

ESP WORLD

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Lyudmila Kuznetsova
Saint-Petersburg State University

Projects Developing ESP Students' Writing Skills (invitation to become a partner)

On February 3-5, 2003 with the support of an ELTeCS grant a workshop on developing ESP students' writing skills was conducted in Lviv, Ukraine. At this meeting of university teachers of English from 5 countries (Ukraine, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Russia) the framework of further collaboration was developed. ESP students from different countries were to make up teams which, by exchanging e-mail messages, would explore issues of mutual interest, either through discussion or collaborative research. In the process, the students were to establish initial contact, agree on the topic for investigation, plan their work together, request and provide information, or conduct a joint survey.

The project was successfully implemented in the spring of 2003. Below are some examples of what the students did:

- Sociology students from Kaunas (Lithuania) and St. Petersburg (Russia) planned a survey on youth culture in their respective countries, collected and exchanged information, making presentations on the results achieved;
- a comparative study of family law was carried out by groups of students from the universities in Brno (the Czech Republic) and Lviv (Ukraine);
- discussions of political issues were conducted by undergraduate and post-graduate students of Social Sciences in Lviv and Moscow;
- students of Natural Sciences and Engineering from Hungary, Russia, Ukraine exchanged information about themselves, their faculties and curricula.

The students' English proficiency level varied from pre-intermediate to advanced, and the complexity of the tasks to be performed was adjusted accordingly.

In June the participants' feedback on the project was collected. Most of the students were very positive about the results and reported improvement in their writing skills, grammar and vocabulary, as well as better use of the Internet and e-mail. The best proof of the teachers' recognition of the project's benefits is their willingness to do it again with new groups of their students and new partners.

At present, we – an international team of ESP teachers from the above-mentioned countries – are looking for partners in other countries of the world. We seek partnership with college and university teachers who teach English for professional communication to students of different specialisms (students' level of English – from pre-intermediate to advanced) and are interested in developing their students' writing skills by doing a collaborative project with an ESP group from a different country.

Those who are interested (and have adequate electronic facilities at their universities) please write to us at the following address: WoWEnglish@yahoogroups.com This is our 'World of Work English' group where we'll be expecting your messages. You can also send a message to the author of this article at ludkuz@admiral.ru