



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

# The Nordic-Baltic Region

## Electronic Newsletter No.2 (June 2020)

### PRESIDENT's Note



Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, NBR President, Iceland.

Dear Colleagues, it is finally here, our Summer Newsletter with interesting contributions from all over the NBR region. The Newsletter concentrates on reports from teachers and Associations on how they dealt with the situation and what they learned. This winter turned out to be tough, as the Corona Virus effected our lives in so many ways. Now countries are opening their borders again and everyday life is slowly returning to the normality we knew before the

pandemic. But perhaps not everything will go back to how it was or used to be. During this period teachers had to adapt to new ways of teaching. Instead of going to school and meeting pupils and colleagues in person, they suddenly had to deal with matters through the internet in various ways. We were not all of us prepared for this. It took quite a lot of rethinking for many of us. Many teachers had to teach their lessons on-line, which took a lot more preparation time and was more exhausting than to teach on site, not to mention the workload of having to go through a lot more assignments after the lessons. The workload was more, not only for teachers but also for pupils. You cannot attend to the different needs in the same way, as you can in school. Some schools were quick to grasp the new situation and were able to give valuable help with on-line access to different programs and how to use them. It was also a question of pupils' access to hardware and how to use the different programs. Teachers had to rethink their ways of teaching. How will it be next autumn? Will we change our methods and emphasis, did we discover something which is better done through computer than in class?

## **INFORMATION from European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe**



Sarah BRESLIN, Executive Director

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) of the Council of Europe is pleased to announce the completion in both English and French of its CEFR- QualiMatrix resource website "A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use"

([www.ecml.at/CEFRqualitymatrix](http://www.ecml.at/CEFRqualitymatrix) ), an output of the ECML programme “Languages at the heart of learning” (2016-2019).

The CEFR-QualiMatrix supports teachers and other language education professionals in engaging in curriculum renewal supported by the CEFR action-oriented approach vision of teaching and learning.

Alongside the matrix tool, the website provides a rich collection of resources and promising practices that can be used by different stakeholders at the levels of policy, curriculum development, teaching and assessment.

We would be grateful if you could use your networks to spread the word about this new publication. We believe that particularly in these challenging times, the resources and ideas provided on this platform will give professionals inspiration and help them foster effective language learning.

## Challenges for the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers



Ene Peterson, chairperson of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers

The year 2020 started for our Association with an extended Board meeting on January 24 when we formed four working groups and made great plans for the ongoing year. The working groups started to deal with the following tasks:

- 1) making amendments to the Statutes of the Association
- 2) the sustainable development of the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language
- 3) the preparation of the annual meeting and elections of a new Board; 3) the preparation of a regional seminar and an autumn conference
- 4) making the EAFLT and its member associations more visible. We were ready to face all kind of challenges in the name of the realisation of our plans and raising the work of our Association at a higher level.

On February 25 we organized a training day for the teachers of Estonian as a second Language in cooperation with Tallinn and Narva Estonian Houses. The aim of the training day was to introduce the activity of the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language and involve teachers in the discussion of the future developments of teaching Estonian as a second language and the role of teacher associations. The programme included also three workshops on the following topics: teacher-student motivational synergy, ideas for conducting inspiring and captivating lessons, and online resources for teaching Estonian.

At the beginning of February and March we had two training days with European Centre for Modern languages (ECML) experts. The first training day PluriMobil: Plurilinguage and intercultural learning through mobility took place on February 6-7.

BUT ... when we least expect it, life sets us challenge to test our courage and readiness to be adaptable to new situations. We were happy to conduct the second ECML training day just before the outbreak of coronavirus, on 5-7 March on the topic Exploring ways to test mediation and Pluricultural /plurilingual skills in the classroom.

We had to cancel ESF project "An International examination" training day for the teachers of English and Russian on April 20. Our three-year project should end on September 30, 2020.

But now there is possibility ,and we shall apply for the extension of the project finish date for 24 more months.

As language educators switched to remote teaching and learning, then we decided to conduct our annual meeting as a virtual meeting on June 9. Initially it was planned as a two day-event with an extended Board meeting and workshops to be conducted in Pärnu (our summer capital) at Strand spa-hotel.

I was extremely excited while preparing for the virtual meeting because there were four important issues on the agenda: the approval of an annual 2019 report, the approval of amendments to The Statues, the elections of the new Board and the approval of an activity plan 2020/2021 .

It came out that we can be quite flexible in crisis and adaptable to new situations. We managed effectively with all issues on the agenda. We approved the annual report and amendments to the Statutes, we planned to conduct a regional seminar on 12 September in Kohtla-Järve and our 6th autumn conference on 27 November in Tallinn.

AND ...we elected a new Board. I continue as a chairperson of the Association. As concerns me, the foundation of the EAFLT and being a chair of the association for the last ten years has been an integral part of my life - facing and overcoming challenges, meeting inspiring colleagues from all over the world, becoming more tolerant and better at people, negotiat-ing and organisational skills. But I cannot change alone anything.

Teamwork makes dreams work. The strength of the team is each individual member. I have great team members: Kati Bakradzre (Estonian Association of Teachers of English), Karola Velberg (Estonian Association of Teachers of Finnish), Leena Möls (Estonian Association of Teachers of Russian as a Foreign Language), Ingrid Prees (Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language), Marika Peekmann (Estonian Association of Teachers of German) and Helina Puksmann (Estonian Association of Teachers of Swedish).

# **Estonian Teachers of English and the Corona Crisis**



**Ilmar Anvelt, EATE Committee member**

**On 16 March 2020, all schools in Estonia were closed, as the government had declared a state of emergency. It is often considered that, because of the generally high level of the computerised society, Estonia was better prepared for distance learning during the corona pandemic than several other countries. Several problems appeared, nonetheless. Teachers say that some students studied better and more than ever - obviously, those who were at a higher level anyway, who had better computer skills and who came from families with good parental support. Some others, however, lost any kind of contact with the school during the crisis. The same could be said about teachers - some were snowed under with work, giving contact lessons on Zoom, searching for additional materials that could be placed on the web, answering children's questions and giving feedback to their work. Others gave merely page numbers of exercises to be done. Some parents complained that, in addition to doing their own work from home, they had to take over the role of the teacher. Here, again, the attitudes were different. I know a teacher who said to her class, "Don't torture your parents, if you have questions, ask me." Most families in Estonia have computers at home. The state of emergency, however, revealed that there were also some who had not. Moreover, although the family had a computer, the situation became difficult when the parent(s) had to work from home, and they had perhaps several children and only one computer for the whole family. Therefore,**



a campaign called "A computer for every schoolchild" was launched on Facebook; people were asked to donate computers they had at home but did not use. For several families, even an old computer that was not working perfectly was of great help.

EATE decided to cancel its Summer Seminar in August. Although the state of emergency is over by now, a lot of preparations should have been done beforehand, which was difficult in the situation of uncertainty. In particular, it was impossible to invite presenters from abroad. Therefore, we decided to arrange our Autumn Seminar at the regular time in October, but this time with approximately the same programme in both Tartu and Tallinn (usually it took place in Tartu only). Although Tallinn is the capital of Estonia and the largest city, EATE has relatively few members from there. We hope that by arranging the seminar in their hometown, we can increase the number of our members from Tallinn.



## The Greatest Tool of a Teacher is Their Autonomy



Eva Viidemann. Jüri Gymnasium. Russian as a foreign language teacher and chairperson of Estonian Association of Teachers of Russian as a Foreign Language ([www.rki.ee](http://www.rki.ee))

As we were forced to find a corner in our home to turn into a working space, we heard how difficult and straining the new normal is for teachers. For some, the transition was easier than others.

