

ATE Newsletter

Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic

Journal of English Language Teaching

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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 *(Ilona Havlíčková)*

Dear members and partners of ATE CR,

Whether you were working over the hot summer months or just enjoying hard earned vacation I hope you had a great time and built up your energy.

I am delighted to introduce the second Newsletter this year and would like to express my thanks to its editor Christopher Koy from the University of South Bohemia for his sleepless nights spent editing and gathering contributions which are greatly appreciated not only by Christopher but also by the Association Board.

It has been a busy year. I am proud to announce the existence of our new web page which has inversely brought sleepless nights to me and my immediate family. Hopefully, it will bring some future satisfaction with its more user friendly attitude and open ATE CR to wider public. It has brought some major changes. In May the Regional Representatives and the ATE CR Board agreed to offer all the upcoming newsletters free of charge (as we had previously gone green and had only prepared an electronic version). Therefore, an online subscription is now available to everyone on our new web pages. This change might come as a shock to some but we strongly believe that it should not be kept solely to ATE CR members and its partners. The electronic version (in .pdf formatting) may be easily downloaded on <http://atecr.weebly.com/newsletter-archive.html>. I really do hope that this decision by the ATECR Board will be accepted warm-heartedly among our members.

Once again, the membership application may also be filled out online. All the news and events are newly organized into separate categories and you may also search by dates/months. Feel free to check the website (<http://atecr.weebly.com/index.html>) and contact us with any further suggestions for improvements.

Our vice-president Zuzana Katerová has represented us in IATEFL Liverpool and renewed many partnership contracts as well as signed a new mutual cooperation between ATE CR and ETAI Israel and INGED Turkey. You will find the report of hers in this newsletter. As we had signed a new cooperation with LAKMA Lithuania, we are sending our representative to their conference held in October 2014. The ATE CR Board has just attended the conference of our partner organisation MSSUA in Olomouc. In case you were not present at the event, feel free to read the report of Iva Havlíková (our treasurer) in this issue. Miša Čaňková attended a conference very recently in Lithuania and just got her report in before this issue came out.

Our Newsletter editor compares presidential elections in the USA. Vivian Lee White deals with a confusing system of weights and measures in England and the United States. Helena Lustová reflects on contemporary society and what has gone wrong. Should you wish to learn more about blogging, read the report by Jana Jílková who actively participated in Blogothon 2013 organized by the British Council.

Mutual cooperation with the British Council has been refreshed this year and together we have done the mutual research into the educational opportunities of teachers. If interested, please read the report by Staša Zawitkovska. The US Embassy, on the other hand, has offered free places in e-learning courses held by the University of Oregon in the city of Eugene. Some of our members were accepted so I do wish them pleasant studies.

Our partner association AMATE has held a lot of meetings regarding future form of leaving exams - the most discussed issue which keeps stirring up grammar school teachers almost to a rebellion and which has understandingly caused a lot of anger and disappointment among wider public. I am mentioning it in my foreword because on our regional meeting we had agreed to support their declaration which was then introduced to the former government. Due to constant political changes AMATE will open new discussions and we would like to have a representative, a secondary education teacher, in the debate.

Looking ahead we have settled the date (September 19 – 20, 2014) and venue (Liberec) of ATE CR conference held every other year. Please mark these important dates in your calendars in **red ink**! Former ATECR president Marcela Malá was appointed a leader of Liberec conference team. We will certainly keep all our members and partners informed and hope to welcome you in person in Liberec next year.

As the new school year started not long ago, let me wish you a delightful year full of gratifying events, enjoyable surprises if you are keen on them, cooperative co-teachers, pleasant immediate superiors and inferiors, and of course students enthusiastic about the rich lessons of their teachers. I also wish you a lot of energy and ease to fight any unnecessary obstacles that might head in your way.

Ilona Havlíčková
ATECR President

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

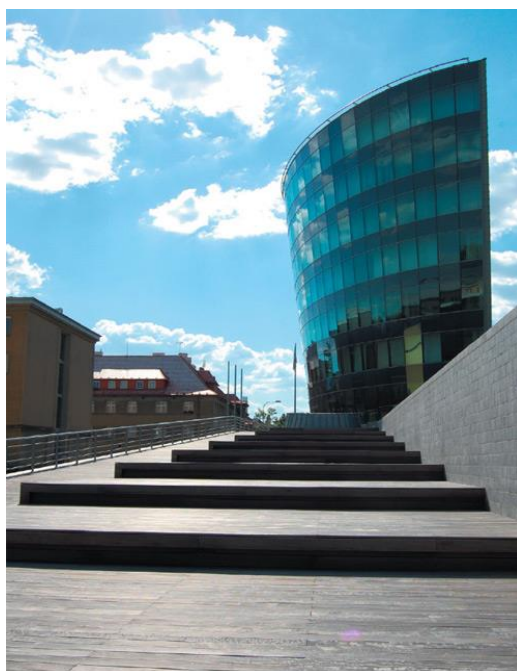
9th International & 13th National ATECR Conference of the Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic: Sept 19-20, 2014

Our next ATECR conference will take place in Liberec at the Technical University-Liberec, on September 19-20, 2014. Further details about registering, the plenary speakers and the other events can be accessed at:

<http://atecr.weebly.com>



TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA V LIBERCI
**Fakulta přírodovědně-humanitní
a pedagogická**



The 26th IATEFL BESIG Annual Conference and Exhibition
in the Prague Congress Centre
November 8-10, 2013



For further information on this business English conference, click on this link:

http://www.besig.org/events/conferences/annual/Prague_2013.aspx.

TESOL 2014 in Portland, Oregon:



For further details, see <http://www.tesol.org/convention2014>

The 14th International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition

Harrogate International Conference Centre

April 2-5, 2014



Plenary Speakers announced:



David Graddol



Kathleen Graves



Michael Hoey



Sugata Mitra

See <http://www.iatefl.org/harrogate-2014/harrogate-2014> for more information !

21st International IATEFL Slovenia Conference

Terme Topolšica – Slovenia: March 6-9, 2014



For more details on this conference, see <http://www.iatefl.si/en/>

Please visit our brand new

ATECR website:

<http://atecr.weebly.com>

REPORTS ON CONFERENCES

11th National and International Conference of the Moravian and Silesian Association of Teachers of English September 13 – 14, 2013 in Olomouc

Traditions and Innovations – that was a title of this year's conference held in the town of Olomouc. This event organized by MSATE/MSSUA and the Department of English, the Faculty of Education, Palacký University of Olomouc became a part of the celebration of the 440th anniversary of the foundation of Palacký University, the second oldest university in the Czech Republic.

I joined the conference together with Ilona Havlíčková and Zuzana Katerová, ATECR Board, in order to meet leading figures of ELT, share ideas with colleagues from around Europe and MSATE/MSSUA and invite all participants to the next year conference in Liberec organized by ATECR and University of Liberec.

