

ATE Newsletter

Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic

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ATE Newsletter – Journal of English Language Teaching

Association of Teachers of English in The Czech Republic

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BETWEEN THE NEWSLETTERS

Dear all,

This is probably my last address of you all in the position of the head of the Association. Therefore I would like to briefly reflect. We have spent (almost) four years in the positions of the executive board of the Association. We started the work with a lot of enthusiasm. We organized the conference in Ústí nad Labem in 2010 and are in the process of preparing another one in Hradec Králové this September. We organized two rounds of the Franklin SpellEvent – in Hradec Králové in 2011 and in Liberec in 2012. There were also bleak days though. When we had to re-submit the whole MSMT accreditation application for the conference in Ústí due to the new format or when we went through really hard times without a permanent newsletter editor. We did get as far as today. What I want to say is that without the support and the enthusiasm of the Association members, without the support of regional managers and without the support of the executive board team, we would be here anyway but definitely feeling differently. Therefore I want to express my thanks to all of you for feeling the pride of being ATECR members, for your enthusiasm and devotion to the teaching job and last but not least for making us keep going.

My thanks go also to all regional managers and to my colleagues in the executive board – Hanka and Šárka, but mainly to Pavla and Michal. Team spirit is a strong drive and I was lucky to work with a very good team. THANK YOU ALL!!

I do not mean to say a pathetic “good-bye”. I want to say – see you in Hradec Králové this September and at many other ATECR future events. Our plan is to establish the Hradec Králové regional ATECR centre with a library and other resources for English teachers.

At the end of this address I would like to remind you to make sure that both our membership secretary and our Newsletter editor Christopher Koy have your valid e-mail address for supplying you with e-ATECR Newsletters. My thanks go also to Chris Koy for his courage to take on the editing position and for his hard work.

I sincerely hope that we will meet in future at many other events organised for English teachers. In the meantime let me wish you all a lot of energy and enthusiasm for the job that we all have been doing.

Olga Vraštilová

ATE CR President

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS (International):

TESOL



MITESOL 2012 Conference

“Serving for a Better World”

October 12 - 13, 2012

Madonna University

Livonia, Michigan, USA

Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (MITESOL) invites professionals involved with English language learners to submit proposals for presentations at the annual conference to be held on the campus of Madonna University in Livonia, the evening of Friday, October 12 and all day Saturday, October 13.

As MITEsol boasts 37 years of service to learners and teachers of English and Madonna University celebrates its 75th Anniversary of service to all learners, it is fitting that we focus this year on serving for a better world. The MITEsol 2012 Conference welcomes proposals from diverse perspectives that address current issues related to English language proficiency assessment, standards-based instruction, ELL students in mainstream classrooms, and funding for quality ESL programs in these tough economic times including short-term and other alternative format programs. The conference also invites proposals related to all aspects of ESL/EAP/IEP/CALL/EFL best practices for instruction, materials development, program administration, teacher training, and professional development in various settings. In keeping with this year’s theme, we also welcome proposals addressing service learning.

Proposals are being accepted for the following formats: paper, poster, panel discussion, exhibitor, teaching/tutoring demonstration, and workshop. Online submissions only will be accepted at

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<http://www.mitesol.org/proposal> The proposal deadline is Saturday, June 23 (11:00 p.m.), 2012 with notification of acceptance via email by mid-August.

If you have any questions about the 2012 MITESOL Conference, please contact:

Andrew Domzalski, Conference Chair, at adomzalski@madonna.edu (general inquiries)
Marian Woyciehowicz Gonsior, Conference Co-Chair, at mgonsior@madonna.edu (proposal inquiries)

Hadeel Betti, Conference Local Chair, at hbetti@madonna.edu

Please include "MITESOL Conference" in the subject line of your email.

I A T E F L



47th Annual Conference and Exhibition, Liverpool, UK

8th – 12th April 2013

<http://www.iatefl.org/liverpool-2013/liverpool-2013>

MSSUA/MSATE

Prague 12th – 13th October 2012

Plenary Speakers:

Brian North, Barry O'Sullivan, Carol Spoettl, Elif Kantarcioglu and Carole Thomas

<http://www.mssua.info/>

IATEFL Poland



21st International IATEFL Poland Conference

WROCLAW, 7th–9th September, 2012

<http://iatefl.org.pl/wroclaw2012/invitation>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS (Local):



8th International & 12th National ATECR Conference

NEW WAYS TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

September 14 – 15, 2012 at the University of Hradec Králové



<http://www.atecr.cz/index.php?q=node/99>

14th Annual Ideas That Work Conference

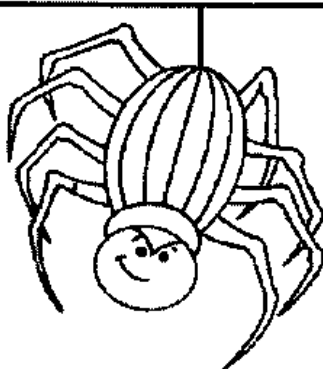
University of West Bohemia in Plzeň

November 10, 2012

<http://www.kan.zcu.cz/index.php?page=19&r=t>

**PLEASE VISIT
OUR
ATECR WEBSITE**

<http://www.atecr.cz>



REPORTS ON COURSES, CONFERENCES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

10th National and International Conference of the Moravian and Silesian Association of Teachers of English, Brno, September 2011

ELT SIGNPOSTS

I had a chance to take part in the 10th National and International Conference of the Moravian and Silesian Association of Teachers of English /MSSUA/ „ELT SIGNPOSTS“ as a representative of ATE CR. The conference was held in Brno, September 9 – 11 and was organized by the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University and MSSUA, o.s.

All sessions took place in the buildings of the Faculty of Education. The conference opened with key-note speeches by Anne O’Keefe (*Grammar Profile*) and Peter Grundy (*Use and Usage*) on the 9th of September. In the evening there was a wonderful performance of the Bear Educational Theatre „The History of England.“

Saturday, the 10th of September started with plenary talks of Barbara Seidlhofer „Proficiency in English“ and David Spencer „Practical activities for the secondary classroom.“ The concurrent sessions followed. In the afternoon there were two co-plenaries delivered by Sheelagh Deller and Michael Hall. During the reception in the evening we could meet a lot of interesting people, talk to the presenters and share from our best experiences.

On Sunday, the 11th of September a wonderful plenary was delivered by Shaun Wilden and, after two concurrent sessions, the conference was closed with a raffle. I enjoyed best the presentation of Simon Gill „Tell me a picture“, where he presented different activities based on visual stimuli, the presentation of Naďa Vojtková „Sharing reading with young learners“ and C. Huxley’s presentation „Boosting brain power“. He showed us how to fully activate our students’ brains in the EFL classroom.