From early on it was important to establish rules of communication with students and parents. Although I am an avid user of Facebook and Messenger, I wanted to keep students away from my personal space and decided on Skype and the school's e-system. I created a dedicated teacher account for Skype and asked my students to do the same. At the end of the day, I could easily turn off notifications and return to them in the morning. When teaching 130 teenagers, that's important because of the difference in daily schedules.

In Estonia, teachers are autonomous in their methods and content. That allows us to choose methods, assignments and materials from various resources or create our own. We were quick to adapt Loom, arrange Google Meet/Zoom, take on Google Classroom - the list goes on. The only limit is teachers' personal creativity. Most of my students liked to draw comics or posters based on texts or as a conclusion for a topic. We uploaded them to a Padlet board and gave peer feedback. Most 14-16 year old pupils loved to have group work even from a distance, this gave them a sense of a classroom, a reason to be in touch. For example, they created a presentation on Russian city of their choice and later did a voiceover.

One of the most time-consuming aspects of being a foreign language teacher is giving feedback. I took great use of Skype's voice messaging option. After having read or heard their submission, I gave my feedback the same way. Voice messaging and recording (such as Vocaroo) gave us the option of communication. Pupils read texts and dialogues either with a classmate or a parent, and answered questions from the text. During these 8 weeks I learned to not hate having to listen to my own voice. It also made checking written assignments less time-consuming: I simply made notes on their work with Snipping Tool and explained them over a voice message.

To make the best of this situation, students could sleep in and choose their own pace for studying. I did my best to give a week's work on Monday, so they could plan their own schedules. In school we meet three times a week, during distance learning just one online lesson proved to be enough to check progress.



Although it was a complicated time for everyone, it was a great experience from a professional point of view. For many of my colleagues the recent course "From teacher to teacher" (От учителя к учителю) by our association was of great help and served as an introduction to this experience. Estonian Association of Teachers of Russian as a foreign language plans to repeat the course for even more teachers in the near future.

The key is to keep in mind it's distance learning not e-learning - not all assignments have to be online or connected to a computer. This was a time to let the student take control of their learning and schedule, most of them thrived.

We had to adjust our plans and adapt to means - just what we expect from our students!



## Special Announcement from STÍL - Association of Teachers of Languages in Iceland



Dr. Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir, President of STÍL

The unfolding corona virus (COVID-19) crisis has significantly affected all our lives in the past few months. As authorities worked to contain the spread of the virus, many national and international events were postponed, and borders

closed. Consequently, the organizers of the conference Future of Languages 2020, due to take place in Reykjavík, Iceland, this June, decided to postpone the event until next summer.

The NBR/FIPLV biannual conference Future of Languages will therefore be held in Reykjavík, Iceland, June 10 and 11, 2021. The published program and registrations will be transferred to the 2021 event and by January 2021, the organizers will re-send the call for papers and request re-confirmation from registered participants who have already paid. Accepted papers will then be transferred to next year's conference program. We regret that it has come to this, but we had to consider participants' health and well-being. We look forward to welcoming you to Iceland in 2021.

For further information please follow <https://vigdis.hi.is/en/events/fiplv-nbr-conference/> and should further clarifications be needed please write to [foflanguages@hi.is](mailto:foflanguages@hi.is)

## A Short Spring 2020 Update from Iceland

In Iceland, the unfolding corona virus (COVID-19) crisis significantly affected all professional activities from mid-March onwards. As stated in the New Yorker some days ago:

"By mid-March, confirmed COVID cases in Iceland were increasing at a rate of sixty, seventy, even a hundred a day. [...] An infected person might have been near five other people, or fifty-six, or more. One young woman was so active before she tested positive—going to classes, rehearsing a play, attending choir practice—that her contacts numbered close to two hundred. All were sent into quarantine."

While politicians stepped back and gave the floor to health officials and national disaster relieve experts the population reacted with respect and general willingness to comply with the sensible and well-argued suggestions and mandates. As pointed out in the beforementioned article: "The remarkable thing in this whole affair is that in Iceland has been run entirely by the public-health

authorities. They came up with the plan, and they just instituted it. And we were fortunate that our politicians managed to control themselves.”

Consequently, all secondary schools and universities were closed, and teachers every-day lives changed overnight. Bringing computers from the work-place to the living-room table, borrowing a comfortable chair from a friend, learning to run new computer programs and attending to endless emails or video calls, while simultaneously running a full load of classes from far, became the norm and every-day practice. On-line teaching became the rule of the day and it happened in a flash.

Most language teachers in Iceland are women - many young women with children. And while primary schools and day-care centers were still partly open most children went to school every other day or a part of the day. Consequently, many teachers taught their full load, partly home-schooled their kids, guided their teenagers and attend their elderly. Quite a task surely, that perhaps was manageable, as according to the Icelandic Surgeon General Mrs. Alda Möller : “We are a nation that’s used to catastrophes. We deal with avalanches, earthquakes, eruptions, and so on.”

As the current president of STÍL, The Icelandic Association of Teachers of Languages, I know that is not the case. It worked because teachers responded with commitment, professional attitudes and pride, knowledge and endless dedication. Their principal target during the pandemic - as always - was to provide first class education for future generations at all levels. Now, that the school year has ended, teachers can hopefully enjoy some time to evaluate the experience, decide what they will take with them into the new school year and future, to then determine what still needs further modification. I truly look forward to hearing about the experiences from elsewhere and stories of best case practices at the conference Future of Languages in June of 2021.

To close, allow me to join forces with Icelandic school authorities and the Minister of Education and express my admiration for language teacher's resourcefulness and devotion. It's been admirable to watch. I surely hope that the extra efforts will be economically recognized and rewarded, as some institutions and school have already indicated.

# LITHUANIA: CHALLENGES and SOLUTIONS



Dr. Almantė Meškauskienė, President of LKPA.

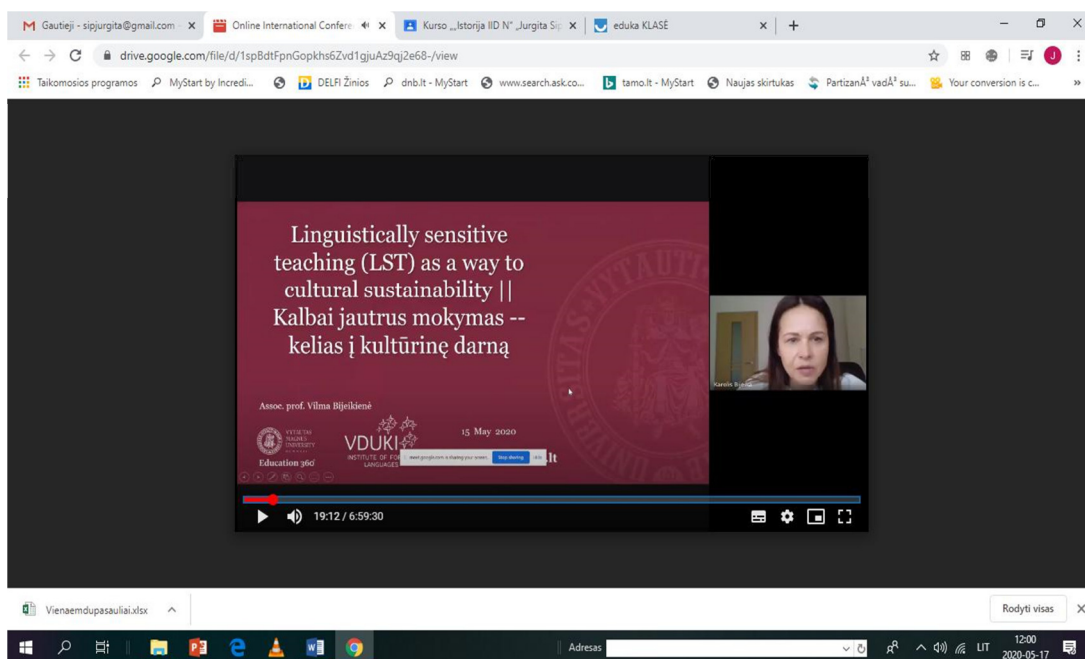
We are privileged to introduce information about LKPA team activities in April - June period. Active members of LKPA Dr. Olga Medvedeva, PSLC director Audrone Auskelienė share our experience and information about various activities in teaching languages in Lithuania during Covid 19 period.

