



## News Bulletin

May – June 2007

### AzETA Regional Conference in Qebele

As the Mission of AzETA is to provide support for high quality education in ELT, professional development of English language teachers of the country, AzETA organises regional conferences apart from annual conferences. The aim is to give an opportunity to the teachers from the regions to benefit from AzETA services more.



One of such regional conferences was held in Qebele on 26 May 2007. The aim was to bring English teachers of the region together, to share experiences, to encourage the teachers of the region to join AzETA and benefit from its services, as well as, to promote AzETA in the region. The Conference mainly focused on the following topics:

- Teaching Young Learners
- Teaching Grammar Communicatively
- Teaching English Through Games
- Ways of Teaching 4 skills Communicatively
- Testing and Assessment
- Classroom Management
- Lesson Planning
- Teaching Vocabulary, etc.

The Conference was held in the open air. It was an ever first experience for AzETA. So, the presenters were challenged to work without any equipment to demonstrate how under-equipped classes are managed. There were 4 concurrent sessions with 22 presentations. All the presenters managed under-equipped environment for their presentations at a very high level. 120 teachers attended the Conference from 11 regions of Azerbaijan.

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AzETA would be grateful for any comments on and/or contribution to our News Bulletin. We need your support.

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AzETA have branches in Baku, Ganja, Khachmaz, Mingechevir and Sheki.

The Conference started with an opening session followed by the short presentations of the beneficiaries of AzETA English Access Michroscholarship Programme students from Qebele. The Progamme is funded by the US Embassy and covers Baku, Mashtaga, Lenkaran and Qebele.



The Conference was co-funded by AzETA, the British Council and US Embassy where the British Council funded the end-of-conference reception, the US Embassy covered the transportation costs and AzETA covered the costs towards the expenses of tea/coffee break and stationary. Catherine Thompson helped Ganja members to join the Conference and covered their transportation costs (12 members).

It was another memorable event for AzETA and all the participants left the Conference empowered, with new contacts and fond memories

The Conference resulted in increased interest of the teachers from that region in AzETA. Teachers from other regions requested to hold such conferences in their regions, too.

Among the Conference participants there were representatives of the British Council, US Embassy, Executive Power of Qebele region, IREX, Peace Corps Volunteers from different regions of Azerbaijan, Senior Egnlish Language Fellow Glenn Deckert and Catherine Thompson.

AzETA acknowledges all the partners for their invaluable support in many ways.

AzETA also acknowledges all the presenters for demonstrating high quality professionalism in managing challenge - i.e. giving presentations in an open air just under the trees.

## AzETA members attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional English Teaching Caucasus Conference

*By Maleyka Mammadova*

AzETA sent three representatives - Khalida Rustamova, Public Affairs Officer, Elmira Ilizarova, International Relations Officer of AzETA and Maleyka Mammadova, AzETA SIG (Special Interest Group) member to **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional English Teaching Caucasus Conference on Curriculum Development** organized by U.S.Embassy Kyiv, Ukraine on May 14—15, 2007. The U.S. Embassy, Baku financially supported AzETA members to join the Conference.

7 representatives from AzETA, 10 Representatives from Armenian English Language Teachers Association (AELTA), 10 representatives from English Teachers Association of Georgia (ETAG) and 3 representatives from Abkhazia participated at the conference.

Dr. Liza Hashbarger, Regional English Language Officer in Ukraine, Khristine Fredrick, Senior English Language Fellow, Moldova, John Scafidi, Senior English Language Fellow in Georgia and Miranda Berishvili, English Language Expert, Georgia gave workshops on Curriculum Development and Teaching and Assessment, and Making Oral Presentations. “The conference organized by-year was very productive for the participants from the Caucasus countries to share their experiences and see the different levels in teaching in the said countries”, says Khalida Rustamova. “Teaching and assessment, added Khalida Rustamova, “was something new for us based on Writing for Rubrics. We learned a lot of new things from this Conference and we shall apply that experience in the teaching process and be helpful for the teachers of AzETA by conducting workshops at AzETA Office, Baku as well as in different branches of AzETA.”

