as to modernize the teaching process.

Silvija Avar attended a seminar held at the International School for Holocaust Studies in Jerusalem from 22-29 April 2018 and she has sent us a report on the event. Silvija's article *Teaching about the Holocaust* is highly recommendable for all interested in the topic and for those who consider applying in the years to come.

Dolores Malić, a teacher of English and German from Slovenia has some great ideas on how to introduce irregular verbs when teaching grammar.

Meri Ružević from the Industrial Mechanical School in Zagreb also sent us an article for this issue. She described an excellent experience from Malta. *The Erasmus+ Mobility Project Competitive Vet for Learners and Teachers II, Covet II* is the topic covered in the article. If you are looking for new ideas or inspiration for your next project, we are sure this article will be of great help.

Silvija Pošta from the Industrial-Vocational School Virovitica contributed with an excellent article about a project *Getting into ICT Shape* that she did with her students and colleagues. We thank Silvija for sharing this amazing experience with HUPEzine readers.

As you can see, our teachers have been everywhere and done loads of projects that we proudly present to you.

Enjoy and hope to see you all in Poreč in April!

Yours, Anita

HUPE BOARD

Anita Jokic (PRESIDENT)

I majored in English and Croatian language and literature at The University of Rijeka and I teach English in Prva riječka Hrvatska gimnazija. I enjoy taking my students abroad as part of numerous educational interdisciplinary projects. I have been a co-organizer of several conferences and summer schools and regularly deliver lectures and workshops. Language teaching and teacher training has been an important part of my life in the last 15 years, working in primary, secondary and tertiary education. From the very beginning of my teaching career, I have been motivated to educate and develop myself further professionally. I continuously share and exchange ideas with my colleagues and ELT experts - I have held about 50 workshops and lectures at both national and international conferences, ELT professional development events and have worked on numerous European and national projects. My professional interests include curriculum design, multidisciplinary lessons, ELT research and writing reviews. I have been an active HUPE member since 2005 and elected President of the Rijeka Branch twice which made me realize even more the value of our association. I believe that new board members will put their experience into good use and make HUPE even stronger and bring it closer to its members giving them a chance to attend foreign conferences and represent HUPE on a regular basis.



Nino Sertic (INTERNATIONAL)

I am an English teacher at Srednja skola Hrvatski kralj Zvonimir in Krk. I have a degree in English and History, and I specialized in European Law at The University of Rijeka. Over the years I have participated in numerous Comenius and Erasmus+ projects and organized teacher training seminars. I enjoy traveling and helping both students and colleagues explore different countries and cultures. I decided to join the HUPE Board to promote English language teaching and to help the organisation grow and develop.



Anita Žepina (EDITOR)

I have been working as an English teacher at Benkovac Primary School for the past 13 years. I come from Split but I have been living in Zadar since I graduated at The University of Zadar. I have a degree in English and French language and literature, and I would say that language teaching has been my passion for as long as I can remember. During my professional career, I have held many workshops, written several coursebooks for young learners and currently I am working on digital teaching materials. I have been an active HUPE member for years now, and after being elected as a Branch president I realized how significant our association is. I decided to join the Board as an editor to help promote language teaching and training throughout marvelous examples that our teachers send us on a daily basis.



Petra Blajić (VICE PRESIDENT)

There are many things that are wrong or simply not working well in our profession. I have a feeling that all we ever do is complain, but only a few of us try to do something to make the situation of English teachers better (at least with respect to additional education, seminars, meetings). The more there are of us working together in HUPE, the better chances we'll have to have our voices heard. Basically, I just want to help out!



Dubravka Lapčić (SECRETARY)

'Being a long time HUPE member and a HUPE-Karlovac Branch president, I grew professionally and personally. I would like to share my experience with the new HUPE Committee members and help make this wonderful and hardworking Association keep being inspirational and supportive for many new generations of teachers to come.'



Tihana Švoren Korarec (PUBLIC RELATIONS)

'I want to help the Executive Committee keep inspiring teachers.'

Željka Jakušić Čejka (TREASURER)

I would like to continue my work in the HUPE Board because I think I can contribute to HUPE's success. HUPE has become an important part of my professional life and I have really enjoyed working with my colleagues.



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Contributions:

The best way to support your association and the HUPEzine is to write to us and send us your contributions. All contributions should be submitted on a CD or by e-mail. Please note the document name clearly on the CD. The deadline for the next issue is 1 May 2020.

Write and send your contributions to the HUPEzine editor. Please, be sure to write your name, surname and affiliation / institution and address at the beginning or end of the text

TEACHERS' MOTIVATION – THE BASIS OF SUCCESSFUL TEACHING

*Author: Ivana Bokavšek, English teacher
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Our role as a teacher today is not easy. Teachers have a wide range of duties, obligations and tasks which they need to complete on a daily basis. Along with this is the huge burden of being motivated in the classroom. The fact that teachers are stressed by everyday challenges and that their role in society is demanding, can easily influence their level of working motivation. By working motivation, I mean their innovative and motivational drive which is influential for their students in order to achieve all the teaching outcomes. To "spice up" this situation a little more, we should not forget that we are 21st century teachers, meaning that we are obliged to be prepared well enough to teach our students how to deal with future labor market demands and to be a competitive and competent workforce.



It is not easy to keep our teachers' motivation at a high level all the time but it is important to be self-reflective and to do self-evaluation regularly. It is the right way to make us aware of our state of mind, to be honest with ourselves, and to determine when, how, or why our motivation is decreasing. It is our responsibility and the first step to expose ourselves to a deep and sincere self-reflection. Here we need to exclude our teachers' ego, otherwise self-assessment will not be effective.

The next step is to define the factors that make a distinctive impact on teachers' motivation. According to my teaching experience I would emphasize some of them here, although there are more to add. They are not ordered by their importance, because I find them all almost equally important. I must be frank here, I have my favourites, but it is up to you, as part of your mini self-reflection to try to list them according to your priorities.

1. Better students' results:

The stress is not just on their results at the English language school, county or state competition, but on their learning results generally and on their personal improvement. By personal, I mean their skills, competences and responsibility towards learning and tasks. If they understand my message, the content they learn and the importance of a particular task or a test, then I am satisfied with my work.

2. Be a better, more innovative and distinctive teacher:

The absence of positive teachers' ambition is not a good start. We need to feel the desire to be better tomorrow. Self-reflection is, again, crucial to start with. To be a better teacher tomorrow means to pay attention to everything that has an influence on teaching outcomes today: teaching methods, high-quality preparation, teachers' training workshops/webinars, in other words, constant learning. We need to be open to modern technological demands and take responsibility for being self-educated. It is not less important to be a distinctive teacher because our students remember us as their positive role-model. Our personal teaching distinction shows them the importance of being good at work in different ways and this makes us and our work unique and it makes a difference in the world around us.

3. A better working environment:

This does not refer to the colour of our classroom walls or how well our classroom is equipped, but it refers to the working atmosphere. If our students feel comfortable and they are relaxed, then the atmosphere will be more interactive and this is the point of our class.

They are supposed to communicate, to ask questions, to observe, to make complaints, to evaluate and assess each other,

to make suggestions and give ideas about the class they would like to have, to laugh, to see their teacher is a human being who can make mistakes and who can make a joke about it.