## Vytautas Magnus University

This May is marked by the 4th birthday of the international eTwinning project "The development of intercultural communication skills and their integration into foreign languages and other subjects" / "World universities to schools". There are over 100 participants taking part in this project: art schools, inclusive education establishments, preschools, progymnasiums, primary schools, gymnasiums, professional centres, colleges and universities. The main partner institutions are: Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas r. Juozas Lukša gymnasium and Kaunas kindergarten "Linelis". The partners in eTwinning system are from Albania, Italy and Turkey. The project is innovative and progressive encouraging the upbringing and development of virtues and values as well as sensitivity towards foreign languages learning in non-typical environmental studies under a context of constantly developing and improving organization in an ecological and modern society.

On May 15th, 2020 the 4th eTwinning project conference "The international conference Eco art and culture in the world under the interdisciplinary aspect" took place hosting over 200 participants that agreed to throw a remote

conference challenge. This project was initiated by Kaunas region Garliava Juozas Lukša gymnasium. This event was honoured by the participation of a variety of representatives involving the academic community – VMU Foreign Language institute director assoc.prof. Vilma Bijeikiene, LSU prof. Biruta Svagzdiene, PhD student Paulina Palujanskiene LSU, Kaunas region “Ezerelis” primary school director, assoc.prof. Asta Tamusauskaite, kindergarten “Linelis” director and assoc.prof. Vilda Grybauskiene, teacher of Kaunas professional teaching centre.



Prof.Vilma Bijeikiene,active member of LKPA

In the remote conference the presentations were delivered and experience shared by the Erasmus and international distance learning programmes' students of Vytautas Magnus University, as well as teachers and students from different universities from all around the world (partners of eTwinning project): Malaysia, Turkey, South Korea, Morocco, Italy, Japan, Vietnam, Serbia, Azerbaijan, China, Nepal and India.

The questionnaire, introduced to the conference participants revealed that although everyone has to gain more knowledge on the ethics of remote communication and IT using skills, the format of remote conference is still very convenient. The participants highly valued honest and deep communication between the speakers and participants, high quality and the scale of the. The participants gave a positive evaluation for the variety of presentations (from kindergarten to university levels), the openness to integration and cooperation

between different level institutions. Regarding the technical difficulties, the respondents of the questionnaire strongly believe that these asperities are easily improved, while the quality, variety and the interdisciplinary intercultural diversity was highly appreciated. The participants would gladly participate in a similar event that would last for a few days.

## Teaching a Language Online during the Worldwide Pandemic



Audronė Auskelienė, Director of PSLC [www.vikc.lt](http://www.vikc.lt) , active member of LKPA

While communication competences have always been of crucial importance for professional and personal development, e.g. looking for a new job, climbing the career ladder, etc. - language competences have always been at the top above them all.

Since this spring all the world has been facing the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in lockdown and working or learning from home. Online teaching has revived at the Public Service Language Centre [www.vikc.lt](http://www.vikc.lt) (PSLC, Vilnius, Lithuania) as well, temporally replacing classroom teaching.

This is an interview with the Lithuanian language teaching experts Daiva Stasiulionienė and Neringa Lašienė who kindly agreed to share their experience of teaching Lithuanian language online. They speak about how professionals from



all over the world - Japan, the USA, Canada, Austria, Belgium, the UK, Germany, Finland, Latvia, Belorussia, Italy, Romania, Bosnia Herzegovina etc. - are learning a foreign language during the worldwide pandemic of Covid-19 with the PSLC.



Daiva Mažuolytė, member of LKPA Board

Neringa Lašienė

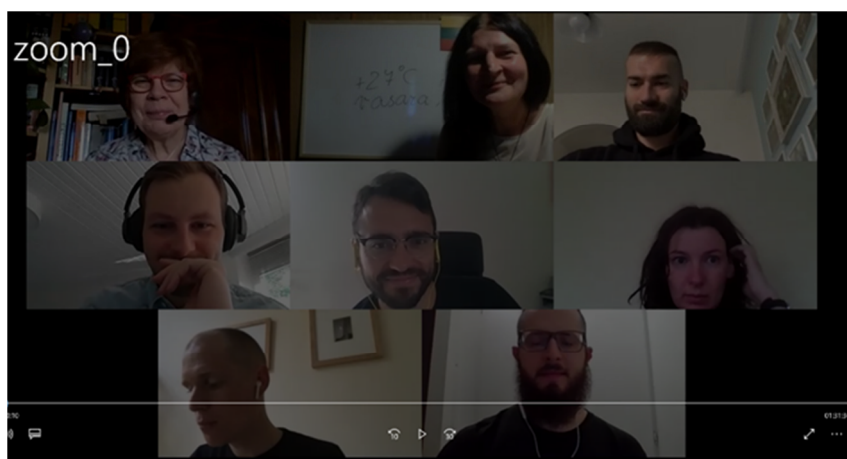
### Why Lithuanian language?

Daiva: I agree, there are so many different languages, so why to choose to learn Lithuanian - a language of such a small nation? I would name several reasons for that. The first one is family bonds: e.g. men (or women) of different nationalities marrying Lithuanian women (or men). Also, the second or third generation of people with Lithuanian "roots" are interested in their ancestors' culture and language. Last but not least, there are historians, journalists, political scientists and linguists - spanning from Japan to the United States of America - who are interested in Eastern European culture.

Neringa: Lithuanian - one of the oldest living languages in Europe - is the key to ancient cultures. In the past people used to believe that by knowing the right word, the proper name, you could control everything and everyone. „Nomen - Omen“, as it is said in Latin. Your name is your fate. By looking back at the meanings, we can better understand the present and build the future. Let's say

everyone knows the word „leader“. „Leader“ is the one who leads, who helps others go. Lithuanian verb „lydėti“ also means „to accompany“ or „go together“.

There are a lot of words serving as keys in Lithuanian. And, last but not least, Lithuania is a beautiful country with wonderful nature and great people. And the best way to get to know it is through its language.



### How different is teaching a language online?

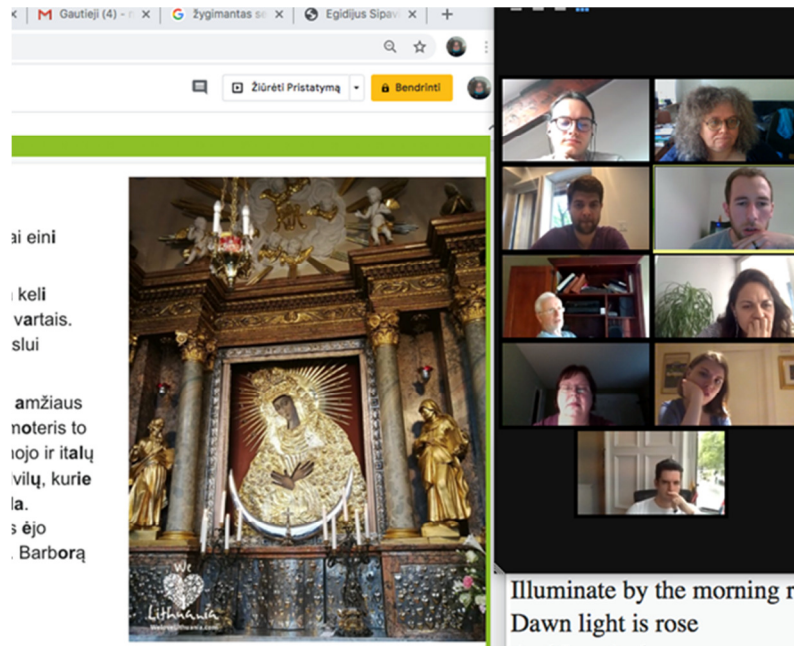
Daiva: Teaching online opens new possibilities to people from distant countries, who admit, that due to the distance, lack of time and financial resources they would have never been able to come to Lithuania to learn the language. Younger adults enjoy learning online, while senior would prefer traditional learning in a classroom. The biggest advantage of online teaching is that it is handy for both the students and me, the teacher, as none of us have to leave home for the lesson. The biggest disadvantage of it is the lack of physical contact, body language, encouraging look, cosy atmosphere (e.g. Usually I enjoy treating my students with my favourite Lithuanian chocolates „Vilnius“ or taking them out to authentic surroundings, what I would have done in the summer school that we had been planning at the Public Service Language Centre this summer, e.g. while teaching Genitive it is really useful to take the students out to read the names of the streets, shops, banks and different goods). To compensate all that the teacher needs to be very thoughtful and sensitive while preparing a package of teaching materials. Besides, preparation for teaching online requires much more time that it would for a traditional classroom lesson. However, my students are really motivated and benevolent - after the first three weeks their progress is visible already.

