










Dear *TESOL-Ukraine*
members and their friends!

Welcome to the spring-
summer *TESOL-Ukraine*
Newsletter joint issue!

This issue presents:

-  Insights from *TESOL-Ukraine* Annual Convention 2025
-  Reflections on *TESOL-Ukraine* Professional Development Events
-  A New Success Story of EMI Basics Online
-  Positive Influence in ELT workplace
-  Global Educators for a Sustainable Tomorrow
-  Voices from *TESOL-Bulgaria*
-  *TESOL-Ukraine* Newsletter: Call for Collaboration

Inspire and stay inspired!
Stay strong!
Stay safe!

TESOL-Ukraine Executive
Committee, August 2025

TESOL-UKRAINE NEWSLETTER

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Commitment and Resilience:

A Message from TESOL-Ukraine President Olena Ilienکو



OLENA ILIENKO

TESOL-Ukraine President

**Head of the Department of Foreign Philology and Translation
O.M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv
(Kharkiv, Ukraine)**

Dear TESOL-Ukraine Members,

As we bring another academic year to a close, I would like to extend my warmest greetings and heartfelt thanks to each of you for your continued dedication, professionalism, and active involvement in our vibrant community of English language educators.

This issue of our newsletter is a special one, as it highlights key events that have shaped our professional journey this year. First and foremost, it is dedicated to our Annual Convention in Ivano-Frankivsk, a remarkable event that once again brought us together to share expertise, exchange ideas, and strengthen our professional bonds. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all participants, speakers, and organizers for making it a true celebration of learning and collaboration.



Another important milestone was the TESOL-Ukraine Election, during which we welcomed a new Leaders Team. I am confident that these dedicated professionals will demonstrate their best qualities and lead our association forward with vision, responsibility, and care. Their work will be essential in further developing our community and broadening our professional horizons.

In this issue, you will also find updates on our partnership with IATEFL, highlights from the Teacher Training Series, and news about our involvement in the MOSAIC Project. Additionally, we are proud to share inspiring stories of our members' participation in conferences and teacher mobility programs — wonderful examples of how TESOL-Ukraine continues to be part of the global ELT community.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the upcoming academic year will bring even more opportunities for growth. We are planning new series of webinars, more training sessions, and increased engagement in national and international conferences. I sincerely hope that each of you will find meaningful and enriching ways to participate and that your professional life will become even more diverse, dynamic, and fulfilling.

Thank you for being an integral part of TESOL-Ukraine. Together, we will continue to inspire, support, and empower one another.

With warmest wishes,

Olena Ilienکو

President of TESOL-Ukraine

2025 TESOL-Ukraine Convention: Stronger Together in Challenging Times

(A landmark gathering without traditional funding brought fresh ideas, new leadership, and renewed commitment to Ukraine's English language teaching community)



LYUDMYLA HNAPOVSKA

**Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistic Didactics,
Sumy State University
(Sumy, Ukraine)**

The annual 2025 TESOL-Ukraine Convention “RISING TOGETHER – TEACHING WITH HOPE AND STRENGTH”, hosted by Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National



University on 23-25 May, 2025, in the historic city of Ivano-Frankivsk, brought together 320 English language educators from across the country for three days of inspiring sessions, networking, and professional exchange. This year's event carried a special significance: for the first time in many years, the convention was organized without financial support from

the Regional English Language Office (RELO) of the US Embassy in Ukraine.

The absence of external funding did not deter the dedicated community: participants covered their own travel and accommodation costs, driven by a shared commitment to advancing English language teaching in Ukraine. *“It didn’t matter that we had to pay our own way: the chance to learn from each other and feel part of this community is priceless,”* shared one attendee. Another noted, *“This year’s convention is proof that our community is stronger than circumstances. We are here because we believe in what we do”*.

The program offered a rich mix of plenary talks, interactive workshops and informal discussions on topics ranging from digital tools for blended learning and intercultural



competence, to trauma-informed pedagogy and innovative assessment. Attendees engaged in lively exchanges of professional experiences, thus creating new connections that promise ongoing collaboration long after the event. *“I’m going home with not just new teaching ideas, but also with a renewed sense of why I teach,”* said one

participant after a particularly dynamic workshop.

During the opening plenary session, the TESOL-Ukraine Board presented its annual report, highlighting a variety of professional development events held throughout the year, both in-person and online. The community also saw changes in leadership: Olena Iliencko was re-elected as TESOL-Ukraine President, while Hanna Podosynnukova stepped into the role of Vice-President.

The membership expressed heartfelt gratitude to Maryna Tsehelska, who stepped down after many years of serving as the organization’s “brain center,” guiding initiatives with vision and dedication. Several new faces joined the Board, bringing fresh energy and perspectives to the association’s future work:



Olena Iliencko, TESOL-Ukraine President

Hanna Podosynnikova, TESOL-Ukraine Vice President

Lilia Kuznetsova, TESOL-Ukraine Treasurer

Ganna Gusieva, TESOL-Ukraine National Coordinator

Serhii Petrenko, TESOL-Ukraine International Coordinator

Oksana Chugai, TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter Editor

Liudmyla Sinna, TESOL-Ukraine Media Coordinator

“It’s bittersweet to see Maryna step down, but I’m excited about the fresh perspectives the new board will bring,” remarked a veteran member.



Ivano-Frankivsk’s welcoming atmosphere and cultural charm provided the perfect setting for this milestone gathering. *“The city was such a welcoming backdrop – its charm matched the warmth of our colleagues,”* commented an attendee. All in all, in the absence of traditional funding, the convention’s success stood as a powerful testament to the

resilience, solidarity, and creativity of Ukraine’s English teaching professionals. The 2025 event will be remembered not for what it lacked, but for the passion and unity it showcased.

TESOL-Ukraine on the World Stage: 2025 TESOL International Convention and IATEFL International Conference 2025



SERHII PETRENKO

PhD, Associate Professor

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

TESOL-Ukraine International Coordinator

From mid-March to early April 2025, TESOL-Ukraine representatives proudly presented our work, shared practical classroom ideas, and established international partnerships at two major global events: *the TESOL International Convention in Long Beach, California, U.S.* (18-21 March 2025) and *the IATEFL International Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K.* (7-11 April 2025). These events provided a powerful platform to demonstrate how Ukrainian educators continue delivering high-quality English language instruction despite ongoing wartime challenges.



The TESOL-2025 Convention brought together thousands of English language teaching (ELT) professionals for a dynamic program featuring presentations, workshops, demonstrations, and panel discussions led by experts, methodologists, and coursebook authors. The EXPO showcased the latest ELT publications from leading publishers, such as

TESOL Press, National Geographic, Pearson, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, and Macmillan Publishers, as well as tech solutions from companies like *Ellii*, *Duolingo*, and *Padlet*, offering fresh resources for innovative teaching. The keynote speakers discussed hip hop as a powerful tool for language learning and revitalization (Victor Zea, a freelance photographer based in Cusco, Peru); English language development

as a journey that doesn't have the same destination for all learners (Missy Testerman, the 2024 National Teacher of the Year, a teacher from Rogersville, Tennessee); and the joy as a vital tool for fostering respect, inclusion, and robust learning (Debra Suarez, 2024-2025 TESOL International Association President).

At TESOL-2025, I had the privilege of sharing two projects:

- *'Making Students Experts through Website Creation Projects'* with Bailey Webster, last year's Virtual Educator at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.



We explored the challenges and successes of a project-based learning approach with archival science students. The session highlighted how guiding learners to create websites on Ukrainian history can enhance students' expertise and practical skills, including subject knowledge, digital literacy, communication, and teamwork.



- *'From War-Torn to Empowered: A TESOL-Ukraine Mentorship Journey'* with Debbie Nelson, Vladyslava Antypova, and Nataliia Holodniuk. This presentation described the 2025 TESOL-Ukraine mentorship pilot, including how we paired experienced mentors with mentees (secondary school and university teachers), the coaching and professional development elements we used, and the initial impact on teacher confidence and classroom practice.

Among the sessions I attended, several stood out for their relevance to our work, including storytelling in ELT, creating infographics for language learning, asset-based approaches to teaching English, scaffolding strategies, AI in education, teaching English through art, coaching and mentoring for ELT professionals, etc.



Beyond presenting, I met with TESOL International's leadership and affiliates from various countries to discuss potential joint projects. We explored possible collaborative projects aimed at making language teaching more engaging and resilient, which is a timely priority for our TESOL-Ukraine community.



The IATEFL Conference was an intense and inspiring week of plenaries, presentations, workshops, and Special Interest Group (SIG) events. More Ukrainian teachers were able to participate there as it was organized in Edinburgh, the picturesque Scottish capital.

By the way, do you know why Edinburgh is pronounced either /'ɛdɪnbərə/ or /'ɛdɪnbrə/. That is due to the fact that the ending *-burgh* comes from Old English *burh* (a fortified place / town). In Middle English, endings like *burh* / *burgh* / *borough* included a guttural sound. Over centuries English lost that guttural in most

dialects. As a result, English orthography is conservative as it preserves older spellings even when pronunciation changes.

The IATEFL plenaries included the following ideas: changes in ELT over the last 50 years (Catherine Walter), using the science of learning to inform teaching (Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel), teachers and classroom research (Daniel Xerri), the TBLT approach (Neil McMillan), and five burning questions to education from a young changemaker (Alicia Waters Galan and Harry Waters).

I was honored to receive the IATEFL ESPSIG Roving Reporter Scholarship, and delivered the following presentations:



- *‘Holistic Approach to ESP Teaching and Learning in Ukraine,’* presented at a pre-conference ESPSIG event. In this presentation, I discussed how to prepare authentic ESP materials for different specializations, integrate 21st-century skills, and provide practical recommendations for ESP teachers working in wartime conditions.

- *‘Asset-based Approach to Assessment in ESP,’* presented during the main conference. In this session, I used metaphors inspired by Scottish writers, such as Robert Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walter Scott, Arthur Conan Doyle, to simplify complex assessment concepts, and demonstrate how an asset-based approach supports students’ strengths and learning outcomes.





Across both conferences, together with the TESOL-Ukraine leadership and members, we held a number of productive meetings with colleagues, publishers, and affiliate leaders. The TESOL-Ukraine board advocated for our teachers in leadership sessions, shared our projects, and discussed joint initiatives with international affiliates. Serhii Petrenko participated in TESOL affiliate leaders communication workshops, and Olena Iliencko and Ganna Gusieva took part in IATEFL associate leaders events. The conversations covered mentorship models, teacher training for emergency contexts, resource development, and possible collaborative teacher exchanges, and publication opportunities.

The Mirror Doesn't Lie:
A Teacher Transformation in Mark Powell's Boutique
Insights from TESOL-Ukraine
Professional Development Online Course
"Positive Influence at Work" with Mark Powell



LYUDMYLA HNAPOVSKA

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With a 40-year background as an EFL teacher, I continue striving to grow professionally. Although I'm approaching the stage where people might call me "a retired EFL teacher," I refuse to give up on either teaching or learning. As I reflect on this final chapter of my EFL/ESP career, I remain convinced: there is always room for improvement.

