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ETAI Mission Statement

ETAI (English Teachers' Association of Israel) is a grassroots, voluntary organization concerned with the professional development of its close to 1000 members. The membership list includes English teachers from all sectors and at all levels of education – elementary, junior high and secondary school, college and university.

ETAI offers professional support, information, forums for discussion and practical suggestions and resources to help English teachers deepen their expertise and grow in their careers through its local events, regional and national conferences and its journal The ETAI Forum.

The main driving force behind all the organization's activities is to encourage teachers to seek the appropriate avenues to keep up-to-date with the latest research in the field, materials, methodologies, technology, essential for their lives as English language teachers.

It is our job as a teachers' association to supply a variety of arenas to foster professionalism. These include organizing events throughout the country, keeping in touch with the English Inspectorate and the Ministry of Education and maintaining our connections with international English teachers' organizations as an affiliate of TESOL and an associate of IATEFL.

ETAI Membership Dues

Members	175 NIS
Full-time students*	120 NIS
New immigrants / New teachers	120 NIS
Retirees	120 NIS / 100 NIS**
Overseas members	250 NIS

*must present a valid student ID card

**a special reduction given to retirees who bring in a new member

New member / Membership renewal form can be downloaded from the ETAI site: <http://www.etni.org.il/etai/dues.html>.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Reports from various sources tell us that one-third of all new teachers leave the profession within three years, and almost one-half leave within five years, often due to poor working conditions and low salaries.

In businesses and the private sector, employees often benefit from merit pay, performance incentives, and bonus programs. Such practices, as featured in several TV reports in Israel, have proven effective in attracting and retaining qualified personnel and in rewarding high-performing employees.

In the education system in Israel a similar program of rewards and incentives, however attractive it might seem to teachers like us, this is not likely to happen.

As with any innovation or program in education, most people would ask: Does such a program improve student achievement? This question is little concern to me. What interests me is whether such a program would produce teachers who are more skilled, more devoted to their work and students, and more professional in their work ethic. I think not!

No group of teachers in Israel, despite the complaints we read on ETNI, could be more sincere about what they are doing day in and day out in their classrooms than the teachers of English.

We have been fortunate in the last couple of years that the English Inspectorate has been able to recognize “Teachers of the Year” by giving awards under the auspices of the American Embassy. However, for most English teachers, the best reward they can get is to give one to themselves by benefiting from the atmosphere and inspiration of colleagues at an ETAI Conference.

True, you have to pay for this “reward” instead of receiving it from your employer, but you do have much to gain; there are many bonuses associated with attending an ETAI conference. Whereas merit pay has been known to undermine the team concept behind teaching, attending a conference creates new teams and develops cooperation among teachers.

What is the one gift that teachers polled in the US last year said would make them feel most appreciated? Close to one-half said a “thank you” would suffice. So come and be thanked and appreciated. Reward yourself with professional improvement and pay yourself a compliment by joining hundreds of other English teachers in Israel at the upcoming Annual Summer Conference – you’re worth it!

Nava Horovitz
Chair

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

This school year has been a roller coaster ride for most of us. After the start of the year with all its craziness, the strike struck. Those of us who work in the junior and senior high schools were plagued by uncertainty about what would follow. Teachers who weren’t striking worked in a surreal atmosphere because many of their colleagues were on-strike. Elementary school teachers were, and still are, trying to understand the significance of the educational reform which is incomprehensible to most. And too many teachers have endured the rain of “kassam” rockets upon them while in the classroom. Now we are nearing the close of the school year: Is the last day June 20th? Or is it July 11th? Or is it sometime in between? Our fellow English teachers who do not work within the public school system avoided these experiences, but were certainly supportive of our plight. Throughout it all, ETAI has offered numerous opportunities of escape and professional development to members and non-members with conferences of all shapes and sizes, film workshops and, of course, the Forum.

This issue is packed with an appealing assortment of articles. It includes a section on teaching reading. Ruthie Zimberg and Shoshana (Barbara) Avrahami Young both stress the importance of phonics to the teaching of beginning reading, but offer different perspectives on the subject. Beverly Stock gives ideas for lessons focusing on reading and Debbie Partouche writes about teaching with stories. Among the varied feature articles is a contribution by Anat Zohar, Director of Pedagogical Affairs in the Ministry of Education, who lays out her view of higher order thinking skills in education. As promised, part two of Jennifer Sternlicht’s article about using principles of negotiation and conflict resolution in the classroom concludes this series. A new feature to the Forum, interviews with leading English language educators from here and abroad, debuts in this issue with an article about Valerie Jakar. Read about the adventures of our globe-hopping members in Donna Morris’s article about her experience in Japan, Nava Horowitz’s trip to London with students from the Talpiot College of Education, and “snapshots” of the TESOL 2008 conference in New York City.

And, a special issue of the ETAI Forum focusing on learning disabilities and differences is planned for the coming year. It will feature an article by Dr. Tsafi Timor entitled Identification of Special Needs within Mainstream English Classrooms. Please join her in sharing your expertise and submitting an article for that issue. Guidelines are outlined in the “Call for Articles” on page xx.

Wishing you all a healthy, restful and relaxing summer holiday!

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, ETAI Forum Co-editors

A SPECIAL EVENING FOR A VERY SPECIAL PERSON

Nava Horowitz (horovm@netvision.net.il)

They came from all walks of life. They were family members, close friends, neighbours and colleagues. They represented many various institutions and organizations. They spoke with different accents in English or not in English at all. They were old, they were young. And they had all come to celebrate the 90th birthday of a wonderful lady called Esther Lucas.

My personal connection to Esther began 40 years ago when she was my pedagogical instructor at Tel Aviv University. I was fortunate enough to be able to stay in touch with Esther over the years through her many activities in ISRATESOL, Contact and especially through ETAI of which she is still a board member. In fact, Esther founded or was involved in the founding of several organizations in Israel such as the Scouts and Guides in Herzliya.



Another on-going interest of Esther's began in 1945 with the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, London enabling Esther to be present at first General Assembly and first Security Council of the UN and has continued in various capacities up to the present with her work for UNICEF. Esther is a long time Board Member of the Israel Committee for UNICEF, and is the Education for Development Officer. She initiated and developed the ongoing UNICEF Project in EFL classes, for which students receive the Israel UNICEF Students Diploma.

It is very difficult to mention all of Esther's affiliations and achievements in the framework of this article. However, I am sure that most of the people who attended the variety show, organized by Esther's son Yonny, had, like me, kept in touch with Esther quite easily simply because she was, and still is, so active and attends so many functions, conferences and events.

The variety show in her honour, held at the Herzliya Theatre, really lived up to the title "variety" as entertainer after entertainer appeared on stage with performances including mime, dance, song and instrumentals to delight, entertain, uplift and amuse the audience who had come to celebrate with Esther. Her son, Yonny, showed outstanding dedication in putting the evening together for his mother's benefit and the audience could only say: "Thank goodness for such a wonderful son! What 'nachat'!"

On behalf of all the members of ETAI, but particularly the "veterans", I wish Esther many happy returns in good health.

THREE MINIS AND A MIDI

Fran Sokel (fsokel@gmail.com / sokel5@013.net)

This isn't about skirts; it's about ETAI events! The second half of this school year has seen much ETAI activity.

Over 600 teachers attended three successful events that took place in the north.

The first of these was the mini-conference in Maghar at the end of January. Avi Tsur spoke about 'Meaningful Teaching – Meaningful Learning' and Rick Rosenberg, the Regional English Language Officer from the American Embassy in Amman presented some very practical suggestions as to how we might extend and adapt materials to meet the needs and interests of our pupils.

The event that followed was the spring conference in Haifa, with no less than 28 presentations, including two extremely interesting plenary sessions. The first was given by Dr. Judy Steiner, Chief Inspector for English Language Education, who discussed at 'Different Perspectives: One Way of Thinking.' The closing plenary was given by Dr. Ofra Inbar, from Tel-Aviv University and Beit Berl Academic College, who spoke about 'Becoming an expert EFL teacher: What does it mean?' This midi-conference was attended by hundreds of teachers and students, many of whom dashed to the Reut Junior High School directly from work in order to participate.

The final northern event this year was the mini-conference in Nazareth Illit at the end of May. Tziona Levi, Head of English at ORT, gave the opening plenary entitled 'Encouraging an on-going dialogue in the classroom', and Dr. Janina Kahn-Horwitz closed the day with her enlightening talk 'The Stages of Spelling Development – implications for teaching and testing.'

In addition to the northern conferences, a mini-conference aimed at teachers of pupils at the foundation level, mainly at the elementary school level, was held in Ramat Gan in May. This event came about thanks to the efforts of Sarit Laufer-Burd and Edna Geva, and was attended by some fifty teachers. The main presentation entitled 'Sing a Song of Sixpence: authentic texts for appreciation of literature and culture' was given by Debbie Toperoff. Participants enjoyed a trip down memory lane while singing along to well known nursery rhymes.

At each event, teachers had the opportunity to browse around the exhibition of books and materials before, in between and after the varied presentations. No less important was the opportunity to network with friends and colleagues. The many mini-conferences that were held around the country throughout the year have been a booming success. Organizing one is less complicated than you think. If you'd like to hold one in your area, please contact Marna at the ETAI office: etaioffice@gmail.com.

Fran Sokel lives in Karmiel. She is currently working as coordinator for English in the northern region for the Rashi Foundation and as a pedagogical counselor at Sha'an'an College. Fran holds an MA in TICE from the University of London, and is currently studying for a doctorate through Bath University in the UK.

The vacation is here and with it comes the
ETAI Summer Conference
July 15-16, 2008

See page 47
for details

TEACHING THINKING ON A NATIONAL SCALE: ISRAEL'S PEDAGOGICAL HORIZONS

Anat Zohar, Ministry of Education Director of Pedagogical Affairs (*anatzo@education.gov.il*)

Abstract

Like other countries, Israel had its share of projects that see the implementation of inquiry and higher order thinking in schools as their main goal. However, although many of these projects were quite successful, they did not succeed in changing the bulk of teaching and learning in Israeli schools. This article describes a new national educational policy called "Pedagogical Horizons for Learning". The goal of this policy is to move the whole educational system towards a focus on higher order thinking and deep understanding. Such a move must consider the knowledge gained from previous projects but it must also lean on strategies for implementing systemic educational change. Implementing the goals of the "pedagogical Horizons for Learning" on a national scale requires simultaneous work on three dimensions: (a) Curriculum, learning materials and standards; (b) Professional Development; and, (c) Assessment. The article outlines the plan for each of these three dimensions and provides some accounts of the first stages of the implementation process.

Introduction

The call for teaching in a way that would invoke thinking as a daily routine in schools is by now several decades old (e.g. Resnick, 1987; Resnick. & Klopfer, 1989; Pauls, 1992; Perkins, 1992; Bruer, 1993). Like other countries, Israel had had its share of projects that see the implementation of inquiry and higher order thinking in schools as their main goal (e.g. Schwarz, Neuman, Gil & Ilya, 2003; Zohar, 2004). However, although many of these projects were quite successful, they did not succeed in changing the bulk of teaching and learning in Israeli schools. Rather, such projects still exist as isolated pockets or "islands" of exemplary teaching within a "sea" of much more traditional schooling that emphasizes rote learning of facts and algorithmic problem solving.

With an eye to changing this state of affairs, the Israeli Ministry of Education has adopted a new national educational policy. A document explaining this policy (called "Pedagogical Horizons for Learning") was first published in January 2007. The rationale to the new policy is explained by making reference to the desired characteristics of future school graduates, formulated in the following way:

"We live in an era characterized by short-lived generations of knowledge that succeed each other at a dizzying pace. In order to ensure that

graduates of Israel's education system are able to successfully meet the cultural, economic, scientific and technological challenges of the 21st century, we must change our conception of what such graduates should know. One of the main goals of the education system has been, and still is, for graduates to have extensive knowledge in a variety of academic disciplines. However, our future graduates will not be able to rely on a set, pre-defined body of knowledge that they have acquired at school; rather they will need, higher-order thinking abilities, the ability to make judgments, and the skills for creative and critical thinking, all of which will enable them to attain new knowledge throughout their lives. The material taught must be meaningful, understandable and relevant to life outside the school walls. The skills imparted should help our future graduates function more effectively in tomorrow's world. Citizens of a democratic state need the ability to make sound, moral judgments, to think critically, and to defend one's position rationally – all of which reinforce the importance of the scholastic and ethical aspects of teaching thinking within the education system. The effort to teach thinking is thus the foundation for all learning activities that take place in school: knowledge acquisition, in-depth familiarity with cultural issues, and the formulation of intelligent moral positions".

From policy statement to practice

Numerous leading educators world-wide have developed means to teach for thinking and understanding in well designed and often well supported educational projects. Moving a whole educational system from a focus on rote learning towards a focus on higher order thinking and deep understanding must lean on the knowledge gained from such projects but must also lean on strategies for implementing systemic educational change. The practical question raised by the Ministry's statements about teaching thinking is how this goal can be implemented on a national scale. The model that was adopted for this purpose is a model developed by Tamir (2006) who had implemented teaching and learning by inquiry in biology education in all Israeli high-schools in the early 70's of the previous century. Tamir figured out that translating the inquiry-oriented American BSCS curriculum and learning materials into Hebrew was only one of the necessary steps

for a sustainable reform. Two additional indispensable steps were extensive professional development courses and the development of appropriate assessment tools. Indeed, the development of a “hands on”, inquiry oriented laboratory exam as a unique component of the Israeli biology matriculation exam that has been developed in this context, was one of the first examples world-wide of a performance assessment test given on a national scale. Other components of the biology matriculation exam that assessed inquiry thinking abilities were students’ individual research projects and open ended questions about a previously unseen scientific research article. A recent study shows that considerable traces of the unique pedagogy that had been implemented in biology as part of Tamir’s endeavor remained in the system even 30 years later (Zohar & Schwartz, 2005).

Following Tamir’s model, the policy stated in the “Pedagogical Horizon” document is implemented by working on three dimensions: (a) Curriculum, learning materials and standards; (b) Professional Development; and, (c) Assessment. Progress in these three dimensions needs to take place simultaneously. If we would change the tests without providing adequate learning materials and without helping teachers to develop appropriate ways of teaching, there will be protests from the field because students will not have the necessary skills for succeeding in the tests that would require higher order thinking. On the other hand, it is clear that an investment in professional development and in curriculum and learning materials will not be efficient without a parallel change in assessment because teachers conceive the preparation of students for high-stake testing as an important part of their job. As long as such tests will continue to require mainly recall of facts and algorithmic solutions to routine problems, teachers will not teach for thinking even if they would participate in professional development programs that will advocate a thinking curriculum. It therefore seems likely that only simultaneous progress in the three dimensions mentioned earlier will indeed enable a systemic change in the desired direction.

