



International Federation of Language Teacher Associations  
Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes

# The Nordic-Baltic Region

## Electronic Newsletter No.4

### (December 2019)

#### PRESIDENT's Note



Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, Iceland

**It's Christmas once again with all the wonderful things it brings and a time to rest and enjoy the Christmas spirit.**

**The autumn has rushed by with all kinds of events, such as the European Day of Languages, the Celebration of associations anniversaries, changes of associations leaders and continuation of preparations for the NBR conference 2020 in Reykjavík, Iceland.**

The Icelandic Association STIL has accepted numerous abstracts in various languages. It promises to be an exciting event filled with presentations and discussions on the themes mentioned in the call for papers. The homepage of the conference has been updated and the new version will also be available on our Facebook site. It will be so very valuable to meet up in person and discuss matters that are of importance and learn from each other. These matters do not just concern us language teachers and researchers, but a much wider public. The themes of the conference coincide with our concerns when it comes to dealing with the educational authorities and their often-dwindling interest in furthering language learning and teaching in schools.

Languages do matter and one very important contribution to society is that by promoting language learning, we are giving our learners the key to a better understanding of others and that can only be a good thing.



**Greetings from the Members of the Executive  
Committee of the International Federation of  
Foreign Languages Teachers (FIPLV - Fédération  
Internationale des Professeurs de Langues  
Vivantes)**



Official picture of the members of the FIPLV Ex.Co. in Konin (Poland), 07.09.19 .  
Miroslaw Pawlak, Judith Richters, Terry Lamb and Sylvia Velikova.

**To colleagues around the world, we wish you all a peaceful  
Christmas with many blessings to count.**

# **The European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe**

## **25th Anniversary Conference "Languages at the Heart of Learning: 25 Years of Inspiring Innovation" (Graz, Austria, 5-6 December 2019)**

On 5 and 6 December 2019 the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe organised a high-level conference to celebrate its 25th anniversary (as well as the Council of Europe's 70th anniversary) and reflect on the important contribution made by the Centre to the field of language education. The event also showcased the results of the ECML's current programme - Languages at the heart of learning - and launched the next programme 2020-23 - Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences.

The conference combined plenary sessions more focused on key political challenges related to language education, with break-out sessions where particular aspects of language education were examined in greater detail, including the range of tools and capacity-building activities organised by the Centre to help bridge the gap between policy and practical implementation.

A Conference Declaration with the dual aims of highlighting the key contribution of quality language education to democratic societies and acknowledging the challenges that need to be addressed was discussed at the conference, with a final version to be issued in early 2020. As such, the Declaration could pave the way for a Council of Europe Recommendation on Quality Language Education.

In total around 210 participants attended the conference and its dedicated sign languages event. Over 1,600 viewers also followed the event via livestream.

We encourage you to visit this website for more detailed information:

<https://www.ecml.at/Events/Conference2019/tabid/4266/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

# FIPLV NBR Conference 2020 in Reykjavík, Iceland.



Dr. Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir, President of STÍL (Association of Language Teachers).

The Association of Language Teachers in Iceland (STÍL) has enjoyed a fruitful semester, marked by a variety of activities. Firstly, in collaboration with the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of Foreign Languages, celebrating the European Day of Languages. Secondly, also in collaboration with the SVF, organizing three specialized workshops, specific topics - all within the realms of didactics and language learning and teaching.

However, most of our energy has been invested in necessary reparation for the conference Future of Languages, to take place in Reykjavík, Iceland, 11 - 12 June 2020. Call for papers was published in early fall and by 1 December we had received over 70 proposals. Selection groups were assembled, and the proposals evaluated. Acceptance letters have already been submitted to the future presenters at the conference. Furthermore, we have by now organized our home page and registration place that will become active by 1 January 2020. The basic fee is 90 euros for early registration to later become 120 euros. Student registration is 50 euros. Included are administrative costs, housing, coffees and light lunches both days, programs, etc. I kindly ask that you keep up with our home page <https://vigdis.hi.is/en/events/fiplv-nbr-conference/> were you find all relevant information.

