



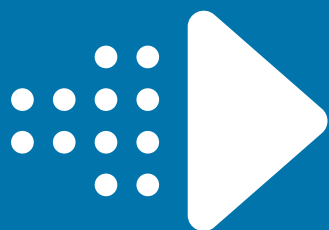
inspire
& be inspired

Hrvatsko udruženje profesora engleskog jezika
Croatian Association of Teachers of English

NEWSLETTER

HUPE Newsletter No. 34 • Autumn 2026





NEXT CONFERENCE

34th Annual International HUPE Conference

*Teaching for Tomorrow:
Multilingualism, Wellbeing and
Sustainability in ELT Classrooms*

November 20–21, 2026

Zagreb, Croatia, at Hotel Antunović

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome back! We hope you have settled back into your routines and are well on track with your schedules and tasks.

In this issue of our newsletter, we invite you to look back at the activities organised by our branches across Croatia. You will also find reports from our representatives who attended conferences organised by our partner associations.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and that it sparks new ideas for your teaching. As always, we welcome your feedback, contributions, and suggestions for future editions.

Wishing you all a wonderful school year!

Warm regards,
Ivana Kasunić
Editor, HUPE Newsletter

CALL FOR PAPERS

Dear HUPE members,

You are all invited to become a part of making *HUPEzine* what it truly is – the best professional magazine for teachers of English in Croatia. *HUPEzine* is published twice a year: the summer edition at the beginning of June and the winter edition in mid-December.

From now on, **all article submissions should be sent exclusively via the submission form located below this text.** Submissions sent by email will no longer be accepted.

If you **do not see the submission form**, please make sure that you are logged in to the website. The form is visible **only to HUPE members whose membership is active and has not expired**. If your membership has expired, the form will not be displayed.

Articles should be between **1,200 and 2,000 words long** and may be accompanied by pictures or photographs, which can be uploaded separately within the form.

Authors who wish their articles to be considered for the **winter issue** should submit their work by **1 December**. The deadline for submissions for the **summer issue** is **15 May**.

We look forward to reading your work and thank you for contributing to HUPEzine!

Ivana Kasunić
HUPE newsletter editor

BRIDGING PEDAGOGY, CULTURE, AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: A 5-DAY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY ACROSS THE UK

Program Overview: Professional Field Training organized jointly by the Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO) and the Croatian Association of Teachers of English (HUPE), in collaboration with Sharing One Language (SOL) in Barnstaple.

In an increasingly interconnected world, teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) goes far beyond grammar tables and vocabulary drills. It demands cultural immersive fluency, interdisciplinary integration, and dynamic, place-based learning techniques.

To foster these competencies among Croatian educators, the Education and Teacher Training Agency (AZOO) and the Croatian Association of Teachers of English (HUPE) partnered to organize an intensive, 24-hour professional field development program in the United Kingdom from September 9 to 13, 2026. Combining expert methodological workshops hosted by *Sharing One Language (SOL)* in Barnstaple, Devon, with structured field excursions across historic, literary, and environmental landmarks, the program aimed to enhance professional teaching skills through innovative pedagogical methodologies, explore practical methods for integrating field studies and experiential learning into curriculum planning and provide deep cultural, literary, and ecological insights that can be directly adapted for classroom usage.

Day 1: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 – Gothic Heritage and Arrival in Devon

The professional training commenced with a dedicated field learning session at Salisbury Cathedral. Educators explored the rich architectural and historical narrative of this early English Gothic landmark, home to the tallest church spire in the United Kingdom and one of the best-preserved original copies of the 1215 *Magna Carta*. Teachers evaluated how physical architectural spaces can serve as prompts for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) lessons, linking history, art history, and English language development. Following the exploration of Salisbury, the group traveled westward into North Devon, arriving at the training base in Barnstaple, setting the stage for an immersive week.