Neringa: It is a huge difference. Live communication with students can be more responsive to everyone's needs. And it is not only the tongue that matters, but also the whole teacher's body "speaks" in the class. Well... and all these online technologies... Yes, they are great, but it has not been that easy to master those ICT tools. I am just choosing the most handy, the most user-friendly way to present the lesson to my students. What is more, it takes loads of time to prepare the slides for the group as well.

What competences are needed for the teacher who teaches Lithuanian as a foreign language?

Daiva: First of all, in order to teach Lithuanian as a foreign language it is important not only to be an expert of Lithuanian, but also, to know its place in the context of other languages and possess a broad sociocultural outlook (as while learning a new language one gets to know a new culture as well) - students appreciate comparative approach of grammatical and lexical aspects of languages as it helps them learn. Next, intuition plays a really important role in learning process - what examples should be given to teach certain Lithuanian language structures. Also, the teacher needs to be intelligent and creative as even though Lithuanian language has been already taught for several decades, there is shortage of readymade teaching materials - different from the situation for English, German or French language teachers who can easily access to a variety of coursebooks and online links. Therefore, a lot of learning content simply needs to be developed by the teacher for each lesson. I am happy as my English, French and Russian language competences help me communicate with my students. And finally - the ICT skills. Choosing proper ICT tools helps me feel more confident and safer in the lesson.

Neringa: In my opinion, you need to know Lithuanian very well first of all, and have good command of English, so that you could explain things to your students. Also, the teacher should be very creative and pay attention to each student. It requires a lot of playfulness and, of course, patience to listen to the same sentence over and over until the student says it correctly. And yet, you must feel joy while teaching - little by little one starts to understand and speak the language that is native for you!



**How did you prepare for this course? What were/are your students' expectations?**

**Daiva:** Before the course I corresponded with each learner individually, trying to test their language level - there were a few Americans and Italians who already could write several words in Lithuanian, but still, they wanted to start learning from the very beginning, as they wished to learn the language correctly. I was especially touched by the human cultural approach - when young men wish to learn the language of their Lithuanian fiancés or wives as it is important for them to get to know the culture of their beloved through their native language. I see this as a sign of real respect. I am glad that among our students in this online course we have very different professionals from all over the world, such as a Japanese scientist researching Indo-European languages, the future Ambassador of Finland with the Attaché who will be starting their diplomatic mission in Lithuania in several months, a famous BBC journalist, political scientists from Belgium and Germany, professors and scholars from all over the world and many others. Most of them can already speak 5-7 languages and are not going to end up with that.

**Neringa:** A lot of my students are of Lithuanian descent, and they want to learn the language of their ancestors and/or be able to communicate with their relatives in Lithuania. Others want to learn Lithuanian because they consider this language exotic as it is an ancient language. There are students who want to live in Lithuania or they have Lithuanian spouses. I hope that they will enjoy the

lessons of the language they are learning and that they will fall in love with Lithuania!

Do you believe teaching online will be used more often in the future and maybe replace classroom teaching?

Daiva: If only I could choose, I would go for traditional classroom teaching. However, considering this particular course online teaching has served as a breakthrough for obvious reasons as it has opened new possibilities for students from distant countries - they would have never been able to come to Lithuania and learn the language traditionally in classroom. I believe, that even when the threat of pandemic is over the online teaching/learning will still be in demand, maybe even more than it used to be. However, I would discuss whether online teaching will or will not replace classroom teaching. As I have mentioned before, the majority (nine out of ten) learners would not even have come to Lithuania to learn the language in classroom due to the lack of time, financial resources, etc.

Neringa: To my mind, these are two different ways of teaching. Of course, it is a very big convenience that people from all over the world can participate in the same lesson and the teacher can teach them without leaving home. Therefore, I believe, in the future online learning will spread and be used more and more often, leaving live meetings an exceptional luxury.

## What is NEW in LKPA?



Dr.Olga Medvedeva, Member of LKPA Board



The year of 2020 will be remembered for various reasons... Today we are happy to present one of the newest areas of LKPA activities: Last Friday Reading Club for all those who love reading and languages.

Launched in November 2019, the club has been meeting once a month ( two distance meetings during the quarantine) to discuss contemporary authors from all over the world , see more <http://www.lkpa.vdu.lt/category/news/>

For the attention of our Lithuanian readers, we offer the essay by Ina Dągytė Mituzienė inspired by our May reading. You'll find it on LKPA website. The essay gives credit to the author's grasp as well as to the level of the Club discussion.

## News from the Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE)



By Robert Buckmaster, Vice-President LATE

### LATE News

Despite the coronavirus crisis LATE managed to complete a Reading Circle Project. Teachers from eight schools from all over Latvia participated in the project, sponsored by Pearson and LATE and it was free of charge for the participants. Each school received a set of (15+1 books of one title) and was able to use them for a month. The teacher in each school organized the reading



process and then the set of books was posted to the next school in the Reading Circle and so on.

LATE's planned two day Annual Conference in August will now be a one day online conference, our first on-line conference. More information can be found on LATE's website: <http://late.lv/conference.htm>

**Special Report about Teaching Online in a Time of Coronavirus**

**By Robert Buckmaster, Vice-President LATE**

**Note: this is largely a personal, anecdotal view of the recent experiment in online learning - not a definitive, researched report.**

Latvia, with the rest of Europe, went into lockdown on the 13th March and schools were closed as a response to the growing Chinese COVID-19 crisis. As countries floundered in their responses and shut borders, children and teachers were sent home. Luckily, the closure coincided with the half-term holiday in Latvia and only the Year 12 English, German, French and Russian exams had to be postponed (to June as it happens). Teachers had a few days to scramble to get ready to teach online. Individual schools adopted their own e-learning solutions and a variety of responses emerged from the initial confusion.

## **The Solutions and Support**

Some schools opted for asynchronous learning with children sent instructions (and sometimes task answers), or the children had to do the tasks and send the answers to the teachers. This was done through emails, online learning portals like e-klase, and using sharing solutions like Google Drive.

Other schools opted for holding synchronous classes to directly replace face-to-face classes, so some children spent the whole day in lesson after lesson. Each school seemed to have their own preferred option for this - Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Whatsapp etc.

<p>In our school we used jitsi.org platform for making online lessons and consultations as well as teachers' meetings. It worked pretty well, easy to acquire. Ina</p>
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Some schools opted for a mixed option so there was some direct synchronous teaching mixed in with self-study work. The Latvian State also started providing televised lessons ([www.tavaklase.lv](http://www.tavaklase.lv)) for different subjects, including English. School administrators provided support and there was some training organized for teachers, as well as monitoring of lessons by head teachers and by directors of studies in schools.

