

### **International Summer Workshop for Teachers of English**

Thanks to FEELTA and its President Galina Lovtsevich, this year I had a chance to attend an international seminar of ELT in Japan.

This seminar was held at LIOJ (Language Institute of Japan) in Odawara. It met me with pleasant weather and hospitable staff. 78 teachers from Japan, Malaysia, Korea, Bulgaria, and Scotland... studied for 7 days.

This year was an unusual workshop. LIOJ celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Asia Centre in Odawara - its 40<sup>th</sup>. So, the executive director of the MRA Foundation, Mr. Masuhide Shibusawa, and the director of Odawara Asian Centre, Mr. Keisuke Nakayama, opened and closed the ceremonies.

It was a great privilege to share my knowledge and experience with people who were so talented and devoted to education. I am very pleased that Japanese teachers are very interested in Russian education. The whole week I was in the centre of their attention and answered all their questions. Now I have many friends in this hospitable country. We send letters to each other, exchange ideas and have a so-called international teachers' pen-pal club.

I was lucky to meet well-known professionals in EFL methodology such as Carolyn Graham, the originator of jazz and grammar chants, and Penny Ur, the author of the famous books *Grammar Practice Activities*, *5-minute activities* and others. Allan Maley (Assumption University, Bangkok) was my teacher for morning classes, and Kip Cates spoke to us about global education and shared with us games we can use in lessons.

We were busy from morning till night, were a little bit tired but happy because we got a lot of information from each other.

I'm proud of the fact that my presentations (90 minutes each) were highly appreciated by the teachers and the LIOJ staff. The topics I presented were: "ELT in Russia" and "Story making". I taught them to sing a song "I'm your friend" and all the guests and participants enjoyed singing it.

We, the participants, were a really colorful group of people: people from different places, from economically strong countries to countries with major difficulties. All of us had different backgrounds, but all of us shared a strong desire for peace and love, harmony and progress. We were living together, eating, smiling, singing, and talking.

The Asian Center was for me like a family that adopted me immediately. I feel the people who work in the Asian Center are very good friends of mine, whom I have known for many years. I was so impressed by their work, organizing skills, and their unstoppable will to do something positive for individuals, society and the world.

I enjoyed the lectures and admired the kindness of Japanese people and their desire to communicate. Japan is a beautiful country with very nice people. I should like to thank heartily Jim Kahny, LIOJ Director, and his staff for their hospitality and the opportunity to learn all this and more. They do great work.

There is a saying: "The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery". Such seminars as LIOJ as well as FEELTA provide, help to do this. Many teachers discovered new ideas, new countries, and new friends thanks to the "Little Island of Joy" as I called it.

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More information on the LIOJ Summer Workshop and the guidelines for participation can be found at <http://www.dvgu.ru/rus/partner/education/feelta/>