During the conference we had enough time to see the book exhibition of all the publishers and buy some really interesting materials. The conference was very well organized thanks to the conference committee. I would like to thank the ATE CR and MSSUA for the opportunity to take part in the conference.

Mgr. Jiřina Babáková

OA & VOŠE Mladá Boleslav

45th International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Brighton, April 2011

Last spring I had the opportunity to represent ATECR at the 45th IATEFL conference in Brighton. Since I was pressed for time and could not stay for the whole conference, I did not have a chance to enjoy many of the presentations. My major tasks were to extend IATEFL membership of our association and to renew some of the partner contracts. I was successful in both missions. I did enjoy a great time with associate colleagues from different countries on the Associates' Day on April 15, 2011, where we shared experience and listened to interesting presentations. There we were all presented with an interesting publication – *Running an Association for Language Teachers: Directions and Opportunities*. It is a useful collection of contributions mapping all sides of the life of an association (fundraising, newsletter, membership and conference management, etc.). During the Associates' Day

I realized how important it is to keep up with the fast development of technology and social networks. Having an ATECR facebook profile is my dream. A good piece of news is that anybody can join IATEFL conferences though (s)he may not be not present physically. IATEFL offers on-line presentation during the conference or videos of the sessions after the conference is over.



Though my stay in Brighton was very short, I enjoyed every single minute of it together with the unexpectedly beautiful weather we had there. Last year I experienced two springs – one in Brighton and the other one back at home. One more reason to remember Brighton ☺

Olga Vraštilová

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46th International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Glasgow, March 2012

When I travel to a conference, I like to plan ahead. I get my tickets and accommodation to get better prices and better choices of places where to stay; I get a local transport map to look up the way from the hotel to the conference centre; I get a travel guide to find local sights and interesting information about the place where I am going. When I went through the Glasgow tourist guide I had bought I came across this piece of information: *“Glaswegians have a way with words, even if visitors have difficulty understanding them. The patter, sociologists argue, is a mix of native sharpness, Highland feyness, Jewish morbidity and the Irish craic (witty story-telling). Much of Glasgow’s story has been harsh, and, in the past raising a laugh served as an antidote to adversity.”*¹ Having read this I started to be really curious about the people and the town itself. I was to get the answers to my curiosity very soon... When I took the local shuttle bus from the Glasgow International Airport to the centre of the town I asked the bus driver to tell me where to get off. I did not understand much of his Scottish English so I tried to pay close attention to the stops on the way. No matter how attentive I tried to be, the driver had to announce the *Princess Street* bus stop for me personally twice ☺ I did not have problems at the hotel reception but I did have immense problems with taxi drivers and shop assistants. Their mumbling was sometimes so incomprehensible that I gave up using taxis at all and tried to choose “comprehensible” shop assistants by walking around and trying to listen to them and figure out who would mean the shortest way out of the shop ☺ Never did I have time to feel embarrassed because all the Glaswegians I met were very helpful and cooperative – they are all used to very large numbers of foreign tourists visiting in their beautiful city. What this piece of experience did reassure me about was that there is always something new to learn; to understand and even speak Scottish English is a great challenge which I put on my *to-be-done-when-retired* list of things to do ☺ The city itself is a great mixture of industrial spirit mixed with both the old and the modern architecture.

The IATEFL conference itself was held in the *Clyde Auditorium* popularly known as *the Armadillo* (see the picture below). It again offered a wide variety of sessions for literally every participant, rich social life and a huge exhibition. As an ATECR representative I attended the Associates’ Day and got a lot of inspiring ideas as well as some new contacts. One of the most important pieces of news for me was the address from the IATEFL President Eric Baber about the potential new policy of the IATEFL membership. Under new conditions all members of IATEFL Associates could become direct IATEFL members which would bring them many advantages, access to much

¹ Clark, R., Hutchison, C., Bruno, N.: *Insight Guides. Great Breaks Glasgow*. APA Publications/Langenscheidt, 2010; p. 9.

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more information and many more other IATEFL members, SIG members, etc. Eric's presentation stated that this change would "bring about a true network of 100+ teacher associations and 100,000+ individual teachers". To me (and my colleagues) this sounds as a revolutionary idea and as long as we could we would support ATECR joining this event.

Among other things I also represented ATECR in the IATEFL stand on Tuesday March 20. I had brought some old ATE Newsletters to distribute and answered questions posed by the passers-by. I had the pleasure of attending Adrian Underhill's opening plenary session as well as many other interesting presentations given by various speakers (such as Carole Nicoll, Jeremy Harmer, etc.)

I took also some time to explore this famous historical Scottish city – I went to see the Glasgow Cathedral and also the Victorian Necropolis which gives this part of the city a strange (goose-bump giving) skyline.

Glasgow is another unforgettable place for me – due to the IATEFL conference as well as due to its spirit and charm.



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The 21st Annual IATEFL – Hungary Conference in the Számalk Centre, Budapest 7th – 9th October 2011

“EMPOWER/ED” Shaping Learning Communities

The biggest EFL teachers' event in Hungary was held at Számalk Centre in Budapest on October 7-9, 2011. The well-organized event hosted about 270 English teaching professionals from all over Hungary, representatives of partner teachers' associations from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, and professionals from the UK, along with major ELT literature publishing houses.

The opening plenary talk delivered by a European-based teacher trainer and writer, Jammie Keddie, was followed by the SIG programme which covered the following SIGs: Culture and Literature, ICT, Young Learners, and Special Needs Education. In the Young Learners SIG Monika Černá gave her presentation “Empowered by the early start?” focused on very young learners and English Language Teaching in pre-school education in the Czech Republic. In the evening we enjoyed a boat trip on the Danube.

The other two conference days offered three additional plenary speakers: Sheelagh Deller (Pilgrims, Canterbury, UK), who dealt with a specific topic concerning “Who influences who in the learning community”, Michael Swan (a famous ELT writer, UK), whose thought-provoking talk I will describe below, and finally Graham Stanley (the British Council consultant, UK), whose main area of interest lies in digital era and the emerging technologies, and how they can be best used for language learning and teaching.

