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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

Get up and say it!

One of the functions of ETAI is to enable face-to-face exchanges of views in a warm and supportive professional climate: to allow members to air their views and ideas honestly without fear of being ‘labelled’ in any negative way. If you don’t ‘surface’ your apprehensions and concerns openly, then how are you going to get any answers? And don’t worry: nobody’s going to label you as ‘negative’ or ‘subversive’. If you don’t tell everyone about the great things you’ve been doing, how will other teachers benefit? And don’t worry: nobody’s going to label you a ‘conceited show-off’.

There’s another reason, besides helping each other, for sharing concerns and good ideas. It is that putting things into words helps you think. Remember that saying ‘How do I know what I think until I hear what I say?’! It sounds funny, but there’s a lot of truth in it. I’ve often found that when working on an article, or preparing a presentation, I’ve actually come to clarify my own thoughts much better and worked out a coherent point of view that I didn’t understand so well before.

Anyhow, for all these reasons – please share! If you’re better at talking, then give a presentation or get together a Round Table discussion at a conference; if you’re better at writing, then write something for the ETAI Forum. The first time it takes a bit of courage and quite a lot of work: but later... you’ll be glad you did it.

Penny Ur (pennyur@gmail.com)
ETAI Chairperson

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

British and American English

As editors of the Forum we spend a lot of time discussing language. Usually this is very interesting, but just every so often our discussions have become a little heated as we argue over the correct way of writing something. With time, we have learnt that usually we are both right, but it is our differing American and British Englishes that are the source of the disagreement. What are these differences?

The most obvious difference between BrE (British English) and AmE (American English) is in vocabulary. Michele talks about periods, whereas Amanda insists they are called full stops. When we work together, Michele puts up the coffee, Amanda makes it. Other differences are ‘tic-tac-toe’, ‘soda’ and ‘John Doe’ in AmE, translating to ‘noughts and crosses’, ‘fizzy drink’ and ‘Joe Bloggs’ in BrE. Even more confusingly, there are also words which are used in both AmE and BrE but have different meanings such as ‘school’ meaning k1-12 in BrE and any educational institution in AmE (Crystal, 2002).

Another difference between BrE and AmE is in pronunciation. One regular difference is the use of the rhotic ‘r’ in AmE. (Crystal, 2003) There are also individual words that are pronounced differently such as medicine – med-sin - in BrE and – med-i-sin - in AmE. Stress differences also make the languages sound different such as ‘address’ where the stress is on the first syllable in AmE and on the second in BrE. The 1937 film ‘Shall We Dance’ featured the song by George and Ira Gershwin, ‘Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off’ where the different pronunciations of tomato cause so many problems the couple break up!

You like potato and I like po-tah-to,
You like tomato and I like to-mah-to;
Potato, po-tah-to, tomato, to-mah-to –
Let’s call the whole thing off!

There are many differences in spelling between AmE and BrE. The lack of ‘u’ in AmE in words such as colour, labour, and honour is one example. Another is the reversal of ‘re’ in BrE to ‘er’ in AmE as in theatre, or fibre. Many words are simplified in AmE for example, ‘foetus’ as it was before it became ‘foetus’ in BrE becomes ‘fetus’, ‘jewellery’ becomes ‘jewelry’ and ‘programme’ becomes ‘program’ (Crystal, 2002). The word ‘manoeuvre’ (BrE) and ‘maneuver’ (AmE) provides an example of two of these spelling differences.

Grammar differences also exist. There are some differences in the past tense: ‘knitted’ and ‘dived’ in BrE as opposed

‘knit’ and ‘dove’ in AmE and in the past participle, such as ‘got’ in BrE and ‘gotten’ in AmE. The past tense may be used in AmE, ‘Did you wash your hands?’ where in BrE the question would tend to use the present perfect, ‘Have you washed your hands yet?’ (Crystal, 2003). Other notable differences are: ‘five past eight’, ‘Monday to Friday’, ‘in hospital’ in BrE as opposed to the AmE ‘five after eight’, ‘Monday through Friday’ and ‘in the hospital’. Crystal points out that AmE usages are taking over BrE (Crystal, 2002, p. 266). Perhaps this is why the Forum tends to use AmE.

Additionally, punctuation also varies on the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In BrE, an apostrophe is not used to write “1980s”, whereas in AmE it is, “1980’s” (Truss, 2003, p. 46). In lists, AmE places a comma before the ‘and’ at the end of the list, for example, red, white, and blue. In BrE, the final comma is unnecessary (Truss, 2003, p. 84). However, BrE and AmE stylebooks both stress that either way is acceptable. Indeed, the use of commas in BrE and AmE is often different and is one way we, as editors, have of knowing where our writers hail from.

The differences in vocabulary, spelling and grammar have to lead to books being ‘translated’ from English into American. A recent popular example is the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling. The first book was entitled ‘Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone’ (Rowling, 1999) in England whereas in the U.S. it was given the title ‘Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone’. Most of the changes involved vocabulary to suit the story to a culturally different market: ‘holidays’ were changed to ‘vacations’, ‘jumpers’ became ‘sweaters’ and ‘crooked’ became ‘wonky’ (Van Metre, 2008).

In the computer era, AmE and BrE raise a new set of issues. The keyboards are not identical: for example, the standard keyboard in the U.S. has # where the British keyboard will have a £ sign (Wikipedia, 2008). In its language options, Windows gives the user the choice between American English and British English.

On a final note, even though there are many interesting differences between AmE and BrE but the question is: are these differences important? We think not, and hope that you as ETAI Forum readers agree with our eclectic approach to UK/US usage here in the Forum.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue with its wide variety of articles, including a special section on writing, and of course all the regular features!

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, ETAI Forum co-editors

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JERUSALEM MINI-CONFERENCE: MARCH 25TH 2009 I Love ETA I in the Springtime!

Eleanor Satlow (*satlow_m@netvision.net.il*) and David L. Young (*dlwhy04@yahoo.com*)

And so do the 70+ lucky people who attended the Jerusalem mini-conference loved it as well. For four hours in the afternoon, the spacious entrance hall at David Yellin College bustled with energy, registration, a book exhibition and happy attendee ETA Iers networking and gossiping. A short opening session in the auditorium featured David Young welcoming the teachers and students, admitting that this was the first conference that he had convened for years. He told the audience it was so long ago in fact, that a Mr. Shakespeare had given a talk on the use of infinitives in the classroom, entitled "To be or not to be," a somewhat lugubrious Dr. Johnson had given a talk about dictionaries and a slim poet called Emily Dickinson who was wearing a long white dress had discussed the poem "Because I could not stop for Death he kindly stopped for me."

Students and teachers, abuzz with literary allusions, then proceeded to the first of two workshop-packed sessions where they had to choose from Paula Barnard speaking on LD Special Needs; Michaela Ziv (UPP) on the New Literature Modules; multi-tasker David L. Young giving An Illustrated History of English; and Leo Sellivan (British Council), with a workshop on how to Lexicalize Your Lesson.

A Break and Browse opportunity was followed by the second session, which included Jen Sundick on Common Ground in Hebrew & Arabic Folk Tales; Brenda Liptz discussing Teachers with Learning Disabilities as "The Others;" Ronnie Abrams presenting Quick-Write Notebooks; another multi-tasker, Leo Sellivan, this time claiming "The More Languages the Better;" and his British Council colleague Nicola Crowley presenting the British Council Website.

By 19.00 that evening, the roads around the David Yellin College were full of happy ETA Iers, most of whom had come to the conference after a long work day, making their way home with joy in their hearts, extensive notes in their folders, and even some new acquisitions in their ECB-supplied conference bags.

Conveners: David L. Young & Eleanor Satlow

With heartfelt thanks to Aliza Yahav and to all those at David Yellin College who made the event happen.

THE ETA I SPRING CONFERENCE: HAIFA 16TH APRIL 2009

Judith Astasy (*judyastary@yahoo.com*)

The annual Spring Conference took place at the Arab College on an unseasonably cool and somewhat rainy day. A wide variety of presenters had prepared interesting and thought-provoking sessions which varied in length from 40 minutes to one and a half hours. We were also treated to three stimulating plenary sessions. The opening plenary was given by was ETA I Chairperson, Prof. Penny Ur. Stepping in to replace Chief Inspector Judy Steiner who was originally scheduled to give the opening plenary, Penny regaled the audience with some creative ways to apply HOTS to grammar exercises. Dr. Janina Kahn-Horovitz and Aharon Gvaryahu, in their respective plenary talks, dealt with varying aspects of teaching weaker and learning disabled students, and both provided us with plenty of information to think about!

As for the venue itself, apart from the many steps leading up from the road, the Arab College is a truly user friendly choice with plenty of browsing areas, abundant places to sit and chat during breaks and ample space for everyone. The book publishers were there in full force, as were representatives from the Jerusalem Post and Haaretz/Herald Tribune who offered tempting free month-long subscriptions.

Hats off to all those incredibly dedicated ETA I northern committee members Yosef Daghash, Lily Khoury, Miriam Melamed, Aviva Shapiro, Fran Sokel, Avi Tsur and Penny Ur, and to the Haifa teachers who once again rose to the challenge and organised yet another great conference.

Judith Astasy has been in the English teaching profession for 36 years! She teaches English for Bagrut and Translation at Kadoorie Agricultural Youth village and is in her final year at Oranim Academic College in the M.Ed. course. She lives in Merhavya near Afula.

THE SOUTHERN-MOST ETAI EVENT OF THE YEAR

Rose Whitman (*whitmanrose1@yahoo.com*)

The final mini-conference of the year was held on Sunday, May 10th in Eilat at the Neptune Hotel. The hotel was really generous and provided lovely cakes and snacks and great coffee. Nineteen of the 32 English teachers in the Eilat-Eilat region attended; since it was the day after the summer Bagrut, many high school teachers missed the advertising and therefore missed the conference because they had been so busy with Bagrut prep. Their absence was felt because the teachers in the region know each other well.

The content of the sessions was stimulating: Penny Ur showed us how to start thinking about the practicalities of HOTS for all levels; Ann Shlapobersky talked about getting over The First Scary Steps of Writing; Rose Whitman spoke about using and developing Video Activities for Projects. A highlight of the conference was a round-table of showing and sharing. UPP, ECB and Zig Zag games set up the materials display.

Along with Rose Whitman, Betty Simelmitz, the English Madricha for elementary level, worked hard to make the conference a great success; without her help not much would have gotten done. We are looking forward to next year's mini, in Aquabba, Jordan, perhaps?

Rose Whitman is a member of Kibbutz Ketura and has been a teacher of EFL and ESL in the 'real' south, for 30 years, beginning in Eilat and moving 'north' to Yotvata High School 20 years ago. She teaches 5th grade to 12th, since the school is one on-going unit from 1st -12th. She is a Brit, trained in England, but whose real learning world is the classroom and the amazing array of seminars and workshops she has attended up and down the country over the years, including ETAI events.

MINI - ETAI CONFERENCE IN NAZARETH ILLIT

Fran Sokel (*ssokel@gmail.com*)

The final northern mini- ETAI conference for this school year took place on Sunday May 10th at the Eshkol Hapeis building in Nazareth Illit.

Plenary sessions were given by Margaret MacAdam from the American Embassy, who talked about developing inference skills in reading, and by our own Penny Ur who shared some ideas to add interest to language practice exercises.

These two plenary sessions were followed by a selection of parallel sessions on different topics, whereby practicing teachers shared their ideas and experiences about using the school website in English lessons, working with Shel Silverstein's poetry, and teaching HOTS through literature in the pilot program. The British Council also presented their www.teachingenglish.org.uk website – a valuable resource for busy English teachers.

Close to one hundred participants took advantage of this opportunity to network with colleagues, browse the materials exhibition and find out about new developments and ideas in English teaching. Some came from as far as Jaffa to attend! We hope to see you at the mini in Nazareth Illit next year!

Happy Birthday ETAI! ETAI has reached the ripe old age of 30! We are marking this milestone with a column featuring anecdotes and highlighting fond memories of ETAI events and activities throughout the years. Thank you Raphael Gefen for your submission! We are waiting for more contributions. You are invited to send any interesting story about ETAI, past and present, to etaiforum@gmail.com.

BIASED REMINISCENCES OF THE ORIGINS OF ETAI

Raphael Gefen (rayag@bezeqint.net)

I write these lines with solid documentary evidence beside me - the English Teachers' Journal (Israel) (issues 22 on), which by that time had already achieved an international readership. And as I read its columns for 1979-1980, I note with sadness the names of contributors no longer with us, including outstanding educators such as Thea Reves and Leila Beth-El.

IATEFAL, the British Council, IAAL and others

I was deeply involved in the foundation of ETAI (to put it with all due modesty), in my capacity as Chief Inspector for English, and for some years beforehand had been in contact with IATEFL in London. Two English teachers' associations were in existence in the 1970s, but both were inactive - a professional trade union association within the Teachers' Union (Histadrut Hamorim), which as far as I remember did nothing, and the Association for Secondary School English Teachers (probably not its official name) that had been active in Tel Aviv in earlier years, but, like so many other organisations, less and less active as the initial enthusiasm wore off, so that by 1979 it too had ceased to function.

The IATEFL and the British Council fully backed the idea of our Association - indeed, the British Council was extremely helpful then and later, in financing scholarships for our members and providing the Association with its first equipment, such as computers. It was a mutual relationship, as ETAI helped the Council set up its Nazareth branch later in the 1980s. Many thanks to the "English Language Officers" of the Council at that time - Harold Fisch, Peter Hargreaves and Ian Seaton.

A few years before, I had initiated the foundation of the Israel Association for Applied Linguistics, which I had hoped would attract English teachers, since ELT (English Language Teaching) was clearly part of Applied Linguistics, now that our syllabus/curriculum had adopted the aim of communicative competence, instead of seeing it as a preparation for the appreciation of English culture and literature (in the former syllabus). However, all my efforts as Chairman were rejected by the others on the Board, who restricted membership to university personnel, and wished to see the Association as a forum for academic papers only. So that idea fell through.

The Role of the MOE

Another fully-supporting body for ETAI was the In-Service Training Department of the Ministry of Education, which for obvious reasons was interested in its activities as an educational and not a trade union body. The first conferences of ETAI were fully financed by the Department.

The English Inspectorate naturally backed the existence of ETAI as a means of teacher-improvement and feedback, although some of the regional Inspectors were rather anxious lest a grass-roots movement encroach on their activities and become a kind of counter-authority. But it is worthwhile mentioning that many of the next generation of regional Inspectors and Teacher-Counsellors came from the ranks of ETAI activists. In those first few years of its existence, the Ministry provided ETAI with office accommodation and services, but later this was discontinued, following objections from the legal department of the Ministry (ETAI not being a government body).

How It Began

The "English Teachers' Journal" (issue 22, December 1979) reported that the inaugural conference of ETAI took place in Tel Aviv (a one-day affair in the hall of a municipal secondary school) on 22 July 1979. The Conference resolved to set up the Association and local branches, and to affiliate to IATEFL. The conference sent greetings to English teachers in Egypt. Could this have been in the circumstances of the recent Begin-Sadat meetings and the peace treaty?

Speakers at this initial conference included Chris Brumfit from the British Council in Britain on "Freedom and Control in Language Learning", Professor Dan Vogel from the Jerusalem Women's College on "Teaching Literature as a Means of Heightening Sensibility to Language", Sheila Been of Instructional TV on "A Multi-Media Programme for Teaching English to Upper-Intermediate Students", Dr. E.A. Levenston of the Hebrew University on "Some Aspects of the Discourse Analysis of English", Dr. W. Gallagher (a visiting scholar from the USA at the Hebrew University) on "A Survey of Recent Research in FLL" and Raphael Gefen on "The Bagrut Examinations" (including references

to recent innovations such as the Listening Comprehension Tests and the changes in the Reading Programme, such as Malamud's "A Summer's Reading" instead of Dorothy Parker's "The Standard of Living"; another new item on the programme was the optional "Eli the Fanatic" by Philip Roth, a choice that was never adopted by schools (too long? subject too challenging? the author's reputation?). The conference elected a National Council (no names mentioned in the Journal). The following issue of the Journal (23, July 1980) reported that the National Council, at its first and only meeting, had elected an Executive Committee consisting of the following members:

Raphael Gefen was Chief Inspector for English 1967 - 1992 and taught at the Hebrew University School of Education (ELT Department) 1968 - 1995. He was ELT Consultant for the Ministry of Education, Singapore, 1982 - 1986. He is now a lexicographer and editor of dictionaries for learners of English as a foreign language.