Day 2: Thursday, September 10, 2026 – Methodological Mastery & Victorian Romanticism

The second day balanced rigorous methodological training with literary and engineering explorations along the Devon coast. Participants engaged in *Modelled Methodology Sessions* facilitated by SOL trainers. These sessions focused on active student engagement, task-based learning (TBL), and functional communicative activities designed to minimize Teacher Talking Time (TTM) while maximizing authentic language output. Teachers critically analyzed peer approaches and acquired adaptable teaching frameworks.



The afternoon transitioned to field-based learning across the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth: Victorian Engineering (*Cliff Railway*): Exploring the water-powered Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway opened discussions on Victorian engineering innovations, local transport infrastructure, and sustainable tourism; Romantic Poets & Literary Landscapes: The region's dramatic coastal terrain provided the backdrop for studying the impact of Romantic poets—specifically Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Percy Bysshe Shelley—on the cultural perception of nature, literary history, and early coastal tourism in North Devon.

Day 3: Friday, September 11, 2026 – Literary Crime, Coastal Landscapes, and Dramatic Arts

Day three turned the spotlight toward the English Riviera, focusing on literary heritage, gamified learning, and drama pedagogy in Torquay and Paignton. In conjunction with the annual *Agatha Christie Festival* in her birthplace of Torquay, teachers participated in and analyzed a customized Treasure Hunt. This activity illustrated how gamification and mystery-solving tasks boost vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and team-building among EFL learners.

The group also explored Paignton's coastal environment, assessing how local geography and tourism intersect. The evening concluded with a live theatrical production.

Day 4: Saturday, September 12, 2026 – Modern Art Controversies & Environmental Sustainability

The fourth day tackled contemporary socio-cultural debates and modern environmental challenges, demonstrating how EFL instruction can address real-world global issues. Returning to SOL headquarters, participants explored advanced approaches to classroom differentiation, authentic materials design, and integrating modern British cultural studies into standard curricula.

"The Damien Hirst Effect" (Ilfracombe): Educators conducted a field analysis of *Verity*, the controversial 20-meter bronze sculpture by Damien Hirst erected at Ilfracombe Harbour. The group debated the sculpture's aesthetic impact, its influence on harbor architecture, local economic revitalization, and public discourse—forming a blueprint for classroom debate workshops.

Marine Plastic Pollution (Woolacombe): On the Blue Flag beach of Woolacombe, teachers conducted an environmental survey on marine microplastics and plastic waste. This hands-on research highlighted the importance of incorporating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and ecological literacy into language learning curricula.



Day 5: Sunday, September 13, 2026 – Royal History, Gamified Assessment, and Program Synthesis

The final day brought the participants to Windsor Castle, providing an immersive encounter with British royal heritage, monarchical history, and state architecture. To demonstrate practical ways to review historical and cultural content on-site, educators engaged in an interactive Treasure Hunt across the castle grounds. This served as an exemplar for designing low-resource, high-engagement educational field trips for students.

The 24-hour training course concluded with a structured program evaluation. Educators exchanged qualitative feedback, reflected on classroom applications, and formally received their certificates of completion. The 5-day professional development program delivered actionable benefits for all participating educators:

Focus Area	Key Learning / Outcome	Classroom Application
Methodology	SOL Modelled Sessions; Task-Based Learning	Student-centered lesson frameworks, reduced TTT, communicative task design.
Literary Integration	Romanticism (Devon) & Crime Fiction (Agatha Christie)	Contextualized reading units, creative writing prompts, and literary trail projects.
Gamification	Interactive Field Treasure Hunts	Low-prep urban/schoolyard treasure hunts for active vocabulary review.
CLIL & ESD	Marine Plastic Pollution & Art Debates (Verity)	Cross-curricular modules combining English with Biology, Geography, and Civic Education.

This joint initiative by AZOO, HUPE, and SOL successfully demonstrated that out-of-classroom field learning, combined with targeted methodological reflection, significantly enriches teaching practices. By bridging history, literature, environmental science, and contemporary art, the 24-hour program equipped Croatian English teachers with a practical toolkit to inspire, challenge, and engage the next generation of language learners.

