



JULY 2023 | VOLUME 9

# EWB NEWSLETTER

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## EWB Regional Conferences: Where English Teachers Come Together to Make a Difference

For the first time in April-May 2023, the English Without Borders Network (EWB) organized three regional conferences for English teachers in Dushanbe, Khujand, and Bokhtar, Tajikistan. The conferences brought together more than 100 people from different parts of the country including the most active English language teachers-practitioners, educators, scholars, EL Fellows, and partners to discuss the latest trends in English language teaching, exchange ideas, and build new collaborations.

The conferences were a great success, and participants found them to be a valuable opportunity to learn from each other, share ideas, and network with colleagues from across their regions.

The EWB is grateful to the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan and the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan for their support of the conferences.

READ MORE  
ON P. 2-5

# EWB Regional Conferences: Where English Teachers Come Together to Make a Difference

The English Without Borders Network (EWB) organized three regional conferences in April and May 2023, for English teachers in Dushanbe, Khujand, and Bokhtar, Tajikistan. The conferences brought together more than 100 people from different parts of the country including the most active English language teachers-practitioners, educators, scholars, EL Fellows, and partners to discuss the latest trends in English language teaching, exchange ideas, and build new collaborations. The EWB Regional Conference in Dushanbe was also attended by U.S. Ambassador Manuel P. Micaller, Parvonakhon Jamshedov, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor, and representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan, and School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE).

The theme of the conferences was **"Trends & Leadership in English Language Teaching"**. The agenda included presentations, workshops, and poster sessions from local and international experts on a variety of topics, including:

- Using technology in ELT
- Emphasizing student-centered learning
- Using authentic materials
- Promoting learner autonomy
- Leadership and responsibility in ELT.

The conferences were a great success, and participants found them to be a valuable opportunity to learn from each other, share ideas, and network with colleagues from across their regions.

The EWB is grateful to the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan, the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan, and American Spaces in Dushanbe, Khujand, and Bokhtar for their support of the conferences.



*EWB Regional Conference in Dushanbe*



*EWB Regional Conference in Khujand*



*EWB Regional Conference in Bokhtar*

## EWB Regional Conferences in Numbers





# EWB Regional Conferences: Feedback from Participants and Trainers



**Anna Lurie**  
English Language Fellow  
for 2022-23 in Khujand State  
University

*Participating in the 2023 EWB Regional Conference in the Sughd Region was a highlight for me. It was a great pleasure to observe so much learning, collegiality, and joy happening in one place, though I always leave EWB events feeling that way so I wasn't surprised! Throughout the day, I was really impressed by teachers' eagerness to learn from and engage with each other. EWB teachers are like a very supportive family. It was clear to me that all of the attendees were getting a lot out of the experience, from networking to professional development to teacher wellbeing.*

*The conference was well organized and I enjoyed being a learner as well as a presenter. It was an honor for me to give some opening remarks to the attendees, as I am truly inspired by the dedication that EWB*

*teachers put towards their work. I also presented a workshop about the new American English resource called Critical Creativity in Action. Having the opportunity to share about this amazing set of materials was very fulfilling, as I know teachers are always looking for ways to inject more critical thinking and creativity into their lessons. I enjoyed taking part in the conference in every way and I look forward to my next event with EWB!*



*I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the U.S. EMBASSY, DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN, and the English Without Borders Network team for the fantastic conference which was organized on May 27 at American Space Dushanbe. Huge thanks for inviting me to attend this interesting and informative Conference. It was a great chance to listen to the professional presenters and get inspired again. This conference gave me time to reflect and grow in many aspects of my personal and professional life. I have learned many meaningful games about warming up during classes and using technology in English classrooms. I believe that the Content Blocks and the Idea Book will be introduced to more EL teachers. Certainly, I will use it in my classes and share it with my colleagues. We had lots of networking opportunities. The organization was excellent, thanks to all the efforts you and your team have made." Thank you EWB - keep being inspirational!*



**Mehrangez Khujaeva**  
English Teacher, Alumna of Study of  
the U.S. Institutes (SUSI) for Young  
Women Leaders Program



**Zamira  
Aynulazizova**  
English Language Instructor

*The Regional Conference in Dushanbe was an exceptional experience, providing a platform for insightful and innovative discussions, and an opportunity to network with like-minded professionals from various fields. The keynote speakers delivered thought-provoking presentations and shared valuable insights that were inspiring and relevant to the conference theme. The breakout sessions were engaging and informative, offering a comprehensive exploration of the latest trends and practices in teaching English. The organizers put a lot of effort into ensuring that the conference ran smoothly, and their attention to detail was evident throughout. Overall, the Regional Conference was a resounding success, and I look forward to attending future events.*

*I am really happy that I participated in the Regional Conference hosted by English Without Borders at American Space Khujand. I am an English teacher at a secondary school with four years of teaching experience, becoming a well-known member of the English Without Borders Network and became famous among my colleagues in Bobojon Gafurov District with my big accomplishments through English Without Borders. During the two years, EWB provided us with valuable opportunities for improving our pedagogical skills. Now I have participated in the first regional conference organized by EWB. The Regional Conference for English Teachers was a fantastic opportunity to connect with other professionals in the field of the English language. I really appreciated the variety of sessions offered at the conference. It was great to learn about new teaching strategies and resources. The keynote speaker was engaging and thought-provoking. I left the conference feeling inspired and re-energized. I had a great experience at the regional conference and feel like I gained valuable knowledge and insights to bring back to my classroom.*



**Abdurahmonova  
Muqqadam**  
English Language Instructor



**Umeda Satorova**  
English Language Instructor

*I am so grateful for the unforgettable experience I had at the regional EWB conference last week! I learned so much from the brilliant keynote speakers, and I had the opportunity to exchange ideas with other passionate engineers from around the region. It was also heartwarming to reconnect with my colleagues from different districts. I am already looking forward to the next conference!*

*I just wanted to thank the English Without Borders Network for conducting a Regional Conference in Sughd region for English teachers. I am so happy that I was one of the attendees at the Regional Conference that was held at American Space Khujand. It was very effective, efficient, and necessary for English teachers. Everything was planned perfectly. The strongest point of this Conference for me was networking and being in great presenters' sessions. The presenters delivered their presentations professionally. They are really masters of their subjects with sufficient knowledge and excellent teaching. I was really impressed by the skills and knowledge of the trainers and presenters. Every part of the Conference was interactive, practical, and entertaining as well. Thanks for the efforts of the trainers and the EWB team!*



**Dilfuza Latipova**  
English Teacher, Alumna of the  
English Teaching Mentor (ETM)  
Program



**Zeboniso Murodova**  
EL Specialist, Coordinator of the  
English Resource Center

*It was a fantastic EWB Regional Conference. I had a presentation on Mindfulness, which was well-received by the audience. I also had a poster session about my Fulbright FLTA experience, which was a great opportunity to share my story with others. The atmosphere at the conference was very friendly, and I felt like I was part of a community of people who are passionate about making a difference in the world. Our favorite American Space Bokhtar place was the perfect setting for the conference. Overall, it was a truly unforgettable experience.*



*EWB Regional Conference in Khatlon region was an exciting and helpful event for me. I was lucky to have that opportunity to learn and share. First, I made new friends who are dedicated instructors and professionals in their fields. Second, I got acquainted with some teaching tips, approaches, and methods that were new to me. I liked the activities which we used to transform the Passive Classroom into an Active Classroom. Moreover, I got more information about Classroom Management and Professional Development Programs like OPEN, ETM, and Fulbright. I am very thankful to the EWB Network for giving me the chance to participate in the EWB Regional Conference and inspiring me to share and care more.*



**Mamaradjab Ibragimov**

English Teacher



**Mavzuna Odinaeva**

English Teacher

*EWB regional conference was one of the excellent opportunities for me to acquire new teaching information and approaches as well as find new colleagues, and expand my network. It was very effective for me because I met new like-minded peers from our region and explored their work experiences and their teaching skills. EWB regional conference provided us with a space for exchanging our thoughts, ideas, and perspectives with other colleagues. Moreover, we gained new insights and methods from professionals which we later used during our classes. Continuing in this way, I believe that EWB is going to help us the EL teachers a lot in terms of providing resources and their professional development. Thanks to the team.*

## Our Partners from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan



**Khudoydodzoda F.,**  
the Representative  
of the Ministry of  
Science and  
Education of  
Tajikistan



**Alimardonov S.,**  
the Deputy of  
Education  
Department in  
Khatlon under the  
Ministry of  
Education and  
Science of  
Tajikistan



**Kosimova M.,**  
the Deputy of  
Education  
Department in  
B. Gafurov district  
under the Ministry  
of Education and  
Science of  
Tajikistan

Representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan visited the EWB Regional Conferences in Dushanbe, Bokhtar, and Khujand to express their gratitude for the partnership and to highlight the great work that EWB is doing in the regions.

