



EUNICE LANGUAGE ACADEMY – 2025 / 2026

Welcome to the EUNICE Language Academy (ELA)!

The ELA is designed primarily for language teachers, but it also warmly welcomes educators interested in languages, culture, or professional development.

At the ELA, you can...

- ...explore innovative approaches, strategies, and tools for language teaching and learning.
- ...join a multilingual community to exchange ideas and share best practices with peers from partner universities.
- ...connect with colleagues and build networks for future collaborative projects and language-related research activities.

Once a month, the ELA hosts an engaging session on a specific topic, led by an expert or educator from one of the partner universities. Come and discover, learn, and be inspired—discover our programme and the different activities here!

The following events are going to be offered from different Universities of the alliance:



3rd of December 2025 16:00-16:40 (CET)

PRESENTATION (open event)

Speaker: Barbara Sawicka, PhD

**Mediation activities and their assessment in foreign language
teaching: From theory to practice**

Abstract: Language mediation, as one of the key components of communication skills according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), plays an increasingly important role in foreign language teaching. The paper aims to introduce the concept of mediation in an educational context, with particular emphasis on its importance in developing communication skills in the context of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

The practical part will present scenarios of language tasks that can be implemented in foreign language lessons, including mediation activities such as paraphrasing, summarising, translating, processing information from various sources, and teamwork based on negotiating meanings and joint problem solving. Particular attention will be paid to the challenges associated with assessing mediation activities, including the subjectivity of assessment. Tools and methods for assessing mediation in communication tasks will be discussed. Examples of such assessment tasks will also be presented.

About Barbara Sawicka: She holds an MA in English Philology and a PhD in Language Assessment from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. From 2010 to 2024, she was Deputy Director of the Centre of Languages and Communication at Poznań University of Technology (PUT), contributing to projects like the CEFR VITbox (2020–2022) and EUNICE (since 2021). She has extensive experience teaching English for Specific Purposes and has authored articles, co-authored a textbook and online courses for engineering and physics students. She regularly participates in conferences and professional trainings and is a trainer herself. She is a member of several organizations, including Polish Association of Modern Languages PTN, IATEFL Poland, NULTE, and CercleS where she is a FG Assessment coordinator.

16:40 – 17:30 (CET)

WORKSHOP (open event)

**Speaker: Małgorzata Bączyńska, MA
CLC Director**

Project-based Learning or Pain-based Learning?

Abstract: Education in the 21st century presents educators with numerous challenges — not only technological, but also methodological. Traditional models of teaching are becoming less engaging for students, while the introduction of innovative methods often brings uncertainty and stress for instructors. The aim of this workshop is to explore both theoretical and practical aspects of Project-Based Learning (PBL). During the session, participants will learn how to design classes in line with PBL principles, develop their skills in evaluating project outcomes, and practice effective ways of providing constructive feedback. The workshop encourages reflection, collaboration, and creativity as key elements of modern teaching practice.

About Małgorzata Bączyńska: She is an active educator involved in numerous projects and head of unit who believes that teaching should inspire and develop real-life skills. She continually expands her competencies and learns how to be an effective leader and director, combining this growth with a passion for innovative teaching methods. She values creativity, collaboration, and learning through action — both in working with students and in developing team skills within the Center of Languages and Communication.

A graduate of the Faculty of English at Adam Mickiewicz University, completed postgraduate studies in interpreting, and Civitas University in Warsaw where she studied International Relations and Diplomacy. Her professional interests include: intercultural communication, innovative teaching methods and modern leadership. In private life, she is a passionate traveler, photographer and promoter of healthy lifestyle.

16:40 – 17:30 (CET)

29th of January 2026 at 16:00-16:40 (CET)

PRESENTATION (open event)

Speaker: Marita Galani, PhD

Inclusive Practices in Higher Education: Supporting Neurodiverse Students through ICT and Multisensory Learning

Abstract: This presentation brings together findings from two qualitative case studies conducted at the University of Peloponnese focusing on students with autism and students with learning difficulties. The research explores the challenges these students face in higher education—particularly in reading, writing, speaking, comprehension, and exam performance—and identifies teaching practices that foster inclusion and learning success.

The results highlight that anxiety, difficulties with concentration, written expression, and comprehension—especially in foreign language learning—are common barriers. However, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and multisensory teaching methods, such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, online exercises, and collaborative tasks, significantly enhance accessibility and engagement.

