



9th International ELT Conference
“New Horizons and Challenges in CLIL and ELT”
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CONFERENCE SPEAKERS & ABSTRACTS

PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

Pille Põiklik



Pille Põiklik, PhD, works at the Language Policy Department of the Ministry of Education and Research. Her work involves efforts to promote the learning of Estonian in lifelong learning as well as supporting foreign language learning and multilingualism in Estonia through cooperation with organisations in Estonia and with international networks. Pille’s background is in English language and literature. Prior to joining the Language Policy Department, she worked at the English Department of the University of Tartu, teaching practical English, academic writing as well as courses on media literacy and discourse analysis.

Foreign Language Learning in Estonia in 2023

Abstract

English continues to be the most taught and learnt foreign language in Estonia and many students show excellent results at different English language exams. National curricula and language policy documents, however, also stress the importance of acquiring sufficient skills in an additional foreign language. The presentation details the current situation of foreign language learning in general education in Estonia and discusses, among other things, what are the (foreign) language profiles of our students, what might be the opportunities to develop plurilingual repertoires (as also explored in the Companion Volume to the CEFR) and how does Estonia compare to other educational systems.

Phil Ball



Phil Ball is based in San Sebastián in Spain. He is the co-author of the book ‘Putting CLIL into Practice’ (OUP 2015) and his CLIL textbook series for the Basque curriculum was nominated for the ELTONS Innovation Award in London. He is module leader on the MA CLIL degree for NILE in England and his work has included consultancy projects in Slovakia, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Austria, Japan and Qatar.

He has been involved in several European-based CLIL projects, and has written a wide variety of CLIL-based textbooks for the Basque and Spanish social science and English language programmes. He designed the 'CLIL Essentials' online course for the British Council and works at the University of the Basque Country (UPV) training lecturers to deliver their subjects through English. He also works with vocational teachers at the University of Vienna and on the OTA masterclasses at Christ Church, Oxford University.

He has authored various CLIL-based articles and is currently working on digital language materials for the French and English CLIL programmes in the north of Spain.

CLIL-based Methods and Non-traditional Learning Spaces: How do they Help Learners to Co-operate, Perform and Propose Solutions?

Abstract

The onset of the information age has altered our views on education, not only in terms of the content of the curriculum but also in terms of the architecture and spatial nature of learning. With regard to content, the easy availability of information has resulted in a shift towards competence-based education, where knowledge and skills are the 'resources' of competences. They are the wheels on the (hybrid) car now. They're no longer the engine.

With regard to spaces, we still have classrooms, but with the new binary distinction of 'face-to-face' and 'online'. The sudden need to adapt materials and methodology to cope with the pandemic resulted in creative solutions from both instructors and learners, and research suggests that the meta-disciplinary competences that we traditionally associated with the social interaction of classroom environments were actually enhanced by the zoom-boom. It seems counter-intuitive, but curricula that were already offering competence-oriented practices (such as CLIL) found the sudden shift to online teaching much less problematic. So – how has this shaped our thinking for the immediate future? In the talk I will consider a wider definition of 'learning spaces' where the dynamic shifts from teacher to learner and the learners look outwards, seeking to interact. CLIL, for example, has been a major player in this re-configuration of the landscape, for the simple reason that when teachers operate in the L2, they think twice. How does a teacher 'thinking twice' lead to competences, learner-centeredness and a more action-oriented approach?

CPP or Co-operate, perform and propose solutions. This talk will show some examples of how this happens, and how the traditional 'space' of the classroom can now simply be a base for looking outwards and solving real-life problems.

Darío Luis Banegas



Darío Luis Banegas is Lecturer in Language Education at the University of Edinburgh. He is an active member of teacher associations in South America and the UK. Darío was also part of the Hornby Trust, working on their Decentring ELT initiative. He has presented and published internationally. His most recent co-edited volume is the Routledge Handbook of Content and Language Integrated Learning published by Routledge. He is currently leading a teaching and research project on social justice and language teaching materials sponsored by the Spencer Foundation, and a research group about intersectionality in language teacher education. His main teaching and research interests are: CLIL, initial language teacher education, action research, and socially just language pedagogies.