In order to be able to consider the feasibility of the planned change, it is important to know that the Israeli educational system is centralized. With approximately 1.8 million students (K-12th grade) there is basically one mandatory curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education that covers a large percentage of what is taught in schools (although the schools that belong to the ultra-orthodox stream are exempt from most of this curriculum). At the end of 12th grade students take the matriculation exams that consist of 7 exams in mandatory core subjects: Language (Hebrew/Arabic), English (as 2nd language), Mathematics, History, Bible,

Literature and Civics. Additional subjects are mandatory in elementary and junior high schools (Science, Geography, 2nd foreign language, etc.). In addition, many additional subjects are electives in high school (e.g. biology, physics, chemistry, communication, arts, computers, etc.). For each subject there is a subject’s chief supervisor [S.C.P] who is responsible for policy making, curriculum, teachers’ professional development and assessment in that particular subject.

In what follows, I outline the plan for each of the three dimensions mentioned earlier as well as provide some accounts of the first stages of the implementation process that took place during 2007.

Curriculum, learning materials and standards

Each subject has a detailed curriculum that prescribes the goals of instruction. Around the year 2000 the Ministry of Education had also adopted a decision to write detailed standards that have been completed in some subjects, but are still in progress in other subjects. An inspection of curricular documents in many subjects (e.g. science, civics, mathematic) shows that higher order thinking goals are already there. The problem is that while these goals exist on the declarative level, they are not implemented. Thus, in most classrooms these goals are not expressed in the mainstream teaching and learning activities, nor are they apparent in textbooks and in tests. This indicates that although it is important to incorporate explicit thinking goals in curriculum documents, they can be insignificant if not accompanied by appropriate supporting means. Since textbooks and learning materials (e.g. educational software) need to get approved by the Ministry of Education, one such means can be a requirement to adhere to the pedagogical approach delineated in the pedagogical horizon.

Standards prove to be a complicated issue. Work on the science standards for instance has been in progress for several years and preliminary standards documents have been published for elementary and junior high schools (1st-9th grade). The science standards consist of very detailed lists delineating what students need to know and to be able to do on two operational levels (low and high) in the context of each part of the curriculum. Although the preliminary science standards do have references to thinking goals, a thorough examination show that they are problematic in several ways.

First, the content standards and the thinking standards are written in two distinct parts of the document with an apparent innate tension between them. The content standards are very detailed, cutting the science curriculum into numerous tiny little bits of information, consisting of isolated concepts that are disconnected to each other.

This approach is contradictory to the spirit of “teaching for thinking and understanding” which highlights (a) meaningful learning that needs to take place in context, and, (b) learning that entails students’ active knowledge construction as they search for answers to questions (rather than learning a closed list of static concepts). Second, there is the question of the amounts of material to be “covered”. When thinking standards are introduced, the amount of content must be reduced because teachers can’t be expected to teach in more depth and devote time to thinking and problem solving while covering the same amount of material as before. Third, the content standards consist of “operational levels”, that dictate exactly what do high and low performance levels require students to do in each topic. This means that for instance in topic A, a low level of performance requires students to “know” some concepts, while a high level of performance requires students to “compare” these concepts. However, a high level of performance in another topic, for instance topic B, requires students to provide an explanation, or to be able to formulate an argument concerning the pertinent concepts. This means that the standards were written in a way that creates a tight connection between a specific thinking operation and specific bits of information. This approach is problematic because the gist of teaching higher order thinking is flexibility and its ultimate goal is transfer, implying that students should be able to apply a thinking skill taught in one context to different, new contexts rather than to link a thinking skill to a specific bit of information.

The problems that were identified with the existing science standards with respect to the goal of teaching higher order thinking made it necessary for the team that is writing the science standards to re-think them. Currently, the team is working to develop a new model combining content and thinking standards in a way that will provide solutions to the problems described earlier, will be clear enough to teachers and will be provide an accurate template for the writing of the national assessment tests. The plan is that standards in other subjects will then follow the model that will be developed for the science standards.

Professional development

The main difficulty in incorporating higher order thinking into professional development programs is the lack of a large enough number of adequate experts that would be able to lead this theme, i.e. to teach in in-service and pre-service courses and to provide guidance in the field. Therefore, a necessary first step is to provide professional development for experts that would then be able to disseminate the “thinking curriculum” to other educators.

The first course that took place in that venue was a thinking workshop for subject’s S.C.Ps. It should be noted that these people are usually exemplary teachers, who were at some point in their career appointed as teachers’ instructors, and then were chosen from all instructors to serve as S.C.P. They are therefore a unique group who has strong capabilities in both pedagogy and administration. During the past decades however, this group was given primarily administrative responsibilities and was not seen as the target of a professional development program.

Approximately 25 S.C.Ps joined a voluntary workshop that was offered to them by the Director of Pedagogical Affairs. The workshop indicated a clear educational goal: moving towards learning for understanding and higher order thinking. However, rather than focusing on fixed routines and ways of implementation for achieving this goal, the rationale of the workshop was to empower the participants to become critical consumers and independent initiators of educational programs in this field. The primary part of the workshop was 56 academic hours spread over a whole school year. It consisted of several topics: Theoretical issues and important concepts concerning instruction of higher order thinking, rationale and educational means for developing appropriate learning materials, pedagogical approaches and tools for teaching thinking, appropriate ways of assessment, and strategies for implementing a change to incorporate the thinking curriculum on a national level. Following the participants’ request the course is continuing for another year. The meetings of the second year are used mainly to present and discuss various issues that come up as part of the implementation processes.

The workshop is already bearing fruit in the sense that approximately half of the participants became enthusiastic about the “thinking curriculum”, and committed to its implementation. Since many of them are educational leaders in their respective fields, they are capable of implementing the ideas they had studied in the workshop in their respective subjects and of adapting them to the unique challenges and problems of each subject. An interesting element in the implementation process is the extent to which it is non-uniform. First, each subject faces unique issues and challenges according to the unique circumstances in which it is taught. For instance, the student population of a mandatory subject taken by all school students, (such as history or civic education) is fundamentally different from the student population of an elective subject (such as accelerated biology or social sciences). In order to be successful, the implementation must grow out of these unique issues and accommodate them. Second, as a “thinking

curriculum” begins to unfold in various subjects, the extent to which thinking skills are content-bound rather than only general (Perkins and Salomon, 1989) is striking. Authentic problems in various school subject call for different thinking strategies, or sometimes, for very different meaning of the same thinking strategy (e.g. the meaning of analysis in mathematics, science or literature is quite different). It is interesting to note that following the participants’ requirement the workshop is continuing during the school year 2007-2008. The goal of the workshop has changed and is now taking the form of a support group that provides a forum for the participants to share the successes and concerns they encounter during the implementation processes they experience in the field.

In terms of professional development (PD) the implementation in each school subject consists of courses for teachers’ instructors and workshops for teachers. Part of the curriculum for these PD courses, namely, the part consisting of general theoretical ideas and concepts about education for thinking is common for all subjects. However, most of the curricula for these PD courses must be developed separately for each subject because it must consist of specific authentic examples for lessons, learning materials and pedagogies that are deeply embedded in the content and in the pedagogical content knowledge of each subject. This process emphasizes that in order to further develop the implementation of thinking according to the infusion approach (Ennis, 1989) in various school subjects, it is imperative to integrate two groups of educators: a group who has an expertise in the subject-matter, and a group who has a sound background in the pedagogies of teaching thinking.

Another venue for professional development involves pre-service education. Following the Ministry of Education’s initiative and funding, a total of approximately 30 new courses about teaching thinking in a variety of school subjects is offered in several pre-service education programs during the school year 2007-2008.

Assessment

The Israeli matriculation exams have not been updated in several decades. The exams consist of predominately written tests with a large proportion of items that require recall of information and a small proportion of items that require thinking and understanding. Since the educational system is oriented towards “teaching for the test”, the matriculation exams indicate to teachers what type of learning is required and valued. The matriculation exams are therefore a conservative factor that leads the system to superficial learning, putting off any chance of innovation and refreshment. Adapting the tests to the

requirements of the 21st century is therefore a necessary condition for any change we would like to implement.

The Ministry of Education has currently began a process of introducing gradual changes in the matriculation exams by using the following means: increasing the proportion of written items that require higher order thinking and of open-ended written items, by introducing testing with open books, by increasing the number of subjects in which the products of inquiry learning or individual projects are considered a component of the final scores, and by combining elements of on-going school-based assessment with the scores of external exams. A systematic effort to induce such changes will indicate to the system that in the future a focus on rote learning will not be sufficient to support success in the matriculation exams. In addition, increasing the level of thinking in national tests designed for elementary school will indicate that thinking is a desired goal throughout the school system.

The changes in assessment must be gradual and slow, but consistent and noticeable. They must be gradual and slow because it is not fair to introduce considerable changes to the exams before the preparation of adequate learning materials and adequate teachers’ professional development had taken place. On the other hand, they must be noticeable because their visibility is an important lever, signaling to the whole system that the requirement to incorporate more thinking in teaching and learning is a serious one that cannot be overlooked. An important key to the success of the whole enterprise therefore lies in the ability to balance these two opposite requirements. The plan is thus to start by increasing the frequency of higher order thinking skills by just a few percentages per year. Such a small increase is unlikely to have a dramatic effect on students’ achievements. However, if the process would be consistent over several years and if it would be accompanied by making the new models of questions, answers and rubrics publicly known (and by the simultaneous development of new learning materials and professional development), a noticeable change will take place in a few years. During these same years, pilot projects of school based assessment referring to chunks of the curriculum (substituting sections of the current written exams) will take place. The same will be true for pilot projects concerning inquiry. Taken together, these changes will eventually transform the matriculation exam to be aligned with the general goals of the Pedagogical Horizon for Learning.

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biodata to come

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Head of program: Dr. Nurit Melnik

Registration is now open for the M.Ed. in Language Teaching (English or Arabic) at Oranim.

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For further details call Anat David: 04 9838933

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NEGOTIATING CHANGE INSIDE THE CLASSROOM & OUT PART 2: CREATING THE CLASSROOM YOU WANT

Jennifer Sternlicht (*starlightfam@gmail.com*)

A teacher can elicit cooperation and effect progress in the classroom through the application of strategies that a skilled negotiator uses (Sternlicht, 2008). The emotional elements of ongoing struggles undermine our ability as teachers to educate. Just as negative emotions further complicate issues and prevent progress, so too the skill of learning to generate positive emotions can unlock infinite possibilities.

Skilled negotiators receive training to recognize and alter seemingly intractable conflicts. Teachers could use this same training to release the often-untapped potential for real learning to take place inside the classroom. The book, *Beyond Reason – Using Emotions as You Negotiate*, by Fisher & Shapiro, Penguin Books, labels emotionally laden areas, “Core Concerns.” These concerns are the extent to which each party feels: appreciated, affiliated, autonomous, receives status and has a role. To remember these core concerns, I use a mnemonic: “Triple A to the Rescue”, A-A-A, RS (Affiliation, Appreciation, Autonomy – Triple A, Role, Status – RS, to the rescue).

Although these core concerns coexist and overlap, it is worth addressing and developing a deeper understanding of each core concern separately in the context of a classroom.

Affiliation comes from Latin *ad- + filius* (son) meaning literally to adopt as a son. When affiliation exists in the classroom, each person is connected to and identifies with the group as a whole. To function at its best, a classroom would have both a teacher who feels connected to his / her students and vice versa. The saying, “kids don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” comes into play here. Once the teacher and the students feel emotionally connected to the classroom community, issues facing that classroom have shared concerns.

Classroom affiliation can begin on the first day. Administrative rule setting and record keeping should be kept to a minimum on the first day. Instead, games that center on learning each other’s names and uncovering personal attitudes and experiences, effectively ignite the affiliation process.

Moreover, the process is enjoyable; it elevates the time spent in the classroom from “time served,” to time felt more deeply on the spiritual level of affiliation. Additionally, that first day gives students a taste of the learning environment and the educational goals and methods to which you are committed.

Appreciation, the most important element in job satisfaction, is also a core concern in a classroom. Discard the concept that teaching is a thankless profession. No longer should teachers be satisfied with working in a “thankless” profession for altruistic reasons. If anything, the teachers’ strike taught us the dangers of allowing others to determine our worth and function. Everyone will benefit when we demand appreciation for the work we do. Teachers must address students directly about the homework teachers do.

A large part of feeling appreciated is knowing you are heard. This requires a skill called active listening. It is a non-traditional and highly satisfying type of listening. Usually, when we think we are listening, we are actually formulating responses to what we expect the other person is saying. Active listening involves restating the person’s position to make sure you understood it correctly and asking for more information. Doing so, gives the speaker a sense that their opinion holds importance and that you are considering the subject from their perspective; it does not imply that you accept or agree with their position. Active listening gives the dialogue an aura of mutual respect, which is important to building a resilient relationship.

As you become skilled, you will be able to show authentic empathy for their perspective because your goal is not to sympathy or antipathy, but rather to understand their position better. Summarize what you think the speaker’s main point was. Confirm that in fact is what was meant. Do not get emotional. You want to maintain an objective stand as well. Ask for more details about an issue raised. You may ask a question to clarify a point you heard raised to make sure you understood it correctly. Ask whether the speaker is willing to compromise on any issue. Ask whether the speaker can imagine making progress on the issue. And, if so, ask “how”? Ask the speaker to envision no progress on the issue. Is this acceptable to him or her? Finally, ask whether the speaker sees any area in which the opposing sides share interests.

Autonomy is recognition of the need for everyone in the classroom to feel autonomous on some level. Teachers need autonomy in terms of determining the content and the way the content is taught. Similarly, students are motivated when they make decisions about how to present the knowledge they have gained. Concepts about alternative forms of assessment and multiple intelligence theory apply to the development of autonomy in the

classroom. We must aim for learning that has an impact on motivation and the develops critical thinking skills, rather than lessons that deliver material in a rout fashion meant for digestion & regurgitation.

Role is a core concern which allows for a more creative and expansive outlook on each person's role in the classroom. Rather than seeing the classroom as one with a single figure in control whose job it is to transfer information, the development of roles for each player in the classroom creates a more active learning environment.

Status is a sensitive issue. When a person feels his / her status threatened, issues quickly get clouded and little more than power play is achieved. In contrast, when status is enhanced, much of the untapped potential in the classroom blossoms.

Use the following chart (adapted from, <http://www.beyond-reason.net/teaching/index.html>) to develop a greater understanding of the core concerns affecting your classroom. Gaining a thorough understanding of the core concerns before entering an expected conflict situation is your best preparation for successfully turning the conflict into a memorable learning experience. Filling out the worksheet below before a meeting allows you to use the core concerns as a lens. At the meeting, the worksheet serves as a lever. You have already imagined the areas for cooperation.

The columns 'Their Core Concerns' and 'My Core Concerns' of the table function as a lens on the emotional landscape of the situation. The last two columns help to use the core concerns as a lever to enlist emotions which foster cooperation. Even just taking the time to fill out the worksheet stimulates positive emotions within you. Once you meet the other party and use some of the initiatives you develop in the final two columns, you will be amazed at how quickly the tension is diffused.

