

# I CAME, I SHARED, I TOOK IT HOME

## – THE NEW TEACHER PROFILE COURSE

As part of the CITA project the 30-hour New Teacher Profile Course was held in Budapest from the 27-29 October with the aim of providing professional development for experienced English teachers. The objective of the Teacher Profile Course was to support teachers in rising to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher, with particular attention to such evergreen topics as Continuous Professional Development, Special Needs Education (dyslexia, gifted children) Integration of ICT and Gamification and Content and Language Integrated Learning. Since all the 30 participants from the three countries were highly motivated teachers with considerable experience, the course was designed to have only a relatively small percentage of clear-cut input sessions (5 hours) - the focus was more on sharing best practices in these areas in an international context. Here is a collection of the hands-on ideas the participants enjoyed the most.....so much so that they took them home and tested them with great results!

*James Miele, a teacher from the Balearic Islands shares a warmer he learnt at the course:*

I have used the snowball fight (demonstrated by Jolanta from Lithuania, I believe) in a C1 level course for adults, adapting it into a speaking activity. Each paper snowball had a personality adjective or trait written on it. When the throwing stopped, each student had to talk to a classmate for two minutes about a person s/he knew who had the personality trait written on the paper. We had three rounds as a class warmer activity, and each S



spoke to three different classmates (the one on the left, the one on the right, and the one across the circle). Since we had an even number of Ss that day I was able to circulate and monitor/facilitate. If there had been an odd number of Ss, I would have participated.

*Irén Vilinovszki, a secondary school teacher from Hungary describes a brainstorming activity that she used in a lesson on drug addiction with teenagers:*

Teaching in heterogeneous groups always means a lot of pre-teaching consideration and work to avoid much failure and disappointment in the classroom, especially when the content of the topic covers the problems of modern society. The aim of the lesson is to raise students' awareness of the problems connected to drug addiction. After quickly revising vocabulary and ideas through pictures illustrating different kinds of addictions and addicts from shopaholics to mobile phone addicts, students are given red, violet and green stripes of paper. They are asked to think of and write one or two words or expressions on them which describe the reasons, the results and the solutions for drug addiction. The red stripes are for reasons, the violet ones are for results, and the green ones are for solutions. The stripes are then put on a mind-map, and lead to a discussion of the topic.

The activity works well with very talented and less capable students involving a differentiating approach and allows students to choose how much they contribute on a voluntary basis.





***Eszter Nagy, a primary and secondary school teacher from Hungary recalls a sensitising activity from the course:***

A lot has been said about mixed ability groups and I am never satisfied with what I manage to do with my own students, but what became more important to me during the course was that I really need to get close to their problems, challenges or outstanding values in order to first understand and then help them in the way they need. The activity we did in order to get into their shoes was the following: pieces of paper were stuck on the wall around the corridor with names of different problems on them (these included social, behavioural and psychological problems). First we did not see what was written on them, after a slow, meditative walk we had to choose a colour we liked and stopped there. After having stopped at a sheet, we could have a look at what it said and we had to introduce ourselves in the name of these “problematic” students. We had to explain what problems and challenges we have to face due to our disabilities or difficulties. This task itself was very emotional and in the second part of the task we were asked to write two things we are able to do and also what we could become in our adult life. It was really moving and interesting to think with the mind of such a child and it made me more sensitive and open-minded.

***Margarita Gudeikienė, a secondary school teacher from Lithuania has plans to incorporate the new ideas in her teaching:***

Although I haven’t practiced CLIL before, I feel more confident now to try some elements of it just to make the content of the lesson more meaningful and the language richer. For example, to go deeper into the content of the topic ‘Jobs, occupations’ for the 10<sup>th</sup> graders (15-16 years olds), I am going to make a project that focuses on the start of a working life – besides the

CV, application letter writing and practicing a job interview, I would like the students to interview people of various occupational backgrounds (their relatives, neighbours), to visit some enterprises or institutions (local cheese factory, fire station, etc.) and collect specific information about the work performed, goods produced or services provided there, to simulate a process of setting up ‘their own companies’ (making a list of professionals and workers required, personal qualities needed, employment procedures involved, etc.).

***Ligita Erminaitė a Lithuanian teacher was inspired by the project ideas:***

I have already worked on a project organizing a trip to a foreign country. I did that with my eighth formers, who are about fifteen. They chose a city or some other place to which they would like to travel, found information on the means of transport to that place, ways of getting around there, hotels to stay in, sightseeing places or other activities to do, places to have meals, do shopping and the weather forecast. They also tried to plan the budget. All students prepared slides on the mentioned issues and presented them in class. It was really interesting and useful to them and me. I tried to prepare a clear rubric for the evaluation. I should admit that some of the presentations did not contain all the necessary information, but it was a good start. I am also going to work on such a project with my other students.



