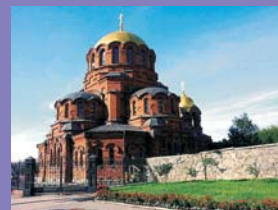


NOVELTA

NOVOSIBIRSK ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION



2011

PRESIDENT GREETING

**THE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC STUDENT CONFERENCE
IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES – 2010**

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STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT GREETING



Dear Colleagues,
 With the transition of our society from industrial to post industrial one in conditions of globalizing world we, language teachers, need to switch from non participative methods and pedagogy to a learner centered pedagogy focused on the acquisition of such competences as:

problem-solving, critical thinking, capacity to quickly adjust to new developments, cooperative and communicative skills.

We need to be highly adaptable to changing demands of the world labor market and learners individual needs. Principal to the idea of education under new conditions is the understanding that knowledge and competences sustainable to efficiently live and work in post-industrial economy cannot be acquired through formal teaching alone, but need to be practiced. They are acquired through a “learning by doing” approach, based on learners’ experience and autonomy.

But what is understood by ‘learners’ autonomy’? Does it

mean *situations* in which learners study entirely on their own? Maybe, it implies a set of *skills* which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning? Is it likely to be the *right* of learners to determine the direction of their own learning? These are the questions we are going to discuss at our Winter Methodology School “Season for Learner Autonomy” this year.

Whatever the implications of our discussion might be, we should always bear in mind that to become autonomous our learners need us, teachers, who are always ready to help. Is not it good to know that you are needed by someone?

**President of the NOVELTA,
 Elena Melekhina**

THE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC STUDENT CONFERENCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES – 2010:

“The impact of globalization on modern society: serious challenges or unique opportunities?”

One of the most significant events of the autumn term at the Faculty of Humanities was the annual scientific student conference in foreign languages, which was traditionally held by the department of Foreign Languages on 25 November. More than 40 students took part in the conference. The theme of the conference – 2010 was “The impact of globalization on modern society: serious challenges or unique opportunities?”

No doubt that *globalization* has been a central topic for several

decades. It is a multifaceted process which covers economic, political cultural spheres of human life. It makes our world more interdependent and interconnected. At the same time, *globalization* has proved to be one of the most controversial topics. There are decidedly mixed opinions on globalization. It is obvious that as any process it has both advantages and disadvantages.

On the one hand, it is definitely about progress, because it connects people by means of communication and offers them

new opportunities for work, education and travel. It increases competition and leads to better (cost effective to produce and cheaper) products. Free movement of people, goods and services is believed to be beneficial to economies all over the world.

On the other hand, there is an opinion that globalization is increasing the gap between developed and developing countries as it benefits only rich nations, which control economies of poor ones. So there is a lot of inequality involved in *globalization* and desire for cheaper prod-

ucts. Besides, multinational companies have more power and influence and are actually richer than whole countries. Moreover, multinationals started to rule the roost and dictate terms to the governments. *Globalization* has already resulted in severe employment problems in the Western World. It also leads to destruction of natural resources. Imbalance in power, political and economic superiority can also serve a source of conflict between the West and other civilizations. Eventually, permanent violent conflicts between groups in different civilizations can lead to global wars. So is globalization a good thing? Some of these burning issues were addressed by the participants of the annual scientific student conference.

Each participant was given the task to carry out research into the problems caused by the process of globalization and then make a PowerPoint presentation basing on their research findings. The program of the conference included seven parallel section meetings: English (4), French, German and Italian. The students were focusing on various problems modern societies are faced with – political, economic, social and environmental issues. The most interesting presentations provided the ground for fruitful discussion and were followed by the question and answer session.

At the opening ceremony the students and the guests were warmly greeted by Vice Rector on International Relations E.B. Tsoy, the head of the Department of Foreign Language E. A. Melekhina and the heads



of the sections. They wished the participants success in their research work and inspired them to study foreign languages. E. B. Tsoy emphasized that nowadays a good command of several foreign languages is a precondition for a brilliant career. John Silver, teacher trainer from the USA, delivered a lively and memorable presentation about the history of globalization.

The organizers of the conference are grateful to all who contributed their research work to

the conference. We also would like to express sincere gratitude to our generous sponsors – representatives of Macmillan Publisher's House in Novosibirsk and the shop of academic literature in foreign languages OXBRIDGE.

Ekaterina Filatova,
Senior teacher,
The Department of Foreign
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Faculty of Humanities,
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ABOUT OUR HALLOWEEN

Halloween is a holiday that takes place on October 31. On this day children wear costumes and masks and go trick-or-treating. Halloween developed

from New Year holiday and festivals of the dead.

