

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHING SUBJECTS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Nowadays foreign language learning is extremely important because of the increasing political, economic, cultural and technological collaboration among different nations. There is also an increasing need of highly qualified, intelligent young people speaking two or even more foreign languages. Thus the Bulgarian schools, namely the foreign language schools, have to face new challenges as well as plenty of problems. Apart from the course of acquiring a foreign language, these schools offer teaching subjects in foreign language, which aims at widening the knowledge both in English and in the discipline, taught in English, as well as developing communication activities.

Teaching subjects in foreign language, namely English classes in Biology is an interesting but difficult process with the following problems:

1. Lack of time for covering the material and its explanation in Bulgarian and English because of the specific character of the terminology in Biology.
2. The use of textbooks translated from Bulgarian into English, which are rather difficult and complicated to be understood because of the lack of correspondence with the lexical items.
3. Lack of literature in methodology, practical presentation of given topics or computer programs.
4. Teacher's qualification in another main problem. It's difficult to get a higher qualification in English and Biology at the same time.
5. The absence of a given strategy or a program, presented by the Ministry of Education for the development of that part in the education system in Bulgaria.

Apart from the listed disadvantages, teaching Biology in English has got the following advantages:

1. The use of original extracts taken from English textbooks, magazines and newspapers, enriches the use of English and is a way of visualizing the material.
2. The information found in Internet sites contributes not only to the better preparation for the classes in Biology but it also enlarges the scope of knowledge, acquired by the students.
3. In the course of the education work the teachers can easily get acquainted with the experience and the results achieved in other countries. This enables the adaptation of suitable materials and methods to the conditions we have in Bulgaria. Thus the standards in the programs and structure of the Bulgarian education will become equal to those in the other countries.
4. Enlarging the number of topics for discussion, creative work and participation in different projects, in collaboration with schools and organizations from different countries.
5. Having Biology classes in English is a prerequisite for the successful passing of SAT and TOEFEL exams, which students applying for university in other countries should sit for.

In order to use the advantages and to overcome the difficulties, the teachers can rely on the help of the British Council, which organizes courses and seminars with colleagues from Bulgaria and other countries.

I would like to offer my colleagues to take part in discussion on the problems presented in the report and to tell opinion and suggestions.

Svetla Georgieva
Teacher of Biology in English
Foreign Language School,
Veliko Tarnovo



3 V class,
129 Primary School
working on Kose Bose
(The Blackbird and
the Fox)

OLDENBURG

Oldenburg ist eine kleine Stadt im Norddeutschland. Wir haben dort unsere Zeit super verbracht. Wir waren 25 Personen aus Bulgarien und jeder von euch wohnte für zwei Wochen in einer deutschen Familie.

Für uns war es sehr interessant mit unseren deutschen Freunden zur Schule zu gehen. Sie interessierten sich für die bulgarischen Traditionen und wir haben ihnen dafür erzählt. Am Anfang war es schwer weil wir uns nicht kannten. Aber in ein, zwei Tagen sind wir schon eine lustige Gesellschaft gewesen. Gewöhnlich sind wir nach der Schule zum Café gegangen. Das Café, in dem wir so viel Zeit verbracht haben. Die meisten Abenden haben wir zu Hause bei unseren deutschen Familien verbracht, die sehr höflich waren.

Am Wochenende wurden Rundgänge um Hamburg und Bremen herum organisiert. Einige Abenden wurden für uns freigegeben und wir hatten überhaupt keine Zeit zum Langweilen. Wir haben da auch Bowling gespielt.

Die Schüler, die am Projekt "MNR 21" arbeiten, besuchten eine andere Schule – BBS III, wo wir uns mit unseren deutschen Partnern getroffen haben.

Wir haben mit unseren Gastgebern sehr angefreundet und wollten nicht zurückfahren. Diese zwei Wochen haben uns einen guten Versuch gegeben. Jeder von euch wurde Mitglied einer deutschen Familie und der Abschied war sehr schwer.

Sie vermissen uns so sehr, aber wir treffen uns bald wieder. Sogar jetzt in Bulgarien stehen wir mit ihnen in Verbindung.

Trotz der verschiedenen Kulturen beweisen wir, dass Bulgaren und Deutschen viel Gemeinsames haben und können Freunde sein.

G. Dimitrova

Oldenburg is a small town in the Northern part of Germany. We spent a fantastic time there! We were 25 people from Bulgaria and each of us spent 2 weeks living with a German family.