Chairperson: Dr. Elite Olshtain (Tel-Aviv University, well-known to teachers for the ESH textbooks and Instructional TV)

Secretary: Ephraim Weintraub, secondary school teacher and Teacher-Counsellor for new immigrant teachers; later to be Chairperson of the Association

Treasurer: Haya Emanuel

Members: Brenda Kalmanovitz, Pnina Rosenblitt, Zippora Banai, Bader Junis, and (ex-officio) Raphael Gefen.

Membership fees were 100 lirot (10 old sheqels); in issue 24 (December 1980) readers were informed that fees were now 20 sheqels!

Feature Articles

THE USE OF A LEXICAL SYLLABUS IN EFL TEACHING TO IMPROVE SECOND LANGUAGE VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

Sharon Fayerberger (*fayermen@gmail.com*)

Over the past two decades more and more researchers have realized the importance of vocabulary acquisition in second language teaching. Vocabulary is vital for communicative purposes and is also a good predictor of reading comprehension. Much has been written about different methods of acquiring and teaching vocabulary (see selected bibliography), in particular implicit vocabulary acquisition. However, there has been less research about the effects of direct, explicit, vocabulary teaching since teaching directly from word lists is often criticized for being old fashioned.

For my masters dissertation I investigated the effects of a lexical syllabus on second language vocabulary acquisition. The lexical syllabus is a list of specific words, meanings, and phrases to be taught in a direct approach at different levels in high school. The syllabus I used was made up of most frequently used words and lexical chunks which can be found on the web (<http://www.lextutor.ca/>) from the first 1000, 2000 and up to 5000 most frequent words as well as lexical chunks used in the text books currently used in high school. For example:

I admit being wrong

Appointed as manager

Associate yourself with someone

Cause and effect

Prevent/prevention

Childhood dreams/friends

Each grade has its own syllabus and many of the words are recycled each year.

In the study, two groups of high school learners were compared. The treatment group (N=96) is the group that learned from the lexical syllabus over a period of six months and the control group (N=43) learned vocabulary spontaneously and sporadically. Both treatment and control groups were made up of 10th and 11th graders. A pre-test that consisted of two sections, one that tests passive vocabulary size, and the other that tests active vocabulary size was administered at the beginning of the school year. Six months later the same test was administered to check for vocabulary gains in each group. In addition, since research has shown that attitudes and motivation are important variables in second language

achievement, the relationship between motivation and vocabulary gains was explored. Therefore, a questionnaire that checks student's motivation towards learning English as a foreign language was administered at the beginning of the year and then again six months later.

First, the results showed that the 10th grade treatment group made significantly higher gains on the passive vocabulary sections of the test, whereas fewer gains were made by the 10th grade control group. Similarly, the 11th grade treatment group made significantly higher gains throughout the passive vocabulary sections of the test whereas no significant gains were made by the 11th grade control group. In addition, the results of the 11th grade treatment group were higher than 10th grade treatment group; passive vocabulary gains were higher than active vocabulary gains. However, among the control group participants there were no significant differences found between the 10th and 11th grade active and passive vocabulary gains. Regarding active vocabulary size, significant gains were made both by treatment and control groups in the active vocabulary sections of the test.

Second, the results corroborate research done on the differences between active and passive vocabulary acquisition. Namely, that there is a diverging gap between active and passive vocabulary knowledge and that active vocabulary knowledge is more difficult to master. The more the students know in a low frequency passive vocabulary level (i.e. 5000 word level), the greater the gap will be in the parallel active vocabulary level. The results of the vocabulary gains are explained in light of three second language theories which have application to teaching: explicit vocabulary instruction, the differences between active and passive vocabulary size and adopting a lexical approach.

With regards to the relationship between motivation and vocabulary gains, the findings show a positive but low correlation between integrative motivation and vocabulary gains which suggests that motivation alone is not enough to explain the significant vocabulary growth made by the treatment group but rather the implementation of a lexical syllabus or other variables that were not checked in this study.

The study indicates that implementing a lexical syllabus by means of explicit instruction, teaching straight from the word lists instead of in a contextualized manner is highly effective in expanding passive vocabulary acquisition quickly. Furthermore, the results seem to support the claim that lexis should become a central part of an EFL syllabus and a more lexical approach should be implemented in the classroom.

I have incorporated a lexical syllabus into my school's main English syllabus. Each teacher has received a lexical syllabus for each grade (10th, 11th and 12th). The syllabus includes 600 words and teachers attempt to teach at least 20 new words a week, which are tested in order to get the students to learn them both passively and actively. Later on, the students are exposed to texts that include the very same words that are on the syllabus.

The idea is certainly not new. In the past the ministry had lists of words to be taught which disappeared with the new curriculum. The idea behind a lexical syllabus is to organize vocabulary teaching for teachers so that teachers know what lexical items are worth teaching, and how much they have to cover per year. Thus, it becomes a friendlier means to teaching such a vital element of EFL teaching.

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DICTIONARY PREFERENCES OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

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Abstract

With the technological and lexicographic advances during the past 25 years, there has been a shift from using paper monolingual English dictionaries in book form to using bilingual, bilingualized and multilingual electronic and computer dictionaries. This paper describes dictionary preferences and attitudes towards dictionary effectiveness of multilingual students and teachers in academic reading comprehension courses in English as a foreign language (EFL) at the University of Haifa. Teachers and students had different preferences and disagreed about the purpose of the dictionary – teachers viewing it as an opportunity for learning, and students demanding an expedient tool to obtain word meaning with minimal interruption during reading.

Introduction

Dictionary preferences of Israeli university students and teachers reflect recent technological and lexicographic advances. Twenty-five years ago, teachers directed students to use a limited number of available monolingual and bilingual English paper book dictionaries for native speakers or foreign language learners. The choice widened in 1986, with the advent of bilingualized (or semi-bilingual) English dictionaries (Marello 1996). Then about a decade ago, computer and hand-held electronic dictionaries began to appear. Today, students can choose among dictionaries that are monolingual, bilingual, bilingualized (semi-bilingual), or even multilingual, and the medium can be paper, hand-held electronic, or computer.

Bensoussan, Sim and Weiss (1984) found that where there was free choice, Israeli students at the University of Haifa and Ben-Gurion University showed a distinct preference for bilingual dictionaries during reading examinations. Examination performance, however, was not affected by dictionary use. They also found that bilingual dictionaries often failed to give complete definitions and explanations, or to include enough idioms and collocations. Finally, it was suggested that teachers and dictionary exercises should help students work on word families, parts of speech and sentence structure.

Since that article was written, Israeli society has become more multilingual. Whereas 25 years ago, the most popular languages (and dictionaries) were in Hebrew, Arabic, English and French, after the immigration wave of the 1990s, large numbers of native speakers of Russian and Amharic appeared among the university population, with their dictionaries.

Teachers generally prefer the monolingual dictionary for students because it makes users think in English (Underhill 1985). Before using the monolingual dictionary, students need to know the rules of grammar and the parts of speech. The bilingual dictionary makes fewer demands than the monolingual dictionary on the user (Atkins 1985). Since they may be faced with much information that is irrelevant to the particular context, students often jump at the first definition listed, which may not be the correct one (Schofield 1999). Because dictionary use is an acquired skill, lexicographers strongly suggest that teachers instruct students in the use of dictionaries (Atkins and Knowles 1990, Hartmann 2001, McCreary and Dolezal 1999, Underhill 1985).

The development of the bilingualized dictionary – termed a 'semi-bilingual dictionary' in Hornby and Reif (1986) and Collin, Kassis, and Angel (1987) – has been an important addition to the collection of dictionaries

available to Israeli learners of English. A clear explanation of the purpose of the semi-bilingual dictionary is given in *Harrap's English Dictionary for Speakers of Arabic* in the Publisher's Preface by Lionel Kernerman. The semi-bilingual dictionary is a learner's dictionary which is foremost a monolingual English-English dictionary in which the entry word, part-of-speech, definition and example of usage are all given in English, followed by the equivalent of the entry word in Arabic.

The technological challenge for electronic dictionaries in Israel was to combine left-to-right English with the right-to-left non-Latin scripts of Hebrew and Arabic (Busharia et al. 1982, Ehlers 1982).

The hand-held electronic dictionaries have become sophisticated, including, for example, phrasal verbs (Landau 2001, Nesi 1999). In fact, teachers say that by insisting on exact spelling, the electronic dictionary may even encourage careful spelling. Students do not, however, need to know the order of the alphabet. The lexicographic developments of the electronic dictionary led to changes at Israeli universities. Several years ago, suspicious of the quality of early electronic dictionaries, the Israeli Ministry of Education and the English Inspectorate banned them from use in the classroom and on tests. With time, however, the newer electronic dictionaries improved in the number of entries and accuracy of translation. As a result, the Ministry became less strict about their use, and teachers began referring to them as well as permitting students to use them.

Hand-held electronic dictionaries (including the *Quicktionary* pen) are preferred by students because they are portable and easy to use, even though they are less accurate and less detailed than print dictionaries, and even though they lack improvements of learner dictionaries such as increased illustrations, examples of regional usage, idioms and collocations, and technical terms (Nesi 1999). A study by Holzman (2000) shows that they are more common in Israeli tertiary classrooms of EAP (English for Academic Purposes) than teachers expect.

At the University of Haifa, advanced English academic reading comprehension courses are given in the Department of Foreign Languages to help students read academic texts in their fields. Students with learning disabilities can study additional hours in the AudioVisual Language Laboratory (listening to pre-recorded texts) or the CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) Center, with computers equipped with the ReadPlease text-to-speech software (since 1999) that enables students to listen to the text, and the bilingual translation English-Hebrew *Babylon On-line Dictionary*. Computer (Internet or CD-ROM) dictionaries include additional

features, such as pronunciation of words and definition or translation by clicking on a word (Landau 2001, Nesi 1999). The English language courses teach students the efficient use of the dictionary, a tool that they would ordinarily be using in any authentic situation (such as working on term papers, studying for examinations, and doing homework assignments). Since 1999, mixed-mode reading courses that combine traditional frontal lessons and CALL components have been given. Course materials include units created on the HighLearn platform (Britannica Knowledge Systems Ltd.) as part of the MEITAL project, in which four universities participated (Bar Ilan University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the University of Haifa, and Tel Aviv University).

Teachers are in a position to determine the policy of permitting or forbidding the use of dictionaries in the classroom and during examinations. In general, however, students are not limited in their choice of dictionary, and are encouraged to compare those available on the market before buying one. Given this situation of freedom, it is interesting to compare student and teacher attitudes towards dictionaries before computer use was widespread.

During the summer session of 1997, a study was carried out about the dictionary preferences of students of English as a Foreign Language at the University of Haifa. The following research questions were asked by a team of experienced teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) whose native languages included English, Arabic, and Russian.

- 1) Which dictionaries do multilingual students prefer to use? What characteristics do students perceive as necessary to make dictionaries effective?
- 2) What are teachers' dictionary preferences for themselves and for their students? What characteristics do teachers perceive as necessary to make dictionaries effective?
- 3) How do teachers' and students' attitudes towards dictionaries compare?

Results*

Only 29% students stated a preference for monolingual English dictionaries. As expected, bilingual dictionaries (English + Hebrew and/or other mother tongue) were preferred by most students. Whereas other studies found that the preference for monolingual dictionaries increased with student proficiency (Atkins and Knowles 1998, Atkins and Varantola 1997, Bejoint 1981, Hartmann

* If you would like to receive the relevant statistical analyses, tables and figures, please contact the author.

2001, Scholfield 1999, Tomaszczyk 1981), their samples included highly proficient students of English. The English proficiency level of the Israeli students in the present study, in contrast, was not high enough to exempt them from the required course in reading comprehension. Thus they probably did not reach the optimal English level for monolingual dictionary preference.

In contrast to the students, the great majority of teachers (89%) reported a preference for monolingual English dictionaries.

In 1997, students (67%) and teachers (100%) alike preferred paper book dictionaries, with electronic dictionaries a close second (students: 65%, teachers: 95%), and computer dictionaries last (students: 13%, teachers: 28%). Computer dictionaries usually referred to CD-Rom or Internet versions (Babylon On-Line Dictionary) used when reading texts online in the CALL Center.

Although teachers preferred monolingual English paper dictionaries for their own use, they preferred bilingual dictionaries to grade students' work, comparing student errors in English with Hebrew vocabulary. Thus, when preparing lessons and exercises, teachers reported using both monolingual English and bilingual English-Hebrew dictionaries.

There appeared to be some disagreement between students' use of dictionaries and teachers' expectations about students' use of the dictionary. Although teachers used electronic dictionaries themselves, they appeared to be suspicious of electronic dictionaries for giving incomplete (and therefore inaccurate) information, whereas students preferred them to paper book dictionaries. These findings are similar to results in a study by Holzman (2000). Today, computer dictionaries are more readily available and widespread than before.

Dictionary Effectiveness

In the 1997 study, the group of teachers listed 15 characteristics of dictionaries that included information categories and pedagogical qualities. Students and teachers answering the questionnaire were asked to rank them in order of importance.

Students viewed dictionaries as expedient tools to arrive at word meaning as quickly and efficiently as possible. Students agreed that to be effective, a dictionary should include translation, polysemes, synonyms, explanations in simple language, spelling, and ease in reading.

Teachers tended to view dictionaries as an additional instrument toward learning language. As such, they preferred dictionaries with maximum information.

Teachers agreed that to be effective, a dictionary should include polysemes, examples, collocations and idiomatic expressions, spelling, language suitable for students' level, and updated (modern) language.

Students and teachers appeared to agree on many dictionary characteristics which were considered important for dictionary effectiveness. Among the top six characteristics, **examples, updated modern language,** and **spelling** were common to both groups. Both groups agreed that **pictures** were lowest in importance.

However, whereas teachers ranked **polysemes** as most important, students ranked **translation** as most important – a characteristic which did not even appear on the others' top six list! Teachers also looked for **idioms/collocations** and **suitability of level**, whereas students looked for a dictionary that was easy to read. Moreover, more students than teachers were interested in **grammatical explanations**. Teachers and students disagreed about the purpose of the dictionary – teachers viewing it as another opportunity for learning, and students demanding an efficient tool to obtain word meaning and continue reading with minimal interruption during reading. Students were not really interested in a dictionary that confuses them, as they saw it, with too much information.

Conclusions

Since the 1997 study, the objectives of the EFL academic reading course have remained constant while dictionary technology and lexicography have advanced. Dictionaries will probably continue to change to accommodate the changing needs of language teachers and learners. With the increased use of Internet, today's students are using more computer dictionaries. Apparently, students are able to cope easily with the text and the dictionary / glossary on the same screen. Some newer dictionaries are too powerful, however, and can no longer be permitted. For example, the newest version of the *Quicktionary* 2008 is prohibited because it can scan 20,000 lines, which would enable students to scan whole exams, thus compromising test security. Dictionaries contained in cellphones are also prohibited during exams because of Internet access and SMS capability. Future research on the topic of multilingual dictionaries in the different media may open new areas of inquiry and findings that can be incorporated into the EFL classroom.

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YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HERE TOO LONG WHEN...

Eleanor Satlow (*satlow_m@netvision.net.il*)

All of us, native English speaking teachers and non-native speakers, use both English and Hebrew in different contexts and situations. Some of us communicate with our families in English, some speak it with our friends, or some of our friends; some of us have a social circle and/or a support system in which we communicate in English. We read English, we watch Hebrew-subtitled movies and listen to the English dialogue, and while we communicate with our colleagues in Hebrew, once inside our classrooms we use English with our students. And yet – are we capable of completing an English conversation without inserting the odd Hebrew word or phrase? (And some are very odd indeed!) When interacting with English speakers abroad who have never been to Israel and don't know Hebrew, can we make ourselves understood? When entertaining guests from abroad here at home, do we leave them confused, bemused and uncomprehending when we try to carry on a simple conversation or even just give them directions?

To start with, and please bear with my home-grown transliterations, are some phrases which I find indispensable in Hebrew, even in an English-language environment.

How do **you** translate these phrases into English?