The two guest speakers are: Dr. Ofelia García (<https://ofeliagarcia.org/>), Professor Emerita, City University of New York and Dr. Sara Breslin, Executive Director, at the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), in Graz, Austria (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/ecml>). Both will give their talks at 10 o'clock in the morning while four or five panels will then run simultaneously throughout the two days. We estimate to have the first draft of the program ready by the end of January 2020. Looking forward to seeing you in 2020.

For specific consultations please write to: [foflanguages@hi.is](mailto:foflanguages@hi.is)

## Experience of FIPLV Colleagues from Slovenia. Languages for Specific Purposes-LSP Teacher Training Summer School TRAILS



Denis Cunningham AM, FIPLV Honorary Counsellor; Mateja Dostal, University of Ljubljana, TRAILS; Violeta Jurkovič, University of Ljubljana, TRAILS; Darja Mertelj, University of Ljubljana, TRAILS; Saša Podgoršek, University of Ljubljana, TRAILS



## Background

At the final session of the First International Conference of the Slovene Association of LSP Teachers in Rimske Terme (Slovenia) on 20 May 2017, in informal exchanges of views between Marie-Christine Deyrich from the University of Bordeaux, Violeta Jurkovič from the University of Ljubljana, and Denis Cunningham, FIPLV Honorary Counsellor, it became apparent that (1) the job-market demand exceeds the supply for competent teachers of LSP; (2) there are almost no formal/substantial teacher education courses for LSP in the EU; and (3) there is a mismatch between foreign/second language teachers for general or specific purposes who do not have sufficient professional knowledge and/or professional competences related to their LSP teaching in various disciplines, and their actual job-demands as LSP teachers.

## Erasmus+ project TRAILS

To address the issue of LSP teacher education and skills development, a two-year project titled "LSP Teacher Training Summer School (TRAILS)", co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, was launched in 2018. The eight partners involved in the TRAILS project are the University of Bordeaux ESPE (France), Univerza v Ljubljani (Slovenia), Universidad De Cadiz (Spain), Jade Hochschule (Wilhelmshaven, Germany), Uniwersytet Im. Adama Mickiewicza W Poznaniu (Poznan, Poland), Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Fakultet strojarstva i brodogradnje (Zagreb, Croatia), Università degli Studi di Bergamo (Italy), and Arcola Research Llp (United Kingdom). More information is available here: <http://trails.inspe-bordeaux.fr> .



First TRAILS partner meeting in 2018 in Bordeaux.

# LSP Teacher Training Summer School

Because the problems identified cannot merely be dealt with on a regional basis, the partners involved are contributing to the design of new LSP teacher training programmes on a transnational collaborative basis. The TRAILS project consists of the following phases: 1) review of existing LSP higher education teacher training programmes in different European countries and identification of good educational practices; 2) identification of teachers' needs; 3) identification of gaps between the provision of LSP teacher training and teachers' needs, definition of training objectives, topic areas and outcomes of the TRAILS Summer School; 4) design of a programme for LSP teacher training, 5) implementation, organization and evaluation of a pilot summer school for pre-service and in-service LSP teachers. The implementation of the programme will take place in September 2020 during the LSP teacher training summer school in Zagreb, Croatia.

## LITHUANIA

### The 3rd Spanish Language Forum



Almantė Meškausienė, president of Language Teachers Association of Lithuania  
(LKPA)( [www.lkpa.vdu.lt](http://www.lkpa.vdu.lt))



The 3rd Spanish Language Forum (Foro de español en Kaunas) took place in November 30, at VMU. This year's international event brought together over fifty Spanish speakers from around the world. The purpose of the forum was to highlight the importance and increasing popularity of the Spanish language in Lithuania and to provide opportunities for Spanish speakers from Lithuania and other countries to share ideas, research findings, and discuss the latest language teaching / learning methods. The forum program included scientific presentations, workshops and discussions.