All programme on Friday and Saturday morning took place at the Art Centre of Palacký University, often referred to as Konvikt (former Jesuit College). Corpus Christi Chapel is a part of this genuine place where plenaries and social events programme took place. It is a piece of beauty you can admire nowadays.

The second part of the conference took place in a less historical building of the Faculty of Education in Žižka Square which used to be army headquarters. The participants of the conference could see the extension of the original building which is still in progress. Both venues are about a 15 minute walk apart through a very nice park.

This conference was a great opportunity to get together and discuss matters of common concern with language educators. Nearly 50 speakers, English language theorists and writers, both from the Czech Republic and all around Europe attended this 2-day conference in order to offer participants (mainly English teachers) their ideas how to improve or brush up English teaching and introduce new trends in ELT. However, as the title of the conference says, most of the speakers confirmed that traditions and new approaches in ELT may be interwoven.

A large exhibition of around 20 ELT-related publishers was a great chance to see the latest ELT publications and services. The exhibition was open to all for the length of the conferences so we could visit their stands and find out more about their offer.

On Friday the 13th of September the conference was opened by the opening ceremony and keynote speech by Prof. PhDr. Josef Jařab, CSc., former University Rector, and local council

guests. It was followed by talks and workshops concerning different topics and different age of English language learners and also different problems English teachers have to cope with while teaching.

The first day of the conference was ended by the concert in Corpus Christi Chapel. The ATENEO Choir, conducted by doc. PaedDr. Pavel Režný, Ph.D., presented songs of different genres such as classical music, folk songs and songs from films and musicals. That was a very pleasant experience which uplifted listeners' minds.

The second day of the conference was full of interesting talks and workshops again. During the lunch break participants could visit the performance of Bear Educational Theatre in Corpus Christi Chapel. The actors passed their enthusiasm on to us, teachers, and I am sure they manage the same while they stand in front of our students.

As written above, the next part of the conference took place at the Faculty of Education. However, it offered other seminars of a high quality.

At the end of the conference there was time to say good-byes. A raffle happened during the closing ceremony where delegates who filled in the feedback forms could win interesting prizes. A pub crawl took place after the conference on Saturday evening so delegates could enjoy the nightlife in Olomouc. It started at the Svatováclavský pivovar and continued in the Hostinský pivovar Moritz. On Sunday there was also an offer of sightseeing tour which started at 10.00 at Archdiocesan Museum, followed by visiting the Trinity Column, University Gardens and other sights of interest in Olomouc.

It was a pleasure for me to participate at this conference and to visit Olomouc. My personal and professional evaluations from the conference were overwhelmingly positive and I am looking forward to meeting ELT professionals 19th and 20th September 2014 in Liberec during the International and National Conference of ATECR.

Iva Havlíková

ATE CR Treasurer

ZŠ a MŠ Josefa Gočára

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47th Annual IATEFL Conference and Exhibition

April 24 – 27, 2013

Liverpool, UK

The IATEFL International Annual Conference & Exhibition each spring is one of the main events in the English Language Teaching calendar. I joined the annual conference in Liverpool in order to mix with leading thinkers in ELT, share ideas with colleagues from around the world and make new friends.

The ACC is a unique venue, situated near the River Mersey on the old docklands and is within walking distance of a wide range of hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions.

IATEFL was working with the British Council to provide an Online Conference, where you could join the online delegates during and after conference. The aim was to make the conference accessible to many thousands more participants, both members and non-members, through Liverpool online. Even now you are enabled to watch live video sessions and recorded highlights of the conference on the Liverpool Online website and access a wide range of multimedia resources including video, audio and PowerPoint presentations of a selection of sessions. I hope that Liverpool Online may still give you the opportunity to feel closer to the face-to-face event. You can join in and follow the action as it happened at

<http://iatefl.britishcouncil.org/2013>

Attended by over 2,000 ELT professionals from more than 100 countries, it involved a 4-day programme of around 500 sessions consisting of talks, workshops, posters, forums, special interest group open forums and symposiums referring Business English, English for Specific Purposes, Global Issues, Leadership and Management, Learner Autonomy, Learning Technologies, Literature, Media and Cultural Studies, Pronunciation, Research, Teacher Development, Teacher Training and Education, Testing, Evaluation and Assessment, and Drama for Young Learners and Teenagers. This offered delegates a unique opportunity to meet leading theorists and writers, and exchange ideas with fellow professionals from all sectors of ELT.

The Associates' Day on 8th April was a great opportunity for representatives of all Teacher Associations that have entered into a mutually beneficial relationship with IATEFL to get together and discuss matters of common concern with language educators from all over the world and from a range of diverse backgrounds and nationalities. During the Associates Day I signed new partnership agreements securing future co-operation between our associations. I

successfully managed to sign a new agreement with INGED association, Turkey and ETAI association, Israel.

As it was my first IATEFL event I also took part in some of the early-morning How-to sessions which gave me handy hints on how to get the most of the conference. Then we could enjoy the opening announcement by Eric Barber IATEFL vice president, five plenary sessions e.g. by David Crystal, honorary professor of linguistics at the University of Bangor or the final plenary session by Roger McGough, awarded poet, four signature events and the extremely wide range of sessions.

In addition, a large resources exhibition involving around 70 ELT-related exhibitors was an excellent chance to see the latest ELT publications and services. The ELT resources exhibition was open to all for the length of the conference, showing published materials, teaching resources and equipment, computer software and services. We could visit their stands and find out more about their worldwide offer and see examples of the latest resources of British Council, Cambridge University Press, English UK, Express Publishing, Oxford University Press, Macmillan Education, Pilgrims and University of Liverpool, English Language Centre, and many others.

There was also an offer of daytime tours, walking tours, excursions, and evening social programme in the form of welcome reception, extensive reading foundation reception and awards ceremony or IATEFL failure fest where we took time out to relax, to keep ourselves entertained and to make new friends.



I consider it one of the best conferences I have ever been to for its friendly and relaxed atmosphere, where ELT professionals from so many countries were able to network, discuss and socialise.

It was a pleasure for me to participate at the IATEFL Annual Conference and to visit Liverpool that truly bared the title of European Capital of Culture in 2008. I will never fail to remember the beauty and favourable impression of the Anglican Cathedral, the Metropolitan

Cathedral, Pier Head buildings, the 'Three Graces' including the Liver Building, the Albert Dock, the Kings Dock and the Liverpool Museum.



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Please visit our brand new

ATECR website:

<http://atecr.weebly.com>

Intercultural Competencies in the Global Village

October 11 – 12, 2013

Vilnius, LITHUANIA

LAKMA, the Lithuanian Association of English teachers, was established in 1990, the year of the restoration of the Republic.

Its 15th International Conference was opened by Eglė Petronienė, LAKMA's devoted, hard working chairperson. She pointed out that the Conference is attended by 177 participants and lecturers from 10 different countries.

“Teaching a language is actually learning a language“ is a quote from a speech by Vilma Bačkute, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Science, a competent office worker with excellent English. Her other statements revealed a person in the know – “Intercultural competences are very difficult to test but it doesn't mean we don't have to teach them. We have to rethink our education, move from grammar to competence“.