## **Problems for Teachers**

Some schools merged classes together and teachers found themselves teaching much larger groups of learners despite the fact that in an online situation a teacher's span of control is a lot lower than in a face-to-face situation. Teachers found themselves spending a lot more time preparing lessons, especially if they were asynchronous, and much, much more time responding to learners' problems with learning and marking their work.

There were some creative discussions about the appropriate methodology to use. For example, some teachers delayed providing learners with answers to self-check tasks while others provided them immediately.

## **Problems for Learners**

Many learners who did not have computers or tablets at home were supplied with these by schools. Some learners who theoretically had access to computers or tablets at home did not have access to them all the time and resorted to using their phones. This led to problems opening Word format documents and other files. Some learners were not surfacing until very late in the day and not doing their work on time. Many did not take deadlines very seriously; others just (it seemed) randomly completed the tasks in order to get them done with very little thought for the consequences. For every learner who applied themselves there seemed to be several who did not; they did not read the instructions; they could not find the files in Google Drive; they couldn't open the documents; they returned work incomplete, or didn't return it at all, and so on.

The main problems were perhaps the learners' time management skills (or lack thereof) and a lack of experience in self-directed learning, which is entirely understandable. Teachers spent a lot of time responding to learners' queries and

some schools were able to provide support in schools for learners whose parents could not help.

'From the very beginning we gave homework for every lesson, as the result there was an enormous amount of emails to read and check so we changed the strategy and gave weekly homework assignments' Ina

Generally, the stronger learners did well, the middle ranking learners did ok and the weak learners did very badly. Though, in some cases, some learners who had struggled in a classroom setting found they were able to cope easily in an online setting and flourished.

## Teacher Development

There was teacher development at many levels. Many teachers obviously learned new IT skills. As teachers were required to report on what they were doing and report 'lessons learned', there was learning from their peers' experience. The main development, though, was probably in learning how to structure and encourage largely self-directed learning, for example the importance of the clarity of instructions and the sequencing of tasks. In the classroom things can be explained; on-line, remotely, everything has to be crystal clear. This is especially true when trying to adapt coursebooks designed for classroom use to a more self-directed learning model.

## Lessons Learned

The whole experience showed that there is a 'digital gap' between those with access to technology and those without. Almost everyone has a smart phone but that is not enough. Being able to consume digital products on a phone or tablet is completely different from being able to use apps for learning and creative purposes. We need to take seriously the gap between the rhetoric of the supposed IT skills of the younger generation (digital natives vs digital immigrants) and the reality. Entertainment is one thing; learning and work are another. A proper competency framework will recognize these gaps and work to overcome them by building meaningful practice and production of creative products into the curriculum. We need to move away from a focus on teaching and testing

knowledge of language to a focus on demonstrations of competencies in the language.

The key areas: time management and reading skills, responsibility and self-directed learning skills. Inga

The lessons learned from this experience are many and varied and each individual teacher will draw their own. Anecdotally, it seems that some teachers enjoyed the experience of teaching online and not having to deal with unruly learners in a physical classroom. Other teachers can't wait to get back to face-to-face teaching.

## **Some Tentative Conclusions**

It is clear that learning online is more time consuming than teaching face-to-face, both in terms of preparation and in terms of marking learner work - just opening up email after email and responding takes up a huge amount of time.

Online learning does suit some learners, while clearly disadvantaging others.

Clearly, it is less than optimal to learn a language asynchronously; there needs to be some direct contact, some communication, some face-to-face time; but at the same time, some of what has been done in the classroom could usefully be done online and blended learning solutions should be explored more, especially with the reduction of time allocated to English lessons in Latvia.

Overall, we can be proud of how our teachers responded to the challenges of the sudden experiment in remote learning. The teachers managed to successfully organize their and their students' work during the emergency so that teaching and learning did happen despite everything. Teachers and administrators worked hard at meeting their obligations to provide lessons for learners.

Although most teachers are quite tired after the online learning experience and are looking forward to having a rest during the summer holidays, they will also acknowledge that they have learned a lot of skills. They now know that they need to help their learners with time management and reading skills, and they need to encourage them to take personal responsibility and develop their self-directed learning skills.

In fact, despite the problems, the whole crisis has been a huge learning opportunity for both the teachers and learners and this can only be a positive thing in the long run.

Note 1: LATE members were sent a 'The Rough and Ready Guide to Teaching English Online in a Time of Coronavirus' in April. It is available here:

<http://www.englishideas.org/RoughandReady.html> .

## Die Erfahrungen während der Covid-Zeit auf Tørring Gymnasium, Dänemark



Birgit Lüken-Hansen

Die meisten Lehrer haben die Wochen mit virtuellem Unterricht Google Docs, Google Meet und Office 365 Teams benutzt.

Die Motivation hängt von der Klassenstufe ab, wir haben nur die Abiturienten, das heißt die Schüler der letzten drei Jahre auf unserem Gymnasium. Die Schüler des letzten Jahres waren die ganze Zeit sehr motiviert, weil sie bald ihre Abschlussprüfungen machen mussten. Außerdem durften sie nach wenigen Wochen wieder das Gymnasium besuchen. Die Schüler des zweiten Jahrgangs waren schon motivierter als die des ersten Jahrgangs. Ganz sicher ist aber, dass

sowohl die Motivation der Lehrer als auch die der Schüler nach einigen Wochen geringer war, vor allem weil es anstrengender und einsamer ist, an virtuellem Unterricht teilzunehmen oder virtuell zu unterrichten.

Man wird als Lehrer daran bestätigt, warum man diesen Beruf gewählt hat: Wegen des Zusammenseins mit den Schülern und wegen gegenseitiger Inspiration.

Der virtuelle Unterricht ist für die fachlich schwachen Schüler am schwierigsten, wohingegen einige vorsichtige Schüler sehr aktiv waren, sich jetzt trauten, sich auf Deutsch zu äußern.

Eine Herausforderung war ohne persönlichen Kontakt zu den Schülern zu unterrichten. Es war schwierig das reelle Erlernen der Schüler zu beurteilen und es war schwierig auf die individuellen Bedürfnisse der Schüler einzugehen. Einige Schüler haben den virtuellen Unterricht mit folgenden Zitaten evaluiert:

„Es ist schwierig virtuell die Hand zu heben“, „Man hat davor Angst, andere Schüler zu unterbrechen, wenn man auf eine Frage antwortet“.

Die Vorteile sind, dass man die Zeit hat, während einer Unterrichtsstunde allen Schülern Fragen zu stellen. Die Schüler haben konzentrierter gearbeitet, denn die Schüler stören nicht einander in den virtuellen Gruppenräumen, sie werden nicht abgelenkt. Außerdem wird der Unterricht gezielter, wenn er virtuell ist.

Was können wir in Zukunft gebrauchen?

Der virtuelle Unterricht macht es möglich, sich mit Schülern mit besonderen Bedürfnissen auf dem Gymnasium oder am Abend zu treffen. Ein Treffen kann auf unserem Gymnasium schwierig sein, weil der Transport oft ein Problem ist. Die Schüler können allein in virtuellen Gruppen arbeiten, wenn z.B. der Lehrer an einem Kurs teilnimmt.

Man kann virtuell Sitzungen beiwohnen.