“The workshops on the language skills were very interesting, and we learned a lot on learning, teaching, assessment which we will try to apply in the teaching process”, Elmira Ilizarova has stated.

It should be noted that, AzETA had been represented in the previous Regional English Teaching Caucasus Conferences before that.

## News from SIGs – Young Learners

### Enjoy English Club Seminar: G8 and Azerbaijan: Perspectives for Cooperation

Enjoy English Club goes ahead. As you know the aim of the Club is to improve children's knowledge on the history, geography, literature, as well as natural values of Azerbaijan, simultaneously to provide them with the knowledge of English, world history, geography, civic education.

On 11 May Enjoy English Club held a seminar titled "Group 8 and Azerbaijan: Perspectives for Cooperation" at Baku Slavic University.

Group Eight (G8) is an international club in which the heads of state or government of the major industrial democracies meet annually to discuss the world's major economic and political problems. The members of G8 are: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK and the US.

17 EEC students gave presentations on G8 countries and Azerbaijan. They spoke and discussed all about the history, geography, economics, culture, politics, problems etc. of these countries with the audience. Representatives of the G8 country Embassies were invited to the seminar, too.

Students of schools # 42, #43, # 16, # 60, # 9 and S.A Lyceum were among the presenters of this event.



Below are the notes from some of the guests.

*I was highly impressed with the students' knowledge and enthusiasms. Please keep up your work. I am looking forward to attending more of such events in the future.*

*Warm regards,*

*Dimitry Tarakhovski  
Public Diplomacy Officer  
US Embassy.*

*Dear Enjoy English Club members,*

*I know that EEC has been functioning since 2001 and has held 3 successful conferences for the children in this period. Today you are holding another important event. It is encouraging to see Azerbaijani children demonstrate interest in co-operation with the children from different countries. Azerbaijan has committed herself to integrating to Europe. I believe that as the future builders of the society, you will help this process develop further through events like this.*

*To initiate co-operation with the children from G8 countries is another good sign for you to integrate with the world community. I welcomed your initiative and contribution to your country in the way you can.*

*It is also good to know that you will be having discussions on each member of G8 countries in this event which will increase your knowledge on 8 countries in general, and on the UK in particular.*

*I want to congratulate you with your one more achievement and wish you all success in your future endeavours.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Laurie Bristow  
British Ambassador*

### Charity Concert dedicated to the International Defense Day of Children

*by Dilara Bunyatova*

With kind assistance of friends AzETA held a charity concert dedicated to the International Defense Day of Children on Saturday June 2, 2007 at Baku Slavic University with the participation of famous singers and different music groups of Azerbaijan under the name of "A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed" aimed at organizing Summer Camp for the orphans from Gizildash. "If we help only one orphan once, God will help us hundred times".

As usual, Mugam Theatre supported the charity activity. Adila Aflaki, Ehtiram, Gorkhmaz Alili, Saida Dadashova, Adalat Shukurov, Ilhama, Lala Mammadova and others sang lovely songs, students danced with great pleasure. The children from different schools, AzETA members were very active in this charity event in selling the tickets of the concert.

Singer Lala Mammadova kindly offered co-operation to AzETA to give her solo concert to

generate income for the purposes of some activities for these orphans.

“Sing Songs,  
Make their hearts fill with joy.  
Sing Songs,  
Bring happiness to all the children.”

AzETA acknowledges the people and organisations for their kind support to the concert materially and morally, in particular to Gulshan Huseynova, ELT Projects Manager, British Council, Afet Ibrahimova, Education Assistant, US Embassy, Baku Slavic University for creating us a usual favourable condition for holding the concert at a very high level.

Acknowledgement goes to all the AzETA members, in particular, Nushaba Bakhsiyeva, AzETA Young Learners SIG Leader and Humay Mirzayeva, AzETA Qizildash Project teacher for achieving the participation of the above singers in the concert. It should be noted that, AzETA will use 400 AZN generated through this concert towards some expenses of the summer camp to be organised for these orphans in August.

AzETA once more acknowledges its Friends!