LAKMA invited seven plenary speakers, mentioned here in order of appearance:

John Corbett, University of Macau, China. His talk Intercultural Language Education: from Curriculum to Classroom..and Back Again focused on the basic question – What's culture?

It's the everyday, it's actually a verb because it indicates a process, a process of identity formation, negotiation, presentation, it's embedded in everyday practice. How do we teach it?

By adapting communicative language learning tasks, by focusing on the home culture as well as the target culture. From native speakers to cultural negotiators we become cultural explorers. Corbett suggests that we can explore the “linguascape“ of our local community to think critically about the role of English in our local public spaces. To proceed from observation to reflection. To go out to explore the interaction between the local and the global (e.g. an ethnographic observation at Starbucks). More about that at John's blog <http://johnbcorbett.wordpress.com>

Chris Hall, York St.John University, UK. In his talk Changing Englishes for Intercultural Communication Chris stressed the fact that native speakers are numerically a minority among users of English, yet in ELT the principal objective is to achieve a native-like competence.

We should move away from the monolithic to pluralistic view of what English is. He says: “Standard English is a mythical beast. Now English is more a galaxy of many different Englishes, many stones with not clear, fuzzy outlines.”

She is went to see John yesterday.

Will I not work no more?

Both examples come from a native speaker from Belfast. We can see that grammar has become a rather social marker.



Excuse me. Please tell me the time. Speaking of what is considered a mistake, Chris says this is the worst mistake because it is rude, it's not the way the Brits ask for something. Here the knowledge of culture and not the grammar is fundamental.

More about changing Englishes at www.yorks.ac.uk

Adrian Holliday, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. In his talk Culture and Authenticity: Hidden Potentials Adrian used the term *linguaculture* a link between a learner and the language (what you are/have you carry to other languages on a personal level). When learning English, we carry our home culture into the process.

Marlene Wall, LCC International University, Lithuania spoke about Defining Hospitality: Cultural and Linguistic Competence in the Global Village. She is a Canadian, living in Lithuania for 12 years, and therefore is the right person to speak about being a guest in a foreign culture.

Daryl McCarthy, Cooperative Studies, Inc., USA. Daryl has taught the audience the NGNBJD mantra: It's Not Good, It's Not Bad, It's Just Different - Effective Strategies for Intercultural Communication.

Liliane Sakamoto, Alpha College of English, Ireland. Her talk on Digital Realia – Online Communities for Participation and Collaboration in the Classroom and Beyond was based on her teaching practice in Dublin. She claims that learning and entertainment are now collaborative.

David Hill, freelance consultant based in Budapest, delivered the closing plenary talk Intercultural? Yes, but Whose Intecultural? Textbooks used to be Britocentric, says David. Not any more, it would not be realistic. In a series of visual images he pointed out the changes in understanding what British culture actually was and is today.

Out of numerous workshops, I would like to report about the most inspiring one, that of Inguna Melne, a very young colleague teaching at Riga State Gymnasium No.1, Latvia entitled Students Involvement in Planning Lessons on Countries and Cultures.

She believes teachers should change their attitudes towards teaching. Students can find the necessary information on their own using IT tools and planning and conducting lessons themselves. They, however, have to be given exact outlines and step by step instructions from their teacher. One example: pictures of the buildings of old Riga are distributed. The task is to go out, search for them, find out relevant information and finally give a presentation in class.

I myself, as a representative of the ATE CR, also had a presentation/workshop on teaching culture and literature to in-service secondary school teachers in Prague Reading through Cultures.

And last but not least, I would like to express my thanks to the ATE CR for giving me the opportunity to take part in the Conference.

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Reflections on Teaching English at the Faculty of Pharmacy

As an English Language Teacher I have gained five years' experience at the Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové, affiliated with Charles University. It is probably also worth mentioning that as a native Hungarian there must be some differences of cultural attitudes in language acquisition practices, both regarding teaching techniques and learning habits. Further, some characteristics of the 'English we speak' are certainly different in Czech context, especially if students are compared in both countries. In the following short article I would like to summarize and share my five-year-old experience in Hradec Králové, at the Faculty of Pharmacy.

In order to convey these reflections in a somewhat organized way, I should organize my points in three paragraphs. Finally, against such a framework, a message should be set off. The primary goal is to offer a topic for a possible discussion on the role of ELT in Academic and professional training. Most notably, the role of an ELT seems to have been undergoing some changes in the past years.

As an introduction, so as to give a brief description on the role of teaching English at the Faculty, it should also be noted that English is not compulsory, yet the most frequently selected optional language course at the Faculty. Since it is obligatory to pass a Final Exam in any of the international languages, the four accredited semesters are being attended by most of the students. Besides, an optional course is offered in a second language program, charged by 500 CZK. Every semester is concluded by a credit test, with possibility to write corrective tests, three times at maximum.

Thus, there are three levels of understanding the current situation – at least as I feel things happen to be: 1st level: students' language skills and expectations in ELT perspective, 2nd level: expectations as formulated by the Faculty, 3rd level: the moral of the situation in ELT perspective, i.e. a teacher's experience to bridge the gap between the previous two levels, i.e. differences concerning the expectations by the students and the Faculty. To be sure, all these points are just individual reflections – no serious tests or inquiries have been launched to test these remarks. Again: the scope of present article is restricted to sharing experience for a possible discussion.

1st level: Students' language skills and expectations in ELT perspective

First of all, some well-known and obvious differences must be mentioned concerning both the students' languages skills and their professional orientations – i.e. various individual ambitions. On the other hand, as a second general remark on the students' language skills, all

against the differences noticeable in any group, considerable improvement has been in language skills over the last half a decade.

Specific comments could be addressed on a variety of typical problems in the context of Czech students' language skills. Even though grammar seems to be emphasized in primary and secondary school English language acquisition, only some 10% of the students are able to successfully complete an upper-intermediate language test. Similarly, communication and understanding 'real' audiovisual materials, i.e. materials edited for non-educational purposes, often mean problems to most of the students in all the groups. That refers to a basic problem: students tend to acquire a passive form of language, based on grammar and a restricted vocabulary. The use of English in realistic environment seems to be neglected all through the education system – surely with relevant exceptions. On the other hand, as I would like to point out, the study materials and techniques we offer at the Faculty are much in the same spirit. Traditions only seem to prevail – but why not to think about some changes?

In any case, let me recall some examples of regular mistakes concerning pronouncing and spelling, e.g. the most chronic one: '**ch**'. In our case, terms related to '**chemistry**' fall in this category. Rather similar problem has been noticed in the case of pronouncing '**C**', such as '**cell**', and the alternatives in spelling of '**k**'. Other problems are closer to the professional profile of our vocabulary. Among the most frequent mistakes I should recall the confounding terms like: '**patient** – **pacient**', terms including '**pharma**-' – quite often written with initial **f** – even in the case of our Faculty. Unfortunately, you may find it even in postgraduate student papers.