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| Aize yofi | Balagan | Le'at le'at |
| Ma pit'om | Ze baMakom | Aize kef |
| Ad haSof | Davka | Ze lo na'im |
| Stam | Ze lo hochma | |

If you hesitated at all at any of the above, you're better integrated into Israeli society than you thought. I've actually taught some of them to my Hebrew-challenged friends and relatives abroad, thus enhancing communication between us, and allowing us to share that elusive Hebrew vibe. What is more appropriate, when standing on the shore of Lake Michigan on a spring day, than to gasp, "Aize Yofi!?" What more succinctly conveys your polite but brow-furrowed disagreement with someone's opinionated statement than, "Ma Pit'om?"

Now let's look at Hebrew terms which have officially entered other languages and whose translation, if one were used, would sound ridiculous and in fact would probably hinder comprehension:

Kipa / yarmulke (my spell-check catches "kipa" but accepts "yarmulke" quite pluralistically); "Bar Mitzvah" and "chutzpah" (at which spell-check raises not an eyebrow); "Aliyah" (spell-check protests); and "Torah"

(spell-check is silent). You get the picture – the whole world says "schlep" and no one asks what it means, and while there are publications that insist on writing "collective settlement," even spell-check knows one of those as a "kibbutz." "Moshav," on the other hand, is less universal, but how would we explain that in English?

Then there are the Hebrew terms which we who live here use without translating, because they are part of our lives: Misrad HaPnim (and all the other Misradim), shuk; or because there is no efficient translation: Makolet, Mechanechet, hishtalmut, gmul, to name a few. And when a colleague or family member goes off to Miluim, who among us would bother to call it "reserve duty?"

This reliance on the original isn't unique to us English speakers, either – listen in on an Arabic conversation and you'll hear the same Hebrew words! It turns out Arabic doesn't have a competing equivalent for the wonderful Davka either. And this doesn't happen only in Hebrew. News flash: the German language does have a word for Davka ("ausgerechnet"), as well as other untranslatable words and phrases that English speakers who live in Germany use quite happily, even among themselves.

Then we have the double-meaning words (one word in Hebrew, two or more in English) – how do we say these in English?

Noach (comfortable or convenient?)

Ragil (usual, regular, or ordinary?)

Acharei (behind or after?)

Tikun (correction, revision, repair?)

As in: What's a chavaya metakenet? If we are acharei nituach, and we say we are after an operation, how long will it take to find one? My American friends are happy for me that my last kid is "acharei hatzavah," but is "He's after the army" something we'd like our students to write in their Bagrut ("matriculation" – so many syllables!) essays?

I'm sure I'm not alone in remembering a time when it took two years to get a phone, but nowadays what we really mean when we say, "You have a telephone", or "you saved me a telephone?" And what are we planning when we're "going to a cocktail?"

Have we forgotten that "cocktail" is only part of a "cocktail party," or that "cables" are what we have, if we're smart and organized, in the trunk of our car, but that if it's a way to get TV reception, it's a singular noun? You get the idea, and no doubt could come up with

several dozen (by the way, it's "dozens," not "tens") examples of your own.

With apologies to the hapless and overworked translators in our print media (as opposed to the TV and movie subtitle writers who really have a lot to answer for), and despite what you can read almost daily in HaAretz English edition, "letza'ari" does not, UNFORTUNATELY, translate as "to my/our sorrow." Nor is "police" used with singular verbs in English (the police are, the police have would be fine). And despite the news reports that fill the paper, the editors there have forgotten everything they ever learned about reported speech, as in:

The police said it wants to question the prime minister but the prime minister responded that he doesn't have time. (Your Bagrut students could probably tell you what's wrong with this).

Wherever your reaction to all this might be along a continuum from "funny but so what" to "a capital crime," can we all agree that it's not English as we would like our students to produce it?

The more idiomatic our Hebrew, the more serious this becomes, as the appropriate phrase in English eludes us and the Hebrew (substitute any language) is so much more accessible. In ordinary discourse, as with our English-speaking peers both at work and elsewhere, these little infiltrations can even enrich our speech and deepen interpersonal connections and communication. But what happens when we go into the classroom? What situations cause us to lapse? If you feel, as I do, that inside every English teacher is a Mechanech/et doing a great job of educating our students rather than "just" teaching, then the kind of role we play as teachers

influences our interaction with the kids, thus affecting our language. So does the degree of formality (Hebrew: "Distans") we maintain in our relationships with our students, the atmosphere outside the classroom, and our own inner sloppiness-detectors.

What if I'm making too big a deal out of this whole business, and these infiltrations, these lapses, simply do not represent a problem? Just because I'm such a stickler doesn't mean my students have to adopt my obsessive stance. Why shouldn't we just go with the flow and say whatever is handy? When **is** it a problem? Of course the logical response to that question is that it's only a problem when it hinders communication. In the same way that I show my students a new white hair every time they leave the s off the 3rd-person form of the present-tense verb, there are basically two ways to speak this or any language – at the risk of sounding inflexible or dictatorial – it's right or it's wrong. Okay, usage is changing, global English is becoming the new English, there are many Englishes, and in the vast scheme of things we have bigger fish to fry – but I invite you to adopt a little bit of my obsession and become more attuned to the differences between the language we teach and the lingua franca of our lives: I submit that communication will improve, our students will profit, and our relatives and friends abroad will understand what we're about.

Eleanor Satlow, taught at the Jerusalem Music and Dance Academy High School for a couple of generations, and served there as assistant Principal; she has also taught EFL at the Hebrew University, the Jerusalem Upper Academy, and David Yellin Teachers' College. Now officially retired, she teaches English part-time at the Academy High School.

YOUSEF DAGHASH: A MASTER TEACHER COMMITTED TO CONTRIBUTING

Michele Ben (*mggben@gmail.com*)



Are you one of the many teachers who was accosted one day by a desperate principal or fellow teacher and reined in to solve the problem of the dearth of English teachers in your area? If so, you are in good company; this is more or less what happened to Yousef Daghash, who is now an

English inspector in the Northern region. He recalls, "I never considered being a teacher till one day I had a chat with a friend of mine who was a teacher at one of the elementary schools at Maghar who told me his strange story of how he was 'forced' by his school principal to teach English since all other teachers refused to teach it. In other words, my career began due to the desperate need for qualified English teachers (even then), and my commitment to contribute to my community." Due to the lack of English teachers in the South, his first teaching position was at Laqua, a Beduin primary school, and he later taught at Tel Sheva High School. Yousef reminisces, "I still remember my early years of teaching when everything you taught was to a certain extent prescribed. At that time, we did not relate sufficiently to relevance and authenticity in our teaching. Repetition of grammar rules and mechanical drilling such as 'change the following sentences from passive to active, direct to indirect speech etc.' The thing students needed to do was 'follow the rules in order to be safe.' It was more teaching **about** English rather than teaching English. Teachers then were more worried about sounding like 'foreigners' and many tried hard to acquire British or American accents. Personally I have always opted for the eclectic approach and employ a variety of methods in my teaching in order to cater to the different needs of my students."

After teaching in the South, Yousef returned to Maghar, a village in the North populated by Druze, Muslims and Christians, where he was born and raised. There, for 25 years, he served as a teacher and head of department at Maghar Comprehensive School "A" where he taught in the Junior High and High school starting from 7th grade till 12th grade, including vocational and "Mabar" classes. Along the way, he earned a B.A. in English Language and Literature from Ben Gurion University and an M.A. in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from California State University in Los Angeles. Yousef's teaching experience extends also to the college level. He taught academic reading at all

levels for Bar Ilan University at Zefat Regional College and gave second year Methodology and reading courses at the Arab Teachers College in Haifa for four years. Although he loves working in school, Yousef notes, "My classroom teaching came to an end only four years ago when for a while I lost my voice." He adds, "Now I work for the Ministry of Education in the North and for the Arab Teachers' College in Haifa. I'm the Inspector for English teaching in the Druze and Beduin sectors and a Pedagogical counselor at the college." Yousef explains, "Teaching English to Arabic speakers is not an easy job. One can't ignore the fact that English is a fourth language in the Arab sector. Before gaining full mastery in L1 and L2, our students are required to handle a foreign language in overcrowded classes of 38-40 kids. In many cases, three to four weekly hours are their only contact with English. The exposure to English is still minimal and while in school, for many students, English is not a necessity or a priority as is Hebrew." Yousef shares the challenge of teaching with Manal, his wife of 14 years, who is also an English teacher. They have three lovely children.

Yousef is actively involved in ETAI as a member of the northern committee and helps organize the Spring Conference in Haifa and the many mini-conferences in the north of the Israel. "My involvement in ETAI is an open door to my professional development. The meetings, workshops and conferences – national and international - are golden opportunities to keep teachers updated with the latest professional development not only in theory but in practice as well," he remarks and then continues, "I do believe that I joined ETAI at the beginning, thirty years ago. I still remember the days when Arabic speaking teachers were not involved or even aware of ETAI's existence. I can't really recall the exact details of how I heard about ETAI but I did attend the first conference and since then I've been involved in this voluntary organization whose prime and main endeavor is professional teacher development." Yousef recollects, "For a number of years ETAI was active mainly in the Jerusalem area and less in the South or the North. In the early 80's with the help and cooperation of two other English teachers Rachel Ash who taught at Bet Yerach and Shoula Sarid who taught in Tiberias, we founded the first ETAI branch in the pedagogical center in Tiberias where we used to hold workshops for English teachers in the North - Tiberias and the surrounding area -and invite ETAI members from other parts of the country to speak, all on a voluntary basis."

According to Yousef, an effective teacher is constantly learning, not only by participating in professional development activities but also, and primarily, from the students. He concludes, “What I enjoy most about teaching is the constant challenge teachers face on a daily basis and the satisfaction that a teacher feels when his or her at-risk students do overcome all difficulties and succeed or show evidence of interest and improvement. Teaching is a two-way street; true we are called teachers but reality proves that we are the true learners who during

the years gain the experience and the skills needed to cope with and adapt to constant rapid change and an enormous spectrum of human variety. We try our best to cater to the various needs of our targeted population and see them grow up to become contributing members of society. They are our future!”

Thanks, Yousef, for sharing your story with us! Your perspective on English teaching and educating is quite an inspiration!

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.

For the Classroom

HOTS: NOT JUST FOR LITERATURE!

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Recently there has been a lot of discussion about the integration of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) into the teaching of literature in the higher grades: but this does not mean that HOTS should not be used in other classes and when dealing with other topics. On the contrary: it is important to encourage the use of thinking skills throughout the school years. We don't necessarily have to explain what each skill is called, or make lists of them; it's simply a matter of trying to get pupils to think more carefully, logically and imaginatively as we go about helping them to achieve all sorts of language-learning goals.

Higher order thinking skills can be divided into two main categories: convergent thinking (applying logic, common sense or examining the evidence in order to solve a problem) versus divergent (the creation of lots of different possible solutions or ideas).

Convergent thinking is often called ‘critical thinking’. It includes things like identifying contradictions and tautologies; probing into cause and effect, purpose and result; generalizing from examples and exemplifying theories; distinguishing between logical and illogical reasoning; detecting the presence or absence of underlying prejudice or unsupported assumptions.

Divergent thinking, or ‘creative thinking’ means either a) finding as many different responses as possible to a cue or solutions to a problem, or b) finding unusual or original responses – this last is sometimes called ‘lateral thinking’.

Let's look at a few examples.

In the beginner classes, new lexical items are often practised by matching, say, the word *dog* to a picture of a dog, or *woman* to the picture of a woman. Basic identification: lower order thinking skills. But supposing we ask our pupils to classify words like *dog, woman, pencil, boy, cat, mouse, table, girl, door* into categories like *people, things, animals*. Not only are we practising the target items: we are asking our pupils to generalize and exemplify: they need to think about not only what the item is, but what *class* of things it belongs to.

Another example for older classes: it is useful when practising new lexical items to insert them into phrases and then ask pupils to detect contradictions or tautologies and discuss them. For example: what's wrong with the following phrases?

an objective opinion an exact estimate
a definite maybe the larger half

... or with these?

a free gift pure undiluted orange juice
a new innovation a biography of Kipling's life
to make wrong mistakes to commute back and forth
to exaggerate too much

Such exercises not only get the pupils to engage and probe the meanings of the target items, they also raise awareness of bad style and illogical phrasing, which will help make them into more critical readers and careful writers.

Back to the primary grades, grammar this time.

Suppose we want to practise putting the adjective before the noun in noun phrases. We could get pupils to match adjectives with nouns and then write them out as complete phrases. But we could get them to think a bit more creatively. Supposing we give each pair of pupils a white page with a different simple noun in the middle: *road, car, tree, baby, table*, or whatever. Then challenge each pair to think of at least one adjective that would go with the noun and write it somewhere on the paper. If they have time, then more. After a minute or two, they exchange papers, read the adjectives that the previous pair wrote, and add some more. And so on, until each pair has seen and contributed to five or six different papers.

They take the last paper they got, and underline the three most interesting / funny / dramatic adjectives; then each pair in turn read out their combinations: *a clever baby* (what can he do?), *a green baby* (a baby frog, maybe?), *a quick baby* (crawls round the room at full speed?).

Not only do such activities practise the target structure, they are also developing original and creative thought and – very important – are far more interesting to do than the conventional matching or gapfill exercises.

One last example, for middle school this time.

A vocabulary area which is quite important, and relatively neglected in most textbooks, is proverbs or well-known sayings that you frequently find in both written and spoken English discourse.

First, it's worth teaching a proverb a week. There are lots on the Web: Google "English proverbs" and you'll find

plenty. Choose ones you are familiar with yourself, and can remember using or hearing. And then teach them. It's useful to learn them by heart: but don't stop there. Here are some things to do with them that will get pupils to probe critically into their meanings and implications.

1. Translate: is there an L1 equivalent? (sometimes there is a direct translation, sometimes there is an authentic L1 parallel, slightly different, or contradictory: it can be interesting to discuss the differences and implications)
2. What, exactly, does the proverb mean, can you paraphrase or explain in your own words?
3. Can you give examples of when it would be true?
4. Can you give examples of when it would NOT be true?
5. Can you improve it? Invent an interesting – or amusing - variation, which you can discuss? Who can think of the best variation?

... And so on.

Think about it!

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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.

USING SONGS AS TEXT FOR READING AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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*If they don't like English something's wrong
And you don't have to sing to use a song!*

This article is based on the following observations –

- Songs are an excellent way to reinforce vocabulary and grammar.
- Songs are more interesting and easier to remember than text.
- Not all English teachers sing – fewer play musical instruments.

- As children get older they don't always want to sing in class.
- Children and teenagers usually enjoy listening to music even if they don't like singing.
- Israeli teenagers listen to a lot of music in English.

So how can a musically challenged English teacher use music to enrich English lessons?

Start out by presenting the song the way you would present text –

- Write the title on the board, review some words and/or discuss the theme of the song.
- Play the song for the class.
- Ask the pupils which words they recognize.
- If you want to concentrate on reading comprehension, hand out the lyrics. Another option is to hand out the lyric sheet with words missing and have them fill in the blanks.
- Play the song again.
- Discuss the song – what did they understand, what is the song about, etc.
- Write some questions on the board.
- Play the song once more, asking the pupils to listen for answers to the questions.

There is no need to actually teach the song, but after playing it a few times you will find pupils singing along with the chorus. Once they are familiar with the lyrics, it's time to divide into pairs or small groups and be creative. Ask each group to present the song in pantomime, stage a "video clip" (actual filming isn't necessary) or even choreograph a dance. You can play the song in the background while they're working. This way they will hear it a few more times without getting bored. If the song tells a story, they can put on a short play. Another option is to play a game like charades

using words or phrases from the song.

How should you choose songs, and where can you find them? It makes sense to use songs that are connected to what you're teaching. The connection can be subject matter, or specific sentence structures or vocabulary. Look through your own or your children's music library, or search the internet. If you're feeling lucky, go into a site such as Lyrics on Demand - <http://www.lyricsondemand.com/> and search for the vocabulary or chunk that you're teaching, you may just find a song you know. Asking pupils to bring in songs promises more interest, but obviously you should review the lyrics carefully before using them in class. Songs that have been translated to or from Hebrew have an advantage, but try to discourage pupils from singing along in Hebrew. For younger or weaker students be sure to keep the lyrics simple. There are CDs available written specifically for the EFL classroom, including my own series, English is Fun.

Remember, creativity is the key, and pupils have plenty.

As a professional musician and native English speaker, Kara Aharon uses both abilities to teach children to speak and enjoy English in formal and informal programs in Yerucham. She works with children aged pre-K through 6th grade using a combination of songs, games and drama.

