

WELCOME TO OUR

The Nordic-Baltic Region Newsletter

HEY, HOW ARE YOU?

NBR President's Notes: Languages as Bridges in Uncertain Times

Dear colleagues,

In today's world, where political tensions and uncertainties remind us daily of the fragility of peace and mutual trust, the work of foreign language teachers is more vital than ever. Beyond grammar and vocabulary, language education cultivates empathy, fosters dialogue, and opens doors to other ways of seeing the world. Each lesson given and each word

learned is an act of bridge-building between cultures.

The Nordic-Baltic region has long been a crossroads of languages, histories, and traditions. By equipping our students with the ability to communicate across borders, we give them not only practical skills but also the capacity to listen, to understand, and to resist the pull of stereotypes and division. Language learning nurtures respect for difference and reveals the shared values that connect us.

In moments when walls—visible or invisible—are being built in Europe and



A background image of several autumn leaves in shades of yellow and orange, scattered across a light, textured surface.

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across the world, we have the privilege and responsibility to keep building bridges. Let us remind our students, and ourselves, that every language learned is an invitation to see the world through another's eyes.

With appreciation for the work you do,

Outi Vilkuna

puheenjohtaja / ordförande / Chairperson

Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto SUKOL ry

The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland SUKOL

outi.vilkuna@sukol.fi

Greetings from Estonia

Prepared by **Ly Leedu**,

a member of the Board of the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language, Multilingua Language School, Education quality manager and Estonian language teacher



TEACHERS OF ESTONIAN AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FROM ACROSS ESTONIA GATHERED AT THE SUMMER SCHOOL

From June 27 to 29, 2025, the traditional summer school of the Estonian Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language, titled "Integrating Hand in Hand," took place. This time, the participants met in the beautiful Sagadi Manor in Northern Estonia. The association brings together active teachers from all over Estonia, ranging from kindergarten teachers to adult educators.

The three-day event offered teachers professional development, inspiring activities, and many opportunities for collaboration.

The goals of the summer school were:

- to promote networking among teachers
- to explore possibilities for integrating formal and non-formal education
- to reflect together and plan new learning activities
- to gather ideas for study trips, museum lessons, and CLIL-based teaching
- to establish collaborative relationships between colleagues from various educational institutions
- to support teachers' mental well-being and sense of unity



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Sagadi Manor's Rich Educational Program

During the summer school, participants became familiar with the various educational programs offered by the manor. Teachers took part in a guided tour of the manor, gaining new knowledge about the history of the manor complex and the stories of the baron's family, and also explored the forest museum on their own. The day concluded with a team game called "Adventure in Sagadi Manor and Its Surroundings," which tested participants' knowledge of both nature and historical facts. In addition to identifying animal skins and trees, they had to, for example, determine the name of the baron's father by studying an old photo gallery. This was excellent quality control before taking their own students on a similar field trip.



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On the second day, participants explored interactive games such as “Track Trail in the Park” and “100 Steps in Sagadi.” Writer and museum director Ain Kütt led a program called “Sagadi – the Hollywood of Estonia.” Participants watched clips from movies filmed in Sagadi, later identifying Estonian films based on music, spotting mistakes in the films, and recalling film shoots related to Sagadi. It was truly a blend of learning and entertainment.

Workshops from Teacher to Teacher: Practical Implementation of CLIL

Inguna Joandi (Narva Pähklimäe School) led the workshop “*Language Rally through Thematic Years*,” where she shared her experiences of integrating Estonian language teaching with Estonia’s official thematic years—such as nature heritage, culture, or music. **Ene Kukk** (Türi Secondary School) presented her master’s thesis and conducted a workshop titled “*To the Museum with a Stroller: A Minimally Effortful, Flexible Museum Lesson for Various Needs*.”



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EVÕL
Eesti Võõrkeeleõpetajate Liit

Miina Puusepp (from the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language), who participated in an Erasmus+ mobility program, shared practical drama-based techniques for language classes. **Ly Leedu** (Multilingua Language Center) introduced the *Actionbound* app. Participants got hands-on experience on how to combine technology with language learning in a way that turns learning into an exciting adventure.

Each morning of the summer school began with yoga in the manor park, led by Marleen Liinold. The days ended with group work sessions where teachers discussed how to implement the new ideas in their own schools.



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Outdoor Learning on the Käsmu Peninsula

The final day began with an orienteering game in the nature of Käsmu. Teachers used paper maps and compasses to navigate the forest and solve tasks related to local nature and history.

Later, in hands-on workshops, participants learned the meanings of signal flags and crafted souvenirs using Viking-age techniques. A guided tour of the Käsmu Maritime Museum offered a fascinating look into Estonia's maritime culture and the stories of sea captains—providing a dignified and memorable conclusion to the summer school.

More Than Just a Training

Most summer school activities offered participants both physical movement and learning through action. Teacher-led workshops focused on renewing teaching methods and applying creative approaches. Participants left the summer school with fresh ideas, new collaborations—and a strong sense that together, much more can be achieved than by working alone.

The Estonian Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language sincerely thanks the Ministry of Education and Research for supporting the summer school.