Double consonants in English (especially the well-known problem of **doubling in verbs**) have also been noticed as a challenging task for many students. When indicating names of institutes and organizations in writing, the **use of capital letters** often falls short, too.

In order to improve skills in reading and writing a very simple technique, i.e. dictation seems to be an efficient way of correction.

As for the notorious issues in grammar, there could be an interesting and common problem, probably of worth consideration, though definitely not left unnoticed: the use of passive forms in the context of word order, i.e. **syntax**. The root of the problem seems to lie in the question of the opposite location of the stressed phrase in the Czech sentences. Sometimes I tell my students in the class: 'O.K., not bad. And now try to re-formulate your sentence in the other way round!'

Even students with relatively sound skills could be characterized by a tangible contrast concerning their passive skills and their real accomplishment in various fields. To be sure, their education in English languages is of high level – primarily focusing on the delicate complexity of English grammar. On the other hand, the levels of language skills may vary in understanding real English conversation. Usually, a lack of a sense for the 'English we speak' is generally common.

Perhaps also due to this gap an over-confidence may develop in some students that eventually would lead to depreciation of the specific tasks they have to face in professional or academic settings. Students may neglect regular studies, leaving the 'vocabulary-cramming' to the last days prior to test writing. Consequently, quite a few students may gain painful experience when reading the test results. – It often happens against the success of other students with

initial weaker skills, however studying regularly during the seminar period. They may have relatively poor grammar (tenses, syntax, etc.) and providing 'only' reproductive knowledge, yet submitting an acceptable test.

A relatively simple move, introduced in 2012 Winter Semester for 1st year students, was of great relevance in coping with the considerable language differences in the groups. Students who completed a simple selection test with 'upper intermediate' score soon after being accepted to the Faculty were selected to join separate groups. The overall task management is slightly different, as students receive different methods, extra materials and activities are being offered to them, e.g. they are asked to provide presentations, submit mini-essays etc.

Since it has been introduced in the current Academic year, no general lessons summarized so far. Among the three ELTs involved in the program we have had the opportunity to apply our own techniques and methods. Students in this group – though not exclusive privilege – tend to show up higher levels of understanding study materials, are more efficient in problem solving. Thus, also due to improved language skills, various tasks are introduced. Less focus on the materials in the 'script' and more time, as well as energy for extra exercises, student presentations, even role games, etc. Students in these groups are more eager to take up difficult tests.

In fact, also group size has its impact on individual achievements and predispositions. The upper-intermediate groups include 10-12 students, whereas we have 20-25 students in the rest of the groups.

2nd level: Faculty expectations

Having said all that about the students' language skills a more difficult issue has to be addressed. At least it seems challenging to tackle with a complex issue – surely not a learning teacher's task to discuss. On the other hand, the character of our study materials severely depends on the profile of the training programs offered by the Faculty. It seems just obvious that English teaching methods ought to be in accordance with the general profile of the Faculty, as well finding paths to adjust teaching techniques to the specific features of the forms of Academic studies, and the professional training at the Faculty.

What are the studies at the Faculty all about, after all?

According to the general profile of the Faculty, graduated pharmacists are guaranteed to have acquired appropriate knowledge concerning 'the preparation of the pharmaceutical form of medicinal products, as well in the manufacture and testing of medicinal products,' etc.

See faculty web-site:

<http://www.faf.cuni.cz/Study/Undergraduate/Pharmacy/Graduate-Profile/>

No doubt, the Faculty management is fully legitimate in emphasizing the high academic and scientific standards in the education. In discussions, most of the students confirm their giving priority to the Charles University over other institutions in undergraduate education exactly because of that reason.

First of all, just to illustrate the complexity of the problems, and all against certain beliefs, the studies at the Faculty of Pharmacy cover an impressively wide range of fields of theoretical knowledge, and complex forms of practices. Besides biochemistry, laboratory practices, etc. it is about all the fields related to pharmacology. To be sure, phytochemistry, and many more subjects are included in the curriculum.

Due to the high standards, a relatively high portion of students fail at the exams, or even drop out by the end of the first two years. Usually they opt for other institutions where they can use their knowledge acquired so far. On the other hand they are ambitious to continue in their studies as postgraduate students. These are again scientific fields of studies. To be sure, according to competitions, publications and conferences, postgraduate students are successful on various occasions.

Hence, in the next paragraph let me share my impressions concerning this sensitive issue. And I should apologize if any of the following comments may prove short-sighted.

Let me share my experience gathered upon having visited the ‘Scientific Students Conference’ organized by the Faculty for undergraduate and postgraduate students in the last two years. It is also my experience that even postgraduate students have problems in expressing themselves at an appropriate level.

Further, concerning the skills in presentation and writing, when the moment comes to speaking or writing articles, especially letters, in English the problems are immediately recognized.

It is not to speak that there are no students with excellent gifts and achievements, or lacking language skills in general. We may probably consider the possibilities to find appropriate techniques in conveying more practical forms of knowledge and language skills.

3rd level

An ELT perspective: improving *Academic English* and *English for specific purposes*.

Let me suggest the following points for further consideration concerning English acquisition priorities.

- 1. Academic language.** Academic writing in English language environment means a variety of skills. Perhaps surprising, learning by heart any of the ‘Vocabulary of Sciences’ leads to no improvement. Language skills do not primarily depend on the extended vocabulary – but the way the terms, phrases, etc. are being applied. It is often about the use of passive voice, the variability of phrasal verbs, and the verbs+ prepositions. As well, syntax is one of the key elements in writing Academic texts. Criteria of scientific texts, the vocabulary of scientific literature also offer further studies.
- 2. English for specific purposes**
Further, there can be a huge difference in theories and practices of a scientist, for example in pharmacology – and the general practice of a community pharmacist.

Notwithstanding the fact that understanding and applying vocabulary related to techniques in laboratory practices ought to be rather similar in the perspective of

pharmacology, there can be however huge alteration in the language used in a laboratory and the community pharmacy. This latter perspective offers a wide variety of fields: communication with customers, dealers, and the marketing involves not only specific areas such as psychology, ethics, but economical or even some legal aspects, too. Another field perhaps worth mentioning concerns the range of products. Chemists are engaged in dispensing prescription remedies – and many other products. Such as OTC /i.e. non-prescription drugs/ or general sales list items require a specific vocabulary. Customers may even address the staff members some questions on the use of point-of-care tests, herbal products and vitamins, or even first aid kits and tooth paste.

We may also mention here some general characteristics of *professional skills*, such as career building and management. Addressing application and cover letters, compiling CVs and list of publications, presentation of expertise belong to writing skills. Conversation, self-presentation, etc. obviously need training in communication skills. Let me mention the issue of particular topics, like data presentation, use of internet in research, which partly concern *Academic skills*.

Conclusion

All the reflections presented above concern some issues related to general and specific fields of our Faculty profile. The primary goal of the remarks is to trigger further discussions on the potential forms of improving the study material and the methods we apply in our language courses. Essentially they have a limited focus: the possible correction of a profile in English teaching, as well as considering the possibilities and way to improve our ELT accomplishment at the Faculty of Pharmacy.