The representatives, who included Khudoidodzoda F., Alimardonov S., and Kosimova M., greeted the conference participants and expressed their appreciation for EWB's commitment to working in partnership with local communities and education departments at different levels to build the capacity of English teachers.

"We are grateful for the partnership between EWB and the Ministry of Education and Science," said Alimardonov S. "Together, we are working to make a difference in the lives of English teachers and learners in Tajikistan."

# EWB Master Workshop Finalists

## Summer 2023

### Finalists from the Districts of Republican Subordination

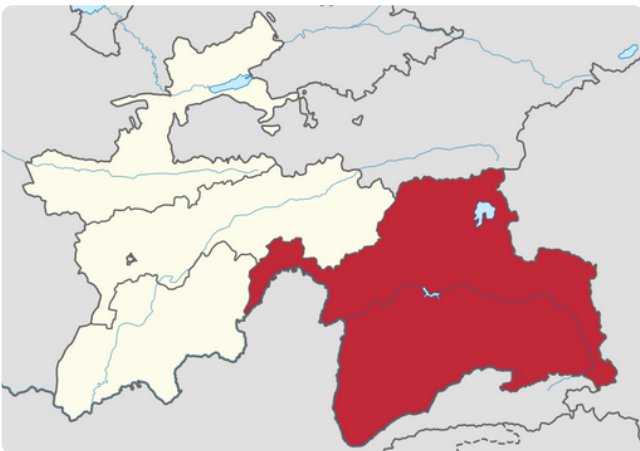


**Muhammadrio Qayumov**  
Gharm town; workshop on Cooperative Learning Strategies and Classroom Observations



**Salmonsho Orzuev**  
Gharm town; workshop on Engaging Students in the Classroom: Strategies for Increased Interaction, Collaboration, and Critical Thinking

### Finalists from the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast



**Bakhtibegim Mamadrayonova**  
Rushon District; workshop on Strategies and Practices for Effective Writing Instruction



**Marifat Niyozshoeva**  
Shughnon District; workshop on Interactive Learning Activities



#### DID YOU KNOW...

**THE EWB MASTER WORKSHOPS GRANT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE UP TO \$500 TO CONDUCT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS FOR DIVERSE GROUPS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN ALL REGIONS OF TAJIKISTAN.**



**Parvina Muborakshoeva**  
Shughnon District; workshop on Student-Centered Teaching and Bloom's Taxonomy



**Zinatmo Navruzshoeva**  
Shughnon District; workshop on Making Reading Fun and Engaging: Innovative Strategies for All Learners



# EWB Master Workshop Finalists Summer 2023

## Finalists from **Khatlon Region**



### **Mavjuda Saidova**

Kushoniyon District; workshop on Teaching English through Tajik Folk Tales: A Culturally Relevant Approach



## Finalists from **Sughd Region**



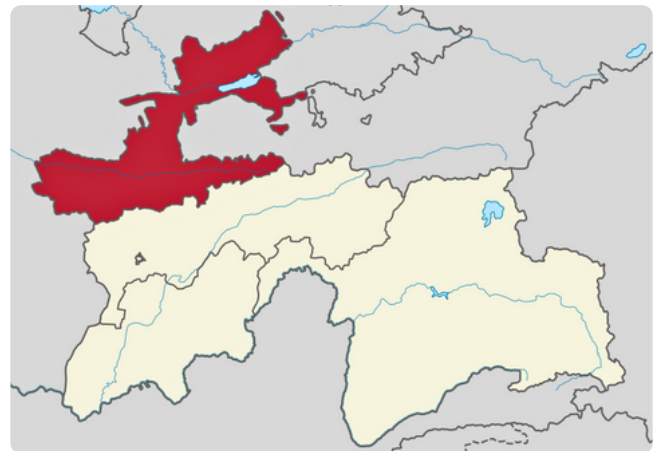
### **Dilfuza Goibova**

Isfara; workshop on The Essential Ingredients for Effective Teaching: Lesson Planning, Classroom Management, and Student Motivation



### **Dilafruz Rashidova**

Shahrستان District; workshop on New Methods of Teaching: What are they and how do they work?



### **Shahnoza Mansurova**

Devashtich District; workshop on Communicative Language Teaching and Using Technology to Enhance Learning



### **Tursunboy Samatov**

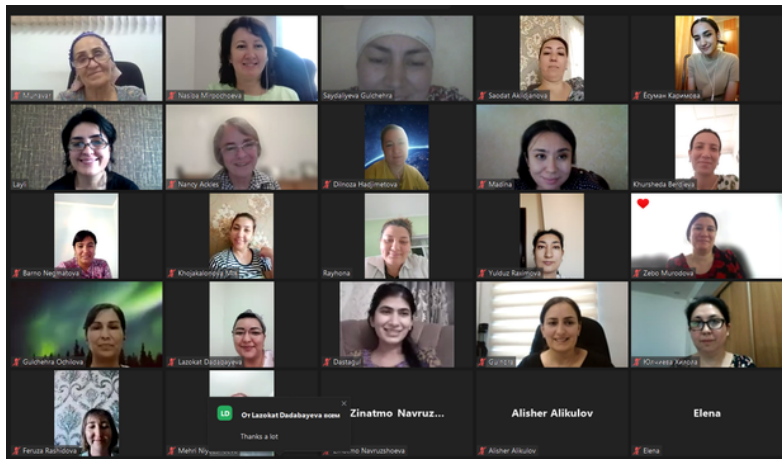
Jabbor Rasulov District; workshop on The Essential Skills of Effective Instruction: Giving Clear Instructions, Teaching Grammar, and More



### **DID YOU KNOW...**

**ENGLISH TEACHERS WITH A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE WHO ARE CURRENTLY WORKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES, OR PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN TAJIKISTAN ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY THROUGH EWB MEMBERSHIP.**

# Summer Online Intensive Course for English Language Teachers: **Sharing Success Stories Worldwide**



A group of 29 English teachers from Tajikistan who are EWB members and English teachers from Uzbekistan participated in an online course on writing success stories and conference proposals organized in July 2023.

The teachers met twice a week for one month for two-hour sessions to discuss their teaching experiences and to offer each other support and advice. The teachers shared a wide range of success stories, from helping students to improve their grades to inspiring them to pursue their dreams. They also compiled draft proposals for English language conferences where they presented their ideas for presentations or workshops. **The best success stories of course participants will be published in the next issue of the EWB Newsletter.**

## About the Course

In July, the EWB Network and Uzbek State World Languages University launched an online intensive course for English language teachers from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The course, titled "Sharing Success Stories Worldwide," was designed to help teachers improve their writing skills, share their success stories with the world, and participate in international conferences.

The course covered a variety of topics, including:

- How to write clear, concise, and engaging success stories
- How to develop a strong proposal and abstract for any conference
- How to build confidence in sharing your work with others
- How to publish your success story in the EWB Newsletter.