From the <i>Beyond Reason</i> website, http://www.beyond-reason.net/ Core Concerns Preparation Form				
General Core Concerns	<i>Their</i> Core Concerns	<i>My</i> Core Concerns	What I Could do to Address <i>Their</i> Core Concerns	What I Could do to Address <i>My</i> Core Concerns
Appreciation	Are they feeling devalued, misunderstood or unheard?	Are you feeling valued, understood and heard?	Find merit in their efforts	What do you want your students to understand about you and what you believe in?
Affiliation	Is the conflict arising from students feeling distanced or excluded?	Do you feel alienated?	Sit next to each other not opposite – inclusion not exclusion	Connect on a personal level What outside interests do you share?
Autonomy	Do they feel their freedom to make choices is constrained?	Are you using materials you enjoy and that you have chosen?	Offer some choices during class and through assignments	Utilize peer and self evaluations
Status	Do students feel demeaned / put-down?	Do you feel demeaned?	Listen more and listen more actively	Remind yourself of the options you do have and the status you do have
Role	Do students understand their role in the learning process?	What is your role – lecturer, facilitator? Do you feel fulfilled?	Give students roles like Researcher, option generator, evaluator	Allow yourself the role you enjoy having as a teacher

The more often you use the Core Concerns Worksheet, the more likely it is your classroom will become the one in which you want to teach. Utilizing the Core Concerns Worksheet engenders commitment to the idea that the classroom is an environment with opportunities for children to grow up getting to know themselves, their classmates and you in a way that is more direct and intellectually deeper than the conversations outside the classroom. Once students

and teachers feel that their presence in the classroom is appreciated, conflicts are not as threatening.

Utopia? Not yet, there is still a whole world outside your classroom!

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POLITICALLY CORRECT LANGUAGE

Amanda Caplan (amandacaplan@gmail.com)

The term 'political correctness' originated in the language of the far left of the political spectrum in western countries in the early 20th century. Whether it is a Communist, Marxist or Maoist phrase is disputed, but in the 1970s and the rise of activities in the Women's Movement, it became synonymous with the use of gender biased language (Nagel et al, 1998). Today it refers to 'either explicit or implicit restrictions on acceptable language for public discourse' (Bramson, 2007). Language that is considered offensive since it demeans minorities has been replaced by terms commanding more equality and respect. For example, the insulting term Red Indians has been replaced by the phrase Native Americans. The movements for ethnic and gender equality are responsible for the socially sensitive linguistic neologisms entering the English language.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis explains, in part, the need for politically correct (PC) language. This hypothesis claims that there is a relationship between the language a person uses and their perception of the world (Wikipedia,

Sapir-Whorf). The assumption is 'that if people are taught to avoid what some perceive as disparaging, insensitive, or biased language, societal attitudes will in turn become less disparaging, insensitive, and biased' (Nagel et al, 1998). Language helps us construct the reality we live in and if the language is invalid and inaccurate, then our understanding of the world will also be distorted (Spender, 1980). By this logic, if language changes to more accurately reflect an ideal society, then we have more chance of achieving this ideal. A society that believes in tolerance and inclusion needs a vocabulary that reflects these values.

Changes in language have taken place in many different areas. The demand for racial equality in the US provided an important impetus towards the need for PC language. The first descendants of the slaves from Africa called themselves Africans. But, as they had been born in the US, this was considered inaccurate and in 1835 the black leaders replaced *African* with *Negro* or *Coloured American*. In his 'I have a dream' speech in 1963, Martin

Luther King used the word *Negro* 15 times and *black* only four times. (Wikipedia, Black People). In the late 1960s, *black* became the accepted term. In 1988, Jesse Jackson encouraged the use of the phrase *African American* (ibid). Recently, *people of colour* (Nagel et al, 1998) has become the PC term.

Changes in English and changes in the role of women in society have necessitated PC language unbiased by gender. The word *chairman* was sufficient before women began fulfilling this role. Then *chairwoman* was introduced, and has evolved into the gender-neutral *chair* (Nagel et al, 1998). The spell check now has underlined the terms *chairman* and *chairperson* with a green line and suggests that I use either *chair* or *chairperson*! Many professions have adopted PC language. Male *stewards* and female *air hostesses* are now commonly called *flight attendants* in the US. *Actor* defines both female and male performers, in the same way that male and female writers are *authors* and no longer *authors* and *authoresses*. Spender's 'male-as-norm' rule has come into force (Spender, 1980). The standard used is male, actor or author, and terms that do not meet the standard are 'allocated to a category of deviation' (Spender, 1980). Spender claims that high status professions are associated with men and therefore women who occupy these posts are referred to as a deviation, such as *female doctor*. Romaine (2001) found the following usages in the British National Corpus (BNC): *lady doctor* (125 times), *woman doctor* (20 times), *female doctor* (10 times) compared to *male doctor* (14 times). However, Romaine gives an example of the opposite phenomenon, the *male midwife*, where the norm is female so the male is marked as a deviation. There are twenty instances of *male nurse* and one of *female nurse* in the BNC (ibid).

The language used to describe disabilities has changed greatly in the move towards more PC language. *Crippled* became *handicapped* and then *disabled*, and is now *physically challenged* or *differently abled* (Nagel et al, 1998). *Challenged* has become a common term, *visually challenged* and *vertically challenged* replace the 'derogatory' *blind* and *short* (ibid). In education, LD has changed from *Learning Disability* to *Learning Difficulties* to the PC term encouraged in Israeli schools today, *Learning Differences*. *Down's Syndrome* has replaced *mongoloid*. *Deaf* is now *hearing impaired* thereby covering the wide range of hearing disorders between partial hearing loss to the complete inability to hear. People who reach a certain age are *senior citizens*. The more facetious may use the terms *conversationally challenged* to mean *boring* and *financially challenged* to mean *bankrupt* (ibid.).

Teachers of EFL must be aware of the importance of PC language in English speaking cultures. Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that their pupils are aware of the social implications of using non-PC terminology. There are many ways to teach PC language. Some suggestions are given by Tsehelska (2006). In one task, she asks pupils to rewrite sentences to make them inclusive. 'A teacher should be tolerant with his students' can be rewritten by either using the word *their*, which can now be used as a singular pronoun, or by side-stepping the issue and writing the whole sentence in the plural. In 'Mary is a camerawoman' the word *cameraperson* is more PC than *camerawoman*. In another task sentences must be rewritten to remove offensive language, as in 'She is looking after her insane mother' (ibid.).

Heightened awareness of the sociological implications of language exists today and PC language has entered some elements of society. However, while PC language is expected in public and professional life and within academia, it has not yet entered 'the vernacular mainstream' (Nagel et al, 1998). Changing language has not changed society (Bramson, 2007), but if these changes make inroads into the intellectual community's thought processes at least a beginning.

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GRAMMAR: LOVE IT. HATE IT. IT'S HERE TO STAY!

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Shakespeare's whining and declining schoolboy

We have all heard of Shakespeare's schoolboy in *As You Like It* (Act 2. sc.vii):

...the whining school boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.

And we ask ourselves the following questions:

- 1) Why was he whining?
- 2) Why was he creeping unwillingly to school?
- 3) Had he done his Greek homework?
- 4) Had he forgotten to bring an apple for the teacher?

The answer: He had not learnt his Latin verbs, conjugated as follows:

<i>amo</i>	<i>amamus</i>
<i>amas</i>	<i>amatis</i>
<i>amat</i>	<i>amant</i> etc.

Unfortunately, this poor lad of the days of Elizabeth I is still with us today. Why? Maybe the answer is that over the past centuries, English grammar has been taught prescriptively, by telling us how to speak and write. This situation is not and was not new, even in Shakespeare's time. In fact, the ancient Romans had their own prescriptive grammarians telling young Caius and Claudius how to express themselves.

Terentianus Maurus instructed his readers:

Vibrat tremulis icitbus aridum sonorem.

This harsh sound vibrates with a trembling impact.

In *Litera*, Persius Flaccus stated:

Sonat hic nare canina.

This letter has the sound of a dog's nose.

Unfortunately this dictatorial approach continued even though the Roman Empire did not, and as history unravelled, the study of grammar apparently became increasingly irrelevant to people's daily lives. In fact grammar became such an art (or science?) that

specialists -grammarians – evolved. They then proceeded to formulate the rules and regulations that have governed our lives for the past two thousand years.

Latin-English:1-0

Such a situation existed when Ben Jonson, (1572-1637), Shakespeare's friend and fellow playwright prefaced his *English Grammar*, first published in 1640, with the declaration that:

The profit of *Grammar* is great to Strangers, who are to live in communion, and commerce with us; and, it is honourable to our selves. For, by it we communicate all our labours, studies, profits without an Interpreter... We free our Language from from the opinion of Rudeness, and Barbarisme, wherewith it is mistaken to be diseases'd... We ripen the wits of our own Children, and Youth sooner by it, and advance their knowledge.

(Try convincing Grade 7 with this!)

Jonson was, however, a product of his Renaissance upbringing and therefore was very heavily influenced by his education in the Classics. To him, if nouns in Latin could have six declensions then so too could their English counterparts. He decided there should be six: Masculine, Feminine, Neuter, Promiscuous or Epicene (horses, dogs etc.), Common or Doubtful (cousin, gossip, friend etc.) and Common of Three (when a noun may be divided into Substantive and Adjective etc).

In his 54-page pamphlet Jonson also dealt with apostrophes, modal verbs and tenses. He saw pronouns as 'irregular nouns' dividing verbs into *Active*, as 'love' and 'hate,' or *Neuter*, as 'die' and 'live' instead of using the 'transitive' and 'intransitive' labels we use today.

In *Unlocking the English Language* (p.30) Robert Burchfield, one of today's leading linguists, sums up Jonson's contribution to English thus: "As a playwright,

he was a lord of the language but as a grammarian, just an obsequious footman.”

This was the situation when, eighty years later, schoolmaster James Greenwood wrote the following introduction to his *Essay Towards a Practical English Grammar*:

To give such a plain and rational Account of *Grammar*, as might render it easy and delightful to our *English* youth, who have for a long time esteemed the Study of this Useful Art very irksome, obscure and difficult... My *third* aim that I had in the writing of this Treatise was, to oblige the *Fair Sex* whose *Education*, perhaps, is too much neglected in this Particular. (Burchfield, p.30)

Agreeing with much of Jonson's work, Greenwood expanded on it and was one of the first grammarians to list irregular verbs. It was from this time that minor linguistic differences as *sneaked/snuck* and *dived/dove* entered the language. Some of his examples as *digged* and *wan* (from 'won') are now obsolete.

The Oxygenisation of English Grammar

The next stage occurred forty years later when Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), the discoverer of oxygen, published *The Rudiments of English Grammar*. This caused a minor linguistic revolution. Perhaps, as a scientist, he saw grammar in a new light and struck out against the use of Latin terminology in describing English grammar. He wrote:

...I am surprised to see so much of the distribution, and technical terms of the Latin grammar, retained in the grammar of our tongue, where they are exceedingly awkward, and absolutely superfluous. (Burchfield, p.32)

Therefore, unlike his predecessors, Priestley quoted contemporary English authors as Dr. Samuel Johnson, David Hume and Tobias Smollett rather than basing his ideas on the writers of ancient Rome. Priestley's radical approach also meant that he tended to be more descriptive than prescriptive i.e. he preferred to describe what he heard and read rather than instruct the public on how they should speak and write. Such an approach influenced several of the later Victorian grammarians and men of letters such as William Cobbett and Henry Sweet, Shaw's model for Professor Higgins in *Pygmalion*.

Shakespeare didn't know English!

However, while Priestley was advocating a more liberal attitude, Robert Lowth, Bishop of London and Professor of Poetry at Oxford, published his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*. In this book he castigated the whole pantheon of English writers and wrote:

The English language as it is spoken by the politest part of the nation, and as it stands in the writings of our most approved authors, oftentimes offends against every part of grammar. (Crystal, p.207)

To put it simply: our greatest writers did not know how to write. Milton was wrong, Dryden wrote ungrammatically, and the same could also be said for Pope, Addison and Swift. Even Shakespeare, the greatest writer in the English language, was guilty! The most famous speech, "To be or not to be..." contains two sentences which end with prepositions!

...The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. Hamlet (Act 3. sc.i)

...And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of. Hamlet
(Act 3. sc.i)

Grammar – A Bestseller!

Lowth's 200-page book was so popular that it was reprinted 45 times and continued to sell well for the next forty years until 1800. Apart from its own importance, it inspired Lowth's successor, Lindley Murray, an Anglo-American lawyer and businessman, to write his *English Grammar*. This book, written for a local girls' school in Yorkshire, sold well over twenty million copies and, as David Crystal noted, it achieved the popularity of the recent best-seller, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* by Lynn Truss. And as with Truss's book, zero-tolerance ruled.

It was obvious that Murray's hectoring tone touched a raw nerve as more grammar was seen to equal more breeding and gentility. Dickens quoted Murray in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (Chap.29) while Disraeli noted, "I will not go down to posterity talking bad grammar," as he corrected some of his Parliamentary speeches. Incidentally, another Victorian, George Bernard Shaw, did not equate grammar with social status and so his heroine Eliza Doolittle said, "I don't want to talk grammar, I want to talk like a lady."

It was during this period of bowing down to the god of Prescriptive Grammar that probably influenced much of our own early schooling until the 1960s. We were taught to quake with fear if we split an infinitive, mix up *who* and *whom*, or finish a sentence with a preposition. Some valiant souls tried to pooh-pooh all this 'grammar nonsense.' Winston Churchill is alleged to have reprimanded an over-zealous editor who tried to move a preposition from the end of one of the politician's sentences saying, "This is the sort of bloody nonsense up with which I will not put." But the man responsible for Britain's Finest Hour was a lone voice, and the rest of us were forced to kowtow to tradition and our English instructors.

Since then we have adopted a more lenient attitude. Noam Chomsky and others have influenced our way of relating to language and communication. Robert Burchfield, the past editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, agrees saying that we are now living in a more humane tradition where “historical linguistics” is everywhere in retreat.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that grammar, in one way or another, is still with us. With titles similar to those of 16th and 18th century grammar books, Eric Cohen and UPP are publishing *New Practical Grammar for Efficiency* and *High School Grammar: A Pedagogical Grammar of English* respectively. Sometimes the g-word is disguised as ‘Structure’ or hides behind grand sounding titles such as ‘Language Awareness’ or ‘Appreciation of Language.’ But whether we want to or not, and whatever we call it, few of us will refuse to teach our pupils what is in fact the essence of Murray’s ‘*Rules and Observations for Promoting Perspicuity in Speaking and Writing.*’

A Solution to the Problem

Therefore, like Hamlet, I am confronted with a dichotomy when I face my classes: To teach them Grammar, or not to teach them Grammar. And if so, should I call it, er... Grammar? And in a similar way, as I sit here in front of my computer, a glass of whiskey next to the keyboard, preparing this article for Forum (which of course must be grammatically correct, or should it?) I cannot help but think of Oliver Goldsmith’s solution to a similar problem in *She Stoops To Conquer*. (Act1 sc.i)

*Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning,*

*Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives genius a better discerning.*

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VALERIE JAKAR: TEACHER, EDUCATOR, MENTOR AND MUSICIAN

Michele Ben (mggben@gmail.com)

Are you one of the nearly 7,000 students who were taught by Valerie Jakar? Was she your music teacher? Maybe she helped you overcome your difficulties with Math? Or perhaps she taught you English? Have you taken one of the many courses she gives at the David Yellin Academic College of Education? Or perhaps she has guided you through your practicum when you trained to be an English teacher? If you are among Valerie’s many students, then you most certainly are familiar with her thirst for knowledge, love of learning and enjoyment of teaching. Even if you aren’t one of the 7,000, Valerie’s varied career and devotion to the profession of education can serve as inspiration to us all. “Interacting with people who want to learn more about themselves, their language

and the people they are teaching,” says Valerie, is what she enjoys most about teaching.