4. Teachers' promotion:

This is the formal recognition of our good work and practice and it is equally important in our process of professional improvement. The impacts of being officially recognized make teachers more self-confident and aware of their importance in the classroom and society as well. It is a long-term responsibility to keep the quality of their work the same, or even higher, as it is used to justify their advancement to specialists in their fields of work. Official recognition by experts and recognition by the local community give teachers an elevated feeling of being successful. Here, I would underline the importance of making yourself ready to be criticized by the experts or even parents. There is no bad criticism, because each makes you stronger and more focused on work. To conclude, I'd dare to say, each criticism is constructive!

5. Personal and professional improvement:

They are a part of being officially promoted, but they are far more complex regarding the level of teachers' awareness of being self-evaluated. Self-confidence is unquestionably developed along with numerous skills and competences. The more they are developed, the better the teacher's motivation is.

6. Common cooperation:

When my motivation is fragile, working with my colleagues on common projects increases my working energy and gives me a feeling of "butterflies in my stomach". The point of being together and doing something useful for your students, your teaching community or school, awakens all our senses and lifts us to be productive, effective and efficient. We shouldn't forget that righteous feeling of helping each other which motivates us to be a more knowledgeable and skillful teacher.

7. Better and more significant projects:

Whenever I create projects with my colleagues and students, my motivation is, without a doubt, considerable. Every step of creating a project, regardless if it is a school one or big one like an Erasmus+ project, makes your working spirit exceptional. I am personally and professionally growing. If it is an Erasmus+ or an eTwinning project, then they make more difference in your working outcomes than any others. Learning from foreign colleagues in their school systems widens your perspective as a teacher. It is incredibly better if you plan and make a project together as the result of your previously successful cooperation. Your teaching, language, presentation and team-work skills, including your personal ones, give you extra value to your knowledge and experience. The project's final outcomes and results conclude the whole process by the best prize: you feel your motivation can never fade and you want more challenges.

8. Learning from your colleagues' best practice examples:

When I prepare my workshops or presentations, the motivation to be a good example from which my colleague can learn, makes me do my best. I also learn a lot in that case.

The same thing occurs when I attend my colleagues' webinars, workshops or interactive presentations, or we just meet, "off the record" for "a small teachers' talk". I compare myself with my colleagues' working policy which again leads me to the basis of our improvement: self-reflection. Then I can see what I am doing right or wrong, how to correct my mistakes, how to continue smoothly and successfully, and if I am just blank or without any ideas, I can ask for help if I need some, why not?

9. Be a teacher role model to younger colleagues and trainees:

If I may, I would gladly and proudly give an example of my mentoring assignment. It was quite energetic, challenging and a non-stop working period that my young trainee endured with a great deal of stamina and dedication. Later on, she became my colleague, luckily, and deserved that successful end to my "torturing". A few months later, my grade 6 students had really liked the song *Waltzing Matilda* when they were learning about Australia so thanks to their spontaneous impulse, I got the idea of making a school play to celebrate Australia Day. My ex-trainee who had become a fresh, young certified teacher, became my colleague. She was still not so experienced but full of motivation. She eagerly joined in to lead her 5th graders, who also participated in the play, to present the story using hand puppets. Everything resulted with an official recognition by the Australian Embassy. Every single student in our 2 classes got souvenirs from the Australian Embassy as a thank you. There is a short trailer about a motivated teacher mentor, a young teacher and students turning two months of hard work into something memorable. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSC4boQ4mRs>

10. Make a difference:

It is not just a wise quote we often refer to, it is our reality. As long as we are really aware of it, we are motivated to keep it alive.

MARKING CHILDREN'S WEEK

Ivana Bašić, mag. prim. educ., Teacher Counselor

Primary School Opuzen

Children's Week is celebrated every year in the first week of October. The motto of Children's Week is a beautiful and recognizable saying that expresses the attitude of adults towards children: *Love children first and foremost*. The central event is the gathering of children for various activities throughout the week and the public presentation of messages to adults and the occasional children's meeting with the mayor.

The lasting goals of Children's Week are:

- focus the attention of the general public on the realization of rights, needs and activities with children and for children
- organize special and appropriate games, events and creative activities with children and for children during those days
- launch new actions of great importance for the development and upbringing of children
- encourage volunteer social and professional work of adults with children, as well as active participation of children in the activities of the local community and beyond.

The project was implemented on the eTwinning portal and is included in the school curriculum.

Throughout Croatia, including Opuzen, from October 7 to 13, Children's Week was celebrated under the motto *Love children first and foremost*. In the morning the main town square was full of children from *Opuzen Kindergarten* and pupils from class 3B from *Opuzen Primary School*. The children prepared a variety of dance and music programmes for citizens. The goal of Children's Week is to encourage children and young people to stay in the open air as often as possible and to make new friends.



We sent messages to adults. We wrote to them in the Croatian language class.

In cooperation with *Opuzen Kindergarten*, the art workshop *My Friend and I* was organized. The children from the preschool group were our guests. Each third-grade pupil selected a friend from kindergarten and they drew together, thus creating a joint drawing.

We are pleased to cooperate with *Opuzen Town Library* and the librarian Karmela Popić Kešina, who held *Bajkaonica* in the town park. The pupils listened to the fairy tale read to them by the librarian, answered questions and later played *BOOK ON THE HEAD*. It was fun to see how skillful the pupils were in carrying books on their heads to the finish line.

We have worked with our partners on the eTwinning portal through video conferencing. We sang and danced together. We repeated the content learned about the rights and duties of children.

In Children's Week the importance of promoting children's rights is emphasized. It is also a good time to remind us of our shared responsibility of respect for children's rights and an opportunity for each of us to consider how child protection can be raised to an even higher level.



Erasmus+ Project KA 229 (2018-2020)

Travel 'n' share

Our first Erasmus+ project was initiated by a school from Norway. They wanted someone with no experience and we were lucky enough to be their partners in a very interesting project called Travel 'n' share. The objective of the project was to see and compare how foreign languages are learnt and taught in different European countries. Members of the project are Verket Skole from Moss, Norway, The Heritage Private School from Limassol, Cyprus, Tarup Skole from Odense, Denmark, IES Carmen Burgos de Segui from Alovera, Spain and finally, our school, Osnovna škola Ivanovec from Croatia.

Six students and two or three teachers were part of the mobilities. Each mobility lasted 5 days and all the participants observed classes in the morning and then, in the afternoon, we went on field trips to get to know their culture, heritage and traditions.

Our first mobility was to Denmark, to a school in Odense which is also the birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen. After observing their English and German lessons, we concluded that in comparison to Croatia, Danish students often work in groups. And because they are used to working in groups and on their own, without the constant help of the teacher, they put more effort into each activity, they are more independent and also more relaxed when communicating in a foreign language. However, our lessons are more dynamic and students are louder and more active in class.