Michael Swan addressed the issue of “What is happening in English (now), and how much does it matter?” His talk was actually the highlight of the conference, so I decided to share some of his ideas and comments with you. Michael showed that the English language is in constant flux, using the following examples of ‘modern’ language versus its older / more traditional version (in brackets) to prove his point:

1. Modals: overlapping meanings: e.g. ‘That was a crazy thing to do -- you *may* have killed yourself!’ (vs. *might*)
2. ‘Shall’ is almost extinct: used only in: ‘*Shall* I help you?’
3. Unimportant distinctions disappear: e.g. ‘*whom*’ in: ‘*Who* did you vote for?’, the difference between ‘*like*’ and ‘*as*’ disappears: e.g. ‘*like* you said’...
4. Sounds weaken and disappear: e.g. ‘I better go home’, ‘You see John?’
5. American English is on top: e.g. ‘*I got ...*’ (vs. ‘*I’ve got*’), ‘train station’ (vs. ‘railway station’), ‘*This data is significant.*’ (vs. *These data are significant.*) Americanisms are used frequently: *gotten, transportation, a half hour*...
6. Mistakes spread through the language: e.g. *Women’s’ Services*.

7. Some rules are not completely true: e.g. we can use the Present Perfect Simple with a definite time expression: 'I am pleased to confirm that Lloyds Bank *has opened* a Home Loan Account for you *on May 19*.' (vs. Past Simple)
8. Double subjects: '*You and I*' e.g. 'Between *you and I*...' (vs. 'between *you and me*').
9. New forms come into the language: e.g. '*like*': e.g. 'He was *like*, 'well, I better go home now.'"
10. Spoken grammar is not written grammar: 'If *you'd've asked* me *I'd've told* you',
11. Other structures include e.g. 'Charles *is understanding* French a lot better since he went to France.'

Michael also gives us advice how to deal with the whole situation. As teachers, we should keep calm because 'these are tiny ripples on a vast ocean'. We should keep ourselves informed and have good up-to-date pedagogic reference books. At the same time we need to be realistic as we cannot produce anything like native speakers. Correctness is important but we have to prioritise. Perfectionism can be disastrous. 'Good enough is good enough.' If you want to learn more, see Michael's new book *Oxford English Grammar Course* by Michael Swan and Catherine Walter (Oxford University Press, 2011).

To conclude, the 21st IATEFL Hungary conference was perfectly organized. Besides the SIGs and plenary talks, the conference offered about 55 more talks and workshops, all of which were organized in sessions of approx. 7 at a time. It had interesting speakers, motivating topics, and a really friendly atmosphere.

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FREE On-line English Teaching Material

Peter Laszlo, co-founder of an on-line webpage for English teachers, would like to inform the ATECR members that the website - www.iSLCollective.com - hosts the Internet Second Language Collective, which is an international file-swapping community of ESL, FLE, ELE and DAF teachers who share free, downloadable language-teaching materials. All printable teaching materials are original and have been created by iSLCollective members. They are furthermore in fully editable doc/ppt formats so that the material can be refined or tailor-made for your particular classroom needs. Launched back in September 2009, its resource library now includes over 8000 worksheets, and is growing by the day so it may be worth looking at.

The 2012 Olympic Games in London

Undoubtedly one of the most exciting events coming up this summer to most of young language learners is the Summer Olympic Games taking place in London, England. England has been preparing the games for years under the direction of two-time gold medallist Lord Sebastian Coe. Teams from every country will be represented and the sights and sounds of London will be televised for a few weeks.



The ancient Greek Olympic games, the start of the modern Olympic movement, the Special Olympics as well as the Czech representatives are among great discussion topics. The favourites and eventually the medal winners will be covered in the media and many of these personalities are fascinating for students. Obviously many topics can be used for in class English teaching. The British Council has a web page dealing with possibilities of English learning and these topics which are motivating for youngsters: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/english-for-the-games>



LANGUAGE & METHODOLOGY

Social Psychology and ELT – THE HALO EFFECT

How important is one's handwriting? Hardly at all you might say, especially today when most people use a computer. Yet research shows otherwise. In a revealing experiment, a number of exam scripts were copied twice – once in good handwriting and once in bad handwriting. They were then passed on to two groups of examiners who were told to mark them and were specifically instructed to mark for content. Amazingly, the neatly-written scripts got significantly higher marks than the others (Sutherland 1992). Why did such a thing happen? The answer is that very often when we have to assess someone (or something) and this person has a salient, positive feature, the latter colours our judgment, so we tend to make all kind of positive attributions about this person, judgments which are at best only marginally related to the quality which stands out. This is called the 'Halo Effect'.

An experiment: One would expect the scientific world to be less susceptible to such an effect. Not so. In 1982, two psychologists decided to try out an interesting experiment. They selected 12 well-known journals of psychology and to each one they sent an article to be considered for publication. These articles are routinely checked by two authorities on the particular field as well as the editor. The results: in 8 out of the 12 cases the articles were deemed unworthy of publication. Out of 16 'evaluators' and 8 editors who (presumably) read them, not a single one had a different view. Well, one might say, not all articles submitted are up to par. This is true, only in this case these particular articles had been published by the very same journals, under the same title only a few months previously!! The only thing the two psychologists had changed were the names of the authors (eminent university professors) to imaginary ones and their affiliations (originally such prestigious universities as Harvard or Princeton) to non-existent (and by definition obscure) ones! Well, you might think, at least 4 of the articles were thought to be good. Not quite. In 3 out of the 4 cases someone simply realised that they had published this material before... (Sutherland 1992)

Why did such a thing happen? The answer is probably that journals like the above are probably inundated by submissions from academics on the make who are anxious to add yet another entry to their CV. It is equally likely that many of these articles are run-of-the-mill, with little to recommend them. This being so, it makes sense for the 'evaluators' to resort to 'shortcuts' (Cialdini 2001) – rather than scrutinize each script, they look at the name of the writer first. If s/he is a famous professor from an Ivy-League University, then the article is more likely to be worthy of publication. But if we start thinking like this, then an amazing change happens: as Sutherland (1992) points out, when faced with a piece of work by an established writer, we tend to look for its positive aspects, while if the writer's name rings no bells then we start looking for flaws!

Still not convinced? Here is another example. In the mid-70s, someone sent a book to no less than 27 different publishers and literary agents. No marks for guessing what happened. All 27

rejected it. Yet this book ('Steps' by Kosinsky) had actually been published in 1969 and had won the American National Book Award! All that had been changed was the title and the name of the writer. What is more remarkable is that one of the publishers who rejected the 'new book' was 'Random House' – the ones who had published the original one!! (ibid.)

Lest you should think that this phenomenon is restricted to the world of books and publishing, here are some more examples to show you just how widespread it is: Good-looking people are universally thought to be friendlier, more intelligent and more humorous, tall people are thought to have all kind of leadership qualities, they are clearly favoured in job interviews and make more money than people like me who are slightly challenged in the vertical dimension, and, of course, men of a high social status are judged as more attractive by women...(Brehm, Kassin & Fein 2002).