## Our Trainers



### Nancy Ackles

*EL Specialist,  
Taylor University,  
Upland, Indiana, USA*

Nancy Ackles is an English teacher and teacher trainer with a Ph.D. from the University of Washington. She has taught in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan as a Fulbright scholar and a US State Department specialist. She is the author of two books on English language teaching.



### Zeboniso Murodova

*EL Specialist,  
English Resource Center,  
Bokhtar, Tajikistan*

Zeboniso Murodova is an English teacher with 20 years of experience in Tajikistan. She has a BA in English Language Teaching and has participated in numerous ELT conferences and trainings. She is currently the coordinator of the English Resource Center at Bokhtar State University.



### Mamura Alimova

*EL Specialist, Kimyo  
International University,  
Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

Mamura Alimova is an English teacher and the head of the department at Kimyo International University in Tashkent, Namangan branch. She has been involved in numerous projects organized by the British Council and is a member of the English Access Microscholarship Program (Access).



### Yana Kuchkarova

*EL Specialist, Kimyo  
International University,  
Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

Yana Kuchkarova is an English instructor at KIUT (Kimyo International University of Tashkent). She holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Language and a Master's Degree in English Literature. Yana is passionate about teaching and has been involved in various educational programs, teacher training initiatives, and conferences.



# Reading Comprehension and Question and Response Building with QAR



**Spencer Salas, Ph.D.,**  
Professor, The University of  
North Carolina at Charlotte,  
in Charlotte, North Carolina,  
USA

This April, I had the pleasure of meeting my English Without Borders colleagues virtually to talk about the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) approach to reading comprehension. As I explained during the webinar and in a forthcoming article for the English Without Borders Newsletter, QAR was the brainchild of Raphael (1984) and emphasizes reading comprehension as strategic question-making at the

intersection of text, author, and reader. The approach is widely used in U.S. primary grade instruction but is still somewhat new to TESOL. In a nutshell, the QAR distinguishes between four question types that readers can learn to identify and, as a consequence, learn where to find an answer or how to craft a response. Allow me to explain.

## 1. In the Text/Right There Questions

These types of questions reinforce literal comprehension. The answer is contained in a line of maybe two consecutive lines of text. This type of question is like a treasure hunt. Readers skim until they locate the information. The response is “right there” waiting to be found.



## 2. In the Text/Think and Search Questions

Sometimes literal comprehension questions require that readers to scan longer segments of the reading to assemble the information the question is asking. It's not in a single line. It's across multiple paragraphs or pages. This type of response involves scanning. But finding the answer takes more time because it's distributed across the text.

## 3. Author and Me Questions

Some questions aren't literal. There's no single answer. For example, Author and Me questions put readers in an imagined dialogue with the text and/or author. These types of questions are asking the reader to make interpretive and inferential moves. Often these questions are asking readers to make a judgment about a position the author is taking or a decision a character in the text has made. These questions generate longer answers because these types of questions generally ask students to also explain their point of view in relation to the text.

## 4. On My Own Questions

On My Own questions take readers far away from the story and into their own experiences. These questions are big questions that access their world. Here again, the response will be much longer because the response doesn't depend on the author or the text anymore. The response is tied to the lived experience of the reader.

To learn more about QAR approaches to reading classic American short stories, keep a lookout on the ET Forum!

### References

- Raphael, T. E. (1984). Teaching learners about sources of information for answering comprehension questions. "Journal of Reading", 27(4), 303-311.
- Salas, S., Mraz, M., Greene, S., Williams, B. (In Press). "The Line between": Questions, Responses, and Adolescent Readers. "English Teaching Forum."

# Multimodality & Youth Empowerment



**Kevin J. Burke, PhD**  
Professor, Language and  
Literacy Education

The central claim this article makes is that youth know differently than adults do. This is not to say that youth know more than adults; rather the claim rests on the idea that individuals have unique experiences and those experiences are conditioned by various factors (gender, sexuality, race, home language, social class, etc.) one of the most prominent of which is age. My work, in the past, has been with adolescents and we would often begin our tasks with kids walking through neighborhoods, taking pictures of landmarks they deemed important. What we found very early on is that youth make much more creative use of pathways than we do as adults. Which is to say that we often left sidewalks and streets and cut through backyards, hopped fences, climbed trees, and generally wandered more

circuitously than we might otherwise have. Further, what we thought of as important landmarks (prominent civic buildings for instance) were not of concern to youth. More often than not they took pictures of beautiful trees that symbolized strength and constancy for them; they also were particularly concerned with playscapes and accessibility: who gets to use public infrastructure. Their abiding concern was, and remains, fairness.

Youth Participatory Action Research is an approach to research that roots expertise in kids and provides, in our iterations, multiple affordances of literacy by which those kids can gather data, and argue for social change in their immediate surroundings. When we speak of multiple affordances of literacy, what we mean are various modes through which youth might both produce data, but also through which they might make assertions that are meaningful to them. And so when we work with youth we ask them to: take pictures; draw maps, write poetry; compose letters; perform freestyle rap; construct resource lists on whiteboards; provide guided neighborhood tours; record video and audio; conduct interviews; create sidewalk chalk drawings; and to prepare formal audio-visual presentations. Throughout this work, we operate with the kids around guiding questions they provide. Our initial prompt is essential: what is it you love about your neighborhood and what would you change? Over the course of our work (from months to years) the youth refine this broad question into specifics (e.g., We love that this park draws kids to the neighborhood, but it's outdated; can we reconstruct it?) using various modes and then we work together to create a project of change.

Returning to our central claim: if youth know differently than adults do, then they will produce meaningful language through modes differently than adults and also through different modes altogether. We see this most often in kids' uptake of new varieties of technology (Tik Tok is an easy recent example). Our role as literacy educators is twofold: 1. To provide youth with access to as many modes as possible to allow them to best and most accurately express themselves; and 2. To help them understand that language and literacy, across various modes, can be used to change the world.





# Practical Tips on Enhancing Tertiary Online Teaching

**Authors:** *Ilona Huszti, PhD, Márta Fábán, Ilona Lechner, PhD, Erzsébet Bárány, PhD, Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, Berehove, Ukraine*

The COVID-pandemic has forced us, English teachers, to realise the great change in the world's education: online teaching has become common practice in our daily routine. We have learned some lessons concerning online teaching in tertiary education. Based on them, we would like to give some practical tips to improve the teaching process.

## Offer live lectures

They are always more involving because, through video streaming, they can facilitate class discussions and provide more student-teacher interaction. You can include a chat function to let students ask questions or discuss the material. However, prefer recording the lecture rather than streaming it if a student deals with a bad internet connection or is unwell then they will miss a live lecture which will be a student loss. If the lecture is in a recorded video then students can watch it any time according to their convenience. Recording the lecture is handy so you can share the recording with students unable to log in at the time of the lecture.

## Use a range of teaching methods (e.g., games or quizzes)

Online teaching enables you to be creative. Besides recorded lectures and reading assignments, you can also use interactive quizzes or games to help students in understanding the material. Various applications can be applied to create them, like Kahoot! or Quizlet. Try to incorporate a variety of teaching methods to give every student an opportunity to experience success because for some students one method works, whereas for others a different one will be preferable.



## Facilitate collaboration

Group project work is useful and valuable for achieving learning goals. It is difficult to organize a planning session in in-person teaching, and even more so when working remotely. That's why your students must be familiar with the tools that can help them work in the online mode. Assign various roles within a group to ensure all team members participate.

## Always provide actual feedback

Do not delay in grading the assignments that your students submit. Remember, they are eager to get to know how well they performed right after they have handed in their tasks. If you do not provide timely feedback, you can risk your students becoming demotivated. Through timely grading and feedback, you can monitor your students' progress, as well as identify areas where additional instruction is needed. From this follows that online teachers must have good time management and organizational skills to move their students forward towards reaching their aims.