Greetings from Estonia

Prepared by **Kai Tammik**
EATE board member
Teacher at Kose Gymnasium



INTENSIVE ESL SUMMER CAMP 2025 FOR STUDENTS AS AN ERASMUS PROJECT

During the week of August 25–29, 2025, students from Kose Gymnasium participated in the international camp “Intensive ESL Summer Camp 2025 for Integration, Digital Capability Development, and Moving Towards a More Sustainable Tomorrow”. They were joined by their peers from Jašiūnai “Aušra,” Dieveniškės “Rytas” and Jašiūnai M. Balinskis Gymnasiums from Lithuania. The event was held in the picturesque surroundings of Dvarčėnai Manor Estate on the shores of Lake Suvingis, Alytus District.



Greetings from Estonia

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EATE board member
Teacher at Kose Gymnasium



The idea for the project was created in 2024 at the Georgia State University, where I was privileged to participate in an exchange programme that was organized by the U.S Embassy in Estonia. There I met a colleague Gerda Maskoliuniene from Lithuania and as a final project for the course we came up with an idea of an intensive English learning camp for Baltic students as a cooperational and cultural exchange. After the exchange programme we had a couple of more meetings with Gerda and all that was missing from the plan was the financial part. My school's project manager encouraged me to submit the idea as an Erasmus project application and a positive response came back in the spring. And Gerda managed to get support from the local municipality.



Greetings from Estonia

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EATE board member

Teacher at Kose Gymnasium



EVÕL

Eesti Võõrkeeleõpetajate Liit



24 students aged 15-16 from Estonia and Lithuania participated in the camp and as a preliminary task, students had to submit a letter of motivation to participate. The camp days were full of workshops filled with creative tasks integrating technology into English language learning. The curriculum was created by me and Gerda. We were also accompanied by teacher Vaike Juursalu from Kose, who was involved in the children's leisure activities and Austeja Maskulnaite, who helped to carry out the workshops. Students developed critical thinking, media literacy, got to know the culture of the Baltic countries and also experienced the differences and similarities of the Baltic people. To balance the studies, there were sports and playful activities which developed teamwork and cooperative skills. In their free time, students could enjoy nature, go swimming, play sports, go to the sauna, and on the last evening, a proper barbecue party was held by the campfire.



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EATE board member

Teacher at Kose Gymnasium



One of the program's highlights was an excursion to Vilnius, where the participants joined an interactive city quest, tackled team challenges, and explored the city's cultural and historical landmarks. Furthermore, their visit to the Centre for Civil Education (Valstybės pažinimo centras) offered them a deeper insight into Lithuanian statehood, democratic principles, and civic responsibility. Discussions with professional educators provided a valuable link between theoretical knowledge and practical application.



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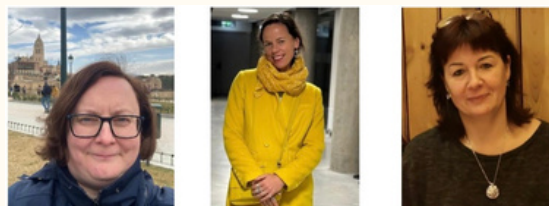
The feedback from the students was very positive. They considered it important to be able to take part in such a cultural exchange program and they were happy to have made new friends. They said that in the camp they had to use English as a means of communication, and this increased their confidence in communicating with other people. For some of the students in the programme, this was their first trip abroad and they were really happy about the opportunity.

Organizing the camp and designing the curriculum took quite a long time, but overall the project can be considered a success. This was the first time to carry out something like that, but we are already planning to organize new English language camps. This experience connected us even more with the international community. This is not a great opportunity just for students only, but also gives a valuable experience for teachers as well.



Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Rita Skara-Mincāne, Laura Ende and Inga Linde**
the Latvian Association of Teachers of English



The new school year for teachers traditionally begins in August, and the 2025/2026 academic year has already brought a busy start for the Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE). This season has been highlighted by several important events, including the LATE 34th Annual Conference 2025, the election of a new Board and President, and the launch of the seventh year of the Reading Circle project for teachers and schoolchildren.

LATE 34th Annual Conference 2025

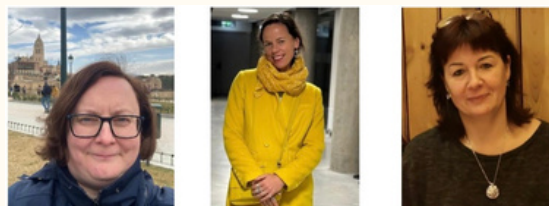
A Celebration of Ideas and Inspiration

The LATE 34th Annual Conference 2025, themed *“Learning Language Teaching and Teaching Language Learners,”* took place at Ogre State Gymnasium, one of the newest and most modern schools in Latvia. The event brought together 270 LATE members and guests, who had the opportunity to explore fresh ideas, revisit valuable ones that may have been overlooked, gain inspiration, and recharge for the school year ahead.



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the Latvian Association of Teachers of English



The conference began with a warm welcome and greetings for the upcoming school year from Inna Zeņkeviča, Headmaster of Ogre State Gymnasium. The opening ceremony continued with our valued cooperation partners from the **British Embassy Riga**, the **British Council in Latvia**, and the **U.S. Embassy Riga**. Inspiring opening speeches were delivered by Philip Barclay, Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy Riga, and Dalia Batuuka, Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy Riga.