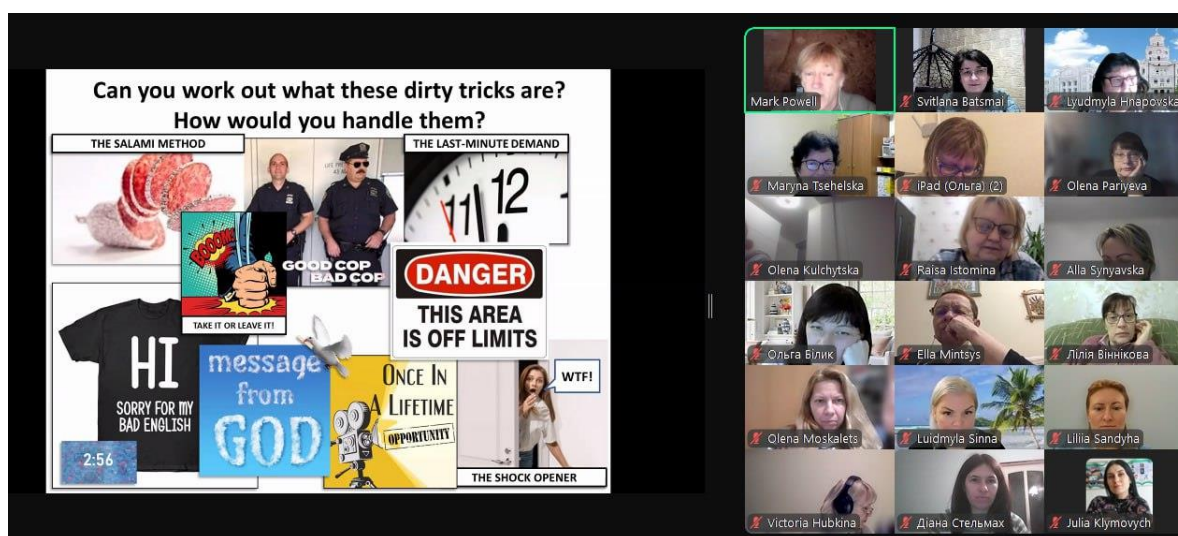
This is why the 12-week journey "Positive Influence at Work" with Mark Powell has been such a transformative experience. It opened my eyes to how much more there is to learn and how much more I can still do. What I once considered my "broad" experience now feels like just a drop in the vast ocean of knowledge and skills still waiting to be discovered. The course expanded my perspective far beyond the EFL classroom, offering fresh ideas and thought-provoking insights that I am still processing. It also introduced me to new professional roles I now feel eager – and excited – to explore.



Why I Went Shopping with Mark Powell?

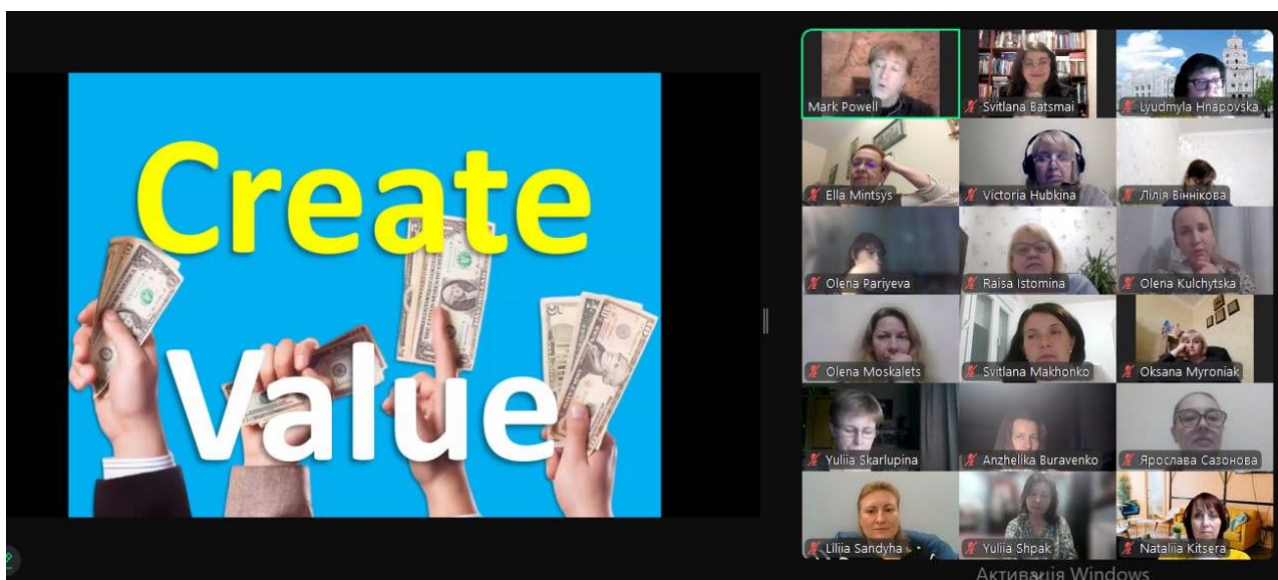
Mark’s course felt like stepping into a high-end boutique – or, more precisely, a changing room. A space of transformation where I could try on new perspectives, examine my own reflection, and reimagine my professional identity – not merely as a university ESP teacher, but as someone capable of influence.

I agree with Mark: wearing the same clothes for too many years can become boring. Your body changes, your circumstances shift, and what once fit may no longer suit who you are becoming. Whether it's for a special occasion or simply the need to cast off burnout and outdated habits, sometimes you just need a wardrobe refresh.



Since 2003, I’ve been working with Mark’s books and developing my career as a Business English teacher through them. My teaching never felt dull exactly – but at times, it became

routine. Even though I regularly attended professional development events and tried out new techniques, I often felt my efforts didn't resonate with my learners. Generation Z, after all, presents unique challenges. And like many of my colleagues, I've struggled to keep up with the rapid shifts in post-COVID, and later wartime education.



The changing room metaphor captures it well. You try on a beautiful dress and realize it doesn't fit – not yet. That realization can be disappointing. But it can also be the spark you need to transform. This course was that spark for me. I entered to seek inspiration, try on fresh ideas, and take on new challenges. And I found much more than I expected.

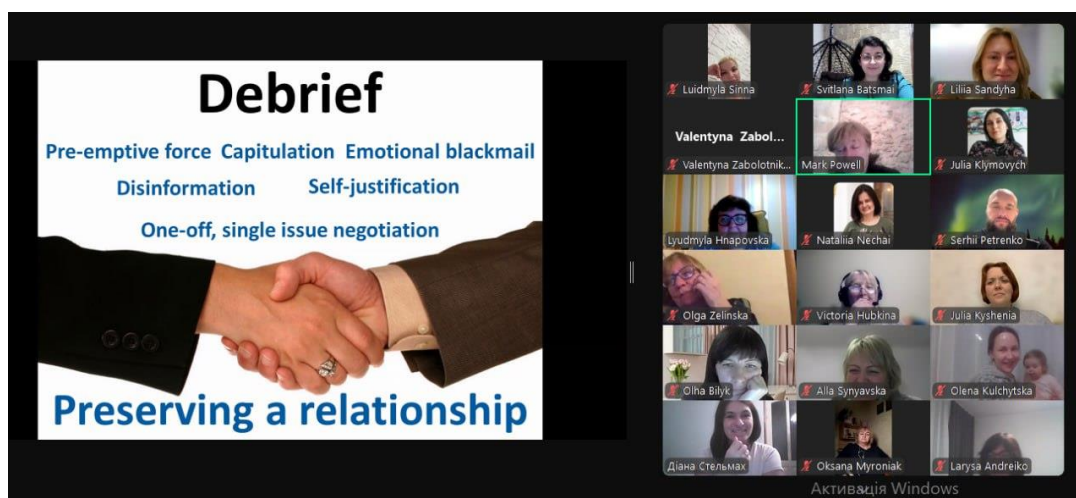
The course felt like browsing a boutique where, in addition to a perfect dress, you discover matching shoes, expert advice from a personal stylist, and even bespoke tailoring. “Positive Influence at Work” offered a structured, in-depth exploration of what it truly means to influence others - going far beyond surface-level communication strategies. It provided innovative tools to develop both my own soft skills and those of my students – skills that are becoming increasingly essential in and beyond academia.

How Did the Changing Room Experience Feel?

Just like trying on outfits, this course allowed me to experiment with different ways of influencing my students and choose the ones that best matched my teaching style. One of the most powerful insights I gained is that influence is not about authority or control: it's

about authenticity, trust, and the real-world application of what you believe in and model yourself.

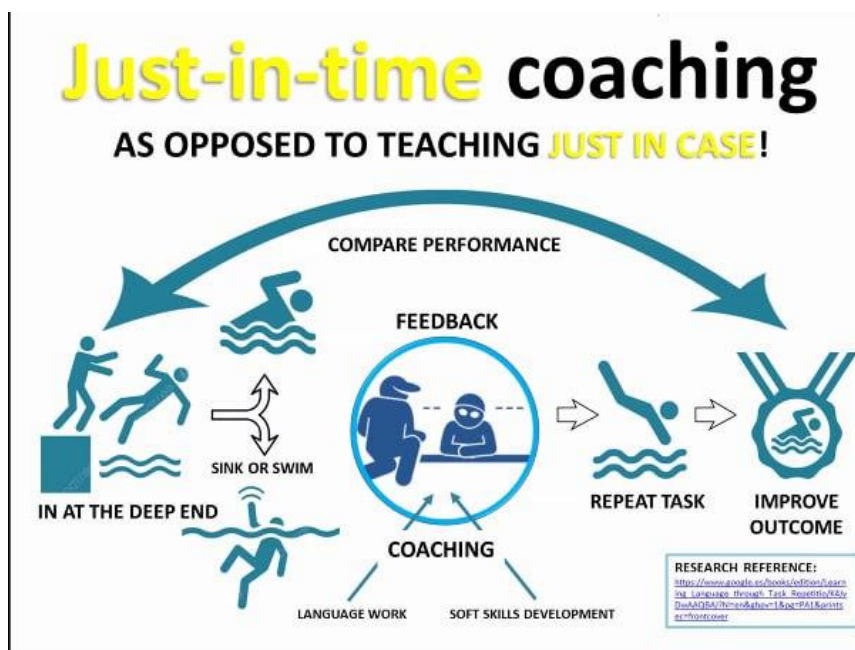
That insight resonated deeply. Teaching university students, especially in ESP contexts, requires more than delivering content. It means building rapport, creating engagement, offering meaningful tasks, and showing students how language fits into their real-world goals. Like choosing the right outfit, influence requires adjusting your approach to suit your learners' needs and personalities.



This process involves trial and error. Not every technique fits. Some feel stiff or ill-fitting. But others allow for movement, flexibility, and confidence. For example, when developing students' presentation skills, I've learned that storytelling patterns don't work the same for everyone. My male Master's students often resist personal stories or rhetorical flourishes. They prefer third-person examples or quotes from their field and may see empathy-building strategies as unnecessary or even time-wasting. Mark's course helped me better understand and accept these preferences – and adapt accordingly.