Applications in the field of teaching: If we can create for ourselves this 'aura' of the competent/charismatic/special teacher, then we are halfway towards winning the battle for the 'hearts and minds' of our students. Here are some ideas:

Friendliness: When I ask my students to describe the best teacher they know, they almost invariably mention someone possessing this quality. When I try to probe deeper to see what it is about their method that is so special, my students are often stumped. It is because attitude is such a salient feature that it colours the students' perception of the teacher both as an individual *and* as a professional (for research on this very theme, see Alberson, Frey & Gregg 2004, p. 8)

First impressions: Teachers often 'save' their best techniques for later – a big mistake in my view. By using your favourite materials/techniques early on, you create a positive impression in the students' minds which will pre-dispose them favourably towards all your subsequent lessons. The tendency of first impressions to 'stick' has been demonstrated again and again (Fine 2005)

Professionalism: Little details like being prepared, giving an outline of your lesson in advance, revising what you did the previous time, showing students that there is a continuity in your sessions – all these create an impression of 'professionalism' and they are more observable than, say, a profound activity sequence (Lewis & Hill 1992). The point is that once you have acquired a reputation as a 'true professional', this reputation precedes you and everything you do will then be seen in this light!

Success: Unfortunately perhaps, teachers too are judged by results. This is particularly true in the case of 1-1 lessons. Consequently, there is a lot to be said for 'blowing your own trumpet'. This will create an expectation of success which boosts the students' confidence and acts like a self-fulfilling prophecy (Dornyei 2001).

Titles: As I have said in other articles and as the above experiment clearly demonstrates, titles like 'MSc', 'PhD' etc. never fail to impress people about your competence – so if you have them, flaunt them! (On how effective this 'aura' can be, see also Goldstein, Martin & Cialdini 2007). Similarly, if you happen to work for a prestigious institution, then mention it to your students. I

remember how people's faces used to light up when I told them I was an Oral Examiner for the British Council!

Looks: At the cost of repeating myself, the importance of being good-looking can hardly be exaggerated. Not only does this quality affect the 'marks' one gets in virtually all other fields, but there is evidence that this positive pre-disposition of others actually elicits all kind of positive behaviours from them (Aronson 1999). The moral is clear: it pays to work on your appearance!

What about ELT? So, what about our field? Are there any elements which can create a 'Halo Effect'? Yes, there are - two of them: a) Your passport and b) your accent. Let me explain. I believe that if would-be employers receive 2 identical CVs, one from a native speaker and another from a Greek teacher, there are many cases when only the former will be short-listed. I believe that if two Greek EFL teachers go through an interview and one of them has a native-like accent while the other one does not, then the former is far more likely to be hired, even if the latter has better qualifications/more experience. And I am certain that (*ceteris paribus*) native speakers are on average better paid when it comes to private lessons. Now, I do not have any hard evidence for all this, but I am prepared to bet good money that all 3 hypotheses are true. Anyone for research?

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Conducting Your Excursions in English

Near the end of every school year we often take our pupils out on an excursion to places of local or historical interest. Why not conduct these excursions in English? Why not give a very basic interactive tour of a castle or museum with children in the English language? After all, there are many places they will visit where they see tour guides speaking in English to foreign tourists in the Czech Republic. Moreover, the children these days have often been abroad with their parents, and the language spoken abroad is so often English as well. It would be a clear simulation of an authentic communication to replicate what we all know happens with tourists: communication in English.

Our school is in the vicinity of the castle of Hluboká which is surrounded with a very nice and large English park. So, in summer we have possibility to go outside from the classroom and spend our class there.

Now I want to talk about learning. What is it in general? It is a big game, it is about doing things well - getting into something in depth. According to some adult students, learning is a quantitative increase in knowledge. It is acquiring information or knowing a lot. Learning as memorizing is storing information that can be reproduced, and it is acquiring facts, skills that can be retained and used as necessary. Learning is also interpreting and understanding reality in a different way.

In the pedagogical practice, teachers have always had to face the difficulties of teaching languages successfully to large and heterogeneous classes. Teacher-centered classes do not allow for appropriate input from all learners at the same time. There will always be some learners who feel frustrated because the input is too difficult for them; there will always be learners who get bored because the input is too simple. Getting students working in pairs or groups seems to be a good solution to this problem. (Rozholdova, 1993)

The Benefits of Pair/Group Work

Appropriate use of pair and group work may improve the learning process by:

- 1 individualising the tasks for learners in view of their different objectives or levels of difficulty (such as language level or information availability) and of a relation to learners needs, interests and expectations in order make these tasks more relevant and challenging to individual learners;
- 2 providing more opportunities and time for individual learners to formulate, express and validate their thought and opinions;
- 3 ensuring more space to practise language in its different functions and contexts;

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4 simulating situations closer to real life, where people only rarely have to interact in front of large audiences;

5 creating a more relaxed atmosphere in the class by lowering the so-called “audience effect” (Barners, 1983 cited in Rulon and McCreary, 1986: 193)

6 encouraging more cooperative as opposed to competitive work in the class by assigning tasks where all learners have an important role in their successful accomplishment;

7 getting learners more involved and motivated and thus more responsible for their own language learning. (Rozholdova, 1993)

Learning in pairs or groups, though, can have its disadvantages for teachers, schoolchildren and the teaching process. For example, it presupposes more preparatory work and higher pedagogical skills from teachers to organize and manage it successfully. To set this up properly, I undertake some pre-excursion English language lessons, focusing on vocabulary words. Below are activities I employ for this purpose.

Memory Game

Classroom - Word list: backpack, chalk, blackboard, globe, crayon, lunch, pencil, playground, ruler, compasses, pencil case, notebook, rubber, sponge, timetable, mark, biro, desk, schoolbag, triangle

House - Word list: roof, chimney, window, door, wall, balcony, garage, lock, key, gate, stairs

Garden - Word list: trees, flowers, lawn, fence, greenhouse, bench, pergola

Flowers - Word list: rose, tulip, iris, lily, orchid, sunflower, poppy, bluebell

Inference activity

Look at the pictures and make inferences based on what you see. Match the inference cards to the correct pictures.

After looking at this picture, I can infer that: she likes the color pink; she is happy; she likes to take pictures; maybe she got a new camera.

By looking at this picture, I can infer that: he is waiting; he is going on the trip; he is excited about his trip; he is staying for awhile.

After looking at this picture, I can infer that: she enjoys writing; she is prepared for class; she enjoys school; she is a student.