The presentation will also discuss supportive assessment practices, including extra time, oral exams, and the adaptation of materials to individual learning profiles. Emphasis will be placed on practical recommendations for foreign language instructors and university educators aiming to promote equitable participation and academic success for neurodiverse students.

About Maria-Eleftheria Galani: She holds a MA and a PhD in French Language and Literature. She teaches French for Specific and Academic purposes at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of the Peloponnese in Greece. Her research interests focus on open and distance learning, adult education, language learning and intercultural communication. She is also an active member of the Open Networked Learning (ONL) community and a facilitator at the ONL course. She has contributed to various national and European projects and is committed to promoting inclusive and innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education and lifelong learning.

WORKSHOP (open event)

Speaker: Maria Rontou, PhD

Designing Inclusive Learning: ICT and Multisensory Strategies for Neurodiverse Students

Abstract: Educating neurodiverse students in Higher Education requires new approaches that move beyond traditional, text-based instruction. This workshop focuses on inclusive teaching strategies that support students with autism and learning difficulties, emphasizing the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and multisensory learning methods.

Participants will explore how multisensory tools such as interactive videos, audiobooks, text-to-speech software, and online collaborative tasks can enhance comprehension, concentration, and engagement in both language and content courses. Practical examples from qualitative case studies at the University of Peloponnese will be presented, illustrating how adaptive teaching and assessment methods promote accessibility and equity.

Through interactive activities and group reflection, participants will design inclusive lesson components, identify effective accommodations for diverse learners, and develop strategies to create supportive learning environments for all students.

About Dr Maria Rontou: She teaches English and English for Academic Purposes as Special Education Staff at the Department of Political Science and International Relations of the University of Peloponnese. She holds a BA in English Language and Philology from the University of Athens, an MA in English Language Studies and Methods from the University of Warwick and an EdD in Language Studies from the University of Birmingham. She has worked as a teacher of the English language in primary and secondary education and at public Institutes of Vocational Training (I.E.K.). She has worked as Collaborative Teaching Staff since 2017 at Postgraduate Courses on Special Education and TEFL at the Hellenic Open University. She has been the writer of the teaching material and a collaborator at an e-learning programme of the University of Athens titled “Teaching foreign languages to students with dyslexia” since 2014. She is currently researching Learning Difficulties and using ICT in Higher Education.

6th of February 2026 at 16:00–17:00 CET

Collaborative Discussion Session (open event)

University Teachers: Maria de Lurdes Martins, PhD & Paula Fonseca, PhD

**AI in Foreign Language Teaching: sharing practices, challenges, and insights across
EUNICE partners**

Abstract: Across Europe and around the world, language teachers are increasingly navigating the opportunities and uncertainties brought about by artificial intelligence in education. Foreign language educators are experimenting with new tools, rethinking pedagogical approaches, and reassessing the role of human expertise in a rapidly evolving linguistic and technological landscape.

This session invites colleagues from all EUNICE partner institutions to participate in an open, conversational exchange on their current practices, questions, and concerns regarding AI in language teaching. Rather than presenting a fixed model, the aim is to create a collaborative space where teachers can share experiences from their respective national and institutional contexts: how AI is being integrated into classrooms, what ethical or pedagogical dilemmas they face, and which skills and strategies students now need in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Through guided prompts and small-group interactions, participants will reflect on the benefits and challenges they have encountered, compare approaches across countries, and jointly consider possible pathways for future development. Emphasis will be placed on supporting one another as a transnational teaching community, recognising both the diversity and commonality of our experiences.

About the speakers: Both Lurdes Martins and Paula Fonseca are foreign language lecturers at the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal, where they teach English for Specific Purposes in Tourism and Wine Studies. Their main interests include language pedagogy, intercultural communication, Virtual Exchange, and the use of Artificial Intelligence in language education, particularly in higher education contexts. They have been involved in several international collaborative projects that promote student engagement across cultures and are particularly interested in how digital tools and AI can enhance language learning, critical thinking, and intercultural competence in multilingual educational settings.