Seven lecturers were invited from Spain, Ireland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania to present the latest trends in Spanish language teaching, translation and other areas. This year special attention was paid to the usage of smart technologies in the language teaching / learning process. Pep Hernandez, researcher at Complutense University in Madrid, discussed perspectives for developing digital competencies, and Cristina Garcia Sanchez, a lecturer at the National University of Ireland, author of Spanish textbooks, hosted a workshop. In addition, Forum participants listened to presentation on the book translation, presentations on Spanish for specific purposes (sports, literature) and attended a workshop on Spanish cinema.

The 3rd Spanish Language Forum in Kaunas was organized by the M. de Cervantes Spanish Language and Culture Club in cooperation with the VMU Institute of Foreign Languages and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain in Lithuania.



# Die Rolle der Lehrkraft beim Testen, Prüfen und Evaluieren

## ÜBERLEGUNGEN NACH DEM SEMINAR DES GOETHE-INSTITUTS „PRÜFEN UND TESTEN“



Regina Mačiuitienė, Die Rolle der Lehrkraft beim Testen, Prüfen und Evaluieren  
ÜBERLEGUNGEN NACH DEM SEMINAR DES GOETHE-INSTITUTS

Aufgrund der Teilnahme unseres Sprachenzentrums am EU-Programm Erasmus+ hatte ich die Möglichkeit, im August 2019 am Seminar des Goethe-Instituts „Testen und Prüfen“ in München teilzunehmen. Das Seminar wurde von der Referentin aus Prag, Frau Barbara Breslau geleitet. Eine aktive Fortbildungswoche in München und einige danach folgende Monate meiner beruflichen Tätigkeit als DaF-Lehrerin und als Prüferin des Goethe-Instituts am Public Service Language Centre in Vilnius haben mich dazu angeregt, meine Erkenntnisse mit den Kolleginnen und Kollegen in der Zeitschrift Miteinander zu teilen.

„Bist du im Deutschunterricht ein Zauberer oder eine Managerin? Oder vielleicht ein Gärtner? Oder eher ein Dompteur?“ – so provozierend lautete eine der ersten Fragen der Seminarreferentin. Mit diesen Metaphern setze ich mich auch jetzt auseinander: was ist meine Rolle im Deutschunterricht? Alles perfekt zu organisieren, sozusagen, zu managen? Oder meinen „Garten“ sorgsam und mit Liebe zu pflegen und zu beobachten, wie die Pflanzen gedeihen? Manchmal fühle ich mich wie ein Clown oder Schauspieler,

manchmal finde ich in meiner Tasche einen imaginären Zuckerwürfel für die bravsten Lernenden, und diejenigen, die nicht so brav sind, werden bestraft... Wenn es ums Prüfen und Testen geht, wird diese Frage noch wichtiger, denn bei der Bewertung der Leistungen werden die Lernenden sensibler. Wir, die Bewertenden, sollen dagegen objektiv bleiben und sowohl Lob als auch Tadel vermeiden. Was ist eigentlich meine Rolle beim Beurteilen im Unterricht, bei der Prüfungsvorbereitung oder bei der Durchführung der Prüfung? Was ist dabei zu beachten? Wie kann ich den Lernenden helfen, möglichst stressfrei die Sprachkompetenzen zu erwerben?

**Begriffliche Festlegungen.** Bevor wir auf einzelne Kontexte des Prüfer- bzw. des Lehrerverhaltens beim Beurteilen der Sprachkompetenzen eingehen, muss der Unterschied zwischen den Begriffen Prüfen, Testen und Evaluieren geklärt werden. In der Fachliteratur (Grotjahn, Kleppin, 2017, 15) werden die Begriffe ‚Prüfen‘ und ‚Testen‘ oft synonym verwendet. Wie meine eigene Erfahrung aber zeigt, wird öfter von Prüfungen gesprochen, wenn es um standardisiertes und anerkanntes Bewerten von Sprachkompetenzen geht (z. B. Abiturprüfungen, die Prüfungen des Goethe-Instituts etc.). Tests werden in der Regel im Laufe des Lernprozesses durchgeführt, ihre Resultate spielen gewöhnlich eine geringere Rolle und in den meisten Fällen können sie nur einzelne kleinere Fortschritte im Lernprozess nachweisen. Der dritte Begriff: ‚Evaluieren‘ gilt als Oberbegriff für ‚Prüfen‘ und ‚Testen‘, so Grotjahn (ebd.), und umfasst sowohl formelle Prüfungen und Tests als auch eine informelle Fremd-, Selbst- und Peer-Evaluation.