It was interesting for us to go with our German friends to school and everywhere they usually go. They were very interested in Bulgarian customs. In the beginning it was difficult because we didn't know each other, but in a day or two we became so funny company! Usually after school we used to go to "Schmittz" - the cafe, where we had been talking for hours. Most of the evenings we spent at home with our German families, which were so hospitable.

There were organized tours around Bremen and Hamburg in the weekend. Also in the evenings there were parties for us and we had no time to be bored. Even the Politics teacher organized a bowling competition. It was interesting because most of the Bulgarians played this sport for first time.

The students, working on the project "MNR 21" visited another school - BBS III. There we met our German partners.

We had become so close friends with the hosts that we didn't want to go back to Bulgaria. These 2 weeks gave us a lot of experience. Each of us had become a member of a German family and the parting was hard.

We miss them a lot but we'll see soon each other. Now, when we are in Bulgaria, we still keep contact.

Despite the different cultures we proved that Bulgarians and Germans have a lot of things in common and we could become very close friends!

Stanislava Sokolova,

Nevena Lazarova

The Blackbird and the Fox Booklaunch, March 22, 2002


50 people were invited to attend the launch of the story playbook 'The Blackbird and the Fox' at the Cafe Matti in the National Palace of Culture, Sofia on March 22, 2002. British Council Director, Kevin Lewis welcomed the guests which included Deputy Minister of Education Yulian Nakov. Venelin Vulkanov, the artist who created the illustrations, spoke about the inspiration he took from the 'fairytale' and 'play' which are evident in the story and we were all entertained by children's actor Svetlo Dobrev who gave a reading of the story in its original Bulgarian version.

Using Folk Stories in ELT

OU Antim, I, Sofia, 23rd March, 2002

(Keith Kelly, Maria Rae, Zhivka Yancheva, Stefka Kitanova)

9.00-10.30 Session one



i) Background to the Storybook
Keith


ii) Multi-cultural Stories
Maria

10.30-11.00 Coffee and Reading

11.00-12.30 Session two

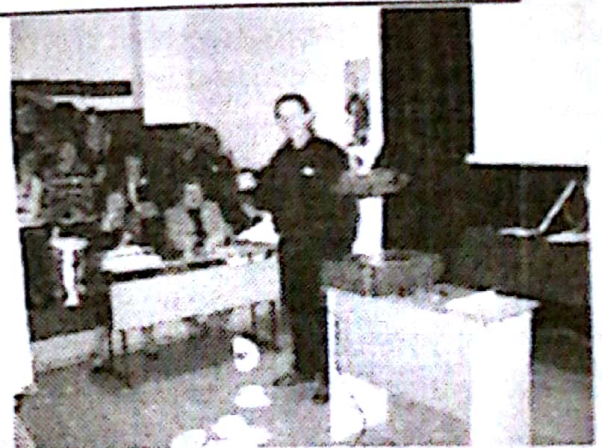
i) Practical Activities
ii) Teacher's Perspective
iii) Cross-curricular Links
iv) The Future

Keith
Zhivka
Stefka
Keith



The workshop which followed the booklaunch on Saturday morning at the Antim I Primary School, Sofia went really well. 30 participants came from schools around Bulgaria to work on using storybooks in their teaching.

I presented the story playbook and classroom ideas which are in the teachers' notes to accompany the storybook.



Maria Rae, Young Learners specialist with the British Council in Buglaria, presented ideas for developing cross-cultural ideas in the classroom with storybooks.



Though extra teachers came we somehow managed to fit them in and had copies of all the materials to make sure everyone went home with something.

The Children of 3v performed the play 'The Blackbird and the Fox' for the audience of the teachers and the children's parents. There were about 100 people in the audience.



Zhivka Yancheva from the host school where the book and the lessons were piloted gave a teacher's perspective.



Stefka Kitanova, teacher of Chemistry and Biology gave some ideas for developing nature studies in the EYLS curriculum.





