

First time in its history FEELTA has got a grant from the Linguistic Institute of Japan (LIOJ) to participate in the International Summer Workshop for the Teachers of English in August 5th -10th.

The LIOJ International Summer Workshop for Teachers of English is one of the oldest ongoing teacher training seminars in Japan. The Workshop is a one-week residential program held annually at LIOJ, usually within the first two weeks of August. It is conducted on a non-profit basis as a service to Japan and to the English teaching profession throughout Asia. The event is open to all, though the program is designed mainly for Japanese secondary school EFL teachers.

Taking the offer as a great honour we selected Galina Reveko an Honorary Teacher of the Russian Federation to represent FEELTA at the workshop. Below is her impressions of the event she attended in August. It is followed by the feedback FEELTA got from Jim Kahny, the director of the Linguistic Institute of Japan.

THE 33rd ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SUMMER WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Galina Reveko
English specialized school №57, Vladivostok

To begin with, I would like to express my gratitude to Galina Lovtsevich, FEELTA president, for giving me a unique chance to take part in Summer Workshop for Teachers of English. The workshop was held from Sunday, August 5 through Friday, August 10 at the Language Institute of Japan, Odawara.

I was looking forward to this great event because the faculty and staff had invited a teacher of English from Russia for the 1st time in its 33-year history. So I was the first representative of FEELTA at the workshop. The workshop program included presentations by well-known language teachers. The Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) Workshop presenters spoke on a wide variety of topics, including current trends and methods in language teaching. They also engaged participants in informal discussions on communicative teaching, teaching large classes, motivating students and other subjects which are related to the reality of the everyday classroom. This year's program featured a selection of more than fifty presentations.

Morning classes included both regular language classes and the popular special – focus classes. The goal of these classes was to offer the participants the opportunity both to brush up their English and to gain further insights into communicative language teaching. I attended Morning classes: "Morning Activities for the Junior and senior High School Classroom". My teacher was Diane McCall. She is a LIOJ instructor from Edinburgh, Scotland. I was very pleased to be her student. Her English and methods of language teaching impressed me greatly.

And of course, the Workshop essential feature was English, the only residential environment in which people from Australia, Canada, England, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Russia, Scotland, Thailand, the United States and other countries shared meals together, had parties together, chattered about daily life and

discussed issues in the field of language teaching. Overseas guests, Japanese teachers and LIOJ faculty had much to learn from each other and shared a lot with each other. The whole week was full of opportunities for cross-cultural interaction.

We discussed the ways how to motivate and stimulate large classes, how to spark students' interest in using English communicatively in the classroom and maintain that interest. How exciting it was to be in student's shoes. I tried to attend different presentations during this intensive week, among them were "Busted Lessons: When Bad things Happen to Good Teachers" and "Extensive Reading in EFL Classroom" by Richard Day, professor of the University of Hawaii whose instructional and research interests lie in the field of second Language teacher education, "Reading Literature: Warm-up Activities for EFL Classroom" and Team Teaching Discussion Group" by Jim Kahny, LIOJ director, "Grammar Games" and "From Listening to Speaking" by Aleda Krause, a co-author of Super-Kids, a 4-level EFL series for elementary-aged children and Super-Tops, a 3-level series for kindergarten children (Longman), "Motivating Your students to Fluency" by Stuart Bowie, an ELT assistant manager at Macmillan Language House and so on. And, of course, my own presentations: TEFL in Russia" and "How to Make English Classes Effective". Japanese Teachers and Guest Presenters were very interested in these topics and I tried to do my best to present our country, our city, and my school. And my presentations were a success, to my delight.

The Book Fair was an excellent opportunity to look through the latest ELT materials and speak with publishers' representatives about the materials we need for our classes: This Book Fair made my heart beat fast but the prices...

On Wednesday evening we held annual "International Night". The Main Hall wall was turned into a festival site, complete with interesting displays, posters, music and games. The goal was to give everyone a chance to meet and learn about each other's countries in a festive atmosphere. We had representatives from Australia, Benin, England, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Russia, Thailand and the United States. The song "Moscow Suburb Nights" by Soloviov-Sedoy was one of the most popular songs during this Night. I made friends with Richard Day, Donna Fujimoto, Kim Gilwon, Aleda Krause, Adbullah Bin Ismail, Akimi Nishizawa and whom not.

Leaving Japan I felt happy, excited, satisfied, pleased, and ready to share with my colleagues what I gained from this unique workshop.

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Jim Kahny, LIOJ Director

For Japanese teachers of English, it is a rare opportunity to meet a colleague from another country. Even rarer is it to meet and exchange ideas with a teacher from Russia.

The Russian Far-East is so near Japan, yet in many ways so far. For our participants, Galina has put a human face with this exotic place.

As an international scholar, Galina was outstanding. Participants appreciated her genuine interest in them and her enthusiasm for teaching.

We all learned about Russia from Galina. We learned about English education in general and Galina's classes in particular. The feedback on the written evaluations regarding Galina's presentations was excellent.* And she also took part in our school festival with much gusto.

*A sample of comments on Galina's presentations:

"I was surprised at her energetic personality. Not only activities but her character stimulate students, I think."

"It was very interesting."

"I was so impressed that I won't forget her."

"I have never been to Russia, so I'm so interested and the video tapes worked so well. I found out differences between Russia and Japan. It is interesting."

"Highly impressed."

"Impressed!! I got lots of courage from her presentation."

Let me close by restating how lucky we were to have such a wonderful teacher from Russia join the Workshop this year. Galina was the perfect representative of her country and we are eager to invite another teacher from Russia to the LIOJ Workshop in the future.

A summary of the Workshop can be found at:
<http://ilc2.doshisha.ac.jp/users/kkitao/library/report/LIOJ01.htm>

First County Conference for English Language Teachers in Bidzhan, JAO

Anzhela Voitenkova, Conference Organizer
Kristina Mitberg, Peace Corps Volunteer

On the March 16, 2001 the First County Conference for English Language Teachers was held in Bidzhan, Jewish Autonomous Oblast. The theme of the conference was "American Culture and Holidays". The participants were from villages around Bidzhan. The purpose of this conference was to provide English teachers from two rayons access to native speakers and improve their knowledge of American culture, holidays and American English. The organizers of the conference were staff of Bidzhan Secondary School. Teachers were especially impressed by Peace Corps Volunteers: Kristina Mitberg's "New Words in English", "Games In The Classroom", "American Holidays"; Clio Stearns's "Songs and Poems In Lesson"; Glen Glover's "American Slang", "St. Patrick's Day".

During the conference teachers could exchange methods of teaching and obtain new ideas for use in the classroom. They had an opportunity to speak English with volunteers, learn more about American culture, holidays, American slang, and discussed new, different textbooks and additional materials they can use in their classroom.

After the sessions there was a concert prepared by schoolchildren. The conference was a success and its participants had a wonderful opportunity to share ideas, meet together and expand their knowledge.

The conference was especially valuable because participants live far away from training centers and most of the teachers had never spoken with native speakers of English before. The organizers decided to hold this conference every year.