



## British Council INSETT Seminar 5 Closing Ceremony

On 10 January the British Council invited its friends to a very special day. It was the closing ceremony of the British Council INSETT Project Phase 1. What makes this type of training effective is that it is extensive, with **five one-week seminars** over a **two year** period. This allowed teachers to try out new ideas, produce their own materials, read up on the latest English language teaching approaches and complete written assignments during the intervals between seminars.

Although it was a closing ceremony, all the participants were happy as there would be the Phase 2 of the Project which will reach out to the teachers in the regions.

First, the trainees of Phase 1 demonstrated their sub-project under the INSETT Project. There were 7 groups with 2-4 trainees in each group. In five-minute presentations they managed to brief the participants on the main idea, the work done so far and future plans. Each group produced a set of materials, an assessment instrument, textbook supplement etc. as the final product of the Project which was a substantial contribution to their own teaching.

The guests of the ceremony were Elmar Qasimov, Deputy Minister of Education, Andy Williams, Director of the British Council, Rahim Agamaliyev, Co-ordinator of the Project from the Ministry of Education, Ragsana Mammadova, AzETA Executive Director, directors of the Project pilot schools, etc. Deputy Minister and British Council Director mentioned the importance of the Project and wished a good luck to the Phase 2 of the Project.

At the end of the ceremony the trainees were awarded with certificates of the British Council and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

## AzETA Mini-Conference: Sharing and Caring

On 15 January AzETA held its 4<sup>th</sup> Mini-Conference titled Sharing and Caring at Baku Slavic University.

The aim of the Mini-Conference was:

- to give an opportunity to AzETA members to share the knowledge gained through different programmes they recently attended;
- to share their experiences with their colleagues;
- to gather all the beneficiaries of different programmes under AzETA umbrella so that they can co-operate together to achieve better results;

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**AzETA would be very grateful for any comments on and/or contribution to our News Bulletin. As always, we need your support.**

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- to give the new members an opportunity for feeling of belonging to an ELT community;
- to give an opportunity to the new presenters to practice before 2nd AzETA and 2<sup>nd</sup> South Caucasus Conferences.
- last but not least, to promote AzETA.

It was a full day Mini-Conference bringing together about 60 participants, including presenters.

The plenary speaker of the Mini-Conference was Andy Keedwell, English Language Support Manager from the British Council, Armenia who shares his impressions with the readers as below:

“It was a great pleasure to attend the AzETA Mini-Conference in January 2005. I have seen AzETA grow so rapidly over the last few years and I was so impressed today by the dynamism and energy of all the teachers I met and the extremely high standard of presentation which I saw. opportunity to meet up with old friends and to meet some new ones, and to see just how much progress AZETA have made over the last couple of years! The presentations were great and very interesting. The very best of luck with future events.“

### **Children’s Conference – AzETA Smile Project**

As informed in the previous issues of our News Bulletin AzETA implements an English Language Project for the orphans in Qizildash, a district in Gobustan region of Baku, with the financial support of the British Council.

With the financial support of IREX AzETA implemented a project for children titled Smile Project. This was an event where AzETA involved some children from Qizildash, some from “Umud Yeri” orphanage (AzETA members teach children English in this orphanage, too) alongside with the members of AzETA Enjoy English Club (the Club members are the talented children from different schools of Baku).

The aim of the Conference was to bring these children together, to create an environment for them where they could sing songs, recite poems, dance, etc. The Conference mainly involved the children with different abilities. The poems, songs, performances were mainly in English which enabled the children to practise what they have learned so far.

The guests of the event were: HE Mr Reno Harnish, US Ambassador and Mrs Leslie Harnish, Dr Sahiba Qafarova, Vice-Rector of Baku Slavic University, Mr George Bishop and Ms Jamie Neczkar of the Open Society Institute – Assistant Foundation, Ms Sevinj Asadova, Press and Public Affairs Officer of the British

Embassy, representatives from Qizildash and Umud Yeri orphanages.

“Azerbaijan Pioneri” (Azerbaijan Pioneer) and “Eurasia” newspapers published articles on the event.

Participation of HE Mr Reno Harnish, US Ambassador to Azerbaijan and Mrs Harnish of World Vision made the event memorable for all of the participants. AzETA extend its acknowledgement to His Excellency and Mrs Harnish on behalf of all the children of the event for spending some hours of their week-end with the children and later with the members in AzETA office. The children really wore their beautiful smiles during the whole event and we do believe that this smile will have a lasting positive impact on their lives.