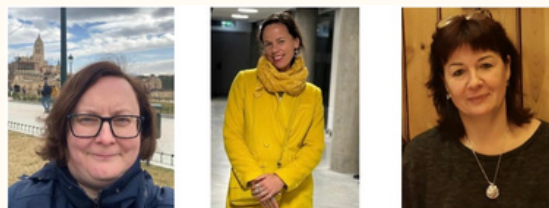


Inga Linde, President of LATE, then addressed the participants, reflecting on the association's achievements over the past year and outlining upcoming plans and events, concluding with a motivational message for the year ahead.

The conference opened with plenary sessions delivered by our cooperation partners from Express Publishing, National Geographic Learning, Pearson, and Oxford University Press. Dinos Soursos from Express Publishing introduced the concept of mediation in the EFL classroom, emphasizing the role of students as social agents who bridge communication, co-construct

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meaning, and foster intercultural understanding. He also explored the potential of AI-powered adaptive learning tools to enhance language education by personalizing instruction to meet the needs of individual learners.

Catherine Hollings from National Geographic Learning emphasized the importance of choosing coursebooks that not only guide and support students but also nurture their intrinsic motivation to achieve both personal and academic goals. She highlighted the value of project-based learning and offered practical insights into implementing projects effectively. In addition, she explored how AI, through targeted practice and real-time feedback, can enhance student engagement and strengthen skill development.

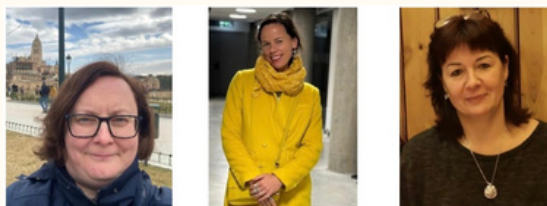


Grant Kempton from Pearson delivered an inspiring presentation that captivated the audience with both insight and charisma. Framing his talk around the question *"Are we there yet?"* he underscored the importance of the learning journey itself. He invited educators to rethink not only how we engage with students, but also how we design

courses and shape the entire learning experience. His focus was on creating learning journeys that maximize student potential and reduce teacher workload by prioritizing confidence over motivation, and by placing greater emphasis on the journey and its key milestones.

Greetings from Latvia

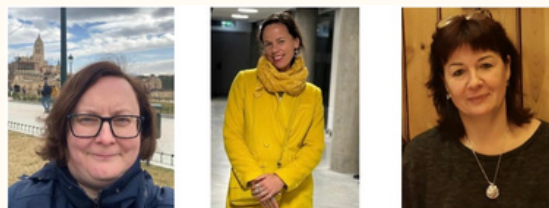
Prepared by **Rita Skara-Mincāne, Laura Ende and Inga Linde**
the Latvian Association of Teachers of English



Dace Miška from Oxford University Press focused on the importance of self-directed professional development, encouraging teachers to take charge of their own growth. Her session showcased a wide range of resources and tools designed for English language teaching, demonstrating how they can support educators in enhancing their skills, keeping up with best practices, and tailoring professional learning to their individual needs. On behalf of LATE, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to **Oxford University Press** and **Dace Miška** for having an ELT Consultant based in Latvia. This support is invaluable, as it greatly helps teachers select the most suitable coursebooks and materials for their students.

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the Latvian Association of Teachers of English



In the evening, the Annual General Meeting took place, during which a new Board was elected. As volunteers, the Board members will continue to dedicate their time and effort to organizing and supporting the work of the association. Following the festive reception, the new Board held its first official meeting.



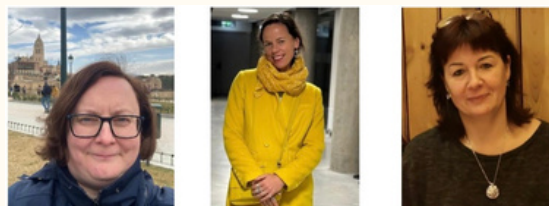
After eight years of devoted service as President of LATE, Inga Linde proudly passed on her responsibilities.

We sincerely congratulate **Agnese Gromova-Kūrena**, the newly elected President of LATE, and wish her every success in leading the association forward.

Congratulations!

Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Rita Skara-Mincāne, Laura Ende and Inga Linde**
the *Latvian Association of Teachers of English*



The second day of the conference was opened by our excellent local presenters. **Robert Buckmaster** explored which metaphors and idioms should be taught to students and suggested effective ways to integrate them into lessons.

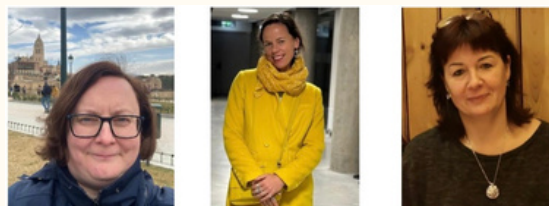
Tatjana Kunda examined the action-oriented approach to EFL teaching, highlighting how learners can act as social agents by completing meaningful tasks that mirror real-world communication contexts. **Agnese Gromova-Kūrena** then shared valuable insights and updates from the IATEFL Conference 2025, held in Edinburgh.

We are also delighted to continue the tradition of **bridging the gap between scientific research and classroom practice** by introducing in-service teachers to the findings of recent university graduates. This year, **Anete Sorokina**, a student at the University of Latvia, presented her research on the *Reading Circle* and its impact on students' reading comprehension, motivation, and collaboration.