Valerie’s love of learning spurred her music teacher to encourage her to begin teaching, conducting and accompanying when she was in her mid-teens. Valerie then began her career in education, teaching music and remedial classes in the Hackney and Camden areas of London. She qualified as a piano teacher and then as a school music teacher, first at the University of Nottingham and then at Trent Park College. Before coming to Israel, Valerie qualified and worked as an ESL (English as a Second Language) specialist. Valerie explains, “I arrived in Israel to discover that my skills teaching 30 adults of mixed linguistic background did not equip



me to teach eight thirteen year old Hebrew speakers. So I got another degree at Hebrew U. in English and Education, enabling me to learn Hebrew in a Content-based environment. Then I got a masters in TESOL at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, which led me to spending the next six years going back and forth, teaching here and teaching and researching there, in order to complete my PhD.”

In 1981 Valerie began teaching English at the Rubin Academy of Music High School as a substitute, and stayed for the next 12 years. During this time, Valerie became involved in ETAI. “Soon after I began teaching at Ruben Academy someone came to my house – there was no e-mail then and we didn’t have a phone yet either – and introduced herself as a member of a new teachers’ organization, ETAI, and she invited me to join. She – Natalie Hess – with Ephraim Weintraub and Evelyn Ezra – got me totally ‘hooked’. We ran local Jerusalem meetings with people like Ahuva Weiss.” Valerie’s contribution to ETAI did not stop at the local level. She served as treasurer in addition to organizing national and international conferences with Natalie Hess, Evelyn Ezra and Nava Horowitz.

Valerie’s active involvement in ETAI stems from her staunch belief in ongoing professional development for everyone. She explains, “I want to help others enjoy their profession as much as I do. We can all learn more everyday, both from experts and from each other.” This commitment to professional development led to Valerie’s involvement in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). She notes, “When I went to the University of Pennsylvania I was introduced to the world of TESOL and to the global educational association called TESOL Inc. I toddled along with my professors and more experienced peers to my first TESOL event, a local New York conference, and LOVED it! I’ve been a ‘conference junkie’ ever since.” Valerie continues, “What I find most exciting about being at conferences is that you get to see and interact with the writers, educators and researchers that you’ve read about. And you get to meet like-minded people so you stimulate each other and form new professional friendships. Some of my contacts have become firm friends... and we live 6000 miles apart!”

Involvement in TESOL has enabled Valerie to collaborate on a number of research projects around the world and thus continue advancing professionally. She is interested in, “the whole issue of Non-native varieties of English – or World Englishes. She continues, “This has finally come to the fore. I welcome that because we need to re-educate people about the status of languages and

their roles in the lives of millions of people who will never need to read Shakespeare or Dickens or Henry James but may need to use the (English) language for communication purposes.” Her interest in issues of peace and multicultural education directly impact Valerie’s academic teaching which focuses on second language acquisition and sociolinguistics including classroom discourse, linguistic landscapes, language planning and policy and curriculum development. This led to collaboration with Ofra Inbar: “We have an article in the just-published Encyclopedia of Language and Education (Hornberger, Nancy H. (Ed.) 2nd ed., 2008).” These interests also tie in with Valerie’s role as director of the ACCESS program, which is a US funded micro-scholarship program for Arabic speaking high school students in the Jerusalem area.

The other project that occupies Valerie is organizing the Mentoring and Mentorship Course for Teachers of English in the Teacher’s Education department of the Ministry. It is important to her to recruit “people to join the professional development course so that they too can be mentored while they are mentoring others,” she says. Her dedication to professional development resulted in Valerie devoting two years as 2008 Convention Program Chair of the 42nd Annual TESOL Convention, “Worlds of TESOL”, which took place in April in N.Y. City. Until the conference, Valerie did not have any time to spend on her hobbies which are cooking and baking, making music, gardening, sewing, walking, swimming, spending time in nature and playing with her grandchildren. She notes, “For the last two years I have devoted most of my time to TESOL 08, so lots of things – and people – were neglected. I’m hoping to redress the situation from now on.” Valerie is grateful to Phillip, who has been her partner for over forty years and SHE stresses, “He has always been supportive of my endeavors; he’s the linguist in the family, and a skilled writer, both attributes which have benefited me frequently!”

Among all her activities related to education, Valerie’s main love lies with teaching. In fact, the only thing about teaching that she doesn’t like is “that students are bound by evaluation and assessment criteria that bear little relationship to what they will actually learn from the course(s) they take. This influences their attitude to their learning,” she explains. Valerie’s continued enthusiasm for teaching most certainly has been nurtured by her involvement in professional development, in which ETAI has played a crucial role. She concludes, “I have been privileged to be in a profession which I have always enjoyed.”

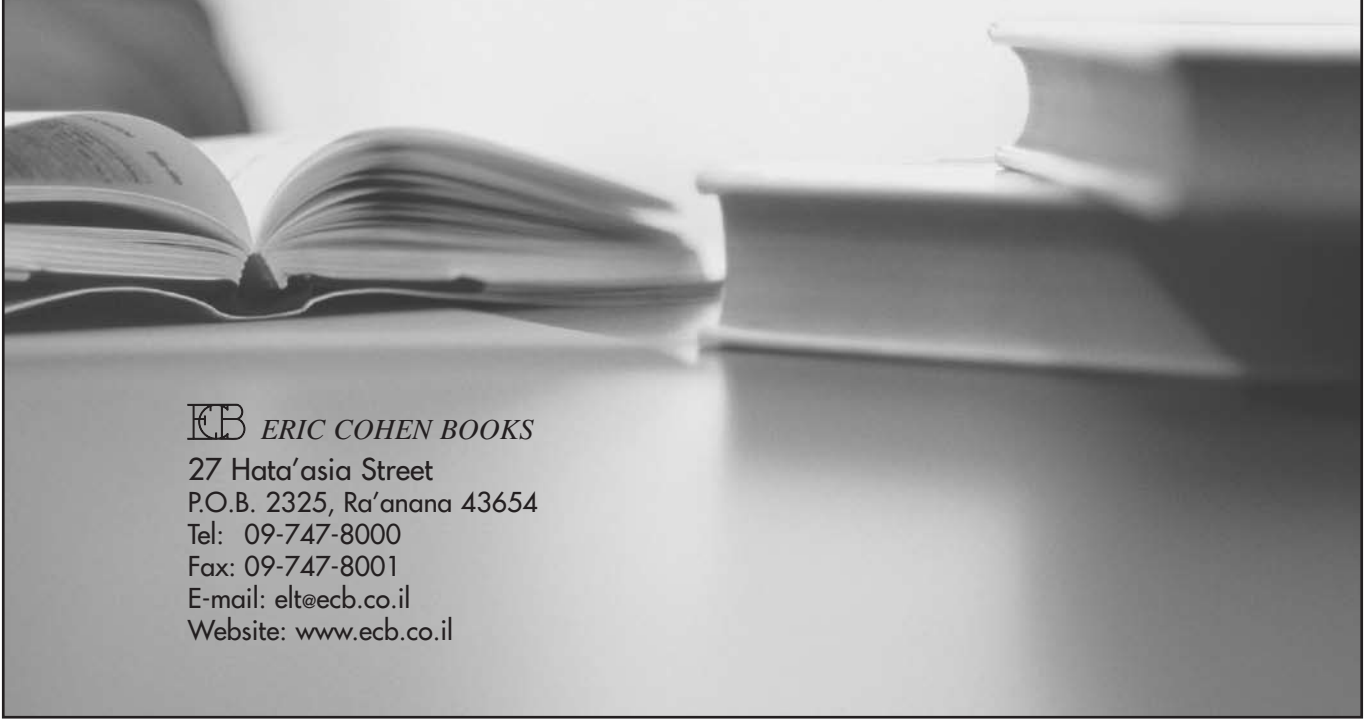
Thanks, Valerie, for sharing your story with us all!



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“LIVE” LISTENING

Leo Selivan (leo.selivan@britishcouncil.org.il)

Making listening comprehension more inspiring

Background

Have you ever wondered why our learners often groan when they hear: “We’re going to do a listening comprehension today”? Pre-recorded materials used in teaching EFL have obvious advantages as well as potential drawbacks.

Listening materials designed for the EFL classroom provide teachers with a valuable resource. They expose students to a wide range of speakers of both sexes and different ages as well as different voice features, such as tone, pitch, accent and speed.

In recent years, with the notion of English being an International language becoming more widespread, several linguists have contended that we should talk about a variety of “Englishes” rather than the English language. Consequently, it has become a routine practice to include in listening materials non-native English speakers, or to be in line with current thinking on the subject, “competent language users of English whose L1 is not English”.

However there are certain disadvantages to the use of pre-recorded materials. They often involve rather inauthentic tasks such as pre-teaching vocabulary and comprehension questions. The teacher usually warms student up by introducing a topic and facilitating a discussion in order to establish a context and create interest. So what can you do when a certain listening activity in the course book you are using is not particularly imaginative? To break the routine and liven up your listening lesson you can do the following “live” listening activity.

“Live” listening lesson plan

Pre-listening

1. Put students in pairs and get them to discuss a topic. It can be your current topic in the course book or any other subject you think might interest your students (your last trip, interesting film you’ve seen

lately, your favourite TV show, celebrity etc). While students speak, circulate and monitor, noting down their errors and, most importantly, gaps in their lexical knowledge.

2. Tell students to write on pieces of paper (I usually use post-it notes for this) questions about the topic they’ve been discussing to ask you, the teacher. Collect the questions.

While-listening

I then spread out their questions on the table in front of me, sit in front of the class and give an extended talk on the subject at hand. You do not have to answer all the questions, especially if you find some of them inappropriate. I usually pre-plan what I am going to say but also leave room for some spontaneity. It is important, however, to show students that you are genuinely answering their questions to keep them interested.

While you speak, students should note down useful chunks of language they hear. Students do not have to be familiar with the lexical approach, which is actually the underlying principle in this activity (see below); a brief explanation on what a chunk is should normally suffice (on the other hand... take the plunge... etc)

The aim of this activity is to record as many chunks as they can. Tell your Ss it is a competition and the pair who gets most chunks / expression wins.

At the beginning, to ease their way into the chunk-recording activity, you may choose to signal every

time you use a certain lexical chunk. I normally do it by making virtual quotation marks with my index and middle fingers on both hands (sometimes referred to as “air quotes”).

I find that students are surprisingly good at this and once they get into it they often find useful the expressions that you might consider quite mundane. It is a good idea to help them identify what a useful chunk is, especially if it is their first experience with “live” listening.

LESSON OUTLINE

❖ Pre 1

- Ss – in pairs – ask each other questions on a topic
- T monitors, notes down errors and gaps in lexical repertoire

❖ Pre 2

- Ss write questions to ask T about the same topic

❖ While

- T gives an extended talk on the topic while Ss listen and note down useful “chunks”

❖ Post

- T elicits the chunks from Ss and boards them
- Ss repeat the task with new partners using the extracted “chunks”

Post-listening

At the end of your talk give students some time to check the expressions they have noted with their partner and then elicit it from them, clarifying and correcting where appropriate. Write up the chunks on the board.

Students then change partners and in new pairs, repeat the first activity (pre-listening). This time when they discuss or ask each other questions on a given topic, they should try to incorporate the lexical chunks.

Variation

Bring in a small tape-recorder or MP3 player with a microphone and record your talk. This way you can simply play your recording again and together with you students identify useful chunks and expressions.

Advantages of the live listening

Motivating

The main advantage of this kind of listening activity is that it helps overcome the disadvantages of pre-recorded materials discussed earlier. It is intrinsically motivating and does not require the teacher to create interest or set a context.

By nature, live listening is more interactive and reciprocal. The speaker (teacher) can see her/his audience (students) and judge by their reactions whether they follow and understand and reformulate or clarify accordingly. The communication taking place is much more authentic than listening to recorded material because it's taking place in the real world.

And last, but not least, is good news for most teachers! – it requires (almost) no preparation. Therefore it can be used as a back-up plan for emergency situations or last minute substitutions.

More active listener

In the live listening activity the teacher can at all times monitor their learners' interest and comprehension and add any necessary repetitions, clarifications and reformulations.

You can also encourage your students to interrupt and ask follow-up questions or simply react verbally (*"Oh, I see"*, *"So, do you mean?"*, *"I'm not sure what you mean by"*)

Even if you have been teaching a class for quite some time you will be surprised at how many new things they can learn about you, that is of course depending on how much you are willing to reveal!

Alternatively, and if feasible, you can always bring in a guest speaker or borrow another teacher from your school to provide the listening input.

Underlying Lexical Approach

Background

This activity can also be referred to as lexical listening since its secondary aim is to encourage learners to extract useful language and hopefully adopt it by making it part of their own lexical repertoire. One of the main principles of the LA put forward by Michael Lewis in the 1990s is that language consists of primarily chunks and grammar merely helps them hold together.

While the benefits of the lexical approach and the unfortunate failure of ELT practitioners to incorporate it into their teaching is a subject of a separate discussion, I would just point out that an adult native speaker possesses thousands of lexical chunks. Rough estimates suggest anywhere between 250,000 – 500,000 chunks.

The teacher's role, therefore, lies in helping students develop vocabulary by building awareness of lexical patterns. One way of doing this is helping them notice, record and subsequently activate lexical "chunks": collocations, fixed and semi-fixed expressions.

Examples of chunks

Depending on the topic, students may find the following chunks useful for extraction and subsequent production.

Talking about my friend / partner

We **hit it off immediately**

We really **see eye-to-eye**

We are **on the same wavelength**

We **get on like a house on fire**

We've **had our ups and downs**

I **got to know** him/her **better**

Talking about an important decision

I had to **mull it over**

It was a **joint decision**

Looking back I think it was...

TOPICS YOU CAN USE

Travel	Your last / favourite trip
Music	Your favourite band / singer
Friendship	Your best friend
Sports	Your favourite sports team or sport that you do
Leisure	Your last / ideal weekend
Film	Your favourite film / last film you saw
Issues	Living in a big city vs. in the country

I hadn't really planned anything – **it was one of those spur-of-the-moment decisions**

Talking about your weekend

I like **to have a lie-in** on Saturday morning
Sometimes I just **stay in and do nothing**, you know,
spend all day **pottering around the house**
I try to **catch up with my emails**

Talking about sport

The other day I **overexerted myself a bit**
As a result, I **ended up with aches and pains all over**
I try to **keep fit**

Conclusion

For most of our students, listening to their teacher in class is the regular weekly dose of English they get and, probably, the most significant exposure to the language.