Talking about ourselves in the English Class: Activities and Experiences about Identity for Equity and Active Citizenship among Teenagers

Abstract

How can talking about themselves can help teenage learners (and their teachers) develop a stronger sense of civic engagement and active citizenship? Based on current notions, research, and practices of identity with language learners, in this talk I will share empowering and context-sensitive activities that EFL teachers have carried out to combine identity, language learning, and the wider social context students live in. The activities not only invite learners (and teachers) to recognise different aspects of their personal identity but also explore their identity as part of their local community and what they can do to contribute to an equitable and inclusive society.

Jennifer Uhler



Jennifer Uhler is the Regional English Language Officer, whose office supports programs promoting quality English teaching and learning in Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, and Greenland. Jennifer has taught in various U.S. and international settings as a teacher and teacher educator. Her professional interests include technology, content-based instruction, and language policy.

From Deep Fake to Deep Learning: Media Literacy in ELT

Abstract

Moving our students from deep fakes to deep learning is urgent for success in learning and in life. Visual literacy, digital literacy, and media literacy are essentially critical thinking skills that can easily be woven into primary and secondary school English language teaching classrooms with little to no preparation. This presentation will provide an overview of a year-long Media Literacy for Educators Program for 100 English teachers from

Poland and the Baltics and share outcomes of teacher learning, including easy-to-use tools for integrating technical and media literacies into primary and secondary school English lessons, free online resources for teachers, and insights from these regional – and local Estonian – communities of practice.

Ülle Türk



Ülle Türk, MA, works as Teacher of English Language and Culture at the Institute of Foreign Languages and Cultures of the University of Tartu where she teaches courses in British and Irish cultures and academic writing to BA students and various teacher education courses to MA students. She has been involved in several examination and curriculum development projects and has conducted numerous teacher development workshops in Estonia and abroad. Her main research interests are academic reading and writing, CLIL, foreign language curriculum development, and language testing and assessment.

Mediation: A New Kid on the Block or an Old Hat?

Abstract

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (2001, CEFR for short) added the fourth mode of communication – mediation –to the traditional three (reception, production and interaction). However, there were no mediation scales in the original document and it is, thus, not surprising that most educators had never heard of this ‘new’ mode before the publication of the CEFR Companion Volume in 2020. The latter devotes considerable space to different types of mediation (pp 90 – 122) and includes 24 scales for them. This has led to a sudden surge of interest in what mediation is and how we can teach and assess it.

The presentation will, first, define ‘mediation’ and its main types (mediating a text, mediation concepts and mediating communication) and will then consider various types of mediating activities that can be found in traditional language teaching materials as well as in language examinations. Finally, some suggestions and guidelines for developing mediation activities will be provided.

Rebecca Raine Raab



Rebecca Raine Raab, PhD, is an English Language Specialist with the U.S. Department of State’s English Language Programs and Narva College. As a teacher educator in the U.S. and abroad, she has taught university courses on ELT methodology, literacy, teaching students with disabilities, and teacher collaboration/co-teaching. Rebecca also co-taught multilingual learners in elementary and secondary public-school classrooms in the U.S. She regularly presents at academic conferences and is a former president of Virginia TESOL, an affiliate of TESOL International. Her research and professional interests include language policy, new teacher induction and mentoring, place-based education, and content-based instruction. Rebecca also works as a

consultant and freelance copyeditor. When she's not teaching or consulting, Rebecca lives on a sailboat in the central Pacific Ocean.