Anita Jokić, prof.



REPORT ON THE 2ND HUPE ISTRA BRANCH MEETING

The 2nd HUPE Istra Branch Meeting was held on 6 July 2026 at Srednja škola Mate Blažine Labin. The meeting brought together English language teachers from Istria and provided an opportunity for professional development, exchange of ideas and networking.

The meeting began with a welcome and an update on HUPE news and activities, presented by Karla Golja Milevoj, HUPE Istra Branch President.



The central part of the meeting was the lecture and interactive workshop "Learning English in Motion: Dance, Music and Wellbeing in the Classroom," delivered by Karla Golja Milevoj and Faye Benson. Karla Golja Milevoj delivered the theoretical part of the session, focusing on the role of movement, music and dance in language learning and their contribution to students' wellbeing, motivation and active participation. She also presented examples of movement-based English language activities that can be incorporated into everyday classroom practice.



The theoretical presentation was followed by a practical movement session led by Faye Benson, during which participants had the opportunity to experience a range of movement and dance activities first-hand and consider how they could be adapted for use in the English language classroom.

The programme continued with a round table with Faye Benson, providing participants with an opportunity for informal discussion and exchange of ideas with a native English speaker. The meeting concluded with reflection and discussion, allowing participants to share their impressions, experiences and ideas for applying the activities in their own teaching.

Karla Golja Milevoj
HUPE Istra Branch President



FROM MEDIATION TO “BRAINROT”: THREE FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ENGLISH

HUPE Varaždin Branch | May 2026

What do mediation, classroom neologisms, “brainrot” and writing have in common? They were all part of our second HUPE Varaždin Branch meeting of the 2025/2026 school year!

Held online via Zoom on **28 May 2026**, the meeting brought together English language teachers for an evening of professional learning, practical ideas and, of course, a little fun. This time, our programme featured three workshops covering very different – but equally relevant – aspects of language teaching.

Making Mediation Meaningful

Maja Labaš Horvat, Excellence Advisor at Secondary School Prelog, opened the programme with *“Teaching Mediation Across Levels: Practical Examples from the Classroom.”*

Mediation is becoming an increasingly important part of language education, but how can we actually teach it in the classroom?

Maja shared practical strategies and activities that encourage students to **paraphrase, summarise,**

explain and transfer information. By incorporating mediation into speaking, writing, reading and listening tasks, teachers can help students move beyond simply understanding language towards actively using it to communicate meaning.

The workshop offered plenty of classroom-friendly ideas that teachers can adapt to different age groups and proficiency levels.

From “Brainrot” to Better English

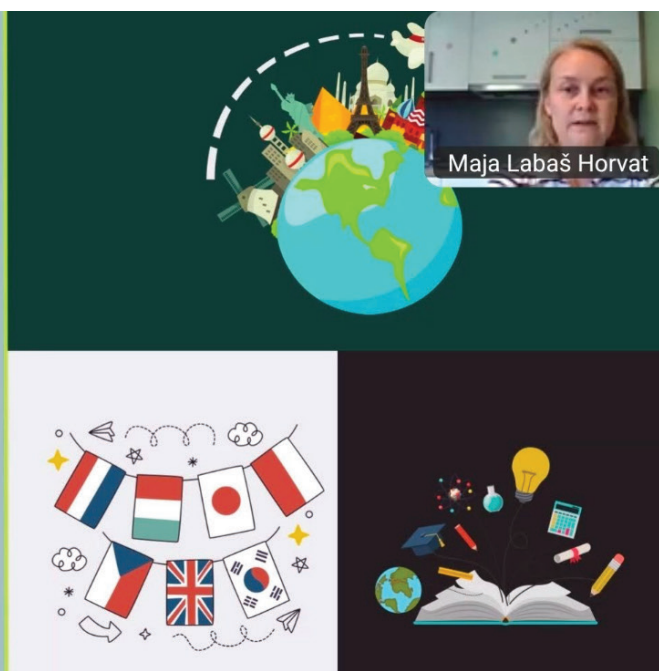
Our second workshop took a completely different – and very contemporary – turn.