This year my groupmates staged a magnificent show that included a performance featuring

Halloween celebrated by evil spirits. Their costumes and make-up fitted the situation. Scary music accompanied by screaming, dark bloodstained posters, and jack-o-lanterns carved out of pumpkins created the proper atmosphere.

After the performance there were different competitions which concern Halloween theme. All guests could take part in them and get sweets for winning.

The final part of the holiday was no less interesting. We got together at a big table to drink tea, enjoy sweets, and talk about ghosts and witches.

Such festive occasions are necessary because they not only expand our horizon, but also improve relationships in our group.

Anastasia Korshunova
Gr. FL-01, Novosibirsk State
Technical University



“COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE” AS A CONTRADICTORY PHENOMENON

The term **communicative competence** is rather widely used and applied today. But can we maintain that the majority of modern teachers and educators are really good communicators and are able to set an example of effective communication?

And is a good communicator a person who always agrees with everyone, especially with his/her bosses? If yes, what is the difference between such a person and a trivial conformist with a lack of a critical thinking? And where is the point when criticism turns into impoliteness and loses its constructive content? Even these few questions evince the complexity and sometimes a certain ambiguity in the interpretation of **communicative competence**.

Let us remember what famous linguists and educators advise to those who are purposed to be good speakers and consequently communicators. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. [Brown, H.D., 1994] Speaker's skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange [Van Duzer, 1997]. Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting [Burns & Joyce, 1997]

So, as it has been stated above, a successful speaker and an efficient communicator should:

- produce the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language;
- use grammar structures accurately;
- assess characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives;
- select vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs;
- apply strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension;

- use gestures or body language; and
- pay attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement. [Brown, 1994]

When I ask myself, what options named above are emphasized more by my colleagues in Russia in educational process, I have to confess that grammar and vocabulary are still of primary importance for the majority of teachers and educators. This tradition has rather firmly rooted in Russian academic life as it has already existed for many decades. Grammar and vocabulary emphasis while studying a foreign language was a kind of a compromise and a way out in the conditions when modern languages in the Soviet Russia were learnt and taught like dead languages: Latin or Old Greek. We dealt mostly with written texts and had very few notion of the fact how to behave ourselves with authentic native speakers or with other foreigners who tend to communicate in English in a real life situations. Besides, educational process being under strict control of the officials, was overloaded with different grammar tests and quizzes.

Nowadays my colleagues and I have more opportunities for communication in English thanks to certain positive social and political changes and especially thanks to the internet.

We feel happy to know some new speaking constructions or to understand some cultural differences through communication with native speakers. Our communication is becoming more colorful and embellished with metaphors, collocations and neologisms. And what is more important, we have started applying English intonation and interjections more appropriately, facing at the same time a new linguistic and pedagogical challenge – how to discourage our students and some young col-

leagues to speak with English intonation using a lot of borrowed words when they speak Russian. Of course, this way of speaking looks like a fashionable attribute of a certain group of young people. And discussing these new challenges we – teachers and educators should ourselves learn more about mentality and the role of background knowledge, otherwise our judgments won't work. Besides, background knowledge is rather important in teaching or assessment. We should take into account that even our students, who have been living in Russia during all their life, have different background knowledge and were taught by their former teachers differently. As for the English language learners coming from other countries, quite often the cultural gap between their background knowledge and the way of teaching is even bigger.

In connection with the communicative and cultural aspects mentioned above, it looks like it is preferable to teach grammar and vocabulary rather in context than in isolated constructions, to apply integrative approach in linguistic education.

Currently our American colleagues have been discussing a lot new the 21st century approaches in education. The students' performance in realistic situations is in the focus of educational debates. Though our technical opportuni-

ties in Russian educational institutions are not everywhere well developed yet, we still can start applying authentic learning situations more often and efficiently. Because though a communicative competence is a rather contradictory phenomenon, it gives fruitful results to those who practice a lot and appreciate team working.

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Galina Igonina, associate professor of the technical faculties' foreign languages department, Novosibirsk State Technical University



LINGUISTIC AND METHODOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

«INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: LINGUISTIC AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS»

A new linguistic and methodological conference has been recently started in Novosibirsk State Technical University which will hopefully result into an annual event gathering people not only from Novosibirsk universities but also from the whole Siberian region. The conference was held on the 22, April 2010.

The leading Novosibirsk professors of methodology, linguistics and philosophy took floor at the plenary: Marina Bovtenko dwelt on the ways to form the linguistic component of teacher's information and communicative competence; Alexandra Kokova covered the modern issues of text research in cognitive paradigm; Nadezhda Bulankina spoke about the role of language and culture in modern education.