## Unterricht in Zeiten von Corona



Stefanie Meyer, Vorsitzende vom Isländischen Deutschlehrerverein

Das erste Mal wurde noch entspannt in der Mittagspause über Corona geplaudert. Es ging um Fledermäuse, Chinareisen und die jährliche Grippe. Später wurde über Desinfektionsmittel und Seife diskutiert, dann über Schüler\*innen, die dem Klassenraum entschwanden, weil sie sich in Quarantäne begeben mussten. Eineinhalb Monate später wurde es still in der Kantine. Alle Lehrer\*innen, alle Schüler\*innen blieben zu Hause. Corona, mittlerweile in unseren Gesprächen ernsthafter mit Covid19 benannt, war voll in Island angekommen und die Schulen wurden geschlossen. Home Office, Fernunterricht, Online Unterricht - mit nur kurzer Vorwarnung wurden wir ins kalte Wasser geschmissen. Die Lehrer\*innen, die Schüler\*innen, die Schuladministration. Als unsere Schule die Türen schloss und die Internetverbindung sich weitete, waren es noch drei Wochen bis zu den Osterferien. Die Hoffnung war groß, dass man nach den Osterferien wieder normal unterrichten konnte. Aber Covid19 sollte in den folgenden Wochen in Frage stellen, was denn eigentlich normaler Unterricht sei.

Meine Erfahrung während der Coronazeit war größtenteils positiv. Meine privaten Umstände waren für das Home Office hervorragend: Ich lebe alleine mit einer Katze, in meiner Wohnung gibt es ein Büro. Ich konnte mich also voll und ganz auf die Herausforderungen des Unterrichtens fern vom Klassenraum

konzentrieren. Damit war ich anderen Kolleg\*innen gegenüber klar im Vorteil, die mit ganz anderen Dingen zu kämpfen hatten.

Allein die berufliche Seite der Coronazeit war ein großer mentaler Aufwand. Ich musste mich komplett neu einfühlen, denn ich hatte bisher noch nicht online oder von zu Hause aus unterrichtet. Einige Kollegen\*innen begannen direkt auf Zoom zu unterrichten, aber ich entschied mich dagegen und erstellte stattdessen ein ausdrucksbares Arbeitsheft mit einem Arbeitsplan für die drei Wochen bis zu den Osterferien. Ich unterrichtete das Fach Deutsch und musste für mich abwägen: Ist es für die Schüler\*innen leichter eine Fremdsprache im Onlineklassenraum zu lernen - mit all den Tücken der schlechten Verbindung und der Anonymität einer ausgeschalteten Kamera - oder wenn sie sich konzentriert und strukturiert Themen selbst erarbeiten? Ich bezog bei dieser Entscheidung meine eigene Erfahrung als Sprachenlerner ein. Das Selbststudium, das unmittelbare Beschäftigen mit der Fremdsprache, hat mir selbst viel geholfen. Ich entschied mich daher für ein Arbeitsheft. Ja, die Fertigkeit Sprechen konnte ich in diesen drei Wochen mit meinen Schülern nicht trainieren. Stattdessen war ich mit meinen Schülern\*innen im regen 1:1 Emailaustausch, fütterte sie mit Lesematerial, Audiomaterial, Grammatikerklärvideos und Grammatikübungen. Auf meinen Arbeitsbögen, die die Schüler\*innen bei mir einreichten, ließ ich Platz für Feedback. So konnten Schüler\*innen z.B. ankreuzen, ob sie die Übung gut verstanden hatten oder mehr Material benötigten.

Für die Schüler\*innen und mich war diese Methode erfolgreich, so dass wir sie auch nach den Osterferien beibehielten. Wir trafen uns auch zweimal auf Zoom, aber hier sind nicht alle Schüler\*innen erschienen, so dass es bei zwei Treffen blieb. Andere Lehrer\*innen unterrichteten anders. Ich finde es wichtig, dass den Lehrkräften ein gewisser Spielraum gegeben wird, ihre eigene Form des Fernunterrichts zu wählen. Denn so wie wir im Klassenraum authentisch unterrichten, müssen wir das auch im Fernunterricht. Ein Kritikpunkt, der an meiner Schule laut wurde, und den ich teile, war die Kommunikation der Lehrkräfte untereinander. So wurde nach den Osterferien eingeführt, dass die jeweiligen Klassenlehrer\*innen eine Übersicht bekommen sollten, was in den einzelnen Fächern gemacht wird und vor allem, wann Prüfungen oder Fristen anstanden. Das Pensum in den verschiedenen Fächern war sehr unterschiedlich. Auch hier hätten wir uns im Kollegium besser absprechen können.

Die Schuldirektion und Administration haben uns in diesen schwierigen Wochen gut unterstützt und waren bemüht die Moral aufrecht zu erhalten.

Nach den Osterferien blieb die Schule weiter geschlossen. Dies hatte weitreichende Auswirkungen, denn nun ging es nicht nur um die Organisation des Fernunterrichts, sondern auch um die Abnahme der Prüfungen. In Island endet das Schuljahr bereits Ende Mai. Ab Ende April schreiben die Schüler\*innen Abschlussprüfungen. Wir hatten noch drei Wochen Fernunterricht bis die Prüfungsphase anbrach. Viele Fragen waren offen - der unsicheren Covidsituation geschuldet. Würde man die Schüler\*innen für die Abschlussprüfungen in die Schule kommen lassen können? Müssen wir die Schüler\*innen online prüfen? Wie benoten wir ihre Leistungen im laufenden Schulhalbjahr? In meinen Augen hat meine Schule eine angemessene Lösung gefunden. Es wurde sich schnellstmöglich auf Onlineprüfungen geeinigt und die Fächerzahl, in der die Schüler\*innen Prüfungen ablegen mussten, wurde auf drei Kernfächer reduziert. Die Benotung in diesem Halbjahr war sehr schwierig. Die Hälfte des Halbjahres war im Fernunterricht abgehalten worden. Die individuelle mentale Belastung der Schüler\*innen während dieser Zeit war sicherlich sehr unterschiedlich. Inwieweit darf die Arbeit, die sie in dieser Zeit leisten, bewertet werden? In dieser Zeit stand ich jeder\*m einzelner\*n meiner Schüler\*innen durch den Emailkontakt sehr viel näher als im alltäglichen Unterricht. Mir fiel auf, dass einige Schüler\*innen deutlich aufblühten, während andere große Schwierigkeiten hatten z.B. Abgabefristen einzuhalten. Einer Leistungsbewertung für diese Zeit stehe ich weiterhin kritisch gegenüber, obwohl ich meinen Schüler\*innen eine Note für ihr Arbeitsheft gegeben habe. In einigen einzelnen Fällen musste ich eine besondere Lösung finden (u.a. Fristverlängerung, andere Aufgaben, kleineres Pensum). Man sollte auch nicht außer Acht lassen, dass im regulären Schulunterricht die private Belastung der Schüler\*innen ebenso unterschiedlich ist und eine Leistungsbewertung in diesem Aspekt oft nicht fair sein kann.

Im Fazit kann ich sagen, dass meine Schule in ihrer Gesamtheit auf die Coronasituation nicht vorbereitet war. So etwas hatte es einfach noch nicht vorher gegeben. In kürzester Zeit haben Schulleitung, Kollegium und Schülerschaft alle Kräfte zusammengenommen und einen sehr guten Kompromiss gefunden. Über den gesamten Zeitraum haben wir sehr viel gelernt und es wurde viel gemeinsam reflektiert. Insbesondere die Kräfte der Technologie wurden entfesselt: Viele Lehrer\*innen halten nun gekonnt Unterrichtsstunden über Zoom,

Powerpointvorlesungen werden mit Video und Ton hinterlegt und auf YouTube hochgeladen, Prüfungen werden online erstellt und abgenommen. Wir wurden ins kalte Wasser geschmissen und sind, meiner Meinung nach, ziemlich gut geschwommen. Ich kann mir sehr gut vorstellen, auch in Zukunft weiterhin kurze Vorlesungen aufzunehmen und als Zusatzmaterial den Schülern\*innen zur Verfügung zu stellen. Ich weiß von mindestens vier anderen Kolleg\*innen, die ebenfalls begonnen haben, kleine Vorlesungen aufzunehmen als Zusatzmaterial für ihre Schüler\*innen. Ich denke nicht, dass irgendein\*e Lehrer\*in meiner Schule den Fernunterricht dem regulären Unterricht vorziehen würde. Doch wir sind sehr viel offener geworden im Umgang mit alternativen Unterrichts- und Lehrformen.