Tea Horvatić, Teacher Mentor at Strahoninec Primary School, presented *“Slay the Lexicon: A Practical Guide to Classroom Neologisms.”*

Instead of asking students to stop using the latest slang, why not use it as a teaching opportunity?

Tea explored the constantly evolving language of young people and showed how expressions that may initially seem like nothing more than “brainrot” can actually provide valuable material for teaching **register, word formation and morphology.**

Mediation
–enables learners to use language actively in real-life situations
–fosters collaborative skills
–develops both language and intercultural competencies



Example 4

THE PRINCESS	IS	BEAUTIFUL
SHE	HAS GOT	LONG BLOND HAIR
THE PRICE	IS	HANDSOME
HE	HAS GOT	BLUE EYES
THE FROG	IS	UGLY
IT	HAS GOT	A GOLDEN BALL

Make sentences, write them in your notebook, write in cursive

Running dictation :)

The session connected classroom-based research with practical activities designed to bridge the gap between the English students encounter in textbooks and the English they encounter online and in everyday communication.

And, naturally, the workshop ended with a Kahoot – giving teachers the chance to discover just how much *rizz* they actually have!

Small Steps, Big Results in Writing

The final workshop, “Writing Skills in EFL,” was delivered by **Željka Novak Božić, Mentor Teacher at Donja Dubrava Primary School.**

The workshop focused on a simple but powerful principle:

Students learn to write by writing.

Developing writing skills does not necessarily require lengthy compositions every week. Instead, **small, regular writing tasks** can gradually build students’ confidence, fluency and accuracy while making writing a natural part of everyday English lessons.

The workshop combined theoretical insights with real classroom examples and highlighted another essential element of successful writing instruction: **a safe classroom environment.**

When students feel comfortable taking risks, experimenting with language and making mistakes, they are more likely to become confident writers. Consistent practice, combined with encouragement and meaningful feedback, can therefore lead to significant long-term progress.

Learning From One Another

Although the three workshops addressed different areas of English language teaching, they shared one important message: **effective professional development should give teachers ideas they can actually take back to their classrooms.**

Whether it is incorporating mediation into everyday activities, turning students’ slang into a language-learning resource, or introducing short and regular writing tasks, small changes can make a meaningful difference.

The HUPE Varaždin Branch meeting was another opportunity to connect, exchange ideas and remind ourselves that some of the best professional learning happens when teachers simply **share what works in their classrooms.**

A big thank you to our presenters and to everyone who joined us and contributed to the discussion.

We look forward to our next opportunity to learn, share and grow together!

Željka Novak Božić
HUPE Varaždin Branch President

Students listen to 2 different songs then write what the songs are about and compare the content (lyrics)

"All I Know So Far"

I haven't always been this way
I wasn't born a renegade
I felt alone, still feel afraid
I stumble through it anyway

I wish someone would've told me that this life is ours to choose
No one's handing you the keys or a book with all the rules
The little that I know I'll tell to you
When they dress you up in lies and you're left naked with the truth

You throw your head back
And you spit in the wind
Let the walls crack
'Cause it lets the light in
Let 'em drag you through hell
They can't tell you to change who you are
(That's all I know so far)
And when the storm's out
You'll run in the rain
Put your sword down
Dive right into the pain
Stay unfettered and loud
You'll be proud of that skin full of scars

That's all I know so far
That's all I know so far

Everybody's Free to wear Sunscreen

If I could offer you only one tip for the future, sunscreen would be it. The long-term benefits of sunscreen have been proved by scientists, whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more reliable than my own meandering experience. I will dispense this advice now.