TECHNOLOGY CAN BRING READING COMPREHENSION TO LIFE

Ann Shlapobersky (ashlapo@gmail.com)

Do you read texts (stories, unseens, text book readings, articles) aloud to your students? If you don't like to read texts out loud to your students, do you ever use the reading comprehension CD/tape that accompanies your textbook as a pre-reading activity so the students can hear the passage with the proper intonation and pronunciation?

Most teachers stop this practice after the 5th or 6th grade and begin teaching cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies assuming that if students can answer reading comprehension questions then they are reading correctly. Actually, if you think about it, most teachers spend very little time reviewing word families and correct pronunciation of words after the very early years. But, how often does this happen to you in junior high or high school classes:

You've asked the students to read a text silently in class. One of your students raises his/her hand and asks:

Student: Teacher, what's this word?

Teacher: *provide*

Student: Oh, right.

"The student should have been able to read that," you think to yourself. "Why didn't they read it correctly?"

Before we ask our students to read a text we usually prepare several pre-reading activities dealing with the introduction of new vocabulary, skimming and scanning for information as well as an introductory discussion on the content before we ask the students to read the text. How often do we prepare our students to read a text by letting them hear it before they read it? *We read poems and songs to our students because of their unique format, rhymes and rhythms.* But, doesn't each text type have a unique format? Doesn't the syntax of sentences vary within different texts types, such as articles, research papers or interviews? If we are teaching a language it is important that students get a sense of the language by hearing it in all its different formats.

Once we ask our students to read a text alone, they put their heads down and we don't really know if they are reading or if they are actually silently pronouncing the words correctly or incorrectly. We can't see their eyes or facial expressions, so we don't know if they understand what they are reading until we ask questions. Projecting the text on a screen and reading it to or with them or playing the reading comprehension passage on the CD as they follow the text will allow you to face the students and watch them: watch their eyes, watch their expressions of understanding or confusion.

Here is one suggestion for an audio pre-reading activity: Project the text on a screen using PowerPoint. Of course you'll have to put a long text on several screens. PowerPoint not only allows you to project the text on a screen but you can also add in sound files of the recorded text and prepare interactive vocabulary and comprehension exercises. This pre-reading activity allows you to watch your students as they listen, read and interact with the text.

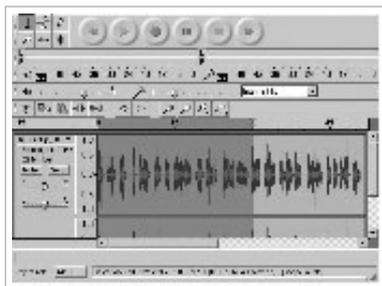
How to prepare for this activity:

Equipment: computer, projector, screen / white board or IWB (Interactive White Board) and speakers

Computer programs: MS PowerPoint and sound editing program such as Audacity (Free-open source – <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>)

Preparation:

- **Important:** Place the PowerPoint presentation and all the sound files in the same folder in your computer.
- Download or copy to your computer the downloadable audio MP3 or music files from the reading comprehension CD of the specific text you want into one folder.
- Use a sound editing program, like the program mentioned above, to copy and paste each section of the text, whether as separate sentences or paragraphs, into individual MP3 files. Make sure you name the sound files in the order of the text.
- When you open the MP3 file in the editing program you can select part of the audio you want your students to hear by dragging your cursor over the part of the audio you want. (See picture.)



After you've selected the audio, click on Edit/Copy. Open a new file and paste your audio selection. Save the file with a relevant name. Don't forget to save all audio files in the same folder with your PowerPoint presentation.

- Type your text into PowerPoint. You may not want to type the entire text, but only the first paragraph or two as an introduction to the subject, giving them inspiration to read more. Do not put too much text on each screen; four to six sentences are enough for lower level students. Don't forget to make sure the font is big enough, but not huge, so the students in the back of the class can see the text easily.
- To insert the sound files you saved onto the PowerPoint screen:
 - ➔ Click on **Insert**
 - ➔ Click on **Movies and Sound**
 - ➔ Click on **Sound from File**
 - ➔ Locate your sound file and click **Ok**.

A small picture of a speaker will appear. Place this picture next to the text. You can adjust the size of this picture.



- Join us once a month for the *neighborhood walk*.
- Fun for the *whole* family.
- Bring your pets.
- When running the slide show just click on the speaker to hear the text. It is also possible to start the sound as soon as the screen appears.
- While the students listen to the projected text you can ask them focus questions so they will not only listen but also follow the written text.
- In between each slide with the text you can add different types of comprehension questions. By adding a hyperlink back to the previous page with the text, you can allow your students to read and listen the text again in order to help them answer the question.

You can download a sample of this type of activity at: <http://www.etni.org.il/etai/handouts.htm> called *Technology Can Bring Reading Comprehension to Life - Walk 4 Your Life*.

Listening to a language attunes your ears to hearing words properly pronounced and aids in your students reading pronunciation. Listening to texts, especially for weaker students, can allow students to get a feel for the flow of the language and provide clues to vocabulary associated with the content.

USING HOLOCAUST POETRY IN TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST

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The memory of the Holocaust has been invaluable enriched by poets who have provided us with a window into a period that for many students – and educators – is very difficult to comprehend. Numerous Holocaust-related anthologies have been published in many languages in recent years, and these poems can often be an excellent educational resource.

It has been said that what the historian achieves in a book, the poet presents in ten or twenty lines. Poetry can say more in less and certainly more succinctly. When a poem adheres, a truth has been stated. That truth is the poet's own experience. Clearly, today's pupils are not all enthusiastic to study poetry. However, poetry can often awaken empathy and strike a chord with young learners.

This article will explore how poetry can be used by educators to teach and commemorate the Holocaust. The ideas presented below are relevant not only for English teaching but history and art teachers can also enrich their lessons by prefacing a particular subject with a relevant poem.

What is Holocaust Poetry?

With the passage of time, Theodor Adorno said the following:

“Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as the tortured have to scream... hence it may have been wrong to say that no poem could be written after Auschwitz.”

Holocaust poetry has provided us with a rich and varied tapestry portraying the period. We include in this body of poetry poems that were written before the outbreak of the war, during the war and in its aftermath.

The wide gamut of themes ranges from discrimination against unwanted minority groups and the beginning of a refugee problem that would escalate during the war to mammoth proportions, the persecution of targeted victims and the annihilation of human beings en masse. Yad Vashem's inter-disciplinary educational approach places an emphasis on the Holocaust as a man-made tragedy involving victims, perpetrators and bystanders. All these elements have been addressed in poetry. The question of generational representation is, of course, central. The victims include both survivors and those who wrote in the ghettos before their deaths. Poems written since the war include survivors and children of survivors, bystanders and children of bystanders, some of whom

were born after the war, but were intensely affected by their parents experiences. Other poets not connected to the Holocaust have used the unique vocabulary that emanated from the period to denote radical evil, as seen in Sylvia Plath's poem, *Daddy*. Holocaust poetry knows no language, national or geographical barriers. The variety is vast and the possibilities of using it in educational settings are equally unlimited.

The Value of Holocaust Poetry in Education

One of the vexed points at the intersection of history and art is the question of the truth. We need not go back more than two thousand years to examine Aristotle's statement that literature has a greater claim on the truth than the historical account. It should not be a question of art muting or obfuscating history. It is certainly not one or the other. It can be a deliberate choice to use the imaginative powers of the poet for nuancing and heightening the understanding and empathy of the learner.

Understanding what and empathizing with whom? If one teaches a poem called *Testimony*, (Schiff, 1995) written by a Holocaust survivor, Dan Pagis, pupils will confront the subject of personal identity in a context where its erasure was sought as an ideological imperative. The poem juxtaposes the identities of three protagonists; the perpetrators, the poet as a representative of the victims and the creator. In short shrift – in eleven lines of his poem – Pagis succeeds in turning the identities upside-down. The student will likely 'feel' the pain of the victim and better understand the relationship between the perpetrators and the victims.

In contrast, Lily Brett, born to Holocaust survivors in Germany shortly after the war focuses on her experiences growing up in the shadows of the Holocaust. In her poem, *My Mother's Friend*, she writes about the difficulties of survivors coping with their freedom and the inevitable trauma encountered by their children. (Schiff, 1995)

Paul Celan, another survivor of the Nazi concentration camps wrote some of the most powerful verse describing his experiences as a victim, and his poems can fruitfully serve as a trigger for generating pupils' interest. For example, let's take two separate word-pictures he creates in his poem, *Death Fugue* and examine the effect. The poem opens with the following:

*“Black milk of dawn we drink it at dusk
we drink it at noon and at daybreak...”*
(Schiff, H. pp. 39)

This opening is repeated four times in the poem with only slight variations. The effect of despondency created from having / not having the life-giving milk which should nourish the victims at the various times of the day, is heavy and accumulative. The “black milk” description is powerful because of its own absolute negation achieved in just those two words and thus the pervasive starvation prevalent in the camps is made devastatingly real in so few words.

The second example illustrates Celan’s poetic touch in conveying the ultimate historical accusation: “... death is a master from Germany”.

This word-picture statement appears three times towards the end of the poem, each time in the middle of the line and preceded with an antithetical word or context like “sweetly” or “dreams”. Celan builds up the general tension from the beginning of the poem and hands down this judgement near the end of the poem leaving sufficient time to create the desired effect of repetition.

If poetry is to be judged by categories such as authenticity and integrity, Pagis, Brett, Celan and others create a tone and feeling that enable a pupil to penetrate their world experience. The history, art, and literature teacher can then channel pupils’ attention to the aspects relevant to the subject.

The critical approach sometimes heard that the extent of the atrocities of the period precludes the possibility of artistic presentation has, I hope, been laid aside. It is not a question of artistic imagination perverting history. The case we are presenting is simply that the recollections of people connected to the Holocaust which have been cast into poetry offer us not only another approach to the subject but have in fact provided us with a rich, personal and authentic means of adding to our understanding.

Postscript

Teachers can find two units on poetry on the Yad Vashem website. One appears under the heading “Teaching the Holocaust through Poetry” and presents a complete lesson plan with questions and additional strategies using photography and paintings, as well as answers provided on W.H. Auden’s poem “Refugee Blues.” This lesson plan highlights both the tragedy of the Jewish refugee problem even before the outbreak of World War II and problems attending the universal subject of political refugees everywhere. This unit can be found in the Education section of Yad Vashem’s website.

The second unit on poetry appears under the heading “Learning Environment,” also found in the Education section on Yad Vashem’s website. Entitled “Seven Poems and Seven Paintings,” it is a guide for classroom teachers on how to use these poems and paintings created especially for each poem.

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Jackie Metzger made aliyah to Israel from South Africa in 1965 and has been living on a communal moshav, called Neve-Ilan, since 1978. For 24 years, he worked as a History and English teacher in the kibbutz school sector and for the last three years he has been working at Yad Vashem in two departments. He works with adult and youth groups who visit the site, and writes materials to help teachers with Holocaust studies in their schools. These materials appear on the website of Yad Vashem.



YAD VASHEM

The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’
Remembrance Authority

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERATURE IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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The title of this paper seems at first to be counterintuitive. How does a teacher introduce complex literary texts in a language foreign to the student? The short answer to this question is that literary texts address the human condition with all its variety of emotions and experiences: excitement, bitterness, sadness, love, hate, jubilation, happiness, disappointment, and anxiety. Even though students’ English may not be fluent, they will instantly empathize with the emotions and experiences expressed in a powerful literary text. For many teachers whose lessons have mainly focused on the grammatical complexities of English language, the

free flow of ideas occurring in a lively literature lesson may seem daunting, but it may also be a pleasant relief. Although it is necessary to understand, for example, what a metaphor is (and many of the students are already familiar with literary terms from Hebrew literature), it is more important to focus on the content of the text. What dilemmas do the characters face? Why is it so tragic? These are the philosophical and psychological questions that teenagers love to delve into and that, despite language limitations, form the impetus for lively discussion and creative writing.

It is my claim, therefore, that literature is beneficial for EFL students because of the nature of the subject that encourages empathy and discussion in the classroom. I will present cognitive and pedagogical arguments for emphasizing the role of literature in the EFL classroom, and will discuss the role of meta-cognitive thinking in these lessons.

Literature as a cultural ritual

Our brains are wired from childhood by our environment and culture; even with television and computers children still enjoy listening to stories at nursery school and hearing bedtime stories read at home. Literature plays a dominant role in our children's early upbringing as it did in our own. In fact, childhood development and the cognitive basis of play provide the same cognitive skills that adults use while reading. Bolton (1995) claims that child's play "can be used to experiment with diverse circumstances, emotions, beliefs, to try out perspectives and activities different from the child's own. The play is in a space between reality and the imagination (p.146)." He notes that this empathic imagination is what is required of an adult when he reads fiction. Harris (2000) also emphasizes the continuity between child play and the adult acquisition of literary skills. Referring to the similarity between child's play and reading a novel Harris explains:

When we are absorbed in a narrative, current reality is temporarily held in abeyance while we focus attention on the world of the narrative. We start to locate ourselves inside that world rather than in the real world, and events that befall the protagonists loom large in our consciousness. (p. 48)

Hebrew-speaking students will have already internalized the pleasure of hearing and reading stories, and since the pleasure of listening to exciting narratives could be greatly diminished when told in an unfamiliar language, the teacher should translate difficult words and allow students to argue in Hebrew about a literary character or dilemma. In addition, the teacher should translate their ideas into English, write up new vocabulary, and congratulate students for their interpretations.

Lower and higher order thinking skills in the literature lesson.

Last year I participated in a pilot course for literature that focused on training teachers to teach literature based on meta-cognitive thinking skills, with the aim of encouraging the transference of learned knowledge in the classroom to life situations outside. Meta-cognitive thinking is said to consist of lower and higher order thinking skills (LOTS and HOTS). LOTS address questions such as who, what, where and when

of the text, while HOTS are described as involving, amongst others, the skills of: comparing, categorizing, classifying, making connections, showing different perspectives, predicting, analyzing, synthesizing and applying information. The aim of the course was to teach an awareness of thinking processes by applying two or three of these said skills to a literary text. For example, as a HOTS exercise, participating teachers had to instruct their students to apply one or two higher order thinking skills to a literary text. The assumption was that thinking skills could be separated out from each other and applied to texts.

Recent work in cognitive studies suggests that readers and listeners of stories already participate in a range of HOTS while internalizing the narratives. Herman (2003) explains that stories organize experience by enabling people to select from among the total set of sequentially available inputs; preprocess those inputs into internally differentiated chunks with a beginning, middle and end; and then use those temporally structured segments as a basis for further cognitive operations on new experiential inputs (Herman, 2003, p. 173). According to the list of HOTS, the brain automatically organizes, categorizes, classifies and synthesizes narratives from a young age. Therefore, reading literary texts draws upon a wide range of finely tuned brain processes already in use since childhood. To complicate matters further, phenomenological theories of the act of reading (Barthes, 1974; Rosenblatt, 1978) highlight the role of the reader in producing and ordering the text. As Iser (1979) suggests, "reading literature is not simply a text-based activity, but an interactive process in which reader and the text both contribute to the meaning that evolves" (as cited in McGinley and Tierney, 1992, p. 247). Clearly, attempting to prescribe specific thinking skills to literary texts ignores the rich complexity of innate cognitive and interactive processes that occur in a story reader or listener's mind. Now, I would like to show how student readers in the tenth grade at Pelech High School, instinctively use LOTS and HOTS while applying their own historicity to their interpretation of the text.

Interactive teaching versus prescriptive teaching

One of the poems used in the pilot was "I, Too, Sing America" by Langston Hughes (1922), which was written as a response to Walt Whitman's poem "I Hear America Singing" (1867). In Hughes' poem, Whitman is indirectly accused of racism for excluding people of color from his poem. Angry about being excluded from Whitman's vision of America, Hughes responds to Whitman's poem in his references to "singing" and "America," and promises that one day things will change.

His poem can be read as a heartfelt cry for recognition and equality for African-Americans. My aim was to test the reactions and creative responses of my students to the poems by using interactive role-play, and to observe how they automatically used HOTS and LOTS without making these said skills the focus of the lesson.

Dressed up in furs and jewels I entered the class and berated my tenth grade students, who were crouched on the floor dressed in black garbage bags, accusing them of stupidity and laziness. At first they sat helplessly staring at me, while some of them protested weakly about my tirade. They then listened to the Hughes' poem read out by one of their fellow students, and it became clear that I was their "mistress" and that they were my servants. After arguing about Whitman's poem, which was posted on the board, they began to protest more strongly about their worth as human beings, shouting angrily at me and finally bursting into song, singing "We shall overcome," a famous civil rights tune. At this point I stopped the role play and we stood quietly, emerging out of the imaginative spaces described by Bolton (1995) and Harris (2000), and slowly getting back to ourselves. Afterwards, we sat in a circle and discussed their feelings and ideas while engaged in role-play and related their interpretations to the poems.