The four workshops highlighted very topical and interesting subjects: Svetlana Kuchina on the example of her newly published multimedia



textbook shared the methods of the design and development of such educational materials; Natalia Kocheturova argued the importance of teacher's visual competence in dealing with creation of Power Point presentations and video materials; Olesya Guselnikova gave a detailed analysis of all the components of teaching complex *Upstream*; Ekaterina Filatova spoke on the development of listening and speaking skills working with mass media.

The two sessions devoted to the linguistic and methodology

gathered more than 20 speakers and allowed the audience to obtain new information on numerous subjects. The linguistic reports covered such topics as lexicography, cognitive and psycholinguistic studies, interconnection of language and culture, semiotics, grammar and the history of the Germanic languages. The methodological reports were also very different ranging from certain particular methods of teaching to the philosophy of teaching in general.



The organizing committee has received very positive feedback from the guests and participants of the conference.

One of the most important results of the conference is the opportunity not only to share opinions on the burning issues but also to publish the articles.

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THE CITY FOREIGN LANGUAGES SPEAKING CONTEST

If we view language as a means of communicating, then we should be concerned with teaching students to use language for communication. Communication can occur only through the use of language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). If the classroom has involved practicing these language skills, then it follows logically that the contest should also have students demonstrate their improved abilities in the language.

Now the question has become how to conduct a contest that should be aimed at revealing the students communicative fluency and accuracy. So the winners of the internal contests from 10 Novosibirsk universities and academies were the target audience in that competition.

The purpose of this paper is to share our experience of organizing the city Foreign Language Speaking Contest at Novosi-



birsk State Technical University by describing its procedures and the results. The event happened 15 April 2010 under the guidance of the Foreign Language Department responsible for teaching students of the engineering faculties was intended for the first and the second year non-linguistic students having

340 hours of foreign language in their curricula.

Its slogan – Studying English is to Think about the Future created itself a positive attitude and motivation for students to participate in and fully expose their communicative competence.

Place	Name	Language	Institution
I	Alex Fedosov	English	Novosibirsk State Technical University
II	Evgeniya Petrova		Novosibirsk State University
III	Mariya Kruglova		Novosibirsk State University
	Team Place	English	Novosibirsk State Technical University
I	Yanina Murashova	German	Siberian Academy of Public Administration
II	Margarita Williams		Novosibirsk Institute of Humanities
III	Julia Filipova		Siberian Academy of Public Administration
	Team Place	German	Siberian Academy of Public Administration
I	Nastya Zheltova	French	Novosibirsk State Technical University
II	Kseniya Shuk		Novosibirsk State Technical University
III	Natasha Salkan		Siberian State Railway University
	Team Place	French	Novosibirsk State Technical University

Before that a great deal of preparatory work had been done by the Organizing Committee:

- selecting authentic materials for designing the Listening Test
- developing situational tasks for the Oral Production Test
- inventing evaluation criteria scale
- doing a lot of paperwork concerning the matter
- purchasing gifts for winners
- organizing performance in foreign languages for the participants
- arranging coffee-breaks for students and teachers.

The whole contest procedures involved the following stages:

- registrating with awarding the code for each participant
- conducting the Listening Test
- carrying out the Oral Production Test
- having a coffee-break
- presenting a programme "Studying for master's degree in Czech Republic" made by UNICITY Foreign Languages School.
- performing a Show in foreign languages
- awarding the winners.

The winners in the three for-

foreign languages were selected by scoring and awarded with the Certificates and valuable presents. The results of the contest are shown in the table below:

It should be noted that all the teachers from other educational institutions who were spread across different committees charged for conducting either Listening Test or Oral Production Test did monitoring and actively participated in the assessment.

In conclusion let me on behalf of the Organizing Committee express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the NSTU administration for financial support and help in holding that crucial, memorable and challenging event for all the participants and organizers.

Ludmila Franchuk
Vice – Chairman of the Organizing Committee,
Senior teacher of the technical faculties' foreign languages department, Novosibirsk State Technical University

A CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2011

Novosibirsk State Technical University

Winter Methodology School	January, 18-19
Humour Day	April
Linguistic and Methodological Conference «Intercultural Communication: Linguistic and Methodological aspects»	April
Speech Contest	May
Annual Student Scientific Conference in Foreign Languages	November

Siberian State Railway Transport University

Translators' Contest	April
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Siberian University of Consumer Cooperation

Olympiads for the students majoring in the Humanities	April
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