Since English remains and very likely will be even more than ever part and parcel of our everyday life in a globalizing academic and business environment.

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Issues Regarding Improving Student Performance at Czech Schools

An article posted in *The Prague Post* (“Education Spending Found Lacking”) shows the mainly negative aspect of Czech educational system. According the words of Jindřich Kitzberger, a former deputy minister for education, the Czech educational system has been considered “heavily underfunded.” The funding for the Education Ministry in 2013 was lowered even more than in 2012. Meanwhile, Czech 15-year old students dropped down the most of all countries in the test scores of the triennial Program for International Students Assessment administered by the OECD last year. The Czech education ministry had decided that the way to solve this situation was with reform hinged on a nationwide standardized secondary-school leaving exam. Instead of admitting that poor results are associated with a lack of money, they dealt with the situation by doing absurd modifications.

While the picture of the Czech education system as a reflection of Czech Society seems to indicate that a lot of things have changed, society really prefers different values. Specifically, people do not care about moral values such as truthfulness, fairness or kindness. People no longer admire well-educated or moral persons. Today the wealthy are usually admired, people who do not care about others. This “hero” of today society knows how to bypass the law. He knows how to earn money regardless of the consequences, sitting in his black expensive car knowing that even if he commits illegal acts, even if he breaks the law, even if he gets caught committing a crime, he knows that he can bribe a politician for his freedom or amnesty. People admire him because he successfully lives in our society and many people today secretly or openly want to emulate him. The “hero” of contemporary society does not regard the well-educated teacher for example who tries to teach students and makes them better persons. Elected to the government and parliament, these people now are supposed to decide about the areas of our lives such as education and health. They do not care about people at all. They care only about themselves. If they decide to do some step which is supposed to be beneficial for people, it may really happen only because some kind of profit can be made. Benevolent or kind people will never exist in political life. From time to time some well-educated professionals appear but they never stay in power a long time. They cannot handle to work with the new “heroes of our society.” If they actually try to fight and do something good, the others will deflate their power and then get rid of them very quickly. The other good people leave politics voluntarily. As one proverb goes, “if you live among wolves you have to howl like a wolf.”

Teachers represent the most visible element of educational system. Even if they are well educated they do not received enough money and many young teachers leave public schools in order to try their best in some other occupation which pays a professional salary. An English teacher can find a better paying job in a company or a private school. When teaching at a Czech public school, the English teacher also has to teach a few hours in a private school or at a company, working harder in order to earn the same amount of money like any secretary.

Teachers do the right thing and survive under substandard conditions, but they know that teaching children gives one a sense of the purpose. Teaching children skills constitutes a valuable and meaningful occupation. What do today's people think about teachers? Do people respect the teaching profession? I do not think so.

Not only qualified teachers are paid very poorly in Bohemia. My high school friend Martina has become a doctor after studying 6 years at a rigorous college of medicine, certainly one of the most challenging fields of study. When she started her carrier at hospital she earned almost the same low salary as a beginning teacher. Clearly Czech politicians do not respect doctors any more than teachers. If the doctor does not open a private clinic or become a plastic surgeon but decides to stay in the general hospital, he definitely will earn less than any similarly high-educated person in this country. A young ambitious doctor who speaks English and German can leave the Czech Republic and find a well-paid job abroad. Many hundreds of them have already left in the "Thank you but we are leaving" protest. Others are thinking about it. The difference between the profession of doctor and, for example, the profession of manager or broker, is that the doctor mainly saves people's lives. The manager and broker do not produce anything, yet our society values these professions more and they earn fantastic income. They earn at least five times more than either teachers or doctors.

Czech students also see an image of Czech society. They see our politicians who steal and are not punished for it, and they see well-educated people who are not valued by society. They see that successful and rich people succeed because they are not ashamed to steal and cheat. This reality shapes the morality and values of young people. This fact may be related to students' motivation for school. This fact may also be related to the results of tests in which students failed. I have heard that perhaps one half of young people do not want to remain in the Czech Republic. They would instead prefer to migrate and work and live abroad. In turn this ironically may in the future lead to an improvement in the students' results while studying English.

Due to declining birthrates in Bohemia, the large number of secondary schools are now seen to be unnecessary. While some schools close or merge, most schools need sufficient funds to be able to exist. Regardless of their status as private or public schools, educational institutions need enough students in order to receive enough funding so some schools have to accept substandard or talentless students which in turn influences the poor results of the Czechs performance in international tests.

Czech schools generally do not get enough money for basic necessary building reconstruction. Local politicians spend substantial public money for their expensive cars and houses, but schools will not receive appropriate funding for new paint or library books. Local policy works under the same principle as the nationwide policy. There are cases that only some isolated or specific schools receive larger funding, if for example a school director takes it up persuasively with a local politician.

The quality of textbooks has also changed. My daughter has been studying at the second grade and while examining in detail the contents of these books, I found that the quality was replaced by quantity. Often textbooks are now produced like products for mass consumption. The contract to manufacture of textbooks now replicates all business contracts in our state. If one knows to whom and how much to pay, then will gets the order, regardless of his capabilities in a given area.

If someone asks me what I think should be done to improve Czech school, I fear that I am not able to give a satisfactory answer. The problem can be shown in the metonymy of the tree and

its roots. If the roots are rotten, how can the tree fully live? Ordinary people would change the world if they acted together. Teachers can positively affect the lives of their students but they cannot change the corrupt political system. A very small number of people manage to stand against their superiors if they act badly. Perhaps a prolonged strike would help to get more money for teachers. However, politicians are more afraid of the collapse of health care than the collapse of the educational system. Education does not seem to be so important. Any proposed solution works as fiction, if the system of allocation of funds is managed by politicians. I can imagine that a computer-controlled system for the allocation of money into which people could not intervene might work fairly and objectively. Then the funds would be able to go to those who truly need and deserve them.

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INSPIRING IDEAS AND TIPS

To Blog or Not to Blog with the British Council ELT Blogathon?

The British Council Teaching English Blogathon is an online event that brings together teachers of English to **share good practices in ELT and find out more about blogging**. As you might guess, it is a long-run blogging competition as demanding as a marathon. This year it ran from **4 February** until **4 March 2013**.

The definition on Wikipedia states that 'A blog (a contraction of the words *web log*) is a discussion or informational site published on the World Wide Web and consisting of discrete entries ("posts") typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first).'

In fact blog is a simple page (or more), where you can publish your opinions, ideas, pictures, or keep a diary etc. No special knowledge of HTML programming is needed as you can use ready-made frameworks.

ELT Blogathon 2013 was organised by the British Council. The bloggers wrote and sent their postings regularly and frequently within the four weeks. This year teachers from Armenia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Israel, Romania, Russia, Spain and Uzbekistan were invited as bloggers. No limitations were set on the readers or guests.

What about you? Let's try a fast survey of just three questions:

Do you read blogs?

Do you write one (or more)?