After engaging in role play and reflecting on the poems, the students concluded that Hughes' poem was partly a projection of his feelings of inferiority as a black man, thus going beyond the more obvious interpretation of his poem being about his anger as expressed in the phrases "nobody will dare say to me" and they will be "ashamed." When they read Whitman's poem, they realized that although there was no expression of racism there, there is unintentional racism expressed in the poem by virtue of omission of people of color. As a response to the poems, in pairs the students wrote imaginary dialogues between the poets. Here is an example:

A dialogue between Langston Hughes (LH) and Walt Whitman (WW) by E. and A. (ages 15).

LH: I too sing America, even though you did not include me in your song I am too part of the beautiful melody.

WW: That is because you and your negative feelings did not notice that I included everybody, all the races and all the colors.

LH: Oh yeah? So why did you write just about your jobs? Mechanics, carpenters, masons, boatmen... Where are the servants mentioned? What belongs to him?

WW: Well...

LH: Anyway you mentioned carols. We are not the people the poem is talking about.

WW: What do you mean?

LH: We are not the happy people, singing out in the streets to the crowd. We are the ones left behind in the kitchens and the fields without any rights or respect!!!

WW: Clearly my purpose was not leaving you outside. We are one nation! Not a group of different people. We must not fight!

LH: Well how come I don't feel that I belong in my own nation?

WW: That is because you don't pay attention to the details, to the happiness in the song.

LH: Happiness for me is freedom and equality!

In order to arrive at these nuanced and perceptive insights of imagined slights; a feeling of being dispossessed by Hughes and the misunderstandings of Whitman, the students applied their enlightened ideas about racism and pop psychology to the poems. To do this they used the HOTS of classifying, categorizing, comparing, contrasting, organizing, and synthesizing without being informed of them beforehand. On closer inspection, the distinctions between these various thinking skills become blurred. For example, while looking at the HOTS of different perspectives of the poets, the students had to use the HOTS of comparing and categorizing the poets' attitudes to race. The HOTS of uncovering motives became an exercise in the HOTS of classifying and comparing the poets' differing perspectives of American society. Because of the obvious difficulty of separating out these HOTS from each other, the attempt to focus on one, two or even three HOTS skills per lesson is impossible.

I wondered whether teaching the students these nebulous skills would have detracted from the fierce emotion and insightful interpretations that emerged as a result of their interactive role-play. Prescribing fine distinctions between thinking skills which clearly overlap, risks confusing our students. Teachers will have a difficult time trying to distinguish among very obviously blurred categories, while students will become distracted from the primary literary text with its rewards, and fixated instead on finding the "correct" thinking skill.

The difficulty of isolating and determining HOTS is highlighted by Resnick (1987) who describes higher order thinking patterns in the following way: they are non-algorithmic, complex, yield multiple solutions, are nuanced in judgment, involve the application of multiple criteria rather than unique solutions, involve the application of conflicting criteria, contain uncertainty, self regulation and the imposition of meaning in apparent disorder (as cited in Meadows, 2006, p. 410). The words,

“complex,” “multiple solutions,” “nuanced judgment,” “uncertainty,” and “multiple criteria” suggests that these thinking patterns are amorphous and complicated, and cannot be imposed, isolated, separated out, clarified, fixed and enumerated as teachers had been directed to do in last year’s pilot program.

It’s hard to see how new combinations of ideas could grow out of a classroom regimen as prescriptive as the one promulgated last year. Educational theorists Greene and Ackerman (1995) argue against studies of reading and writing curricula that emphasize empirically testable methods, advocating instead models that recognize the importance of contextual socio-cultural knowledge and the interactive process whereby this knowledge is internalized. . If we take their view, testing students’ knowledge of HOTS and LOTS rather than focusing on their socio-cultural knowledge and interaction with the literary text, will not encourage the kind of teaching the new curriculum reforms claims to be seeking.

Conclusion

Perhaps the problem of applying taxonomies of thinking skills to literary texts lies in the subject of literature itself. Zunshine (2006) notes that works of fiction are meta-representations par excellence. Fictional genres legitimate a variety of personal and institutional endeavors to resituate, reinterpret and reweigh every aspect of a literary text (Zunshine, 2006, pp. 65-67). Thus there is an innate tendency of readers to reevaluate texts by readily accessing available thinking skills in place since childhood. To insist that students in essence “unlearn” what they do naturally, in order to refocus on a restricted number of thinking skills, is surely counter-productive.

Literature is a rich and beneficial resource in the EFL classroom because it motivates students to participate in the lesson, which is crucial for language learning. Prescriptive teaching of HOTS and LOTS as a starting point for literature lessons, imposes limitations on their responses. According to Giroux (1988), any approach to critical thinking will invalidate its own possibilities if it operates out of a web of classroom social relations where the teacher is the dispenser of knowledge and the student is the passive learner. A web of hierarchical social relations in the classroom will end up crippling student imagination and creativity (as cited in McGinley and Tierney, 1989, p. 244). Consequently, literature should be viewed as a launching pad for engaging with the English language in a creative way, rather than as a vehicle for dispensing dubious notions of cognition and learning.

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PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE F-LITERATURE MODULE

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These past years the Ministry of Education has been developing a program for the teaching of higher order thinking skills (HOTS). Dr. Judy Steiner, the English Inspector for the Ministry, together with a top level staff, adopted this program for literature. I participated in the pilot program which substituted the regular F Module for the F-LITERATURE Module.

The one year course began in January 2008, after the teachers' strike. There were 14 sessions: two F2F sessions in the areas of the participants, six online sessions every three weeks and then a double F2F session held in Tel Aviv for all participants in the pilot. The course ended with three more online sessions and one final area F2F meeting. It was a very intensive course, requiring a lot of creative work on the part of the planners and the participants. The course gave us a half of a "gmul".

For assessment purposes, there was a choice of choosing a Log (portfolio) or Test. The test required teaching certain texts. The Log allowed the teachers to teach the literary pieces of their choice, after approval. The texts included one play or novel, two short stories and three poems. I chose the Log since I wanted to teach literature that I enjoy and thought my students would enjoy. Both the teacher and the students received grades for their Logs. The teacher had to do a Log of all the course material plus a final Reflection. The students had to give in their Logs before the day of the Bagrut. The log was graded by the class teacher based on the following criteria: organization-10%, 6 texts-60%, a final Bridging Text and Context task-20%, a final Reflection-10%.

Each unit has seven components: Pre-Reading, Basic Understanding, While Reading, Introduction and Application of Higher Order thinking Skills, Bridging Text and Context, Post-Reading and Reflection. We had to fill in an extensive Unit Planner for each text. I will attempt to demonstrate these steps by using one of the texts I taught as an example.

I would like to present the way I taught the short story "Priscilla and the Wimps" by Richard Peck. The story can be found in "Cool Collection" (ECB) and on the internet. I targeted two thinking skills for this unit: Prediction and Comparison. I also taught the literary terms of simile/metaphor. The language point was the use of slang and "gang" terms.

Pre-reading and Bridging Text and Context:

I introduced the topic of violence in school. Working in pairs, the students went to the computer room to find examples of school violence in Israel and in the world. They came back to the classroom for a summary discussion. I wrote the examples on the board. Their final conclusion was that, thankfully, we don't have this problem in our school.

Basic Understanding and while Reading:

I read the first part of the story aloud to the class. Students underlined words they didn't understand. These were put on the board and I demonstrated the meanings for the students using examples of other sentences with the words. I also asked many basic questions targeting Lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) to make sure that the students understood what had been read up to this point.

While Reading and Introduction of HOTS of Prediction:

Most thinking skills are introduced after reading the text. However, the skill of Prediction must be taught while reading the story.

I stopped the reading at the point when the Kobra is told by Priscilla to call Monk. The class was asked to guess/ to predict what would happen next. I put all of their ideas on the board and we briefly discussed them. I explained that this is the thinking skill called "Prediction". We can predict and then check ourselves because the answer will follow in the text.

I continued reading a few more lines. Most students were pleased that they had guessed what would happen. Again, I explained that we predicted based on facts we know and on what we think may happen.

While reading, I also asked the students to circle slang expressions, similes or metaphors and "gang" words. We put them on the board and went over their usage and meaning. I finished the story up to the last 4 lines. At this point I again asked the students to predict the ending. Many gave answers that were way off. Others guessed more or less correctly. I then finished reading the story.

Post-Reading:

1. I gave a vocabulary quiz based on the vocabulary words the students had chosen as new words. The quiz included writing 10 sentences showing correct usage of 10 of the words. The quizzes were graded.

2. The class broke up into three groups: Wimps, Kobras and Parents and Teachers. The groups worked on answering questions on a page I had prepared. Each group reported to the rest of the class. Their homework was to write a composition answering the questions about a different group than the one they were in. The compositions were graded.

Analysis and Interpretation:

I explained that we were going to learn the thinking skill called "Comparison". We compared the Kobras to the Wimps. This was a class activity. I put a graphic organizer on the board. The students suggested the parameters for comparison and we filled in the chart together. They copied this into their notebooks. Later I typed it out and gave each student a copy. I intend to spiral this thinking skill into other texts so I wanted to make sure that they all understood the graphic organizer and how to use it for comparison. Therefore I did this as a class activity.

The homework was to write a composition based on one of three essay questions that I had given out. A grade was given for this work.

Summary/Reflection:

We were asked to get Reflections from the students on each text that we read. I prepared a "Summary Template" for the students to fill out. This summarized

everything we had done when learning the text. Then I gave out a page explaining the kind of Reflection I wanted. Students did this at home, handed them, in and received a grade.

This process took nine lessons. It was an excellent unit which both the students and I enjoyed. I highly recommend becoming involved in this new program.

Truthfully, many of us use these thinking skills when teaching literature in our work without this special program. The major difference is that now we are **explicitly** naming and teaching these skills. Then we are attempting to have the students internalize them and apply them to other areas of study and thinking.

If you would like to receive the hand-outs mentioned here, you may contact me and I will gladly send them to you.

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THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Susan Holzman (*holzms@zahav.net.il*)

Does it make a difference? After all, the Hebrew letter “shin” **ש** and the English letter “e” **e** look the same. What difference does it make if it is written from left to right or right to left?

And what if, when writing a “v” on the board, a teacher begins the letter on the left side or the right? The letters are well-formed. The writing is clear. And the letter “o” that looks so much like the Hebrew letter “semach” – is it a problem which way we draw that circle? After all, a circle is just a circle – as long as it looks like a circle.

As a teacher trainer, I have had numerous opportunities to watch my students write, sometimes on the blackboard and sometimes on papers they were working on. I have been amazed at the hodgepodge of writing directionality that I have witnessed. On the one hand we might say that this is an unimportant detail, bottom-up nonsense. We have to look at the whole, the context, the big picture. Don't we accept invented spelling and look at fluency before accuracy? Isn't it likely that along the way, this will correct itself as they are exposed to more English? Furthermore, in a short time, we will all be using the computer keyboard anyway and handwriting will become a thing of the past.

However, I do not think that this is unimportant nonsense. I believe that the blackboard (or whiteboard)

will continue to be used in classrooms. I think that teachers will be writing and modeling the physical act of writing to their students and that their writing should be anatomically correct. Just as we would expect teachers to use accurate spelling and accurate grammar in front of their students, so should we expect them to write from left to right forming their letters as English letters should be formed. Invented spellings and communication which is fluent but not entirely accurate are stages of inter-language which are in flux and constantly changing, hopefully for the better. But, once the physical act of writing has been mastered, no one expects or talks about change or improvement. The handwriting that the children acquire when they learn to write is more or less the handwriting they will continue to use. There might be a comment that the writing is messy or illegible or neat, but not ill formed.

One of the innovations of the new curriculum is that process as well product interests us. In this spirit, teachers should be aware of the process of writing, not just process writing. The handwriting on the wall should be written from left to right, each letter, each word and each sentence. After all, the whole English language is written this way.

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TEACHING GOOD WRITING

Simcha Angel Condiotte (*engl-jer@macam.ac.il*)

Let's begin with a common understanding about the subject of writing and agree upon the meaning of the word writing. What is writing?

Writing is the process of putting down on paper, or in other visible form, one's invisible thoughts. It is only upon the transfer of those thoughts to paper with an implement extended from the hand, most commonly a pen, that what is called writing comes into being. Students who write reveal thereby their most personal thoughts; that is, because the moment before the writing comes into existence, it belongs to the category of thought. The act of writing transforms thought, which is abstract, to the level of the concrete. The process of writing then is intrinsically a transformation from the abstract to the concrete, from the invisible to the visible, and from the personal to the public.

Clearly, writing is a form of intimate communication. Whether the communication occurs with oneself only, as in writing a journal, or with important others, it depends upon two 'personages', the writer and the reader. The expectation of a writer is inherently that some 'other' will read what has been printed. In fact, therefore, the writer requires a reader for the satisfying conclusion of this activity. In the classroom that reader is commonly the teacher.

What aspects of the relationship between the student writer and the teacher are significant? A comfortable relationship between the student and the teacher is necessary for the success of the student writer. The sensitive teacher will keep this in mind. The teacher must motivate the students to be willing and able to express those thoughts which have formerly been private.

Like in all relationships, success depends upon trust.

To build this trust, the teacher would do well to combine the techniques of pedagogy with those of psychology. All students must believe that they are writers. The teacher must encourage the students by appreciating their writing. The teacher should impress upon the students the concept that their ideas are valuable, worthy of expression. Furthermore, the teacher must instill the students with confidence in their ability to express themselves through learning about the writing process. Indeed, the teacher must believe that effective writing can be learned. The teacher's role is to guide the student writers, to encourage their desire to express themselves, to identify their abilities, to strengthen their skills, and to evaluate the students' writing in a way that promotes continual development.

Both teacher and students should view the development of good writing as a process. This approach is called "process writing." Process writing is a program of personalized study of the subject of writing over a period of time under the professional guidance of a teacher. This process also aims at the development of the intellect of the student writer. The teacher must provide a series of progressive activities designed to promote the student's thinking skills. Therefore, process writing will focus on directing the thinking skills into effective expression of meaningful writing.

The serious and thoughtful teacher should be prepared to devote time and energy into the actualization of student potential in the realm of self expression and in the realm of the intellect.



Following are sample activities the teacher can utilize in the classroom in the teaching of good writing.

1) A QUESTIONNAIRE – WRITING PROFILE

The following questions will enable the students to construct their profiles as writers.

This questionnaire can be used for a preliminary writing assignment and evaluated for technique in sentence structure.

Directions: Answer each the questions as fully as possible in two complete sentences.

1. What kinds of writing do you do most often?
2. What kind of writing do you enjoy most?
3. How do you feel about your writing?
4. What is the easiest part of writing for you?
5. What experiences have affected your learning how to write?
6. What preferences do you have for time and place when you write?
7. Do you reread your writing to yourself? What do you look for when you read?
8. Are you willing to read your writing to other people? Who?
9. What does the concept of revising mean to you?
10. What do you think the characteristics of "good" writing are?

2) CRITERIA FOR GOOD WRITING

Criteria for what is considered good writing should be clear to the student.

Directions: On the board make a chart of three columns with headings of content, form, and technique. These three categories are aspects of all writing. Elicit from the students appropriate adjectives and nouns in each category.

Below is an example for teacher reference. Each of the items in this example can be taught. All are therefore subject to evaluation.

| CRITERIA FOR GOOD WRITING | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| CONTENT | FORM | TECHNIQUE |
| Appropriate | Capitalization | Accurate Spelling |
| Coherent | Margins | Correct Grammar |
| Interesting | Neatness | Good Organization |
| Meaningful | Punctuation | Proper Sentence Structure |
| Understandable | Spacing | Varied Vocabulary |

3) ACQUIRING VARIED VOCABULARY

Using a varied vocabulary appropriate to the writing task is an important aspect of the writing process. Accordingly, the teacher should view the expansion of the student writers' vocabulary, known in writing as diction, as one objective.

Directions: Use this article as a source for diction on the subject of writing. Make a chart of three columns with headings of word, syllabication, and part of speech. Each of these categories can be used for skill development.

