

Omiya: July – Native English Teachers: Ideas for Self Introductions at Elementary School

By Irina Bobanova.

Babanova explained the difficulty young monolingual children have in grasping the reality of people who speak another language. She believes that children learn best if teachers start with something familiar. How can educators do this? The first steps in to reducing the strangeness of a language is the self-introduction: letting students know something about the teacher's country, and culture. One of her beliefs is that English is also viewed as a language for learning about the world peoples, cultures, countries and problems. According to Babanova, hands-on materials such as notes, books, toys, music, etc are effective sources for introducing language and culture.

First, the speaker introduced the geographical information of her country, Bulgaria, using the world map, then, the colors of its flag, national flowers, famous food and beverage. She compared Bulgaria with Japan e.g., the differences of language, currency, and time. Supported by realia such as coins, books in Bulgarian, pictures of rose wine and traditional dance, the participants got general ideas of the country and culture. The members were completely impressed by the cheerful and well-organized presentation by the speaker.

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