Although the budget of the Project was very limited, with the kind donation of different stakeholders the event went very well and left long-lasting memorable moments with the children. Every single child from the two orphanages that joined the event was given a present package where alongside with the Project budget donations were made by different stakeholders.

AzETA extends acknowledgement to:

- George Bishop and Jamie Neczkar of Open Society Institute - Assistance Foundation for their personal donations to the present packages for the orphans that joined the event;
- British Embassy for the donation to the present packages;
- the British Council for the usual kind support and donation to the event;
- Baku Slavic University that hosted the event without any charges for the Conference hall. Special thanks goes to Dr Sahiba Gafarova, Vice-Rector on International Relations of the University for her quick response to AzETA needs on technical assistance in organising the event;
- Nigar Baimova to request this money from IREX as an alumnus on behalf of AzETA;
- Nigar Baimova and Afet Dadashova of the US Peace Corps for personal donations to the present packages;
- And of course, to all AzETA members who put lots of efforts, energy and time into organising and success of the event on completely volunteer basis.

### US Ambassador and Mrs Leslie Harnish visited AzETA office

As mentioned in the previous article, HE Mr Reno Harnish, US Ambassador and Mrs Leslie Harnish attended children's event under AzETA Smile Project on 29 January.

In spite of late hours His Excellency and Mrs Harnish visited AzETA Baku Branch office and spent more than an hour with the members there having tea with them, sharing their impressions on the event and on importance of organisations like AzETA. They encouraged the members more mentioning that the US Embassy will always support AzETA in its activities and agreed to attend 2<sup>nd</sup> AzETA Conference to be held on 23-24 April 2005 where they will join AzETA members to celebrate AzETA's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Below His Excellency and Mrs Harnish share their impressions on the event and on AzETA with the readers of the News Bulletin:

"Thanks very much to the club (AzETA Enjoy English Club – ed.).

Xanim Leslie and I were honoured to be asked to spend the afternoon with you. All of the children are so bright with their precious ability to speak English language. They are also very talented as singers and dancers.

We wish all these wonderful children a bright future in sunny Azerbaijan. We wish them health and prosperity. Hopefully, they will have chance to visit the US of America some day and meet some American children.

Sincerely,  
Reno Harnish  
US Ambassador"

"Bringing children together for a day of play and smiling is such a good idea.

The programme in English really brings a smile to my face. The children are so full of life and energy and are so happy to speak this new language. It is in this common language of English that these wonderful children will be able to communicate with many people around the world.

Warm regards,

Leslie Harnish"

### ACCELS Award Ceremony and Mini-Conference

American Councils for International Education (ACCELS) organised Award Ceremony and Mini-Conference for English language teachers from Azeri secondary schools on 23 February at the Western University.

More than 70 English teachers from Baku and regions attended the Conference.

In the first part of the day Award Ceremony was organised. ACCELS presented certificates for Round 1 and Round 2 winners of "2004 Teachers of Excellence Awards" Program. The guests of the event were: Prof. Misir Mardanov, Minister of Education, Mr Neil McGurty and Ms Afet Ibrahimova of the US Embassy, Mr Shane Austin, Country Director of ACCELS, Ms Marilee Muchow, TEA Programme Officer.

It was a great pleasure to see that most of the award winners of Round 1 and Round 2 were AzETA members. And Round 3 winners – finalists are all AzETA members who are in the US for a 3-month exchange programme.

During second part of the day a mini-conference was organised where several ELT professionals gave presentations. Ragsana Mammadova, AzETA Executive Director was also invited to the event as a presenter. She gave a presentation titled "Empowerment through Teachers' Associations" focusing on the example of AzETA. As there were lots of teachers – award winners from different regions of Azerbaijan they got interested in AzETA very much and offered co-operation.

AzETA is grateful to ACCELS for this opportunity.

Marilee Muchow, TEA Programme Officer, who visited Azerbaijan to take part in the event, visited AzETA office on 26 February. Below are her impressions on AzETA after her visit:

"I was so interested to learn about AzETA when I visited Baku. I am so impressed with how many members you have and how active they are.

While interviewing the teachers for the TEA Programme I learned how much teachers have learned from participating in AzETA seminars and workshops. I think their participation in AzETA has greatly impacted on their ability to teach English.

AzETA also encourages the teachers to continue their hard work.

Congratulations AzETA!"

## NEWS FROM THE SIGs

### Outreach Teacher Training Project

As informed in the previous issue of the News Bulletin, AzETA launched its Outreach Teacher Training Project for 2004-2005 academic year with the financial support of the Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation.