### Summer Camp in AzETA

*By Ayna Sadigova and Gamar Rustamova, EAMP Teachers*

English Access Microscholarship Program me (EAMP) teachers have compiled plan of activities from 2 July to 27 July 2007 for summer camp. Besides the activities from the textbook World English Volume 2, the students will have roundtable discussions, debates, miscellaneous activities including letter writing, acronyms, information about the USA, the UK and Azerbaijan geographical position, population, cities, borders, holidays, religion, culture etc.

At the lessons the students will develop their language skills further, they will be able to use the activities in an increasingly lifelike and natural way. In a democratic and multicultural society, students need to understand multiple perspectives that derive from different cultural vantage points. This understanding will allow them to relate to people in our nation and throughout the world. With this purpose, the students will be taught how to give presentations on problem solving, decision making, environmental pollution, teenagers’

problems, etc. Every Wednesday the students will have open air lessons. They will visit the Martyrs’ Alley, the Maiden Tower, Shirvanshahs’ Palace, the Zoo and so on.



Some of the students will participate in the US Embassy reception on 3 July dedicated to the US Independence Day and sing American anthem. (You can read more on the Summer camp in the next issue of the News Bulletin – ed.)

**Maleyka Mammadova:** Journalism classes in AzETA continued through March 29-to July 7 involving 10 students including the students from Mashtaga guided by Prof. Steven Youngblood, Fulbright Scholar from Park University, Missouri, USA. During this time students could issue one newsletter in May. The name of the newsletter is “AzETA Times” where they covered the topics interesting for them in different writing styles through which they developed their language skills.

“I hope that I gave my students at least a taste of how a professional journalist operates”, Prof. Youngblood said.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of “AzETA Times” will be published in July.

**Sudabe Sadigova,** EAMP Teacher, Mashtaga “I am very happy that involved in this project and teach for Mashtaga Madrasa children. My students are creative, enthusiastic, friendly, in a word, are full of love. Soon we are having a summer camp.

Baku EAMP teachers and I have prepared summer camp program for the project children. While drafting this program we, I and EAMP teachers, discussed a lot, shared ideas and experiences, thought creatively and identified the roots of the problems that might cause tiring and boring lessons. We took into consideration the students’ needs, desire, requirements, class time, hot weather condition and thought of the effect of

the program on teaching and learning. Finally, we made clear how to achieve high teaching quality in the summer camp.

EAMP summer camp program include round table discussions, presentations, open air lessons, as well as fun, games, competitions amongst students etc. For example, a teacher has a chance to engage all students in extended conversation through discussions or presentations on a given topic. Shy students speak more freely, get ideas, information, they become well informed and feel confident. Every week we have an open air lesson on Wednesdays, Baku and Mashtaga Madrasa children come together. It allows students to use English in natural context, to make friends. Quiz, fun, competition and games are an excellent way to transfer new language into long term memory, to energize the classroom and relieve a lot of tension. This means the atmosphere of the class is relaxed. To be honest, they are very excited. When I told three students from Mashtaga that they were involved in this event they really were beside themselves with joy.

EAMP students are getting ready for the US Independence Day reception to be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Dimitry Tarakovsky, Public Diplomacy Officer, US Embassy, teach them the anthem of the US at AzETA, on Mondays and Thursdays. The selected students will sing the anthem of the US at the reception on the 3rd of July.

## Teacher Training SIG:

### Moving Forward and Networking Event

by Ayna Sadigova

On 22 June the British Council held its next seminar in Bilgeh aimed at providing further consolidation for professional development, meet Phase One and Two participants, present in 10 minutes the projects to each other, update participants on the British Council further ELT strategy and create a professional work and co-operation among the participants.

AzETA members were among the trainers. It shows that the co-operation between the British Council and AzETA grows day by day. Most of the participants on the Phases 2 were from different regions of Azerbaijan. They were informed about AzETA and its 4<sup>th</sup> ELT Conference to be held on 10-11 November, 2007.

We wish the number of AZETA members increase.