## Discovering and Using New Ways of Communication



Corina Löwe, Board member of Språlararnas riksförbund on behalf of German Teachers in Sweden, <https://lnu.se/en/staff/corina.lowe/>

The ongoing Corona pandemic is a challenge for people in Sweden and elsewhere. Even Swedish schools were forced to test new grounds meeting this challenge. Different regulations for different school forms were established: whereas the Swedish authorities recommended to keep kindergartens and primary schools up to 9th grade open, high schools, colleges, universities and institutions for adult education had to move their classroom lessons to distance learning from March

18th. All this happened without much planning and time for adjustments and affected teachers and students alike.

The Association of Language Teachers in Sweden represents teachers in all major languages taught in Swedish schools, such as English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Italian, Chinese and also mother tongue tuition teachers. To get a better picture of how the members managed the Corona pandemic crisis in their daily work life, we conducted a short online survey in April. The results do by no means claim statistic evidence but may serve as a glimpse into the reality of language teachers. The majority of the 54 participants were high school teachers.

The majority of all teachers responded to our first question on the biggest challenge in this new situation that measuring students' results and performance is difficult. Maintaining students' motivation was the second most frequent answer. Another problem mentioned is how to adequate help and support students from vulnerable social backgrounds.

For primary school teachers, the problem of duplicate work was significant at that time because they had to offer classes in the classroom and also to teach a number of children online, who for various reasons could not go to school. It was also difficult to keep the recommended physical distance in a full classroom.

38 teachers experienced an increased workload. Although many teachers are satisfied with the technical equipment of their schools, they wish for a better IT support and training.

There were ambivalent answers to the question of perceived support from the school management. The spectrum of answers ranged from: "They do what they can" to the somewhat angry opinion "it would be nice if there was any interest at all in how the teaching staff copes with the challenges."

As we all know, teaching language is didactically demanding. If Corona will continue to affect schools for a longer period of time, teachers see a risk that oral language skills in particular will suffer due to the lack of training. "Teaching becomes poorer," as one teacher said and continues: "I believe that language teaching also includes body language, such as culturally typical facial expressions and gesturing. For students this is difficult to perceive via a digital medium."

Other teachers also see advantages: "Smaller online groups are more likely to encourage students to speak. They cannot hide." The crash course in online teaching during spring has helped teachers to "wash out the gold grains" in their repertoire, to learn more about new technical tools, to discover and use new ways of communication, to be more precise in formulating instructions, and to establish new working routines. Workshops on the effective use of online tools in language teaching are part of our regular conferences, organized by the association board and our regional associations. In the acute transition phase was our association one of several public actors who tried to provide teachers with tips for effective online teaching. Members and board members used social media and the member's magazine as a forum for this.

One teacher summarizes this period: "Many [advantages]! Easier to focus for some students, good with undisturbed work in small groups, good opportunity for individualized teaching, educational in many ways for me."

## NORWAY:

Von heute auf morgen - ab ins Homeoffice!



Fotograf Bjørn Inge Karlsen.



Wie der Blütenkopf einer exotischen Pflanze oder eine geheimnisvolle, farbenfrohe Korallenformation, so harmlos-freundlich muten die Covid-19-Animationen und Zeichnungen im Internet an.

Tatsächlich verbannte uns dieses brandgefährliche Virus mit sofortiger Wirkung nach Hause und veränderte das Schulleben auch in Norwegen von einem auf den anderen Tag für Monate dramatisch.

Als am 12. März 2020 um 14 Uhr Staatsministerin Erna Solberg im Gefolge ihrer MinisterInnen den Lockdown verkündete, hatten die meisten LehrerInnen meiner weiterführenden Schule (11. - 13. Klasse) zwei Stunden später die Schule verlassen in dem Bewusstsein, soeben eine historische Situation erlebt zu haben. Was mich angeht, radelte ich nach Hause mit einem deutlichen Gefühl der Unsicherheit. Unterricht via Netz mit ganzen Schulkassen - das war Neuland, und ich gebe zu, dieses Neuland war ein bisschen angsteinflößend. Ich hatte mir fest vorgenommen, auch im virtuellen Klassenzimmer den Unterricht so kommunikativ und abwechslungsreich wie nur möglich zu gestalten. Aber wie sollte man das am besten planen und umsetzen? Wie würden die Schüler auf den online-Unterricht und die soziale Abgeschiedenheit im Lockdown reagieren? Und wie ich selbst?

### Ein kurzer Coronablues

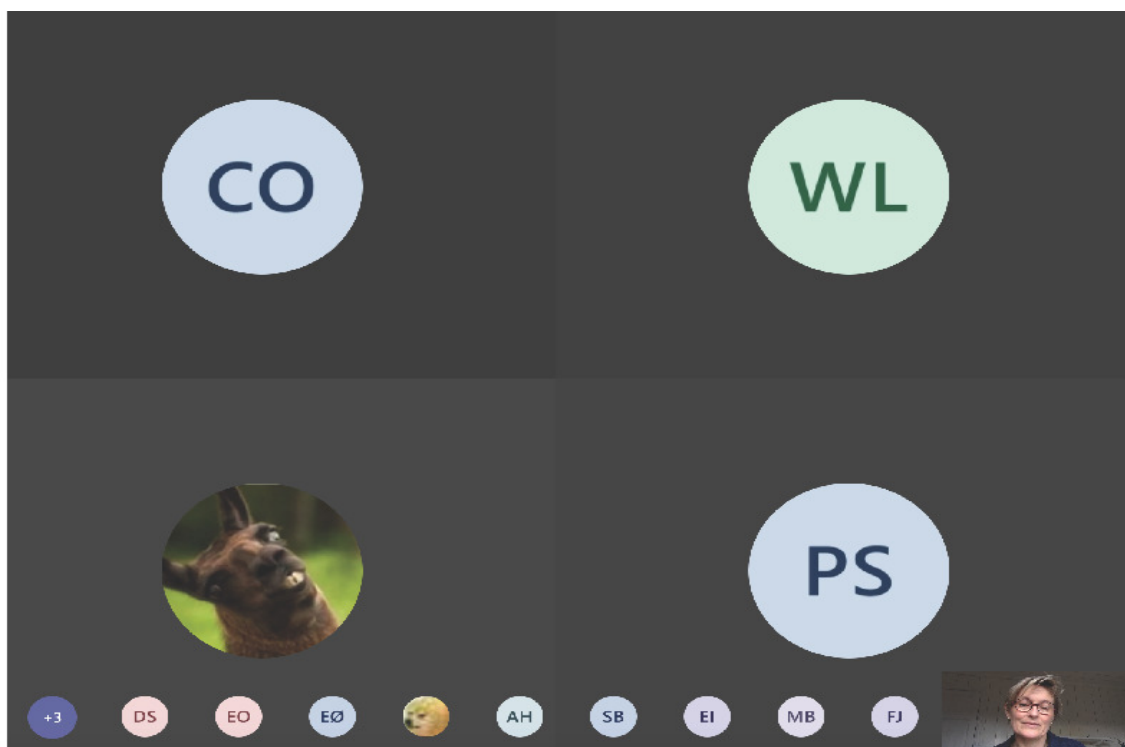
In meinem persönlichen Rückblick waren die ersten drei Wochen des Lockdowns die schwierigsten. Bereits am Tag nach der Ankündigung bekam ich die Nachricht, dass ich wegen des Kontakts zu einer Covid-infizierten Schülerin unter Quarantäne gestellt sei. De facto waren mir für 14 Tage, abgesehen von Spaziergängen mit Familienmitgliedern, keinerlei physischer Kontakt außerhalb der eigenen vier Wände erlaubt. Rein praktisch unterschied sich das Quarantäne-Leben zwar nicht stark von dem, das meine Familie zu diesem Zeitpunkt führte. Dennoch hatte diese zusätzliche Beschränkung auf mich vor allem einen psychologischen Effekt: Ich fühlte mich gefühlsmäßig noch mehr auf mich selbst zurückgeworfen. Mir fehlte schon bald der Kontakt zu meinen KollegInnen und noch mehr zu den SchülerInnen. Deswegen konzentrierte ich mich mehr denn je auf die Arbeit. Auch eine Form der Coronafolgen-Bewältigung!