**Funktionen des Testens, Prüfens und Evaluierens aus zwei Perspektiven.** Das Überprüfen von sprachlichen Leistungen auf verschiedene Art und Weise gehört zu dem Alltag jeder Lehrkraft. Es ist aber wichtig, sich immer bewusst zu machen, welche Ziele wir mit einem Evaluationsinstrument verbinden und welche Folgen das haben kann. Im Seminar des Goethe-Instituts haben sich die Teilnehmenden darüber auseinandergesetzt, mit welchen Zielen konkrete Evaluationsmaßnahmen eingesetzt werden, welche Funktionen sie haben und wie das auf die Emotionen und die Motivation der Lernenden auswirken kann. ‚Prüfen‘, ‚Testen‘ und ‚Evaluieren‘ können verschiedene Funktionen erfüllen, die sich oft überschneiden. Grotjahn und Kleppin (ebd., S. 13) unterscheiden darunter folgende Funktionen: Diagnose, Förderung, Einstufung, Erkennen von Fortschritten, Feststellung des Erreichens von Lernzielen, curricularen Vorgaben etc., Auslese und Zulassung, Erstellen einer Rangordnung, Vergabe von Noten, Vergleich mit anderen Lerngruppen, Rückmeldung an die Lehrenden, Lernenden oder auch an die Eltern und andere Interessierte, Motivierung der Lernenden, Disziplinierung, Entwicklung diagnostischer und reflektiver Kompetenzen. Diese Funktionen sollen eine Antwort darauf geben, warum im Unterricht geprüft und evaluiert wird. Aus der Perspektive der Lernenden sind die Prüfungen und Tests wichtig, weil sie den eigenen Leistungsstand bzw. die eigenen

Lernfortschritte erkennen lassen, man entwickelt dazu auch eigene diagnostische und reflexive Kompetenzen (insbesondere wenn eine Selbstevaluation eingesetzt wird) – das spielt beim autonomen Lernen eine wichtige Rolle. In anderen Fällen ermöglicht ein Zertifikat (z. B. das Goethe-Zertifikat, das DSD II oder ein gut abgelegter TestDaF) eine erfolgreiche Bewerbung um eine Arbeitsstelle bzw. um einen Studienplatz – häufig ist dieses Ziel mit großem Leistungsdruck und eher negativen Emotionen verbunden. Die Aufgabe der Lehrkraft wäre es dann, zu klären, mit welchen Emotionen ihre Lernenden die Prüfungs- und Evaluationssituationen verbinden, welche Auswirkung auf ihren emotionalen Zustand das hat – und dementsprechend den weiteren Lernprozess zu gestalten.

Rahmenbedingungen für das Prüfen, Testen und Evaluieren. Im heutigen Fremdsprachenunterricht „steht nicht mehr das reine Sprachwissen, sondern das Sprachkönnen im Vordergrund“ (Grotjahn, Kleppin, 2017, 16). Das bedeutet, dass die Lernenden beim Fremdsprachenlernen mit den Aufgaben konfrontiert werden, die entweder in ihrem realen Leben aktuell sind oder zukünftig (z. B. beim Studium oder im beruflichen Leben) eine Rolle spielen könnten. Die Handlungs- und Kompetenzorientierung, d.h. der Bezug auf das reale soziale Leben, soll eine zentrale Rolle sowohl im Unterricht als auch in jeder Prüfungspraxis spielen. Bei der Bewertung der Prüfungsleistungen ist in diesem Zusammenhang der kommunikative Erfolg entscheidend. Dazu braucht man natürlich angemessene sprachliche Mittel, die aber nicht als isolierte Grammatik- bzw. Lexik-Aufgaben eingeführt werden sollen. Dieser Standpunkt spiegelt sich sehr gut bei den produktiven Prüfungsaufgaben (Module Schreiben und Sprechen) des Goethe-Instituts (Übungsmaterialien des Goethe-Instituts, 2019) wider: unter den gesamten Bewertungskriterien beim Modul Sprechen Goethe-Zertifikat B1 beträgt z. B. das Kriterium „Strukturen“ (Morphologie und Syntax) nur maximal 20 Prozent der gesamten Punktzahl. Das sollte auch bei der Gestaltung von eigenen Testaufgaben nicht vergessen werden. Die anderen nicht weniger wichtigen Kriterien sind hier Erfüllung der Sprachfunktionen, Interaktion, Wortschatz und Register, die Aussprache und Kohärenz – alles, was zu einem erfolgreichen Handeln im realen Leben beitragen kann.