Enjoy the power and beauty of your youth. Oh, never mind. You will not understand the power and beauty of your youth until they've faded. But trust me, in 20 years, you'll look back at photos of yourself and recall in a way you can't grasp now how much possibility lay before you and how fabulous you really looked. You are not as fat as you imagine.

Don't worry about the future. Or worry, but know that worrying is as effective as trying to solve an algebra equation by chewing bubble gum. The real troubles in your life are apt to be things that never crossed your worried mind, the kind that blind sides you at 4 p.m. on some idle Tuesday.

Do one thing every day that scares you.

Sing.

Don't be reckless with other people's hearts. Don't put up with people who are reckless with yours.

Mediation

The first song is about life in general and what the singer/poet wants to say to his generation. The song is old but some advice is still valid, it could be said to present generations too, for example, not to worry too much and not to mess all the time with our physical appearance. The song also encourages us to stay optimistic. The second song by a more modern singer, Pink, is a little bit more aggressive sound and lyrics. The music is both

Mediation

Both songs we have just heard are about advice to other people. They try to tell us how to live a better life and be happier.

The first song is called "All I know so far" and it's by the pop singer Pink. She tells us that she hasn't been perfect and that she has many problems but she gets stronger and more determined with time. She doesn't give up, she fights.

HUPE ZAGORJE BRANCH MEETING REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2026

The HUPE Zagorje Branch kicked off the new school year with an inspiring first meeting, held on 9 September 2026 at Škola za umjetnost, dizajn, grafiku i odjeću Zabok. English language teachers and HUPE members from several branches gathered to exchange fresh ideas, gather classroom inspiration, and connect over a warm cup of coffee.

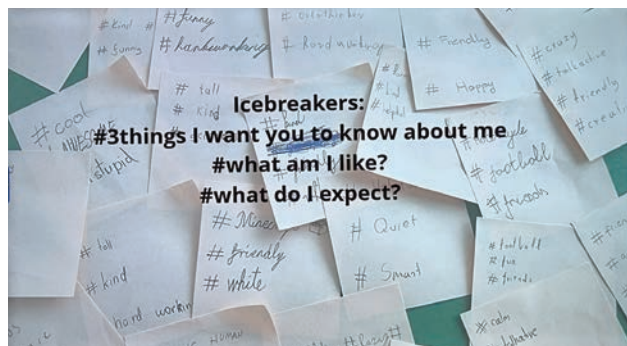
Highlights of the Meeting

Maximise Your HUPE Experience

Branch President Barbara Hanjilec opened the meeting by presenting the full scope of HUPE membership benefits. She shared updates on current initiatives and upcoming activities—with a special focus on the upcoming HUPE Conference in Zagreb—and encouraged teachers to get actively involved in the community.

Welcome Freshmen

Jasna Buljan, a secondary teacher mentor from SŠ Zlatar, led an engaging workshop showcasing activities designed for students across different age groups. She shared insights from her project on senior-freshmen collaboration, providing practical strategies that culminated in participants creating their own customized zines.

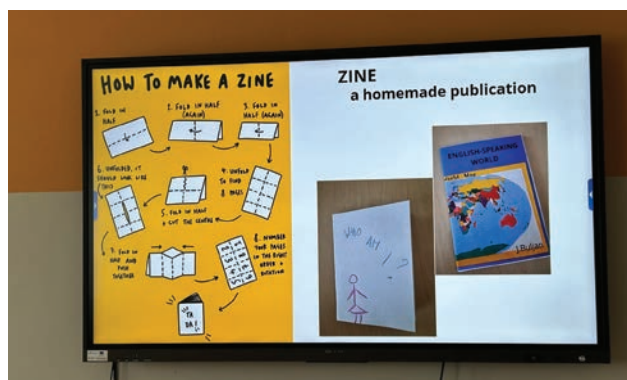
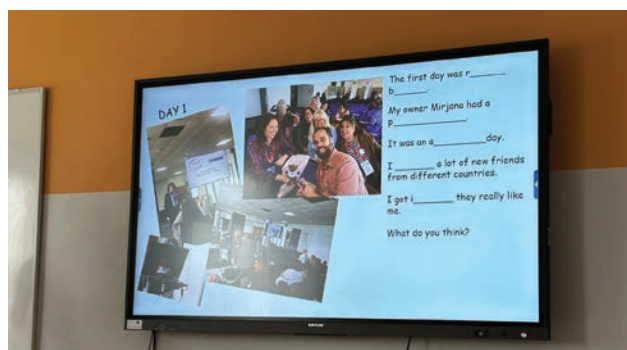