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the Latvian Association of Teachers of English



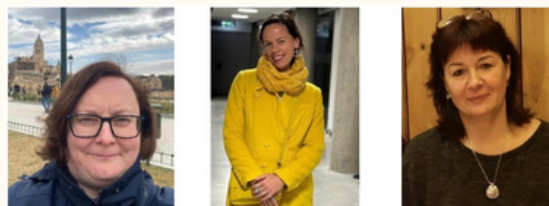
We would also like to warmly thank **Marjorie Rosenberg** (Austria), who shared inspiring activities that encourage learner-generated content in the ELT classroom. By offering creative frameworks for students to fill with their own ideas, she showed how learning can become more personal, meaningful, and engaging.



At the end of the second conference day the conference participants welcomed also our well-known LATE speakers, Ivars Dominks Zeps and Joseph Jack Horgan. Ivars delivered a session on teaching literary analysis, highlighting the challenges students face when working with demanding texts. He pointed out that many learners, even at advanced levels of English, often struggle to understand literary devices and apply them effectively. **Joseph** shared a range of additional resources he has developed specifically for EFL classrooms, which were warmly welcomed by educators.

Greetings from **Latvia**

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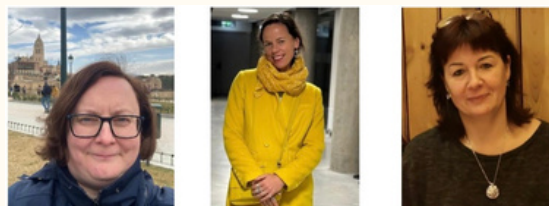


In addition to the plenary sessions, teachers could attend two of the 19 offered workshops. These sessions covered everything from practical classroom strategies and materials adaptation to professional development tools, teacher well-being, and the integration of AI, ensuring that every participant found something relevant to their teaching context.

Marjorie Rosenberg (Austria) led an engaging workshop on embracing diverse learning preferences, while **Robert Buckmaster** shared a range of practical teaching ideas. **Ingūna Melne-Vasiljeva** focused on digital media literacy, and **Yuliia Horbachova** discussed habits that help teachers prevent burnout. Other highlights included **Liena Ziemele-Miltiņa** on using films to foster self-directed learning, **Diāna Bolgare** on preparing students for the *Poetry in My Heart* recitation contest, and **Rita Skara-Mincāne** together with **Inta Augustāne** on introducing Business English in high schools. **Baiba Mantiņa** explored Japanese *Kamishibai* storytelling, **Iveta Glužģe** presented approaches to teaching Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*.

Greetings from **Latvia**

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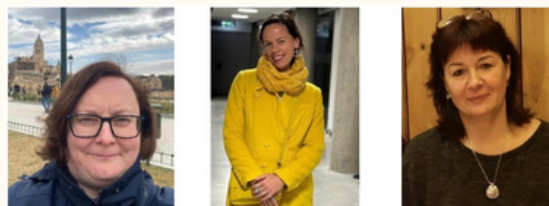
The variety extended to practical tools for teachers as well, with **Laura Pavloviča** and **Jūlija Griba** showcasing AI applications for lesson planning, and **Natālija Burišina** demonstrating how AI can be used to strengthen students' argumentative writing. **Egija Baumane** presented practical tools for guiding students in self-assessment, reflection, and responsible use of AI in the writing process, whereas **Liene Paneva** and **Ilona Ceļmalniece** led a workshop on practical strategies for adapting and enriching new coursebooks to better meet learner needs. **Marta Žagare** presented a creative writing project where students create illustrated books, and **Joseph Jack Horgan** shared free literature-based materials for teaching Jack London's *Call of the Wild*.

We were also delighted to welcome presenters from the USA – **Joe Walther** (U.S. State Department) and **Lauren Anderson** (National Louis University, USA). Joe shared creative strategies for fostering innovation in EFL classrooms, while Lauren invited participants to reflect on curriculum implementation in Latvia. With such a broad selection of sessions, every teacher was able to find inspiration and resources tailored to their needs and interests.

During the breaks teachers could explore the bookstalls, discover the latest EFL materials for both teachers and students, learn more about the Poetry in My Heart contest and study-abroad opportunities at the EducationUSA stand.

Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Rita Skara-Mincāne, Laura Ende and Inga Linde**
the **Latvian Association of Teachers of English**



Reading Circle project 2025/2026

The *Reading Circle* project for teachers and students is one of LATE's standout initiatives, and we are proud to continue it for the seventh year. This school year teachers together with their students from Grades 3–8 and 10–11 will have the opportunity to read 5–7 books as part of the project.

The main aim of the project is to build a strong classroom culture that fosters reading motivation and develops students' reading skills. This year, 49 teachers and their students from across Latvia have already joined the initiative. Learn more about the project here:

Linde, I., & Daniela, L. (2025). Teachers' Insights into the Efficacy of the 'Reading Circle' Project Using English Language Teaching Graded Readers. *Education Sciences*, 15(1), 91. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15010091>



On behalf of LATE, we
wish everyone an
exciting new school
year, filled with joy,
inspiration, and a love
of learning!

Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Tuija Kae, Rildo Reis**



Suomen kielenopettajien liitto ry

The Global Classroom Project

Enhancing English proficiency and intercultural understanding through teletandem

The FIPLV–NBR Conference 2025 that was held in Helsinki in April provided educators from across the Baltic and Nordic countries a chance to gather and explore innovative practices in language teaching. One of the main themes was “Languages Mediating Culture and Mutual Understanding”. We were proud to present our Global Classroom Teletandem project, an intercultural exchange initiative connecting Brazilian and Finnish high school students through virtual English conversations.



Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Tuija Kae, Rildo Reis**



Suomen kielenopettajien liitto ry

About the project

In a few words, the Global Classroom Teletandem project is an intercultural virtual exchange initiative connecting high school students from Brazil and Finland to enhance English proficiency and foster global citizenship. Designed and developed by teachers Tuija Kae from Finland, and Rildo Reis from Brazil, the project uses structured online sessions focused on cultural or other relevant themes to promote authentic language practice and deepen cultural understanding. The online sessions are conducted using Google Meet. Students prepare presentations, engage in guided discussions, and reflect on their experiences, all supported by teacher facilitation and mediation. For example, in the spring 2024 Finnish students studying the study unit ENA07 (nature and environment) prepared presentations on environmental issues in pairs and their peers in Brazil did the same. Both Kae and Reis feel that the project has improved students' confidence in English, expanded their awareness of global environmental issues, and strengthened their intercultural communication skills.



Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Tuija Kae, Rildo Reis**

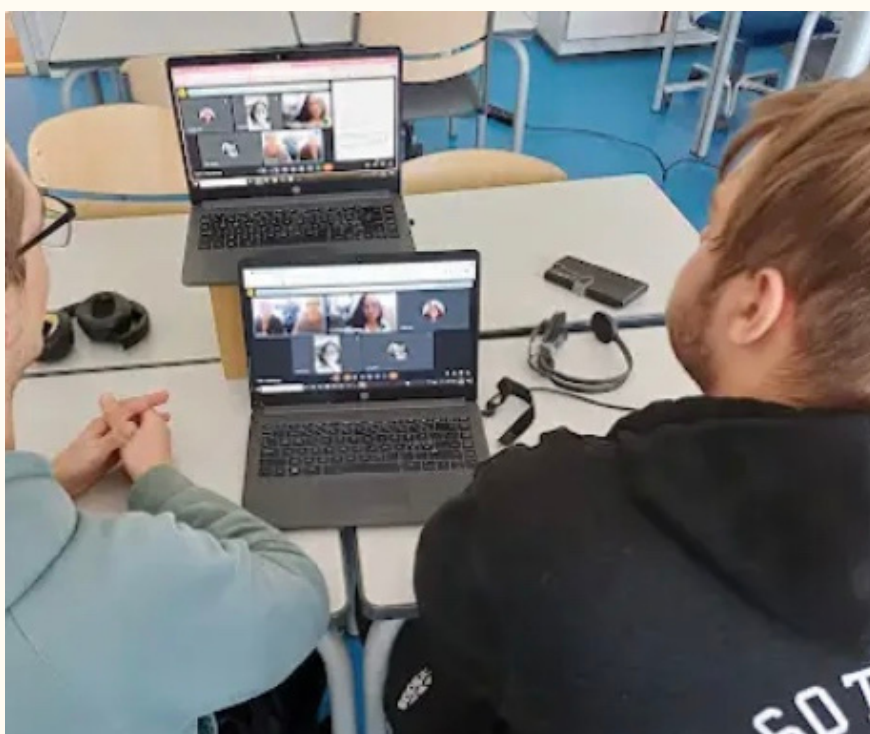


Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

Presentation at the conference

The project was presented on the second day of the FIPLV–NBR Conference organized by SUKOL, during which educators gathered at Kulosaari Secondary School for parallel sessions and keynote lectures. Approximately 44 teachers, both Finnish and international ones, attended the session.

After the presentation, the audience was given time to reflect on how they might adapt similar practices in their own classrooms. Two teachers shared that they had already implemented comparable activities, highlighting the growing interest in virtual exchanges. Another attendee inquired about the feasibility of conducting the project with students at different CEFR levels, prompting a brief discussion on adaptability and differentiation. Additionally, two teachers from Finland and Lithuania expressed strong interest in joining the initiative, demonstrating the project's potential for expansion and collaboration.



Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Tuija Kae, Rildo Reis**



Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

Global Classroom Teletandem –projekti käytännössä

Teksti Tuija Kae

Suomessa projektiin osallistui Sotungin lukion toisen vuosikurssin ENA07-ryhmä, johon kuului 31 opiskelijaa. Brasiliassa mukana oli paikallisen kielikoulun 33 vapaaehtoista lukioikäistä opiskelijaa.

Projektin esitykset liittyivät ENA07-opintojakson teemaan luonto ja ympäristö. Aiheina olivat muun muassa paikallisen eläimistön ja kasviston vertailu, sää ja ilmasto, alueen luonnonkatastrofit sekä saasteet ja niiden torjunta Suomessa ja Brasiliassa.

Suomessa esityksiä valmisteltiin yhdellä 75 minuutin oppitunnilla ja kotona. Työkaluna käytettiin Google Slidesia. Varsinaiset esitykset pidettiin 2–3 hengen ryhmissä kahden 75 minuutin oppitunnin aikana. Ryhmät sijoituivat eri puolille koulua, ja he esittivät työnsä Brasiliaan Google Meetin välityksellä. Samaan aikaan puolet suomalaisista opiskelijoista teki oppikirjan tehtäviä, kun toinen puoli piti esityksiä. Opettaja oli pääosin luokassa mutta kiersi välillä seuraamassa eri puolilla koulua tapahtuvia esityksiä.