Live listening not only gives them such an opportunity, but also provides language input and inspires learner output.

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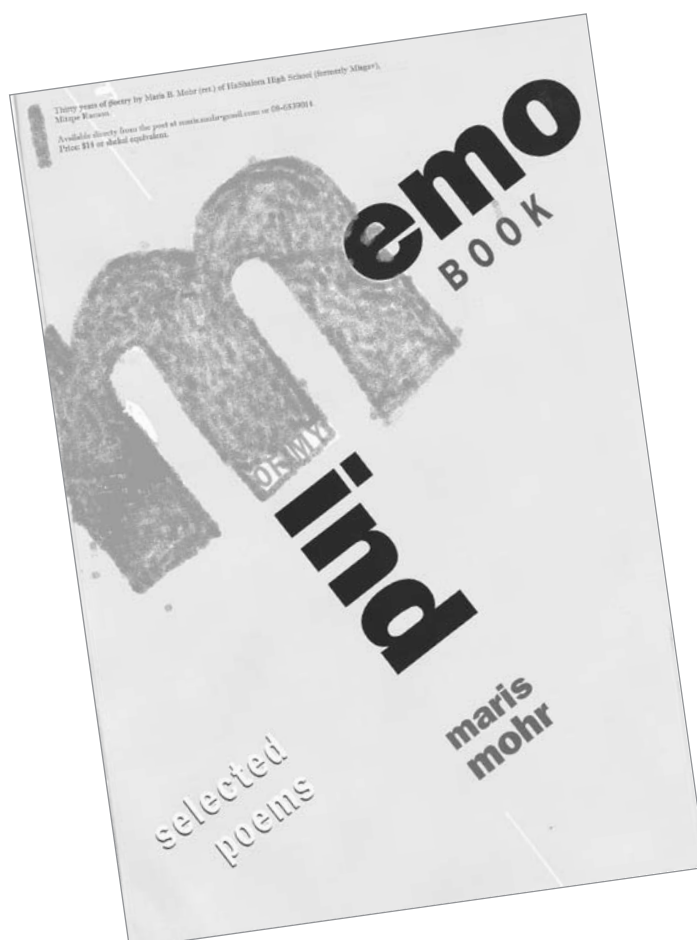
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 **BRITISH COUNCIL** Leo Selivan is an EFL teacher, teacher trainer and material developer at the British Council Israel. He has been at the British Council for the last 5 years. He has also taught in Cyprus, Turkey, the UK and Russia. Leo is a British Council mentor in the Clore English Learning Centres Project in Kfar Hassidim, Bat Yam, Beer Sheva and Kiryat Gat. He is particularly interested in the using multimedia in the classroom and is a proponent of the lexical approach.



POEMS

Maris B. Mohr (maris.mohr@gmail.com)**BITTERSWEET MOMENTS**

First cool breezes of fall
bittersweet moments of memory
apprehension of grayness and storm.
To linger in the sunny optimistic warmth
spring, summer reveries under soft
white floating clouds
before the invasion of
dark winter storms.

© Maris B. Mohr 15.11.2006

GREY DAYS

Billowing shades of grey dripping off the horizon
Invade the sky-space above and around
Light of sun – conquered
The battle rages
Rumbling, exploding, altering the scene
For moments or eons of dark foreboding
Broken by optimistic light
Seconds of hope

Life of the sky, life of the self
Searching within and without
Absorbing and rejecting
Evolving, growing
Never becoming a final creation but
Moving on through
Raging dark and light
Settling in the light

© Maris B. Mohr 25.2.2007

MIDNIGHT WAKE-UP

Did you ever awake
in the middle of the night
wondering if
you really want to wake up again
tomorrow?
This movie can be rerun time after time
but I won't play in it forever.
The time has come to see the sun
burning away the sticky webs
of sleepless nightmares of
painful repeat performances.
Anxiety returns at dusk
a reminder of midnight wakefulness
fear of old movies
act one or five all
the same.
Call for intermission
a break in the cycle
maybe the one to cancel this
never ending horror show to release
my slumbers and return my
sweet repose.

© Maris B. Mohr 13.1.2005

Born and raised in NYC, Maris B. Mohr been living in Israel since 1970. For the last 29 years she has been living with her family in a small town called Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev Desert of Israel. Settling in the beautiful desert has inspired the poetry that she'd always written to develop in new directions. She also became ill with Multiple Sclerosis, which has added new dimensions to her poetry. Her poem, "Midnight Wake-up", was definitely written under the frustrating influences of MS. She hopes it can help people who have felt the same way.

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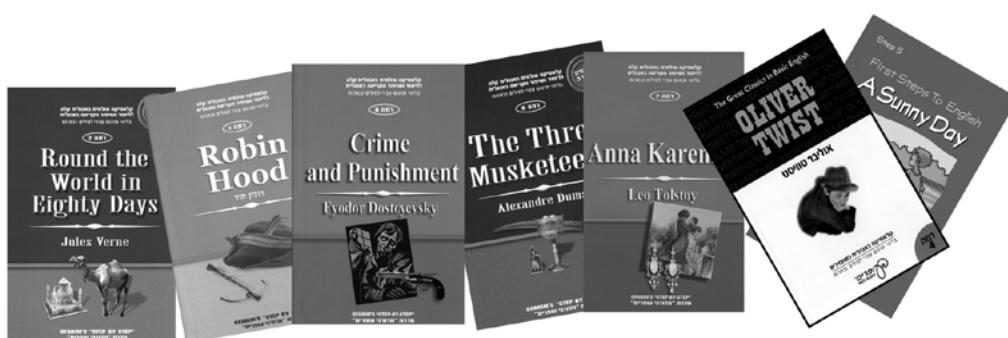
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THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S NEW WEBSITE FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS

Helen Sykes (*Helen.Sykes@britishcouncil.org.il*)

Free and friendly to use with loads of great teaching materials at your fingertips!

www.teachingenglish.org.uk

The new global home for English teachers on the web brings together everything busy teachers need for the classroom and the staffroom – lesson plans, worksheets, teaching tips, articles as well as information about professional development, training, conferences and qualifications.

Here is just one example of the many activities available on the site, written by Nicola Crowley, EFL teacher and teacher trainer, British Council Israel.

Grass skirts revision race

This activity gets the students motivated with a competitive revision race.

Preparation

- Make a worksheet with between 10 and 20 questions of what you want to revise. Multiple choice, gap-fill (cloze) and short answer questions are best. See an example below.
- Copy the worksheet on to different coloured paper; one colour per team of three or four. If you don't have coloured paper you can use different coloured markers and draw a line down the left side of the page.
- Cut under each question from right to left leaving the left edge of the page uncut. The result looks like a grass skirt!

Procedure

- Tell the students that they are going to have a competition in teams and that they will be given one question that they must answer correctly before they get the next question and so on. The winning team is the team that answers all the questions correctly first.
- Put the students into teams of 3 or 4.

- Tear off the first question from each different coloured worksheet and place face down in front of each team. Tell the students to wait to turn over the question until you have given out all the questions and said "GO!"
- Tell the students that they can start and when they have the answer to write it into the blank or beside the question (depending on the questions you have given then). It is a good idea to have the answers on hand so can quickly tell the students whether it's correct or not.
- It is useful to nominate one student per team to run up to the front of the class to get the next question. However, make sure that the students have a clear path free of bags etc. so they don't trip. If this is a worry then an alternative is to get the students to raise their hands when they have the correct answer.
- If the answer is correct, tear off the next question from their team's worksheet and give it to them.
- If the answer is incorrect, send the student back to their team to try again. If they don't get the answer the next time you might give them a hint or tell them the answer if they're behind the other teams.
- After one team has won, encourage the remaining teams to continue answering the questions for second and third places. Try to give enough time for all the teams to finish.
- Then review the questions that the students had difficulty with or didn't get to finish and take note of errors made to be reviewed in the next class.

Notes:

- In classes with a large number of students choose a student to help and give them the answers or get them to do the activity before class and they can tell the students if the teams' answers are correct or not.
- If the class is weak, or the worksheet is difficult, give the students a word bank of possible answers on the board.



Helen has been teaching and teacher training for the last 8 years around the globe. She has worked in India, the UK and Japan and now heads the British Council ELT department in Israel. In her work with the British Council, Helen has been involved in many kinds of projects in different communities throughout Israel where she has been continuously impressed by the English teaching community's dedication and expertise.

Nicola is a teacher, teacher trainer and material developer at British Council Israel. Over the last 7 years she has also taught in Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Spain. Nicola was instrumental in developing and delivering the British Council "Film in the Classroom" project and is a British Council teacher trainer in the Clore English Learning Centres Project in Kseifa and Acco.

Example worksheet**British Council | BBC Grass skirts – travel phrasal verbs**

Cut up the strips ready to use in class.

1. I went to the airport when my friend was leaving to see her
2. I picked a little Italian when I was working in Rome.
3. I boarded the plane and after 10 minutes it took
4. I was really tired of studying so I was looking forward to going on holiday and getting
5. When we arrived at the airport we found the counter for British Airways and checked
6. When Tim went trekking in Peru he set each morning at 5 am.
7. When we leave the hotel tomorrow we need to check – before 11 am.
8. My brother has been in Asia for a year but he's coming next week.
9. I love going to new cities and wandering the streets and getting lost.
10. I spent a whole day looking the museum. It was so interesting.

**Call for articles!
Make your Voice Heard!**

A special issue of the ETAI Forum focusing on learning disabilities and differences is planned for the coming year. Please submit all contributions as WORD documents as an attachment to an e-mail. The name of the document should be your family name and the title of the article, or part of it: i.e. Jones_callforarticles.

Please try to keep the language non-sexist and use *they* instead of *he/she*.

We are interested in publishing references, but these should be included within the text. References should be written out in APA style. You can find this in the "OWL Handouts" put out by Purdue University
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

If you have a photo of yourself, or any other attractive visual material, like cartoons, we would be interested in receiving this. At the end of the text, please include brief biodata about your professional life, including where you teach and any other significant information. Please include your e-mail address.

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PIC-STORIES








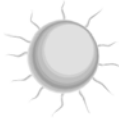
Phyllis Oded (*phylliso@015.net.il*)

STORY-TIME

First rewrite the story using words only. Then, go on with each story. Do not use any direct quotations. Try to make your story different/interesting. Pay attention to capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling and vocabulary.






1 day Mr.  went skiing. He put on a warm scarf and .

He was very  2 go skiing with his   .






They built a . They put a  on his head and  in his  and he   ed like this:  until the  came out.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

EASY STORY-TIME

1.  am going 2 school now. M   is open
 cause it .

Write the story in words. Then draw the picture.

2.  have 2 pieces of .  1 do U
 want, the 1 or the  1?

Write the story in words.

Answer the question:

Phyllis Oded has been teaching English in Israel since 1967. Although she is officially 'on pension,' she still teaches because she loves teaching. She is now teaching at Alliance High School in Ramat Aviv. Here's how she describes her job: "I teach young people about the world IN ENGLISH."

OLD FASHIONED, AND PROUD OF IT!: TEACHING READING AND WRITING THROUGH PHONICS

Ruth Zimberg (*jollyphonicsisrael@yahoo.ca*)

When I first learned to read in Canada 50 years ago, I was taught phonics. I read about Dick and Jane, and did plenty of exercises circling pictures with the given sounds. I cut up my Mom's old magazines to make collages of pictures with initial sounds, and wore out many an eraser making sure my spelling was correct and legible.

By the time my youngest son learned to read, he had to struggle through a method called "whole language". He came home writing gibberish which even he couldn't read. The teacher assured us that eventually he would "catch on". While he did learn to read, he did so with a lot of frustration, and he did not enjoy reading until he reached adulthood.

Many students, particularly EFL students, suffer the difficulties of memorizing hundreds of words which they cannot easily decode (and which they must translate as well). This is hardly a way to instill a love of English!

Defenders of whole language methods claim that there are too many exceptions to the phonetic rules in English. While it is true that English combines the linguistic patterns of numerous other languages, approximately 85% of English words can be read in whole or in part by using phonetic rules. The remaining words must be taught as "sight" words using whole language methods.

Spelling must be taught by a combination of methods, as one must choose which of a number of letter patterns is the standard spelling for a given word. According to phonetics, the following letter combinations would all be pronounced the same way, although only one is the correct spelling for the past tense of "to throw": threw, through, throo, throe,

When I arrived in Israel six years ago, I was told that "phonics" was not the main emphasis of teaching reading here. While many educators personally believed in the benefits of phonics, its use in the school system was limited to the teaching of remedial classes AFTER children had already experienced frustration and failure! Currently, the tide is turning, and books using a phonics approach are now being produced for Israeli classrooms.

There are various phonics-based programs available. This article, for example, is based on concepts from an internationally recognized program called *Jolly Phonics*, and from *Reading Recovery Jerusalem*, developed by Susie Secemski and Rika Deutch. Other systems are available from Israeli book publishers and on the

internet.

What is teaching phonics all about?

For reading, phonics teaches the *symbols* of English (letters) and the *sounds* they represent.

For spelling, students learn the *sounds* of English and the *symbols used to represent them*.

To learn to read, write, and spell properly, one must acquire the following skills:

1. Letter –sound correspondence
2. Letter formation
3. Blending
4. Identifying sounds in words
5. Reading and spelling 'sight' words

Learning Letter-Sounds Correspondence and Letter Formation

It is best to begin by teaching the 42 main sounds of the English language. Students learn sounds and the letters that represent the sounds, rather than learning ABC letters and the sounds they make.

The name of the letter is not introduced at the start. For example, in teaching "Ss", one does not call it "es" but rather "sss" so that the children are not confused by non-representative sounds. Later, the names of the letters and alphabetical order are introduced to facilitate spelling and dictionary use.

Multi-sensory Methods

Students begin by learning the sound "sssssss". They may hear a story about a snake who says "sssssss". They can offer words with the sound 'ssss' (eg. sandals, salad, spaghetti, Sony). The teacher shows pictures of 'ssss' words, and teaches an action to help remember the sound. (eg. weaves her hand in an "s" shape and says 'ss'). The children see the letter 'S', draw it in the air, draw it on paper, circle it in words they see, and feel the shape as they draw it in sand or with finger paint.

They can also make their own flashcards for each sound. On the reverse of each card, they draw a picture showing a word that begins with the sound. This serves as a cue if they forget the sound of the letter. The flashcards can be used for 'sound' practice as well as for spelling out words dictated by the teacher.

Each of the sounds is introduced in a similar manner. Each letter has an action to accompany it to help make learning fun and more effective. For example, children see a picture of a gorilla, a good cognate, and can imitate

a gorilla saying “g, g, g.”. For short “a” open the mouth wide as if eating an apple and say ‘a, a, a’. This helps Israeli children avoid saying “e, e, e” for this sound.

Exercises in letter identification, discrimination (eg. b/d/p/q, m/n, n/h, a/d, etc.), letter formation, sound identification in words, dictations, and of course reading, are all important parts of a phonics program.