## Workshop in Zagatala

by Gulshan Samadova, NQT SIG Leader

AzETA always keeps in contact with regional English teachers. AzETA Teacher Training SIG Coordinator Afet Huseynova organized a trip to Zagatala on May 19. Leath and Joe Smith from the British Council and I visited the Gymnasium of Humanitarian Subjects in Zagatala. The workshop, given by Gulshan Samadova on the topic "How to make students speak" involved 12 English teachers in the discussions on the subject. The regional teachers seemed to be very interested in the topic, as all language teachers are concerned about their students' speaking. The session was quite successful judging by the participants' and observers' feedback. "Thank you for having such a great lesson. We learned much about how to hold speaking lessons.

"We'd like to have such lessons in future, too..."- wrote Shafiyeva Sevinj – a teacher from school # 1 Zagatala in the feedback.

The observers also appreciated the workshop as Joe Smith and Leath wrote in their feedbacks. Joe Smith wrote: "The seminar followed a logical, well-planned structure. I think it delivered the intended target methodology clearly and concisely. I very much enjoyed observing it."

Leath also noted that the session went well and more to that expressed some positive ideas about future sessions.

After the session the trainers went for a walk, as there is a lot of interesting places to visit in Zagatala: the ancient tree in the park, which is 700 years old, Zagatala fortress, etc.

I would like to thank Yetar Muradova and her great family for their hospitality. I think Joe and Leath would also like to join my thanks. See you again, Friends!

## Workshop in Yevlakh

AzETA SIG members-Sudabe Sadigova and Maleyka Mammadova visited Yevlakh May 19, 2007 to give workshops for Yevlakh teachers on Teaching and Assessment and How to make Oral Presentation. Catherine Thomas from Ganja branch of AzETA joined them.

22 teachers from different schools including boarding schools attended the workshops. Teachers were active, they wished these kind of workshops organized in Yevlakh for the teachers to be update of modern teaching methods.

Sudabe Sadigova thanked the teachers for participation on behalf of AzETA and encouraged them to organize such measures more often and establish their own branch.

## New Qualified Teacher Training SIG:

### Training Courses:

#### Sumqayit:

*Trainers: Ayna Sadiqova, Farida Huseynova*

On 27 June the next round of NQT training Course sponsored by the British Council in collaboration with AzETA was held in the Education Department of Sumqayit for newly qualified teachers. The Educational Department helped the trainers in making the necessary arrangements.

There were 19 teachers from different schools of Sumqayit. AzETA Executive Board member Huzura Agayeva made opening remarks and greeted the teachers, gave them some suggestions and wished them success in their teaching. The teachers wrote their names on papers and put them on the table.

Ayna Sadigova began the first session in team with Farida Huseynova, introduced the third session's pack "Steps to Success" to the teachers, then presented Units 5 and 6. The topics of the 1<sup>st</sup> session were Teaching Reading and Writing.

Objectives of the session were:

- To raise teachers' awareness of Reading techniques that can be used in class
- To demonstrate the participants teachers how to move from presenting structures to practicing them
- To demonstrate the participants how to use real and imaginary situations for freer

Handouts on these topics were given to the participants. They were involved to work in groups and pairs, gave them opportunities to express their feelings freely.

The second part of the session was TESTING AND ASSESSMENT. The Objectives of this session were:

- To raise awareness of the importance of assessment, testing, evolution
- To help the participants make decisions about students' abilities and levels
- To evaluate students' progress and achievements
- To get to know classroom assessment tools and techniques.

At the end of the seminar the participants were given Scorecard Questionnaire of the British Council and Training Evaluation form of AzETA.

After finishing the sessions Vidadi Bagirov, Head of Education Department of Sumqayit thanked the trainers for the training.

#### Ganja:

AzETA EAMP teacher Sudaba Sadigova visited Ganja on June 24, 2007 to observe the training session under the Project of Newly Qualified Teachers Trainings.

Trainers Khalida Aliyeva, Head of Ganja Branch gave workshops on Teaching Reading and Teaching Writing and Vafa Maharramova gave workshop on Testing and Assessment for 15 participants.

"All participants were active, motivated, involved in the discussions, worked in groups and pairs. Sessions were successfully organized. The trainers' instructions were clear, they monitored the work of the groups providing useful suggestions where required. There was a friendly atmosphere in the sessions" said Sudaba Sadigova, who observed the sessions. "To be honest I was impressed by the hard work of the trainers and the trainees" added Sudaba Sadigova.