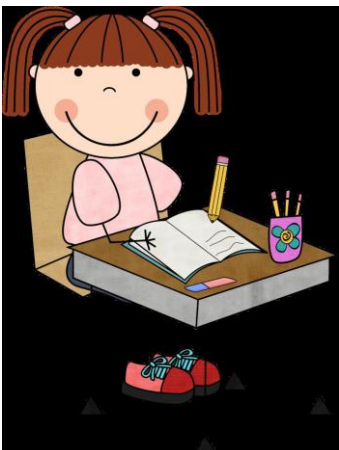
After looking at this picture, I can infer that: they are friends; they like to read; they are helping each other; they are learning to read.

Drawing a Story

Use colored pencils and crayons to create a picture of a caste. Then, write a short story about your picture.

Writing

1. Think about things that are green. List four different things that are green and use each of these words in a sentence.
2. The time for lunch is very important in the school. Write about your favorite foods to eat for lunch.
3. Write about your favorite healthy breakfast foods.
4. Think about staying home on a rainy day. Write about your favorite things to do on a rainy day.



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Teaching Hesitation Strategies – A Few Suggestions

Most foreign language programs in Czech public schools and universities have included in the curriculum an upper-level, skill-oriented course called “Conversation Exercises.” The development of the skill of “conversing” in a foreign language definitely can be a challenging one to “teach.” Often native speakers, if available, are especially coveted and hired for these courses. This hiring practice apparently reflects the view that in the best conversation course, the learner engages in exchanges which are as authentic as conversation can be in the target language, hence the use of a native speaker. Learning by imitation also may be part of the methodological approach behind the use of native speakers. Obviously, a proper communicative course is a learner-centered class: the teacher should do as little talking as possible whereas students should be actively conversing for as much of the lesson as possible, as we all know.

While teaching English conversation courses in České Budějovice over the few years, I have noticed the natural hesitations common to learners searching for words appropriate for unplanned, spontaneous discussions. These hesitations may take the form of silence for a period of about five to eight seconds, and often the student looks anxious. Sometimes a much less desirable Czech utterance like “*tak*” fills in the silence. At its worst even entire sentences

are expressed in Czech such as “*Ježíš Maria, ja nevím jak se řekne...*” These utterances not only interrupt the conversation but change the intended target language as well, completely ruining the flow of an English conversation, degenerating the exercise into a clumsy task for interpreters.

Of course, it is natural for students to hesitate while considering which word, phrase or even grammatical structure to use. As a matter of fact, native speakers of all languages naturally tend to hesitate while laboring to come up with an appropriate response to a question or to think of a persuasive turn of phrase in a spontaneous discussion. This contribution suggests that teachers contemplate including English language hesitation markers or “fillers” used by native speakers once learners reach the point of producing spontaneous oral communication exchanges in English with other learners or the teacher. Fillers are rarely taught in the English language classroom, although many linguists (including the late Josef Vachek) have been examining these everyday speech events. This kind of active production of language should be practiced in class at the intermediate level or above.

There may be an initial resistance among teachers of English to such language fillers as “*well*,” “*uh*” or “*uhm*” since they sound like the speaker is ill educated or has particularly disorganized thoughts. There is no doubt that *excessive* use of fillers conveys a poor image. Teachers are not comforted or aided by most teaching materials either. Current English texts stress written language conversations even while attempting to emphasize speaking skills. Obviously, it is not the purpose here to teach students to stuff their conversations with “*uh*”s and “*uhm*”s but rather to help learners acquire and employ more native-like techniques to signal an addressee that they are searching for a word. This can be done by creating awareness among students about the strategies they use in their own language. Citing examples of Czech fillers they use will draw their attention to fillers in English. Some Czech fillers I frequently hear include “*tak*,” “*takže*,” “*takhle*” and “*no?*”

After acknowledging the use of fillers in Czech, the next task is for students to recognize the similar kinds of strategies in the speech of native speakers. One way teachers can aid students to recognize strategies used by native speakers in class is to play in class easily accessible video recordings from the BBC and CNN. Videos of talk or quiz shows as well as selected moments in

news broadcasting, such as the so-called “*breaking news*” or reports broadcast “*live on location*” or press conferences offer spontaneous speeches that are optimal authentic teaching material.

In small groups, students viewing a selected segment of a broadcast can easily count the number of times repeatedly-used fillers are stated by speakers on the videotape. A more challenging but useful group activity students can do is to list all the different forms of fillers the native speakers use when they hesitate. Student recognition of the strategies in the authentic speech of native speakers will generate a more comfortable feeling with these especially foreign, paralinguistic utterances. Students will then feel much more poised when they imitate the same fillers for their own hesitations.

A list of English fillers can be given to students on an OHP or a handout – or better yet – written up on posters that can adorn the classroom walls. The following table offers a few common English fillers. Below it are suggestions for understanding their strategic use. The list is obviously far from exhaustive and merely intended to help advance this area of strategic competence.

The English filler “*well*” is an introductory filler and can be rendered into Czech as “*totiž.*” The filler “*you know*” can introduce or conclude a sentence and indicates that information or an opinion is shared with the listener. English native speakers probably use it as a conversation filler more than the Czechs use the equivalent “*viš.*” “*Anyway*” is an introductory filler that contrasts what is being said with what has been said. It can also be used to change a topic. “*Yeah*” and “*okay*” are affirming fillers, underscoring what has been said. “*I mean*” and similar expressions such as “*I think,*” “*I believe*” and “*I guess*” make the statements or assertions sound less impersonal. They also serve to hedge the strength of the statements by leaving the door open for disagreement. The non-lexical filler “*hmm*” verbalizes the word search so the listener knows they are hesitating. The English filler “*right?*” is used with a rising intonation and engages the listener, seeking affirmation of the statement.

well	okay	I guess
you know	I mean	like
anyway	I think	hmm
yeah	I believe	right?

The fillers above are sometimes used in combinations, but beware: occasionally multiple hesitation markers used by native speakers can really be annoying to the listener. The stereotyped “Valley Girl” discourse parodied by Hollywood twenty years ago overuses these fillers to an extreme, sentence after sentence: *“Yeah, well, like, it’s so grody, ya know? Ya know what I mean?” ... “I mean, I’m so hungry I can scarf up half the menu or something.”* The idea was to represent a “Valley Girl” as a scatterbrain. It is important not to overuse them or combine different fillers too often, in other words. On the other hand, seasoned politicians often use prepared, sentence-length fillers for a different strategy – hesitation to not only win time for searches, but to kill time if a journalist asks a series of unpleasantly difficult questions. A filler my students view on videotape employed by an adroit American politician on Tim Sebastian’s former broadcast “*Hardtalk*” (BBC) in response to a question in the midst of a particularly harsh grilling was, *“That’s an interesting question,”* a disingenuous line intended to both flatter the interviewer and frustrate the journalistic effort by killing some time off the short broadcast. Ultimately, though, it is essential that students be directed to emulate the native speaker’s authentic ways of hesitating speech, while at the same time recognizing the clever exploitation of the often useful rhetorical features.