In most programs, the sounds are not taught in alphabetical order. For example, *Jolly Phonics* teaches the following seven groups of letters:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. s a t i p n | 5. z w n g v o o o o |
| 2. c k e h r m d | 6. y x ch sh th th |
| 3. g o u l f b | 7. qu ou oi ue er ar |
| 4. ai j oa ie ee or | |

The first group of sounds was chosen because they make more simple words than any other combination of six letters. This way the children can read more words, more quickly, than starting with a, b, c, d, e, and f.

The letters *b* and *d* should be introduced separately to avoid visual confusion. The letters *m* and *n* should also be taught at different times

The long vowel sounds are not presented simply as alternative sounds of the letters ‘a’, ‘e’, ‘i’, ‘o’, and ‘u’. That is because a single vowel is usually pronounced as a short vowel. To produce the long sound, the vowel is shown together with the other letters that work with it eg., “ai”, “i_e”, “a y, oa”. The children learn a sound and what that sound can look like. They must also learn which combination of letters make the sound for a given word, eg. plate vs. plait.

Having an idea of what the sounds look like enables children to spell phonetically from the very start of the program. The words they write may not always be correct according to English standards, but one **can read** them and can help the student correct for spelling later. They can succeed in communicating in writing from an early stage.

Blending

Blending is the process of saying the individual sounds in a word and then running them together to make a word. eg. *d-o-g* becomes *dog*. Most children accomplish this transition well; however, many students get stuck saying separate sounds. This is because they don’t recognize the individual parts as *being* parts of a whole.

To overcome this problem, time is spent getting the children used to hearing the words broken up. Once they realize that words are broken into sounds, they can learn that the process is reversed when sounds are built into words. The teacher begins speaking like a computer:

Eg. I s-ee a c-a - t. I s-ee a d-o-g.

While some children may not understand “c-a-t” and “d-o-g” when pronounced as individual sounds at first, they quickly catch on to the idea. They are then better ready to put sounds back together as words: c-a-t = cat.

Note: Students who can read Hebrew, should have already acquired the concept of blending letters into words. However, all pupils still benefit from exercises such as these, especially those who experienced difficulty acquiring reading in their native tongue.

Hearing Sounds in Words

It is important to help children identify the sounds in the middle and ends of words. We often ask for words that begin with a certain sound. To become a good speller, one must sound out the entire word correctly. Rhymes and songs can help students hear similar sounds at the ends of words.

‘Sight’ Words

Reading and writing words and sentences quickly follow the learning of the very first groups of sounds. An important part of teaching reading in *Jolly Phonics* and *Reading Recovery Jerusalem* methods, is to *only introduce words and sentences which use sounds the children have already learned*. This enables success in reading, and maintains motivation to read.

Some ‘sight’ words, which do not follow the sound patterns already taught, must be introduced as they are needed for reading sentences (the, once). However, using too many words that the students cannot yet decode leads to frustration. Teaching the word “guitar” or “penguin” as sight words when the students have only been taught “g” or “p” is discouraged.

While English speakers may begin to learn reading at a young age, EFL students may do better to wait about 3rd or 4th grade before beginning to do so. Preparation for reading may include extensive vocabulary work, and left-right practice in patterns and drawing. It is NOT necessary to teach the ABC names beforehand. In fact, it may even be counter-productive, as the names of the letters do not always match the sounds they represent.

The introduction of phonics into reading programs is essential to the success of our English students. It is encouraging to see the increased use of phonics in our schools.

Ruthie Zimberg teaches English at Orot Banot School in Beit Shemesh and is the Israeli representative for Jolly Learning Ltd (Britain). Ruth has also produced two CD/Songbooks for teaching English. She has given workshops on teaching phonics and on teaching through songs, at ETAI conferences, David Yellin College, Beit Berl, Oranim College, as well at conferences in Canada and the US.



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TEACHING READING ALPHABETICALLY, PHONETICALLY, AND VISUALLY

Shoshana (Barbara) Avrahami Young (harbar@zahav.net.il)

Initially, I began my reading project many years ago for adults who had never been able to learn to read. The big challenge was a program for postal workers. At the end of the 36 hour course using my reading method, these former non-readers had tears in their eyes from gratitude. The method was a great success over the years for both children and adults. As a response to the appalling level of reading of many pupils entering the 7th grade, I decided to expand my method in order to better prepare children for reading.

I found that many children entering the 7th grade do not know the basic sounds of English. They mispronounce the vowels, do not apply the rule of silent e, do not recognize ce, ge, ck, ch, and sh, and mix up the letters at the end of the alphabet.

My method is based on an alphabetically sequential, accumulative and visual approach which is suitable not only for regular classes but also for learning-disabled pupils and even young English speakers. By teaching our pupils to read according to the order of the alphabet, we give them order and efficiency, immediate feedback, and a sense of achievement. And, we don't miss anything. This is due to the fact that no new word is introduced before all its letters have been learned. The first word pupils are taught is *cab*. The word *apple* cannot be introduced to represent the letter *a* because the pupil has not yet learned the other letters that form it. Furthermore, no word is chosen to be taught unless it can be shown in a nice picture. The repetition of reintroducing the letters, viewing pictures, writing the letters and then reading and writing the words gives pupils a feeling of satisfaction and motivation. They are so happy to see how many words they can read.

Capital letters can be taught together with the small letters, simply because the pupils are able to learn them together. This avoids confusion later. When we get through the alphabet, we will see how proud our pupils are when they can write their names, read other pupils' names, and read and write their addresses. See how excited they are when we send them to the grocery store in order to write down the names of 5 products. This is because they have learned the capital letters with the small letters.

Let's take the first lesson. The teacher presents the first 3 letters of the alphabet in order, each one separately and each one with a lesson on the name of the letter, the sound of the letter, how to write the capital letter and how to write the small letter. Have alphabet flash cards prepared

in advance- a set of capital letters and a set of small letters. The pupils should practice saying the names and the sounds of the letters. They should match the capital letters with the small letters. Now they are ready for the first word – *cab*. They will practice this word in capital letters and in small letters. The teacher must show the picture that goes with the word. The teacher must make sure everyone copies the word correctly. Volunteers can go to the board in order to write the word. Word cards and pictures or picture flash cards should be prepared for each lesson and can be used for reviewing and reinforcing vocabulary, reading, and spelling.

When we present *Dd*, we will choose only words that can be represented by pictures such as *dad*, *add*, and *bad*. We can choose a picture of a man with a baby or children, a sign showing $1+1=2$, and a little boy throwing a rock at a window. This is a good place to teach the sound of double letters, which will appear several times in the program, such as in *egg*, *ball*, *dress*, *puppy* and *rabbit*. The orderly reintroduction of letters such as *b* and *d*, which are often confused, helps establish the correct sound for each letter.

Because the letter *e* plays such a major part in our reading program, it is important to teach its many functions, in the beginning, in order to teach the basics of reading. It is important to teach the sounds of “e”, *ee*, *ea*, *silent e*, *ce*, and *ge*, and its functions in a slow and orderly manner. When we get to the letter *Ee*, we should teach *bed* and then *bee*. *Double e* will be useful a little later. Pupils can practice all the words they have learned so far by reading from the board or from a handout with words in both capital and small letters. Pupils can read a word and then spell it out loud. In addition, a letter can be left out of each of the words. Pupils will be asked to listen to the teacher and to fill in the missing letter. We should not forget to put the alphabet on the board and in the notebooks in both capital and small letters at the beginning of each lesson.

Even though the sound *ce* seems to be complicated to teach, it is quite straightforward. Explain to the pupil that *ce* (in that order) sounds like *s*. Then put *ace* on the board. Explain that the *e* at the end of a word is silent but it makes the *a* say its name. We don't have to go into vowels and consonants. The pupil will get used to the idea of silent *e* because it will be reintroduced many times. When we get to the letter *Ff*, we will be able to teach *face*. Because the pupils have already learned *ee* in *bee*, it is easy to introduce *feed* and *beef*. When we get to

Gg we can teach *egg* and *bag*. It is here that we can teach ge using the word cage and review the rule for *silent e*. We can easily get a good picture for this word. There are many more words that can be shown in pictures. We can find plenty of pictures on the Internet or we can have pupils draw their own pictures and write the word under the picture. These can be hung up in the classroom or put into the pupils' notebooks or files.

We can use the pictures for oral work, such as: *Who has a bag? Katie has a bag. I have a bag.* This is to better engrave upon the pupils' minds the present simple tense by using it properly without explaining all the rules. This is necessary in order to prevent the constant mix-up of the present simple tense by high school pupils, no matter how often it has been taught.

The word I would pick to represent the letter Hh within the limits of the letters that have been learned is *head*, which is a very popular word. The teacher has to teach *ea* as a *short e* sound. When we get to the letter Ii, we can choose *dig* and *fig*, which have good pictures. It is here that we review *ace* and *face*, and then teach the word *ice*. When we get to Kk we can teach words with *ck* such as *kick* and words with *silent e* such as *bike*. We shouldn't forget the double ll in *ball* and the combinations in the word *black*. When we get to the letter Pp we can finally teach *apple*. I recommend familiarizing pupils with the word *queen* for the letter Qq even though it has a *u* in it. By the time we get to Rr there are plenty of combinations we can teach, such as in the words *chair*, *orange*, *page*, and *radio*. We shouldn't forget the *double s* in *dress* and *glass* or the words with *sh* such as *ship*, *fish* and *shark*. When we get to Tt, aside from *cat*, *hat*, *tree* and *teacher*, we have the soft *th* sound in *mother*, *brother*, and *father*. There is a hard *th* sound in *three*. The *th* sound doesn't have an all inclusive rule, so it is better to teach the most popular words that can be illustrated in the beginning program and deal with other words at a more advanced stage.

Now there are six letters left: *u*, *v*, *w*, *x*, *y*, and *z*. It is important to work on these letters a lot because these are the letters that, when tested, pupils commonly mix up. For *Uu* we can teach *mug*, *bus*, *sun*, *pupil*, and *purple*. The *ur*, *er* and *ir* combinations sound like *er*. *Van* and *avocado* are great to teach for *Vv*. *Ww* has *flower*, *water*, *watch* and *wine*. The *Xx* sound comes at the end or middle of a word, such as *ox*, *box*, *fox*, and *mixer*. At the end we have *Yy* with *yo-yo* and *yellow*, and also *baby* and *puppy* where the letter *y* has an *e* sound. Finally there is *Zz* with *prize*, *zipper*, and *zoo*.

We shouldn't forget that with each new letter there should be a lot of words taught. There should be exercises and games for matching pictures and words, for writing and spelling, for reading with capital letters and small letters, and for using the pictures for simple conversations.

Of course, the words I gave here are only a few examples of what we can teach as we climb the alphabet, adding more and more words to our pupils' repertoire. We can teach them the colors now or as we progress, telling them to make crazy combinations like a green cow or a purple tree. This helps to establish word order.

Within this on-going accumulative process, we can give our pupils the satisfaction of learning to read, write, and even speak. By lesson 24 your pupils will be motivated to continue into new territory – the sentence.

All these ideas can be easily utilized by you, the teacher. You can create your own materials according to the principles I have outlined. However all the materials I have created, Read and Write from A to Z, are available from Bonus Ltd., Rishon LeZion.

Shoshana comes from New Jersey, USA, and has a BA from Rutgers University. She has taught extensively in junior high school and high school in Israel and in her own private school, which she managed for over 9 years. Shoshana has been the English coordinator for grades 7 to 12 at Yeshivat Hadarom in Rehovot since 2000.

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READING IN THE CLASSROOM: VARIOUS IDEAS FOR PRE -, WHILE- AND POST- READING ACTIVITIES

Bev Stock (*bev@macam.ac.il*)

Access to information is one of the four domains underpinning the curriculum in use today. This domain requires the student to read or listen to text in order to obtain information. The reading skill is taught early in the student's encounter with learning English. Phonics and global reading are used together or independently to help the student acquire this most important skill. Once the student is able to decode, other reading skills are taught. These include vocabulary acquisition, specific reading strategies, development of schema and critical thinking. This paper focuses on "teaching" text at the later foundation stages and early intermediate stages. Students in classes 5 through 8 need to know how to access a text in order to gain information which in turn increases knowledge.

The first stage in teaching a text is the pre-reading stage. As teachers we aim to introduce the text in a manner which will help our students to successfully comprehend the text. One method is to tell the student a personal anecdote. For example, when dealing with a reading text relating to pen friends the teacher can bring into class a postcard that s/he received. The card can be read, followed by a discussion of who has a pen friend, how can you get a pen friend and what a pen friend is. Another example is to bring a family photo and discuss this as a lead in to a text about family or family relations. Introduce the title of the text. Play a game of hangman to guess the title or simply write the title on the board. Elicit vocabulary by discussing words associated with the title. Show a picture that relates to the content of the text and a word association activity using the picture can get students thinking of related vocabulary. Predict contents based on the title.

Vocabulary presentation is also an important pre-reading activity. One of the most frequently used methods in elementary school is to use pictures in order to introduce new words. Very often we present a list of words connected to a topic i.e. paradigmatically (e.g. all the colours together, all the animals together, all the 'ed' adjectives together.) An alternate method is to teach words as they combine (syntagmatic links) in sentences or contexts. For example teach the colour blue with sky, rather than blue with red and yellow. Words can be presented as flashcards and the students need to read them. Another idea is to say the word and have the students write down the first letter. More able students can try and write the entire word. The teacher then corrects and explains the

new words. These are just a few of the many ways to present new lexical items.

How do the students record the new vocabulary? It is our job as teachers to encourage our students to write down new vocabulary in a systematic way. They can make dictionaries, use the words in sentences and make cards. Did you know that you have to see a new word at least five times before you can usually use it and include it in your 'active' vocabulary? Once lexical items are presented, follow-up activities are necessary for reinforcement. This is usually part of the post-reading stage.

Here are a few ideas for vocabulary work. Write new words on a card and put them in a shoebox. Use these words for quick class exercises to reinforce vocabulary. One activity is the "beep" game. Choose a word from the box and use it in a sentence. Instead of saying the word, say 'beep'. Students guess the missing word. Then let students come to the front, choose a card and make up a sentence for other students to guess the "beep" word. Using the same collection of words, pull out a number of words from the box. Give clues or definitions so the students can guess the word on the card. The student who guesses the word correctly wins the card. The winner is the student with the most cards at the end. Miming words is fun. A student mimes a word and the other students need to guess the word. An alternative mime idea is to have a student mime the word and say it. The rest of the class has to repeat the miming action and say the word. Have the students come up in turns and draw a picture of a word on the board. When you have 5-10 words on the board, have the class guess the words. Then call on students to come to the board and erase the picture of the word you call out.

In addition to oral or communicative-style activities, there are written activities. Some examples include word searches, crossword puzzles, using the lexical items in sentences or stories and quizzes. Quizzes may take the form of a dictation, a cloze exercise, a matching exercise or a translation exercise. The important thing is to continually recycle words and help the students to claim ownership of the words.