What's New in the EFL Teaching World

Mirjana Zubak Mičetić, HUPE Vice-President and teacher at OŠ Bogumila Tonija in Samobor, brought key insights from the IATEFL Annual Conference in Brighton (April 2026). Rather than a standard presentation, this was a dynamic, interactive session demonstrating how conference takeaways and professional travel experiences can be directly transformed into meaningful classroom activities.

The meeting successfully blended informative updates with hands-on, practical ideas, leaving all attendees equipped with new strategies and renewed energy for the school year ahead.

Report prepared by:
Barbara Hanjilec
HUPE Zagorje Branch President



REPRESENTING HUPE AT THE 33RD BETA ANNUAL

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

I had the honour of representing HUPE (Croatian Association of Teachers of English) at the 33rd BETA (Bulgarian English Teachers' Association) Annual International Conference and the 3rd Regional Central and Eastern Europe FIPLV (Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes) Congress titled "Language Education: Expanding Perspectives, Enriching Practices" at UNWE (University of National and World Economy) from 11 to 13 September 2026 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The joint event included lectures and workshops from participants not only from Europe, but all over the world as presenters came from India and various countries, which provided a truly global perspective and intercultural background.

We were greeted by BETA President Albena Stefanova, *Professor Daniela Nikolaeva Koch-Kozhuharova on behalf of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics Department at UNWE, as well as President of FIPLV Terry Lamb from the United Kingdom*, in the opening ceremony. Other members of the Executive Committee of the Federation were also participating in the conference like FIPLV Vice President Sigurborg Jónsdóttir from Iceland, Secretary General Geraldo de Carvalho from Brazil, and Publications Officer Sylvia Velikova from Bulgaria. Members of the BETA Committee were, along BETA President, organisers of the conference, active participants or presenters at the conference: International Relations Officer Veselin Chantov, Secretary Lina Yanbastieva-Petrova, Editor Georgi Dimitrov, and co-opted member Tsvetelena Taralova, who *guided us on a sightseeing tour of beautiful Sofia*.



The conference featured four plenary speakers: Judith Hidasi ("Language as Soft Power"), Dragana Božić Lenard ("Between the Algorithm and the Classroom: AI (Artificial Intelligence) Tools, ESP Learners, and the Teacher in the Middle"), Dubravka Celinšek ("Bridging Language and Disciplinary Knowledge in LSP through Literary Texts and Problem-Based Learning"), and Charlotte Smith ("Applying Applied Linguistics"). Associate Professor Dragana Božić Lenard (**Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, University of Osijek**) from Croatia, representing Association of LSP (Language for Specific Purposes) Teachers at Higher Education Institutions, explored the rapidly evolving role of LSP educators in an AI-shaped landscape, emphasizing the unique, irreplaceable human skills that teachers provide alongside algorithmic tools.

