

PENNY UR

First Time in Armenia

October 5-7, 2018

Sessions for Language Teachers and Educators



Penny Ur was born in the UK, took graduate and post-graduate degrees at Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and moved to Israel in 1967. She has thirty-five years' experience as an English teacher in elementary, middle and high schools, and has also taught BA and MA courses at Oranim Academic College of Education and Haifa University. Her primary interest is practical aspects of effective English language teaching, on which she has presented lectures and workshops at TESOL, IATEFL and other English teachers' conferences worldwide. In 2013 she was awarded the OBE for services to English language teaching. Her books include Grammar practice activities (2nd Edition) (2009), Vocabulary activities (2012), A course in English language teaching (2012), Discussions and more (2014), Penny Ur's 100 teaching tips (2016), all published by Cambridge University Press.

Visit Dates: October 5-7, 2018

Venue: Ani Plaza Hotel

Day 1 - October 5, 2018**Sessions 1 – 19:00 to 20:15****Where do we go from here? An overview of English teaching methodology**

This presentation will provide an overview of what is going on in English teaching methodology, based on perspectives from research, theoretical literature, and educational policy, as well as teaching materials and classroom practice. A critical discussion of the present situation will be followed by recommendations for the future.

Day 2 - October 6, 2018**Session 1 - 12:00 – 13:15****Research and the language teacher**

The question of the gap between research-based theory and classroom teaching is one that has been frequently discussed in recent years, and has been seen, essentially, as a cause for concern. Teachers, so the argument goes, do not keep up to date with the research and do not use it as a basis for practice. My position is that the knowledge-base of effective teaching is essentially thoughtful experience, and that research-based theory is a relatively minor, if significant, supplementary resource. Given this reservation, I will make some suggestions as to how insights from research can be made accessible to busy practitioners and can contribute to their professional expertise.

Session 2 - 14:15 to 15:30**Critical thinking in language teaching / Higher-order thinking skills**

It is important for ESL materials to include tasks based on both lower- and higher-order thinking skills. This session provides participants with opportunities to view, experience and discuss a selection of language-learning tasks based on critical, divergent and convergent thinking skills, which aim to enhance learning and motivation.

Session 1 - 11:00 to 12:15**Teaching mixed-ability classes**

In this talk I will begin by attempting to define what is meant by a 'mixed ability' or 'heterogeneous' class, and then go on to list some of the main problems – but also the advantages! – that we encounter when trying to teach them.

As with many educational problems, there are no easy solutions. We could, perhaps largely solve them by preparing different tasks to suit different groups within the class; or by preparing several texts at varying levels of difficulty, as suggested by some methodologists. But most of us have neither the time nor the money to invest in such elaborate preparation, let alone the time to check the results later. In this talk, I shall be proposing and discussing a series of practical teaching principles, illustrated by classroom procedures, that involve very little (or no) extra preparation, that can make our job teaching large heterogeneous classes easier, and that go some way towards bringing about more effective learning.

Session 2 - 13:15 to 14:30**My top 30 teaching tips**

This session presents a series of practical teaching tips. These are primarily based on my decades of classroom experience teaching English to all ages and levels in a country where English is little spoken outside the classroom, but enriched occasionally by insights from the research.