Den ganzen Artikel finden Sie unter

[https://ldv.lt/images/PDF/Miteinander/2019\\_Herbst/Miteinander\\_online\\_19\\_2\\_Nr\\_59.pdf](https://ldv.lt/images/PDF/Miteinander/2019_Herbst/Miteinander_online_19_2_Nr_59.pdf)

# ESTONIA

## **Celebrating the 10th Anniversary- Looking Back and Moving Forward at Full Speed.**



Ene Peterson, Chair of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers

**The Estonian Association of Foreign Language teachers (EAFLT) celebrated its 10th anniversary on 22 and 23 November in Tartu at Dorpat Convention Centre. On 5 December 2009 EAFLT was founded in Tartu, in the City of Good Thoughts. The founders were the Association of Teachers of German, the Association of Estonian as a Second Language and the Association of Teachers of Finnish (we started with 300 members). By today three more language associations have joined our umbrella organizations and the number of members (including individual members) reaches up to 700.**

**This year approximately 200 participants (teachers and partners ) from all over Estonia attended our conference: teachers of English, Estonian, German, Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Italian, Latvian, French, Japanese; the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, Foundation Archimedes, Foundation Innove, the Integration Foundation in Tallinn and Narva,**

Tallinn University, the University of Tartu, the French Institute in Tallinn, Education USA Advising Centre, Goethe Institut, Deutsches Kulturinstitut Tallinn.

The first day of the conference was more academic: welcome and opening speeches, presentation in the event of the year of the Estonian year and the opportunities for the professional development of teachers, forum on the topic "The present state of teaching foreign languages and the preparation of foreign language teachers".



We had a guest speaker - Susanna Slivensky, the Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes of European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML). She gave a plenary speech "Teaching foreign languages in the 21st century - challenges, opportunities and pathways for action". The key message of the presentation was that teaching foreign languages in the 21st century is about building bridges. Building bridges is a challenge. Building bridges offers opportunities. Building bridges opens pathways for action. Susanna Slivensky pointed out an important role of the teachers. Teachers are experts for building bridges between policy and practice; they are familiar with good practice examples for innovation and, as effective networkers and members of associations, they influence reforms. No doubt these are idealistic and limited perspectives on the role of teachers - but maybe they are worth exploring.



The first day ended with a cultural programme which included visiting an exhibition „Echo of the Urals “in the Estonian National Museum. The fascinating exhibition offered an in-depth look into the customs and history of said subgroup, known as the Finno-Ugric peoples. The excursions were conducted in Estonian, English and Russian (all together 4 groups with 100 people). The excursion was followed by the reception in the Estonian National Museum.

On the second day of the conference the participants could visit five parallel sessions on the following topics:

- 1) From teachers to teachers (workshops in English, German, Russian, Estonian and Finnish prepared by the member organizations);
- 2) Teachers in the role of the learners: language classes. The participants could experience the feelings of a language learner while starting learning a new language, e.g. Japanese, Latvian, Swedish, Italian and Spanish;
- 3) From a specialist .to a teacher (workshops, talks): teaching adults, the teachers as researchers, language immersion, alternative assessment;
- 4) International examinations for teachers of English, German, French and Russian.