Would you like to share knowledge and useful tips on English language teaching and learning?

If you answered yes at least to the last question, you would be the right person to join ELT Blogathon.

In any case you are invited to join **the TeachingEnglish international community** and share your ELT experience with teachers from various countries. If you do not feel able to write or be the author of your own blog, you can certainly read other bloggers' posts, ask questions or leave comments. I am sure that you will find interesting information and ideas there.

I really enjoyed taking part and have not only shared but also learnt a lot of useful information. More details about this wonderful British Council event are available on-line at <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/elt-blogathon-about>

One of the winning bloggers *Addeh Hovassapian* offers ideas on **How to Create an “English only” Classroom** and lists the following effective, personally proved, techniques:

- Have them reflect on and negotiate the reasons why they shouldn't use L1 in English classes and *let them create the rules*.
- Try to create a positive atmosphere where making mistakes is not a cardinal sin!
- Instead of punishing the students for using L1, be supportive of every effort at using English.
- Don't hear and respond except in English!
- Give them American/British identities to impersonate during the lessons!
- Do some math with them!! A 90 minutes lesson with 18 students means only 5 minutes speaking time for each student. This minus the teacher talk, there remains only 3 min!! Can they really afford to speak in L1?! (This revolutionized one of my classes!)

The blog posting finished this by passing on to the reader:

Your turn: What do you think of my suggested techniques? What are your suggestions??

You can follow the postings here <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/elt-blogathon-2013>

Twelve Top Tips to become a successful blogger

1. make your blog unique
2. offer the reader something valuable
3. create postings with meaningful and original content
4. encourage the reader to look at the issues from a different viewpoint
5. use a consistent organizational structure to make your postings easy to follow and do not neglect keywords
6. design your blog in an attractive way (the formation of paragraphs, fonts, headings, sub-headings, numbered lists, bulleted points, colour scheme, pictures)
7. add some widgets (share buttons, facebook like box, follow the post button)
8. post frequently (every day, every week, every month, ...)
9. share your blog/invite new readers
10. keep the reader coming back
11. aim to increase the number of comments on your postings
12. One last but not least tip: Have fun!

If you are planning to create a blog, you can consider creating a blog at some of the following free platforms. Some of their distinctive features are mentioned in the brackets.

Blogging Platforms

- Blogger (Google's blogging platform)
- WordPress (allows customizing by pre-designed themes or HTML, CSS, PHP)
Tumblr (mobile devices friendly)
- Jux (visual content-friendly)
- Weebly (a fully featured website builder which offers drag-and-drop interface, support for image galleries, slideshows, video/audio, maps, etc.)
- Webnode (Czech platform)

There are numerous blogging services available and you can choose the most suitable one according to your personal taste and needs.

Why not to join in the next round in 2014? By then you can enjoy the past postings and other features of **Teaching English** <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>

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Do I Need to Go any Further in my Education?

(Questionnaire conducted by the British Council in cooperation with ATE CR and distributed among teachers of English working in primary and secondary education)

The British Council, apart from other activities, has continuously been offering further education programmes for teachers of English language. Our aim was to gather information about educational needs of teachers from the Czech Republic so that we could meet their expectations as best as possible and concurrently adapt to conditions in which teachers are actually able to attend seminars.

The questionnaire was placed on our web pages and on web pages of our partner organizations, including ATE CR. We are extremely grateful to all our colleagues who helped distribute the questionnaire among teachers of English as well as to all the teachers who found some time to fill it in. Altogether, we have received 61 replies.

Let us have a look at some of the received reactions:

➤ **Participation in further education**

Approximately one fourth of all respondents does not participate in any type of further education programmes. Mostly the reasons were:

- I am going to pension soon (4)
- The existing offer of further education does not suit my needs (3)
- My employer does not pay the course/travel fees (10)

➤ **Personal involvement in further education**

There is hardly any teacher who would not desire professional perfection. Almost everyone would like to be useful for their school and almost everyone is interested in new methodological trends. Surprisingly, rather a big number of teachers would like to become methodologists. Three teachers pointed out that they are being forced to further education by the school management; nine teachers had noticed negative rivalry among English teachers and thought it would be advantageous to be prepared in advance.

➤ **Institutions where to search for further education**

This year's number one belongs to British publishing houses which have a long tradition in the Czech Republic. The National Institute for Further Education (Národní institut dalšího vzdělávání, NIDV), regional institutes for further education of teachers and professional

associations of English teachers have been the second most frequently sought after. The British Council has also been mentioned quite frequently, we are grateful.

➤ **How do I get information about further education?**

The most frequently teachers learn about the seminars and other educational activities from the web pages of the institutions and professional associations (AMATE and ATE CR quoted). Invitations via emails and 'newsletters' from British publishing houses and the British Council have also been often used. Other information channels, such as printed catalogues, social networks and recommendations from colleagues have been sought after only rarely (approximately 6% of respondents have mentioned them).

➤ **The most popular form of education**

The questionnaire has confirmed the 'suspicion' we have had for some time that Czech teachers of English language have a weakness for 'separate thematically individualized seminars focused on methodology and ready-made materials for the classroom use', precisely 50% of teachers prefer such type of education. Approximately one quarter of teachers would prefer an 'e-learning course lasting several weeks or months' which would enable home preparation. The same number of teachers would welcome the opportunity to attend 'continual course on methodology'. Only one respondent would appreciate 'webinars on separate topics'.

➤ **The most popular topics**

Obviously, qualified teachers are not being treated kindly. We seem to have forgotten that even qualified teachers have an aspiration to learn and that it might be difficult to find a seminar with new information they could appreciate. Total of 33 respondents would be interested in attending a 'more demanding course for qualified and experienced teachers of English'! Quite a low number of teachers would wish to attend courses regarding 'IT and its use in teaching English'. 'Special courses for methodologists', 'Language' and 'CLIL' courses have even lower attention of teachers.

Let us dwell upon the opinions of the 'qualified and experienced' ones a little bit more. I would like to quote two teachers."

"I am keen on my own professional development in the following areas: lesson planning, mistake correction and providing feedback to students, correct motivation of students, effective speaking activities and leading discussions, writing, tips for refreshing classroom, and ideas for efficient lesson plans and so on. I am also interested in modern technologies and web use, but I know that the attention to these areas has already been paid by the British Council."

"I would be interested in the contemporary vocabulary, especially used among young people, vocabulary concerning the use of IT and so on."

➤ **Expected financial costs**

Apart from two respondents who would appreciate cost-free adult education, we have received the following expectations:

- Expected price for a two-hour seminar: CZK 300-500 (the lowest mentioned price CZK 100 and the highest CZK 1000)
- Half-day seminar: CZK 500-800 (CZK 350 and CZK 2000)
- E-learning 12 week course/60 lessons CZK 1500-300 (CZK 500 and CZK 5000)

➤ **Current situation regarding adult education:**

About 20 teachers attend 1 to 2 seminars annually; the same number of teachers quoted 3 to 4 seminars every year. Six teachers manage to attend 5 to 6 or more seminars annually whereas 15 teachers do not use this form of education at all, however, most of them would be willing to!

