



LATVIJAS ANGLŲ VALODAS SKOLOTĀJU ASOCIĀCIJA

The **Latvian Association** of Teachers of English

LAVSA
LATE

LATE 33rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

“Learning Language Teaching and Teaching Language Learners”

Ogre State Gymnasium

(1 Gunara Astras Street, Ogre)

21st-22nd August, 2025



Dear Conference Participants and Presenters,

We would like to express our gratitude to the headmaster of Ogre State Gymnasium Inna Zeņkeviča for the hospitality and possibility to use the premises of the school, for supporting activities of teacher professional organisation and a sincere thank you to the vice-headmaster Maija Vilnīte for the unwavering support throughout the event planning!

We sincerely thank the **U.S. Embassy Riga**, the **British Embassy Riga** and **British Council in Latvia** for their ongoing support of LATE's initiatives.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the following organisations and speakers for their support:

- **Oxford University Press:** Dace Miška
- **Express Publishing:** Maria Kokkini and Dinos Soursos
- **Pearson:** Monika Henel-Celis and Grant Kempton
- **National Geographic Learning:** Catherine Hollings
- **Jānis Roze Bookshop:** Mārīte Keiša and Dita Miķelsone
- **Krisostomus Bookshop:** Arta Kupče, Jūlija Šastina and Maarja Paakspuu (Estonia)
- **Our guest speakers:** Marjorie Rosenberg (Austria), Joe Walther (U.S. State Department English Language Fellow) and Lauren Anderson (USA).
- **Our local presenters:** Robert Buckmaster, Tatjana Kunda, Inta Augustāne, Rita Skara-Mincāne, Ingūna Melne - Vasiļjeva, Ivars Dominiks Zeps, Joseph Jack Horgan, Diāna Bolgare, Liene Paneva, Ilona Ceļmalniece Agnese Gromova-Ķūrena, Yuliia Horbachova, Baiba Mantiņa, Anete Sorokina, Marta Žagare, Iveta Glužģe, Natālija Burišina, Liena Ziemeļe-Miltiņa, Egija Baumanē, Laura Pavloviča and Jūlija Griba.

Thank you to the publishers and bookshops for their ongoing support and thoughtful donations of conference bags.

Appreciation is also due to the LATE Board members, **Robert Buckmaster, Laima Takere, Irina Griņevska, Rita Skara-Mincāne, Ilona Ustinova, Ina Andīņa, Agnese Gromova-Ķūrena and Aija Gudza**, who have helped to organise the Conference and other LATE events throughout the year. Our gratitude also to Santa Sanija Linde for kindly volunteering her help throughout the conference.

We hope that you will benefit from this conference both professionally and personally, spending these two days with your colleagues, meeting old friends and making new friends and getting a good professional start to the upcoming school year.

Participants will have the opportunity to attend two workshops and are asked to indicate their preferences when applying. We will do our best to accommodate these preferences. Participants will learn which workshops they are attending during the conference-day registration.

We wish you all a very enjoyable and inspiring conference!

Yours,
Inga Linde
President of LATE

LATE 33rd Annual Conference
“Learning Language Teaching and Teaching Language Learners”

Ogre State Gymnasium
1 Gunara Astras Street, Ogre
21st-22nd August, 2025

Thursday, AUGUST 21

09:15 – 10:00 Registration		
10:00 – 10:30 Welcome and Conference Opening	Inna Zeņkeviča - Headmaster of Ogre State Gymnasium Philip Barclay - Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy, Riga Dalia Batuuka - Cultural Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy Riga LATE News by Inga Linde - President of LATE	Conference Hall
10:30 – 11:20 Plenary (50 min)		
Dinos Sourso Express Publishing	Getting the Message Across: Mediation in the EFL Classroom This presentation introduces mediation in EFL classrooms. It emphasizes students as social agents who bridge communication, co-construct meaning, and foster intercultural understanding. Mediation integrates reception, production, and interaction, promoting effective communication through activities like simplifying texts, explaining concepts, and facilitating collaboration across languages, cultures, and modalities.	Conference Hall
11:20 – 12:10 Plenary (50 min)		
Catherine Hollings National Geographic Learning	Striking The Right Balance Choosing a coursebook to support and guide your students to their personal and academic English goals can be minefield. One the one hand you need a coursebook that engages them on a personal level, developing their intrinsic motivation and enjoyment for learning English. And on other hand you need a coursebook that has the academic rigour and focus to develop their exam skills, thus giving them the best chance of reaching their academic goals. But does such a course exist? In this session, we'll explore tips and tricks to create the perfect balance and lead your students to success.	Conference Hall
12:10 – 12:30 Coffee Break (20 min)		
12:30 – 13:20 Plenary (50 min)		
Grant Kempton Pearson	Are we there yet? The Importance of the Learning Journey We are now living in a world students seem unequipped for and one that provides new, steeper challenges for teachers. This means changing the way we approach not only the students, but the whole course, in fact the whole learning journey. In this plenary I will be outlining why we need to rethink and what we can do from the very next lesson to create learning journeys that maximise student potential and minimise teachers' workload through better understanding of confidence over motivation by becoming more focussed on the journey and its waypoints.	Conference Hall
13:20 – 14:10 Plenary (50 min)		
Catherine Hollings National Geographic Learning	Unlocking the Power of Projects: Strategies for Success Projects can offer wonderful learning opportunities but can be tricky to deliver effectively. In this workshop we'll briefly explore the benefits of projects for students and the challenges that teachers face in implementing them successfully. We'll then look at some practical tips for best practice before putting that knowledge into practice.	Conference Hall