Now, to finish with, here further practical tips for online teaching:

- Set a time each week for students to just connect and chat.
- Start class a bit early to allow students to socialize.
- Ask students to respond to how they are feeling about what they just learned with emojis.
- Set aside time to have breakout rooms so students can more easily interact and/or do group work.
- Encourage students to put questions either in a chat or a Q&A box.
- The most crucial tip is: remember to make your online classes more interactive.

# Situational Presentation: The Fun and Engaging Way to Teach Grammar

How do you usually teach grammar? Is it difficult or boring? Are there any ways that make grammar explanations easier, more interesting, and more fun? Yes, you might answer that there are a lot of ways. As an English instructor, from what I observed and experienced, teachers normally have a hard time teaching grammar, therefore they use different ways and choose the easiest approach for the students to explain grammar. I personally, tried several ways to make my grammar explanation simpler and more straightforward and found situational presentation- one of the most effective and productive approaches that enable both a teacher and students to create an interactive atmosphere and help to meet the objective of the lesson.



## Why is it important?

First, using situations in class can increase learning enthusiasm through watching, listening, and speaking. Students cooperate with each other, then contextualize and clarify the meaning and form and then produce the target language. Furthermore, it develops students' critical thinking (inference) and helps to practice their speaking and writing skills.



**Khayriniso Gulomaydarova**, English Instructor from the University of Central Asia's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) in Khorog (Tajikistan)

## Procedure

- **The objective of the lesson:**

Students can infer the first conditional (example), practice, and then produce it.

- **Lead in:**

The teacher draws or sticks a picture of a person on the board or chart and some other things, or objects around to stir students' imaginations and stimulate discussion. Learners think and discuss what relation these objects have with the character and then draw a connection for five minutes.

- **Context:**

The teacher provides a context or scenario which leads to a smooth transition from lead-in into a presentation. The teacher adds more pictures and then invites the learners to make statements or sentences using the pictures or prompts on the bubbles through elicitation. Students, in pairs, infer the target language using the pictures and prompts on the bubbles. In the end, the teacher elicits the answers and writes them on the board, and presents meaning and form.

- **Controlled practice:**

This activity is designed by the teachers to check if students have learned the TL accurately in each task. There usually can be gapped sentences, matching, jumbled sentences, etc.

- **The outcome of the lesson:**

In Free or Freer Practice students can produce their context or scenario productively using the target language. They are divided into groups and then each group is given different pictures. Students work together, discuss, and then create a story using images or prompts and the newly learned grammar. It is interesting that each group comes up with a funny, fascinating, or thought-provoking scenario or situation. When they finish each group presents their job and others listen to presentations carefully and evaluate each other. The best presenters are always the winners.



# Teaching Abroad: A Life-changing Professional Journey of Marhabo Kholmurodova

## What program did you do and where?

In 2018 I was privileged enough to get a scholarship from a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), implemented by IREX to participate in the Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement (FTEA) Program. It was a six-week program that enabled me to experience US educational system as well as its cultural aspects. The program was held in one of the cities of California called Claremont. Claremont Graduate University (CGU) serves as a host university for the U.S. Department of State's Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) program.

The TEA program helped me to develop expertise in my teaching subject areas, enhanced my teaching skills, and increased my knowledge of the USA.

In addition to attending workshops and courses organized by CGU's Teacher Education Program, we the TEA fellows had discussions and worked in classrooms in nearby public schools. I gave presentations about my home country and conducted lessons both at Sycamore Elementary School in Claremont and Claremont Pomona High School.

## How did your expectations of where you lived, the sizes of your classes, and potential cross-cultural challenges match up with reality?

The first thing that I noticed is the tiny windows at the top of the walls. This really surprised me about the classrooms and later I was told the reasons for that. Also, I thought that students at schools have a special uniform but when we had a session at CGU before we were sent to schools, they told us that students do not have to wear uniforms to school. However, I think the most important thing is the knowledge students obtain in these classrooms. I had to observe several classes before teaching myself. At the time of my observation, I found the lessons very interactive, effective, and productive. The students were bright and very nice. Most of the students at Pomona High School were of Spanish origin and what I like the most is the moment we taught each other. We had an agreement that at the end of each class we spare some moments to learn each other's languages. We exchanged useful phrases in Spanish and the Tajik language.



*Claremont Pomona High School,  
Claremont, California - CA, USA*



*Sycamore Elementary School,  
Claremont, California - CA, USA*

## What did students expect of you?

The students were as excited as me because we were both new to each other. Nevertheless, they were introduced to the reasons and purpose of my visit to their school. Consequently, they were very supportive and helpful. Usually, the classes that I observed encouraged both online and offline interaction. For example, students sometimes had discussions, and debates in class, and sometimes they shared opinions on the read pages from the book via laptops on the screen without discussion verbally. Taking this into my consideration I encourage them to make poster presentations. For instance, I first introduced them to a strategy called Book in Hand or Text-to-Text/Self, and then they were supposed to work in groups to apply the strategy to the assigned pages they have read and present their posters in front of the class. They enjoyed the involvement very much and I think they expected something new from me too.

### What challenged you the most?

One of the challenges I had while teaching was to think of something that could involve everyone in the class and motivate them to be engaged and interested in my lessons. It required a lot of thinking, and I spent nights awake to come up with something really captivating, however, it was worth it. I learned a lot myself while searching for attention grabbers, warm-ups, and lead-in activities. Thanks to it I have developed a personal teachers' toolkit now that I still use ideas from in my classroom.

### What were you most proud of?

I am proud of myself because I could make it! I set a goal for me to do a program in an English-speaking country, and I achieved my goal and had an amazing experience in the U.S. Moreover, I obtained loads of knowledge and developed myself as a professional teacher there. Also, I am proud of representing my country, my lovely and peaceful homeland to the people in the U.S. I am proud of building the bridges of networking and knowledge exchange between my country and the United States.

### Who left the biggest impact on you from your experience there?

The people I worked with have impacted me to some extent. However, the course that I attended and most liked was "Integrating Technology in ELT" and the instructor that facilitated this module has impacted me the most. Mr. Eddie Partida made the impossible possible for me. I had never thought that technology could be so successfully implemented in the English classroom because I had no experience with this in my homeland until I took his classes. In addition, to the technological tools he introduced Google Classroom as well as Google Docs and generally Google apps that could be used in English classrooms. Initially, it was unbelievable for me, however, after Mr. Partida's sessions I am able to confidently integrate technology into my classes. Also, during the COVID-19 pandemic I delivered a series of workshops to my colleagues and shared my knowledge of what I have learned in his class. My colleagues were able to create Google Classrooms and post their assignments via the internet during the online mode. Later, I proposed a training proposal to the management of the school which was on "Using Technological Tools to Motivate Reluctant Students". It was approved by the management and the Training was successfully delivered.

## Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (Fulbright TEA)

Fulbright TEA brings international secondary-level teachers to the United States for a six-week program. Teachers take academic seminars for professional development at a host university. They observe classrooms and share their expertise with teachers and students at the host university and at local secondary schools. There are two cohorts for the program:

- General Pedagogy Cohort
- Media Literacy Cohort

The General Pedagogy Cohort focuses on general teaching methods and strategies. Participants take academic seminars on topics such as curriculum development, lesson planning, and instructional technology.

The Media Literacy Cohort focuses on media literacy and critical thinking skills. Participants take academic seminars on topics such as recognizing bias, propaganda, and stereotypes; improving students' critical thinking, analytical, and communication skills; and how media literacy promotes civic engagement.

In addition to the different focuses, there are also some eligibility requirements that differ between the two cohorts. The General Pedagogy Cohort is open to teachers of English, English as a foreign language, science, mathematics, and social studies. The Media Literacy Cohort is only open to teachers of media studies, communications, journalism, or related fields.