We really liked the Danish school system: the relaxing atmosphere in the classroom, the independence of students who are used to working on their own, the lack of bells and strict rules about wearing slippers, the ability to sit still in class and not leave the classroom without asking. We admired the high reputation (+ salary 😊) of the teachers in Denmark which Croatia lacks, and last but not least, the happy and healthy students who do not think of school as something negative. They truly like school, they are not obsessed with marks, and at school they can really express themselves. They all got tablets from school and all the work is done at school so they can enjoy spending time with their families at home.

In Cyprus things are a bit different. The school is private, so the rules are stricter; students wear uniforms, they behave really well and discipline during the lessons is really at a high level. Students use both, iPads, books, workbooks and notebooks. The Russians are more into 'old school', even though they used their iPads and they played Kahoot quizzes, while English and German classes tend to use modern technology more often while teaching. All the students are very good at languages and, since this is the international school and



all the lessons except foreign languages are held in English, their knowledge of grammar and their speaking skills are excellent.

Most important of all, our students learned to be tolerant because in Cyprus people don't care where somebody is from. There are students and teachers of different skin colours, religions and nationalities and they all get along very well, and they don't care about their differences. What kind of person you are is what is important, and not your physical appearance.



The third mobility was to Spain. Their school system is the most similar to ours. They have books which last for four years and teachers are allowed to choose the materials which they find most interesting or more appropriate for their students and they are gradually introducing modern technology in their teaching.

Some students are very good at foreign languages but most aren't. Their speaking skills aren't on a very high level and some students mispronounce the words. But the teachers are trying really hard to explain everything and to motivate students for learning. We all agreed that the reason for mispronunciation is maybe because American and British TV series and films aren't shown in English with subtitles, but they are all in Spanish. If the students heard more native speakers of English in their free time (TV, radio, computer) their speaking skills would improve.

Our students loved Spain. They all said how much they enjoyed it, how they liked their Spanish peers and their parents and that this trip has changed their lives. They were also very happy because they visited stadium Santiago Bernabeu which was their greatest wish from the beginning of this project, since they're all Real Madrid fans.

After visiting each of the mentioned countries, our students had to make a presentation to their peers back home. Everyone agreed that they really benefited from the journeys. Even those students, who are shy and not very talkative, became more self-confident. They were full of impressions, full of gratitude for being part of the project; they all said how they enjoyed it, how they liked the school and the host families. They started encouraging other students to apply for similar projects because they became aware that being part of such a project can only help you with your self-esteem, your tolerance towards new and different people, and also improve your communication skills.

We were the hosts three months ago and we can say that it was a great experience for both teachers and students alike at Osnovna škola Ivanovec. It was our first Erasmus project and we were really doing our best to make it as successful as possible. There were many things that needed to be done properly and the key word to make it all function was organization. Since we are a little school with only 28 teachers, some of who work at two schools, we couldn't divide the work among many people. There were a few people who really got engaged in this project and put a lot of effort and free time into making everything work. Of course, those not directly involved in the project helped as well and this was the perfect opportunity to see how we work as a team.

We were told that the trip was useful for them as well as for their students, they found something they could use in their own teaching, they learned something about our country and our culture, and in general, they really enjoyed their stay. We succeeded in making them feel welcome and I hope that they will always remember this trip as something positive in their lives.

It was truly a rewarding experience for all the students at our school as well because they made new friends across Europe; they feel more comfortable when speaking English and they all have more self-esteem. This was our main objective – to teach our students to be more tolerant and to make them find new and unfamiliar situations exciting instead of scary. We will continue doing similar projects in the future because it can only make our school and its students and teachers better. We are grateful to be part of such projects where one can travel, meet other people and grow as a person. And as somebody once said: 'Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer.'

Croatian visit to the UK

Erasmus+ KA229 'Ready, steady, change! (2019-2021)

Ivana Gradečak

Croatian teachers **Ivana Gradečak**, **Nataša Kralj**, **Nikolina Hader** and **Dajana Kovačić** spent five beautiful November days in the UK, to be more precise, in Nelson near Manchester. The reason for their trip was an **Erasmus+ project** called **Ready, steady, change!** where the emphasis is put on mental health. Besides Croatia, partners in this project are the UK, which is the main coordinator, Greenland, Italy, Madeira Island (Portugal) and Turkey.

The host school of our first mobility, which lasted from 4th – 8th November 2019, was **Pendle Community High School & College** in Nelson, Lancashire,

the UK. The first day was all about getting to know each other through presentations about our schools and countries, focusing on statistics related to mental health, saying what our schools/regions/countries do concerning mental health and mentioning problems that need to be solved. Ivana Gradečak, the project coordinator of **Primary School Ivanovec** from **Croatia**, introduced the members of her team and their school as well as explained how their school deals with students who have special needs. In Primary School Ivanovec the most common problems are educational problems such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, ADHD and autism. Some students work with assistants who help them a lot with their work while the curriculum is adjusted to their needs. In today's world of technology and electronics, it's a good thing is that we have a school garden where most of our students spend a lot of their time. They really like working in the garden and reconnecting to nature. Our plan is to make a sort of 'open classroom' where students could have their lessons and spend even more time in the fresh air. All partner schools have similar problems with their students, some of them are even more serious, for example, they have to deal with sexual and physical violence at school and even with suicides that often occur in their community.

Pendle Community High School & College made a huge positive impression on all of us. This school, even though it has students with special needs, is such a successful school with many awards and accomplishments which



they are really proud of. Their students were so polite and friendly, walking quietly in the corridors, greeting us warmly in the classrooms and achieving amazing things with the help of their teachers and assistants. We were all very impressed by the interior of the school. Everything was so colourful and all the school walls were covered with creative pinboards full of students' work – artwork, literary work or craftwork made from wood. On Thursday, the last day of our visit, the students even made lunch for us. It was quite impressive how they pulled this off by themselves, with only a little help from their teachers. They served the food so carefully and always with a smile, they explained in detail what ingredients were in each meal, they were so polite and kind and the food was absolutely amazing, yet very healthy.

Apart from spending time at school, we also visited many locations, ate delicious food in different types of restaurants that the hosts took us to and enjoyed their traditions such as Guy Fawkes Bonfire Night and others. We convinced ourselves that English hospitality and friendliness was not just something we read about in our English course textbooks; it was real! Once again, we are very thankful for everything, especially to **Debra Grogan**, who is the main coordinator and the initiator of this project, but also to other staff members who helped with making us feel as welcome as possible. The next mobility is planned in March and we're going to be the hosts. We will all do our best to make everyone's stay enjoyable at our little school in Croatia.



ENJOY READING?



Written by: Gabi Čakš, prof

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I was curious about how a teacher motivates learners to read nowadays. The author, Stephanie Davis, is convinced that a learner needs to be able to read in a foreign language, but it is not clear what 'reading' means exactly. The author mentions Catherine Wallace who has identified three purposes for readers when reading: reading for survival, reading for learning and reading for pleasure. It means that one can read for different reasons and so is involved in different processes. The important question is why read. The author says that reading is a painless way to improve one's grasp of a language. This is particularly true at the advanced levels when students have a more specific understanding of the basic structures and vocabulary of the language. The benefits of extensive reading are enormous for students with a high level of proficiency in the language because their knowledge of the vocabulary will continue growing.