14:10 – 14:20 Break (10 min.)		14:10 – 15:00 (50 min.)	
WORKSHOP 1		LUNCH/ Visiting Bookstalls/Conversations with Colleagues	
14:20 – 15:00 (40 min.)		WORKSHOP 2	
15:00 – 15:50 (50 min.)		15:00 – 15:40 (40 min.)	
LUNCH/ Visiting Bookstalls / Conversations with Colleagues		15:40 – 15:50 Break (10 min.)	
15:50 – 16:20 News from the Publishers (30 min)			
News from the publishers	15:50 – 16:00	Dace Miška Oxford University Press	Conference Hall
	16:00 – 16:10	Grant Kempton Pearson	
	16:10 – 16:20	Catherine Hollings National Geographic Learning	
16:20 – 17:10 Plenary (50 min)			
Dinos Soursos Express Publishing	Harnessing the Power of AI Towards an Adaptive Learning Experience This presentation explores how AI-powered adaptive learning tools enhance language education by personalizing instruction to fit individual student needs. By providing targeted practice and real-time feedback, AI increases engagement and supports skill development. The talk highlights how these technologies create more effective, inclusive learning environments, ultimately improving outcomes and transforming the classroom experience.		Conference Hall
17:10 – 17:50 Plenary (40 min)			
Dace Miška Oxford University Press	Self-directed Professional Development Self-directed professional development opens learning possibilities for educators to acquire a wide variety of skills, gain access to various training outside the classroom, and accommodates to a larger range of personal motivation and circumstances. In this session, we will explore self-directed professional development resources and tools related to English Language Teaching.		Conference Hall
17:50 – 18:10 Annual General Meeting (20 min.)			
18:10 – 19:00 Reception			

Friday, AUGUST 22

08:20 Meeting only for the “Reading Circle 2025/2026” project participants		Room
09:00 – 09:05 Welcome and Opening of the Second Day of the Conference Igors Grigorjevs, Ogre Municipality Education Authority		Conference Hall
9:05 – 09:35 Plenary (30 min)		
Tatjana Kunda Riga French Lycee	Tasks for Real Life: Transforming EFL Teaching Through Action-Oriented Methodology This plenary explores the action-oriented approach to EFL teaching, where learners function as social agents completing meaningful tasks that mirror real-world communication contexts. The session will demonstrate how teachers can design task-based activities that engage students in authentic language use beyond traditional skill-focused exercises.	Conference Hall
09:35 – 10:20 Plenary (45 min)		
Robert Buckmaster The English Ideas project	Metaphors and Idioms We Live By In 1980 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson published Metaphors We Live By, the seminal text about metaphors in language. Though an important book in linguistics, it had a limited impact on language teaching. In this presentation I will discuss which metaphors and idioms we should be teaching our students and suggest some ways we can work with them in our lessons.	Conference Hall
10:20 – 10:27 Students'/Graduates' presentation		
Anete Sorokina Rigas Secondary School No 49 (University of Latvia)	Reading Circles and their Benefits to Reading Comprehension Reading circles offer a collaborative learning environment where students dynamically engage with the text and each other. This peer-based discussion encourages students to participate actively in their learning, promoting greater motivation and engagement with reading. However, there is little research on reading circles. It was found that after completing a set of five-week reading circle lessons, students' reading comprehension improved by an average of 24%. Students also mentioned that this activity helped them socialise, work in groups and structure their thoughts.	Conference Hall
10:27 – 10:40 News from the IATEFL Conference		
Agnese Gromova-Kūrena	In this short report I will give you news from the IATEFL Conference 2025 which I attended in Edinburgh.	Conference Hall
10:40 – 11:00 Coffee Break (20 min)		
11:00 – 11:50 Plenary (50 min)		
Marjorie Rosenberg Freelance	Activities to Encourage Learner-Generated Content for the ELT Classroom As today's English learners need the language for a variety of reasons, it is important to directly address their needs. Providing frameworks that learners can complete with their own content makes learning more meaningful to them, lets express their own ideas and increases their confidence. This talk will demonstrate classroom activities which can be adapted to different levels of competence. Learners can then put what they have learned into practice in the real world.	Conference Hall

