



FORUM



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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

A recent exchange of opinions on ETNI got me thinking: Why does it seem to be assumed throughout the system that lower-level learners are to be taught by lower-level teachers?

Elementary-school teachers, for example, are paid less than their upper-school counterparts. And in most middle and high schools, it's the less highly-regarded and experienced teachers who tend to get the lower hakbatzot.

It is arguable that elementary-school teachers are the most important of all: the level which a school pupil achieves in English by the end of the sixth grade is going to impact his or her achievement in this subject for the rest of their school career. A child who has not managed to learn to read English by the beginning of seventh grade is unlikely ever to catch up; a child who reads and has at least a thousand-word sight vocabulary has a head start. It's the Matthew effect again: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. So it's up to the elementary school teachers to make sure that their pupils are 'rich' in English by the time they finish elementary school. And so this is where we need the best teachers: at elementary school. But a successful teacher is likely to move into higher grades, simply because of the pay and easier conditions.

Similarly, it's the weaker learners at middle- and high-school levels who need the expertise of the experienced and successful teachers; good students can often progress autonomously, regardless of the level of teaching. But of course it's much easier and more pleasant to teach the higher 'hakbatzot': so it's difficult to find fault with the successful teachers for preferring them.

A complex issue!

Teachers who teach the more advanced and successful learners also do a great job; I would not like to imply that they are in any way less worthy. But I'd like to take this opportunity to make clear my appreciation of and respect for the teachers who spend their professional lives promoting the learning of English in what are often more difficult learner populations. And we should do our utmost to make sure that we have plenty of sessions at our conferences and mini-conferences that provide for their needs, and articles in the Forum containing practical ideas that can help them teach more effectively.

Penny Ur (pennyur@gmail.com)
ETAI Chairperson

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

It seems like the school year has just begun, yet Chanukah is nearly upon us! This issue of the ETAI Forum is packed with a huge variety of articles to keep you busy throughout the break from school. Elisheva Kronman, Bev Stock, Iris Shenkman and Eleanor Satlow all provide practical ideas for the classroom. Lea Kirshenberg points out that thinking skills are integral to reading comprehension in general and should not only be relegated to the teaching of literature while Leo Selivan focuses on grammar from an unusual angle. And Sarah Dembinsky gives us a peek into the world of teaching adults. Ways to put remedial reading students on the path to success are explained by Marsha Bensoussan, while Ramon Lewis discusses ways teachers cope with the challenge of managing the classroom. We continue marking ETAI's 30th birthday with articles by Judy Segal and Esther Lucas. In our regular feature about influential educators we remember Hazel Camron and Sheila Been. Regular columns include reproducibles from the British Council, Netsurfing by Miri Yochanna, David Young's book review and Aharona Gavryahu's column addressing our questions about pupils having difficulties.

We hope to see you in Beer Sheva soon or in Haifa in the spring. However, we're sure to meet up at the international conference in Jerusalem this July! Don't miss it!

Enjoy your reading!

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, ETAI Forum co-editors

ETAI MINI CONFERENCE MAALOT

Another successful mini-ETAI conference took place in Maalot on October 13th at Nativ Meir School. Over 50 participants enjoyed interesting, professional lectures and sessions given by Dr. Janina Kahn-Horwitz, Sue Osher, Sarah Cove and Aviva Shapira.

Many thanks to all those who helped organize the event and we look forward to seeing you all at the next ETAI conference.

**ETAI FINANCIAL REPORT
WINTER 2009**

Dear Members of ETAI,

Although financial reports are not usually the most fascinating reading material (except for accountants) I am hereby fulfilling my duties and publishing the following report. Please note: All figures are in Israeli shekels.