I still remember that reading in the classroom was the most boring thing in secondary school because the texts chosen by the teacher, or the ones provided by the course books, were not interesting and they were not authentic.

I wanted to discover why reading is unpopular. The first thought that came across my mind was the fear of reading in a foreign language in front of the class. The author (Davis) says that advanced learners have a sufficiently high level of English to enjoy and appreciate good, interesting, authentic texts, but learners do not know how to read through the text and how to enjoy the reading. The author has done some research in the class and asked learners about reading in their language. Students were confident and had many answers about how they read. When she asked them about reading in English they did not know how to answer. In my opinion, learners are much more confident and sure about reading in their mother tongue because they live with the language and they need it in all situations. The great mistake of foreign language teachers is that they choose boring and unreal texts, which are not interesting for young learners. If learners read something they can relate to, they will be more motivated to go through the texts and read because of the interesting content. I think that learners with lower levels of language proficiency have greater problems with reading because they have to read texts with difficult content and they are not familiar with the vocabulary. If they had an interesting text they would at least be curious as to what the general idea of the article or the story was.

We as teachers have two responsibilities. First, to help our students develop effective reading strategies and secondly, that they are able to read for pleasure. If learners can interact with English texts in the same way as educated native speakers do, then we are on the right path to improving motivation for reading.

I asked myself if teachers knew that reading is not really popular among learners and how we could solve this problem. Firstly we have to show them that reading can be more than just another classroom activity. Learners need to be motivated for reading in their free time and they would have to have the option of choosing their own texts. Perhaps a good idea is to give a weekly or monthly homework assignment where they have to find texts they like and then provide feedback about the text to the teacher. Another idea is to organize a Reading Club, where students share their experiences or ideas about the text. They can write in the school's magazine about the chosen text and they can cooperate in the School's Reading Badge program. Teachers can organize a Reading Night where they read with their students or a Reading Tea party where students would read in smaller groups and share their thoughts about the topics in the books.

Another author, Rivers, says: "Students learn from the classroom whether the language is for communication or not. They learn whether it is part of their reality or just some tedious, artificial chore that someone 'up there' has ordained they must perform." I agree with Davis who says that we need to supplement our core of "Reading Comprehension" texts with other authentic texts which learners will enjoy. It is not important if texts are short or long as long as the learners like to read them. They can read jokes or stories, both are important if they influence the learner's motivation for reading and their personal growth.

On the other hand, I am still not sure how students would accept this. Would this be seen as more homework or as a new opportunity for reading? Would they be motivated? Teachers should guide the learners through reading so that the

learners would gain reading strategies.

In spite of all this, I think that reading was always the most boring part of English class as far as I am concerned. But what contributed to this? I have several reasons for this opinion. I was not motivated to read something from the coursebook, the topic was not interesting and the teacher did not always want feedback from the reading. In my opinion, teachers who only want a short comprehension check at the end of the text, without the students' personal opinions about the dilemma or a discussion of the text, have to have this in mind. Reading is an active skill, which involves guessing, predicting, checking, investigating, debating and asking questions. It has an important communicative function, it needs to be meaningful and the students need to know what to do with the text. Reading should be fun and useful.

The most important step is good organization for reading. Teachers should prepare learners for reading with interesting activities like associating or predicting. The headlines of the articles or any other reading materials can be a good introduction to a reading activity. One option is that a teacher gives the learners the text, and the other is that he guides them through the text and makes their reading meaningful. I think that teachers should use authentic texts when possible and also reading should not be a separate activity but should be connected to writing, listening and speaking. Students should also be encouraged to derive meaning from the text without understanding every word. To achieve this, learners should be guided before, during and after reading.

I was interested in this topic because I think that teaching reading is difficult especially because learners are sometimes embarrassed or unwilling to read. This article gives us several options on how to improve learners' motivation for reading. It shows that reading is important for one's language development. Finally, writing this article also gave me some doubts on how to convince learners that reading is good for them. Perhaps weaker learners have difficulties with reading because they have negative experiences when reading. I am convinced that some methods are more suitable for weaker students while others are for advanced learners only. Positive encouragement for reading from the teacher is the key to successful learning.

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Teaching With or Without a Coursebook- Humanizing English Lessons



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Keywords: coursebook students, motivation, to humanize, authentic opportunities, teacher

Nowadays teachers, students and even parents cannot imagine teaching or learning the English language without using a coursebook; it is still the official “document” which guides us in what and how one should learn. It is the book where all the important topics are contained: grammar, reading material, listening opportunities and extra activities for practicing speaking. Teaching young learners (e.g. pupils in the first grade, aged 6 in Slovenia) does not require a coursebook or an activity book. The recommendation goes in the opposite direction, not to use a coursebook at all. Young learners cannot write and cannot read yet, so why would they have the coursebook then?

The alternative in practice is that the majority of teachers in Slovenia use notebooks, where pupils can draw or glue some of the copied material, which in my opinion, is almost the same as using a coursebook. It is suitable for parents, not pupils.

On the other hand, parents like to see and monitor what their children had learned and what they still have to learn. However, young pupils do not really like notebooks, they like to experience the language holistically, with their body, mind and soul. That means that using a notebook is not really necessary. Unfortunately, this kind of teaching might be more demanding for some teachers, because one needs a lot of knowledge and creativity in preparing and implementing all the activities in order to attain the main teaching aims.

Nevertheless, this kind of teaching is also very fun, challenging and provides a lot of teaching freedom or improvisation for a creative, flexible, self-critical and caring teacher. Sometimes teachers have the feeling that they are restricted when they are bound by a coursebook and that they are not meeting the needs of their pupils. Tomlinson (2010) argued that textbooks were ‘designed primarily to satisfy administrators and teachers but in doing so often ignore the needs and wants of learners.’ *“In 2008 the British Council found 65% of their trainers used a coursebook on a regular basis, and Tomlinson, surveying conference attendees in Asia and the UK in 2010, noted that 92% regularly used a coursebook”* (Wright 2012).

The topics that we teach should be authentic, meaningful and relevant for our learners if we want them to actually learn something and to retain this knowledge. Pupils can learn things long-term only if they are motivated by an enthusiastic teacher who is not a clown in the classroom, but is his/her best self, the one who likes to teach and provides opportunities for learners to be active and involved; it does not matter if the teacher has stronger or weaker pupils in the classroom (when we speak about fluency, not accuracy). We as teachers can offer pupils the chance to choose their own text or reading material and speaking topics, so that they can gain their own experience. In this way, pupils get a chance to choose their own topics, to become responsible for their learning and to become more involved in the lesson.

Tomlinson’s article “Humanizing the Coursebook” tells us the author’s own experience about teaching with the book and what he has done about humanizing the coursebook so far. He points out that learners of foreign language need to gain more confidence and self-esteem. If learners are not confident in their own ability to speak they will never speak in a foreign language. His ideas about how to use the coursebook and how to humanize it are interesting and effective. As soon as a teacher comes into the classroom and says: “Open your books” his lesson has already failed and might become a mechanical drill of formulas printed in the coursebook. Instead, a teacher should plan his lesson according to the students’ needs and interests. In this way, students can internalize the topic and will want to speak about it. They will

want to share their own opinion about it and will be willing to discuss the topic in a small group. They will be able to take a stand and argue for their opinion; they will focus on the debate and discussion that is linguistically accurate based on grammar, good pronunciation, fluency and free speaking.