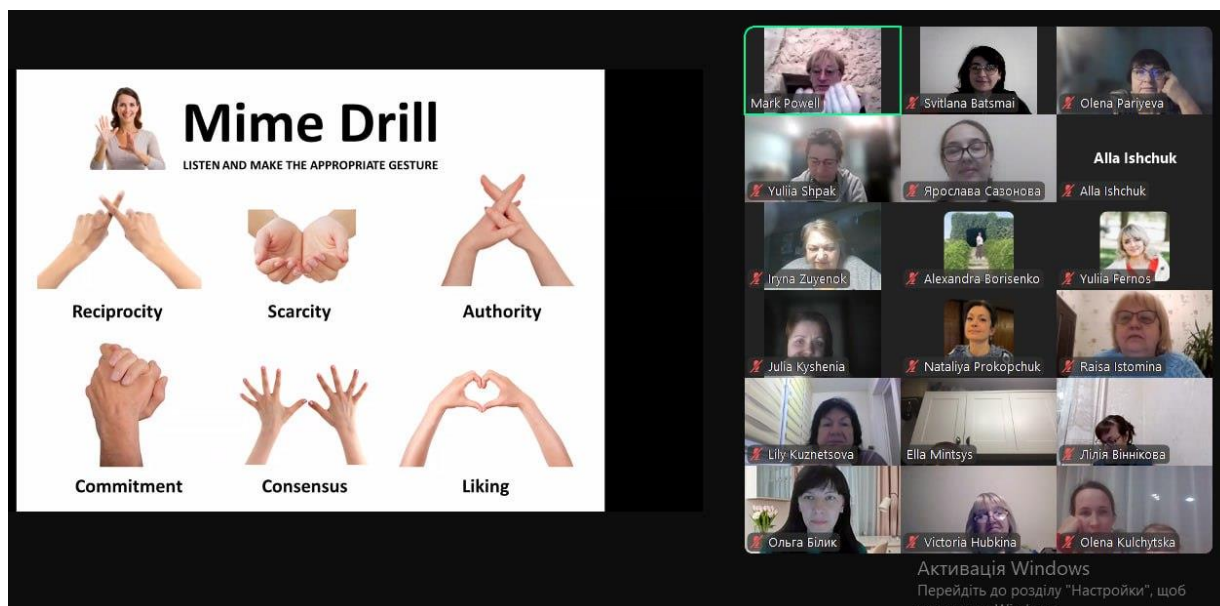
By incorporating Mark's interactive activities, I hope to better influence my learners to see that empathy and belonging aren't "extras" but essential ingredients in successful communication, networking, presentations, and negotiation. These human-centered skills lead to real-world success, and better business outcomes.

Another key theme was feedback, much like a mirror in a changing room. Just as a mirror helps you judge whether something fits and flatters, student feedback helps me assess what's working in my teaching. I now recognize the importance of gathering not just formal evaluation data but also engaging in daily classroom reflection – whether in a ROOM (in-person) or online (on ZOOM). As Mark emphasizes, real influence depends on awareness and responsiveness.



He also stresses that true influence isn't about pushing ideas but understanding others' perspectives. It's not about making others wear your dress – it's about helping them find one that suits them. This principle is vital in my multicultural, multi-specialist teaching environment. A one-size-fits-all method simply doesn't work. Tailoring content and tasks to students' career paths and interests – understanding and entering their “circles of influence” – takes effort but yields far better results.

Cialdini's six powerful weapons of influence (reciprocity, scarcity, authority, commitment and consistency) – referenced throughout the course – alongside Mark's practical tips from each session, have helped me move closer to my students' hearts. I now better understand what kind of “dress” they'll actually wear, proudly and comfortably.



What Am I Leaving the Boutique With?

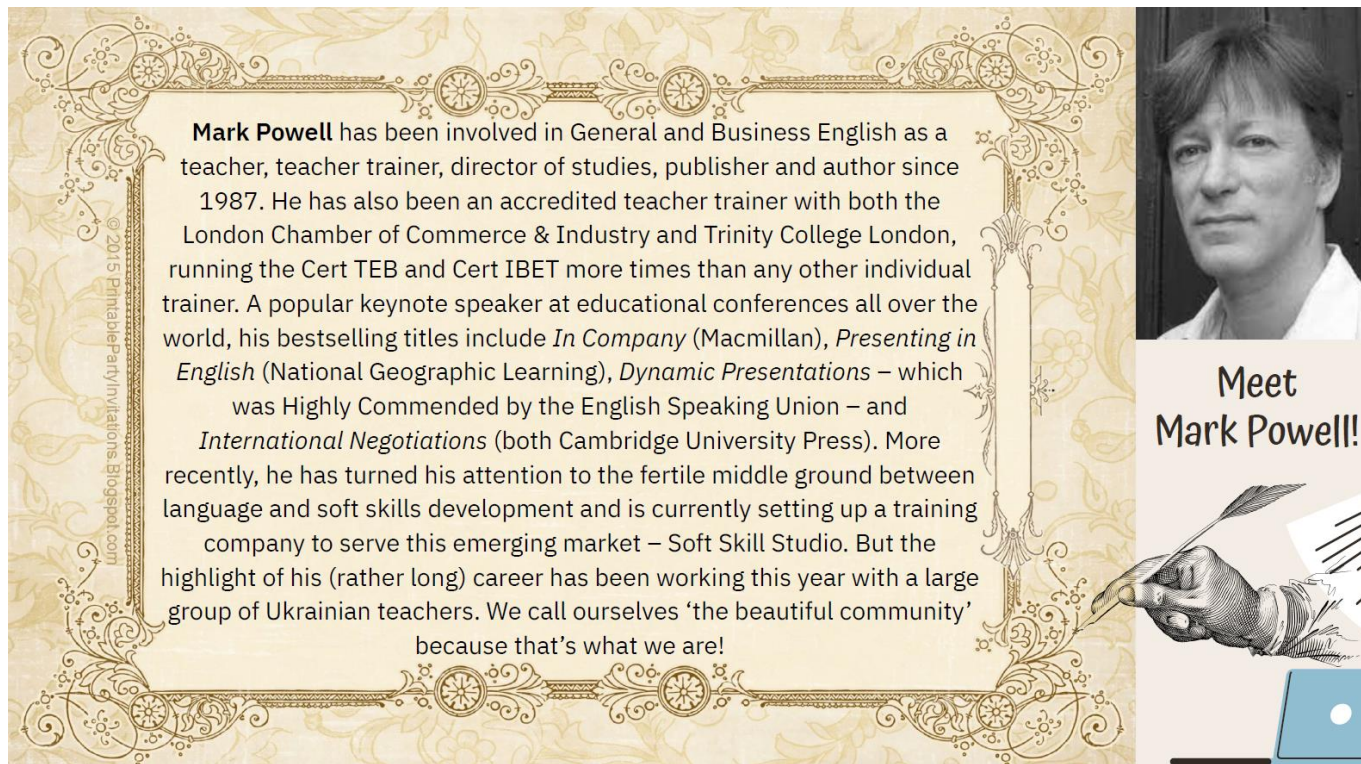
Everything I've shared here is just a glimpse of what I'm leaving this boutique of ideas with. My shopping bag is full of inspiration, insights, tools, and renewed motivation. I'm eager to apply these in my ESP classrooms and to continue evolving as both a teacher and an influencer.

And yes – I'll definitely be back when the next collection arrives!

The pricing policy in this boutique is unlike anywhere else: everything that would cost a fortune in a lesser shop is absolutely free here. Thank you, dear Mark Powell, for being not only a brilliant shop assistant but also a trusted stylist, a skilled tailor, and a passionate mentor.

See you again soon!

Mark Powell's BIODATA



Mark Powell has been involved in General and Business English as a teacher, teacher trainer, director of studies, publisher and author since 1987. He has also been an accredited teacher trainer with both the London Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Trinity College London, running the Cert TEB and Cert IBET more times than any other individual trainer. A popular keynote speaker at educational conferences all over the world, his bestselling titles include *In Company* (Macmillan), *Presenting in English* (National Geographic Learning), *Dynamic Presentations* – which was Highly Commended by the English Speaking Union – and *International Negotiations* (both Cambridge University Press). More recently, he has turned his attention to the fertile middle ground between language and soft skills development and is currently setting up a training company to serve this emerging market – Soft Skill Studio. But the highlight of his (rather long) career has been working this year with a large group of Ukrainian teachers. We call ourselves ‘the beautiful community’ because that’s what we are!

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Meet Mark Powell!

If you'd like to get an idea of Mark's approach and presentation style, have a look at these short YouTube clips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIuBwEFIsHg>.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7KV3FSKhIg>

To Mark Powell: A 'Thank You' Poem

(AI-generated yet deeply human, reflecting the transformational essence of the course from a participant's heartfelt perspective)

*Mark Powell. His name itself a guiding spell,
Drawn from power and well, it tells so well
A force of strength, yet kindness too,
A wellspring deep, refreshing, true.
A name, a promise, standing tall,
To lift, to lead, to give his all.
With every word, you lit a way,
Through trials dark, through skies so grey.
You showed us how to lead with grace,
To teach, to trust, to find our place.
In moments hard, when doubts arise,
You gave us strength, you made us rise.
Not just a guide, but one who stands,
With wisdom bright and helping hands.
You taught us more than words can tell,
The power held in "leading well."
Through lessons shared and kindness shown,
You've helped our seeds of hope be sown.
So here we stand, with hearts so true,
Forever grateful, thanks to you.
Your light will shine in what we do,
Our lasting thanks, from us to you!*

EMI Basics Online Course as Networking of Ukrainian University Teachers and Academics: *A Success Story*



SERHII PETRENKO

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The TESOL-Ukraine Developmental Project *‘EMI Basics (CPD Online Course for EMI University Teachers),’* originated from the Erasmus+ Project, *‘Foreign Language Teacher Training Capacity Development as a Way to Ukraine’s Multilingual Education and European Integration/ MultiEd,’* and the latest TESOL-Ukraine projects (2019-2024). The idea for the Project was generated by participants of the *2021 Odesa Professional Development Institute* in response to the challenges of internationalization of Ukrainian higher education. Since then, it has gained its popularity among EMI university teachers in

Ukraine, united ESOL and subject teachers of Ukraine by sharing values and beliefs in teaching at tertiary level, using English as a language of instruction, and developed English language communicative competences of its participants as well as enhanced professional skills and competences both of participants and the course facilitators.

It has also become a source for new projects and a pool for academics networking. For now, nearly 200 university teachers have developed and/or updated their professional skills. Some educational tools and strategies we used through the course may be applied for new projects and university courses, especially in emergency.

A little bit of history. The idea to launch a course for EMI teachers was born when finalizing CLIL Project and discussing needs in internationalization of higher education in peaceful *2021 Odessa Professional Development Institute*. The drafted Course Program was piloted in Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv by Serhii Petrenko, a pioneer of the Project and its leader, and Iryna Zuyenok as a facilitator, and got positive feedback. The content of the course was formed on the basis of the needs analysis, using the report of the British experts Rod Bolitho and Richard West who pointed out that *‘most current and potential EM teachers require methodological training to make their deliver more effective for students whose English may be weak. This training would need to include the effective use of technology, ways of making lectures more interactive, and in general scaffolding their inputs to make them more accessible’* (2016), and structured interview spread at the University. Having evaluated the course using the first 60 participants’ feedback, the official Syllabus was designed by us within a mini-team headed by **Olena Iliencko**. The Syllabus was approved at Dnipro University of Technology for the Linguistic Centre and Regional Learning Hub ‘DniproTECH’ in March 2024.