Tapaamiset alkoivat yhteisessä Meet-huoneessa, minkä jälkeen opiskelijat jaettiin pienryhmiin. Jokainen suomalais-brasilialainen pari esittäytyi ja keskusteli opettajan jakamien icebreaker-kysymysten avulla. Sen jälkeen ryhmät pitivät esityksensä, ja aikaa jäi myös vapaaseen keskusteluun. Lopuksi kaikki palasivat yhteiseen huoneeseen.

Aikaero Brasiliaan oli kuusi tuntia, joten esitykset pidettiin aamulla Brasilian aikaa ja Suomessa iltapäivällä.

Sekä suomalaiset että brasilialaiset opiskelijat kokivat projektin antoisaksi ja hyödylliseksi kielitaidon harjoittelun kannalta. Erityisen mukavaa heidän mielestään oli keskustella samanikäisten nuorten kanssa, jotka tulevat erilaisesta kulttuurista. Suurimmat haasteet liittyivät brasilialaisten opiskelijoiden Internet-yhteyksiin etenkin silloin, kun he osallistuivat kotonaan. **26**

Greetings from Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**
President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden



Annual Conference in Växjö

The annual conference took place in Växjö, Småland, on October 1st. The theme was set to Back to Basics, focusing on reading skills and vocabulary acquisition. The local branch of our organisation arranges a full day of lectures and workshops annually, and this year the entire country was invited. Some participants from other parts of the country joined the lectures online as well.



The day started with three presentations focusing on the neurolinguistic approach to learning vocabulary. Journalist Maria Sundén Jelmini presented the methods from her book Supermetoderna, 'the Super methods'. Professor Marie Källkvist presented research findings concerning the same topic, and

speech therapist Ingrid Thulin Olander explained in detail how vocabulary is acquired among early learners and which effects can be seen based on different training methods. All three lectures were very much appreciated by the audience.



Greetings from Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**
President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

During coffee breaks and lunch, participants were able to browse the materials presented by the different publishing houses present.

After lunch, workshops in English, German, French, and Spanish engaged the participants in different topics, using the different target languages.



We wish to thank the board of the local branch, Språklärarnas riksförbund Kronoberg, for a very successful conference.

Shining a Light on Middle School English Teaching

A recent webinar on teaching vocabulary in the English classroom, led by **Dr Maria Stridsman** from Umeå University, brought attention to the teaching of English at the middle school level, an area that is both under-researched and often taught by teachers without full subject qualification.

Dr Stridsman's research shows just how crucial vocabulary is for overall language ability, reading comprehension, and long-term academic success. Yet middle school English teaching in Sweden faces many challenges:

- Limited research and guidance – very few classroom studies focus on how vocabulary is taught and learnt at this level, and the national curriculum gives little clear direction.

Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

- Unequal learning opportunities – many pupils build their vocabulary through games, music and media outside school, while others rely entirely on classroom teaching that may lack systematic support and repetition.
- Gaps in teaching materials – textbooks and digital resources often fail to provide enough repetition and depth for long-term vocabulary growth and development, focusing on isolated words rather than meaningful use and variation.
- Unclear expectations – vocabulary development is not well defined or systematically supported in the curriculum compared to other subjects, leaving teachers without a clear framework to guide progression.

By organising this webinar, we hope that our association is helping to close the gaps and strengthen subject expertise by connecting practising teachers with up-to-date research. We also hope that it has provided practical insights and inspiration, giving teachers the tools and confidence they need to improve vocabulary teaching and support more equal learning opportunities for all learners.



Greetings from Sweden

Språklärarnas
Riksförbund

The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Continued work concerning the National Education Policy

As reported in the previous newsletters, this spring, the association submitted five comments on official reports (remissvar) to various national education reforms proposed by the Swedish Government and the Swedish National Agency for Education.

The next step in this process was taken on the European Day of Languages, the 26th of September. Together with the French Teachers' Association of Sweden and a large number of teachers at Swedish universities, we are calling for a national language strategy. Sweden has implemented a new STEM strategy, and the subsequent move is to create a similar strategy for languages. The call was published online and [can be read in Swedish here](#). A translation follows below.

Together with this text, we are collecting signatures in an [online petition](#). These efforts reflect a strategic shift toward greater visibility and influence in education policy. The association now plays an increasingly central role in national debates on quality, equity, and the future of language education in Sweden.

The urgent need for a national language strategy

The need for a national language strategy is urgent.

The subject has been raised on numerous occasions in recent years from several directions, for example in the government report Redovisning av uppdrag om översyn av timplanen för grundskolan och motsvarande skolformer (U2020/00527/S) and in an opinion piece in Göteborgs-Posten on 30 September 2024: Acute shortage of multilinguals makes Sweden less competitive.

Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**
President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Despite this, we do not see the measures required to strengthen the position of languages. At a time when democratic dialogue is being hampered in many parts of the world, language skills and intercultural competence are of the utmost importance. The role of modern languages and native language instruction in schools needs to be reinforced, as well as preserving and strengthening the role of minority languages in society and the education system.