Learners should always be included in the lesson and should be the main part of the lesson. The text-driven approach emphasizes that learners have to connect the topics learned in the classroom with their own life. In this way, we get learners involved and interested in the topic. Talking to learners is also an important feature in this article. Chatting with learners means to give them a part of yourself, to share with them your own opinions, jokes, examples and anecdotes. It means to have personal contact with them which is useful for the learners' and for the teachers' personal growth.

However, I think that a coursebook can be a guide for a teacher and has many advantages. Coursebooks are usually well organized and safely lead us to progress through the curriculum, however, it is not the only material or obliged book for each English lesson. Additional materials, authentic texts, games for revising grammar or vocabulary and visits by native speakers, all provide the learners with opportunities for real use of English. Teaching without a coursebook won't please every teacher because it creates a lot of extra work with thinking up ideas and preparing materials. However, if you have noticed that your teaching is dull, unrefresh and driven by a routine, I would definitely recommend giving it a try from time to time. It will suit your professional development and will be interesting for students.

In my opinion, it is effective if a teacher includes mixed intelligences in their lesson as suggested by H. Gardner which motivates learners. If learners are busy they cannot be bored and will be effective. The worst thing in the classroom is if learners do not have anything to do or if the lesson seems irrelevant to them. A teacher should avoid the old systems of teaching and should be open enough to combine a modern, organic approach, the learner's needs, their own professional knowledge and the ability to use different kinds of teaching methods with a great pedagogical ethos.

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Gabi Čakš is a teacher at VIZ II. OŠ Rogaška Slatina, Slovenia. She has graduated in English and American studies at the Faculty of Arts in Maribor, Slovenia and continued her education at the Pedagogy faculty in Maribor where she has finished a study programme for teaching English to young learners. She has been teaching for 10 years in the primary school in Slovenia. She has also finished a study programme of Gestalt pedagogy at the Theological faculty at University in Ljubljana and is finishing her PHD thesis in gestalt pedagogy. She has attended International conferences as a speaker. The school she works in has cooperated with the National Education Institute of Slovenia where Gabi Čakš provided two sample lessons for teachers and headmasters of Savinjska region.

Flipped Classroom

Gorana Babic, a Croatian language teacher working at Franjo Tudjman Brela Primary School participated in professional development in Prague at a structured course called *Flipped Classroom*. This course was conducted in English with the aim to introduce the flipped classroom and the possibility of using new technologies (cell phones, internet, smart board) in teaching in order to increase students' motivation and achieve better educational results, as well as to modernize the teaching process.

It is part of a one-year Erasmus KA1 project, *Let's improve our teaching* (worth 12 659 euros) which has been coordinated by Gorana Babić. This was the first of a total of five planned teacher mobilities funded by the EU through the Mobility Agency, which approved the funding of the project. Along with Gorana Babic, the seminar was attended by teachers from Hungary, Finland and Spain. A Flipped classroom is a form of blended learning in which students watch online content, mostly video lectures and most often at home. Then they discuss it with each other at school and ask questions about what they saw. Communication with students in the reverse classroom has been proven to be significantly richer than in traditional teaching that offers a frontal approach which is boring and not productive for modern students.

It is interesting for students to explore the teaching content themselves, but also to use videos prepared by the teacher or someone else, and making it their homework. In class, they then discuss, ask questions, help one another, and solve a problem by applying the knowledge they have acquired. In situations where students cannot come up with a solution on their own, the teacher explains the problem to them. In conclusion, the flipped classroom implies different methods and ways of working. It enables the students to choose the contents and methods of teaching themselves and to determine how long it will take them to acquire certain teaching material. The content of the course was also related to metacognition for better learning (knowledge of one's learning abilities, self-observation / self-monitoring of one's own learning progress towards the goal and evaluation of success at the end of learning, self-regulation of the learning process by changing procedures in case of difficulty in achieving the goals), tools for effective presentations, tools to build their own website, online formative assessment tools, how to find resources online, and strategies for effective teaching planning and classroom activities that apply the flipped classroom principle.

Attendees learned new skills through collaborative activities, demonstrations, and hands-on interactions with tools that are applicable in the flipped classroom, and were introduced to Edpuzzle, Quizizz, Nearpod, Insertlearning, Plickers, QR Code Generator and Scanner tools, as well as digital comics creating tool called Comicpixton and Weebly used to create free websites. On the last day of the class,



everyone had the task to present their website or quiz that they created by the end of the course.

Our representative chose the Quizizz tool, in which she created a quiz for the revision of literary concepts and read literary works – it is going to be used with sixth-grade students. Then she interpreted *The Happy Prince* written by Oscar Wilde using the tools Insertlearning, QR Code Generator and Plickers. She decided to use these tools when interpreting literary works for completed reading, as well as grammar revision and during media classes. It is planned to organize a workshop at the school that will also raise the interest of fellow teachers in other subjects and encourage them to use these tools to achieve the project's goals (modernizing the teaching process and improving the digital competences of teachers and students). Gorana also plans to organize an open class where students and parents will be able to attend and see how these tools are used in teaching. Besides learning about flipped classroom tools, the participants also visited one primary and one secondary school where they had the opportunity to learn about the Czech educational system.

All these activities are important for the personal and professional development of school staff. In this way, teachers become more aware of the responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning, which certainly contributes to the reputation of the school and greater visibility at the international level which in turn has a positive impact on the local community.

Overall, participants in the course have improved in several areas: how to develop key student competencies such as creativity, critical thinking, media and digital literacy, to promote the use of ICT and active teaching methods to improve the quality of full-time education at all levels, and to understand the importance of open educational resources (OER) and an open environment for education to promote universal access to education. Also, this course has fostered a broader understanding of current educational practices and systems in different countries and nurtures mutual respect. While meeting colleagues from different nations within the European Union, the participants became involved in a cross-cultural learning experience, exchanged ideas and built a network for future international cooperation. The course provided an opportunity to get to know the cultures and customs of all participating countries. These structured courses also have a special value that is of the utmost importance, day-long lectures, work and socializing inevitably encourage new friendships and collaborations on new international projects.

If you are interested in more details about this mobility, you can read about it on the teacher's personal blog: goranababic.blogspot.com



Teaching about the Holocaust – Yad Vashem Seminar

Silvija Avar

Teacher of English and Italian at Glazbena škola u Varaždinu

Whenever the topic of the Holocaust is brought up among my fellow colleagues, two attitudes prevail: some would like to teach it, but express reluctance because they do not know how to approach it, whereas others dismiss the idea right away because they consider it much too cruel and disturbing to be taught in an English classroom. In the beginning, my attitude was the first one. I had wanted to introduce it into my English lessons for quite some time, but I was not quite sure how. Then, I just started, slowly and carefully. First with films (*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, *La vita è Bella*, *Schindler's List*) and then with textual material (e.g. an excerpt from the book "Playing for Time" by Fania Fénelon) accompanied by some language and vocabulary exercises I devised on my own. Then I heard about a seminar on Teaching about the Holocaust organized by **Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in association with the Ministry of Science and Education**. I first applied in 2017, but was not selected that year. Fortunately, my application was more successful a year later and I was fortunate to be one of the 24 Croatian teachers who attended the seminar held at the **International School for Holocaust Studies in Jerusalem** from 22-29 April 2018.