Word = Vocabulary Syllabication = Spelling Part of Speech = Grammar

Below is an example for teacher reference. All of these words are appropriate for a quiz.

| WORD | SYLLABICATION | PART OF SPEECH |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| communication | com-mu-ni-ca-tion | Noun |
| conclusion | con-clu-sion | Noun |
| development | de-vel-op-ment | Noun |
| effective | ef-fec-tive | Adj. |
| express | ex-press | Verb |
| ideas | i-deas | Noun |
| process | pro-cess | Noun |
| transformation | trans-for-ma-tion | Noun |
| vocabulary | vo-cab-ul-ary | Noun |
| writer | writ-er | Noun |



A personalized approach to teaching writing to second language learners, works. Students who 'see' themselves as writers are able to write. They learn to concentrate their energies on deciphering the thoughts which flow naturally in all of us so that they can be revealed in the printed word. Each student can overcome the latent fear which places 'writers' in the category of creative people, artists who have a talent the students may or may not possess. The teacher of writing must guide the students to 'see' themselves in the category of human beings who have the ability to learn the skills of good writing as they can learn the skills of any subject under study. The teacher of writing will be deeply rewarded for this dedication.

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ENGLISH SPELLING ERRORS OF FIRST-LANGUAGE HEBREW SPEAKERS

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Most educational research about English phonological awareness and spelling is published in “mother tongue” countries such as the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, any language interference discussed is from first languages or dialects of ethnic minorities in the countries concerned. So, the research data and the generalizations thereby derived are not always relevant to teachers of English in Israel.

In preparing our students for local classrooms, rather than spending time on analyzing the writing errors of students from Hispanic, African-American, Hindi or Aborigine backgrounds, we might better profit from a look at more home-grown samples. We are concerned with Israelis learning to handle English as a means of international communication, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) or as a foreign language (EFL).

One way in which our local situation differs from the ESL environment is in the absence of total immersion: however much TV or however many films students may see, their exposure to English is limited and everyday life can usually proceed quite well without it. The claim that they learnt Spanish by watching telenovelas (soap operas in that language) has become commonplace among students. One wonders as to the level of proficiency they have attained in terms of basic language skills.

I decided to approach my summer course students for data. They agreed unanimously to let me use their individual spelling errors for my research on condition that only single words were listed and that anonymity be respected.

My data is taken from a large class of “Michlalah” students, training to be teachers of subjects other than English, taking a Level 1 (i.e. exit or exemption level) Professional English course. All students consider themselves mother-tongue Hebrew speakers and the compositions of native speakers of other languages in the class were excluded.

The first writing sample was a 100-word description entitled “About Myself,” written during the first meeting of the class. The second was a review of the film “Princess Bride”, which we watched in class. For this assignment, students were allowed to use dictionaries. The words for analysis were extracted in isolation and no attempt has been made here to indicate errors of grammar, of which there were many.

The data collected a wide range of spelling errors and

reflects the heterogeneity of the class. The very different problems revealed also suggest that teachers approach spelling from several angles simultaneously, notably the *phonological level* and *spelling rules* (what has been called “spellography”). [Ed. note: The complete list of words analyzed are available from the author of the article.]

The data was divided into two categories of spelling errors: *phonologically-oriented* and *rule-oriented*. Some errors revealed less phonological or spelling awareness than others, e.g. ‘cilled’ for *killed*, ‘mani’ for *money* ‘umor’ for *humour*. Others were typical of native speakers, e.g. “wonderfull”, “importent”, “seperated” and “begining”. The former usually went with poor quality written English on the grammatical and lexical levels, while the later came from students who probably have a five-point Bagrut.

The first category relates more closely to the Hebrew language-specific problems involved in spelling. However, there is not always a cut-and-dried distinction and that some incorrectly spelt words might fall into more than one category.

PHONOLOGICALLY-ORIENTED ERRORS**The Data**

Because the factors involved in faulty spelling are not always obvious, and may be anything from a random or careless slip of the pen to ignorance of a specific rule, we must proceed through this unexplored terrain with an open mind.

Before studying this data, however, I had surmised English pronunciation errors common among Hebrew speakers based on the relevant results of my previous research (Barnett, 1984).

On the phonemic level there are four consonants and a number of vowel contrasts which are particularly difficult to master.

Consonants – Prognosis

The two ‘th’ sounds (voiced as in *this* and voiceless as in *thin*). Typical errors are pronouncing voiced ‘th’ as ‘d’ or ‘z’ and voiceless ‘th’ as ‘t’ or ‘s’. *Thin* and *thin* might become ‘tick and tin’ or ‘sick and sin’; *there* and *then* ‘dare and den’ or ‘zare and zen’.

‘H’. ‘H’ is often omitted, especially by those who do not pronounce the letter ‘hay’ in Hebrew. Hypercorrection often occurs in a haphazard manner and we have a phenomenon which I call the ‘floating aitch’. For this

the speaker guesses haphazardly where the aitches have to go. One result might be: 'And they leaved appily hever hafter.'

'R'. Some consider the 'r' mispronunciation a cosmetic detail because it does not lead to confusion and does not blur any phonemic contrast. Native speakers, however, find the back 'r' unacceptable and foreign. This because the standard English "r" is a retroflex post-alveolar frictionless continuant or semi-vowel, not a back 'r' (velar or uvular fricative or roll).

Consonants – Observations

Problem of letter differentiation: 'Meek' for *week* and 'me' for *we*. This is unusual at this level of study, but I include it as an atypical example.

The 'th' sounds: Voiceless 'th' sounds are sometimes written as 't', e.g. 'tird' (third), 'tri' (three), 'tank' (thank) and there is hypercorrection in 'theacher.' In 'becouth' the writer seems to substitute 's' for voiceless 'th' and is here hypercorrecting. Voiced 'th' becomes 'd' in 'fadrs' for *father's*.

Omission of 'h': 'Umor' for humour/humor suggests 'h' may not be perceived as a phoneme. 'Harb's' is a hypercorrection for *Arabs* and the apostrophe suggests a confusion between plural 's' and possessive 'apostrophe s'.

Voiced/voiceless consonant substitution: Jeruzalem (oddly reminiscent of the Spanish name, *Jerusalen*).

Confusion over the use of 'wh' for the 'w' sound: 'wh' appears in place of 'w' and vice versa in 'whatch' for *watch* and 'wich' for *which*. I suggest that learners usually know that 'wh' is sometimes used but not sounded, but don't know when.

Problem with the /k/ ending: 'musik', 'chek' and the strange 'somethik', either a slip of the pen or a phonological problem with not hearing the nasalisation before the velar consonant.

General problem with the 'k' sound: one student does not know that the letter 'c' has a hard /k/ before a, o, and u but a soft /s/ before i, e, and y. Thus we have 'cilled' for *killed* and cetch for *kitsch*.

Confusion over hard and soft 'g': 'danjerous' for dangerous suggests the writer does not know that the 'j' sound is usually produced by 'ge' or 'gi'.

Consonant assimilation in speech transferred to writing: In 'egsams' for exams we have an almost phonetic transliteration of the spoken word.

Problem with consonant clusters: 'exeptatins' for

expectations; borother for *brother*. Reversal of letters: 'gril' for *girl*.

Trouble with syllabic final 'l': singel, nationl, litel.

In 'nod' for not – apparently another phonetic version - we have the only example in this data of the characteristically American flapping of medial /t/ so that it changes to /d/.

Unawareness of Greek 'ph' for 'f': 'Fisical' for *physical*.

Treating foreign word as if it were Hebrew: 'acvarel' for *aquarelle*.

Omission or confusion of inflectional suffixes: 'day' for *died*, 'angeach' for *engaged*, 'learend' for *learned*, and 'merry' for *married*, 'difficults' for *difficulties*, 'secrifit' for *sacrificed*, 'worryng' for *worrying*.

-ing ending: 'beginng' for *beginning*, 'satisfaing' for *satisfying*, 'worryng' for *worrying*.

Comparative ending spelling rule: 'funnyer' for *funnier*.

-s ending, especially when it involves adding it to a y-ending: 'babys' for *babies*, 'studise' for *studies*, 'Movees' for *movies* correctly avoids the 'y' but confuses the spelling.

Omission or confusion of derivational suffixes: -tion, -sion endings. 'Situashion', 'conclution'; -ly ending: 'actually' for *actually*, 'realy' for *really*; -ure endings: Leaterchure for *literature*.

Related to suffix problems is the inability to recognize just when to double a consonant. This leads to the need to teach open and closed syllables, long and short vowels and a complex of spelling rules to be taught around whether to double or not. In short-vowel syllables any final consonant is doubled (if it is 'k' then we substitute 'ck') in order to keep the vowel short. If the consonant is single then the preceding vowel has the sound of its alphabetical letter. Examples are *ratted* and *rated*, *tacking* and *taking*, or *ridding* and *riding*.

Examples in the data are: 'funy' for *funny*, 'geting' for *getting*, 'sumer' for *summer*, 'imposible' for *impossible*, stoped for *stopped*, and 'writen' for *written*. In 'feelling' for *feeling* the writer does not know that double-vowel + consonant does not require doubling.

Difficulties with -ough. 'Tuff' for *tough*.

Difficulty with word final 'j' sound: 'angeach' for *engaged* and 'langwich' for *language* we seem to have a perception of the 'j' sound as a 'ch'.

Elision of consonant or unexploded plosive in speech transferred to omission of letter in writing: ‘exsactly’ for *exactly*; ‘gaverment’ for *government*, ‘lilbit’ for *little bit*, ‘merry’ for *married*.

Vowels

Prognosis: Vowel contrast problems are predominantly in the short vowels, confusion of long and short, and the two schwa sounds (long and short).

The following short vowel contrasts pose a difficulty: e in pet and a in pat, a in cat and u in cut. Short vowels are sometimes confused with long vowels: i in sin with ee in seen; u in soot with oo in suit; o in hop with o in hope. Long vowel difficulties: aw law and ow in low. Spelling pronunciations of the long schwa in which the vowel is wrongly pronounced the short vowel before ‘r’. Thus *word*, *third*, *herd*, and *burn* are given different vowel sounds.

The schwa raises a particular problem since it is a sound without a letter, so to speak. There is no letter-sound correspondence and a schwa might ‘realize’ any of the orthographic short vowels, a, e, i, o, u. For example, it occurs on weak syllables only where the vowel loses its ‘full’ value and is ‘reduced’ to this vague-sounding central vowel. This happens to the weak (unstressed) syllables in about, taken, pencil, eloquent, supply, and sibyl where it is spelled with a, e, i, o, u, and y respectively. A second type of vowel reduction sometimes occurs when a short unstressed ‘e’ is replaced by the weaker short i-sound, e.g. *exact* is pronounced as ‘igzact’.

Rule-oriented errors occur because the writer not only has not internalized the spelling of the written word but simply does not know the rules. Suffice it to say that it helps if the teacher not only spells correctly him/herself but also knows the rules. The more rules he/she knows the easier will it be to teach the rudiments of English spelling to beginners and to offer explanations for correction of errors. An excellent coverage of the basic rules and how to teach them may be found in Shemesh and Waller (2002) which uses an RP (standard British English) phonemic alphabet. Other good books on spelling are Fischer (1993), which uses an AmE phonic alphabet, and Digby and Myers (1993), which also uses RP.

Observations

Confusion between vowels: e/a, a/u, e/i, and schwa sounds in speech are often incorrectly spelled. The long schwa is also open to misinterpretation, so that *learn* and *third* are spelt as ‘lorn’ and ‘thord’ by the same student, suggesting an awareness of the sound without the knowledge of different spellings: *her*, *fir*, *word*,

heard all have a long schwa in speech. This is a common Hebrew speaker’s sound-spelling problem.

Because the sound is not represented in our orthography and yet unstressed short vowels (a, e, i, o, u,) are regularly reduced to short schwa in speech the sound can create a spelling problem if the student’s exposure to written texts is limited. In ‘injue’ for *enjoy* the writer represents the vowel reduction of e to i in speech.

Also, short and long ‘o’ are confused, viz, ‘jocks’ and ‘hop’ for *joke* and *hope*. Short and long ‘i’ are also confused, viz. ‘keetch’ for *kitsch*, ‘dip’ for *deep*, ‘leave’ for *live*.

‘Sow’ for *saw* suggests a lumping together of the long ‘o’ and ‘aw’ sounds.

‘sucsext’ for *succeed* suggests a confusion of verb forms succeed and success.

Hebrew speakers frequently confuse the pairs *these* and *this*, *off* and *of*, and use only the first of each pair. This produces, for example, ‘These house is nice’ and ‘A bottle off beer.’

Finally, the fact that Hebrew is a language consisting mainly of three consonant roots in which vowels are not written in adult script creates added problems for our students. They have to remember to ‘fill in’ all the vowels, sometimes vowels which are not pronounced. Trouble with consonant clusters: nexs, brodrs, dispoing, cousently, compny, sucsext. ‘Borother’ for *brother*, which we saw above, suggests hypercorrection for this problem.

Finally, there is the more obvious example of breaking the The i before e rules: ‘acheived’ simply breaks the rule; ‘decided’ suggests further difficulty with the word *decide*.

We cannot put ourselves in the student’s mind. So many factors are involved that we will never know the full reason for errors. The best we can do is use to the best of our ability everything we know about comparative phonology and the English spelling system — if it can be called a system — to get to the bottom of our students’ problems and, most important, to devise a method to TEACH them to spell.

This paper does not approach the vast and complex subject of dyslexia, which is most commonly characterized by difficulties with learning how to decode words, to spell, and to read accurately and fluently. It is worth noting, however, some of the main problems of dyslectics. According to Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dyslexia>), “Dyslexic individuals often have difficulty “breaking the code” of sound-letter association (the

alphabetic principle), and they may also reverse or transpose letters when writing or confuse letters such as *b, d, p, q*, especially in childhood.” In our data we have several examples of the above difficulties.

I recommend that teachers of written English try to work backwards: to teach pronunciation and spellography early in our curriculum. This entails stressing all four major language skills: listening and speaking for teaching phonological awareness, and reading and writing skills with an emphasis on spelling rules.

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Joe Barnett studied at the University of London, where he received a B.A. in Philosophy, an M.A. in Applied Linguistics, a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education, and a Certificate of Proficiency from the International Phonetics Association. For the past 30 years he has lectured in teachers' colleges in Israel. While at Michlelet Levinsky and Beit Berl he wrote two language laboratory tape courses on English Pronunciation for Hebrew- and Arabic-speaking trainee English teachers respectively.

He currently lectures in Theoretical Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Phonological Awareness, and EAP in the English Department of Michlalah-Jerusalem College. He also teaches High School pupils in various contexts.

TO PEER EDIT? OR NOT TO PEER EDIT?

Beverly Stock (bevstock@gmail.com)

This is the question I ask myself every time I start a new writing task. I always use the process approach to writing – pre-writing activities, while writing tasks and post- writing. Revising and editing are essential parts of the writing process. Peer editing is an often used strategy at this stage of the writing process.

In peer editing students exchange papers with their classmates and make comments. I do believe that peer editing is a learning strategy in which both students gain – the student who evaluates another student’s work and the student who is given the feedback. I have been using this technique in my classroom for several years now but I’m still not sure of its efficacy. At the beginning of each year, and sometimes at the beginning of a new writing task, I go through the pros and cons and usually decide that yes, I will use peer editing in my class. In this article I want to explore some of these points and invite you to share your views.

Much research has supported the claim that peer editing is an effective way to help students improve their writing. (Berg 1999; Soares 1998) I have found that by listening to their classmates, students are able to make corrections that they would have not made had they been self-editing. Revising their work in

pairs in the classroom often involves peer discussion. By insisting that this is done in the target language we are also helping the students improve their oral skills. Students often write an essay for you and want to hand it in straight away. The thought of reading it over and checking it is often unwelcome. Peer editing can improve the students’ interest in and enthusiasm for the revision stage of the writing process. It can also help develop critical thinking and writing skills and make the final evaluation easier for the teacher. It offers an opportunity to see and learn from other students’ work. Thus peer-editing gives students a chance to improve their work before the teacher evaluates it.

For the teacher there are also certain advantages in using peer editing. It promotes high levels of student engagement. Often it produces better organized papers that are easier to read. There is an increase in the amount of student-directed learning.