Office staff: including salaries for Marna (full-time) and Rozy (part-time during pre-Summer Conference period), including social security/*bitu'ach le'umi*

Total: 66,584 NIS

Major office expenses: including rent for Jerusalem office, accountant, post-office box rental, insurance & petty-cash

Total: 39,653 NIS

Other office expenses: including toner, photocopying, fax paper, printing labels paper, disk-on-key and ink

Total: 2,611 NIS

Other expenses:

Postal expenses: 1,201 NIS

Conference name-tags: 912 NIS

3 'mass mailings' of *Forum*: 3,757 NIS

TESOL fees: 1,380 NIS

Rasham Amutot registration: 1,180 NIS

Barco projector: 3,812 NIS

Printing & Conference expenses: 77,674 NIS

Petty-cash: 3,246.87 NIS

Grand Total: 202,010.87 NIS

July 2008 Summer Conference- Bayit V'gan, Jerusalem

Expenses including:

Renting venue for 3 days: 39,400 NIS

Printing forms, programmes etc: 4,416.15 NIS

Clerical expenses: 6,332.15 NIS

Mailing costs: 2,164.40 NIS

Other expenses:

Including: food, name-tags, technical help, taxis, tablecloths, mail, gifts & hotel rooms for visiting lecturers: 3,841.39 NIS

Total Conference expenses: 56,154.09 NIS

The above expenses were covered by the following income:

Publishers: 22,100 NIS

Participation fees: 35,610 NIS

Flyers in conference kits: 2,400 NIS

Total Conference Income: 60,110 NIS

December 2008 Winter Conference, Beersheva

Expenses including:

Printing programmes, receipts, speaker proposal forms, stationery: 1,759 NIS

Travel, photocopying, food, mail: 2,124.50 NIS

Renting minibuses from Jerusalem & Ra'anana: 3,700 NIS

Rental of venue, Amit school: 2,000 NIS

Sufganiot, lecturers' travel, extension cords & milk: 1,009.68 NIS

Total Conference Expenses: 10,593.18

The above expenses were covered by the following income:

Publishers: 5,800 NIS

Participation fees: 6,485 NIS

Bus fares (J/lem & Ra'anana): 1,120 NIS

Student group from 'Hemdat Hadarom': 4,900 NIS

Total Conference Income: 13,895 NIS

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July 2009 Summer Conference, Jerusalem

Venue: Himmelfarb school: 28,000 NIS

Printing forms, programmes, receipt books & handouts: 4,178 NIS

Food: 650.40 NIS

Plastic name tags & Whiteboard markers: 244 NIS

Ushers 'boys in orange': 4,378 NIS

Jazz concert: 1,200 NIS

Clerical help/office: 6,447.30 NIS

Raffle booklets & T-shirts: 1,627.60 NIS

Taxi & photocopying: 159.74 NIS

Tablecloths & mailing: 2,281.40 NIS

Food at Pre-conference: 550 NIS

Photocopying & gifts: 159.40 NIS

Total Conference expenses 50,235.84 NIS

The above expenses were covered by the following income:

Publishers: 24,600 NIS

Participation fees: 40,210 NIS

Flyers in kits & T-shirts: 1,160 NIS

Total Conference Income: 65,970 NIS

Note: ETAI, as a non-profit body reinvests any profits made at conferences etc back into the organization itself. All board members, Forum editors, conference committee members, presenters, and mini-conference organizers donate their time to ETAI on a wholly voluntary basis.

I would like to thank Marna and Rozy for working so hard and providing me with the above figures.

David L. Young
ETAI Treasurer

SUMMER WITH ETAI – 2009

by Susan Bedein (bedein@hotmail.com) and Judi Aloni (judialoni@hotmail.com)

Everyone comes to ETAI
What's that you say? Why?

The answer is clear.

Year after year

From far and near

English teachers appear.

They listen to talks

About classroom diversity

From elementary to
university

Gaining new insight

To everyone's delight.

Himmelfarb, our new venue

Pleasant for all

Boys in orange always on
call.

Publishers and presenters

Throughout the day

Showing teachers the way.

Jerusalem, city of diversity

Welcomes ETAI

If you want to know why,

Come on by

And give it a try.