This initiative was supported by **Jen MacArthur, RELO, U.S. Embassy, Kyiv**, who provided a Virtual Educator for the course.

The course has a **double aim**: *‘to develop and/or upgrade professional and communicative language competences of EMI university subject teachers both in English*

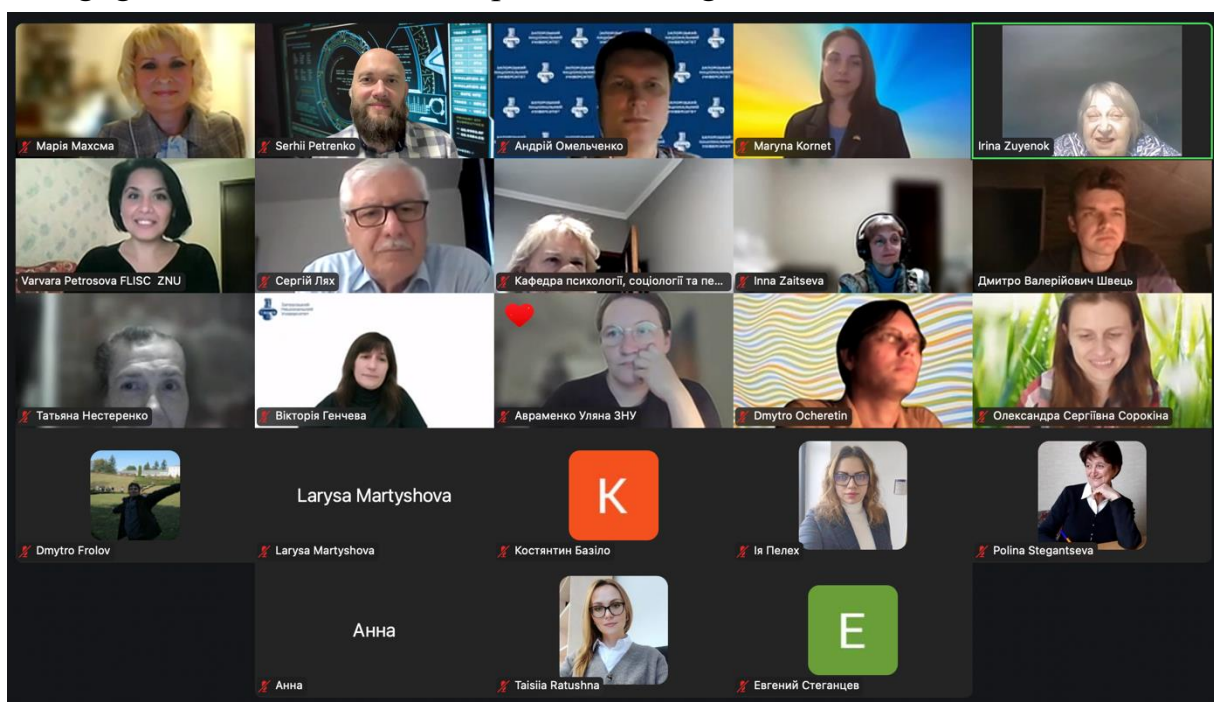
as a medium of instruction and pedagogy and methodology applied for lecturing and teaching specific subjects' (2024).



To provide maximum communication in English we use various applications and digital tools, learning platforms and social networks (Zoom, Padlet, Mentimeter, Telegram, Facebook, etc.) as well as email.

Target group: University subject teachers with language proficiency level: B1+ - B2. After piloting the project with a group of 60 EMI teachers at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, we have focused on the universities of Central and South Eastern

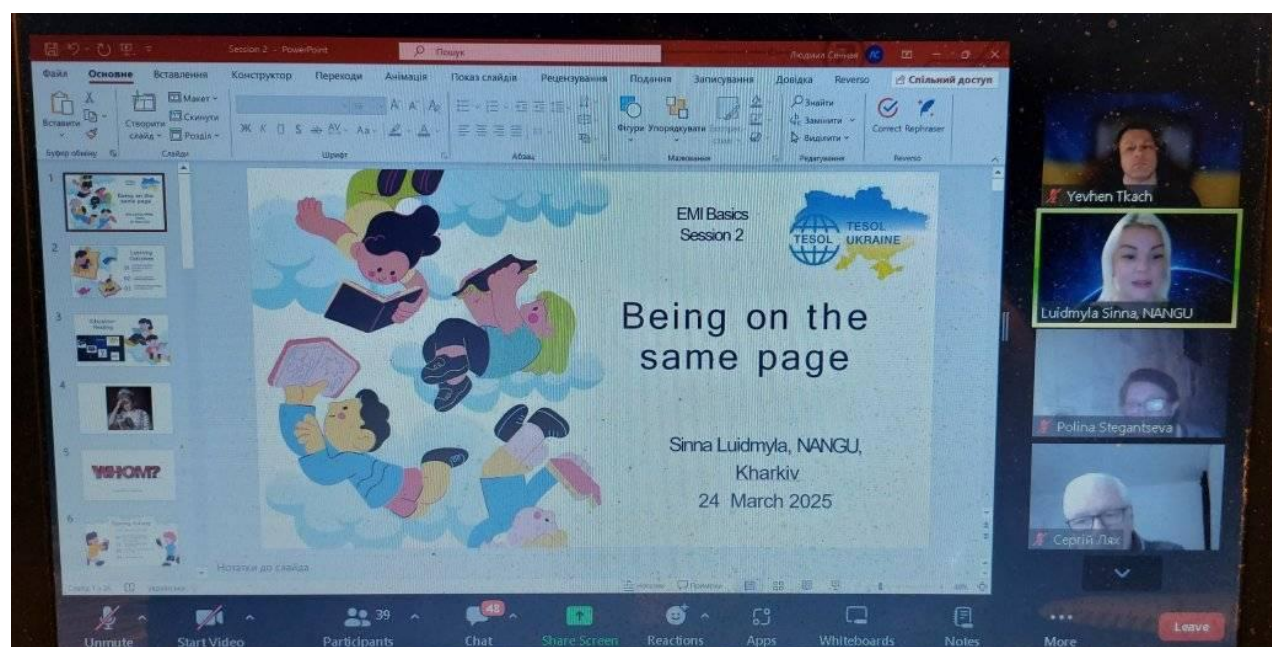
Ukraine in order to support academics of these universities and those removed: Dnipro University of Technology, Dnipro State University of Internal Affairs, Dnipro University of Customs and Finance, Kryvyi Rih National University, National Technical University of Ukraine 'Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute,' O.M. Beketov University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, Dmytro Motornyi Tavria State Agrotechnological University, Central Ukrainian National Technical University, Zaporizhzhia National University, National University 'Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic,' Zaporizhzhia Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education of the Zaporizhzhia Regional Council.



The **Linguistic Centre** at Dnipro University of Technology headed by **Iryna Zuyenok** and **Foreign Languages Intensive Study Centre** at Zaporizhzhia National University headed by: **Varvara Petrosova** volunteered to host and coordinate the course.

Application was free to access as *Call for Participation* was shared in various social networks for educators. The Application Form has been focused on needs analysis that easifies to update the content and redesign the course for the specific group of participants.

The team of the course facilitators. The course is delivered by a team of facilitators – TESOL-Ukraine members, who volunteered to give a two-hour session on the topic of their interest and/or research. The content is not rigid. As soon as new cutting-edge technologies appear and/or new knowledge and skills are obtained by the TESOLers in various projects, they are included into the content of the online course.



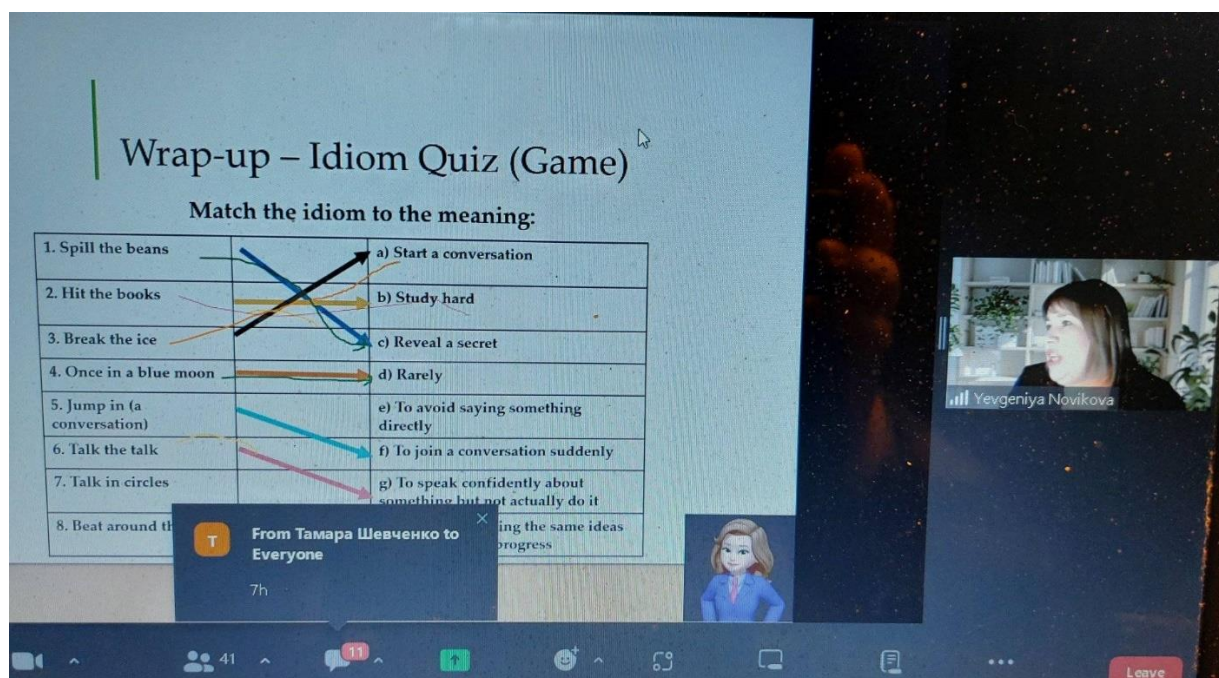
We started with **Olena Iliencko**, TESOL-Ukraine President, Doctor of Science, Professor at O.M. Beketov University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, who deliver the introductory speech to today’s year EMI Basics course participants and trainers; **Iryna Zuyenok**, Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages at Dnipro University of Technology, an ESP teacher, teacher/trainer trainer, PGRCert in Trainer Development (ELT) awarded by the University of Exeter (UK), Director of the Linguistic Centre; **Liudmyla Sinna**, Assistant Professor of the Department of Philology, Translation and Strategic Communication at the National Academy of the National Guard in Ukraine,

Kharkiv; **Maryna Tsehelska**, a scholar and educator with PhD in Linguistics, Director of the Educational Center ‘Interclass,’ and Associate Professor at the English Language and Methodology Department of Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, Vice-President of TESOL-Ukraine; **Serhii Petrenko**, Ph.D. in Linguistics, Associate Professor at the Foreign Languages Department for the Faculties of History and Philosophy at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, TESOL-Ukraine International Coordinator; **Oksana Chugai**, Ph.D. in Education, Associate Professor of the Department of English for Engineering #2 at the National Technical University of Ukraine ‘Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute,’ certified teacher/trainer (TKT, CELTA), TESOL-Ukraine Secretary; **Tetiana Starostenko**, Ph.D. in Linguistics, Associate Professor at English Philology Department at H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University and an Associate professor at the Department of Foreign Philology and Translation at O.M. Beketov University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, lecturer on Contemporary American Literature, Classic British Literature, A History of the English Language; and **Lyudmyla Hnapovska**, a Ph.D. in Linguistics, Associate Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistic Didactics at Sumy State University, where she teaches a variety of ESP courses for Bachelor, Master and Ph.D. students. Then, **Olga Yashenkova**, Ph.D., Director of KNU Language Centre, Associate Professor of the Department of English Philology and Intercultural Communication at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, where she teaches Communication Theory, Business English, English in Intercultural Communication, etc., joined with her expertise in SEL. This year we are happy to have in our team **Bohdana Saliuk**, Ph.D. in Comparative Literary Criticism, Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages and Teaching Methods, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities for Scientific and International Activities at Berdyansk State Pedagogical University, trainer at the Teaching Excellence Centre ‘Ars Docendi.’