One way to encourage students to use fillers in class is to introduce *“the English filler of the week,”* i.e., each week the instructor introduces a new conversational filler, its functions and position(s) in a sentence (initial or end of sentence). Encourage students to use this filler in all classroom discussions and conversations whenever they hesitate and feel *“the filler of the week”* is appropriate. Whenever they need planning time, students should be invited to use a variety of fillers.

The use of fillers in English conversation can be explained and practiced in both conversation classes and intermediate and upper-intermediate language classes. Fillers are useful for more proficient communication and can thus improve important affective factors such as learner motivation and confidence, mitigating the anxiety when the student is searching for a word or some kind of special phrasing. The use of authentic English fillers instead of the Czech versions will help keep the conversations exclusively in English, even under the most trying moments. Finally, a strategic use of

English fillers in a debate develops students' creative and logical thinking skills, arguably our ultimate instructional objective.

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INSPIRING IDEAS AND TIPS

Definitions in Context

This is a variable exercise, testing your pupils' vocabulary and it also serves as an adjustable checking of various topic-based vocabulary as well as general revision and fun activity.

Its level ranges from beginner to advanced, depending on the vocabulary selected. The preparation time varies according to the length of exercise and its thoroughness, but basically we may state it is developed within minutes and it covers large units of what we need to brush up with our students and is also fun to do for them, so most of the time the targeted groups find this exercise motivating and good fun. The time devoted to this activity depends on general factors, such as the number of students and how "tough" you make it, but generally it covers a part of class from 15 up to 30 minutes (with adult students in 90-minute classes).

The major advantage is that a teacher can revise or even test vocabulary they have covered in the lessons. The principle is to give an incomplete clause into which a word or a phrase belongs. The clause is printed for the pupils to see (or shown, written on the whiteboard etc.) and the teacher gives a description of the "missing word" as if found in an English – English dictionary (with the language adjusted to the students' needs).

Example I / Beginner's Level, General English

The Student's Sheet

1. My boyfriend always goes to Madrid on ...
2. Oh, I never liked ... much.
3. We often use an electronic ... in our English classes.

The Teacher's Note

1. vacancy; time when we do not go to work, we relax and often enjoy traveling or doing nothing or having fun...
2. an activity where people meet for talk and fun, enjoy their time and drink or eat...
3. a complex of words or vocabulary you do not know...

Suggested Answers

1. holiday(s)
2. party; partying; parties
3. dictionary

Example II / Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate, Biology English

Student's Sheet

1. I have never touched a real...
2. ... are my mother's favourite flowers.
3. He lost some in the accident.

Teacher's Note

1. a type of reptile, of which there are typically "no legs", it has a long body with scales, no lids on the eyes, often figures in mythology and is the "bad animal" in the Bible.
2. tall plants with large yellow disks of which the centre is dark brown or nearly black and consists of seed people and animals can eat. The seeds are oily.
3. usually red liquid which goes through your body and is essential for the existence of a living creature. It consists of plasma and red and white cells.

Suggested Answers

1. snake; (serpent)
2. sunflowers
3. blood

The exercise can be transformed into a creative exercise where the students "create" their phrases and/or definitions. This exercise can also well serve as an introduction to using a mono-lingual dictionary and can motivate students to do so by giving tips for the on-line variants (www.yourdictionary.com, www.dictionary.com, also www.answers.com, www.thefreedictionary.com, www.audioenglish.net, www.allwords.com, www.wordnik.com or specialized dictionaries, such as www.biology-online.com in the case of biology-based vocabulary) or can become a part of the dictionary work in class.

The examples shown above work with nouns only, but the exercise can easily be transformed into a language exercise concentrating on verbs, adjectives or other word classes.

This versatile activity can take many forms, depending on your and your class's needs and preferences. Its creative potential does not only depend on the tutor but also gives space to student's language creativity.

The universal example shown below could serve pre-intermediate to intermediate levels and uses basic (general) English vocabulary, for the purpose of its wide use for the readers – teachers.

We do hope it helps in your classes and makes it more fun and success.

Student's Sheet

1. My parents drive to ... every summer.
2. Jan's sister enjoys grilling ...
3. As a child I spent a lot of time playing ...
4. We need your ... here, Sir.
5. He never wrote a single ... in his life.
6. We need carrots, cauliflower and ... for this salad.
7. I planned ... a list of French words but went to the cinema instead.
8. I do not enjoy ... these days, do you?
9. We had a ... dinner at the hotel last night.
10. Jim and Jill had a bad ... about their children's behaviour.

Teachers's Notes

1. the capital of Spain.
2. it is the meat which comes from cows.
3. a sport with bats (rackets) and light balls, played in a court divided by a net. The number of players are two or two pairs and the shape of the court is rectangular.
4. one's name written by oneself.
5. a text written in verse, not prose.
6. a vegetable with green peel and white or light green fresh inside, consisting mainly of water, usually eaten fresh.
7. to learn, to go through so that we know it.
8. the major winter festivity, connected with religious past and often with commercial giving presents and eating great food nowadays; originally it was a celebration of Christ's birth.
9. excellent, delicious
10. quarrel; disagreement

Answers

1. Madrid
2. beef
3. tennis
4. signature
5. poem
6. cucumber
7. to study
8. Christmas
9. tasty; wonderful; fantastic; superb (many possible answers)
10. argument; row

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Dlouhé Dvory – New York, please

About a year ago my younger brother came home telling me that there will be some kind of a competition in English and that the winner will go to New York to participate in the world championship and that he would give it a try. I tried to tell him that it is not really possible for him to win, well I'm that kind of person who has never won anything, so I wanted to make him prepared. He brought home few papers of practising words lists which he received from his teacher of English but I can't really remember seeing him practice at all.

The only needed thing in this competition is to spell a given word correctly. The competitor is given a word in English. S/he can ask for the definition and or example sentence of that word in English. Then s/he has got 2 minutes to spell that given word correctly. There is no allowance to correct once even one letter is spelled incorrectly though they can begin the spelling again if the part spelled already was correct.