LOOKING BACK ON EFL TEACHING IN ISRAEL

Dr. Esther Lucas (lucas@bezeqint.net)

I arrived in this country in 1946 by plane straight from the UN Preparatory Commission in London, having flown via Marseilles and Malta to Cairo, followed by overnight train to Rehovot, and taxi to Tel Aviv, from where the kibbutz lorry took me to Kfar Blum. Not long after, I was picking grapefruit in Ein Harod. Down in the valley the train chuffed past. I could jump on as it halted on its way to Afula and pay my fare to the Arab conductor on the train. One day I was invited to an English class in a kibbutz in the Jordan Valley. The kids were not at all keen on learning English. The British Mandate was in force and English was the language of the “occupying” power. They didn’t see why they should learn it. There was of course no TV, no foreign stations on the radio, no travel abroad for students. Everyone was being told to speak Hebrew. Why did they need English?

After some experience teaching EFL to young students in kibbutz Glil Yam, in 1957, I joined the staff of what was then the only high school in Herzliya, today known as HarRishonim School. When I began, there were just four classes: “Tet” to “Yod Bet”. The 9th year students were called “Hamshushim” and the 12th graders were “Shministim”, both names based on European class classification.

My first aim was to introduce motivating activities. There was little written at that time on foreign language teaching methodology, and certainly no teacher training for EFL in high schools in Israel, but I used ideas on teaching in general. It took a few years, but by 1963 the whole school was involved in a number of new activities. An English newspaper was produced which at first appeared twice yearly. An English play was being performed annually by the drama group in front of the whole school. An English choir was formed and an English library installed. Visitors were invited to speak to students at school, and interviewing personalities was encouraged.

Our joining the Associated Schools Project of UNESCO was part of my second aim, namely to help our students to find out something about the world of young people around them. So albums, and later discs, were exchanged with schools abroad and correspondence was encouraged. Contacts were made with interested schools in Israel and eventually visits abroad were arranged.

Our EFL staff soon became a group of teachers working together on these projects. The books I produced for use in English classes also incorporated an element of international understanding.

Looking at the early issues of “Echoes,” our English Newspaper, one can see the serious involvement of the editors, the first of whom was Yael Harussi, who later became a university professor. The correspondence between the editors of “Echoes,” who changed every year or two, and the readers is still interesting to read today, the editors always defending their policy against critics of what students really wanted to read. Topics were extremely varied, and included questionnaires on school life. One proved that not every student read the English newspaper, which was to be expected. The enthusiastic involvement of the non-native speakers, who were of course many, both in the Editorial Board and in the drama group, always amazed me. Many of the students of those days are now grandparents and meeting them is a pleasure for me. Only once did a woman, having ascertained that I was Esther Lucas, tell me that I had hated her. I was completely taken aback, having never hated anyone. I assumed she had not been very successful, and had carried her grudge into adulthood!

In those days most students knew what UNESCO was, since many corresponded with students abroad and because the exhibitions which featured various international topics such as United Nations Days, International Cooperation Day and Pen Pals were mounted by the students themselves and all the classes visited the exhibitions. We had visitors from other schools in Israel and even from a school in Great Britain.

Just as today, teachers were involved in deciding what to teach and how. The grammar translation method had practically died, though at first I used Diengott’s book published during the Mandate. Teachers were encouraged to go to meetings and were told how and what to do by a “Yekke” inspector who encouraged teachers to use his books. After a while pattern practice became the fashion. In a school I once visited, the teacher was getting the students to practise the following sentence: “The boy threw the papers into the basket”. The first clue was “girl”, hence the chorus: “The girl threw the papers into the basket”. Next clue: “the rubbish”, “The girl threw the rubbish into the basket”. Final clue: “the teacher”, “The girl threw the teacher into the basket.” I never discovered if this was said on purpose or not. The teacher ignored it.