Priorities of interests in the sessions delivered are traced in the feedback gathered by the end of the course.

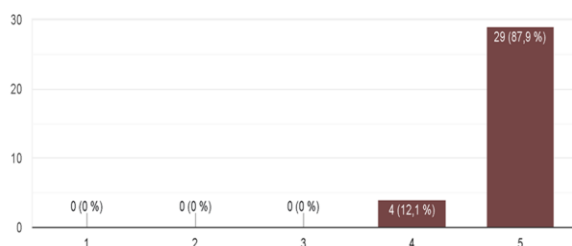


Conversational Club as an obligatory component of the course. To develop oral communication in addition to written communication in chats of various social nets, we have foreseen conversational clubs run by a Virtual Educator from the U.S. aimed at developing speaking skills (monologues, dialogues, polylogs, small talks, etc.), discussions and debates with the focus on developing fluency and expanding a range of vocabulary of various registers not limited to academic and business English only. The participants highly appreciated communication with **Liz Basok** in 2024, and TESOL-Ukraine members: Prof. **Yevhenia. Novikova** who is now working in UK and **Oksana Chudak**, who is in Denmark.



Participants' Evaluation of the Course. As we teach 'what we preach,' by the end of each round of the course we gather feedback, which helps us to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the course and to analyse needs to be used in re-designing the course and/or changing its content. Below are some responses of the participants of this year training, which may give you a hint on the course and its relevance, appropriacy and quality.

To what extent did the "Basics of EMI" course meet your needs?



To what extent did the "EMI Basics" course meet your expectations?

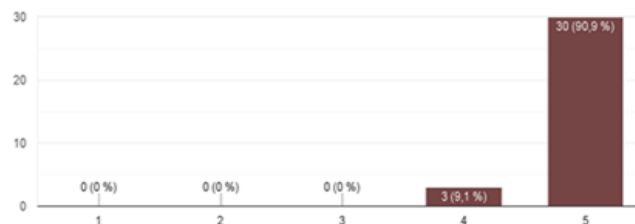


Fig. 1. Meeting participants' needs and expectations.

According to the course participants, new, the most interesting, thought provoking and meaningful for them were *sessions on Storytelling Strategies for Engaging Lessons by Bohdana Saliuk, Engaging Minds and SEL by Olga Yashenkova, Cultural dimensions in learning environment by Tetiana Starostenko, conversations and discussions, Quizzes, teaching approach and methodology*, and topics of the *Speaking Club*. Some of the participants wrote:

'This was my first experience of studying in this format, so everything was new, meaningful, interesting and provocative.'

'The didactic principles of EMI were largely new to me. I was struck by the boundless friendliness of the teachers who conducted the classes.'

The adjectives used by the participants to describe their personal overall impressions on the course are given in a word cloud given below.



Created with Wooclap

Fig. 2. Word cloud of participants' feedback on overall impression on the course

Potential impact of the course on EMI teaching. Twenty-seven participants of the course in 2025 shared the changes or ideas they are going to implement in their own courses. Among them the Framework of lecture shared by **Serhii Petrenko**, Idioms & Informal Phrases, Storytelling, Social Emotional Learning Competencies, forming micro-groups for discussion, using *'Bloom's taxonomy, template, storytelling, interactive methods,'* introducing *'all interactive tools,'* *'more activities with students during the class, implementation smart and digital technology on teaching for connecting with students and getting feedback from them,'* *'incorporating more interactive elements into my lectures, such as polls, group tasks, or short discussions, to increase student engagement and participation.'*

'I've revised my presentations and am now adding short videos, discussion questions, and feedback.'

'I will review the course syllabus and reduce the material by 20% to allow for more interactive activities.'

'Now my lectures will not be dry and bland. There will definitely be interactive tasks and videos. I will try to be on the same wavelength with the students.'

'I will plan and execute the lectures in a new way.'

'I will incorporate more student-centered activities to encourage interaction and communication in English.'



Output of the Project. Though the Project are still in progress, there are some important outputs of it after the first three rounds:

1. Nearly 200 lecturers from a dozen of Ukrainian Universities have undergone training at the course. Some of them have drafted updated Syllabuses and new courses of lectures to be delivered in English.
2. Innovative ideas and interaction during lectures are on the way to be applied both when lecturing in English and Ukrainian.
3. Launching a net of the University Linguistic Centers: Dnipro – Kyiv – Zaporizhzhia – Kharkiv with further cooperation.
4. Contributing to networking of the course participants within one specialism area. (E.g., Kharkiv – Kryvyi Rih – Uzhhorod – Tourism & Hospitality)
5. Launching Speaking Club for EMI teachers at the university level.
6. Professional development both participants and facilitators.
7. Promoting TESOL-Ukraine and its activities and events.

Despite of the positive feedback, there is a need in sustainability of this Project that is also mentioned by the majority of the course participants who are eager to continue their communication in English and networking within one specialism and/or university, city, and Oblast. Some regions of Ukraine are still not covered by the Project. So, we are ready to satisfy this need for the Central and Western Ukraine, if there are any.

Some wishes and valuable suggestions from the course participants may inspire you to join the team of facilitators or organize this course at your premises. We will be happy to support your initiative.

'I wish the course leaders to remain as motivated, active and inspiring. Teachers are, first and foremost, a personal example and all the leaders were infectious with their constructiveness, ability to hold the audience's attention and engage us in activities. Special thanks to Varvara Petrosova for moderating in such a difficult region for continuous sessions.'

'I wish further development of the course, new groups and new ice-break in lectures planning.'

'Thank you very much to all the speakers and organizers for their work! I wish the course would continue to grow and be enriched with new ideas for teaching.'

'I've been working on courses for 15 years and have seen different products. Yours is unique' (a teacher trainer/educator from Zaporizhzhia Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education).

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2025 EMI Basics Course Participants' Feedback (anonymous).

From Mentorship to Methodology: Integrating Coaching and Student-Centered Pedagogy into ESL Practice



ANNA RAIKHEL
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My recent role as a mentor and facilitator in the pilot TESOL-Ukraine Mentorship Program (January–June 2025) was not just a professional opportunity; it was a transformative experience that changed my perspective on teaching, learning, and student support. As I joined the program with enthusiasm to impart knowledge and support a fellow educator, I left with a more profound insight into how mentoring and coaching can significantly enhance ESL education, especially when integrated with student-centred teaching approaches. Language education has progressively moved towards models that focus on the learner, highlighting the importance of active participation, relevance, independence, and individual development. Grounded in constructivist learning theory, this approach enables students to take charge of their learning, promoting independence, critical thinking, and intrinsic motivation. In ESL settings, this philosophy proves particularly effective, enabling educators to customise instruction to accommodate various linguistic, cultural, and personal backgrounds. Previously, I had explored this approach; however, it was my experience in the mentorship program that motivated me to incorporate it into my academic teaching practice purposefully.

During the mentorship program, I observed directly how coaching and mentoring transformed the learning experience into something more personal. These strategies fostered trust, empathy, and ongoing development—principles that frequently become overlooked in inflexible, test-focused settings. In my role as a mentor, I offered comprehensive, enduring support, fostering my mentee’s emotional and professional development. In my role as a facilitator, I collaborated with my mentee to establish achievable, performance-oriented goals, tackle challenges through constructive feedback and reflection, and jointly create effective strategies. The process highlighted how mentorship can address both the academic and emotional needs of learners, especially in ESL classrooms where students frequently encounter cultural adjustments and linguistic insecurity.

Motivated by this experience, I started incorporating coaching cycles and reflective practices into my ESL courses at the university. I have begun to design my classes with a focus not just on linguistic goals, but also on the emotional readiness, self-regulation, and motivation of my students. By implementing goal-setting, journaling, and group discussions, I observed my students gaining a deeper awareness of their learning paths, developing greater confidence in their use of English, and becoming more connected with one another as a collaborative learning community.

A key insight I acquired was the significance of creating adaptive and individualised learning environments. ESL students possess diverse cognitive profiles, varying prior experiences, and distinct aspirations. I started incorporating tiered vocabulary tasks, multi-modal input, and choice-driven writing prompts to more effectively address individual needs and preferences. This method not only enhanced language results, it also instilled a sense of ownership in students regarding their learning. A significant insight gained from the mentorship program was the importance of viewing the curriculum as a dynamic network of relationships, rather than merely a static collection of materials. I now focus on inquiry-based learning, project-based collaboration, and peer mentoring, enabling students to derive meaning from real-world contexts. These changes transform my classroom into a space of collaborative creation, where both teacher and students engage in building knowledge together.

A huge transformation in my practice has been the incorporation of social and emotional learning (SEL). I now purposefully incorporate activities that promote empathy, emotional resilience, and intercultural awareness—components that are frequently overlooked in conventional ESL teaching yet are essential for learners facing academic and cultural shifts. Tools such as Padlet, Flipgrid, and Google Classroom have enabled me to incorporate formative and authentic assessments that extend beyond traditional grammar drills to evaluate comprehensive development. Certainly, the integration of student-centered teaching and mentoring comes with its own set of challenges. Throughout the pilot program, we faced challenges such as time limitations, substantial workloads, and the intricacies involved in evaluating both academic and emotional growth. Developing genuinely tailored learning paths and sustaining ongoing mentoring relationships necessitates institutional backing and time—resources that are frequently limited. Additionally, some students may not feel at ease with reflective practices or greater autonomy right away, particularly if they are used to hierarchical or teacher-centered settings. With clear expectations, careful scaffolding, and a safe, respectful atmosphere, even hesitant students started to flourish.