The programme of the seminar was extensive and provided essential guidance to help me get a much better insight not only into the topic, but also how to tackle it in the classroom. I gained more confidence and, in addition to that, had more of the resources I needed in order to do that.

Each day of the seminar was dedicated to a different topic. The first was: **The Chronological Approach: Jewish life before the Holocaust – Persecution, the Holocaust as a Result of Human Decisions: A Multi-Perspective Approach, Implications after the Holocaust, Aspects of Commemoration**. It was a very systematic approach because, as we were told: "one must understand the context in order to understand what happened". The lectures we attended dealt with the history of the Holocaust, as well as the methodological approach to teaching it. Some of the lectures given were: **The Holocaust and other Genocides** by Dr. Robert Rozett, **The Current Political Situation in Israel** by Dr. Gisela Dachs, **About Antisemitism in Nazi Ideology** by David Silberklang, **Perpetrators of the Holocaust – A Reassessment** by Dr. Robert Rozett, **Teaching about the Perpetrators: The Case Study of a Deportation of German Jews to Riga**, a workshop about **Albanian Righteous among the Nations** given by Dr. Noa Mckayton.

For me, the highlight of our seminar was a meeting with Holocaust survivor **Lily Gombush** who was born and grew up in Zagreb. As a teenager she was taken to the Rab concentration camp, then to the Risiera di San Saba in Trieste and eventually to Auschwitz, where she had a personal encounter with Dr. Josef Mengele. She says that she survived the camps because she believed in her luck and thanks to her knowledge of foreign languages, especially German.

I am very grateful for having been given the opportunity to take part in the seminar because I also got the chance to visit the **Historical Museum of Yad Vashem**, the whole complex and to hear about the history behind it. Much thought has been put into it. The Museum was primarily meant to be a place for mourning, to collect the names of the victims in order to try to abolish what the Nazis actually intended to do: to erase and eradicate a group of their fellow humans. The emphasis is given to the **fate of the individual**, as we should also do when teaching about it. In the Museum **names and identities are restored**, so that victims don't remain anonymous. The Museum is actually based on four pillars: **to commemorate, to document, to research and to educate**. A part of the Museum complex is dedicated to the **Righteous among the Nations**, i.e. to non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust, and there is a list of Croats, too.

The *Shoa* (the Holocaust in Hebrew) was the plan of total annihilation of the Jewish people and the murder of those Jews who could be reached by their murderers. It is difficult to understand that mass murders of one group of people became socially acceptable. Moreover, as one of our lecturers said: the Jews were killed twice when captured: before killing them the Nazis humiliated them. The *Shoa* can be taught as a story of mankind: it was done by humans and suffered by humans. We should present history as a never-ending process which is connected to our present and through the eyes

of **the individual**. That's why all the material we worked on involved **individual** people, with their names and surnames, family members, neighbours, and their fate. No one is anonymous.

If you are considering teaching about the Holocaust, 27 January is a perfect date to start because it is the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Why choose to teach about the Holocaust? Because it is said to be the **yardstick to understand evil**. At the heart of the Holocaust there is racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, hatred and stereotyping. That is why it is important to promote understanding and compassion, and fight prejudice and hate. The *Shoa* was a transnational catastrophe. It is a story of mankind.

If you want to start, you can find useful material at yadvashem.org > **Education & E-learning**, where you can find age and level appropriate multimedia resources. Some of the video material you can find there is: *the Oneg Shabbat Underground Archive in the Warsaw Ghetto*, *the Jewish Letter Carrier in the Warsaw Ghetto*, *Roots of Nazi ideology*, *Glimpses of Jewish Life before the Holocaust*. There you will also find pedagogical guidelines needed for teaching this difficult subject matter. The approach to Holocaust education is interdisciplinary: you can approach it through art, music, literature, theology and drama. These resources are also a valuable source of information for your own personal development thanks to which you can enrich your knowledge and gain a broader understanding of what happened during that period.

Teaching Ideas or How to...?

by **Dolores Malić**,

a teacher of English and German, Osnovna šola Frana Roša, Celje, Slovenia

Today I would like to share some ideas I used this year when introducing irregular verbs to my 7th-grade students, aged 12 to 13. Our classes are heterogeneous and there are 21 students in this particular class.

When introducing new and important grammar points (which the majority of students dislike because they have to learn irregular forms by heart), I used the flipped classroom approach. I made a cartoon-based introductory video with the famous and funny Mr. Bean. It was the first time I used this approach so I did not really know what to expect: how the students would react, if the video would be effective or not. The course of this »trial« lesson was explained to my class beforehand:

1. **Students watch the video** and jot down anything they found interesting, any questions that may have occurred while watching, etc. I told my students to go to our school's e-classroom where I put the video with subtitles. They had a few days to watch it; I told them that they would probably have to watch the video more than once.
2. The next task was to **pay attention to the verbs** that appeared in the video.
3. After the deadline, we **talked about the video in our lesson**. Most of the students managed to notice there were some differences in verb forms. The advanced students were able to make some connections to the topic of our lesson and the others then simply agreed by declaring that they now saw the pattern with regular verbs. As far as my experience goes, this is not a bad outcome at all.
4. The next step was to give the students **the list of the verbs** they had **to learn by heart**. They learn 70 verbs in the 7th grade. The forms they need to know are the infinitive, the past participle and the translation. I always show them some YouTube videos that could help them learn the forms and pronunciation and we always use a pop song where they have to listen and fill in the missing verbs. The students have one week to learn 20 verbs, we practice them in our lessons (usually by playing some ball games and also by simply saying the verbs out loud) and I test their knowledge after that time – in written form and also orally because they have problems with pronouncing the forms correctly.
5. The last and most effective and interesting part of learning the verbs this year was **the conclusion**: After they had learned all the verbs and their forms, we spent a lovely autumn lesson (one hour only) outside. Our school has a very nice courtyard so we have a safe place to play or study outside the classroom walls. I came up with **5 different stations**: bingo, running dictation, snakes and ladders, »day-night« game and making sentences by using the Rory Cubes and Story Cubes. I divided the students into 2 groups of 4 that chose the running dictation first, three pairs played snakes and ladders and 5 students played bingo (1 of them was the judge who said the verbs in Slovene), two girls decided to try to come up with a story by using the Cubes.

The Running dictation was played with the infinitive form of the verb given in English, the group members had to run back and forth in order to fill in the missing forms (ie. the Slovene translation and the past participle).

When **bingo** was played, four students had a piece of paper each with the English forms of six verbs. The »judge« called out Slovene infinitives and the players had to cross out the English synonym. The student who had their forms all crossed out first, had to read them aloud and say the past participles. The other players and the judge had to listen carefully to notice any possible mistakes made by the winner.

I found a blank template for **snakes and ladders** on the Internet, printed it out and filled it with an English form of an irregular verb. The players had to say the past participle and the Slovene equivalent in order to proceed. The players had to be very attentive and had to correct their opponent if a mistake was made.