“No translation in the classroom” was preached for many years, and I see the question still crops up today. I never accepted this drawn out method for getting students to understand and speak. And then, one day, Shakespeare was dropped!!! I knew that the language was difficult; it

was difficult for native speakers too, but it offered much opportunity for discussion. This was made even clearer to me when Kennedy was murdered while I was teaching Julius Caesar.

In 1964, on Shakespeare's 400th birthday we had the temerity to produce Julius Caesar at school, directed by a diplomat's wife. Parents and friends all helped with making costumes and applying makeup. Students themselves built the stage, painted the scenery and fixed the lighting with the help of professionals. We had three performances remembered fondly by staff and students for years.

Of course no one had heard of HOTS, but all literature-loving teachers used similar methods without bothering about terminology. I found interest in literature expressed by our students in their contributions to "Echoes." There were some serious contributions as well as parodies such as "I Hear Israel Singing". And there was always a "drama critic" ready to report on our English school plays.

There was no ETAI yet, and of course no ETNI. The Jerusalem Post reported on some of our activities. School students were not interested in a teacher organization though they did care how school was run. The first English teachers' association I remember was called the Secondary School Teachers' Organization, run by a charming Italian teacher called Bianca. We had a publication of a rudimentary kind called "Notes and Papers". By the time ETAI came into being, thirty years ago, I had retired from school, but was teaching at Tel Aviv University, and I made use of their facilities to have the ETAI newspaper printed there. Colleagues helped me collate the pages. Contributions to our first newspapers consisted almost entirely of the doings of the local ETAI branches, and our publication was a mere shadow of today's Forum. I was the editor and did not find the job particularly interesting, though organizing the local Herzliya area branch was. We had a treasurer and we collected subscriptions. Meetings held in different schools were devoted to topical problems and the local inspector sometimes took part. I remember active branches in Jerusalem and Rehovot besides ours. The branches ceased functioning when ETAI became a truly national organization with an office and functionaries.

The successful regional mini conferences have more recently taken the place of those local activities.

After founding ETAI, Elite Olshtain founded ISRATESOL. After a while I became its president and was really sorry when we were obliged to amalgamate with ETAI for lack of participants. Israel could not really maintain two EFL teachers' organizations. I was glad to be able to attend many conferences of both IATEFL and TESOL in the UK and the US. There was no international criticism of Israel in those days.

When I went to teach at Tel Aviv University in what became the School of Education, I was able to involve students in some of my interests in international understanding. One semester I taught a course with a colleague subsidized by UNESCO. Incidentally, I have just recently been awarded a certificate from UNESCO signed by the Director-General in recognition of my work in the Schools Project.

Today I feel somewhat sorry for EFL teachers in Israel, faced with so many restrictions introduced largely to assist the less able students. We had all kinds of students when I taught, and we did our best to help those who needed it. No modules, almost no special conditions, but also no Internet, no e-mail, no mobile phones. How did we manage? We did. Life was so much simpler. Somehow we found solutions to our problems. I don't know how I would survive in today's environment. On the other hand I am full of admiration for the scope and variety of the lectures at ETAI conferences, and for the work done by ETAI's indefatigable volunteer EFL teachers all over the country. I wish you all continued success.

Esther Lucas taught mainly at high school and in teacher training at Tel Aviv University. After retiring, she continued to teach at various other institutions. She has an MA from Oxford and Tel Aviv, and a doctorate from Lueneburg, Germany. She came to this country during the Mandate, and is still active in international educational organizations.



ETAI IN DAYS OF YORE

Judy Segal (jodys@bezeqint.net)

In the early 1980s a rumour arose in the land that there was a new English teachers' association. The idea of such an association really appealed to me. It would be so beneficial to meet with other teachers, to be exposed to the latest ideas and research, to discuss classroom issues and just to be in touch with others. The problem was that no-one seemed to know who or what this association was. It remained a mystery until one day Dvora Ben-Meir called on behalf of ETAI and asked whether I would be interested in establishing a group in Petach Tikva.