Here are some ideas for the while reading stage. Read the text out aloud and give the students an activity to do. For example ask the students to underline all the words with capital letters, circle the adjectives or highlight new words. Have the students read. Allow the students to work in pairs and read to each other. The teacher can

read the entire text and ask comprehension questions along the way. Time the students and have them silently read to a certain point, stop them and ask a question. Continue this timed reading or revert to reading aloud. Have the students each take responsibility for a different section of the text and then group them and have them explain the text to each other.

A post-reading activity is needed to check and reinforce the materials after the text has been read and the students have an idea of the content. Ask comprehension questions. These need to be both “LOTS” and “HOTS” style. “LOTS” are low order thinking skills. Such questions ask for general information: who wrote the text, what does the title mean, what happened next and other similar questions. High order thinking skills, “HOTS”, require the student to think and evaluate the information gleaned from the text. Asking if students

agree or disagree with something mentioned in the text is an example of “HOTS”. Students can also respond to the text in writing. A much more difficult activity, but a worthwhile one, is to ask the students to write down the main idea of the text or to explain what they learnt from reading the text.

Teaching a text requires the teacher to work through a variety of activities before prior to reading, during reading and after reading. I have given some suggestions. And now I pass the ball to you. Send me some of your favourite reading activities and I will collate them and share them in the next *Forum*. Use my email bev@macam.ac.il. In the subject line, write READING IDEAS FOR FORUM.

Bev Stock works at the David Yellin College of Education where she teaches reading, writing and proficiency. She also is a teacher trainer.

USING STORIES IN THE CLASSROOM

Debi Partouche (debi_p@012.net.il)

Why I chose this topic

One of the things I like about teaching English is teaching stories. Teachers teach English through different means; reading texts, grammar, listening texts, songs, and literature. These are all actually used as a means of helping our students acquire the English language. It is important to vary our lessons and use different ways to enrich our students with language. I find that teaching through stories is one of the most interesting and motivating ways there is.

Why teach through stories?

Stories create magic and a sense of wonder at the world. Stories teach us about life, about ourselves and about others. Teaching through stories is a unique way for students to develop an understanding, respect and appreciation for other cultures, and can promote a positive attitude to people from different lands, races and religions. The real-life problems presented within a story provide meaningful learning opportunities for students. Students are provided with opportunities to solve their present problems as well as develop decision-making skills for the future.

How can our students benefit from reading stories?

Reading stories promotes a feeling of well being and relaxation. It increases children's willingness to

communicate thoughts and feelings. It encourages active participation and increases verbal proficiency. It encourages use of imagination and creativity. It can also encourage cooperation between students and enhance listening skills.

What do stories give our students that routine texts cannot?

Stories allow children to explore their own cultural roots and experience diverse cultures. They enable children to empathize with unfamiliar people, places or situations. They offer insights into different traditions and values. Stories help children understand how wisdom is common to all peoples and all cultures. They offer insights into universal life experiences. They help children consider new ideas and reveal differences of cultures around the world.

Here are some examples of stories. Although I have categorized into the three groups, some can fit into more than one category.

Stories that teach us about life and real life problems:

1. The Blanket by Floyd Dell
2. The Verger by W. Somerset Maugham
3. The Magic Barrel by Bernard Malamud
4. The Lady or the Tiger? by Frank Stockton
5. Priscilla and the Wimps by Richard Peck

Stories that teach us about ourselves and others:

1. True Love by Isaac Asimov
2. The Bet by Anton Chekhov

Stories that can promote a positive attitude to people from different lands, races and religion:

1. While The Auto Waits by O. Henry
2. The Lottery by Shirley Jackson

Prepare before teaching

Teaching stories needs preparation. Stories should not simply be read to students. Students also should not simply read the stories to themselves. Stories are not intended to stay dormant on paper. They are meant to be discussed and to come alive in our students' minds. It is easy to discuss and debate issues relevant to our students' lives that arise in a story. We can use stories to familiarize our students with other cultures. An endless number of tasks relating to the story can be done.

Here are some suggestions for teaching a story:

1. *Getting Started Teaching a Story*
 - Talking about the title
 - Making predictions (from the title, selected vocabulary, a picture)
 - Telling part of the story and guessing
 - Motivating through a picture
 - Giving information about the author
 - Giving background information about the location, culture, historical setting
 - Listening to part of the story
2. *The actual reading of a story can be done in different ways.*
 - In groups
 - Jigsaw reading
 - Listening to parts of the story read out loud
 - Partial teacher reading and partial students reading
 - Silent reading with guiding questions

3. *Activities to follow teaching the story*

- Role Plays relating to the characters in the story
- Making the story into a play and putting it on in class
- Drawing the story in comics
- Changing the ending of the story
- Choosing your favorite part of the story and discussing it.
- Talking about characters
- Talking about plot and sequence
- Talking about messages
- Use graphic organizers: event map/ cause and effect/ story map / timeline etc.
- Debate an issue in the story as a class or in groups
- Various writing activities-summarizing/ dialogue writing/ letters to characters/ newspaper reports

Summing Up

Young learners share a remarkable variety of personal experiences, values and ways of understanding. The language they learn in the classroom is the tool they use to shape their thoughts and feelings. Using language is more than a way of exchanging information and extending ideas, it is their means of reaching out and connecting with other people. Stories can link not only between the world of classroom and home but also between the classroom and beyond. Stories provide a common thread that can help unite cultures and provide a bridge across the cultural gap.

Debi Partouche has been teaching English in Israel for the last 30 years in Junior High and High School classes in the south. She was a counselor for English teachers for five years and has been writing textbooks for the last five years.

LIFE NEAR GAZA: ENGLISH TEACHERS KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

Living under the constant threat of 'Kassam' missiles is, in her words of Safir Yoshkowitz, an 11th grade pupil at Shaar HaNegev High School, 'not easy'. She wrote this poem to help her express her feelings.

Lilies

Safir Yoshkowitz (together with Lavi Miednik)

Roses, Tulips and Poppies
it all blooms around us
midnight
morning breaks
unstoppably
all around us.

I open my eyes
and it doesn't leave me
my senses are all blurred
I hear
I feel
and I fear
still it doesn't leave me

My mind blocks it
it enters inside slowly
suddenly
my adrenaline is wasted
I can't handle it anymore

I am waiting for the lilies to bloom.

*(Reprinted with permission from
Landmarks, www.anglit.net)*

Avi Tsur, the Inspector for the Rural Sector, who tested for the Oral Bagrut in Safir's school, described his day under the threat as 'an uplifting experience', listening to the pupils expressing their fears and dreams, and sharing their feelings with the testers. He praised the teachers from the school, the testers, and of course, the pupils themselves, saying he was very proud to be the Inspector for the area.

Teachers who were asked at the last minute to test in the area did not hesitate to assist him. These teachers deserve to be named one by one: Judih Weinstein Haggai, Adele Raemer and Judy Segal from Maaleh Habsor; Steven Hellman and Martin Usher from Givat Brenner Kibbutz High School; and Mel Wilson from Habsor. These volunteers required last minute insurance, given by the testing department late at night, the day before the exam.

All the testers had to be seated in a secure zone, and the staff at Shaar HaNegev, led by Cheryl, made them feel totally at ease and safe.

Judith Weinstein Haggai was so moved by her experience on this day of testing that she has set up a community blog to publicize the pupils' stories. The blog is in English, so that people in Israel and around the world can find out how young people living near Gaza under threat of Kassam rockets feel. The link is <http://talkingnow.wordpress.com/>. Check it out and contribute!

As we start our summer holidays without all the stresses of school, this is a good time to remember that in some parts of the country, a big stress factor is omnipresent. It's neither pupils nor the school system; it's the fear of falling rockets. Best wishes to everyone for a quiet, peaceful and relaxing summer.

“SNAPSHOTS” FROM TESOL

The International TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Conference, titled “Worlds of TESOL,” took place at the beginning of April in New York City. Among the 9,000 plus participants from all over the world were about dozen teachers from Israel. Here are our impressions:

On April 1st, 2008 I flew off to NYC leaving my students with piles of work pages so I could attend my first TESOL conference. Needless to say, I felt overwhelmed among the 10,000 English teachers attending this conference. I also attended many the interesting sessions with lovely music performances before each plenary.

What I'd like to share are a few “snapshots” which are imprinted in my mind from this remarkable experience. The first is waking up at 6 am on April 2nd, to be ready by seven thirty (yes a.m.!!) for my presentation in the “Clinton Suite,” of the Hilton. My stomach was filled with butterflies and questions filled my head. Would anyone show up at 7:30 a.m. to hear me talk about how we use research projects in Israel? Would the Power Point presentation that I had laboured on for weeks even work? Was I dressed correctly? Well, luckily, the answers were yes. Many people showed up, some even displayed interest by asking questions, the Power Point worked, and my jacket was perfect.

The second “snapshot” is of the four hours when I volunteered. I sat in a booth and gave out certificates and ribbons to hundreds of my peers who had also presented. These few hours allowed me to observe and meet many interesting people and even give directions to a few lost souls. As a perk, I got a free cap and bag from The New York Times!

My final “snapshot” is being given, at no charge, a huge book of World Maps from the nice sales representative of National Geographic in the book exhibition. I had enquired about it and it couldn't be sent to Israel so he just gave me the book!

There's not enough space for me to express how fantastic this conference was or share all my stories. And in spite of the expense of the whole trip I am already thinking of how I can get to Denver in 2009. That says it all!

Aviva Shapiro

It's the hugeness of it that gets you at first: hundreds and thousands of people milling around two central hotels with the black-and-white TESOL bags and red ribbons round their necks with their name-tag. It's amazing that you ever manage to meet anyone you know, but you do. I met quite a lot of Israelis there: Valerie, who did an amazing job as the convener and organizer of the whole conference; Ofra, Michele, Aviva and others. I also met ex-Israelis: Natalie Hess, David Mendelson.

David Berliner once said that if you go to one good session, renew one old acquaintance and make one new friend – ‘dayenu’: it's a successful conference.

By that criterion, TESOL was a success for me. was able to spend time with an old friend and respected editor, Michael Swan. And I made lots of new friends: you just introduce yourself and start chatting to whoever sits next to you at a session and share appreciative or rude comments about the presenter. And an excellent session I went to was by Norbert Schmitt on teaching vocabulary. Anything he writes, by the way, is both readable and worthwhile, and highly recommended.

There were also, I have to admit, quite a lot of time-wasting sessions – people making all sorts of over-generalized, politically correct statements and not really getting anywhere. But that's part of the game; you get that in any conference (except ETAI, of course). And there were plenty of excellent sessions to compensate. In sum: a worthwhile, if exhausting, experience!

Penny Ur

The annual TESOL convention is always a multicultural experience for me, meeting people who come from all different parts of the world, each of whom represents one puzzle piece in the overwhelming whole that TESOL is. The highlight of this year's convention was the opening plenary given by Dr. Suresh Canagarajah, the William J. and Catherine Craig Kirby Professor in Language Learning at Penn State University. Dr. Canagarajah is originally from Sri Lanka and has won many awards for his work.

His presentation was entitled *Worlds of Practice: In Search of Community*. He stressed that while TESOL is a global community, the search for local identities is imperative for the organization to meet the needs of English today. He discussed the framework of relationships needed to sustain the many professional discourses in TESOL and the values that underpin them. Dr. Canagarajah's modesty, his questioning nature, and his deep understanding of the intersecting worlds of English added an earnest sincerity to his search for community.

As a member of our own diverse ETAL community, I strongly identify with his view of small, intersecting communities all of which share some common values and goals but differ in others. We, in Israel, have a rich tapestry of intersecting communities. Let's celebrate this diversity and help it to flourish!

Randi HarLev

I was in New York and planning to attend the TESOL conference, so I decided to register for two of the pre-conference day courses offered.

The first was a half day workshop, "Building literacy in emergent adult readers." Since only about 25 teachers attended, it was possible to interact with each other and work closely with the marvelous presenters. We were given a short lesson in Russian, which helped us understand the difficulty in learning a new language. We were also taught five principles of teaching literacy: keeping it in context; going "up and down the ladder," which means beginning with the whole text then dealing with it piece by piece and then going back to the whole; providing what they suggested as a "buffet" of learning opportunities; tapping into what the student already knows and nurturing the learners' confidence. We sat with colleagues and worked on actual lesson plans and shared experiences.

The second workshop was entitled "Second language difficulties or learning disability." Again, the presenters were superb and gave all the participants a chance to contribute. Subjects included identifying cases for discussion, issues of diagnosing LD among ESL/EFL students and the use of "Universal Design" adapted to education including multiple means of representation, expression and of engagement.

The enriching plenary sessions were always preceded by entertainment provided by local school children and people from various ethnic groups. I particularly enjoyed the group of 20 children who danced their hearts out to popular music. The subjects of the plenary sessions ranged from quality teaching, creating independent learners to language without borders and Penny Ur's wonderful interactive lecture on correctness and corrections.

There were lectures with breakfast, lectures with power point presentations, lectures with only a few participants, and lectures so crowded that participants sat on the floor. I gained so very much from most of the lectures and sessions that I attended. They were enjoyable and fully worth my while!

The exhibit halls were overwhelming, filled with every type of educational material imaginable. Armed with a smile and empty purse I managed to leave the conference with several free books and magazines. And I couldn't resist buying two or three books to help me with my teaching.

I also volunteered at the conference. I ended up selling tickets for the TESOL raffle and even bought a winning ticket and won a book!

I highly recommend that as professionals, committed to improving our teaching by constantly learning from others, we become part of the international community of teachers, whether it is through TESOL or IATEFL. We, and our students, will only gain from it.

Looking forward to seeing some of you again and some of you for the first time at ETAL summer conference.

Sarah Dembinsky

It's six a.m. I'm sitting in the Hilton Hotel in New York City and listening to a panel of English language educators talking about how to rejuvenate your professional batteries. What's so amazing is that there are at least 30 other people with me, listening as well.

The international TESOL conference was like an ETAI national summer conference on an overdose of growth hormones. It was huge: There were hundreds of sessions to choose from, thousands of people milling around, and a materials exhibition that gave me a serious case of sensory overload. But surprisingly, the conference also felt comfortable and homey. I mentioned this to one of the first people I met at the conference and she replied, "We're all English language teachers! It's our job to communicate and help people feel accepted and at ease!" So, along with almost 10,000 other communicative and accepting individuals, I ran from workshop to demonstration from panel discussion to lecture. I listened to people from all over the world share their expertise and met people from everywhere on the planet. Every session I attended was enriching and enlightening. Even if the presentation itself was disappointing, the participants' comments were often worthwhile hearing.

My experience at the TESOL conference gave me a great deal of pride in being a member of ETAI. Our conferences, although on a smaller scale, are just as professional and well done as the TESOL conference. Our members are equally as versed in current teaching practice and theory as TESOL members. I hope I will have the chance to attend international TESOL conferences in the future, but I am grateful that there are so many opportunities to attend ETAI conferences here in Israel.

Michele Ben

About the contributors:

Michele Ben teaches at Ginsburg HaOren Six-year Comprehensive School in Yavneh, mainly in the JHS. She worked as a remedial reading teacher in Hebrew for 15 years before retraining ten years ago as an English teacher. Michele holds a BA in Special Education from Hebrew University, an MA in education from U.N.N. and a certificate in translation from Bar-Ilan.