# Abdukholik Saburov: An English Teacher's Journey

I am Abdukholik Saburov, a young English teacher with seven years of professional teaching experience. I was at secondary school # 3 in Vakhsh District and four years at Bokhtar State University of different age groups and English levels.

When I was in the 11th grade, I was invited to study English at the local Language Center launched by our local Educational Department. One of the famous English teachers from Vakhsh, Zarabekov Jonsho, taught English to me there. I was lucky to be in his group. He created a very safe and friendly atmosphere where I worked without the filter effect to master English. After I finished this course, I decided to be an English teacher like Muallim Zarabekov because he inspired me so much.



*English Resource  
Center Conference in  
Rumi Hotel,  
Dushanbe, Tajikistan*

I graduated from Bokhtar State University in 2019, and my parents presented me with a laptop for my successful graduation. I came back to my village and started my teaching journey with young learners. I created my teaching materials myself from papers and boxes. I visited American Space Bokhtar and attended their program and brought new things to my classroom.

I have a great desire to learn and experience new things in my classroom. I always look for different opportunities to update my pedagogical and methodological development.

I remember the summer of 2021 when I was very interested in trying to take an OPEN online course. I researched this course and got a lot of information and applied it to this. Fortunately, I was selected for this OPEN online professional English Network. There were a lot of topics in this course, and I was interested in "Teaching Grammar Communicatively". The duration of my online course was two months and 64 hours. I completed this course. However, it was difficult for me as a young teacher, but I never gave up and moved forward to finish this course.

I learned many fruitful new ideas in the modules such as the role of grammar practice, reflective essays, reading and listening activities, the Task-Based Learning Approach (TBL), the advantages and disadvantages of different error correction techniques, and cascading of new knowledge.

The experience I had was unpredictable. I didn't have reliable internet access in my home town. I did my online course from different spaces. I went to American Space Bokhtar, and then later I finished my course at the English Resource Center. There was a lot of hard work and a lot of fun. I recommend to all English teachers to take this course as it is a way we grow as teacher professionals, and as persons. However, the OPEN Online course gave me new challenges. I got the chance to attend the first EWB National Conference and Expo in Dushanbe in 2021.



*English Resource  
Center Conference  
in Rumi Hotel,  
Dushanbe,  
Tajikistan*



I met wonderful and experienced teachers who inspired me. It was my first time attending such kind of conference. This conference gave me a chance to conduct a workshop with 15 secondary English teachers in Bokhtar to share my takeaways from the EWB conference. I was a little excited to conduct a session for English teachers. I didn't have experience teaching teachers before. After the conference, I gained confidence in my teaching skills. I am a very active member of the EWB network. I don't miss the regular EWB Thursday webinars. I dream and hope someday I will be a speaker of this webinar. I dare to Dream Big. I have two more certificates from two EWB intensive online courses offered by Lisa Mann.

On November 16, 2021, the English Resource Center (ERC) was opened by our English faculty. New professional development opportunities opened for all English Language teachers in our faculty. With the opening of the ERC, my career path changed. Especially 2022 was a fruitful and productive year in my teaching career. Some of my colleagues said, that this year was my year. I agree with that. First of all, I completed two online professional developments at ERC. I got a lot of practical ideas which I immediately applied in my classes. My students accepted these activities with delight.



School #3, Bokhtar,  
Tajikistan

Secondly, I got the January « The ERC Teacher of the Month» award at the English Faculty. I competed with 7 opponents and honestly, I didn't expect to get it. In December 2021, by the order of our rector, some English teachers from our department were assigned to teach English to other English teachers from other faculties. I was assigned to teach a Basic English course for chemistry teachers for two months. I like to be in both roles of teacher and trainer. Going from a teacher to a trainer, helped me to develop my knowledge and skills to teach English to adults successfully. I explored a range of techniques and strategies for teaching adults.

Next, I completed three trainings of the ETM program funded by the US Embassy. This program taught me TTT, PPP, and TBL approaches that helped me in my teaching. Now, I can call myself an alumnus, and I proudly joined the USANT network.

These achievements, I mentioned above, helped me to become an Access teacher. It was also a big competition, but I succeeded thanks to my achievements. Now it is my second year working as an Access teacher, I tackled some challenges on this journey. I have learned how to make a calendar of monthly plans for my lessons, write the highlights of my lessons, plan, and design enhancement lesson plans for the personal growth and development of students. This program requires hard work. I contributed two of my lesson plans to the teachers' manual online course conducted by the EWB network. My lessons became interesting, and my students gave me positive feedback. I integrate varied skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) by implementing TBL and CT in my lesson plans.

My next dream goal is to apply for the Fulbright FLTA program. This year I got enough information about this program. I asked my question to alumni of this program. When I filled out the online application I understood, that I need to get some more academic achievements and awards.

In conclusion, I would like to say "success" is all hard work and "choice". I do not wait and hope for chances and opportunities. "Choice, not chance, determines success." I choose to be a successful teacher, and I will work hard to achieve my dreams and goals. I will work hard to shift my concentration from taking chances to making good choices. Choices have no limit. "Take ownership of your life with the understanding that you are the captain of your ship, your life." One of the characteristics of a successful teacher is, "Develop yourself and make a better version of yourself every day."

# Muharram Oqilova: An Inspiration to Teachers Everywhere



***Read the success story of Muharram Oqilova, a 50-year teaching veteran who has dedicated her life to educating others.***

Muharram Oqilova a professional with over 50 years of teaching experience, graduated from the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Leninabad Pedagogical Institute named after S.M. Kirov, and started her teaching experience as an English teacher at school number 15 of Khujand city.

In 1980 she was appointed as a school principal's assistant at a secondary school in 20 Khujand city and continued teaching English at the same school. She worked hard on improving her professional skills by participating in international programs.

In 1982 she was selected as a presenter at All-Union Teacher's Conference in Erevan, Armenia and her presentation on Innovative Teaching Methods used in the English lessons of Tajik Language schools was a great success and was awarded a Diploma from the USSR for taking second place. For her hard work and dedication, she was awarded the "Distinguish Badge – Excellence Teacher" of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan. Her teaching method was spread among English teachers in Tajikistan as an Innovative Teacher.

Muharram Oqilova is one of the experienced teachers who participated in the implementation of several International Projects as an expert. From 2002 to 2007 she was a coordinator and translator of the British NGO "Merlin" and IFES Tajikistan the realization of "Malaria" and "Civic Education" for high school students of the Sughd region.

Her knowledge and experience gained in different programs helped her to develop and improve her speaking skills and teach English to different categories of the population of her country. Her first experience working with Access students was Summer Camp for International students from remote villages in Varzob Dushanbe with American Exchange students in 2007.

In 2009-2010 she conducted English lessons for 25 students from poor families in the Devashtich district on the "Micro scholarship Access for English" project in cooperation with NGO "Dibar".

In 2010 she taught the Business Course at the Institute of Economy and Trade on the frame of Harvard Business Courses organized by the Doctoral Student of Harvard University, USA, Vanessa Beary, for two months. Her contribution to preparing future professionals for the development of business in Tajikistan was great.

Her desire to learn new types of schools like lyceums and gymnasiums and then to spread in Tajikistan was supported by the Educational Department of the Sughd region and she was sent to Moscow Educational Department to participate in a learning course.

In 1991 in partnership with the director of school-gymnasium № 625 of Moscow and with the support of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan the first lyceums and gymnasiums were organized in the Sughd region.

In 1997 Muharram Oqilova began to work as a director of the Small Business Institute in Khujand and on the frame of the EC Project for Tajikistan she participated in three months of training at Grandfield University of London. Returning home she organized business courses on management, marketing, accounting, and IT for start-up businesses.