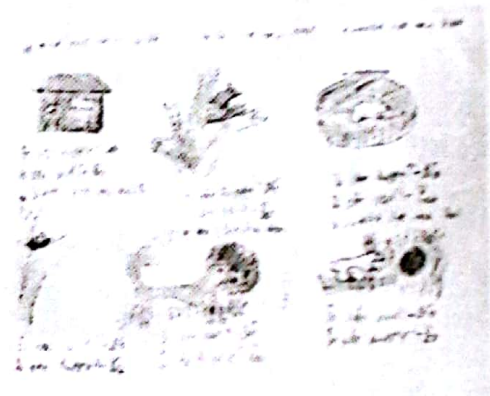
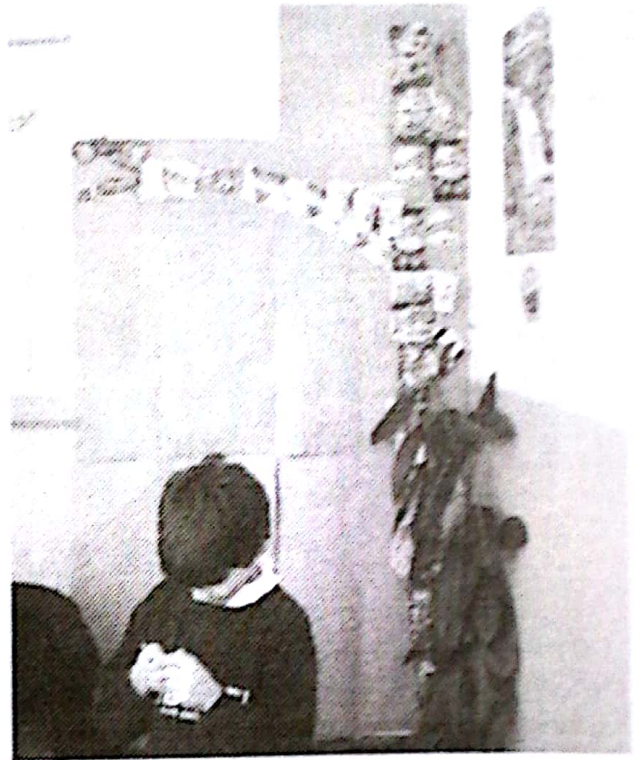
The Blackbird and the Fox is the first of 6 planned story playbooks to support the teaching of English to young learners in Bulgaria. The idea is based on the theory that traditional stories in translation have the benefit of already being familiar to learners and so facilitate the process of learning the foreign language. This children's story playbook and teachers' notes is an attempt to develop cross-curricular links between the young learner English classes and the rest of the primary curriculum. It is also an attempt to provide locally produced high quality affordable materials for the teaching of English to Young Learners.

Follow up workshops will take place hosted by the teachers who have attended this meeting who will teach using the story and feedback to each other to create a support network within the FACT Group (Forum for Across the Curriculum Teaching) - www.factbg.hit.bg. All of the teachers were keen to join the email discussion group at factworld@yahoo.com and contribute to the FACT Group Journal with lesson ideas for cross-curricular primary ELT work.

Colleagues interested in the storybook and materials will soon be able to access them free as our next task is to produce the whole package in pdf format for colleagues to download and use in their classrooms.

Best wishes

Keith



Dear Colleagues,

I am an English teacher at language school in Dobrich. I've prepared some techniques, that I find useful especially when working with comperatively young students-preparatory class for instance. Maybe you won't find them something new But I hope you won't be bored.

I. The 50-word Essay

1. Purpose - to begin the class on time with an activity that is useful for te early-comers that requires the late-comers to also do the work (as homerwork) if necessary.

2. Procedure - write a topic on the board. As each student comes into the classroom, he is supposed to immediately start writing whatever he can about the topic - producing as minimum of fifty words - as the late-comers arrive, they start to work. When the students who have arrived on time finished. I checked their work and stop the activity. Late-comers and others who have not finished have to complete the writing for I choose topics that are light and lively: A Great Movie, Hamburgers, Smoking, Parents.

II. Unbroken Circle

1. Purpose - to end the class in a perfect performance in which every person in the class must do something perfectly to earn the class the right to leave or take a break.

2. Procedure - first I established the order for responce (from left to right, from the first to the second desk).

Then I give an utteranceto a student who must respond with a gramatically perfect responce. If the responce is correct, student two makes a responce. etc. When an error is made the circle is broken and the studentone has to begin the responses again. The game continues until all students have re- sponded perfectly, without breaking the circle.

Some sample utterances:

1. Where were you born?
2. How do you go to school?
3. When did you arrive in Dobrich?
4. How long have you been studying English?
5. What were you doing this morning at eight?
6. What will you be doing tommorow at ten?
7. Has your sister seen the movie "The Matrix"?
8. If I gave you a hundred dollars, what would you do?