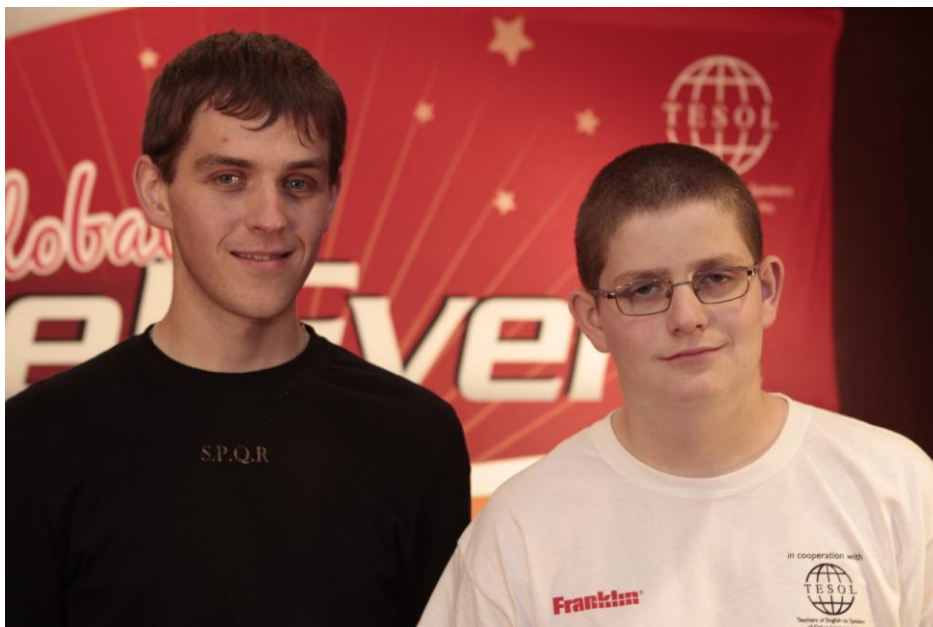


Trophys, prizes and cheque worth 10 000 \$ for the winner

The competition here in the Czech Republic was held on the 7th of May and I was there with my brother as our parents were not able to go with him. There were 50 competitors and I bet none of them really realised what was in game. While I was sitting there and listening to all those great children, many of them were better in English than I am, I had a great feeling of knowing that one of these great competitors will win a trip to New York. It did not matter who it will be, the greatest thing was it will be one of them. It's not like a lotto where one has a chance to win, here it was a sureness of one winning it. By that time I did not know yet that my brother will be the one. His winning word was millionaire and later there was an article in newspaper that Millionaire helped for the trip to New York. Our parents did not want to go to New York so for me it was the beginning of 3 months of work, planning and preparing what was needed and requested from us to go.



It was the 15th of September early morning when we were leaving our home for the biggest trip we had ever had. None of us had ever flown by a plane, my brother had never been to a sea before and we were going 4,000 miles away from our home without knowing what it will be like. We entered the train and said to the conductor Dlouh   Dvory – New York, please. Well it was just a joke, but it is like requesting a ticket to the Moon. We went to Prague and from there by plane to New York. We landed successfully at 3 p.m. Then we took a taxi to the Hotel. We were staying in Marriot Marquis Hotel, the glossiest and most elegant hotel I have ever seen. There we finally met the person with whom I had been in touch via e-mails for last 3 months, Ms. Alline Boutin, a smiley sympathetic heartfelt woman. She was the one who helped us out with everything we needed for the trip.



The next day we had a trip with a guide around New York, first we went by bus so we saw the Empire State Building, Chrysler Tower, Wall Street and many other places of interest, then we took a boat trip to the Statue of Liberty. Everything was so well planned. We had a lunch at the Hard Rock Caf   and in the afternoon we had free time to talk to each other because they were doing interviews

with finalists. It was awesome being in a room with people from 15 different countries from all over the world. Noone really seemed to be worried about the competition which was to be held next day. We were all enjoying the possibility to meet so many different cultures at one place and the party we had in the evening was great.



The last day of our stay in the hotel it was the “D” day for all finalists. All began with introducing important people. Mr. Barry J. Lipsky, president of Franklin Electronic Publishers, told us where the idea of having a spelling championship came from. He said that they were in China and they had seen some wrong spelled advertisements so one of his colleagues came up with that idea. Whole championship day was guided by Mrs. Tamara Kirson, The New York Times 2009 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Teacher of the Year, a very cheerful woman who made the competitors feel really comfortable during the whole competition. It took 9 rounds and the final winning word was Repetitious. South Korea won it. The Czech Republic finished on the second place.



We had our trip extended as we stayed in the USA for another 5 days. We rented a car in New Jersey and had a great trip. First we went to the ocean where we stayed for one afternoon then we continued north to the lake Seneca, which is a 20 km long lake between mountains. Finally we got to the Lake Erie in Buffalo and later to Niagara Falls as well. It was the biggest and greatest trip of my life.



Awesome view at one of the Niagara falls

We would like to give big thanks to Mr. Barry Lipsky, the team around him and Franklin Electronic Publishers for making this competition happen and providing it with great prizes. Our thanks go as well to the Merriam-Webster company which provided the spelling championship with lists of words and prizes. Last but not least we would like to thank a lot to TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), association of English teachers who made it possible for children to participate. Our special thanks go to Mrs. Olga Vraštilová and the team around her as they made the spelling round here in the Czech Republic possible to happen. So thank you Franklin, Webster and TESOL for this great opportunity we had received. It was an unrepeatable experience.

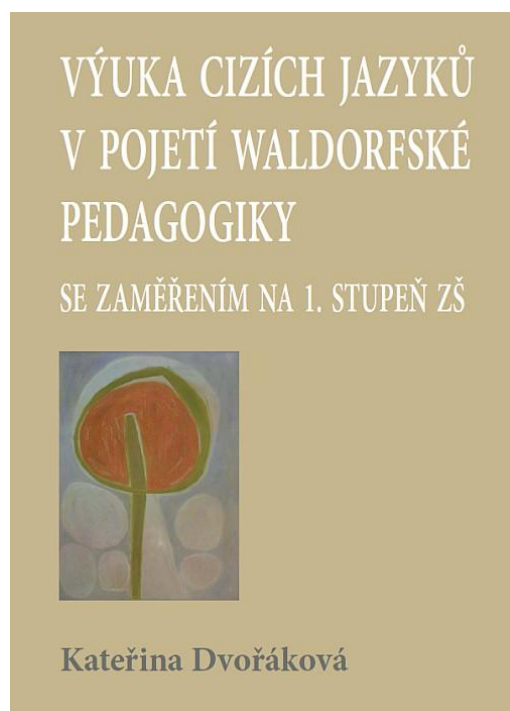
Jaromír Fof

BOOK REVIEWS

Výuka cizích jazyků v pojetí waldorfské pedagogiky

by Kateřina Dvořáková

Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Pedagogická fakulta - 2011



The pedagogical system of Waldorf schools, based on the ideas and teachings of the German philosopher Rudolf Steiner, presently operates in more than sixty countries. In the Czech Republic alone, it is currently the most widespread of the so-called alternative educational systems, with almost 30 pre-primary, elementary, and secondary schools.