**Our Association received support for the preparation and implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) project "An International Examination "during the period from 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2020. At the conference the teachers could attend seminars, visit study centers, talk to the representatives of the examination centres and teachers who had already passed an international examination.**

**The conference ended with a Language Fair where the participants could visit 13 study centres. During two conference days we had all together 50 speakers who made our conference to happen and to be a success.**





**BUT ...we cannot rest on laurels. In 2020 new events and activities await us: elections of a new board, regional seminars, a round table, FIPLV/ NBR 2020 conference, summer and autumn conferences.**

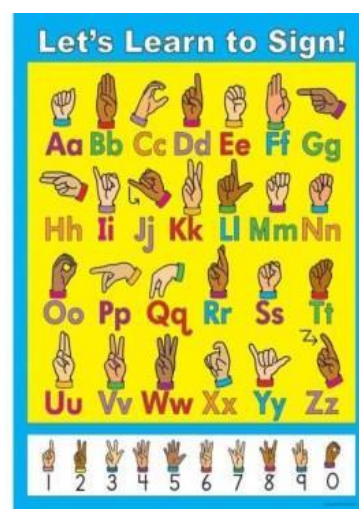
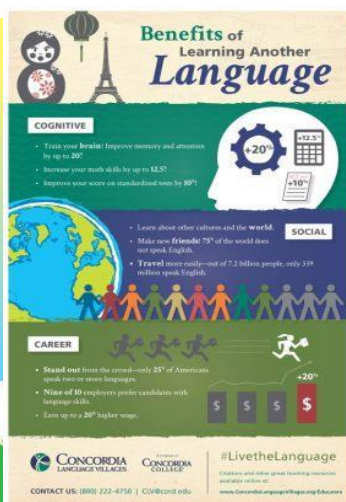
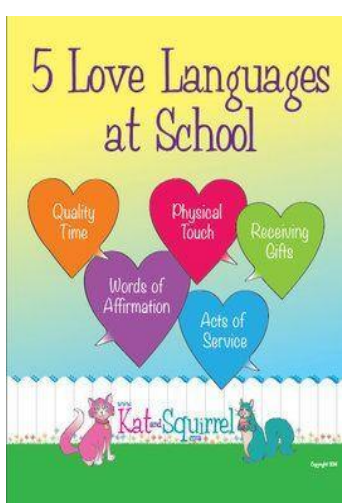
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## POSTERS are Widely Used by Teachers

Useful information is available here:

<https://www.internationalposter.com/a-brief-history-of-the-poster/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poster>



## От учителя к учителю: делимся опытом



Aleksandra Novashevskaja. Kallavere secondary school. Russian as a foreign teacher and chair person of Russian Language Teachers Community of Estonia (RTCE).

**Цифровая грамотность – одна из важнейших составляющих эстонской системы образования. Каждый учитель-предметник в том или ином объеме использует информационно-коммуникативные технологии на своих уроках, поэтому проблема компетентности педагога всегда актуальна.**

**Общество преподавателей русского языка и литературы Эстонии и его члены открыты для всего нового, готовы учиться и переобучаться. Мы уверены, что обмен опытом в формате «От учителя к учителю» – лучший способ освоить новые знания и научиться применять их на практике.**



**В декабре в стенах гимназии ARTE прошел первый этап обучения «Информационно-коммуникативные технологии на уроках русского языка».**

Под руководством опытного педагога Лилии Булай наши коллеги учились создавать анимированные видеоролики, которые помогли бы облегчить ученикам освоение трудной русской грамматики или сделали бы процесс изучения лексики эффективнее и веселее. Ценность неформального обучения состояла и в том, что каждый учитель не только получил готовый продукт, но и смог научиться создавать его в привычном для себя темпе, постоянно получая помощь и поддержку опытного коллеги.

В январе участники обучения научатся создавать опросы на платформах VideoAnt, Play Posit, H5P, а в феврале – виртуальные квест-комнаты и аналогичные им игры.

## EATE Autumn Seminar 2019



Ilmar Anvelt, EATE Committee member

The Estonian Association of Teachers of English (EATE) has kept up the tradition of organising two events annually – our summer seminars in the resort town of Pärnu on the Baltic coast and autumn seminars in Tartu in Central Estonia. This year's autumn seminar took place on 25 October in the rooms of Miina Härma Gymnasium, which has usually been the venue of our autumn events.