**Project regions** are Mingechevir, Lankaran, Khachmaz and Neftchala.

**Training period** will be: 2 day training during autumn, winter and spring School Vacations. The first training was conducted on 18-19 December. The topics included: Learning Styles, Group and Pair work, How to Improve Listening and Speaking Skills. Approximately, 20 teachers attended the training in each Project region.

The second round of the training will be held on 1-2 April. *More in the next issue of the News Bulletin.*

### Elizabeth Chorak meets Civic Education SIG members

*By Afet Huseynova DID Teacher Trainer*

**Deliberating in a Democracy (DID)** is a teacher-focused initiative designed to improve teaching and learning of democratic principles and the skills of civic deliberation. [Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago \(CRFC\)](#), in partnership with [Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles \(CRF\)](#) and [Street Law, Inc.](#) has launched international program funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Deliberating in a Democracy's overall goal is to increase the knowledge, ability and dispositions of teachers, students and policy-makers to effectively participate in deliberations related to democratic principles as applied in their countries.

The DID partnership will work with teachers from [Azerbaijan \(Open Society Institute-Azerbaijan\)](#), [Czech Republic \(PartnersCzech\)](#), and [Lithuania \(Regional Center for Civic Education\)](#) conduct professional development trainings and country visits.

The Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation (OSI-AF) has been working with NGOs such as AzETA and Nur for several years. In the DID project English - Irada Samadova, Resmiye Badirova, Huzura Agayeva, Tarana Aliyeva, Farida Huseynova and History teachers work together and will conduct three deliberations in their classrooms. The two deliberation topics were selected in the DID Prague and Baltimore conferences while the third one was selected locally. The following are the deliberation topics: 1. *Should Government Regulate Violence on TV?* 2. *Should Government Regulate Economic Development to Protect the Environment?* 3. This one has not been formulated yet. Topic is

*private tutoring and the quality of education at schools.*

Deliberating in a Democracy will provide for up to 3,000 secondary students to engage in authentic civic deliberations while learning democratic principles and participating in lessons on democracy. 60 teacher participants at the six U.S. and international sites will develop a greater understanding of democratic principles, examine the tensions that exist in a democracy between liberty, equality and safety, and use contemporary examples and experiences to apply their knowledge.

Over this academic year, Deliberating in a Democracy will focus on several key components:

- Deliberations on the Web
- Professional Staff Development Sessions
- Classroom Civic Deliberations
- Exchanges between U.S. and Partner Countries
- Student Civic Deliberation Conferences

The first staff development of the Azerbaijani team was on January 11 and Elizabeth Chorak, Deputy Director of the Street Law Inc. visited Azerbaijan to participate in this event. She also visited AzETA office as the Project involves some AzETA members. She was amazed with the voluntary work of the AzETA members. Below she shares her impressions:

“AzETA is very impressive. Your outreach to other teachers will certainly improve education for all students. It is especially nice that work with poor children in the orphanage and shelter – they need your help.

Much luck with your work now and in the future”.

The exchanges between partner countries allow some AzETA members and history teachers involved in DID to visit the US schools in March and observe the American partners' classroom deliberations. Two AzETA members will have a ten day visit to the US on 3 March to learn more about the Project.

For further info on the project visit: [www.crf-usa.org](http://www.crf-usa.org) where you should click on “Deliberating in a Democracy”. You can have access to DID resources there.

### Student Government Association Project

*By Afet Huseynova*

With the collapse of the USSR, most of the organisations concerning this system became history as well. At present there is no children organisations at schools, a big gap is felt in this field. To address these needs and educating citizens of tomorrow as active participants of their society some members of AzETA in co-operation with history teachers and

generous help by the OSI Teacher Trainer George Bishop worked out a proposal for the Democracy Commission Small Grants Competition Spring 2004 of US State Department. Having won in this competition AzETA has started establishing a new form of children organisations, SGA in 4 schools of Azerbaijan, Baku - schools #200 - Resmiye Badirova, #164 - Irada Samadova, #177- Nazaket Mehdiyeva and #8 of Sheki - Turkan Kerimova.

Since the start of the project our teachers have been training their pupils on the structure, essence and constitution of the SGA, democracy, voluntary work, how to run SGAs based on the modules provided by the generous support of IFES Baku office. SGA in Sheki is working hand in hand with Peace Corps Volunteer Sara Paulsworth who was SGA president at school in America. The SGAs are going to hold their elections in March. There are a lot of initiatives from the pupils on school and community improvement activities. They have already started planning their activities, for instance, school 177 is going to visit orphanage where SGA members will provide training on SGA for the pupils there. Certainly, their teacher is preparing them for this training and they will facilitate training with their teacher. The tea break will be provided by the members of the SGA as donation. This is only one example from one school.