The training will continue in the next school year, too.

To read more about the Project, visit the NQT Page at the AzETA website at: [www.az-eta.org](http://www.az-eta.org)

## YOUR COLUMN

### Story in a bag

Maria Spelleri

Manatee Community College, Florida, US

This oral story creating and relating activity works best with intermediate level and above learners. (I don't recall the origins of this activity. I picked it up from some book or workshop at least ten years ago!)

#### Preparation

Before class, the teacher fills paper bags with 5-6 random objects. You'll need one bag per group of four students. To make this activity interesting, the objects should be diverse and unrelated to each other. Go for a combination of the unusual and the mundane.

An example of a diverse content bag from my class is: a postcard from Singapore ,a can-opener ,a candle ,a surgical mask ,a theatre playbill (program)a teddy bear.

#### Procedure

- At a signal, each group of students opens its bag, removes its objects and invents an oral story incorporating all the objects found in the bag. The stories become very complex and creative in order to make each object a step in the plot.

Here's an example based on the bag items described above.

"One morning Shelley received a postcard from her old college friend, Louise. The card was from Singapore, and in it, Louise had invited Shelley to come for a visit. Shelley flew to Singapore and met Louise. The first night she was there, they went to a play at a local theatre. It was a murder mystery and the ladies were feeling a bit nervous walking back to Louise's home after the show. When they got home Louise tried to turn on the light, but there was no electricity. She lit a candle and .....etc."

- It's important that the story be oral and not written and then read. This allows spontaneous changes, and for group members to jump in and correct each other or add details in the final telling.
- When the groups have finished, each group shares its story with the whole class. Each student in the group should tell one part and

- hold up the related object when it is mentioned in the story.
- Some group members may tell two parts, or tell one part that uses two objects- it doesn't matter. Most of the talking is done in the creation of the story within the group.

Watch out for those clever souls who would say "Shelley packed her suitcase for Singapore. In it she put a candle, a can opener, a teddy bear...etc." **Variation**

- The teacher makes up a crime that has been committed, for example; '*Professor Whatsit found dead under a picnic table, Lady Wigglebiggle's diamonds stolen from her bedroom drawer*'.
- The groups are then told that the items in their bags are clues to the crime collected by a detective. The story that the groups come up with then are the details of the crime. Here is an example.

"The teddy bear had been ripped open, to reveal a hiding place. It was now empty. The detective realised it was the place where Professor Whatsit kept the key to his secret laboratory. Buy how had the killer made it past the guard dogs? The can opener left on the kitchen counter was analysed and found to contain traces of dog food. Clearly, the killer fed the dogs, maybe even drugged them to keep them calm etc."

### AzETA bids farewell to:

#### ▪ Prof. Steve Youngblood and his family

On 18 May AzETA organized a farewell party for Prof. Steven Youngblood, Fulbright Scholar from Park University, Missouri, USA and his family on the occasion of their leaving Baku.

In the party, Ragsana Mammadova, AzETA President, thanked Prof. Youngblood for his great contribution to AzETA and for the Journalism Classes for EAMP students, as well as to his wife Barbara Youngblood for teaching EAMP Students in Mashtaga. In his turn Prof. Youngblood thanked AzETA President for her kind welcome and support, Maleyka Mammadova for her assistance in Journalism classes and Sudaba Sadigova for organizing the party and the members of AzETA for participation in the party.

“My teaching here, at the university, at the ANS Journalism Academy (held at a local TV station), at AzETA and at Baku Oxford (High) School has been satisfying. I hope that I gave my students at least a taste of how a professional journalist operates”, Prof. Youngblood stated.

“So, thank you Azerbaijan. We’ll miss your goodwill and your plov (a tasty rice dish), but know that the memory of your graciousness, and your friendship, will always warm our hearts”.

Steven Youngblood is an Assistant Professor of Communication Arts at Park University. He taught Journalism to AzETA EAMP students through March 29 to June 7, 2007.