As a finalist of the JFDP Program of USAID in 2004, she made her presentation of the SBI courses in the "All University Sites for Democracy" in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

In 1989 she was appointed as a Vice – Chairman of the Educational Department of the Sughd region and as a specialist in English Language teaching she was responsible to cooperate with the US Embassy in Tajikistan in realizing the educational projects of USAID in the Sughd region such as the FLEX Program and TOEFL Test for exchange students from 1990-1997.

In 1996 she was the finalist of the ACCELS USAID Program on contemporary issues and visiting scholar at Indiana University, USA in the faculty of Leadership and Eurasian Studies. Her program goal was to study the educational system of the USA and compare studies of school curriculums with the schooling system of Tajikistan. Her presentation on the panel discussion of the faculty with professors Hossler, Donald Sharam, and students was successful. During her stay at this university, she made her cultural presentation on the theme "Tradition and Custom of Tajik People" and organized a Festival in cooperation with the Student Association of IU which was another great achievement.

Muharram Oqilova considers herself the happiest person as her participation in so many educational programs helped her to see the world, work with great people, share her experience with young teachers, find her place in society, and be the breadwinner for her family. She is proud of her profession and commitment to the sphere of educating those who are the doors for future development.



## **Zebijon Rasulova: The Teacher Who Loved English and Shared Her Passion With Others**



Zebijon Rasulova is quite an experienced teacher in modern society. She graduated from Khujand State University of Khujand in 1975 and became an English teacher. She started her teaching activity in 1975 at school № 21 Khujand city and does her best to educate the young generation on the spirit of democratic ideas, paying great attention to the promotion of high morals, modesty, and honesty. She devoted 48 years of her life to teaching English to school children of different knowledge levels and different characters and could motivate them to learn English. Her lessons are very interesting and she always tries to give deep knowledge to all her students using modern teaching methods and visual aids.



For many years she worked as an inspector of English language in the Educational Department of Khujand city. She managed to involve school English teachers to change the way of conducting lessons, conducted training workshops, language festivals, knowledge contests, and regional Olympiads. One of her best initiatives to join all English teachers was to spend English Month at schools where the students participated in different language competitions to improve their knowledge.

Zebijon Rasulovala is a creative teacher and during her activity she published English books "The Sample of Almanac" and "How to Learn Language Easier" for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades of secondary schools and gymnasiums.

To polish her professional knowledge, she is an active participant in training workshops and seminars. Being a semifinalist of the TEA program, she was presented with two computers and books for \$2800 which she placed in her English Resource Center for teachers to use.

For some years she worked in cooperation with the ACCELS program and was nominated to participate in the TESOL Conference, in Baltimore, Maryland, USA as a representative of the English teachers of Tajikistan.

From January 16 to February 27, 2000, Zebijon Rasulovala was a participant in the EFLU-RELO SCA Trainers Training Program and had her internship course at the English and Foreign Language University in Hyderabad, India.

For her long-term, hard, and fruitful life as an inspirational teacher, she was awarded the title "Excellence in Teaching the Republic of Tajikistan". Recently she has had her own Language Center teaching students English and is an active participant in EWB webinars and training workshops.

## Send Us Your Own or Your Colleague's Success Story or a Story of Your Student!

Every quarter, EWB collects success stories from outstanding English teachers of Tajikistan. We have already published dozens of stories that have motivated and inspired hundreds of other teachers. If you are an English teacher who has a success story to share, we would love to hear it! We believe that every teacher deserves to be honored for their hard work and dedication.

When submitting your success story, please make sure that it meets the following standards:

- The story should be well-written and engaging.
- The story should focus on your own personal experiences as an English teacher.
- The story should highlight your specific accomplishments and how they have benefited your students, your school, or your community.
- The story should be no more than 1,000 words.



We will review all submissions and select the best stories to be published in our newsletter. The newsletter is read by thousands of professionals in Tajikistan and abroad, so your story has the potential to reach a wide audience.

To submit your success story, please email it to [pr@ewb.tj](mailto:pr@ewb.tj).

We look forward to hearing from you!

# TESOL 2023: The Gathering of the World's English Language Educators

TESOL 2023 conference of three days, March 22-24, 2023, in Portland, Oregon brought more than 3,000 people from different countries all over the world. The term "conference" cannot express the notion of such a huge event like TESOL, so some other new word should be created to name it. Its difference from usual conferences is its structure consisting of many different components like sessions, expo, book store, grants, awards, lottery, job opportunities, etc. As well, TESOL is not only science as the term conference may imply; there is a combination and cooperation of science and classroom teaching, scholars and teachers, research and practice, and efforts of bringing scholars into classrooms.



**Saidmukhidin Kholov,**  
English Teacher at the English Access  
Microscholarship Program (Access)



Generally, the convention consisted of concurrent and exhibitor sessions, an expo halls, and a bookstore. More than 600 sessions on diverse aspects of language teaching created an environment of cooperation, understanding, discussion, and interaction for sharing knowledge and expertise. Also, more than 70 organizations presented their services related to different aspects of language and its teaching at the expo halls.

As well, hundreds of books and publications with discount prices were offered to participants. One of the most visited expo booths was the U.S. Department of State Office of English Language Programs which is recognized worldwide as an influential leader in the field of English language learning and teaching. It presented many resources useful for teaching English across the globe for building cooperation, understanding, and relationships. The visitors' meeting, questions, and answers with Ethan Rosenzweig, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, at expo hall about the perspective of teaching English in different corners of the world created a sense of enthusiasm, commitment, encouragement, and thankfulness among the international English language educators.

This year, TESOL became more digital following the demands of the education market introducing the Eventsential application due to which TESOLers could view the convention program, get the latest information on session changes, and connect with other attendees.

The Portland city cultural tour allowed conference attendees the opportunity to enrich their understanding of U.S. culture, nature, way of life, and people.



## Marifat Saidalieva: A Fulbrighter's Story of Inspiration

"I feel very proud whenever I call myself a "Fulbrighter" (this is what we liked to call each other). This program is very competitive and the selection process is not easy. My experience with Fulbright FLTA changed my life and made me more confident about my capabilities and creativity" – said Marifat Saidalieva.

Marifat Saidalieva was the only Tajik in 2018 who won the scholarship of Fulbright FLTA program 2018-2019 and spent an amazing ten months of the academic year at the University of Georgia. Part of her program was to teach the Tajik language at the University of Georgia, take up to five courses at the university one of which was American studies, and of course, represent the Tajik culture among American and international students. Marifat participated in different events with presentations about the Tajik people, culture, and history to University of Georgia students and professors. She actively participated in all cultural, local, and international events of the university and city of Athens. She volunteered at the International Coffee Hours with student association groups.

"I never missed an opportunity to participate in events with presentations and Tajik food, as I knew one of my biggest tasks within this program was to spread the amazing culture of Tajikistan" – said Marifat Saidalieva.

Marifat started her teaching career at Kulob State University in Kulob where she graduated in 2012. She has experience teaching at the Faculty of foreign languages for almost seven years and worked on projects at the department of international affairs of the university.

"In the USA I took a course about American non-profit organizations, philanthropy, and volunteering which changed my view and perspectives of life. It made me understand that I can be more useful for my community working in this area" – said Marifat.

Now Marifat Saidalieva lives in Dushanbe and works as a National Program Coordinator in one of the leading NGOs of Tajikistan. She actively participates in all activities organized by USANT and is always ready to help teachers and scholars who plan to participate in this amazing program.



## Zinatmo Navruzshoeva: A Teacher's Success Begins with Her Students

Navruzshoeva Zinatmo is an English teacher with 5 years of teaching experience at a secondary school and public organization, Jurat. She has been working with the public organization, Jurat, since March 2020. She teaches students from start-up to upper-intermediate level. She is in her first-year master's degree at Synergy University in Moscow.