This pilot program really transformed my perspective on my responsibilities as an educator. I no longer view myself solely as a language instructor. I am currently a coach, mentor, facilitator, and learning partner, dedicated to co-creating environments where students feel empowered, valued, and capable. This method is in harmony with transformative learning theory, highlighting the importance of respect, agency, and

collaborative meaning-making. I am optimistic that teacher training programs should incorporate mentoring and coaching strategies within their frameworks. My experience highlights the necessity for additional professional development workshops, peer mentorship networks, and inclusive, technology-enhanced teaching methods that cater to the entire learner. It is essential to reconsider assessment practices to incorporate more genuine, student-centred, and culturally sensitive approaches. To effectively prepare ESL learners for real-world communication and global citizenship, our classrooms must embody the diversity, complexity, and humanity of the students they serve.

In summary, the TESOL-Ukraine Mentorship Program provided me with more than just insights; it offered me a clear sense of direction. It emphasised that language learning goes beyond the mere acquisition of grammar or vocabulary; it involves nurturing confident, reflective, and emotionally intelligent individuals. I bring this viewpoint into each lesson I teach, every curriculum I create, and every student I guide.

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**Pen, Page, and Purpose:
Word Magic in Wartime Ukraine
(Writing Our Way Forward)**

***Reflections on TESOL-Ukraine Professional Development
Summer Institute on Creative Writing in Lviv***



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The 2025 TESOL-Ukraine Summer Institute, devoted to the topic “Word Magic: Creative Writing Lessons for the Language-Learning Classroom,” was an immersive professional development event designed to empower educators through the transformative power of creative writing. This unique event featured two keynote trainers: internationally acclaimed poet and Fulbright Scholar Cecilia Woloch (the USA) and a teacher of English, teacher trainer, publisher, and author Mark Powell (Great Britain), joined by leading Ukrainian educators. The city of Lviv became a hub of inspiration for English language educators from across Ukraine. From June 30 to July 4, forty-two passionate EFL professionals gathered in person for the 2025 TESOL-Ukraine Summer Institute.

This highly anticipated face-to-face event brought together creative minds to explore the role of imaginative expression in English language teaching. Held face-to-face against the backdrop of war, the Institute was a celebration of language, identity, and the enduring power of creativity. The Institute served as a sign of the resilience and unity of Ukraine’s teaching community, showcasing the power of words to inspire, heal, and connect.



The event opened with a thought-provoking symposium “Language Learners as Authors: Creative Journeys in EFL”, where educators from diverse academic contexts shared how they cultivate creative writing in their settings. This was followed by a dynamic panel discussion “Students’ Voices, Teachers’ Tools: Creative Writing in the EFL Classroom” featuring our experts – poet Cecilia Woloch from the USA, along with TESOL-Ukraine trainers and leaders Dr. Maryna Tsehelska, Dr. Nataliia Pyliachyk, Dr. Olga Yashenkova, and CELTA/DELTA qualified EFL teacher Mariya Tykhonovska. Together, they addressed some of the most pressing challenges in the field, such as:

- how to engage mixed-ability learners in creative writing,
- how to assess creativity fairly,
- what genre-specific writing instruction is like,
- what promises and pitfalls of using AI we can face in creative work,
- how to find the delicate balance between encouraging creativity/originality and maintaining language accuracy.

Although Cecilia Woloch, who is an American poet, writer, educator, Fulbright scholar, National Endowment for the Arts fellowship recipient, author of six collections of poems, a novel, & numerous essays, was originally expected to serve as the keynote speaker, illness prevented her from attending in person. Nevertheless, she joined several sessions via Zoom, sharing her wisdom and poetic voice across borders. Her virtual presence was warmly felt, and her engagement added depth to the course’s creative dimension.



One of the highlights of the Institute was the unexpected yet deeply enriching session delivered by internationally renowned trainer Mark Powell, an expert with extensive experience in Business English as a teacher, trainer, director of studies, publisher, and author. Stepping in at short notice, Mark led a two-hour workshop on storytelling that left participants energized and reflective. With his trademark charisma and clarity, he guided us through narrative structures and strategies that could be adapted to a range of classroom contexts.

The programme also featured a rich variety of sessions on different aspects of creativity and creative writing in ELT, led by experienced TESOL-Ukraine trainers. Participants were introduced to methods and techniques aimed at unlocking learners' potential, cultivating their voices, and making the writing classroom a space for both linguistic growth and personal expression.

Participants engaged in hands-on workshops, collaborative sessions, and gained practical strategies for integrating creative writing into the language-learning classroom. It was like a journey, but instead of packing our suitcases beforehand, we tucked away treasures of writing wisdom into our professional suitcases during this event.

Cecilia Woloch guided us through the art of the micro-memoir — those tiny, glimmering moments that reveal who we truly are. She showed us that even the briefest memories, when held carefully, could unfold into stories in her sessions “Angel Baby Blues: A Catalogue of Memories” and “Life Stories in Miniature: The Micro-Memoir.”

From her, we learned to see the extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary.



Mark Powell demonstrated how unpredictable and rewarding a teacher’s job could be in his session “Story Coach! Storytelling Tools & Techniques from Kindergarten to Corporate.” Yes, there were problems, challenges, and narrative pitfalls — but just when things seemed most uncertain, a superhero appeared. His reminder was clear: in every great story (and every workshop), there’s a turning point when something or someone saves the day. For us, the Summer Institute was that moment.

For us, the Summer Institute was that moment.

Maryna Tsehelska provided detailed instructions on how to transform a single sentence into an entire world at the session “From One Line to a Narrative: Stories from a Given Sentence.” With her guidance, we explored how a story can grow from the smallest prompt. Her scaffolding strategies unlocked creativity for every writer, no matter their level, proving that imagination needs only a spark.



Olha Bilyk, Iryna Malyshivska, and Nataliia Pyliachyk led us on a virtual trip called “Writing with All Senses: A Multimodal Journey into Storytelling.” Their exercises awakened all five senses, reminding us that immersive storytelling is essential for transporting our students to the world of imagination and creativity.

Olga Yashenkova reminded us that even the most creative minds sometimes need support. She encouraged us to embrace AI as a tool, a companion that can assist without replacing the writer’s authentic voice.

Lyudmyla Hnapovska demonstrated how stories are shaped by the places at her session, “First-Person Writing that Brings Stories to Life: Learning through Place.” Through her, we discovered how landscapes can become characters in their own right. She reminded us that setting isn’t just a backdrop; it breathes emotion and meaning into every narrative, so even a humble object may become a vivid character to tell an exciting story.

One of the most memorable experiences of the week was the plein-air session held in Lviv’s open-air ethnographic museum, or “skansen.” Surrounded by traditional Ukrainian architecture and artifacts, participants explored themes of cultural identity and memory. The setting proved to be the perfect backdrop for inspiring first-person narrative writing rooted in national heritage and personal reflection. The participants of the TESOL-Ukraine Summer Institute not only attended sessions there, but also had a hands-on experience at a workshop on “motanka”, a traditional Ukrainian doll. The museum integrates the hilly landscape, restored Carpathian vegetation, and carefully relocated historical buildings from various regions of Western Ukraine. It was a perfect setting for our first-person narratives!



Liudmyla Sinna led us into the session “The Story Circle: Weaving Words, Building Bonds,” a gentle yet powerful reminder that challenges shape our personal, social, and

professional portraits. Her session was a space of reflection, connection and transformation through shared narratives.

Serhii Petrenko brought laughter and surprise to the room with dice, character cards, and collaborative challenges in the session “Roll, Write, Solve: Dice-Based Creative Writing.” Through gamification, he showed us how writing could be spontaneous, playful, and adventurous when teamwork meets imagination.



Hanna Podosynnikova taught us at the session “Designing Creative Writing Competitions: Making the Magic Work” that when image, music, and text come together, something magical happens with organisers and participants of creative contests. That spark — when multiple modes collide — ignites creativity and brings narrative to life in surprising and powerful ways.

Mariia Tykhanovska and **Andrii Borovskyi** helped us not only discover geese with exotic names but also unearth poetic treasures — rhythms, rhymes, and playful sounds that added music to our words.

Final projects “Takeaway Treasures: Words, Wisdom, and Wonder,” presented in teams, showcased all the treasures discovered by the participants, and creative ways of using them to present a final product – a skit, song, presentation, or poem. The final day of the Summer Institute was for reflection on sensory richness, the power of small moments, cultural roots, the magic of place, multimodal creativity, community connection, narrative scaffolding, playful collaboration, and the courage to keep writing. This event was a unique opportunity to learn something new about teaching writing, using it as a tool for revealing creative potential and connecting with fellow professionals.



It was also an emotional retreat for us, educators, at the end of the academic year. The spirit of the Institute – collaborative, reflective, and brave – will stay with us for a long time.



In times of uncertainty, Word Magic reminded us that creativity in the language classroom is more than a methodology: it's a form of connection, resistance, and hope. As we return to our classrooms, we do so renewed in our mission and deeply inspired by the magic we created together.

TESOL-Ukraine Partnership:
TESOL-Bulgaria Methodology Tips
on Extensive Reading for Language Development



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Introduction. The American School of Bulgaria offers students the opportunity to study for an American High School diploma using the Core Curriculum Standards based on the requirements of the state of Florida. At both the foundation school, AFSB (grades 1-7), and the high school, AHSB (grades 8-12), instruction is entirely in English, and applicants have to have at least a B1 level of proficiency in English to be accepted into high school. According to the CEFR standards, students with a B1 level can understand the main points of clear texts on familiar topics in standard language, manage most situations on a trip to places where English is used, produce simple, organised texts about familiar topics, and describe experiences, events, wishes and aspirations, and explain opinions and plans (British Council, n.d.).

Since its inception, the school has accepted students from many different countries, and currently, the student demographic includes Ukrainians, Russians, Bulgarians, Turks, Belgians, Indians, and more. Students are accepted into any grade and do not need to complete the full 12 years with the school to qualify for the diploma, although they are encouraged to complete grades 9 to 12 with the high school.

While B1 language proficiency is the minimum requirement, it still needs further development to enable students to cope with the intricacies of Shakespeare, Poe's poems, or science texts. The school provides support through ESL classes during summer school before the academic year starts, and for students who struggle in the opening months, extra ESL classes are given.

In his book, *The Power of Reading*, Stephen Krashen (2004) reported that in-school free reading programs invariably demonstrated growth in students' comprehension, vocabulary development, writing ability, and speaking ability, usually above those who received formal instruction (p.3). The stress is, of course, on free reading or extensive reading. Students who read books of their own choice, that they are interested in, perform better than those who do intensive reading where they are given prescribed texts to read, mainly since free reading is, in Krashen's words (2004, p.38) a low-anxiety environment in which comprehensible input is acquired.

As a second language speaker of English myself, I can attest to the development of my language skills by reading avidly and constantly in English. The establishment of a reading program at AHSB to provide additional support and immersion time in English was, therefore, close to my heart and something I knew would help those students struggling with comprehension. Besides, I had already presented similar programs in South Korea and seen the positive effects obtained (Overbeek, 2025), so I expected that similar effects would be seen in this type of program.