The whole class played »day-night«. At first, I was the one who called out the verbs and students had to squat down if the verb was irregular. With regular verbs, they had to simply stand upright. After some time, the person who did their best at the game, called out the verbs instead of me.

The two girls using the cubes came up with some sort of a story. They read it out loud and the others had to write down any possible mistakes.

Since our headmistress is also a teacher of English and German, I invited her to visit us. The students liked the visitor and she also played with some of them which gave the whole lesson some additional value. The students were very happy to have Mrs Gajšek Ključarič there and they were not as shy as I expected.

When we had our last lesson that week, I asked the students for feedback. There was only one student that said he did not really like our previous lesson (I guess there always has to be someone, right?) because it was too cold. Oh, well, you just cannot make everyone happy, can you? 😊

INDUSTRIAL MECHANICAL SCHOOL STUDENTS' ERASMUS+ EXPERIENCE IN MALTA

**Industrijska strojarska škola Avenija Marina Držića 14 Zagreb,
kontakt Meri Ružević koordinatorica Erasmus + projekta 091 589 39 90.
Marina Jadrić, prof. engleskog, Meri Ružević dipl. ing. stroj.**

In November 2019, the Industrial Mechanical School students and teachers spent two weeks in Msida, a small town near Valletta-Malta's capital city- to complete Erasmus + Mobility Project Competitive Vet for Learners and Teachers II, Covet II. The project had been approved by the EU Agency for Mobility Programs. The project's aim, with the emphasis on getting the international on-the-job training experience and enhancing students' professional and personal skills, was fully achieved.



HVAC students Luka Kosović, Filip Šubarić, Franjo Miličević, Nikola Tolić, Robert Sedić, Adnan Ekić, Leon Greguraš, Andrija Džidić, Tomislav Korošec, Tomislav Skočak, Marin Kušar, Antonio Čutić, Luka Klemen, Mislav Hukman, Leon Volf and Šimun Jurić arrived safely in Malta on Saturday, 16th November 2019, and, accompanied by teachers Meri Ružević and Nenad Posavec, started their two-week Erasmus + Mobility in Competitive Vet For Learners and Teachers Covet II project.



On Sunday, 17th November 2019, the students and teachers visited Marsaxlokk, a traditional fishing village, and went sightseeing in Valetta. That was a great way to get ready for their two-week stay and the upcoming work week, which started on Monday, 18th November.

Students Luka Kosović, Nikola Tolić and Robert Sedić did their training at Jasmine Nursing Home in Msida, while Leon Volf and Šimun Jurić developed their competencies at Solana Hotel & Spa in the same city.

Mislav Hukman, Marin Kušar, Tomislav Skočak and Franjo Miličević had an opportunity to compare their skills on European level at KBL Service at Naxxar, while Adnan Ekić, Tomislav Korošec and Luka Klemen worked on their problem solving skills, creativity and the better understanding of team work at Smart Effect Ltd. in Mrieħe. Antonio Čutić and Leon Greguraš commuted to St. Paul's Bay every day to learn about the technologies and equipment used by Malta's HVAC technicians. Working at Swift Air Conditioning and Refrigeration in Haz Zebb provided Andrija Džidić and Filip Šubarić with an opportunity to promote cooperation and team work, as well as connect both job training and school education.

The teachers and students spent their weekend on the picturesque Island of Gozo and got to know Valleta's cultural sites even better, and then they continued with their responsibilities in order to meet the expected learning outcomes:

- Improving their organisational skills and the rational use of material
- Reading and understanding technical and technological documentation
- Selecting appropriate material
- Selecting and applying appropriate assembly and processing technologies(choosing appropriate tools, devices and appliances , as well as selecting appropriate techniques of joining)
- Product quality testing
- Cooperative communication with clients and colleagues
- Making a simple cost calculation
- Using computers, the Internet, different data bases and computer programs concerning their profession
- Making a design of a simple consumer's installation
- Applying aesthetic criteria specific to their professional field
- The knowledge of heat transfer media properties, the knowledge of different types of energy sources and their properties.

It is clear that Erasmus + program gives young people an opportunity to learn about Europe's heritage and diversity, while on-the-job training helps them develop their generic competences. It boosts their confidence and increases motivation. Students actively participate in the process of evaluation and self-evaluation of the learning outcomes, as well as take responsibility for the learning process, develop career management skills and gain a valuable work experience , which eases their transition to the world of work . This project also raises awareness of the importance of lifelong learning which encourages young people to continue their education. All these aims were fully achieved during the students' two- week Erasmus+ Mobility COVET II project in Msida.



Erasmus + 2019 KA101 project „ Getting into ICT Shape“, Industrial-Vocational School Virovitica

Silvija Pošta

The Industrial-Vocational School Virovitica has been approved for a one-year KA101 project worth 7950 euros. The project involves three mobilities of four teachers in three countries, where they will take structured courses on the use of ICT in teaching and learning.

With the dissemination of the results of mobilities throughout the year in the form of workshops at school and at county and regional levels, as well as online, we expect to modernize our teaching, to adapt the teaching content to make it more attractive to students and to improve the quality of the teaching process through the use of different online tools and apps.

A Course in Barcelona

As part of the KA101 project “Getting into ICT shape” teacher Silvija Pošta participated in a one-week structured course in Barcelona, Spain from 1/7 to 6/7/2019 called “There’s an App for That! Exploring the Best Apps for Teaching and Student Learning.” The course was attended by 5 female teachers from Romania, 3 teachers from Hungary and 1 from Croatia.

In the course, we discussed the impact of technology on today’s society, especially on the younger population, the advantages and disadvantages of using it, and potential problems. Over a five day period, we have worked on various online applications to create videos, surveys, projects, and quizzes that make teaching content more interesting and engaging to students, and that encourage student-centered learning.

For the final task, we created an Escape room in two groups. One group was imprisoned in the library, and with the use of online applications for five different tasks, they found their way out. The second group was stranded on a deserted island after a plane crash, and with the help of their newly acquired applications and QR codes, they managed to leave the island.

The applications that we have worked on and can be used in the classroom are as follows:

Kahoot- <https://kahoot.com/> for creating quizzes, surveys, discussion;

Powtoon- <https://www.powtoon.com/home/> for animated videos up to 90 seconds; it makes the material more attractive than PP presentation;

Seesaw- <https://web.seesaw.me/> for creating videos, tasks,...; it’s possible to link to tasks via QR code;

Edpuzzle- <https://edpuzzle.com/> for editing finished videos from sites such as youtube... (shortening, dubbing, adding questions,...); login is possible via google account;

TedEd Talks- <https://www.ted.com/watch/ted> -similar to Edpuzzle in video editing; it can be used. for homework or as an introduction to the next lesson;

StopMotion- <http://www.stopmotionpro.com/> - you can create interesting videos by taking photos through the app and recording audio;

Pear Deck- <https://www.peardeck.com/> - you can create definitions for expressions and draw them on a mobile phone, and after verifying the accuracy of definitions by the teacher, they can be transferred to the Quizlet application, which offers various options for practicing the terms entered. Students sign up through www.joinpd.com , and teachers sign up through their Google account page;

Typeform- <https://www.typeform.com/> - to create quizzes with various options such as a drop-down menu, yes / no options, multiple-choice, pictures, etc. and student answers are anonymous;

Plickers- <https://get.plickers.com/quiz> contains multiple answers and codes that students get after a class is formed and the teacher checks their answer/ solution with his / her mobile phone;

ProProfs- <https://www.proprofs.com/> is used to create surveys, quizzes, chat, discussions, projects, brainteasers, etc;

And on the <https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>, a mobile phone code can be created for students to access their assigned quizzes.