Zinatmo believes in her students, and they take place in different competitions every year. One of her best students is Dovutbekov Dovutbek who participated in the Republican Olympiad and was awarded a silver medal. This is the best honor for her. Dovutbekov Dovutbek was born on 27 April 2011 in the village of Tishor district Shugnan. He is a smart and knowledgeable student and has had a great interest in reading since childhood. He is a winner of different competitions such as the Spelling Bee, the best video creator, and the Olympiads. Now he is studying in 5th form in school number 13 named after Abdulalisho Zinatshoev of Tishor village.

Navruzshoeva Zinatmo is one of the active members of English Without Borders and she has the certificate for attending the English without Borders Webinars, in August 2021. As she mentioned, Thursday's webinars give her new trends in English, such as critical thinking, reading skills, using technology in the classroom, and how to use warm-up games during the lessons.

She also participated in the first EWB National Conference and Expo from November 19-20, 2021. Participating in this conference allowed her to listen to other teachers, masterclasses, presentations, and workshops and apply these teaching methods during her classes.



# Attending a Professional Conference to Advance Your Teaching Career And Expand Your Network

My career is made up of many steps: writing articles, watching webinars, attending E-Teacher OPEN MOOC and GOOC online courses, writing grant proposals, winning mini-grants, getting the Teacher of the Year 2007 USG Alumni of the Year 2020 award, and The Best Volunteer award 2018, winning competitions on the USANT platform, writing a self-care manual as part of the EWB Master Workshop 2022, and attending many professional teaching conferences both in person and virtually. These experiences improved my resume and gave me access to an invaluable professional network that will enable me to move forward professionally.



**Zeboniso Murodova,**  
Coordinator of  
English Resource  
Center, Bokhtar  
State University,  
Bokhtar, Tajikistan



I am Zeboniso Murodova, an English teacher/trainer, a mentor, and currently, I am the coordinator of the English Resource Center based at Bokhtar State University.

I would like to share my experiences of attending different conferences this year, both in person and online. The first National English Resource Center Conference in Dushanbe.

Forty English teachers from Dushanbe, Bokhtar, Panjakent, and Kulob attended the National English Resource Centers' Conference in March, which was held at the Rumi Hotel in Dushanbe. I, as coordinator of the English Resource Center (ERC) in Bokhtar, invited 15 English instructors from our English Faculty of Bokhtar State University to attend the conference. Our colleagues registered for this conference out of sheer excitement. Some of the teachers were conference attendees for the first time. "Becoming the Leader in the English Language Teaching Field" was the conference's theme. I, and ELF Fellow Benjamin Bertrand, had a presentation on Public speaking skills.

What I love about conferences is there is always a competition for attendees. There was a project proposal writing competition. All participants filled out the EWB project proposal application as an example and pitched it in front of the jury the next day. University instructors from Bokhtar took first and second places. Later, teachers submitted their grant proposal to the EWB Master Workshop Summer 2023. Fortunately, one of the applications is accepted. I was overjoyed to observe the excitement and delight that the teachers felt at the conference.

I had the chance to attend the April 3-4, 2023, Virtual TESOL Convention. I started going to the virtual TESOL convention in 2020. Although it was a completely different experience, I went to certain seminars for my professional growth. The difference between a live conference and a virtual conference is that during a live conference, you must select only one session from among several to attend, whereas, at a virtual conference, you can attend as many as you like. I enjoy this. The online TESOL conference gave me the tools I needed to train teachers and students more effectively. By taking part in this conference, I had the opportunity to be chosen for other ELT positions. I've always wanted to physically attend this conference. But I never expected that one day I would be presented at the TESOL conference. Covid time allowed us to attend and present this conference online.

In 2021, with my mentor Jode Brexa, we presented a 45-minute presentation on Tajik Voices: Resilience through Digital Storytelling. In 2023, with the help of American Specialist English teachers from four countries, I submitted a panel presentation proposal on Exploring Teacher Career Path Development: Empowering and Supporting Teachers. It was a panel discussion with a diverse group of six teachers from four distinct regions of the world where each of us shared our stories about leadership, work-life balance, teacher empowerment, and more. I am one of the panelists from Tajikistan who shared my story about the importance of self-care and ideas on how educators can incorporate them into their personal and professional lives.

Then, on April 29th, 2023, I attended the English Without Border's Regional conference in the Khatlon region. I presented a session on mindfulness for educators.

To build resilience in the face of external stressors, mindfulness has grown to be a popular meditation approach. It involves learning to pay attention and manage feelings and behavior. I shared some mindful moments activities teachers can use in their classrooms. For example, "A Mindfulness Activity to Move the Body and Rest the Mind". The instructions are very simple: Take a walk in the classroom, and look for something red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Keep going through the colors, in order, until the end of your walk. After the walk, discuss what different members of the group noticed. Were different people focused on different things? I always walk to work and notice small things with different colors and shapes around me.

And finally, the last conference in this academic year was the USANT Regional Conference for Khalon alumni. The theme was Media, Blogging, and Self-employment. There was a competition on grant proposal writing. USANT will give \$500 for the best project proposal connected with the theme of the conference. I was on a team of six USG alumni.

They all were my friends. Our team was Transformers. We brainstormed together and chose a session from the conference which we liked very much. Our topic is "AI for Educators." We chose this topic because the session conducted by Rustam Gulov was very engaging and interesting. We learned several AI tools such as Quilt, an AI-powered paraphrasing tool that enhances writing skills, and an AI CV and resume builder.

On July 8th, 2023, I and my team of USG alumni, conducted a one-day professional development training. Eleven participants came to the SPCE Bokhtar Learning Center, including five Bokhtar English faculty members, three ACCESS alumni who are students in the preservice teacher training program, a teacher from a Tajik Russian school, and two Access ETM teachers from the Kubodiyon district in Bokhtar. The variety of participants contributed to engaging AI training.



As technology continues transforming education, teachers are turning to AI tools to save time creating dynamic, engaging presentations, lesson plans, handouts, quizzes, CV building, writing tools, and grading for their students. Participants explored the Bard AI tool and Novoresume tools for resume building. Sarvinoz Komilova OPEN alumni, introduced how to use Google Bard in education. She demonstrated many BARD applications for educators. Teachers understood they could construct their lesson plans on specific topics and develop techniques in a mixed-ability classroom. An ETM alumna named Maksuda Khojakalonova assisted teachers in choosing several resume formats and styles so they could create and download their CVs for free using Novoresume. Most educators created their first resume. Alisher Alikulov, ETM alumnus created an interactive game as a competition. A Kahoot quiz was utilized to assess participants' understanding of AI tools for educators. The first three winners received memorable prizes such as wireless headphones, mini speakers, and a wireless computer mouse.

I was encouraged and inspired by all the conferences I attended this academic year. I was a presenter in most of them. After each of them, I came back to my work with a lot of energy, a huge smile, and fresh perspectives. When you go to conferences, there are many things to keep in mind.

When attending your first conference, there are many things to keep in mind, but try not to stress. Conferences may benefit your work and be enjoyable! But if you are attending a conference for the first time the conference start with a poster session. Secondly, conferences are a great place for networking. Why? So, if you go to one, it's kind of like you've got a big sign over your head that says, "I'm open to meeting people and networking in my field." Networking is important because it enables you to connect to like-minded people or important figures in your field who will help you with job hunting and other career issues. If any academic heroes are speaking at a conference, this could be the perfect chance for you to meet them. Who knows, maybe a little chat could lead to future collaboration! You can immediately add them to your professional network and exchange contact information. Send them an email as soon as you arrive home from the conference to establish contact and follow up. Conferences are enjoyable and beneficial to our careers. The year is still ongoing. The opportunity for new conferences inspires me.





# DIGITAL POSTERS CONTEST

EWB is excited to announce our new creative contest for English language learners! This is your chance to show your appreciation for your favorite English teacher by creating a digital poster about them.