And so began my long association with ETAI. At that time there were local groups that met on a regular basis to hear invited speakers from the field. At one point there were as many as 19 or 20 of these groups from Tiberias down to Eilat. The amazing thing was the willingness of the speakers to travel far and wide voluntarily in order to spread the word and enable the teachers to remain in touch. In Petach Tikva we met in an elementary school in the centre of town. Our first speaker was Sheila Been of Educational Television who spoke about reading comprehension and how much could be learnt from the text's environment before even reading the text. She was followed by Elana Shohamy whose expertise was testing. There was one occasion when Penny Ur agreed to come and speak for a whole morning at the beginning of the Pesach holiday. I was to pick her up in Tel Aviv. Long before I had left home she called to say that she was already in Tel Aviv as she had the opportunity of a lift at the crack of dawn.

One year, as is often customary, we wanted to invite the publishers to our last meeting before the summer break. The school explained that we couldn't use the premises for anything commercial and so I had to try and find an alternative venue. I first tried Histadrut Hamorim where there was a small hall. The person in charge was sympathetic but wanted us to register the

organization with the Histadrut. I explained that we were non-denominational but would check out the issue. Meanwhile we could use the hall.

Apart from the local groups there were at least two conferences a year, summer and winter. There were also sessions for the activists, those who organized the local groups. Time and thought was constantly invested in how to attract and interest more teachers in professional involvement and development. Support was never more than a phone call away.

At some point I became the national secretary and worked closely with Ephraim Weintraub, who was the chairperson. Ephraim lived, slept and ate ETAI. He was constantly exploring ways to involve more teachers. He was tireless in his efforts and saw the association grow impressively.

Although now retired I still enjoy coming to ETAI events and meeting others and hearing about what is happening in the field. I believe ETAI to be unique in that teachers care sufficiently to come voluntarily and give of their precious time. It is important to them to develop professionally. ETAI enables this to happen. All teachers have much to offer as well as to receive. I think that many of those who actively participate come to realize that whatever they do in their classrooms is of interest and their experiences are worth sharing.

May ETAI go from strength to strength and continue to grow and develop.

Judy Segal is enjoying retirement after some 40 years in education. She began as a general teacher in a Primary school in England. In Israel she had a varied career teaching English in primary and Junior High, working in Educational TV, teaching at Beit Berl College of Education and was also an Inspector for English in the Central District.

**Have you seen
the NEW ETAI website?
www.etai.org.il**



A JOURNEY DOWN MEMORY LANE

Nava Horovitz (horovm@netvision.net.il)



Hazel Camron ה"ת

A while ago I received a phone call from Babette Kaplan telling me that Hazel Camron had passed away. Although I had not been in touch with Hazel for some time, this sad news triggered so many memories of times past that I felt the urge to put pen to paper (rather finger to keyboard) and record some of my many memories of my connection with Hazel which I'm sure many of the readers of the Forum share.

Hazel Camron actually came on Aliyah twice, once in 1951 and again in 1961. After this second Aliyah, Hazel launched a long career in English teaching in high school in Ramat Hasharon, as an in-service trainer for educational television and as an Inspector for English in the Tel Aviv area. From 1984, as a retiree, Hazel devoted herself to volunteering -teaching English again in Ramat Hasharon, in ESRA and at Beit "Melinov", a home for retirees. In addition, Hazel published several books such as "On the Way to English" (1989), "New Ways to English" (1986) and "We All Want a Beautiful Israel" (1984). Hazel was always interested in helping "the less-able" learner, as they were defined in those days, and it was through her interest in these pupils that our paths first crossed.

Although I had met Hazel at several in-service training events, she "found" me teaching in a vocational high school with classes studying in the secretarial trend and preparing for the then vocational "gemer" matriculation exam. At the time, there were no published materials suitable for this population of Israeli pupils and I had

written my own and was using them in class. The Chief Inspector for English was Raphael Gefen and he, together with others in the Ministry, was interested in having more suitable materials in English available for pupils who need as much help and encouragement as possible. Acting as "go-between" and "matchmaker", Hazel introduced me and another English teacher, Talia Glass, working in similar conditions, to the Ministry project. I then went on with Talia to publish lots of material called "Office Situations" for the secretarial trend in the schools of the 80's. Later, I moved on to publishing textbooks for a variety of students.