This time's presentations by local speakers concerned preparation for exams, teaching of writing and the e-schoolbag, a web-based learning environment. There were also guest speakers from the US and the UK.

As learning Scottish folk dances proved to be very popular at our summer seminar, we asked our committee member Kristi Jalukse to arrange a session this time as well.

A usual feature of our seminars is book sales where several booksellers offer both educational literature (textbooks, grammars, dictionaries, books on methodology) and books of fiction, calendars, posters, etc.

Our next event will be the summer seminar in Pärnu on 24–25 August 2020.

Photos: Christiana Osan (UK) spoke about special educational needs and motivational activities. A lively Scottish folk dance.



## Greetings from Finland



Outi VILKUNA, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland SUKOL, newly elected chair. ( [https://www.sukol.fi/in\\_english](https://www.sukol.fi/in_english) )

Our organization has been active monitoring the availability and spectrum of early onset Foreign Language learning implementation in Finland. We are most disappointed in learning that only 1/3 of the educational organisers are offering other language(s) than English as the early onset Foreign Language whereas the aim of this new curricula was to broaden the palette of languages studied since Primary School. Connected to this is also the fact that Primary School Foreign Language teaching seems more and more to be handed to class teachers and not subject teachers. Class teachers do not necessarily have adequate studies in the language that they are then allegedly teaching to their young pupils. The Federation of Foreign Languages Teachers in Finland has made an appeal on this matter to the ombudsman of the Finnish Parliament. We are still waiting for the response. From the beginning of 2020 a National Educational Policy Report will be launched and we aim to strongly take part in it in an attempt to raise awareness on the plight of Foreign Languages learning and teaching at present and find emergency means to improve their state.

Our organization had its annual autumn general assembly on November 23rd, 2019 and Olli-Pekka Lindgren (Turku University Foreign Languages Center) was awarded The Foreign Languages Teacher of the Year 2019 including a 1000 euro grant donated by SanomaPro. We want to emphasize the meaningful work done within Universities and other institutions offering Foreign Languages' studies. Jaakko Laaksonen was handed the FIPLV Award for his extensive merits in the digitalisation of Foreign Languages' teaching and sharing his knowledge to his peers by working as a digital teaching trainer e.g. including our Abitti system (linked to the digital matriculation examination). At the general assembly Sanna Karppanen left her position as the chair of the organization after three years of valuable work and Outi Vilkuna was elected the new chair for 2020-2022 from two candidates presented by the member organizations. More detailed information is available here:

[https://www.sukol.fi/ajankohtaista/outi\\_vilkuna\\_sukolin\\_puheenjohtajaksi.2472.news](https://www.sukol.fi/ajankohtaista/outi_vilkuna_sukolin_puheenjohtajaksi.2472.news)

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On behalf of NBR team we would like to thank SUKOL chair Sanna Karppanen for participation in NBR activities. Thank you for supporting us, for providing information. We wish you success in professional career and your personal life.

We wish Outi VILKUNA success in leading SUKOL. Thank you for your articles sent to be published in NBR Newsletters, your professionalism, cooperation, for providing Nordic and Baltic region teacher communities the opportunity to learn from your valuable experience in Finland.

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## CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS and TRADITIONS in NORDIC and BALTIC Countries

### Christmas Traditions in Scandinavia:

<https://www.tripsavvy.com/christmas-traditions-events-in-scandinavia-4178656>

<https://travelsim.com/the-most-magical-nordic-countries-for-a-christmas-trip/>

<https://www.fiftydegreesnorth.com/article/which-scandinavian-christmas-markets-to-visit>

### Christmas Traditions in the Baltics:

<https://www.eesti.pl/christmas-traditions-in-estonia-1369.html>

<https://www.balticrun.com/funny-lithuanian-traditions/>

<https://www.tripsavvy.com/latvia-christmas-traditions-1501730>

<http://www.truelithuania.com/topics/culture-of-lithuania/holidays-celebrations>

**More about Santa Claus:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa\\_Claus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Claus)

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Santa-Claus>

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