18th of March 2026 at 16:00–17:00 (CET)

PRESENTATION WITH INTERACTIVE DEMONSTRATION (open event)

Speakers: Susanna Mantila and Mirjam Särs

Principles and Potential of Interaction: New Course on Multilingualism, AI, and Academic Skills

Abstract: Finnish universities are known for including mandatory language courses in all degree programmes. In recent years, however, pressures to improve efficiency have narrowed the range of language and communication studies. At the same time, in today's increasingly multilingual and intercultural academic and professional environments, effective communication across languages and contexts is recognised as a key competence for students and staff alike.

At the University of Vaasa, the curriculum for language and communication studies in bachelor's and master's programmes was reformed for the academic year 2025–26 due to harmonisation and increased student intake. As a result, most programmes now include fewer language studies than before. To reflect current demands, the university's Language Centre designed a new mandatory course focusing not only on language but also on interaction and academic skills. The 3-ECTS course, titled *Principles and Potential of Interaction*, was introduced to address this need.

About the speakers: Susanna Mantila holds an MA in English Studies and Modern Finnish, and is currently a doctoral researcher in Communication Studies at the University of Vaasa. She has over twenty years of work experience as a translator. She currently works as University Teacher at the Language Centre of the University of Vaasa, teaching Finnish and English. She is the English Team Coordinator and participates actively in designing new courses, cooperating in projects, and creating shared learning materials. Her research interests include terminology, performativity, and affectivity, especially in relation to adult language-learning. She has designed and piloted beginner-level online and on-campus courses in Finnish and has taught the National Languages EUNICE Finnish course since 2022.

Mirjam Särs is a University Teacher of Swedish at the University of Vaasa. She holds a Master's degree in Swedish and has over ten years of teaching experience. She currently serves as the team coordinator of the Swedish team at the University of Vaasa. She has designed and developed several new courses and digital learning materials on multiple levels. She is actively involved in teaching and course development, as well as educational projects and collaborations. Mirjam has a strong interest in innovative pedagogy, exploring approaches such as tandem pedagogy, flipped classroom methods and digital and blended learning.

23rd April 2026 at 10:00-11:30 (CET)**PRESENTATION (open event)****Speaker: Inmaculada Martínez-Martínez, PhD****La lingüística de corpus y sus aplicaciones a la didáctica del español**

Abstract: Después de abordar el concepto de corpus y trazar un breve recorrido histórico sobre la evolución de la Lingüística de corpus como disciplina, se mostrarán las razones para introducir los corpus en la clase de Español Lengua Extranjera (ELE). Se explicarán los fundamentos cognitivos que aconsejan su empleo en la clase de lenguas extranjeras y se pasará revista a las herramientas de corpus que se pueden usar en el aula de lenguas. Se propondrán actividades como muestra, con las implicaciones didácticas que estas tienen para el estudiante y el docente. En una segunda parte se puede trabajar con una aplicación de análisis de corpus para que el estudiante se familiarice con su uso.

About the speaker: Ph.D in Hispanic Philology, Complutense University of Madrid. Master in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language, Complutense University of Madrid. Visiting Professor at the University of Tokio during four years (1994-1998). Lecturer of training courses for teachers (Antonio de Nebrija University, Menéndez Pelayo International University, Cervantes Institute, Sophia University (Tokyo), Université libre de Bruxelles, Université de Liege). Professor and Director of training courses for teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language at Menendez Pelayo International University.

Scholarship by Canon Foundation as Visiting Researcher at the University of Tokio (Japan). Specialised in Spanish as a Foreign Language Teaching, with special attention to the Learning Styles and Corpus Linguistics. She is author of publications in journals, books and conference proceedings about this area, Consciousness Raising and about Learning Strategies.

She has been the director of Studies at the International Centre for Superior Studies in Spanish Language (CIESE-Comillas) (2007-2015) and the director of the Master Programme in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language. At present, she works as a professor in the Department of Philology at the University of Cantabria and she is the head researcher in various research projects at the same institution.

5th of May at 10:00-11:30 (CET)

Workshop (limited spaces for 20 participants)

Speaker: Bret Ohrazda and Katharina Timm

Is it cultural or personal? A workshop on transculturality for teachers

Abstract: In this 90 min. workshop we will work on the understanding of the concept of cultural hybrids and how to approach working with language learners such as students and colleagues who come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The goal is to achieve self-awareness and develop strategies of how to work in an environment that increasingly consists of cultural hybrids. Through sharing transculturality we will get to know what is needed in our environment. We invite you to share experiences and learn from it.