Hazel's special gift was her conviction that every experienced teacher has something they can share for the benefit of other teachers. She always said that no matter what you take for granted in your own teaching, other teachers can learn from it. I think that it was this philosophy that gave me an affinity to the work and aims of ETAI and has guided me throughout the years in all my work in the teaching of English.

As Esther Lucas wrote to me: "I liked her and so I believe did everyone else who knew her. She was friendly, understanding and kind..... I think the English teachers' community has lost a great personality."

Hazel has left me with an important legacy which I hope I have passed on to pupils, teacher trainees and colleagues and that I will continue to do so.

Nava Horovitz, semi-retired teacher trainer at Talpiot College in Holon. Past Chair of ETAI and active member of the Executive Committee and Convening Committee for the ETAI 2010 International Conference.

IN MEMORY OF SHEILA BEEN

Dvora Ben Meir (benmeir@bezeqint.net)



Sheila Been ה"ת

For those of you who were privileged to have known Sheila Been, I am sure you are now picturing an elegant, soft-spoken, articulate, analytical, and charming woman. This is the Sheila Been that the veteran teachers among us will always remember.

For those of you who never had the opportunity to know her, I will try to draw a picture of a unique individual and personality for you to emulate. I was fortunate to

have had more "Sheila hours" than most of her many colleagues and friends and therefore, I think that my close connection with Sheila can help me depict her and her contribution to the EFL community in Israel and the world.

Sheila, her husband Eff and their three children made aliya from South Africa in 1963. She had been trained as a speech therapist and drama teacher in Johannesburg but turned to teaching English as did many other English-speaking olim. Her forte was drama, and so she opened The English Drama Circle in Herzlia, an innovative

framework in which children learned English through role-playing, songs and short plays. She eventually moved into high school EFL teaching where she realized that she needed an academic framework on which to base her teaching methods. She took part in the first intensive course for English teachers sponsored by The Planning Center in Jerusalem and was exposed to the leading lecturers in Israel. From then on, Sheila felt that she had become a professional English teacher and was ready to implement all that she had learned – mainly Audio-Lingual Methodology.

In the 1970s, Sheila joined the EFL team at Educational Television and began a new career of materials development and teacher training. It was at this institution that Sheila and I became colleagues and life-long friends.

I learned a great deal from just working together with Sheila. Sheila was a role model and mentor, a good listener and a creative practitioner. Sheila taught us all to question, to take risks and to monitor whatever we did. Upon being introduced to the Communicative Approach in the early 80s, Sheila questioned, took the risk of developing the earliest communicative materials in Israel and the world and monitored whether the principles were being implemented. Sheila was accepted warmly by the international EFL community and her contribution was greatly appreciated by material developers and teacher trainers all over the world.

Sheila moved on to commercial publishing and as usual proved to be a dedicated, hard-working and innovative editor. To the many writers she worked with she was a beacon of inspiration, a model of perfectionism and a caring, supportive colleague.

Sheila was an active member of the EFL community. She was a founding member and later chairperson of ETAI, a founding member and chairperson of Contact, the teacher-educators association, a member of ISRATESOL and the Ministry of Education English Committee. Her contribution to all of these organizations was significant. She held these positions with grace, modesty and professionalism, never seeking glory for herself.

In all the years of our working relationship and in the many hours we spent together, never once did I hear a harsh word or see a critical glance. In all the positions she held she was always the impeccable lady, speaking in well-modulated tones, demanding the respect of her colleagues and students. Sheila did not know the meaning of sarcasm, irritation or belittlement. She thought the best of the people she worked with and those whom she taught.