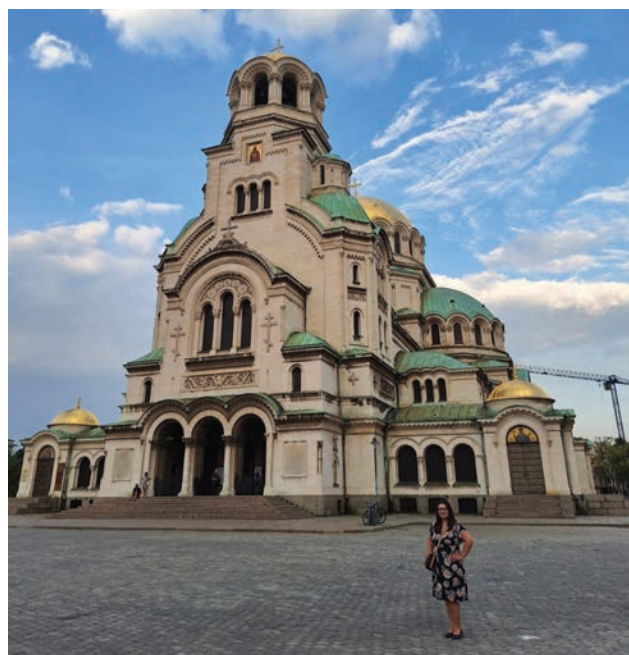


Lectures and workshops included up-to-date topics like “Parasocial Relationships and Young People Today” by Albena Dencheva-Nikolova and “From Story to Screen: Using AI and Digital Theatre in the English Classroom” by Slavka Borislavova, as well as practical guidelines for the classroom teaching like “Teach Smarter, not Harder: Effective Classroom Strategies” by Vesna Jaquet, representative of ELTA (English Language Teachers’ Association) Serbia, and “Let’s have fun using humour in the classroom” by Valentina Kikerkova, representative of ELTAM (English Language Teachers’ Association in North Macedonia). BETA President Albena Stefanova held a lecture titled “Teacher Resilience and Teacher Associations as a Means to Survive in the Modern Educational Context” which gave an added value to teacher organisations like HUPE.



My presentation titled “FLT (Foreign Language Teaching) from Young Learners to University Students: Expanding Perspectives, Enriching Practices” summarised my experience teaching future ECE (Early Childhood Education) teachers and future primary school teachers at the Faculty of Education, University of Osijek, teaching teenagers in secondary schools in Osijek, and teaching LSP to students at the Faculty of **Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology and Faculty of Law, University of Osijek**, with an emphasis on interculturalism and recommendations for practical use of intercultural topics and methods in FLT and LSP teaching. I enjoyed plenary talks, lectures and workshops, roundtable discussions on foreign language education, and meeting inspiring colleagues to exchange ideas and experiences. I would like to thank BETA for the wonderful conference, and HUPE for the trust, support and opportunity to be part of this marvelous experience.

Marinela Boras, PhD
Faculty of Law, University of Osijek



IATEFL CONFERENCE, WARSAW, POLAND 18–20 SEPTEMBER 2026, VISTULA UNIVERSITY

From 18 to 20 September, I attended the IATEFL conference, hosted at Vistula University in Warsaw, where I presented a lecture titled “From Screen to Classroom – Motivating English Learners with Film”. The conference brought together English language teachers, teacher trainers, and researchers to share practice and ideas. Under the theme *The Changemakers Revolution*, the conference explored how learning is evolving at every stage of life—from early childhood education to higher education, teacher development, and adult workplace learning.

My lecture explored how film can motivate English learners and bring authentic language and culture into the classroom. Attendees were offered practical ways to integrate film clips into English language teaching through communicative, learner-centred activities. Together, we examined how film can spark discussion, encourage critical thinking, strengthen intercultural understanding, and create meaningful opportunities for authentic language use.

Only around 15 teachers attended my workshop, possibly because it was one of the last workshops before the conference ended on Sunday, but I believe the feedback was positive. We even took photos together.





The conference is always an opportunity for networking and making friends, so I agreed with the president of SCELTA Slovakia to establish future collaboration between the two associations. I also used the opportunity to talk to the TESOL France president about establishing future collaboration. I met lovely and successful people and got many ideas for my work and HUPE meetings. I came back with a positive experience, and I am eager to continue my work.

All in all, presenting at and attending the conference was a valuable professional experience.

Silvija Pećanac Bačić
HUPE DUBROVNIK