▪ **Dr. Glenn Deckert, Senior English Language Fellow**

*by Khalida Rustamova, AzETA Public Affairs Officer*

On 25 June AzETA hosted farewell reception for Dr. Glenn Deckert, Senior English Language Fellow, at Aqua Park Restaurant. Mr. Jonathan Henick, Public Affairs Officer, Dimitriy Tarakhovski, Public Diplomacy Officer, Ms Afet Ibrahimova, Education Assistant, from US Embassy, Mr. Brian Maguire, PEP Manager, British Council, Mr. Sabir Hamidov, Senior Advisor and the directors of trainees’ from Dr Deckert’s Training group attended the reception. Ragsana Mammadova, AzETA President made opening remarks and thanked all the guests for joining the reception. She also thanked Dr Deckert who conducted a 50-hour Training programme in EFL Methodology towards the goal of training AzETA teachers throughout Azerbaijan. On behalf of AzETA Mr. Glenn Deckert was granted a Certificate of Appreciation and a specific present from AzETA - a plate with his image (photo) was presented to Dr. Glenn Deckert. Mr Jonathan Henick, Public Affairs Officer from US Embassy, Mr Sabir Hamidov from Ministry of Education and some other guests were given the floor. The teachers Elmira Elizarova, Janna Aliyeva took the floor and thanked Dr. Glenn Deckert and of course, US Embassy and AzETA as well for such a unique project to train Azerbaijani teachers. After the official part the guests enjoyed national Azerbaijani food.

▪ **HE Dr Laurie Bristow, British Ambassador**

Ambassador Bristow started his diplomatic mission to Azerbaijan in January 2004. During his work in Azerbaijan, he was one of the greatest supporters of AzETA. He attended the opening ceremony of 3 ELT Conferences of AzETA and many other events demonstrating great support to the organisation which played an important role in empowerment and promotion of AzETA.

Considering all his invaluable support and as a token of appreciation, AzETA hosted a farewell reception for HE Dr Laurie Bristow, British Ambassador on 31 May at Hazz Café in collaboration with AUKAA (Azerbaijan-UK Alumni Association).

AzETA President Ragsana Mammadova thanked Ambassador Bristow for his invaluable contribution to the building of civil society through supporting civic initiatives of NGOs like AzETA. As a token of appreciation AzETA and AUKAA presented Certificates of Appreciation to Ambassador Bristow on behalf of their members.

Ambassador Bristow thanked the organisers of the event and highlighted the importance of the NGOs like AzETA emphasising the increasing role of the English language as an international language, as well as the network of alumni group who are an asset for their countries. He wished best of luck to AzETA and AUKAA in their future work.



Below the Ambassador shares his impressions with the readers of the News Bulletin:

*First, some impressions of AzETA. I have come to know in AzETA a group of extraordinary committed and resourceful teachers of English, children. What you do is immensely important for the future of your country.*

*Second, some impressions of Azerbaijan. we arrived in Baku late of night in January 2007. We quickly came to understand that we were among friends. We have enjoyed the legendary hospitality and warmth of the Azerbaijani people, and are leaving behind many, many friends. We'll be back!*

*Laurie Bristow  
British Ambassador  
31 May 2007*

### YOU WILL READ IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The 6th Central Asian Teachers of English Conference (CATEC) on 28 June – 1 July, Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan
- EAMP students sing American Anthem at the US Embassy Independence Day Reception
- Education for Peace, Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue, 24-27 June, Georgia
- Next meeting of Working Groups under Cross-Regional Network Association Project
- Enjoy English Summer Camp 3
- AzETA prepares for its 4<sup>th</sup> ELT Conference
- And more...

### NOW IT IS TIME TO LAUGH



#### Tomato Garden

An old Italian man who lived alone in the country wanted to dig his tomato garden, but it was very hard work, as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincenzo, who used to help him, was in prison.

The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

Dear Vincenzo,

I am feeling pretty bad, because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I am getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. If you were here, my troubles would be over. I know you would dig up the garden for me.

Love, Papa

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

Dear Papa,

I'd do anything for you Papa, except dig up that garden. That's where I buried the bodies.

Love Vinnie

At 4 a.m. the next morning, FBI and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left.

The same day the old man received another letter from his son.

Dear Papa,

Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances.

Love, Vinnie