Sarah Dembinsy (BA, M.Ed in special education) was born England and came to Israel in 1979. She has been a teacher here for over 25 years, mostly in high schools around the country. She is now concentrating on adult education including working with retirees from the army, private and small groups and enjoying life with husband and three children and still supporting Manchester City!

Randi Harlev is an ELT consultant with over 30 years of teaching at all levels and pre-service and in-service teacher training. Today, she works with publishers designing and developing print and online EFL courses and giving in-service seminars for teachers. She holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior from Anglia Ruskin University and an MA in TESOL from the University of London.

Aviva Lana Shapiro is a teacher and coordinator at the Beit Yerach Comprehensive High School in the Jordan Valley, and a REED (Rural English Education Department) counsellor in the North. She has also taught elementary school through college preparatory courses. A mother of five, she is a former kibbutznik who now lives in a "Yishuv Kehilati." She has a BSc from the University of Maryland, USA and an MBA from Leicester University, England.

Penny Ur has thirty years' experience as an English teacher in primary and secondary schools in Israel. She is head of the M.Ed program in the teaching of foreign languages at Oranim Academic College of Education, and teaches also at the University of Haifa. She has published a number of articles on the subject of foreign-language teaching, and several books with Cambridge University Press, including *A Course in Language Teaching and Grammar Practice Activities*.

IN AND AROUND LONDON IN 7 1/2 DAYS

Nava Horowitz (*horovm@netvision.net.il*)

Despite the complications involved, such as paying for the high cost of travel, theatre and kosher food, finding host families for the weekend and making contact with Jewish Schools to visit, Talpiot Academic College for Education in Tel Aviv went, for the fourth time in recent years, on a week-long trip to London as part of the course of study leading to a B.Ed. in English. Funds were raised and families extended themselves to accommodate additional childcare needs so that as many students as possible, including those who are mothers, to participate in the trip to London. The College provided a small subsidy.

The trip, entitled "Language, Society and Culture", took place in February 2008. The group, consisting of 15 students and 2 staff members, was based in a bed and breakfast hotel near Paddington Station from Sunday through Friday. Over the weekend, students were hosted by Jewish families in Hendon. The objectives of the trip included becoming aware of the cultural practices and traditions in an English-speaking country; developing literacy skills and an appreciation of literature; developing linguistic skills; and developing sensitivity towards others and understanding cultural differences. Upon our arrival at lunch time on Sunday, the students were "thrown in at the deep end" with a visit to Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park – a truly colourful and multicultural event in terms of people and topics.

Every day of the week was packed with events. The group left the hotel every morning at about 8:30 and returned, after experiencing the theatre, at around 11:30 pm. Each student was assigned different events on the daily programme and told to find information to pass on to the members of the group. Another task was to use their maps of London and to plan our group's route from one place to another. By Wednesday, the students were such experts that they were given a free afternoon and told to meet up for the theatre performance in the evening. No one got lost and all arrived at the appointed time and place. Those who weren't sure of themselves, didn't hesitate to ask passers-by.

The features of the programme were:

- Museums: British, Victoria and Albert, Science, Natural History
- Tours: Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
Walking tour of Westminster, St. James Park,
Buckingham Palace Parades
- Visits: Kenwood House

The Wallace Collection
Covent Garden
Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park

- Jewish Community Experience:
School Visits: Ilford Primary School and
King Solomon High School, Ilford
Weekend home hospitality with families in
Golders Green / Hendon
- Theatre: The Lion King
Lord of the Rings
The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each
Other (National Theatre)
- Special Exhibition: Laughter in a Foreign Language

In addition to acquiring a wealth of general knowledge and experiencing the general atmosphere of British culture, like keeping to the right on the escalator in the Underground and "Mind the Gap", the students formed relationships as a group. These relationships will have a lasting influence on their work in the college in terms of cooperation and motivation. The students also gained a sense of achievement in having coped in the culture of the foreign language they are learning and actually using it in real life situations. An added benefit is that the experiences in this course have direct relevance to their future teaching in the field.

The following are students' comments from the reflections they were required to write:

"I felt a tremendous change because I overcame some barriers that this trip made me deal with in terms of language and I am so happy it happened." (Dafna, 1st year student)

"I had a wonderful communication and interesting discussions with Jewish and non-Jewish people during the trip. I was trying to understand their world / life without judging them. We still communicate by email." (Ortal, 1st year student)

"The trip broadened my horizons since I was exposed to a variety of cultural aspects that I wouldn't have seen in a month. I feel an improvement in my fluency. The host family spoke only English so it demanded speaking English all day and speaking quickly without considering my words as I usually do." (Rinat, 3rd year student)

Nava Horowitz is a veteran teacher and teacher trainer at Talpiot College, Tel Aviv. She is a firm believer in the importance of the "London Experience" for all trainees in English Departments.

JAPANESE ENLIGHTENMENT: Creating a Culture of Peace through Education

Donna Morris (*donamo22@hotmail.com*)

It was my good fortune to have a wonderful experience this past February when I was chosen to represent Israel in “The Asian Educators Symposium and Exchange Programme”, which took place in Tokyo, Japan. It was a



privilege and an opportunity for me to take part in an event which brought together teachers and educators from Asian countries to share their innovative and effective teaching programmes, activities and methodologies.

The programme was held at the National Olympic Memorial Youth Centre, Shinjuku in Tokyo from 18 to 25 February 2008. Educators from nine countries participated: These countries included USA, China, Brunei Dar-e-salaam, Pakistan, The Philippines, India, Japan and Israel. The symposium was organized flawlessly by the Goi Peace Foundation and the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU). In addition, we were joined by 25 Japanese educators.

The programme involved participants giving an introduction and several workshops covering the three main objectives of the symposium:

- “Universal Values of a Culture of Peace”. What are they and how can teachers implement them into their teaching?
- “Practicing Non-Violence.” What kinds of violence exist in schools (physical, emotional and psychological violence, emotional abuse, discrimination and bullying, etc.)? How can they be overcome?
- “Nurturing a Responsible Global Citizen”. What kind of education is needed to create a sustainable and harmonious civilization?

Each participant was asked in advance to give a presentation covering various topics in education. The presentations were then followed by discussions and brainstorming. Topics varied from: “Dealing with traumatic stress caused by conflicts and terror”, to “Character building and moral education”.

We all had the same belief; “As educators we must teach today’s generation about acceptance for the other, tolerance, peace, empathy, values, discipline and how to be a global citizen.”

I decided that my presentation would deal with, “Teaching Tolerance for Different Religions” and was titled, “ENLIGHTENMENT, – The light within each of us that shines as one. “My aim was to teach that through encouraging enlightenment and diversity, the three monotheistic religions of Israel and the world all have something in common and can be appreciated and enjoyed.

Learning Outcomes:

- To respect the three monotheistic religions of Israel and the world.
- To understand the link the three religions have to Israel.
- To learn about the holy places and traditions of each religion.
- To learn about three holidays which all relate to light.
- The definition and purpose of enlightenment.

One of the activities I prepared was a slide show of symbols, places and people. This was intended in part to communicate information about the three monotheistic religions of the Middle East, about beliefs, events, institutions and practices important to the three religions, despite their differences. The main purpose, however, is to stress the many things that these three religions have in common, as well as their differences, which should lead to a greater understanding and respect for the other.

One evening, an open forum was held, where we sat on a panel in front of an audience of 100 which included many educators. We were asked about our teaching methodologies, our countries and education system. It was a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and opinions and learn about the creative and innovative peace education practices in various countries. It

was an honour for me to address such a distinguished gathering.

We also had the opportunity to visit local schools, observe lessons and interact with the children. This gave us a deeper understanding of why Japan is well-known for its well-maintained educational system and excellent achievement. This can be clearly seen particularly in their community programmes, including Earth Kids Space and Ecological Foundation for Children. Furthermore, we were fortunate enough to have a taste of Japanese culture and traditions, through some breathtaking sightseeing tours including an observation tour in Ancient Kyoto.

One of the highlights for me was at our final meeting. It was time for reflection and closure. The Pakistan delegates were the first to talk. They personally thanked me in front of everyone, for teaching them tolerance

and the acceptance of the other. And most important, for showing them that Jews are not monsters! They both hugged me with tears in their eyes and promised to recite in their homes every morning, "May Peace Prevail in Israel". My main goal had been fulfilled.

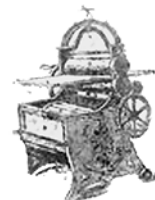
The symposium was a once in a lifetime learning experience for both my new friends and myself. We made a promise to continue our shared goals and to remain in contact, which we do on a regular basis through a forum especially made for us.

As a teacher, I believe my role is not just to teach a subject, in my case English. My role is to teach today's generation about acceptance for the other, tolerance, peace, empathy, discipline and most important, how to be a decent person. Hopefully, through Peace Education we will all find the true definition of what it is to be human.



Donna Morris, 41, is a native of Wales, Great Britain. She is active in Peace Education. She teaches native speaker classes, heterogeneous classes and special education classes in elementary and junior high schools in Kiryat Ono.

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NETSURFING

Miri Yochanna (*miri.yochanna@gmail.com*)

Hello all,

It's that time of year again. The weather is getting hot and the air conditioner is working full blast. Oh, wait, is that just me? Anyways, it's hot but we have to start thinking of September, it creeps up on us so quickly.

I've found a few good sites for you to enjoy this time around. A couple of my students recommended some sites and I've brought those to you as well.

So enjoy the summer and enjoy the conference.

Remember, if you have good sites to recommend, let me know at *miri.yochanna@gmail.com*

Miri

Name	Giggle Poetry
Address: http://www.gigglepoetry.com/poetryclass.aspx	
Category	Resource mainly
What's in the site?	A great collection of incredible poems. They are fun, funny and a great way to work on the language with the children. It also offers great links to the Poetry Teacher with lovely ideas, the Fiction Teacher, with more excellent ideas. This is a site that has enjoyable poems and good ideas that can be brought into the classroom with little effort. The poems are funny, easy to work with and there are teaching ideas, writing ideas and plenty to choose from.
My personal favorite	I like the poems honestly, but there is a section called "Poetry Class" where there are instructions on how to write similar poems. The ideas are cool and they could be brought into a class, mainly higher levels, but they each spark off wonderful ideas of how I could use this in a class, what my students would think of it and how they could relate to most of them. It's lots and lots of fun.
Possible uses	Have the students read poetry for starters, understand the imagery and then also have them write their own version of a poem using the same notions or ideas.

Name	BritLit
Address: http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/try/resources/britlit	
Category	Literature Resource
What's in the site?	What it isn't would be easier to say. This site offers almost complete units to download and use in class. There are resources for elementary, high school and what they call younger teens or what are known as junior high school kids here. The sets include the text, vocabulary activities, context activities, worksheets on language, etc, etc, etc. There are even flashcards and other visuals to download. All I can say is "Where were they 20 years ago when I was getting started?"
My personal favorite	I loved the whole thing, really. It's hard to decide which is better. It depends on the age level you want to teach, the mood you are in, what literature you want to bring in and how much paper you have in your printer. ☺ But one thing I really liked was the audio files that come with the different literature sets. It's great to have the students listen to the readings / poems in class.
Possible uses	Teach literature at all ages, in the English lesson. It's all there, ready to be used.

NOTE: Thank you to Lihi Telem my student at Beit Berl College, who recommended this website.

Name	ESL Depot
Address: http://www.esldepot.com	
Category	Resources
What's in the site?	It's basically a store where you can buy all the things you might want for your ESL needs. They deliver, or so they claim, anywhere. That in itself is a good thing. Quite a few of their things are download purchases, so there is no delivery problem at all. Finally a store that caters to all ESL needs. There are some really good things here and we could all use a refresher now and then. Besides, the prices are reasonable, so it's worth it. They have e-books, so there are no delivery fees; there are games and software too as well as a chat room.
My personal favorite	But they also have many free things to download. This is the part I liked best. There are pages for the learners to give these to our students to work on or read. There are also pages for you with resources, ideas, and all sorts of other goodies. All in all, a really good place to visit.
Possible uses	For upgrading your library and for new ideas in class. Really a good resource site.

Name	Lil Fingers
Address: www.lil-fingers.com	
Category	Resources and online use
What's in the site?	There are many different pages for the really, really young kids but there are simple stories for reading online. While not all the stories are read aloud, they are very clear and easy to follow so in a class it would be easy to read to the students. There are coloring pages, work on the letters and other fun activities for the very young.
My personal favorite	I liked the coloring pages with the blocks and the letters. These are so cute and the kids could really enjoy coloring their name using these blocks. I also liked a story book called Monsters in the Dark, very cute. The games are wonderful and they offer lots of fun for the kids.
Possible uses	I would use this in class with the young learners - kindergarten, grade one or two. They can play with the games, listen to the words, follow a story, color pages and learn the vocabulary. It's a great site.

NOTE: Thank you to Chen Jacobs, my student at Beit Berl College, who recommended this site

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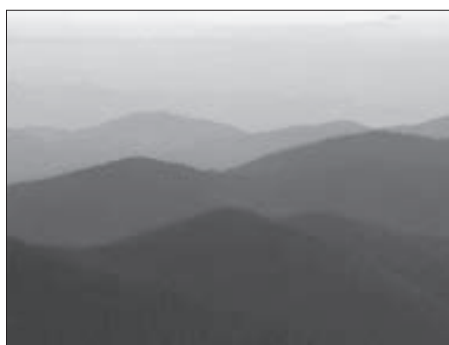
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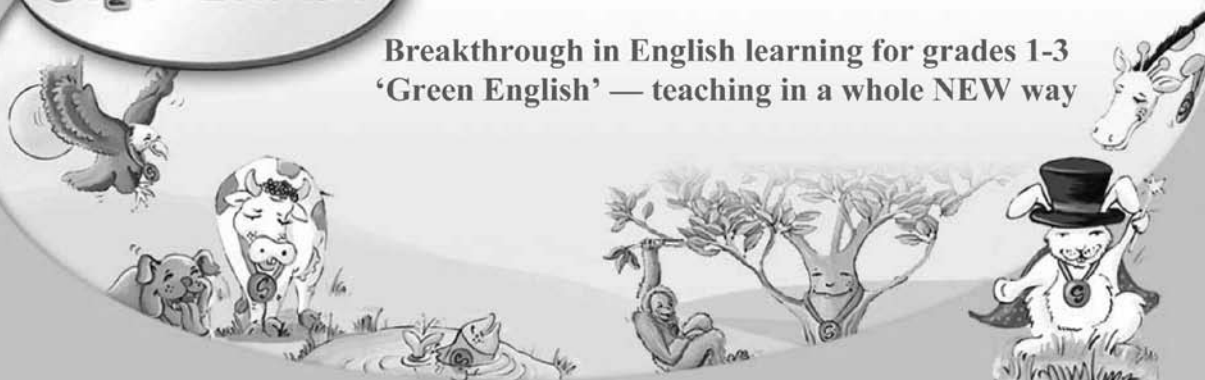


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