The contest is open to all ELLs who are currently enrolled in school, college, or university. To participate, you will need to **create a digital poster about your favorite English teacher** using any poster maker website with free access (such as Canva, PosterMyWall, or Crello). Your poster should be visually appealing and use colors, fonts, images, and videos to communicate your message.

## Here are some ideas for posters that you could create:

- A tribute poster that celebrates your teacher's achievements and contributions to your life.
- A motivational poster that features your teacher's words of wisdom or encouragement.
- A timeline poster that charts your teacher's career and accomplishments.
- A poster that illustrates a specific lesson or concept that your teacher taught you.
- A poster that expresses your gratitude to your teacher for their help and support.

No matter what kind of poster you create, we encourage you to be creative and original.

## The prizes for the contest are:

- First prize: Wireless Headphones
- Second prize: Power Bank
- Third prize: TOEFL iBT Prep Books



Once you've created your poster, you'll need to share a link to it with the EWB team via email: [ewb.durakhshimarifat@gmail.com](mailto:ewb.durakhshimarifat@gmail.com). In the "Subject" of your email write "EWB Contest 2023". The application deadline is September 20th, 2023, at 11:59 PM.



# EWB Cultural Activities:

## April-July 2023



### Book Lovers Club

The EWB Book Lovers Club is a community of people who love to read. We meet regularly every month to choose a book, read it, and then come together to discuss it. We are a diverse group of people from all walks of life, but we all share a love of reading.



We believe that reading is a powerful way to learn, grow, and connect with others. We also believe that discussing books can help us to better understand ourselves and the world around us. If you are interested in joining the EWB Book Lovers Club, please send us a direct message on Facebook or Instagram (@ewbtj) or contact us via email.

### 30+ Nights

EWB and ASD (American Space Dushanbe) are continuing to host regular 30+ Nights events for participants aged 30 and above. These events are a great way for mid-career professionals to network, improve their English language skills, and learn from each other. 30+ Nights events are held every last Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm. The events typically include ice-breaker/networking activities, interesting presentations, simulation games, and fun activities for practicing English.

There are many benefits to attending 30+ Nights, including:

- Networking opportunities with other professionals
- Learning from fluent English speakers
- Practicing your English in a fun and relaxed environment
- Building your confidence in speaking English
- Making new friends

We hope to see you at the next 30+ Nights event! For more information, please contact EWB or ASD via our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.



### World Health Day Celebration

EWB and around 50 other participants of various ages celebrated World Health Day at the Botanical Garden in Dushanbe.

The event aimed to create awareness of the importance of good health and effective ways to stay fit and healthy. During the event, participants were introduced to and engaged in different activities, such as simple yoga exercises, an art gallery walk activity, and some fun games in the fresh air.

The event was a great success and helped to raise awareness of the importance of good health among the participants.



# EWB Cultural Activities:

## April-July 2023

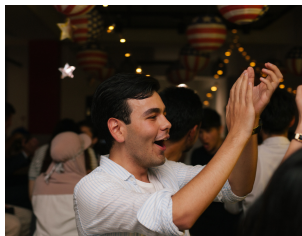
### US Independence Day

English Without Borders (EWB), The US Alumni Network of Tajikistan (USANT), and American Space Dushanbe (ASD) hosted a joint celebration of U.S. Independence Day to celebrate unity and friendship.

The event brought together a multinational audience from the EWB/USANT/ASD communities and was filled with elements of American culture, including games, music, dances, food, and much more.



The event was a great success, and participants immersed themselves in an atmosphere of joy. They played games, danced to American music, and enjoyed traditional American food. The event also featured a presentation on American culture and a discussion about the importance of unity and friendship.



### English Language Day

English Without Borders (EWB) celebrated English Language Day on July 25th with three universities and a learning center at American Space Dushanbe. The event included three team competitions: Battle of Brains, Public Speaking, and Drama.

The participants represented the Branch of Lomonosov Moscow State University, Avicenna State University, Tajik-Russian Slavonic University, and the Informational Technology and Communication Center from Vahdat. Participants eagerly participated in intellectual and creative contests, exchanged ideas, and learned from each other and about the EWB community.

The event was a great success and helped to promote the importance of English language learning and cultural diversity. EWB is grateful to all of the participants and organizers for making the event possible.





# Using a Free AI-Powered Writing Assistant to Improve Writing Skills

## Preparation

- Choose a writing prompt that is appropriate for the level of your students.
- Install the Grammarly extension on your students' computers and create a free account

## Procedure

1. Have students write a **first draft** of their response to the writing prompt.
2. Have students use Grammarly to identify and correct grammar errors in their writing.
3. Have students revise their writing based on the feedback from Grammarly.

## Assessment

The revised essays can be assessed based on the following criteria:

- The number of grammar errors corrected.
- The overall improvement in the quality of the writing.

## What is Grammarly?

Grammarly is an AI-powered writing assistant. It offers real-time feedback on grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity, style, and plagiarism. Grammarly is available as a browser extension, a desktop app, and a mobile app.

### When to Use it

- This activity can be used to practice writing
- It can be used as a pre-writing activity to help students brainstorm ideas and organize their thoughts
- It can be used to help students improve the grammar

### Level



### Skills



### Practice



### Preparation Time

1-5 minutes

### Activity Time

15-30 minutes

### Contributors

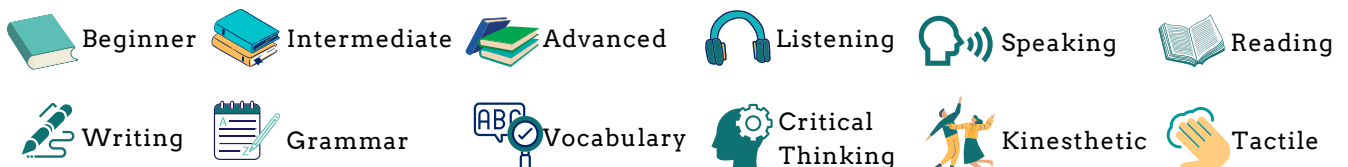
Zuhro Saidova, Google AI Bard

Grammarly is a popular tool used by students, professionals, and writers of all levels. It is a great way to improve your writing skills and ensure that your writing is error-free.

For those who are looking for more writing and communication support, Grammarly offers the following resources:

- Grammarly Handbook - an online guide explaining English grammar and style.
- Grammarly Blog - offers daily tips, fun commentary, and valuable insights from the wonderful world of writing and communication.

**Grammarly's free essay-checking tool** can help you review your and your students' papers for grammatical mistakes, unclear sentences, and misused words. You can access the Grammarly Free Essay-Checking tool here: <https://www.grammarly.com/essay-checker>.





# News & Opportunities

## EWB Leadership Camp 2023 in Kayrokkum



The EWB Leadership Camp for English Teachers is a 5-day-long program designed to accelerate English teachers' growth as aware and empowered leaders and teams who will take on new initiatives and cooperate with the EWB regional representatives in promoting EWB activities at schools and in local communities.

**Learn more here:**  
<https://ewbn.org/ewb-leadership-camp/>

## EWB National Conference and Expo



EWB National Conference and Expo is a great opportunity for English language teaching professionals to exchange ideas, learn about trends, and build community. Participants exchange ideas and practices, expand their professional networks, and learn about EWB initiatives in Tajikistan and beyond.

**Learn more here:**  
<https://ewbn.org/ewb-conference/>

## Participate in EWB Activities in Your Region



To participate in EWB activities in your region, contact our regional representatives:

- **DRS:** Mirzosharif Sharipov  
[drs@ewb.tj](mailto:drs@ewb.tj)
- **Sughd:** Munavvar Zaripova  
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*Dear readers, we hope that you will enjoy reading this newsletter and the materials collected here will be useful for you.*

*All the articles in this newsletter were provided by the authors themselves.*

*Happy reading!*



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