You have noticed that my purpose is make the students use different gramatical categories. To make the activity more difficult in more advanced classesit is not me who ask questions but I change the activityand when the student one responds he should ask the next student a question, but not repeating the same gram. structure. This can be very useful when revising various verb tenses. Because the task is not easy I give student a cue in the form of a grid (on a card in fron of them or on the blackboard)

Everyday (simple present)	+	-	?	- ?	(tag question)
	(affirm.)	(neg.)	(question)	(neg. q.)	
NOW					
(present prog.)					
Yesterday (past)					
Have just (present perfect)					
Used to (past habits)					

The grid can be expanded when a new form is introduced.

Best wishes.
Violeta Borisova

A Mail From Borneo

Dear Stefka,

Thank you very much! Your FACT Summer 2001 edition is right here at our hands in East Borneo, Indonesia.

As I live in Sangatta, a township built by a world class coal mine company (is still equally owned by Rio Tinto and British Petroleum) in the tip of East Kutai, East Borneo, some 300 km to the north of Balikpapan (can you point where is it on the map?) it is a big surprise to me this afternoon.

Good job of you and your friends in 'FACT'!

It must reminded me the time when I stood before my students in class, mingled around and joining in their

Dear colleagues,

Hello from Bourgas. My name is Zoya Yankowa and I want to share with you my experience with HEALTH MATTERS EUROPEAN SCHOOL AWARDS. It is a competition run by the association for Science Education and sponsored by Glaxo Smithkline (one of the world's leading healthcare companies). The Awards are open to all secondary school students across Europe between the age of 11 and 17. Projects can be submitted in writing or electronically in English or 6 other languages. Students are asked to submit a research project into any health related subject ranging from diet and disease prevention through to health and fitness. The competition is designed to introduce students to the importance of modern health issues. In today's society and to stimulate team activity among them. It encourages students to design research and implement their own scientific investigation on any health oriented subject. All participating students receive a certificate and schools have the opportunity to win 500 Euros cash prize for their Science Department, together with individual prizes for students.

A group of an enthusiastic boys from 10 A class of our school (now 11 - graders) carried out a research on the curative properties of garlic. It happened so that another group from 9D class (now 10 D) chose the same topic. It was interesting to compare the final results. And here are to poems written by the girls from 10E class, which are part of their presentation on the topic.

Written by Kalina, Lilyna, Nora, Stela, Stefka and Christina. The work brought a lot of satisfaction and pleasure to all of us. If you to follow us for further information and an entry pack contact: Caroline McGrath, ASE - Project Manager E-mail: caroline@sci-ence.demon.co.uk Good luck to the enthusiasts!!! Zoya Yankowa - Chervenkova Teacher at Maths School - Bourgas e-mail: zoe_ch_2000@yahoo.com NOV 2001

discussions. I missed that time. It was when I was in culturally rich province of Yogyakarta and Medium of East Java, both are in Java.

I'm developing my career in journalism and doing an internal publication for the company now. Sometimes I still 'steal' time to stand before the class to teach English to operators and mechanics of heavy equipment here in Sangatta.

How is Sofia at the moment? Is it winter out there?

Please extend my gratitude and warm regards to (you and) your friends in FACT! It is really inspiring.

Kind regards,

Mikael Onny Setiawan (Miko)
Sangatta, East Borneo

'OUR EYES' :

MY PRETTY EYES

My pretty eyes I love the most.
I cannot say how much they cost.
When I am silent they speak instead.
Even so much better than whatever I say.

My face is beautiful by my eyes.
In the dark they shine like two fireflies.
Shine like the imposing sun can shine.
Even so much brighter than all the stars.
Owing to my unique eyes.

I can see the birds in the sky.
I can admire all the lovely things.
In this surely disgusting and ugly word.

YOUR EYES

Your eyes - I cannot forget them
Your eyes - They make me feel insomnia
Your eyes - They live in my heart
And like a fire they burn me inside

I want to forget but I cannot
The first love cannot be forgotten
Your eyes laid me many times
And hurt me with a sharpen knife.

Tallinn, Estonia

Dear all,

A two-day seminar on content and language integrated instruction took place in the beautiful wintery medieval city of Tallinn from March 8-9.

The event was hosted by Tallinn Technical University and was organized by colleagues at the department of English Language, managed by Monika Sepp. Lida Schoen represented the Science Across the World Project and I gave a Bulgarian perspective on the project and presented the FACT Network (Forum for Across the Curriculum Teaching).