## Gemeinsam einsam - bloß nicht!

Mir wurde schnell klar, dass der Online-Unterricht eine sehr viel detailliertere Stundenplanung voraussetzte als üblich, bei der alle Eventualitäten mitzudenken waren. Das brauchte Zeit, sogar viel mehr Zeit als sonst!

Es galt außerdem die richtige Mischung zu finden aus einerseits aktivierenden Gruppen- und Einzelaufgaben, bei denen mündliches Deutsch im Fokus stehen sollte, und andererseits Trainingseinheiten, in denen die Bereiche Wortschatz, Schreiben und Grammatik integriert waren.

Zu Beginn zeigten sich die SchülerInnen diszipliniert. Wir trafen uns wie in normalen Schulzeiten pünktlich auf „Teams“, um gemeinsam die Stunde zu starten. Diese Treffen stellten sich schnell als wichtig heraus, nicht zuletzt, weil sie eine Form der gemeinsamen Begegnung waren und damit auch ein kleines Stück Normalität. Mit der Zeit ließ allerdings die Disziplin und auch der Wunsch der SchülerInnen, sich auf der Lernplattform vor der Kamera zu zeigen, deutlich nach. Wie viele meiner Kollegen unterrichtete ich immer häufiger in einen „schwarzen Kanal“ hinein - kein besonders inspirierendes Erlebnis! Deswegen verlagerte ich den virtuellen Unterricht mehr und mehr in Kleingruppen, die dann Mini-Projekte und Aufgaben bearbeiten mussten. Unterwegs besuchte ich die Gruppen, half, wo es nötig war und etablierte so einen guten Kontakt.



**Für die einen toppi - für die anderen flopp !**

**Interessant waren auch die sehr unterschiedlichen Rückmeldungen seitens der SchülerInnen auf das Online-Lernen. In meinen Klassen verfügten alle sowohl über die digitale Ausstattung als auch über ein eigenes Zimmer und damit über die nötige Arbeitsruhe, um dem Unterricht folgen und die Aufgaben erledigen zu können. In Gesprächen nach dem Lockdown erfuhr ich, dass einige SchülerInnen die Heimschule durchaus positiv erlebt hatten. Mehr Ruhe, bessere Konzentration, weniger Ablenkung und nicht immer mit so vielen Menschen zusammen sein zu müssen, so wurden mir die Vorteile der Heimschule beschrieben. Andere hingegen waren heilfroh, in den normalen Schulalltag zurückkehren zu dürfen. Diesen SchülerInnen fehlte vor allem der soziale Kontakt zu den FreundInnen. Mehr Schularbeiten und weniger Spaß zusammen, so lautete ihr kritisches Fazit zum Thema Heimschule.**

**Und zum Schluss ein Kessel Bunt**

**Es ließe sich noch so viel mehr über die Zeit in der Heimschule schreiben, aber der Artikel soll ja nicht aus den Nähten platzen. Deswegen noch ein Kessel Bunt zum Schluss.**

**Es ist eine Binsenweisheit, dennoch trifft sie auch auf meine SchülerInnen zu: Leistungsstarke Eleven sind insgesamt gut mit der Online-Situation klar gekommen, während leistungsschwächere sich gern ausgeklügelte und teilweise „unsichtbar“ gemacht haben. Den Kontakt zu eben diesen Schülern immer wieder herzustellen, hat meine Arbeitszeit und die vieler KollegInnen nochmals deutlich verlängert. Einmal abgesehen von den vielen zusätzlichen schulischen Konferenzen, die sich als nötig erwiesen, um den Schulbetrieb optimal aufrechtzuerhalten.**

**Es ist auch unbestritten, dass viele norwegische Lehrkräfte dank Corona einen weiteren Sprung nach vorne gemacht haben, was ihre digitalen Kompetenzen angeht. Ich zumindest zähle zu der Gruppe, die viel Neues gelernt und ausprobiert hat und das als einen Gewinn betrachtet.**

Ebenso hat die Heimschule neue Perspektiven auf mögliche Benotungsformen eröffnet, die man durchaus in den normalen Schulbetrieb integrieren sollte.

Gesagt werden muss auch, dass viele LehrerInnen und auch ich Mühe hatten den Schulalltag vom privaten Leben so zu trennen, dass Familie und Freunde nicht zu kurz kamen. Das war, so meine subjektive Beurteilung, den meisten nicht möglich.

Und nicht zuletzt: In Norwegen wurde die Leistung der LehrerInnen während des Lockdown in der Gesellschaft wahrgenommen und öffentlich auch immer wieder betont. Ich hoffe, dass sich dadurch das Lehrermage auch langfristig weiter verbessern wird.

## Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges, Experience and Results



Eglė Šeinotienė, Honorary President of LKPA, Secretary of FIPLV Nordic Baltic Region

Covid 2019 has changed the life of teachers all over the world: school and university closures, positive attempts of educational institutions to support teachers and learners, staying at home, was real challenge. The load of work for teachers was really huge- it was not easy to plan and perform face-to- face teaching, evaluate students' achievements, to find proper resources on-line and create them for teaching at a distance. We had to support and motivate

students, encourage families and help students to undergo the difficulties. Assessing remotely and preparing students for final language exams took a lot of time and responsibility. Teachers were not left alone: UNESCO, various international organizations, Ministries of Education and Science in the countries supported all kind of educational institutions in their efforts to mitigate the immediate impact of school and university closures, to ensure the quality and quantity of continuity of education for all students.

Teachers must be proud of being able to cope with Covid 2019. Congratulations!

In this Newsletter we offer you some of materials with best practices to be used and shared:

[http://evbb.eu/news/2020/07/01/professional-development-activities-meeting-the-challenges-of-covid-19/?fbclid=IwAR04cDgQoudtURDMytX3-eksGrwtdvymJnlLOG4c\\_pNxDu60FniFmRL3ZIC](http://evbb.eu/news/2020/07/01/professional-development-activities-meeting-the-challenges-of-covid-19/?fbclid=IwAR04cDgQoudtURDMytX3-eksGrwtdvymJnlLOG4c_pNxDu60FniFmRL3ZIC)

[https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/covid-19-insight-reports?utm\\_source=facebook-bcteachingenglish&utm\\_medium=social-managed&utm\\_campaign=bc-teachingenglish&fbclid=IwAR1FRGYbH6H2p23ocKqHT58OR7ylk\\_i0y08jWONG8-14wJYbFbXmGKWHUfo](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/covid-19-insight-reports?utm_source=facebook-bcteachingenglish&utm_medium=social-managed&utm_campaign=bc-teachingenglish&fbclid=IwAR1FRGYbH6H2p23ocKqHT58OR7ylk_i0y08jWONG8-14wJYbFbXmGKWHUfo)

[https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/integrating-ict/guidance?utm\\_source=TE\\_Facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=bc-teachingenglish&fbclid=IwAR1KodeoJUBt97RDrp\\_2mwGWxN10uEyfINJ5wfJw-mB6-4fE9xeHZrEXYuU](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/integrating-ict/guidance?utm_source=TE_Facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=bc-teachingenglish&fbclid=IwAR1KodeoJUBt97RDrp_2mwGWxN10uEyfINJ5wfJw-mB6-4fE9xeHZrEXYuU)

More useful materials you can find on FIPLV NBR Facebook :

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

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