I. The Power of Place in Content and Language Integrated Learning for Multilingual Learners

Abstract

Place is powerful as where we live influences who we are, what language(s) we speak, the food we eat, our opportunities for education and economic participation, and the natural world we encounter daily. However, teachers often underutilize place in the classroom. Place-based education, defined as "anytime and anywhere learning that leverages the power of place to personalize learning" (Vander Ark, Liebttag, & McClennen, 2020), has the potential to transform schooling as teachers and students utilize the local community and its assets (e.g., museums, businesses, natural resources). In this talk, I present place-based education as an invitation for teachers to create interdisciplinary, relevant, authentic, and culturally conscious content and language integrated learning opportunities that connect place to the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning (PTDL) model (Coyle, Meyer, & Staschen-Dielmann, 2023). Concrete examples of teachers from different countries and contexts who have implemented place-based educational initiatives will showcase the deeper learning and plurilinguistic development possible for multilingual learners when place is prioritized and utilized.

WORKSHOPS

II. Authentic Languageing through Place-Based Education

Abstract

Multilingual learners need opportunities to practice languageing in authentic contexts outside of school if we want them to experience language learning as relevant and integral to their daily lives. In this workshop, we will discuss how teachers can take language learning to the real world through place-based education. In centering language learning around place, we can also teach academic subject area content and literacy while developing learners' pluriliteracies across subjects, languages, and community contexts. The goals of this workshop include:

- Identifying components and principles of place-based education as well as benefits for CLIL contexts
- Exploring the six phases of professional learning teachers need to reflect upon when beginning to plan and implement place-based education
- Generating ideas for place-based education in participants' communities using planning documents that guide participants to identify challenges and opportunities in communities while making connections to the curriculum

To meet these goals, participants will take part in reflective activities and use planning tools to map potential place-based educational collaborations in their communities.

Vasily Nosov



Vasily Nosov has been teaching English to learners of different ages since 1995. He has taught in various schools across Ida-Virumaa, in more recent years focusing on upper secondary school and training for Cambridge exams. He is a graduate of Goldsmiths College, London, and an alumnus of The Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program.

Be Real: Building Relationships with your Students

Abstract

Even the most qualified teachers using the best classroom materials and the most cutting-edge technology can have classes of students who feel bored, insufficiently motivated, and as a result, fail to realize their potential. What is the secret ingredient? How can a teacher actually inspire achievement? This presentation is aimed at early career professionals and is intended to supply participants with a range of guiding principles and practical strategies drawing on first-hand classroom experience.

Anastassia Ananina



Anastassia Ananina is an English language teacher at Narva Gümnaasium with a passion for language education and technology integration. The educational journey took her from earning a Bachelor's degree at Queen's Mary University of London to obtaining a Master's degree at Narva College, University of Tartu. Over the past two years, she has been immersed in the study of Educational Technology at the University of Tartu, where her main research interest involved exploring innovative ways to enhance grammar instruction and expand vocabulary acquisition.

Enhancing English Vocabulary Teaching through Innovative AI-Powered Techniques

Abstract

In today's dynamic educational landscape, the integration of technology and pedagogy has opened new avenues for engaging and effective language instruction. This seminar aims to explore the innovative use of AI, specifically ChatGPT, in teaching English vocabulary. Departing from traditional assessment-based approaches, we delve into the realm of non-graded testing and interactive learning experiences that empower students to master vocabulary organically.

We will discuss the potential of AI to serve as a supplemental tool in language education, bridging the gap between traditional methods and cutting-edge technology. Rather than merely replacing human instruction, ChatGPT is positioned as a dynamic partner that fosters creativity, contextual understanding, and personalized learning journeys.

Attendees will discover a variety of vocabulary exercises that can be created with the help of ChatGPT. Furthermore, the session emphasizes the merits of non-graded testing, where anxiety-free assessments and interactive exercises encourage exploration, experimentation, and skill refinement. Teachers will gain valuable insights into effectively integrating AI-driven techniques into their existing curriculum while fostering a stimulating and inclusive learning environment.

By embracing AI as a supportive ally in the English classroom, educators can reimagine vocabulary acquisition as a vibrant, personalized, and interactive journey.