It was an intensive two days which aimed at introducing the 100 participants to the Science Across the World Project (www.scienceacross.org) as well as presenting classroom ideas for developing cross-curricular instruction.

I think Lida's cosmetics workshop summed up the whole event as the participants created and marketed hair gel, shampoo and bath salts with an Estonian theme. Producing and marketing cosmetics are activities that fit in the Science Across the World topic 'Chemistry in our lives'. It is a good example of combining content (science) and communication (languages = English).

15 people volunteered to follow up the seminar and form a group to develop the link to the FACT network in Estonia - www.factworld.info. This development was at the heart of the event in that the marriage of SAW and FACT enabled the teachers to work on the SAW materials, subscribe themselves to the project (add actual number here) and exploit the growing FACT network communicating with colleagues in Central and Eastern Europe and the world.

I presented the SAW Project, its growth, benefits and problems in Secondary Schools in Bulgaria and Lida gave the Dutch perspective in

Teacher Education: teacher students helping schools to implement SAW.

Thanks go to SAW, The British Council Estonia (www.britishcouncil.ee) for their support for the this event and Tallinn Technical University for their excellent organisation and hosting of the seminar.

The swallow, we learnt, is the national symbol of Estonia and this event has provided a maiden flight for SAW and FACT in the Baltics. We hope it will fly on. We also had garlic icecream...?

Best wishes

Keith



Bulgarische Lehrerinnen in unserer Klasse

Ein Bericht von Arafat Oba 4a

Am Mittwoch, den 13. März hatten wir, die Klasse 4a, Besuch aus Bulgarien. Die beiden Lehrerinnen hießen Stefka und Veneta. Wir haben ganz viele Fragen über Bulgarien gestellt. Es war sehr interessant. Zum Beispiel haben wir über bulgarische Fußballer in der Bundesliga gesprochen. Danach haben wir eine Englischstunde gemacht über Blumen und wie sie auf Englisch heißen. Stefka hat uns auch bulgarisches Geld gezeigt, das so viel wert war wie 5 Euro. Auf dem Schein war ein bulgarischer Schriftsteller. Die beiden waren zwei Wochen lang in Oldenburg und es gefiel ihnen gut in Deutschland.

ПРИМЕР ЗА ЕДИНСТВОТО НА ЕВРОПА

В продължение на две седмици 35 младежи от 14 европейски държави гостуваха на град Констанц на Боденското езеро, Германия. В „Международна младежка среща 2001“, организирана от германския Народен съюз, който полага грижи за гробовете на загиналите във войните немски войници по света, имаха удоволствие да участват и трима български младежи – двама студенти от Варненския медицински университет и един ученик от III ПМГ „Акад. Методий Попов“. Разбира се, младежите полагат грижи не само за паметниците, но и за създаване на приятелства и дружески отношения помежду си. Тези летни срещи са символ за съвместното израстване на младежите в една свободна и мирна Европа. Една от важните цели на „Работата за мира“ е да се напомни за необходимостта от мир и безсмислието на войните и държавния терор, както и за страданията и мъките на милионите пострадали.

Двуседмичната международна среща може да бъде пример за единството на Европа, както напписаха местните вестници. Младите хора демонстрираха удивителна зрялост в отношенията помежду си, човешко достойнство и много толерантност в съвместната си работа. Организирането на такива срещи е посветено на помирието, разбирателството и дружбата през границите.

Голямо внимание се отделя на запознаването на младежите със страната, нейните забележителности и културни ценности. Съвместното изживяване по време на посещенията на музеи и сред неповторимата природа на Боденското езеро

и забележителните му околности ще остави завинги спомени в съзнанието на всички. Повечето от младежите от Източна Европа, младите българи също, посещават за първи път Германия.

Бързо и неусетно преминават дните, наситени с интересни преживявания и открития, както за страната – домакин, така и за самите участници. Всеки един от е описан от самите тях в лагерния дневник, който всички получиха вече в готов вид само преди няколко дни и спомените отново оживяха. Апогеят на срещата беше Вечерта на гостите. Удоволствие за всички беше както подготовката за нея, така и провеждането и. Всички участници се постараха да представят своята родина, както и себе си по най- добрия начин. Ефектът беше невероятен. Неусетно за всички вечерта премина в нощ, изпълнена с музика, много танци и безкрайни разговори.