The pupils are very enthusiastic about school and community improvement activities. The pupils in Sheki have prepared their logo where you can see a broom in the centre, which means that they want to have clean-up activities for their community. Next time you will hear from Sheki about the development of the project.

We believe that other schools will also be interested in establishing SGAs and it will become a popular organisation in Azerbaijan in near future.

#### NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

##### *Ganja:*

Regular workshops are organised by Tara and William Lyon, Peace Corps Volunteers in Ganja. Alongside with providing workshops, Eddie McGee is a great help to the Branch in organisational and management issues. He regularly has meetings with the Branch management team and provides them with ideas on how better to manage the Branch. Active members of the Branch are developing a project on workshops for the neighbouring regions where Eddie provides them with helpful comments and support.

Although very young, Xalida Aliyeva, Head of the Branch tries to do her best to promote the Branch in the neighbouring regions and increase the interest and involvement of the teachers more in the work of the Branch and its activities.

##### *Khachmaz:*

After the first round of the Outreach Teacher Training in Khachmaz, interest in the Branch increased. In order to improve involvement of the teachers in organisational management of the Branch AzETA is seeking ways of organising study tour of some Branch activists to other AzETA branches.

##### *Mingechevir:*

Mingechevir is also the AzETA Outreach TT region. The aim is to support the Branch there and involve more members from the neighbouring regions. As in Ganja, there is a bunch of young enthusiastic members in Mingechevir Branch who have different skills and are involved in the management of the Branch.

##### *Sheki:*

Official opening ceremony of the Branch is still pending due to lack of necessary office equipment for the Branch to function.

Eddie McGee, Senior English Language Fellow and Ragsana Mammadova, AzETA Executive Director agreed to have a study tour to the Branch in early March for needs assessment. *More in the next issue of the News Bulletin.*

**NB:** Good news for the Branches! With the generosity of the British Council Baku office AzETA all branch offices will have a computer which will improve the management of the branches, as well as contact between AzETA head office and the branches, as well as among the branches. AzETA will be seeking ways of getting internet connection to the branch offices. AzETA is very grateful to the British Council for usual great support.

#### You will read in our next issue

- Novruz holiday celebration at AzETA for children
- 2<sup>nd</sup> AzETA ELT Conference – 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AzETA
- AzETA Baku Branch Director's participation in TESOL Convention in San Antonio, Texas, US
- British ELT Networking event in Berlin, Germany
- AzETA members return from the US
- Final preparations for 2<sup>nd</sup> South Caucasus ELT Conference in Tbilisi

## YOUR COLUMN

Dear Members,

Below are the hyper-links that might lead you to the resources you might find useful in your teaching.

### Grammar and Vocabulary

Hughes, A. *On-line English Grammar*.

<http://www.edunet.com/english/grammar/index.html>

Lynch, J. *Guide to Grammar and Style*.

<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/writing/>

<http://iteslj.org/Lessons/>

<http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

<http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Flats/7947/lessgames.htm>

<http://www.english-at-home.com/>

<http://www.ict4lt.org/>

### Other Links

*English Language & Literature*.

<http://www2.prestel.co.uk/wispers/edunet/english.htm>

*BBC Education*.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/>

*CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) Links*.

<http://tiger.coe.missouri.edu/~cjw/call/links.htm>

Center for Internet technology in teaching. *Using Internet in Education*.

<http://citt.marin.cc.ca.us/using.html>

*EFL Magazine*.

<http://www.u-net.com/eflweb/home.htm>

*The Internet TESL Journal*.

<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/>

LeLoup, J. & R. Ponterio. *Foreign Language Teaching Forum*.

<http://www.cortland.edu/flteach/>

Purdue University. *Online Writing Lab*.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

Shamash, M. *Teacher's Library of Resources*.

<http://193.130.123.186/teachers.nsf>

Sperling, D. *Dave's ESL Cafe*.

<http://www.eslcafe.com>

*Teachers Net*.

<http://www.teachers.net>

*Intercultural E-mail Classroom Connections*.

<http://www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc/intro.html>

## NOW IT IS TIME TO LAUGH

### LET'S LAUGH TOGETHER



The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, it was conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as "Euro-English" has been accepted.

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly, this will make sivil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of "k". This should klear up konfusion, and keyboards can have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f". This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling can be expected to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v". During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru. If zis mad you smil, pleas pas on to oza pepl. Zen ve vil rul ze world!!!