Methodology. The school has some English books in various genres and levels available as part of its library, and these, along with a printed version of a full collection of Calvin and Hobbes cartoons as written by Bill Watterson, were made available to students. They were also encouraged to bring any book they wanted to read, as long as it was in English, to the classes. Many students asked for permission to read books on tablets or cellphones, and initially this was allowed. However, after seeing the results reported by Park and Lee (2021) about the benefits of paper-based texts for inferential reading comprehension (p.35), it was decided that in the second semester only paper-based texts would be acceptable, and twenty more books were bought to supplement the existing library. Classes are 50 minutes long, twice a week, in the last period on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All students in the 8th, 9th and

10th grades have to take this class. Students get a reading passport, where any book they have finished reading is briefly discussed with the teacher, who then signs off on it.

In the first semester, students were tested for reading fluency, accuracy and comprehension using the rubric shown in table 1. Each evaluation was based on a short article at a specific level, which students had to read out loud to the teacher, after which they answered inferential as well as specific information questions. The first evaluation was done using an A2 level text, the next using a B2 level text and the final evaluation in semester 1 used a text at C2 level.

The October evaluations (A2 level) were used as a baseline against which to measure the progress a student made during the first semester. Six-week intervals were allowed between evaluations for students to consolidate the progress they were making.

Table 1. Reading Evaluation Rubric - Semester 1.

	Level				
Aspect	1	2	3	4	5
Fluency	Can't read	Can read some words, but less than 50%.	Can read most words, but stops at unfamiliar words and asks for help.	Can read almost all the words but tries to read too fast and misses words and phrases, or pauses occasionally to sound out a word.	Reads with the speed and rhythm associated with native speakers.
Accuracy	Can't read	Can't say words correctly, often misses words, or mispronounces them.	Misses some words and often guesses at a word or puts a word in that is not there.	Makes a good guess at words not known, but misses punctuation and intonation.	Read the text as written.
Comprehension	Can't read	Unable to answer any questions about the content.	Can find specific information when re-reading the text, but can't render the gist of the text.	Can answer some gist questions, but cannot make inferences. Can find information quickly.	Can tell the story or convey the gist in their own words. Can answer information and inference questions.

Results. The following bar charts (figures 1, 2, and 3) illustrate the results obtained by the students in the three criteria measured, Fluency, Accuracy, and Understanding. It can be seen that, in general, there is an upward trend with each subsequent evaluation. Also, since students are expected to have some level of English ability, no student scored below 3, which was a good sign.

It is evident that some students stayed at more or less the same level as their baseline, but it still illustrates an improvement since the level of language increased from A2, to B2, to C1 - indicating that they coped reasonably well with more complex language as time passed. However, some students showed a decline as the level of difficulty of the texts used increased. This is a significant result, as the students in question were those who tended to use the time in the class to socialize rather than read. Since this is supposed to be anxiety free reading, students who were seen socializing rather than reading, were constantly reminded that it is supposed to be a reading session. However, in the interests of keeping the anxiety levels low, they were not disciplined as this would have raised their anxiety, instead, students were reminded of the benefits they could be accruing.

Figure 1. Understanding

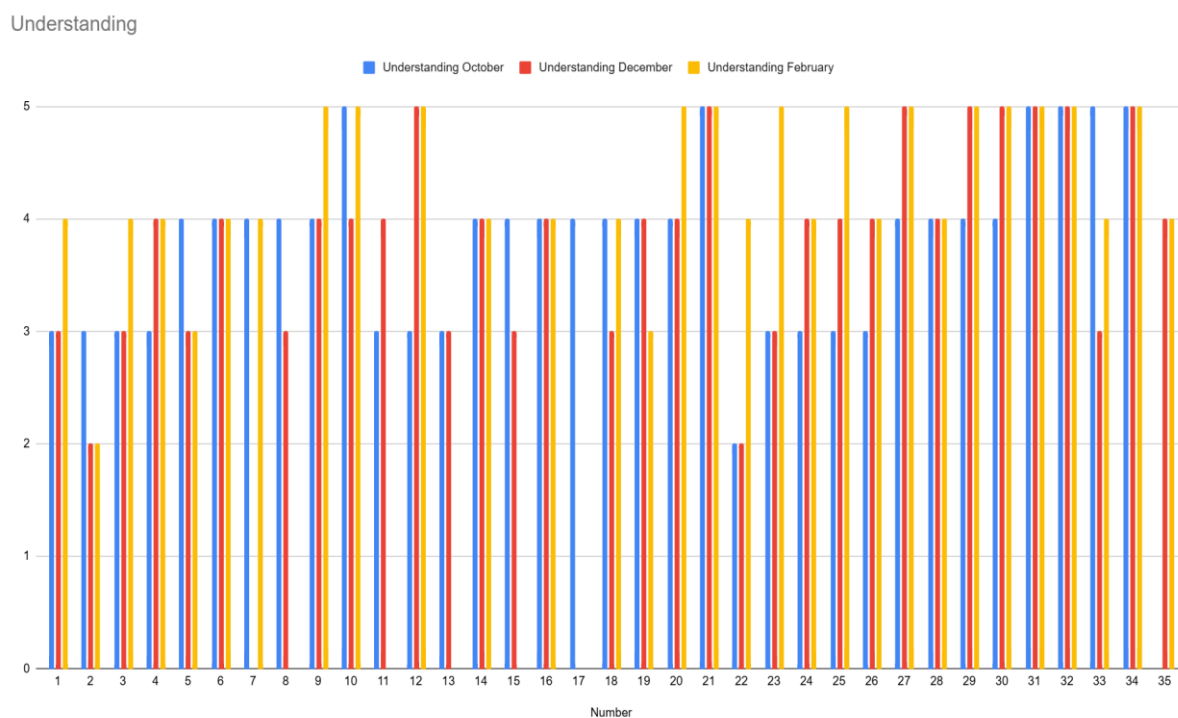


Figure 2. Accuracy

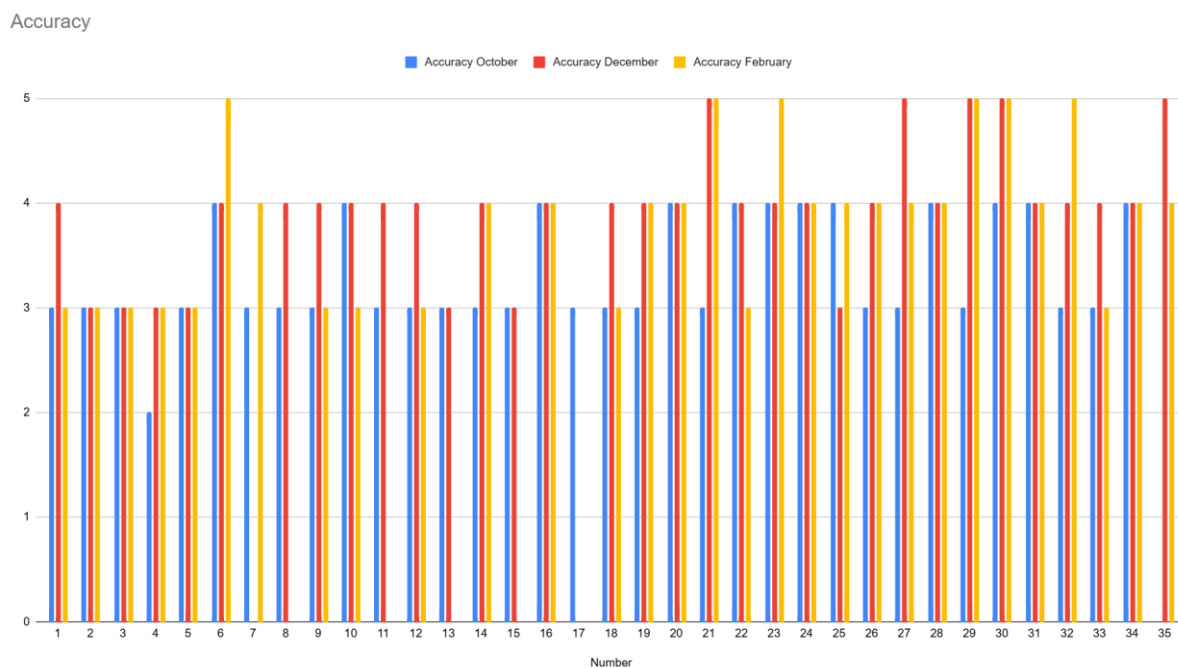
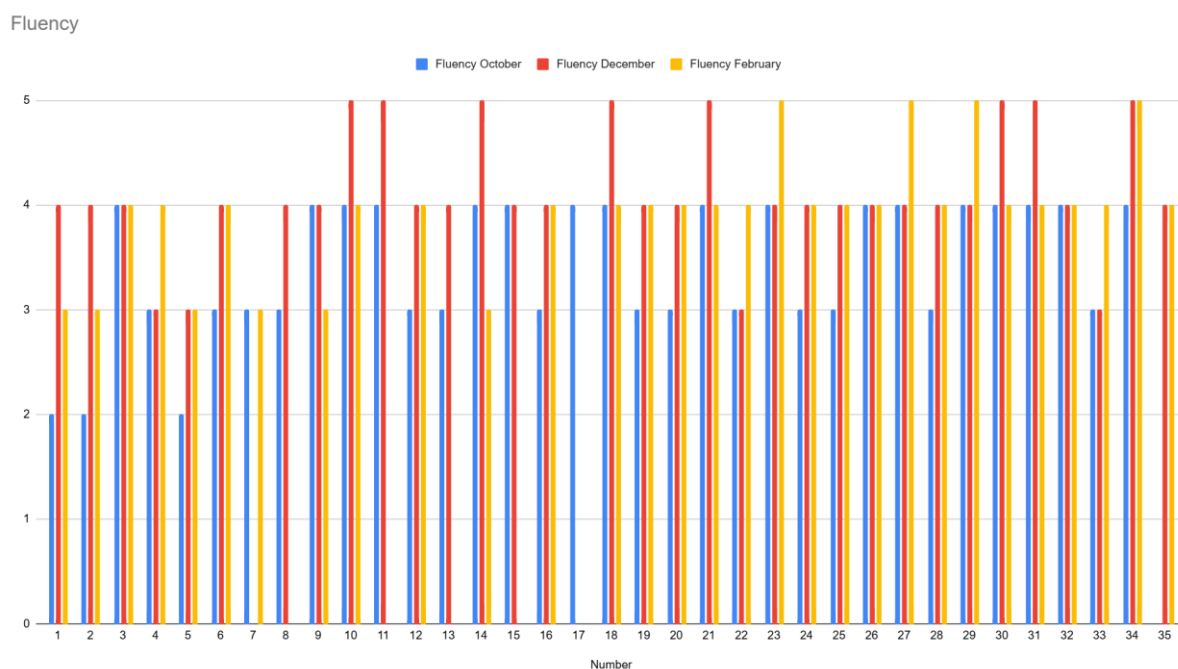


Figure 3. Fluency



In all of these graphs, it can be seen that there are students who were absent during an evaluation, and in one case, who left the school.