The last day was left for guided tours of the city's landmarks.

As the course was held in the afternoon, there was also time to go sightseeing in the morning, to visit the Picasso Museum rich in the collection of the painter's earlier oeuvre, to visit Gaudi's houses and the famous Sagrada Familia or to spend the day at one of the city's beaches.



A Course in Prague

A teacher of the Industrial-Vocational School Virovitica, Slobodan Koletić, participated in a one-week training course in Prague, the Czech Republic, from September 30 to October 4, 2019, called "ICT in Education" organized by ITC - International TEFL Certificate. A total of 11 teachers from Finland, Denmark, Portugal, France, Germany and Croatia participated in the course. Throughout the week, various online applications were worked on, some of which were the following: www.blogger.com - blog creation application; www.spark.adobe.com - an application for creating videos, websites and brochures; www.kahoot.com and www.socrative.com - quiz and test applications. Implementing them is easy with the use of a google account, and the advantage of using them is creating more engaging lessons for our students.

One part of the training was related to 21st Century Literacy - code literacy in which we were introduced to Scratch- <https://>



scratch.mit.edu, which is free. With Scratch, you can program interactive stories, games and animations. The program helps young people think creatively and systematically, which is one of the essential skills for life in the 21st century and it encourages mutual cooperation.

We also used various programs to download online content, such as: <https://id.savefrom.net/> ; <http://jdownloader.org/> as well as teaching support applications on: <https://get.plickers.com/> ; https://quizizz.com ; [https://learningapps.org /](https://learningapps.org/) ; www.prezi.com ; <https://www.slideshare.net/> .

The training was completed with a project assignment in which one website had to be created using all the knowledge gained through the lectures. I presented my project assignment on www.weebly.com.

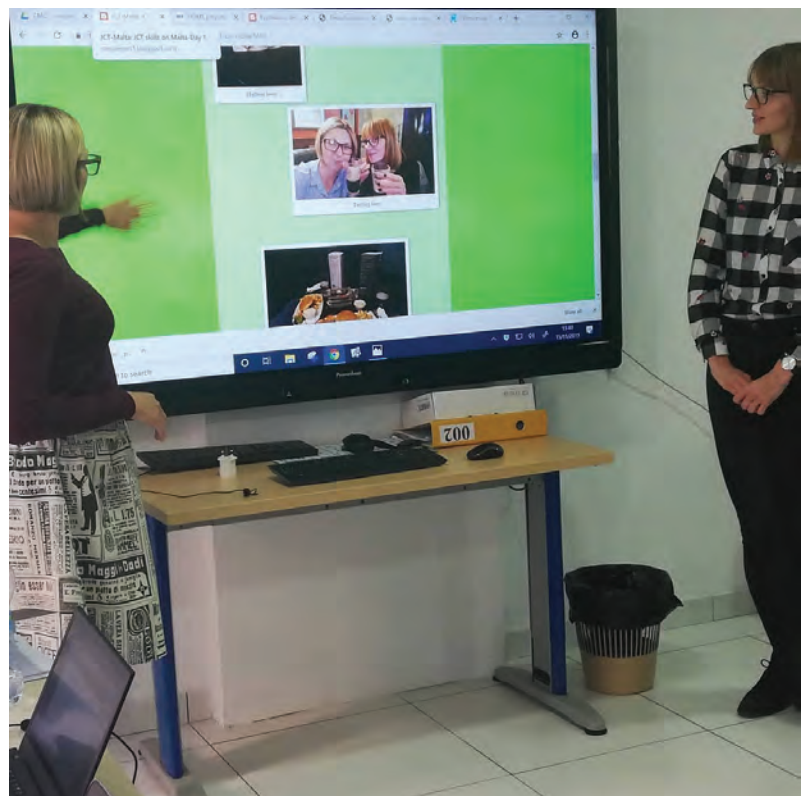
In the afternoon, there was time to visit the city, see its sights and we also visited Smichov Secondary Technical School, which has three ICT programs running at the moment.

A Course in Malta

A biology teacher, Maja Ivanac and our chemistry teacher, Marina Nemet participated in the „Empowerment in ICT Skills“ course in Malta organized by The Executive Training Institute of Malta (ETI). The course lasted from November 11 to November 15, 2019, and in addition to our two teachers, there were two teachers from Italy, four from Germany and one from Poland who also participated.

The course is designed for teachers who want to learn about various software and online tools that can help them integrate technology into their work.

The course was interactive with a basic frontal lecture on a particular tool or program and individual and group project work. All the participants were required to have at least a B1 level of English proficiency since the workshops were in the form of brainstorming and problem analysis and solving. The course lectures helped participants set up tools such as blogs and websites and apply online tools such as Learning Apps, Ed Puzzle and similar.



For example, Flashback Express Recorder is used to record your computer screen. There are Avatars for creating virtual identities on <https://www.voki.com/> , <http://www.hexatar.com/> , <https://www.androidify.com/en/#/> , while www.storyboardthat.com/hr or <http://www.wittycomics.com/> can be used to create cartoons for learning purposes. Furthermore, the app 123App on <https://123apps.com/> allows us to cut audio and video, convert audio and video from one format to another, and merge multiple audio tracks into one, which an audio-joiner allows.

We also learned to work on the Podomatic tool- <https://www.podomatic.com/> to create and store free audio podcasts. With this tool, you can record audio and post it online for other people to download and listen to.

We also learned how to use the LearningApps tool - <https://learningapps.org/> , which is designed as a networking site where users can find a variety of free tools, or use templates to create their own for the classroom use.

Participants were asked to reflect on tools and activities, to participate in stimulating discussions about their own knowledge and skills, their approach to teaching in relation to the abilities and knowledge of today's students, and to adjust the use of tools in everyday situations and learning and teaching contexts.

The exchange of ICT participants' pedagogical knowledge was encouraged through discussion and thus their English language skills were developed.



The final task was a project where each group presented the newly-gained knowledge of the content given during the week.

The lecturer analyzed each project and praised the work of all groups.

It was concluded that a well-designed lesson can be enriched by an introductory online game or by given online homework, which can be an incentive for a new and creative approach to lesson content.

Participants were encouraged to persevere in their work and were given the freedom to create creative and stimulating teaching materials with the proper use of online tools. The goal was to prepare students for everyday life situations by teaching them to think, deduce and express their opinions.

After the training, there was free-time to sightsee Malta. We visited the capital city Valletta, the highest city in the center of Malta- Mdina (the so-called "a quiet city") and a traditional fishing village in the southeastern region of Malta, Marsaxlokk.