

Dear colleagues,

The British Council in collaboration with the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science ran a summer school for teachers interested in language and content integrated learning at the Peter Beron Institute for teacher development, Varna, Bulgaria, July 1-13.

The programme was intensive and varied for the 26 participants with input from 10 language and content specialists from Bulgaria, USA and the UK.

Many thanks go to Soar Valley College, Leics for their help and support and in sending Tim Webb, a teacher of Geography, History and Business Studies to share initiatives in their school for teaching content to learners whose first language is not English.

Among the many sessions over the two weeks were: Poetry in the Science Lesson; Multiple Intelligences and Teaching Science; The Cross Curricular Approach to Teaching Science; The Future of Teaching English Across the Curriculum. Though the programme is too heavy to list here in full, more details can be obtained by writing to me at the address below.

A major achievement of the school is the writing of materials for language and content lessons which will be available shortly in the form of a photocopyable file (and on the network website at www.factbg.hit.bg) with accompanying cassette of listening materials.

Teachers at the school were also introduced to Science Across the World Materials 'Keeping Healthy'

which they will teach and carry out the exchange activities with each other over the next academic year.

This is the second consecutive summer school in Varna dedicated to teaching English Across the Curriculum and negotiations are already under way for some of the envisaged 40 places next year to be made available to colleagues from other countries. This is in line with the British Council policy to help develop an international network of teachers of language and content which has already seen a great deal of success through the FACT network.

For more information about the school, the network, or to reserve spaces for next year, please write to me or the FACT group at factbg@yahoo.com.

Yours

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From: Edward Richards
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Subject: Bulgaria/European Year of Languages/On the bus

The (in)famous number 94 bus - the EYL-2001 bus-, carrying its mainly unsuspecting passengers on the route from the University of Sofia to the University Halls of Residence, was the venue for mini language lessons

during the month of June. According to a pre-arranged timetable, pairs of teachers supported by the relevant institute or Embassy introduced passengers to conversational exchanges in: Croatian, English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Turkish, and Ukrainian.

The series of lessons ended on 29 June with English, provided by Corinne Porter, Senior Teacher at the British Council Teaching Centre Sofia, and by Elena Angelova, a freelance consultant in English. They boarded the bus at the University, and spent the next two hours and sixteen minutes (two circuits of the route) distributing EYL and BC brochures, and chatting to passengers in English, or, occasionally, explaining the philosophy of the EYL in Bulgarian.

Many of the passengers were University students on their way to take a State exam: some were happy to speak English to take their minds off the exam, some were so stressed that they preferred to speak in a

foreign language they felt more at ease with - Russian. One passenger, a lawyer, seized the occasion to ascertain the English equivalents for certain legal terms in Bulgarian. Some passengers took part in language games and tongue twisters. Another passenger, a doctor in the military, spoke English perfectly and said he had used 5 foreign languages in his work abroad. Yet another found out that Corinne spoke Indonesian which led to a comparison of the grammar systems of the two languages.

Corinne and Elena are working on articles about their experience to appear in BC and IATEFL publications worldwide and locally. What came out of the morning's exercise was not only an obvious interest in English but an appreciation of the professional and personal value of some knowledge of one or more languages. And, for the organisers of this EYL event, further evidence that the teaching/learning of foreign languages can be popularised on the street and on the bus.



Summer School 2001 Team