About the speakers: Bret Ohrazda – is an American English teacher with 25 years of experience working abroad: 18 years in Japan and 7 years in Germany. He holds a Bachelor in English (Creative Writing) from San Francisco State University (USA) and a Masters in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the University of Birmingham (UK).

Katharina Timm is the language course coordinator and network coordinator of EUNICE. She holds a Bachelor in Romance languages and economics from the University of Kassel (Germany) and a Master Degree (double degree) in German as a foreign language from the *Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg* (Germany) and the Universidad de Antioquia (Colombia). She has worked for more than 3 years as a teacher in Colombia and volunteered for *AFS interkulturelle Begegnungen e.V.* for more than 10 years.

2nd of June 2026 from 10.00 to 11.15 (CET)**Workshop (Open to all)****Speaker: Julie Walaszczyk****Rethinking Virtual Exchange: Addressing Othering in Language Learning**

Virtual Exchange (VE) has become a common tool in language education, offering opportunities for authentic communication and intercultural learning. Yet, research shows that subtle forms of “othering” can occur, shaping how students perceive and interact with peers from different backgrounds. This workshop invites teachers to explore VE through a critical lens, using student quotes and research insights (Hahn, 2021; O’Dowd, 2020; Helm, 2015). Participants will analyse examples of othering, discuss underlying dynamics, and reflect on strategies to design VE projects that promote more equitable and meaningful intercultural interactions.

Bio: Julie Walaszczyk is an e-Learning Educational Developer and ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education) Advisor at the University of Mons (Belgium), working within the Language and Internationalisation Unit of the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation. Since 2015, she has supported faculty in English-taught programmes across multiple disciplines, combining expertise in ICLHE with the design of Virtual Exchange (VE) and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects. She has extensive experience in developing e-learning activities and international online courses with partners in Europe, Brazil, and Japan. Her work focuses on fostering intercultural competence, multilingual and inclusive learning environments, and innovative, technology-enhanced teaching practices. She is also engaged in critical perspectives on internationalisation, particularly challenging traditional North-South paradigms and promoting more equitable, globally informed approaches.



October 14th 2026 16:00-17:00 (CET)

Speaker: Erica Sandlund, Professor, English Linguistics, Karlstad University, Sweden

Getting language learners to talk:

Research-based thoughts on L2 oral proficiency and interactional competence

Abstract: Few things are as tied to our social lives and our learning journeys as talk. For both present and future purposes, language learners gradually learn to share information, narrate experiences, give instructions, formulate plans, and build relationships through talk in a second language. In order to develop their linguistic, oral proficiency, and their L2 interactional competence, language education must offer opportunities for practicing talking with others. As many language teachers have attested, getting learners to talk in a target language can be a challenge. Language teachers also frequently report wishing for more guidance on how to test and assess spoken language skills.

In this talk, I draw on international and Swedish research on practicing, testing, and assessing second language oral proficiency and interactional competence. I will illustrate what these concepts can entail for teaching and assessment through video and audio-recorded examples of task-based interactions conducted by 9th grade English learners in Sweden – in *assessment* (high-stakes oral proficiency testing) and *classroom* contexts (exercises for practicing). Finally, based on our work on challenges with assessing L2 oral proficiency and interaction, I will also show examples of how experienced teachers discuss and implement rating criteria in collegial assessment discussions.

Research webpage: <https://www.kau.se/en/researchers/erica-sandlund>

About the speaker: Erica Sandlund has a background in English Linguistics (PhD, 2004), and her research focuses on spoken interaction. Together with colleagues, she has researched the testing and assessment of L2 oral proficiency for fifteen years, and has recently co-authored a book for researchers, research students, and teachers on the topic ([Sundqvist & Sandlund, 2024](#)). Her research interests also include second language interactional competence, the teaching of English in multilingual classrooms, and currently, L2 storytelling in a research project entitled Tell-ability. At Karlstad University, she is the Deputy Head of the Department of Language, Literature, and Intercultural Studies with a primary responsibility for the PhD student environment. Since 2023, she has a full professorship, teaches Master's and PhD level courses in the department, and supervises PhD students. She is also a board member and researcher in the interdisciplinary research group ROSE (Research on Subject-specific Education) and the Center for Language and Literature in Education. She finds a strange joy in transcribing talk in minute detail, and loves that her work allows for a wide variety of research, teaching, and administrative duties in a stimulating environment!