Heather Gaddis



Heather Gaddis is an English Language Fellow at Vytautas Magnus University in Vilnius, Lithuania. She has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Old Dominion University and a Master's in Educational Technology from Boise State University. Heather has worked with English language teachers and learners in the US, Mexico, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan and now Lithuania.

Milda Karčiauskienė is currently a teacher at Vilnius Duke Gediminas Pre Gymnasium. She has a B.A. in primary education and English philology from Vilnius Pedagogical University as well as a M.A. in Educology of Law from Mykolas Romeris University. Milda has worked as a teacher and lecturer with students of different ages.

I. Plurilinguistic Learning Environments

Abstract

As society becomes more linguistically, racially, socially and culturally diverse, it is necessary for schools, particularly language teachers, to take steps to make their classrooms more inclusive so that their students feel included and involved in their own education. Plurilingual education makes use of strategies that facilitate the inclusion of all aspects of students' identities. Participants will reflect on how language teaching has started to shift away from a monolingual focus and will analyze activities that make use of plurilingual strategies in order to apply them in their own contexts.

II. Teacher Talk: Fostering Mentoring Relationships Between Teachers

Abstract

Creating mentoring relationships between teachers is key to preventing burnout and to making teaching a sustainable profession, particularly for early career teachers. In this session, participants will learn about a regional event held to foster these mentoring relationships and will engage in a world cafe style discussion in which they will be able to share about their challenges and inspirations in education on topics such as classroom management, communication with key stakeholders at school, creating relationships with students, and work/life balance.

**Amy Christine
Tšerenkova**



Amy Christine Tšerenkova has been teaching English in Estonia for over 20 years, the last ten years of these in the Estonian Defense Forces. Her work for the EDF also involves developing face-to-face and hybrid courses, creating online content, and serving as an English language editor for its academic publications. She is also a consultant for the National English Exams in Estonia. Amy has recently forayed into the rewarding field of teacher training, serving as a facilitator for the English Faculty Development Workshop in Bulgaria for the Bureau for International Language Cooperation.

Amy is happiest in the classroom where she has the privilege of helping her students meet their personal and professional goals. Her own attempts at learning Estonian, Russian and Sign Language have given her insight into the affective challenges of language acquisition as an adult. Therefore, she is deeply invested in finding ways to create a more effective learning environment by minimizing obstacles to learning and maximizing student engagement.

Practical Applications of Brain-based Learning Research

Abstract

We are constantly hearing about new research and trends in teaching and learning. Have you ever wondered whether any of this is relevant to your English language classroom? Can this research actually benefit your students? In this workshop, I will share my journey of applying brain-based learning strategies with my students. You will have the chance to try out one of the techniques and consider whether brain research has any practical application in the classroom.

Noora Mahmassani



Noora Mahmassani is an English Language Fellow who is based at Liepaja University in Liepaja, Latvia. During the 22-23 academic year, Noora was a Fellow at Narva College where she worked with students, pre-service, and in-service teachers. In her home state of Maryland in the USA, she has supported English language learners as teacher and curriculum developer. Her professional interests include multilingual and multicultural education and learner-centered instruction.

I. Teaching for Tolerance: Strategies for Multicultural Classrooms

Abstract

Working with multicultural and international audiences requires excellent cross-cultural competencies from the instructor and from learners alike. This workshop will focus on how strategies from the field of second language learning can be applied to diverse groups to encourage tolerant, peaceful, and open dialogue. Participants will receive practical tools for successful facilitation of group work, discussions, and classroom teaching with diverse audiences.

II. Gender Inclusive Language in the English Language Classroom

Abstract

How can we use language as a tool to confront bias and promote gender equality? This workshop draws upon research into the continued need to increase the gender-inclusivity of language in the English language classroom. An overview of the United Nations Guidelines for Gender-Inclusive Language in English will be presented, and participants will engage in hands-on activities designed to apply these guidelines to authentic texts and instructional materials.