11:50 – 12:40 Plenary (50 min)		
Ivars Dominiks Zeps Riga State Gymnasium No 1	Successfully Teaching Literary Analysis Students often feel discouraged to engage with more demanding texts. Many of them find it difficult to understand literary devices and symbolism (or why any of it even matters) long into high school. I would like to offer a way to help students understand literary analysis through topical examples and media relevant for them.	Conference Hall
12:40 – 12:50 Break (10 min.)		12:40 – 13:30 (50 min.)
WORKSHOP 3 12:50 – 13:30 (40 min.)		LUNCH/ Visiting Bookstalls/Conversations with Colleagues
13:30 – 14:20 (50 min.) LUNCH/ Visiting Bookstalls / Conversations with Colleagues		WORKSHOP 4 13:30 – 14:10 (40 min.)
		14:10 – 14:20 Break (10 min.)
14:20 – 15:10 Plenary (50 min)		
Joseph Jack Horgan Jelgava Spidola State Gymnasium	New Free Materials for EFL Teachers In this talk, the speaker will present two projects he has been working on for EFL teachers. The first is a website which allows teachers to print out or use in digital form free AI-assisted extended readers based on a number of well-known texts in the public domain that can be used in English classes from A1 to B1 levels. The second is a series of summative assessment tasks that teachers can use that satisfy the requirements of the grade 12 "highest level" English standards that are in compliance with the new grading requirements introduced in 2024.	Conference Hall
15:10 – 15:30		
Inga Linde LATE President	Closing of the Conference / Certificates	Conference Hall

List of Workshops (40 min.)

Workshop	Presenter/ Organisation	Title/abstract	Room
WS 1	Marjorie Rosenberg Freelance	Embrace the Differences Our classrooms consist of individuals with a variety of learning preferences, so understanding how to embrace these differences can be invaluable. When we mix methods and materials the effects on our learners become clear. This workshop offers many practical activities which can be applied in a variety of teaching situations and are designed to help a wide range of learners.	219
WS 2	Robert Buckmaster The English Ideas Project	Teaching Ideas In this workshop I will share with you some ideas of working with language with your students I have been experimenting with. These will be focused on developing your students' understanding of the language and their written and spoken fluency. This will be most useful for Yr 8 +.	223
WS 3	Ingūna Melne-Vasiļjeva Riga State Gymnasium No1	Digital Media Literacy in the Classroom In this workshop, I will share how I integrate digital media literacy into my English lessons to help students think critically about online content, identify misinformation, and become responsible digital citizens. I will showcase real classroom examples, student projects, and activities that foster engagement and critical thinking. Participants will see ready-to-use materials and open-access resources to adapt for their own teaching contexts.	127
WS 4	Yuliia Horbachova Valmiera Secondary School No 2	10 Habits That Improve Well-Being and Help Teachers Avoid Burnout This workshop is about sharing practical, everyday habits that help teachers feel better both physically and emotionally, maintain their energy, and prevent burnout. It's about promoting teacher well-being by encouraging small but effective changes in daily routines, like mindful breaks, setting boundaries, staying connected with others, or simple self-care practices, so teachers can continue their work with more balance, motivation, and joy.	203
WS 5	Liene Paneva and Ilona Ceļmalniece Riga Centre Secondary School of Humanities	New Course Book: Where to Start? Practical Tips for Classroom Success Adapting unfamiliar coursebooks to meet learner needs and the national curriculum is a common challenge for English language teachers. This workshop will present practical strategies for using new materials effectively and creating targeted supplementary resources, as well as offer hands-on activities. The presenters will share examples designed to enrich and extend coursebook content.	204
WS 6	Diāna Bolgare "Freelance "Diana's Language Coaching"	Poetry in My Heart: Bringing Poetry into the Classroom This workshop introduces the "Poetry in My Heart" recitation contest. We will share judges' insights, discuss poem selection, and explore the best ways to prepare for the performance to ensure the contest reaches schools throughout Latvia. Teachers will try writing poems using templates and gain practical tips for guiding students through both the online and final performance stages.	205