To fully evaluate the impact of this program, we compare two students from 8th grade (numbers 1 and 2), two from 9th grade (numbers 12 and 13), and two from 10th grade (numbers 24 and 25), all of whom had the same baseline evaluations. Their average

performance in English and Science for written submissions in November and February is also provided.

In the case of the students from 8th grade, their behavior in the reading class was not the same, while it was similar in the case of the students from 9th and 10th grades. This behavior involved the focus with which they read, how often they discussed what they had read with the teachers, and the general discipline they showed during reading classes.

Table 2. Comparison of Reading Program and Subject Results *

Student Number	Oct.			Engl.	Sci.	Dec.			Feb.			Engl.	Sci.
	F	A	U	W.A. Nov	W.A. Nov	F	A	U	F	A	U	W.A. Feb	W.A. Feb
1	2	3	3	23	60	4	4	3	3	3	4	60	60
2	2	3	3	53	70	4	3	3	3	3	2	40	80
12	3	3	3	80	90	4	4	5	4	3	5	88	97
13	3	3	3	10	68	4	3	3	4	3	3	80	75
24	3	4	3	93	85	4	4	4	4	4	4	80	90
25	3	4	3	98	85	4	3	4	4	4	5	96	96

* Legend - F = Fluency, A = Accuracy, U = Understanding, W.A. = written assignment

Student 2 in 8th grade stayed on the same page of the book in all reading classes and never attempted to discuss the book with the teacher. This was despite numerous attempts to focus them on reading, reminding them of the fact that this is a reading class, and encouraging them to make use of the time to their advantage. All the other students reported above focused for varying lengths of time, ranging from 20 minutes to the whole period of 50 minutes, often taking a short break to stretch or think about what they read.

Discussion. Because the evaluations were done using texts of increasing language difficulty, there might be room to argue that the performance of students who attained the same level of accuracy, fluency, and understanding should be adjusted upwards.

However, if we consider that all the students are also exposed to either ESL (for 8th grade students who scored under a B1 level when assessed on more than just grammar), or English classes, as well as constant immersion in English in their other subjects, the assessments are still on a fair level compared to their expected language level, and can stand as is.

This also raises the point of how much of a difference is being made by extensive reading, and how much is the result of the above-mentioned exposure to the language on all levels - being expected to read texts, answer quiz questions, listen to explanations, and take part in

oral discussions. To determine this, much more data needs to be collected, and longitudinal, controlled studies are needed. However, already existing longitudinal studies (Krashen, 2004, p.37) have methodologies that would be difficult to implement in a school where the aim is to use proven and helpful educational strategies to maximize our students' chances for success, and setting up a control group may be seen as depriving students of an advantage.

It is in this light that these results are presented, not to prove that extensive reading is a good idea, but simply to show how the introduction of this idea into this school has helped students to adjust to an English-only environment in school while being part of a society where English is seldom if ever used. This is why there is very little in the way of statistical analysis here, since the sample size is too small and the data collection too sparse. Also, the effect of other factors on the development of the students has to be considered as well.

What can be seen is, for example, the two students in 8th grade - student number 1 showed improvement not only in language ability but also in their science subject, where an improved level of understanding of written text no doubt helped them to achieve better grades in the quizzes and assignments. Student number 2, who, as mentioned before, does not use the time in the reading class to read (or at least try to read), showed a decline in their grades in English, and while doing well in science, has not achieved outstanding results.

The two students in 9th grade are an interesting pairing, since number 12 is from a country that uses English as a commonly spoken language, while 13 is from an area with very little or no use of English as a general means of communication. As can be seen from the table, both of them showed a similar baseline for the text that was at the A2 level. However, it is clear that student 12, while struggling with reading out loud, did not have difficulties in using English and responding to it during instruction, while student 13 struggled with the language as a subject and also when using it during instruction. However, their dedication to extensive reading and instruction saw their grade for English skyrocket, while their scores in science also rose.

The final pairing of two students in the 10th grade showed how a similar start, but a different approach to extensive reading, affected their scores in English. First of all, student 24 was reading on a cellphone, while student 25 read a printed book. In the final evaluation, student

25 scored higher in understanding and showed consistent results in their written work in English and their science subject. Student 24, however, did not show an increase in their ability to make inferences and to understand gist, and their written work in English showed a decline.

This last finding, again, might not be significant since many other factors may have played a part, but it is indicative of a finding reported by Park and Lee (2021, p.55) that the use of printed materials, whether handouts or books, improves inferential reading comprehension. In general, it can be said that the students who used the time available to read extensively and freely, improved their reading ability to near-native speaker levels, while those who found the process tedious, tried to use the time to socialize rather than read, and in general did not find reading pleasant but a chore, did not benefit.

Conclusion. “In other words, as students believe that they will succeed in reading and develop these beliefs, it is thought that their interest, curiosity, and desire for reading will increase” (Baki, 2024, p.60). Students are now in the second semester of the school year, and in this semester, they are only allowed to use print books, and their reading scores from the first semester have been shared with them and their parents. Seeing their progress as well as only reading from printed text, their inferential reading comprehension will improve, and the metacognitive motivation to read will become manifest.

What is clear is that reading is beneficial, and providing students with a time to read, the choice of what to read, and discussions of what has been read is an important part of the educational process that prepares them for being able to function in multi-lingual environments and achieve academic excellence, not only here at high school, but in the future at university and in their careers.

This is especially true for our large contingent of Ukrainian students. For many of them, English has been an academic subject rather than a means of communication or of discovering the world. The school has welcomed the Ukrainian students and has done its best to make them feel welcome in this new environment, and as a result our multi-cultural student body is discovering many things about each other and cultures not currently represented in person, but definitely on the pages of the books they are reading.

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Dr Leonie Overbeek Bio

Dr Overbeek completed a PhD at Sofia University in Philosophy, examining the relationship between humans and nature from an ethical perspective, in 2023. She currently works at the American High School of Bulgaria in Varna, where she teaches Economics, Public Speaking, Debate, Writing, and Reading.

She was born in South Africa and worked in the hard sciences for over 20 years, doing research on mining and mineral extraction, before doing a Master's degree in Value and Policy Studies at Stellenbosch University, focusing on communication inside organizations. She regards herself as a lifelong learner and tries her best to share her enthusiasm for learning new subjects and exploring new realms of information with her students.

Raising Global Educators for a Sustainable Tomorrow: Ukraine's Voice in the Erasmus+ GTSF Project



OLGA YASHENKOVA
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In today's rapidly changing world, education plays a critical role in preparing individuals to address global challenges, ranging from climate change and inequality to digital transformation. Equipping future teachers with global competencies is essential for building a more sustainable and inclusive society.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (TSNUK) is proud to represent Ukraine in the international Erasmus+ project "*Global Teachers for a Sustainable Future*" (GTSF), which runs from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2026. The project supports the European Union's priorities by enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education and fostering global competencies among both students and educators.

GTSF promotes innovative educational practices that integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4: Quality Education, into higher education. Its primary goal is to empower future teachers to become global citizens and agents of positive change, while equipping educators with tools to embed sustainability, intercultural awareness, and digital collaboration into their teaching.

The project aims to:

- equip students with the skills, knowledge, and values needed for global citizenship and sustainable thinking;
- train educators to integrate the SDGs into curricula using Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) principles and Virtual Exchange (VE) methodologies, including Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL);
- develop micro-credentials and recognition mechanisms to validate learning outcomes;
- promote inclusive internationalization at home within higher education systems;
- support the UN 2030 Agenda through joint educational and research initiatives.

Through this multifaceted approach, GTSF seeks to make sustainability education more accessible, relevant, and globally connected.

The project consortium brings together leading **universities, educational networks, and organizations** from Europe, Asia, and Latin America, forming a rich, intercultural learning and collaboration environment:

- CEU Cardinal Herrera University (Spain – project coordinator)
- Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)
- Technical University of Braunschweig (Germany)
- Transilvania University of Braşov (Romania)
- Ibn Haldun University (Turkey)
- Jönköping University (Sweden)
- Global Case Study Challenge NGO (Austria)
- Spanish Network for Sustainable Development (Spain)
- Sultan Idris Education University (Malaysia)
- University of Monterrey (Mexico)
- Colombian Network for the Internationalization of Higher Education (Colombia)



Kick-off meeting of the GTSF team at CEU Cardinal Herrera University

This international partnership enables the co-creation of educational resources, facilitates experience sharing, and supports peer learning across diverse higher education contexts.

The GTSF project includes a wide range of activities designed to build sustainable teaching practices:

- joint international trainings, workshops, and seminars;
- development of a Learning Management System (LMS) to host course content and micro-learning modules;
- creation of a comprehensive teacher's handbook on integrating ESD and VE/COIL;
- piloting courses and evaluating their impact on students and educators;
- facilitation of VE/COIL projects where student teachers work in international teams to tackle sustainability challenges.



Working together for the sustainable future of global education

A **core component** of the project is the **VE** program for teacher education students, which enables international collaboration on sustainability-related themes. Participants engage in virtual “community walks,” co-create digital projects, and build both intercultural communication and digital literacy skills. Their learning achievements are recognized through micro-certificates and digital badges that can be added to CVs or LinkedIn profiles.

Importantly, members of TESOL-Ukraine and colleagues from other Ukrainian universities had the opportunity to join the “Virtual Exchange Trainer & Facilitator Program” from July 7–18, 2025 – one of the project’s cornerstone professional development offerings. This structured training consists of four modules:

1. Foundations of VE and COIL
2. Designing Engaging Virtual Learning Experiences
3. Cross-cultural Facilitation and Managing Inclusive Virtual Learning Spaces
4. VE Practice: Facilitating a GTSF Collaborative Project



TESOL-Ukraine NEWSLETTER:

Call for Submissions

It's a great professional development opportunity! *TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter* invites you to submit articles on various subjects related to the professional life of English teachers and TESOL-Ukraine activities in your area.

Dear TESOL-Ukraine members,

On this page, we bring to your attention the main rules set for submissions to the TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter. Following the requirements, you will easily choose the field and format for your article. You will save time and effort while preparing it and ensure the best result, which will increase its chances of being accepted for publication in either the TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter or any other TESOL International journal.

The Editorial Board may suggest that the author send the material for the partner's TESOL-Hawaii Newsletter. You are always welcome in your articles to share research-based practices and to report on practice at all levels and in all contexts that are grounded in theory and have immediate relevance to practitioners.

The main requirements for the material submitted:

1. The submission must be original and not a revision or restatement of research in the field.
2. The submission must not have been previously published or be under consideration for publication elsewhere.
3. Authors may use British or American spelling, but they must be consistent.
4. The authors should submit manuscripts electronically to the Editorial Board of the TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word or a compatible program. Please submit figures, graphs, and other graphic elements in a standard graphic

format (e.g.: JPEG or Excel). Tables should be created in Microsoft Word or a compatible program.

5. Authors who want to submit video or music files should contact OChugai@meta.ua for further information.

6. All quoted materials must be cited in the text and the following reference list.

7. All the submissions should be addressed to OChugai@meta.ua.

The Editorial Board will be thankful to both the authors of the new rubrics and those of the traditional sections of the TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter.

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