Even though we have not had the opportunity to study a big sample of teachers, we believe that the survey helped grasp the main features of further education in primary and secondary education. We would like to thank to all the participants and respondents willing to share their opinions! In near future we will make an effort to project the gathered information to our offer of educational opportunities for teachers of English language.

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The English Measuring System (part 1)

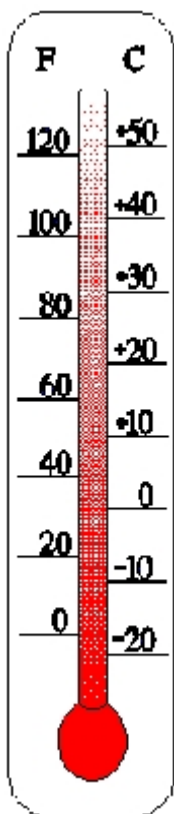
One of the more confusing aspects of the English and American daily experiences Czech pupils encounter is the system of English Weights and Measures. Instead of the easy-to-calculate metric system, the *inches*, *feet*, *yards*, and *miles* used to measure length or the *ounces* and *pounds* used for weights are usually never mastered. As if these were not enough, the differing temperature-measuring systems (*Fahrenheit* versus *Celsius*) are amongst the most confusing aspects of English “realia” one can ever try to figure out.

A good way to begin work on the English system is to personalize the issue. When asked how tall they are, pupils begin their answer naturally enough with the metric system: “I’m one hundred and fifty-seven centimeters.” The teacher can put a table like the one in Figure 1 on an OHP and then hand out a separate sheet with questions they should ask their neighbors:

Ask and answer these questions with your neighbor:

- How tall are you? – (Example answer: “I’m five feet, two inches tall.”)
- How tall is your mother?
- How tall is your father?
- How tall is your brother/sister?
- Are you still growing?
- How tall would you like to be?
- Who has it easier, a very tall person or a very short person?
- Why? (By the way, how tall in your opinion is *very* tall?)

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 4’7” | 1,40m | 5’7” | 1,71m |
| 4’8” | 1,42m | 5’8” | 1,73m |
| 4’9” | 1,45m | 5’9” | 1,75m |
| 4’10” | 1,47m | 5’10” | 1,78m |
| 4’11” | 1,50m | 5’11” | 1,80m |
| 5’0” | 1,52m | 6’0” | 1,83m |
| 5’1” | 1,55m | 6’1” | 1,86m |
| 5’2” | 1,57m | 6’2” | 1,88m |
| 5’3” | 1,60m | 6’3” | 1,90m |
| 5’4” | 1,63m | 6’4” | 1,93m |
| 5’5” | 1,65m | 6’5” | 1,96m |
| 5’6” | 1,68m | 6’6” | 1,98m |



A similarly structured table can be put up on an OHP for the two temperature scales, and the teacher can offer students a handout with some questions, for example:

- What is the temperature today? (Example answer: “It is 62 degrees Fahrenheit.”)
- What was the temperature when you walked to school this morning?
- For a healthy person, what is the normal body temperature?
- What temperature does water freeze in Fahrenheit?
- What temperature does water boil in Fahrenheit?

Similar exercises may be made for distances miles (1 mile is approximately 1600 meters):

- How many miles do you travel to get to school?
- How many miles away do your grandparents live from you?
- How many miles is Prague from here?

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CULTURE FROM ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

COMPARING THE 2008 & 2012 US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The re-election of U.S. President Barack Obama for four more years as head of state almost a year ago on November 6, 2012 invites comparisons with his first victory back in 2008. His first win was considered historically important since it was the first time that the United States had elected a member of a racial minority (representing less than 20 percent of the total U.S. population) to the highest office of the country.¹ With his recent reelection, Obama solidified his policies with a new national mandate. In spite of a high unemployment rate, rising public debt and other economic difficulties, Obama succeeded in other areas such as signing into law the Affordable Health Care for America Act, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, the Food Safety Modernization Act and a new START Treaty with Russia. He repealed the anti-gay “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” federal policy, pulled troops out of Iraq and permanently ended the terrorist career of Osama bin Laden.

After the election of the first black president back in 2008, it was concluded that racism in the U.S. was no longer a problem: the U.S. had become a “post-racial society.” However, as the table below indicates, in spite of the unpopularity of President Bush’s war in Iraq (2003-2010), the declining economy and the unpopular 2008 government bailouts of banks and mortgage institutions as well as the auto industry under a Republican administration, the Democrat Obama received significantly less than the majority of white votes. (He did win a majority among college-educated white voters.²) In the end Obama won the election only through the “supermajority” of three “minority” groups, Latinos, Blacks and Asian Americans. When combined, this supermajority enabled Obama to defeat the Republican candidate John McCain. Obama’s margin of victory was just under 10 million votes.³

Presidential Candidates in 2008:

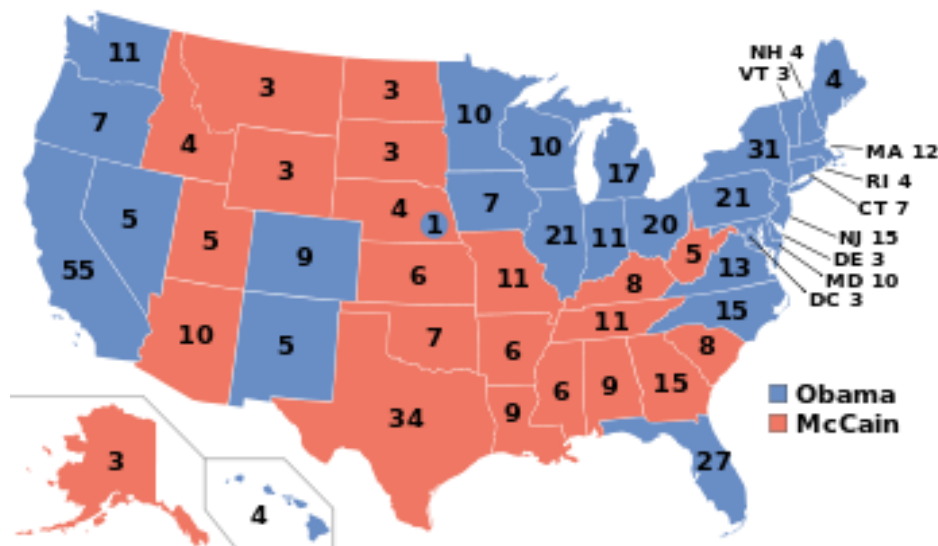


Senator Obama (Dem-Illinois) & Senator McCain (Rep-Arizona) at a debate, October 15, 2008

Some historical political traditions have not changed. For example, except for North Carolina and Virginia, the southern states which made up the Confederate States of America during the Civil War to maintain slavery (after Abraham Lincoln's election) overwhelmingly voted for the white candidate, John McCain. Obama lost almost all white votes in the "Deep South."