WS 7	Rita Skara-Mincāne Valmiera State Gymnasium Inta Augustāne Riga State Gymnasium No 3	Bridging the Gap: Integrating Business English into High School English Courses This workshop explores practical ways to introduce Business English into high school classes. Participants will discover hands-on activities, learn useful business idioms, and engage with tasks that build real-world communication skills and student motivation. The session offers adaptable ideas to bring authentic business contexts into the teenage classroom.	206
WS 8	Liena Ziemele-Miltiņa Riga Teika Secondary School	Fostering Self-Directed Learning Through Film-Based Activities In today's educational landscape, fostering independent learners is essential. This workshop explores how the use of films can enhance communicative competence, self-directed learning, and critical thinking. Participants will gain insights into managing the learning process through film, including effective pre-, while- and post-watching tasks. Drawing on my own experience, I will share concrete B2-level activities that empower students to take ownership of their learning.	223
WS 9	Egija Baumanė Kegums Secondary School	Tools for Students: Self-Assessment, Reflection, and AI in the Writing Process In this workshop, teachers will learn a practical method for guiding students in essay self-assessment, reflection, and improvement based on the task's objectives. The provided materials can be adapted to other types of writing. The session will also explore responsible uses of AI for revising and evaluating written work, including techniques for writing effective prompts.	235
WS 10	Joseph Jack Horgan Jelgava Spidola State Gymnasium	Literature-based material for the optimal-level "English I" course using Jack London's novel "Call of the Wild" Over the last year, the presenter has developed a collection of free material that teachers of the "English I" course can use with their 10th and 11th grade students that satisfies all requirements of the optimal-level curriculum standards. The material will be presented and tested during the workshop.	221
WS 12	Baiba Mantiņa Liepupe Elementary School	KAMISHIBAI - Japanese Paper Theatre KAMISHIBAI is a non-formal teaching-learning method, which started in Japan between the 8th and 10th centuries, which can be adapted to any teaching discipline. It is a learning by doing team-building method in which the focus is on a storytelling technique that can be used as a method of presentation and dissemination of the results of a project (e.g., Erasmus+) or any program.	203
WS 14	Marta Žagare Ikskile Secondary School	Writing Project - My Story The workshop presents a writing project for 6th–8th grade students based on the book Knots on a Counting Rope by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault. After listening to the story and using worksheets, students create their own illustrated book, incorporating metaphors. The project fosters creative writing, understanding of literary devices, and visual expression.	204
WS 15	Iveta Glužģe Valmiera Viesturs Secondary School	Bringing "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury into English Classroom This talk shares practical insights from teaching Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 in an advanced EFL classroom. It explores strategies for engaging students with dystopian fiction, developing critical thinking, and expanding literary vocabulary. The session highlights how classic literature can enrich language learning and foster meaningful classroom discussions in an EFL context.	205

WS 16	Natālija Burišina Ogre State Gymnasium	Empowering Argumentative Writing: Blending Print, AI Tools, and Remote Guidance in the Modern English Classroom This workshop presents an innovative, pedagogically grounded approach to teaching argumentative essay writing by integrating printed materials, advanced AI tools, and remote access to students' devices. Participants will engage with structured methodologies for guiding students through the writing process, while exploring how AI technologies can enhance skill development, deliver individualized feedback more efficiently, and significantly reduce the teacher's workload related to assessment and correction.	223
WS 17	Laura Pavloviča and Jūlija Griba Ulbroka Secondary School	From A to I – How Can AI Tools Work for You In the workshop, we will look at ways to make teachers' everyday lives easier using artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Practical examples will help with both lesson planning and material preparation. We will also touch upon the possibilities offered by Canva. The workshop will be conducted in Latvian.	235
WS 18	Joe Walther U.S. State Department English Language Fellow, Daugavpils University	Creativity in Language Learning: a Creative Curriculum or a Curriculum of Creativity This 40-minute workshop explores creativity from both sides of the podium. Participants will examine how to teach more creatively and how to design activities that promote creative thinking. We will also discuss ways to support student creativity and use creative problem-solving to build critical thinking skills in the EFL classroom.	127
WS 19	Lauren Anderson National Louis University, USA	From Policy to Practice: Reflecting on English Teaching in Latvia In 2019, I came to Latvia as a US Embassy English Language Fellow, learned about the new curriculum, and visited your classrooms. Now, I want to hear how it has impacted you. Join this session to reflect, share experiences, and gain insights from colleagues. Leave with inspiration and ideas for classroom-based action research projects rooted in your teaching practice.	207