***Jolanta Žygienė a primary teacher and teacher trainer from Lithuania calls for participants in her international project:***



I have tried to create video projects with my 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders about ‘My Favourite Food’ and ‘My Schoolbag’ and invited teachers from the course to join. It will start in December with one Hungarian class and in January with one Spanish class. I hope it will be interesting for our students to compare views on the topic, language used in the video and use creativity to do something different for the project, also involving their parents to help. There are some simple rules:

1. Video is no longer than 60 sec.
2. You can use any material to create the video.
3. Use any app or mobile device application for creating it.
4. Send it to your teacher by e-mail with your parents help.

*If you are interested, join us. Send me your email and we can start: zygienne@yahoo.de*

***Daiva Riškienė, an English teacher from Lithuania feels that sharing experience and ideas is not only useful for rethinking our role as teachers but also inspirational for building in new sources in well-known teaching situations.***

A lot of my former knowledge and long-practised methods have gained new meaning by finding an infinite amount of information and possible teaching material at the following

websites. I took them home and have been using them to design innovative and successful activities in my classes.

<http://interactivesites.weebly.com/>

<https://prezi.com/>

<https://padlet.com/>

<http://ed.ted.com/>

<https://getkahoot.com/>

***Gyöngyi Zsuzsanna Bende, a secondary school teacher and mentor from Hungary recommends two applications for the classroom:***

One application that I really like is Kahoot that can be used for a lot of things in class. I have started using it as a revision tool for grammar structures and usage. My students really liked it and they asked me to do one every week. So I have already made around 12 so far. They told me that this way they don't find revising grammar structures boring anymore.

Another application that I have started using is Redmenta, an application used to make short or long quizzes or tests. This Hungarian application can be used in any subject and a lot of different types of tests can be generated there. The tests are adaptable, reusable and students can even be allowed to do it as many as three times if desired. I am using it for revision of grammar structures and vocabulary.

*Judit J. Tóth, a secondary school teacher and teacher trainer from Hungary reflects on the use of two other mobile applications in and outside the classroom:*

My favourite app from the course is Songify. It is a programme that turns a recorded audio file into something of a song – a magic experience. It is simple to use, but the effect is really interesting for the students. I have found it is best used with short conversations that have short turns – so I have decided to use it at beginner level. I have tried it in my 7<sup>th</sup> grade group with tongue twisters: my students recorded themselves reciting their favourite tongue twister and then listened to the “songified” version. You can also share the resulting song in an e-mail, for example, so students – and the teacher – can listen to all the other’s performances. The app made my students much more enthusiastic, energetic and happy to share their work with others.

Another idea I have not yet tried, but definitely will, is the use of maps on my students’ mobiles. Next time I have to teach following and giving directions, I will ask my students (in groups of 2-3, so they surely all have access to a smart phone) to follow my directions on their own maps and tell me where I am leading them. Then I will ask them to lead and follow each other in pair work. In fact the language work is exactly the same as with printed maps in their books, but the task seems much more realistic and meaningful.

*Anna Kaszásné Becsei, a secondary school teacher from Hungary highlights the importance of on-going self-reflection:*

I learned that observing, being observed and getting feedback from our students alongside self-reflection is of vital importance in professional learning and professional development. I am not saying that I have not done any reflection before, but I got new perspectives. I had never realized how much self-reflection and continuous feedback from language learners can mean in getting to know the way of thinking of the specific groups I teach. I used to ask for feedback at the end of the year, before the summer holidays started. It was good, but would it not have been more

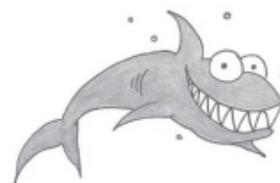


useful to get feedback several times during the course? And, why have I not done real self-reflection on my teaching? In writing, with focus on various issues in my teaching.

As for making use of what I’ve learned at the CITA course with my students, besides introducing various activities from the training, we have had a few feedback sessions too. “We” meaning both the students and I. One of the highlights for feedback was when we did it based on a song. After getting to know the song and speaking about its metaphors, there was reflection on individual language learning with the inspiration of Slim Dusty’s *Looking forward, looking back*. (Read Anna’s more detailed account of this lesson on page 28 )  
Mirror, mirror on the wall, what is Professional Development after all? Looking forward, looking back, look around and test yourself. It is certainly worth self-reflecting! ?

*And finally a riddle by Frank Prescott shared by Jolanta*

Why is **A SHARK** a cliché of a teacher?



Sharks are the ones believed to have to swim constantly to stay alive. Like teachers they never stop working.