However, there are also negative points relating to peer editing. Not all students like doing this activity. Many feel that certain classmates don’t know how to correct their work and they want the teacher to do it. It requires all participants to fully engage, which does not always happen. Peer comments require insight and

suitable detail. Not all of my students are capable of this even with coaching and direction. I find students often concentrate on the mechanics rather than the form of the essay. Also spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors may be reinforced

As the teacher I may find that pair work may not be suitable for my class. It requires considerable preparation and guidance. I sometimes ask myself if it really saves me time and is the whole exercise worthwhile.

Before asking you to share your views let me first explain what I do. I talk to the students about the importance of revising their essays. The technique of peer editing is explained and modeled. For each essay we write I prepare a checklist for the peer editing stage. While the students are peer editing I circulate, listen and comment. I encourage. I join in a conversation. I play 'devil's advocate.' I find these sessions are physically and emotionally draining. Yet at the end of the day I believe that the peer editing technique is an important

learning opportunity for the student. It allows them to take control of their own learning. It approximates what "real" writers do. So what do you think?

Please email me your views and I will compile them for the next edition of Forum. In the subject line write "*Peer editing ideas for Forum.*"

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SIXTIES NIGHT

Maxine Tsvaigrach (*maxinetz@013.net*)

I might not have gone braless, but in every other way I'm a child of the Sixties. I remember it all as if it were yesterday: the Mary Quant matching tops and tights (garish); the white go-go boots and white lipstick to match; the trips to the Village (i.e. Greenwich Village in New York) for dangling earrings, incense, posters and peasant blouses; the Kennedy assassination; ironing my hair to make it look straight and silky (it never did) like Michelle's from the Mamas and the Papas; dancing wildly to *Satisfaction* at parties in sixth grade; ("Did Mick Jagger really say PREGNANT?"); Dustin Hoffman so young and adorable in *The Graduate* – how we all identified with his disdain of his parents' materialistic values: "Son, the future is in plastics"; the endless, incensed arguments with my uncle who actually believed in the Domino Theory and the justness of American involvement in Vietnam ("Uncle Herbie, how can you believe that b.....t? You sound just like a redneck from the South!!") Woodstock. OK, I wasn't actually there – I was in summer camp – but I was in Port Jervis N.Y., not far away!

Ah, and the music. The music. There is nothing like the music of the Sixties. NOTHING. The Beatles, the first among equals. The "bad boys", the Rolling Stones, the

antithesis of the wholesome, rosy-cheeked image the Beatles projected (at least at the beginning). You either hated Mick Jagger for his ugliness and vulgarity or you adored him for precisely those reasons. The Beach Boys. The Lovin' Spoonful. Sexy Gracie Slick and the Jefferson Airplane. I wanted to be her up there on stage singing *White Rabbit*. The Turtles. Herman and the Hermits. "Young Girl, Get out of My Mind, my love for you is way out of line ..." (oof, who sang that??). Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Simon and Garfunkel, Cat Stevens, Aretha Franklin, The Supremes, The Four Tops ... Who comes to YOUR mind?

So fantasize a situation where you can actually recreate a semblance of the Sixties at your own school and you get an idea what Sixties Night at Yigal Alon High School of the Arts and Sciences in Ramat HaSharon was like on Thursday, March 19th, 2009.

Two years ago I organized, together with Eli Fichman, a History teacher, Beatles Night. The evening was so wonderful, so uplifting for everyone, that it left us with a taste for more. It was clear to us that the music of this era is as beloved by the younger generation as it is by ours, and it would not take much prodding to get our

pupils enthusiastic about participating in another show dedicated to music of the Sixties.

That's not quite true, of course. Pupils always need prodding. They have exams and Scouts and don't have time to practice. They are too preoccupied with their latest girlfriend or boyfriend and they forget there are auditions. They don't read the announcements on the forums. They don't read e-mails. (But they DO read their SMSes faithfully. This became the most effective mode of communication as the date of the performance approached).

I will not tire you with all the details, the last-minute heart attacks when three days before the show you call the company that is supposed to provide the amplifying equipment and they don't know what you're talking about. Or the SMS from a pupil who cancels out on the day of the show because of a family emergency and you know that his song is the best song of the evening. Or the pupil in charge of the video clips who left one of the DVDs at home and it's 6:00 PM and the show is scheduled to start in two hours and he lives in Tel Aviv.

Perhaps I'm an inveterate optimist but my motto is "Things always work out in the end," and they did. The boy who couldn't come was replaced at the last minute by the most versatile and talented pupil in the Music Department, who learned his part in thirty minutes. The sound man did some last-minute juggling of his schedule and showed up because "he couldn't let us down." We used another video clip.

What can I tell you, ladies and gentlemen? It was a wonderful show. I guess you want to know what was performed. Well, we started off with a clip of a young, sweet Elvis clad in a soldier's uniform, singing "*It's Now or Never*." Then came four pupils starting off the live music with a rendition of The Who's *My Generation* so wildly energetic that you could have sworn it was Roger Daltrey up there, followed by four boys who performed a barbershop version of *Barbara Ann*.

OK, I won't bore you with the entire two-hour program. I can send anybody interested a DVD of the show. Or you can check it out on Youtube. But I'll give a few highlights: The Beatles' *Come Together* and *Drive My Car*, Janis Joplin's *A Piece of My Heart*, Simon and Garfunkel's *America* and *Bridge over Troubled Water*, Joni Mitchell's *Gallery*, Aretha Franklin's *Chain of Fools*, and the original clips from the Ed Sullivan show of Mick Jagger singing *Satisfaction* ("and heeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee're they are.....The Rolling Stones!") and of Jim Morrison singing *Light My Fire*. Life just doesn't get any better than that, does it?

And since Eli Fichman is a History teacher, he contributed his extensive body of knowledge on the period, via a trivia quiz which related to cultural and historical events of the Sixties. Some questions: (Answers at the end!)

1. Who sang the theme song of the James Bond film "Goldfinger?"
2. What was the name of the trendiest street in London in the 1960s?
3. What phrase was used to coin the liberal-democratic movement in Czechoslovakia that was suppressed by the Soviets in 1968?
4. Who was the leader of this movement?
5. What fruit graced the 1967 album cover of the New York band "Velvet Underground"?
6. Who designed the album cover?

Winners were entitled to choose as a prize one of the 60s posters for which I had combed the stores of New York last summer and that were hanging on the wall behind the stage. (Remember the Rolling Stones poster of a huge bright red tongue lasciviously sticking out? That was one of them).

The mayor of Ramat HaSharon even got in on the act and performed a song in Hebrew called התשמע קולי originally sung by חלונות גבוהים, a group that was popular in Israel in the 1960's.

What was missing? Well, I wish we had had go-go dancers in white boots, a la Hullabaloo, accompanying the musicians. Too bad Leonard Cohen and Bob Dylan weren't in Israel at the time; I'm sure they would have come. But most of all, I wish all my friends who grew up with me in the 60s could have been there.

Will Eli and I do Seventies Night next year at school? Of course. You are all cordially invited. It'll be groovy, man.

Answers:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Shirley Bassett | 4. Alexander Dubcek |
| 2. Carnaby Street | 5. banana |
| 3. Prague Spring | 6. Andy Warhol |

Maxine Tsvaigrach has been an English teacher for 31 years. Since 1984 she has been teaching at Yigal Alon High School of the Arts and Sciences in Ramat HaSharon, and was the Department Co-ordinator from 1992 to 2008. In addition, she has been doing counseling and teacher training for the past two years. She is a passionate, inveterate fan of Sixties Music and can often be heard singing music of the Beatles, Cat Stevens, Simon and Garfunkel, Rolling Stones, Elton John, and Joan Baez (among many others) in her car at the top of her lungs.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: CRELL MATERIALS

Emil Halloun (*emil.haloun@mail.huji.ac.il*)

A very unique experience began for me last July. I was invited by Dr. Valerie Jakar, of David Yellin Academic College of Education, to attend a four-day course on how to use English as a second language in peace education. Honestly, I did not have any great expectations, as I also work as a group facilitator. However, sharing this issue with English teachers only was different and special. We had a wonderful time together in the wonderful setting of Ginosar.

Now I will present briefly how the activities I learned about in the course contributed to my work with my students during the first month of the school year. Each class had one hour a week for one month for what I called peace education in English language. In my English language classes in the high school I found the materials taken from the Curriculum Guide of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) to be very relevant. This document was adapted for teachers of English Language Learners by Alison Mojto-Milofsky.

I began with a general introduction to world conflict. I handed out a paper with the world conflict written in Chinese. The Chinese character for conflict is composed of two symbols: one meaning “danger” and the other meaning “opportunity.” I used this paper twice: the first time was to introduce my topic and the second, to conclude it. This gives the word “conflict” an international dimension. In other words, the students learn this word in a language with which they are not familiar, and then we moved on to talking about this specific word in English. This step, or switch, grants them a sense of empowerment. I also used this to encourage the weak students. Most of them claim that they know nothing in English. In Chinese, they definitely knew nothing except the way “conflict” is written. However, in English, they knew how it is written and how to pronounce it. For 12th graders, the teacher may add that the word conflict comes from the Latin *Confligere*, which means to strike.

I had already used several exercises in my classes from the Curriculum Guide of USIP in the 10th and 11th grades. For me, it was very interesting to see the way native Arabic students perceive the world ‘conflict’ in English. To illustrate: my students connected the word

‘conflict’ immediately to conflict between friends, or conflict among family members or between a teacher and his or her students. They did not link this word to the October events in Akko, for instance (a few students come from Akko.) Moreover, they did not link it to the ongoing conflict in our region. Is this blindness? Not at all. Clearly, the terminology used by them to describe different problems at different levels changes. This also directly reflects the varied ways they respond to conflict. For example, they used many words such as “occupation” and “war.” So here we see the role of a second language that they do not usually use to describe problems that they suffer from in their everyday life. In other words, I think that English is the perfect setting or language (even without the existence of a third party or another group who speaks that language), to start giving a proper definition to each problem. Everything stems from language and terminology used. The teacher may use the various exercises: Name Game, Have You Ever, Draw Your Own Symbol, Conflict Is, When you Say Conflict I Think Of, We All Belong to Many Groups.

During these classes, I noticed the presence of those who always retreat into silence. Many of them discussed this issue openly. What I noticed is that most students liked the topic of “conflict” because they hoped that talking might improve things. Moreover, I would like to mention that in one class that has 25 students only, I took advantage of the space and we sat in one big circle because a room that is too big and full of empty space makes the students feel uncomfortable. Certainly, this circle reminded me of the one we sat in during the workshop in Ginossar. We, English teachers, were also students at that time, and talking about peace at first with people whom we do not know was definitely uneasy. But, the ice-breaking exercises contributed much to create the safe atmosphere we reached at the end. If you have the opportunity to attend a CRELL workshop, I highly recommend it!

Emil Halloun is an English Teacher at Mar Elias College, Ibilin. He also works as a Conflict Resolution facilitator for Israeli and Palestinian youth. Previously, he was an Educational projects coordinator-Unit of Social intervention, Hebrew University.

THE NEW READING EASY OR CHILD'S FIRST BOOK

By Anon

Published by J. Rawling, Bradford, Wilts., UK. c1830

A BOOK REVIEW by David L. Young (*dlwhy04@yahoo.com*)

You can buy any of the books that I have recently reviewed in the latest editions of FORUM by going into your local W.H.Smiths, Barnes & Noble or Angus & Robertson or even on the web. However, I doubt whether you'll find a copy of the book reviewed below either in a shop or on the web.

This review is about a pupil's first reading book - but it is nothing like the good ol' fashioned ESH 2, or the more modern "Hi Dizzy" and "Wow" now used in our classrooms. This Reader is not found on the shelves in any of the above bookstores, but this is not really surprising as it was first published about 175 years ago. However, despite the passing of time, it still has the same aim as all the other Readers you know and love - to teach the ABC and reading.

As with so many Readers, this Victorian one, *The New Reading Easy*, or, *Child's First Book*; arranged so as to blend Entertainment with Instruction, starts with the alphabet - from A-Z in the standard order, in both lower and upper case. This is then repeated, the letters being printed in italics and then the alphabet is 'differently arranged.' On seeing XZTSPB and ygpqbdqj, one may clearly imagine the Victorian schoolma'am, her sharp eyes behind her pince-nez spectacles and her bony but authoritative finger moving along the lines of letters checking if young Tommy or Jane have 'learnt their letters' and can tell the difference between the b's and d's and p's and q's. And all of this is only on page two!

Page three continues with vowels and consonants as well as with double and triple letters: fi, ff, and ffi in addition to diphthongs such as æ and œ. When I read this, I wondered whether our poor student was being deprived of learning about triphthongs as 'ire,' but then I realized that you cannot learn everything about English reading and its orthographic system in just three pages.

Of course, all of the above is just the preparatory stage and after reading, and no doubt learning by heart, four lessons of ba, dy, ru etc. our future reader of Shakespeare and Milton arrives at Lesson Five where he is faced with linguistic gems such as "my ox," "do ye go" and "ye go up." Over the next two lessons these brief sentences are lengthened to "We go to an ox" "O go ye in" and "Lo I am he." Notice by the way that the Reader's anonymous writer assumes that the young reader will be of the male gender; we do not come upon young ladies and their activities until page 14 when we are regaled with

descriptions of the perfectly considerate behaviour of Charlotte Good.

Comparing this Victorian rate of progress in reading to its modern equivalent, it is only on page 35 in *Sound Reading* that we learn that "Sam is a man" and that "Sam is in a band." Perhaps the only three-word phrase that is not included in Lessons V - VII (note use of Roman numerals) is "Yes we can."

Once our Victorian Tommy was fluent in the above material, he could start on the next part, the 'Short and Easy Lessons.' Unlike our modern reader who learns about the adventures of Sam, Mitzi and Tim, our counterpart from years back wasted not his newly-acquired reading skills on such light-hearted foolishness and frippery, but on learning morally uplifting sentences such as "Go in the way of God" and "Do not go in the way of a bad boy." This meant while our hero was enhancing his scholastic efforts, his moral fibre was also being taken into account. How does that compare with anything that our EFL publishers are producing today?

These noble instructions continue until Lesson VII. By the time Tommy has reached page 14 he can read (maybe with the encouragement of a stick or a paddle) notable sentiments such as: "Spell such words as you can not read, and then you will know them the next time you see them" and "When a child is told of a fault, says he does not care, there is much fear that he will not mend."

This book's high moral tone continues for several pages, printed in sepia brown on white. They instruct its young readers to be good, and to play carefully and considerately while reminding them about the "Duty of Children to their Parents." However, before our enlightened pupil can take his religious fervour too far ("Moderation in all things") a spelling list is included towards the end of this book which brings our potential saint back to earth. The words are arranged alphabetically, contain two syllables each, are hyphenated and include several words which will certainly not appear in any Reader published by Eric Cohen, UPP or AEL. Examples of such words are: 'wan-ton,' 'vir-gin' and 'za-ny.' Another strange aspect of this lesson on basic spelling is that it comes *after* reading unhyphenated stories about Sammy and Charlotte Good, 'The Child's Grief' and the 'Happy Death of a Little Girl.'

This Christian tone pervades the rest of this little book, exhorting the young reader to remember Jesus

and his deeds, to behave piously and to say his daily prayers. And if we're talking about exhortation, then the following sentence probably captures the essence of this Reader: 'Give attention to reading, to exhortation and to doctrine.' By the time young Tommy of the 1830s can read these unctuous statements fluently, he will be ready to continue with his linguistic education and start learning his lessons in grammar from: *'A Grammar of the English Language in a series of letters intended*

for the use of schools and of young persons in general, but more especially for the use of soldiers, sailors, apprentices and ploughboys' by William Cobbett. This book is also intended "to prevent statesmen from using false grammar, and from writing in an awkward manner." Cobbett, however, may have been wiser to have quoted Shakespeare's advice in Henry IV, Part 1 and instruct the politicians "to tell the truth and shame the Devil."

David L. Young loves the English language and has been teaching it from junior school to university level as well as to adults since he came to Israel in 1968. Today he teaches at the Jerusalem Academy of Science & Arts. He edited "Communicating in English" and has had three historical novels published in UK. His fourth book on The Zion Mule Corps (WW1) is due out this summer.



Call for articles!

The deadline for submissions to the Winter 2009 edition of the ETAI Forum is **October 29th, 2009** and we are anxiously awaiting your contributions. Make your voice heard!

Submit all contributions as WORD (.doc) 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. **Maximum** article length should be about 2,500 words but if your article is longer, please try not to exceed 4,000 words.