Though the first Steiner school had been set up after World War One, its humanistic ideals could hardly have taken root in the Central Europe until after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. Since then, the Waldorf pedagogy has been adequately researched, but no study has specifically treated the topic of foreign-language teaching. Dvorakova's *Waldorf Approach to Teaching Foreign Languages* seeks to fill this gap.

This book deals with the methodology of foreign-language teaching, with a particular emphasis on primary-school learners. Its main aim is to present and explore how foreign languages are taught under this system which, after all, has over ninety years of experience to its credit, and which has succeeded in incorporating two foreign languages into its Primary Curriculum – from the first grade onwards.

The publication is based on a five-year research project that incorporates the author's own teaching experience in grades one to five, her observations in other schools (including one in Germany), and interviews with expert foreign-language teachers. It also presents a survey of available theoretical resources on the subject. In particular, the following questions are examined:

- When and how are reading and writing skills introduced?
- What are the Waldorf teachers' opinions about the ways foreign languages are taught at their schools?
- What is the pupils' ability to learn foreign languages?

Typical lessons and the essential Waldorf pedagogical principles are presented, such as the use of art in teaching or the absence of textbooks. Examples are given from lessons of English and German.

Moreover, attention is paid to discussing and showing how learning strategies – both those spontaneously used by the pupils and those introduced by the teacher – can effectively be developed even with young learners. Examples of strategy use are recorded, including a case study monitoring the strategies applied by a talented student over a five-year period.

Practicing teachers should no doubt appreciate the chapters dedicated to reading and writing. The gradual development of these two skills is described in great detail. In the Waldorf approach, classic textbooks are replaced by authentic works of literature and graded readers, as well as readers written by the teachers. Additionally, the system's unique treatment of storytelling and drama is highlighted.

In conclusion, the author attempts to summarize the main distinctive features of the Waldorf system, outlining both its strengths and weaknesses. The book, written in Czech, is designed to serve as a sort of guide for Waldorf foreign-language teachers working in Primary Schools. Because of the link with humanistic ideals, however, this publication could also provide a stimulating and thought-provoking incentive for anyone else working in this field.

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Dear Colleagues,

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The payment without the filled-in form is very difficult to identify. The membership is for one calendar year (Jan.-Dec.). New members who send their application form and payment in October, November, December are granted membership for the following year as well. You can also send your Renewal or Application Forms via email.

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Please note: “*Zpráva pro příjemce*” should contain your name and surname, “*variabilní symbol*” for new membership should state number **2012**, for renewals **your ATE membership number**.

The last bit of information concerns the contact between the executive committee and the members. As the Internet has become generally available both at schools and homes we ask ATE members to write their current email address on the Renewal Form. We believe that email contact is more flexible and economical than paper mail. Try to access ATE Web page as often as possible:

<http://www.atecr.cz>. If you encounter problems reaching our web page or want to suggest or improve something, do not hesitate to contact members of the executive committee.

Vladimír Přech

ATE CR Membership Secretary

Email: vladimir.prech@svses.cz



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ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Členská přihláška AUAČR

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P.O.Box 169

11121 Praha 1

Osobní údaje o členech AUAČR slouží pouze pro vnitřní potřebu tohoto občanského sdružení (Zákon č.1 O 1 /2000Sb, § 18) / Personal data of ATECR members are collected only for internal administration of the Association (Act 101/2000 Coll., section 18)



ASOCIACE UČITELŮ ANGLIČTINY ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY
ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Prodloužení členství v AUAČR - 2012

ATECR Membership Renewal Form - 2012

Příjmení / Surname

Jméno / First name Titul / Title

Adresa pro korespondenci / Mailing Address

Ulice a číslo / Street & Number

PSČ a obec / ZIP Code & Town

Telephone:

E-mail:

Změny od poslední registrace / Changes from the last application

.....

.....

Datum / Date

Podpis / Signature

Typ členství / Type of Membership

Prosím zakroužkujte / Please circle

Regular	350,-
Student	150,-
Institutional	700,-
Retired teacher	150,-
Family	450,-

Místo pro nalepení kopie dokladu

o platbě členského příspěvku

Please attach a copy of your proof
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Účet / Account

AUAČR Praha 1

ČS, Václavské nám. Praha 1

1923416359 / 0800

variabilní symbol: **2012**

vyplněnou přihlášku pošlete na adresu

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How to pay

The following information concerns the payment of the membership fees and their registration. We strongly recommend that members who renew or prolong their membership send us immediately the filled-in form with a copy of a proof of payment attached. No registered letter is required.

Send it to:

ATECR, Membership Secretary

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11121 Praha 1

As the payment without the filled-in form is very difficult to identify, we ask you to state your **name** in “Zpráva pro příjemce” to make sure we can link the payment to your name.

Do not also forget to state **2012** as your “variabilní symbol”.

Please make sure we have your valid email address so that any necessary information from the ATECR board can reach you easily.

Should you have any problems, please contact ATECR membership secretary at

vladimir.prech@svses.cz

Ever Thought of Writing for *ATECR Newsletter*?

We invite articles from our members and readers! Share with us your:

- interesting activity used with your learners
- research on language, literature, or teaching/learning topic of interest to your colleagues
- your own “English revelations” - your understanding of a grammar point, vocabulary item, or other information in a new way
- views on a book you have read recently (textbook, methodology book, etc.)
- report on an interesting workshop, conference, or meeting you have attended recently
- other topics of interest to teachers of English in the Czech Republic

Submissions are invited from previously or never-before-published writers. Please see our guidelines in “How To Submit an Article to the *ATECR Newsletter*”.

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1. Submissions should be in English!
2. Articles must be submitted electronically (preferably in .rtf or .doc format as an attachment to e-mail) to: koy@pf.jcu.cz
3. Include the following information:
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 - b) The name of your institution or other identifying affiliation.
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4. When your article is accepted for publication, you will be notified by e-mail.
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6. Authors of the articles will be contacted in case of substantial changes in their contributions.
7. References to articles and books cited must be complete. For journal article include author, date of publication, title of the article, title of journal, volume number, and page numbers (where article appeared). For books include author, year of publication, title, location and name of publishers.
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Contributions

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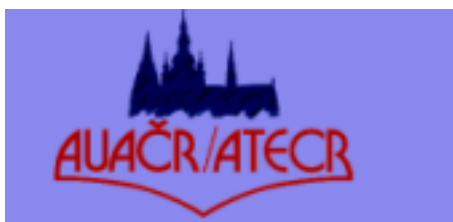
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