"Fewer are studying modern languages"

In universities across the country, we see a situation with ever fewer students taking modern languages, less teaching time, and insufficient government funding for the humanities. This language crisis has its roots in problems that already arise in primary and secondary education. If pupils do not learn languages from the outset, there will be no students capable of continuing their studies at higher levels.

This impoverishes Sweden as a nation of learning. To ensure that Sweden maintains its position as an international actor in, for example, industry, innovation, diplomacy and cultural export, we need a population that masters more languages than just Swedish and English.

"Part of European identity"

The EU's guidelines that all citizens by 2025 should master two languages in addition to their mother tongue need to be taken seriously. Language skills are part of our European identity.

The investigations presented regarding a new curriculum and a new grading system entail serious consequences for language subjects in several respects, but no compensatory measures are put forward to strengthen language education.

Greetings from Sweden

**Språklärarnas**
Riksförbund

The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

"Doesn't count"

The status of language subjects in compulsory school is further diminished by the fact that the subject is not included in admission to upper-secondary school. At upper-secondary level, it is proposed that merit points be abolished, a system which today motivates more students to study both English and other languages at advanced levels. Universities also report that students' knowledge of English is insufficient to cope with course literature.

To be able to take the next step, an analysis of the international context is required. Sweden is a country that is part of several international frameworks, and the situation in the Nordic region, the EU and the wider world is relevant in order to find the best possible way forward.

A Swedish language strategy

We want a Swedish language strategy to be developed, which in the long term strives to ensure that everyone living in Sweden has good opportunities to develop proficiency in several languages. The following objectives should form the backbone of such a strategy:

Primary school

- Modern languages as a compulsory subject, on equal footing with other subjects
- Limited group sizes to ensure quality of teaching
- Strengthened right to mother tongue teaching in all mother tongues throughout school years

Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Upper-secondary school

- Requirement of passing grades from compulsory school in mother tongue and two additional languages for admission to higher-education preparatory programmes, for example Swedish, English and one modern language
- Modern languages as a core subject in all higher-education preparatory upper-secondary programmes
- Modern languages as a core subject in the hotel and tourism programme
- Language teaching in modern languages throughout all three years of upper-secondary education

Higher education

- Socio-economic initiatives to attract more students to language studies
- Socio-economic initiatives to ensure the growth of language teachers
- Better opportunities to integrate language studies with higher education in other fields, such as economics and engineering

Society at large

- Higher value placed on multilingualism in recruitment and salary setting
- Opportunities for relevant and continuous language training during working hours in sectors with multilingual contact
- Continued measures to safeguard the role of minority languages in society and the education system
- Creation of a national language centre, similar to Fremmedspråksenteret in Norway, taking a national approach to language issues for both education and society.

Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

New Autumn Issue of Lingua

In parallel with its policy work, Språklärarnas riksförbund continues to promote professional development and language awareness through its quarterly magazine Lingua. The new issue, which will be published in October 2025, features contributions from both language researchers and practising teachers, written in Swedish as well as in English, French, Spanish, and German.



The issue explores a wide range of topics, including oral language teaching, reading strategies, and pronunciation. In this edition of Lingua, you can read about the IDT conference of 2025, which took place in Lübeck earlier this summer with over 2700 German teachers from all around the world. Furthermore, you can also read about the use of emojis in Spanish teaching, to teach English in a multilingual environment, Térèse Mölsä's visit to the conference in Besançon, activities in modern language teaching to promote motivation, as well as our recurring articles written by our committee's language representatives.

Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of the Association and **Jūratė Helsvig**, Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Vilniaus Kolegija



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija - LKPA

Autumn Events of the Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania: A Colourful Mosaic of Languages



Celebrating the 25th European Day of Languages in Lithuania

On September 26, Lithuania celebrated the 25th anniversary of the European Day of Languages, a day dedicated to promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural cooperation. This year's events highlighted the importance of language learning and raised awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity.

This year, the Public Service Language Centre in partnership with the Capital's Children and Youth Centre, an exhibition showcasing the best drawings from the children's art competition **"European Tales without Borders"** took place at the Visitor Centre of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, with around 200 children from across the country participating.

ORGANIZATORIAI:



PARTNERIAI:



RENGINŲ GLOBOJA:

Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo Kancleris Algirdas Stončaitis



Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of the Association and **Jūratė Helsvig**, Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Vilniaus Kolegija



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų
asociacija - LKPA



Algirdas Stončaitis, Chancellor of the Seimas, welcomed the participants and awarded prizes to the winners.

Meanwhile, at Vilnius “Vytis” Gymnasium, 26 language workshops titled **“A Date with Languages”** introduced students to a wide variety of languages. Participants explored both commonly taught languages at school – English, Italian, Spanish, and French – and less frequently taught languages, such as Irish, Czech, Danish, Japanese, Croatian, Latvian, Finnish, Turkish, and Hungarian. More than 400 pupils attended, and ambassadors from Turkey, Japan, and Croatia welcomed the participants. The workshops were led by representatives of foreign embassies based in Lithuania.

The Institute of Foreign Languages at Vytautas Magnus University also organized the event called **“Across Europe with Languages”**, engaging school students and the university community. The event attracted over 300 participants from nine schools and VMU. During the event, there was the “Language Carousel”, where participants learned words and phrases in nine foreign languages with the guidance of international students.

Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of the Association and **Jūratė Helsvig**, Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Vilnius Kolegija



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The winners of the quiz **“Test What You’ve Learned in the Language Carousel”** received prizes. Additionally, workshops in Italian and Lithuanian Sign Language were held. The international spirit of the celebration was enhanced by students from Transform4Europe Alliance universities in Poland, France, Germany, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and Portugal.



At Vilnius University, the Institute of Foreign Languages hosted Prof. Dr. Habil Michał B. Paradowski from the University of Warsaw. His lecture **“Living Between Languages: The Strengths, Struggles, and Surprises of Multilingualism”** was delivered in English to the university community, members of the Language Teachers’ Association of Lithuania, and special guests. The lecture explored the benefits, challenges, and unexpected aspects of multilingualism from psycholinguistic and social perspectives, including issues of language interaction, identity, and communication.

Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of the Association and , Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Vilniaus Kolegija



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija - LKPA

Furthermore, the Foreign Languages Centre of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution contributed to the celebration with an interactive quiz titled **“The Labyrinth of Languages, Cultures, and Time”**. Participants were encouraged to explore the history of languages, test their knowledge, and discover interesting facts about languages and cultures.

As every year, this year’s European Day of Languages celebrations in Lithuania brought together pupils, educators, and language enthusiasts, offering creative, interactive, and inspiring experiences for all.



Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of the Association and **Violeta Žemaitienė**, Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Vilniaus Kolegija



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų
asociacija - LKPA



Tage der deutschen Sprache an der Hochschule Vilnius

Die Tage der deutschen Sprache wurden in Litauen erstmals am 20. Oktober 2016 veranstaltet, mit dem Ziel, das Erlernen der deutschen Sprache zu fördern und ihre Popularität im ganzen Land zu steigern. Seitdem hat sich diese Initiative zu einer jährlichen Tradition entwickelt, die in der dritten Oktoberwoche stattfindet. Während der Veranstaltungen werden vielfältige Aktivitäten rund um die deutsche Sprache und Kultur angeboten, zu denen Gymnasien, Hochschulen, Bibliotheken, Unternehmen und andere Organisationen einladen.

Im Oktober wurde in der Fakultät für Kunst und Design der Hochschule Vilnius die Ausstellung zeitgenössischer deutscher Plakatkunst eröffnet. Die Ausstellung zeitgenössischer deutscher Plakate (insgesamt 90 Werke) zeigte herausragende Arbeiten deutscher Plakatkünstlerinnen und -künstler aus dem letzten Jahrzehnt. Ihre Werke zeichneten sich durch innovative, international anerkannte Designlösungen aus, die zugleich den aktuellen Kunstdiskurs bereichern.

Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Jūratė Patackaitė**, President of
the Association and **Violeta Žemaitienė**,
Lecturer at the Centre of Foreign Languages,
Vilniaus Kolegija



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų
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Gezeigt wurden Arbeiten von Vertreterinnen und Vertretern verschiedener deutscher Schulen und Generationen, die jeweils eigene ästhetische und kommunikative Ansätze verfolgen. Ziel der Ausstellung war es, sowohl die Studierenden und Lehrkräfte unserer Hochschule als auch die interessierte Öffentlichkeit in Vilnius mit dem Genre des zeitgenössischen Plakats vertraut zu machen.

Jedes Jahr freuen wir uns über die deutschsprachigen Veranstaltungen, die von Mitgliedern der Litauischen Sprachlehrervereinigung und Deutschdozentinnen und -dozenten an Universitäten und Hochschulen organisiert werden. Auch dieses Jahr gab es zahlreiche Treffen, kreative Workshops, Wettbewerbe und andere Initiativen, um die Bedeutung des Deutschlernens, die kulturelle Zusammenarbeit und die berufliche Weiterentwicklung in den Mittelpunkt zu stellen.



Online sources for learning languages

NBR, Nordic Baltic Region of FIPLV

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/677820838960243>

<https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/europeandayoflanguages>

https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/translation/european-day-languages-events-2023_en

<https://edl.ecml.at/>

<https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanDayofLanguages/>

<https://www.facebook.com/translationeuropa/>

<https://ihworld.com/news-blog/ih-blog/our-favourite-idioms-from-across-europe/>

<https://europeisnotdead.com/european-nationality-related-idioms/>

<https://www.omniglot.com/language/idioms/index.php>

Language teachers' associations in the Nordic-Baltic region

FINLAND Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto SUKOL RY (SUKOL)
www.sukol.fi

ICELAND Association of Foreign Language Teachers in Iceland
(STIL) FIPLV <http://stil-is.weebly.com>

SWEDEN The Language Teachers' Organization of Sweden
<https://spraklararna.se/>

ESTONIA Eesti Võõrkeeleeõpetajate Liit (EVOL) (Estonian
Association of Foreign Language Teachers)
www.voorkeelteliit.eu

LITHUANIA Language Teachers Association of
Lithuania/Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija (LTAL/LKPA)
<https://lkpa.vdu.lt>

LATVIA The Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE)
<https://late.lv/>

NORWAY Norwegian Association for Teachers of German

Have a colourful School year!



The Newsletter #3 September 2025 is issued by:
Outi Vilkuna, NBR President, Finland
NBR Secretary Asterija Rudienė, Lithuania

Photographs used are from the Associations' archives and free on-line resources.



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join us

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43