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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Please submit your contributions to: etaiforum@gmail.com

Transport of the Future

- ∞ Do you believe that a car can be run on air?
- ∞ Look at the picture below, predict and write your answers in the table.



| Make | Top speed | Price |
|------|-----------|-------|
| | | |

- ∞ Now read the text and see if your predictions were correct.

There is now an amazing new car that can *run on* air. It is cheap, creates no pollution and costs almost nothing to run. But is it just *too good to be true*? The new CAT (compressed air technology) car was *on display* at the Paris motor show. The car was invented by Frenchman Guy Negre. He has spent the last six years developing his idea and has now produced a car that can travel up to 120 miles (200 kilometres) on one *tank* of compressed air and reach speeds of up to 65 mph (110 kph).

The car will cost around 7,000 pounds (10,000 euros) and will come complete with its own re-fuelling system. There is a problem with the car though. It will take around four to five hours to refuel. A high speed re-fuelling station has been designed, but this will cost around 70,000 pounds (100,000 euros).

The company believes that the car will sell well to taxi companies and delivery firms that operate in towns, because they don't need to travel long distances and they will be able *to afford* the cost of the re-fuelling station. Some *critics* have *pointed out* that the car hasn't been properly tested yet and that the company's *claims* about the car's performance may be *exaggerated*, but even if the car can only achieve half of what the makers claim, it could turn out to be the answer both to the energy *crisis* and to the problem of inner city pollution.

Comprehension check

- ∞ Read the text again and make notes about these things and their connection to the text. The first one has been done as an example.

| | Answers |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Guy Negre | <i>He is the Frenchman who invented the car.</i> |
| 2. Six years | |
| 3. 120 miles | |
| 4. 65 mph | |
| 5. £7,000 | |
| 6. Four to five hours | |
| 7. £70,000 | |
| 8. Taxi companies | |

Vocabulary

- ∞ Look at the **bold** words in the text and match them to these meanings. One has been done for you as an example.

| Definitions | Answers |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| a. a difficult time | |
| b. being shown | <i>on display</i> |
| c. container for fuel | |
| d. facts that may not be true | |
| e. people who disagree with something | |
| f. be powered by | |
| g. to have enough money to buy something | |
| h. made to seem bigger or more important than they are | |
| i. commented | |
| j. unbelievable | |

Discussion

- ∞ Read the following sentences and decide if you agree (A) or disagree (D)

| | A or D |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Nobody will buy the CAT car because they are too slow. | |
| 2. I would rather buy a CAT car than a Mercedes. | |
| 3. People are too worried about the environment. There isn't really a problem. | |
| 4. Big companies should spend more money on finding clean power sources. | |
| 5. Ordinary people can do nothing to protect the environment. It is a job for the government. | |
| 6. Big companies don't care about the environment. They just want to make more money. | |
| 7. There is no energy crisis. We have enough oil and coal to last for many years. | |
| 8. In five years time everybody will be driving an air powered car. | |
| 9. Cars are terrible dirty things. We should use more public transport. | |

- ∞ Now discuss the sentences with your classmates.

- ∞ For more information: Go to the internet to watch a news clip about the car.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2281011.stm>

An air powered car – © BBC | British Council 2002

Originally written by Nick Peachey, British Council teacher trainer and materials developer; adapted by Charlotte Brander British Council teacher trainer and materials developer.

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QUESTIONS FROM YOU!
A column with questions, answers and advice from

Aharon Gavryahu (*gvaryahu@gmail.com*)
the National LD Counselor in the English Inspectorate

Dear Everyone,

As the school year ends, many issues that seemed so important wane and we look forward to a change of pace during the summer. The problem, however, is that those issues that remain unsolved return to haunt us too soon. I would like to address two of those issues. One issue concerns with assessment and evaluation of learning disabilities and the other, modifications and accommodations during the school year.

Here are the questions – and my answers. Your questions lead to improved intervention and change. Please ask!

Question 1:

Do the accommodations in English need to be written separately or does “Hakra’at She’elon” in “Miktzaot Ravei Melel” include English? What about disregarding spelling errors? Must English be listed separately?

Yes, and no. The following testing accommodations can be, and usually are, carried over from Hebrew assessment to English, if there is no specific English assessment: extra time, ignoring spelling errors and listening to the test. However, accommodations such as the oral examination or the “mutam” (modified) examination can only be recommended on the basis of a psychological evaluation and a specific EFL evaluation as well. English language skills must be evaluated for the regional committees to be able to properly understand the necessity for granting one of the level three modifications.

It is perhaps necessary to reiterate here, that the real purpose of the assessment is to know not only how to test the learner, but also how to make some kind of positive change in a pupil’s performance. The purpose of an assessment is to determine what skills can be enhanced and what the best way to teach that learner. When there is no specific evaluation in EFL, the accommodations seem to be “granted” in a vacuum, assuming that if the skills are poor due to a learning disability in mother tongue, then they will be equally problematic in English.

While that tends to be the case, it really is worthwhile for a specific English assessment to be done. Responsible evaluators will either evaluate the English skills themselves, or will refer the learner to a specific evaluation for English. As English teachers, we are often the first to spot the learning difficulty not yet diagnosed in Hebrew. It is then our responsibility to refer the parents to the school guidance counselor (yoetzet). The guidance counselor has a list of qualified evaluators who can evaluate both EFL and mother tongue skills. Often the specific EFL evaluation will offer not only a learner specific intervention program, but also may identify additional areas that need to be attended to, and at times, may expand the recommendations specified on a prior assessment. So, while an EFL assessment is not always necessary, it really is a good thing to recommend!

Question two:

Why do the kids have to hear English read from a recording? Why can't someone stand in front of all the kids who get "hakra'at she'elon" and read it out like in the Hebrew subjects?

First of all, the tests in English are very different from those given in the Hebrew subjects. Examinations in History, Literature, Civics etc. are usually made up of questions, and the students are then asked to write long answers based on material that they have studied. Unseen passages in these subjects are read aloud to the students, not once but as often as needed. If the student requires the reading of a question again, this is done as well. Most students who require a reader can read most of the questions, but need to hear them in order to really understand the question properly.

In English our tests are made up of texts that must be either listened to or read. The questions on the tests, except for on the literature modules, are based on the written or spoken texts. Learners are not expected to remember the content of the texts on the English exams, but rather to refer to the texts in order to answer questions appropriately, and to be as grammatically and as linguistically as precise as possible. None of our learners, especially not those with identified learning disabilities, are expected to remember all of the facts and information written in the unseen passages and then to recall the information to answer questions.

In addition, in general, each learner works at their own pace and using recorded texts allows learners diagnosed with reading difficulties to do so. Hopefully the teachers will have helped them understand and develop their own style and method for working and test-taking. Our students have developed their own way to take a test that fits their learning style and their abilities. Learners with reading disabilities may need to hear the whole text prior to working; others skim the text for answers to the WH questions and require slow and careful reading of the questions pertaining to each paragraph in the text. Yet others need to hear each paragraph a number of times in order to properly understand the written text. The recordings of the texts make that possible. The student can go back and forth on the CD or on the tape (perhaps one day another type of technology will be available) and find the place that he has just heard, and can listen again and again until it is understood.

Students must get the opportunity to practice working with recorded material. They need to learn strategies and skills that are appropriate for them and that help them to succeed. This requires spending time during the school year using recorded material. It may also require some direct training by the teacher. It is not appropriate or fair to put all of those students who need to listen to the text in one room with one reader. It is actually our responsibility as teachers to know how our students test best. In addition,

I also highly recommend working on reading skills as often and as much as possible. That has wonderful results, including reducing the number of learners who require listening to a recorded text.

If you are interested in organizing a workshop on how to use recorded texts, I would be happy to assist you.

Please contact me for this or with any questions concerning learners diagnosed with learning disabilities. (gvaryahu@gmail.com)

Have a lovely summer and a restful vacation!

Aharona

Kibbutzim College of Education
School For Advanced Studies & In-Service Training
Tel Aviv



Identification and Remediation of EFL Students with Learning Difficulties

Course Coordinator: Stella Nachmias

Course Objectives: The course offers an in-depth theoretical background, identification tools and relevant techniques needed for professional teaching of LD learners.

Target Population: Qualified and experienced EFL teachers at all grade levels with a minimum of 3 years teaching experience.

Course Description: The program offers the opportunity to enhance one's knowledge in the field of learning disabilities and the acquisition of English as a foreign language.

Furthermore, it enables the participants to gain professional skills for building an individualized or classroom educational plan using relevant identification tools. It empowers the teachers to teach the special needs students by acquiring specific multi-sensory techniques for remedial teaching. Participant will be required to apply new information in practical ways.

A one year program - 6 weekly hours (168 hours)

Participants who complete all requirements will be offered a certificate. The course is recognized for Gmul Hishtalmut with a grade.

**For inquiries & registration
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TEEN SECOND LIFE

Charlotte Brander (*cbrander79@hotmail.com*)



Second Life is a virtual world where residents socialize, explore and even become virtual millionaires! Adults play on one 'grid' and teenagers on another. Within the teen online community, the British Council has created an island for English learners. The Teen Grid of Second Life is populated by 13-17 year-olds and works as a social networking site where youngsters can make friends with people from different countries and cultures around the world. Adults are not permitted to enter unless they are approved educators.

The British Council Island is a place where learners can take a virtual look at the UK, past and present. The island teaches teens about British culture and history while actively improving their English, computer skills and above all, having fun.

So how can this virtual world improve teenagers' English? First of all, teens chat and send messages to all the registered inhabitants in English. Teenagers from Brazil, Bahrain, Cyprus, Hong Kong, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Switzerland frequent the British Council Island from their computers and many other countries are set to be involved.

The island is packed with learning quests that require residents to think laterally, read clues, navigate, teleport and workout how to solve mysteries. The quests are of varying degrees of difficulty and are proving to be a real challenge for the students. Quests also include links to the British Council LearnEnglish website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/central.htm>

The first snapshot overleaf shows the "Welcome Area" where residents first arrive on the British Council Island where students can choose which quest to complete. The second snapshot is the Loch Ness Monster (Nessie) from whom teens can learn all about the legend of Loch Ness and take a tour of the island on her back. Other quests include the Merlin Quest, a journey into the world of King Arthur, the Shakespeare Quest where students can put on a show of their own in the virtual 'Globe Theatre'. Students in Nazareth are currently in the process of creating a virtual exhibition of their work which will be displayed for other players to see.

The British Council in Israel is at the forefront of this global project with over 300 students already registered. Working in close association with Keren Karev, the British Council has been able to visit schools in many places, endeavoring to include different socio economic and religious backgrounds, including schools from Lod, Nazareth, Ramle, and Bedouin communities of the Negev. The aim is to reach those who live in the periphery and

who do not have many chances to get involved with such educational projects.

The teenagers' response has been phenomenal; they have been 'wowed' by the graphics, stumped by the quests and excited to speak to other teenagers around the globe. For many, it's the first opportunity to talk to someone from another country and users express that they find they have a lot in common. The British Council invites teachers to either set up after school clubs where a trainer is on hand to assist, or teachers can simply register their pupils (with parental consent), and the kids can go on at home any time. Playing at home allows them to meet up with other players who maybe in a different time zone making it all the more exciting. Quite often home computers are of a higher standard than school networks, and as the game requires a good graphics card and fast internet connection it is not always possible to play in school.

Teachers have overcome this minor hurdle by arranging for their students to come online at a pre-arranged time which still allows them to work together as a group. A British Council trainer is usually present as well as Graham Stanley, the creator and games master, who regularly pops along to offer advice to teens and guide them through the initial steps.

The British Council Israel trainers have presented the island to over a hundred teachers and English coordinators at various teaching conferences and meetings around the country since July 2008 and more and more teens are registering as a result. At any time teachers can go online to Youtube.com and view the video presentation: www.youtube.com/britishcouncil4teens.

The project is set to continue right through 2009 and there are high hopes that many more Israeli teenagers will take advantage of this free educational resource. Parents and teachers alike agree that their teenagers are spending valuable time at the computer enjoying English learning. This type of study can greatly help those pupils that may ordinarily be struggling in their regular English lessons. It's truly amazing to see the way they communicate naturally in English, and those who didn't believe in their English who have realized that it isn't so hard after all. This is real time and real English.

If you would like to register your students on the island, please send an email to learnenglish@britishcouncil.org, asking for more information and you will be sent a parental consent form for parents to fill in. Shortly after you have faxed this to the British Council Israel offices, the teens should receive an email with details of how to create their character and get started on the island.

Charlotte Brander is a teacher, teacher trainer and material developer and has worked at the British Council in Israel for the last two years or so. Previously she spent 8 years teaching in Japan, Italy, Austria, Taiwan, Turkey and the UK. She currently lives in Eilat but that doesn't stop her from commuting to mini ETAI conferences around Israel on a regular basis! In fact she is involved all over Israel in the different projects that the British Council is working on.



NETSURFING

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

Hello everyone,

I decided that this time I would try to find some good sites with online activities for the students and you. I know that many students feel unsure about grammar, vocabulary, writing, etc and we, the teachers, are always looking for more practice activities. So ...

All the sites this time provide online practice and activities. I hope you find them helpful and useful for yourself and the students.

Remember if you have a site you like in particular and think it would be worthwhile sharing with others, email me at *miri.yochanna@gmail.com*

| | |
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| Name | Fun Easy English |
| Address: http://funeasyenglish.com/english-resources-student.htm | |
| Category | online practice |
| What's in the site? | A little bit of everything. There are links to grammar practice, to idioms, pronunciation, vocabulary, and so on. There is practice with videos for different issues and step by step guidance. There are even tests that the students can do and test themselves on different things in the language. As an added benefit, especially for our students who are keen on speaking more like their counterparts abroad, there is a whole section on slang, which is really cool. |
| My personal favorite | I really liked the pronunciation section. There are videos that you use to check you're the way you move your mouth when pronouncing different sounds. There are pictures, which are great, to help you figure it out. Then there is also written practice to put the sound and the written form together. It's extremely well done. |
| Possible uses | It's a great way for the students to practice everything they learn in class and then some, online at home and in class. |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name | Memori |
| Address: http://www.1-language.com/materials/memori/elementary/index.htm | |
| Category | online practice – mostly for younger children |
| What's in the site? | This site mainly contains a memory game that progresses from easier to more challenging material in a variety of topics. The initial level is identical match but then when one level is finished; you move on to the next level and each one includes more sophisticated practice. The higher you move up, the more vocabulary you learn and practice. There is also a really nice link, still being developed apparently, for TOEIC practice. There are sample questions and immediate feedback. |
| My personal favorite | I liked the language practice offered through the memory games on the different topics. The children would really enjoy the game and learn a little bit of English at the same time. I really liked the artwork as well, making the vocabulary come to life. |
| Possible uses | Online practice for children in their free time or even as a prize in class if you have a computer and internet access. |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name | Interesting Things for ESL Students |
| Address: http://www.manythings.org | |
| Category | online practice – mostly for younger children |
| What's in the site? | A little of everything is practiced here. There are links to lots of different activities for grammar, vocabulary, idioms, listening, and so on. Each topic opens up to a collection links for practice from various sources. Each one offers lots of different ways to practice the issue at hand. |
| My personal favorite | I loved the proverb crosswords. There is a whole section on proverbs and in it, there is a collection of crosswords which are really fun. They come at a variety of levels, starting with rather simple ones and progressing to some that are not easy at all. |
| Possible uses | Great online practice for your students at home and in school. |

Miri Yochanna has been an EFL teacher and teacher trainer for almost 20 years. She is currently a teacher trainer at Seminar HaKibbutzim and she is also working at CET (Center for Educational Technology) heading up the English division of a new Item Bank Project. She has been developing various teaching materials for many years and has written a number of course books for elementary school; Pals, Wow! (UPP) and Highlight (ECB) as well as edited several others.

DON'T MISS IT!

The 6th ETAI International Conference 12-14th July 2010, Jerusalem

We will be welcoming colleagues and friends from abroad to our **sixth international conference** where we will meet celebrities in the world of English teaching and colleagues from around the globe.

We are looking for committed ETAI members to join the teams of volunteers to make this event a real success. People interested in offering their expertise, be it stuffing folders, counting money, organizing tours around Jerusalem, hosting out-of-towners or participating in any of the many aspects of organizing and running the event should contact the ETAI office (etaioffice@gmail.com) or Valerie Jakar (vsjakar@gmail.com). **You don't need to live in Jerusalem in order to help out. We need YOU!**