В деня преди отпътуването, по време на официалното закриване, на което присъстваха кметът на града и много други общественици, младежите споделиха, че за тях не е съществувал проблем за разбирането помежду им, независимо че техните езици са различни. Помагала им е волята за разбирателство и желанието за приятелство. И още нещо: независимо че гостуваха 14 дни само на една страна - Германия, те остават с чувството, че познават още дванадесет страни от Европа, родините на техните приятели, с които преживяха две неповторими седмици.

В. Воева

The English Across the Curriculum Summer School

Event The English Across the Curriculum Summer School, Varna July 1-13, 2002

Aim Ethical English - a supplementary book for English, Ecology and Health

Partners British Council, Science Across Europe, Varna Department for In-service Teacher Training, The Bulgarian Ministry of Education

Participants 29 colleagues from 5 countries (Romania, Bulgaria, the UK, Holland and Croatia) and tutors from a variety of disciplines across the curriculum

The group worked extremely hard in the heat of the Varna sunshine with input sessions on integrated language and content skills development followed by materials writing activities. John Clegg contributed valuable ideas for language support in the content classroom for students and teachers which created a foundation for the materials writing which was to follow. The input sessions offered strategies and frameworks for content and language teaching combined with practical lesson examples from a variety of subjects across the curriculum taught in English.

All of this was geared towards the writing of a book of Science Across Europe materials with teaching ideas and activities. In this way colleagues combined professional development with the production of a useful and easy-to-use resource book for classrooms across the region.

With the successful ELTeCS bid a book will be published in the Autumn and sent out to all participants in return for the local organisation of workshops for colleagues interested in using Science Across materials and the supplementary book. It is envisaged that both English language teachers and content teachers will come together at these meetings in the same way they worked together so well at the Summer School.

We will also send copies of the book to British Council offices across the region and invite colleagues to get involved and share the benefit of these wonderful resources for language AND content learning.

Tutors and organisers

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BILINGUAL FORUM

Bratislava, 2002



The second conference of the “Bilingual Forum - FACT II” met in Bratislava, Slovakia, 9-13 June 2002. It gathered 30 participants from 6 countries, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The participants were especially honored by the presence and participation of Mrs. Danica Bakosova, Department of Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Slovakia.

There was specialist contribution from the British Council, CERNET-Vienna, the Ermitage School, France, Science Across the World and the United Kingdom.

Brief summary of the conference

The conference heard speakers on various issues associated with bilingual education. The principle topics covered were:

- Bilingual education – necessities and requirements
- Language support in bilingual education
- Learner autonomy in bilingual education

Conference members were particularly impressed by a joint project between students from the Bilingual English-Slovak Grammar School in Sučany, Slovakia and the bilingual secondary school in Ganserndorf, Austria.

The organizers, sponsors and participants came together in proposing the following conclusions and recommendations:

CONCLUSIONS

It is understood that in Central and Eastern Europe, bilingual education is needed to support European Citizenship and understanding. For bilingual education to continue to grow successfully, it needs official recognition and support in each country and across the region.

It is also recognised that the Council of Europe declares that European citizenship involves working competency in three languages. Bilingual education plays a fundamental role in reaching these objectives.

Consequently, a growing number of teachers in Central and Eastern Europe are teaching through the medium of a foreign language. During the course of the conference, and notably through the workshops, participants had the opportunity to review the wide variety of materials, resources, projects and teaching styles used in the bilingual classroom. This was seen as being an important source of creativity and innovation with the potential for all the classrooms throughout a school. The circumstances in which colleagues work, the difficulty of finding appropriate materials and training have produced an urgent need to network and forge regional contacts in the sphere of bilingual education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For these reasons we recommend that:

- Regional networks need to be established and developed;
- Local professionals need management training in bilingual education;
- Pre-service and in-service training in bilingual education need to be introduced across the region;
- Quality materials need to be prepared, and made available and accessible to bilingual education teachers;
- A programme of annual teacher development meetings and conferences needs to be coordinated;
- Dialogue needs to be initiated regarding bilingual standards, curricula and methodology.

Danica Laukova, Bi-lingual and International Project Manager, Bilingual English-Slovak Grammar School, Suèany, Slovakia, conference organiser

Mrs. Danica Bakosova, Department of Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Slovakia

John Clegg, Language Education Consultant

Nigel Heslop, Assistant Director Science Across the World

Christopher Hunter, Headmaster, L'Ermitage School, France

Keith Kelly, English Language Education Specialist, British Council, Bulgaria

Stefka Kitanova, European Association of Teachers

Franz Schimek / Stuart Simpson: CERNET, Austria