| November 4, 2008 Election | Barack Obama (Democrat) | John McCain (Republican) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| White voters | 43 | 55 |
| Latino/a voters | 67 | 31 |
| Black voters | 95 | 3 |
| Asian Americans | 62 | 37 |
| Total Percentage | 52.9% | 45.7% |

With the American system of "winner take all" electoral votes of each state (except Nebraska), Barack Obama (blue) won the most highly populated states (California 55, New York 31, and Florida 27) except the State of Texas (34) which John McCain (red) easily won. Some states are won by a slim majority. Indiana for example was won by Obama by less than 1 percent but he nevertheless received all 11 electoral votes from Indiana. McCain on the other hand won the State of Missouri by less than 10 votes but received all of Missouri's 11 electoral votes in 2008. All in all, Obama enjoyed a 4.6 percent improvement over the 2004 Democratic candidate John Kerry four years earlier.⁴

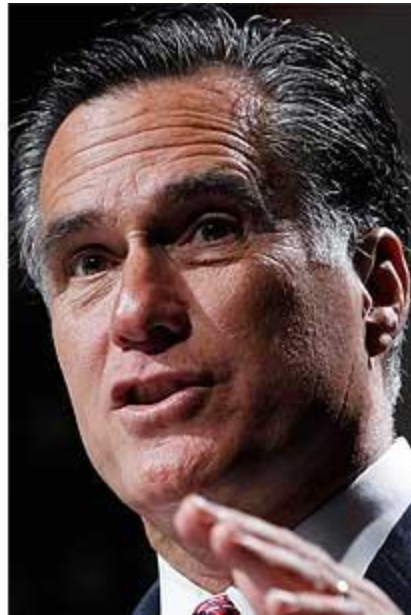


Presidential Candidates in 2012:

In spite of the common notion that "Americans vote with their purse," that is, they tend to vote for or against the politicians in power based on the success of the economy, President Obama was nevertheless reelected with a badly-performing economy over a businessman and former Massachusetts Governor, Republican Mitt Romney. Surprising many, President Barack Obama campaigned successfully in 2012 by emphasizing the need to *raise taxes* back



President Barack Obama (Dem)



Governor Mitt Romney (Rep)

to the tax rates of the 1990s when Bill Clinton was president in order to deal with the increasing national debt. This policy plan was in stark contrast to the tax policy of his Republican opponent who wanted to lower tax rates, thereby increasing the national debt. Romney also stumbled during the campaign with some unpopular statements which the Obama campaign exploited to the fullest extent possible, particularly a statement in which Romney stated that 47 percent of Americans take no responsibility for their own lives.

With regard to the voting statistics of the American electoral dynamics in the November 6th, 2012 election, the ethnic differences are presented on the table below:

| November 6, 2012 Election | Barack Obama (Democrat) | Mitt Romney (Republican) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| White voters | 40 | 59 |
| Latino/a voters | 71 | 27 |
| Black voters | 93 | 3 |
| Asian Americans | 73 | 25 |
| Total Percentage | 50.6% | 47.8 |

On November 6, 2012 Barack Obama only lost two states to his Republican opponent which he had won in his bigger victory in 2008:

- North Carolina
- Indiana

Except for these two states, there were no other changes from the 2008 electoral map (see below), though Nebraska did not give Barack Obama any electoral vote in 2012 as it did in 2008..



With regard to the question of gender preferences, a majority of women have been voting for Democrats ever since 1988, and the most recent election has not changed that trend. Obama won 55 % of women voters (of any race). In addition, he won 60 % of the youth vote (of any race). While Mitt Romney won the majority of the white vote, and particularly of white male vote, white voters dropped to only 72 percent of the total electorate. Since the election results were announced, many leaders of the Republican Party have emphasized the need for their party to figure out a way to attract more minority voters, in particular the Hispanic vote.

In the Electoral College vote (based on the states which actually had a majority for one candidate or another), President Obama won a lot more convincingly with 332 votes compared to Romney's 206. In the popular vote, the race was much tighter, with Obama winning 50.6% versus Romney's 47.8% of the vote. In urban areas and among well-educated populations, Barack Obama tended to win the majority of the vote while in rural country and the less educated sections of the country Romney dominated among the voters.

The level of education a voter has played some role in determining preference in this election. An interesting statistic shows that the strong majority of college-educated Americans voted for Barack Obama in 2012. Those states with the largest and smallest percentage of college-educated residents and their voter preferences are shown on the table below:

Top 10 Best (and Worst) Educated States, and How They Voted

ranked by percentage of residents 25 years of age or older with college degree or more



Research Statistics provided by RealBusiness.com, based on education data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. 24/7 Wall St. identified the U.S. states with the largest and smallest percentages of residents 25 or older with a college degree or more. <http://www.realbusiness.com/personal-finance/2012/10/15/americas-best-and-worst-educated-states/>

In the international scene, both of the elections were welcomed around the world. European and especially African opinion polls showed a significant preference for Obama over his Republican opponents.⁵ The influence from abroad is also “internal” to a great extent, for the unexpected success Obama enjoyed was with the Hispanic vote in both elections. Hispanics now make up the largest minority in the USA and they mostly voted for Barack Obama.⁶

¹ Even African American politicians felt Barack Obama (or any other black) could not win. Robert Ford, a black Democratic State Senator from South Carolina, stated in February 2007 „Every Democrat running on that ticket next year would lose because he’s black and he’s the top of the ticket. We’d lose the House [of Representatives] and the Senate and the governors and everything“ (Quoted in Robert Fikes, „They Said It Could/Couldn’t Be Done: Quoted Speculation on the Possibility of a Black President, 1920-2008,“ *Western Journal of Black Studies* 33:3 (Fall 2009): 177.

² Philip A. Klinker *et al.*, „LBJ’s Revenge: The 2008 Election and the Rise of the Great Society Coalition,“ *The Forum* 6 (2009): 1-3.

³ „National Exit Polls Table,“ *The New York Times*, November 5, 2008. <http://elections.nytimes.com/2008/results/president/national-exit-polls.html>

⁴ Todd Donovan, „Obama and the White Vote“ *Political Research Quarterly* 63:4 (December, 2010), p. 864.

⁵ See the Dutch scholar Karin van Bommel, „Obama Made in Kenya: Appropriating the American Dream in Kogelo“ *Africa Today* 59:1 (Summer 2013), pp. 69-71.

⁶ Matt A. Barreto *et al.*, „A New Measure of Group Influence in Presidential Elections: Assessing Latino Influence in 2008“ *Political Research Quarterly* 63:4 (December, 2010), pp. 909-911.



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ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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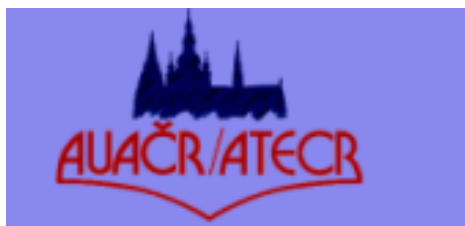
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