Sheila called herself a “workaholic”, but she also knew how to enjoy her children and grandchildren. She was so proud of them and adored being with them. She and her devoted husband moved to a retirement village, but unfortunately, Sheila’s health deteriorated and she was not able to enjoy the facilities offered. However, whenever I came to visit, she still was the gracious and caring Sheila that we had all known. Her loss certainly will be most felt by her husband and loving family. However, for those of us whose lives she touched so deeply, we feel the world is a poorer place without her presence. She left her mark on the English teaching profession in Israel, as well as on many teachers, students and her friends. Her contribution, her devotion and her friendship will always be treasured. May her memory be a light to guide us in our dealings with our pupils, friends and families.

LESSONS FROM SHEILA BEEN: IN MEMORIAM

Judy Yaron (judyyaron@yahoo.com)

Much of what has made me the educator I am today I learnt from Sheila.

Sheila was my editor for a number of years. Consequently, I was privileged to spend one-on-one quality time with her: long days and often even longer nights working on one text, one exercise or one activity - until she was convinced that we got it right.

It wasn’t easy. In fact, at times it was quite traumatic.

While writing “Window to the World” she would call me daily at 4 PM in order to review my work. And every afternoon at around 3:45 PM I could feel the knots in my stomach growing tighter and tighter as my anxiety

increased. I was petrified of what Sheila would have to say after going over my material with what she used to call her “lice comb”.

But, I am forever grateful and proud to have been her protégée. The following are but a few of the lessons she taught me.

- When “Television Tales” (a wonderfully rich textbook for the 8th grade) came out, teachers felt that some of the texts were too difficult. Sheila explained: “When a text is difficult, give an easy task. When a text is easy, give a challenging task.” This “rule of thumb” has been for me a practical way of creating lessons without

having to rewrite texts on different levels to meet the needs of heterogeneous classes.

- “Are you teaching or testing?” Sheila would repeatedly ask me, forcing me to re-examine tasks I had developed to ensure that the students had the tools, language and skills to perform.
- “Have you checked the exercise?” was another one of her “favorite” questions. “Of course,” would be my response, having gone over the answers of the exercise in my head. “In writing ... “ she persisted.

“Oops!”

Initially, I admit, I found it tedious and annoying. “Nu, really!” being stubborn and somewhat over confident I would argue.

But, soon I discovered that by answering in writing even the simplest questions, and solving even the most basic exercise, as if I were a student, I would discover problems and obstacles I tended to overlook when doing them in my head.

- Sheila hated jumbled words and cryptic vocabulary activities. “Remember,” she would tell me, “not all people like riddles and some students get stressed, so if

it doesn’t have any real language value – don’t go there! ‘Fun’ is not good enough. Create fun activities that are also meaningful. Or, create meaningful activities that are also fun!”

- Finally, there was the question, Why?

Why are you teaching this item?

Why are you asking this question?

Why do you want the students to perform this activity?

Sheila taught me that if I cannot answer the question “Why?” convincingly, then there is no real point in doing the exercise, asking the question or teaching an item - even if it is in the book. Sheila taught me that even the best of textbooks don’t always withstand the “why” question with every class or student.

It is with a mixture of deep sadness, pride, and love for a wonderful lady and a great teacher that I share these lessons with you and express my sincere condolences to her family.

Judy Yaron is currently the National Yachad Accelerated Learning Project (YALP) Coordinator based in Melbourne, Australia. She is a former editor of the ETAI Forum.

Call for articles!



The deadline for submissions to the Spring 2010 edition of the ETAI Forum is **February 20th, 2010** and we are anxiously awaiting your contributions. The deadline for the Summer 2010 edition is **May 10th, 2010**. Make your voice heard!

Submit all contributions as WORD (.doc) documents as an attachment to an e-mail to etaiforum@gmail.com. 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, do not exceed 4,000 words.

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, include brief biodata about your professional life, including where you teach and any other significant information. Include your e-mail address.

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HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS AND THE LITERATURE PROGRAM

Dr. Lea Kirshenberg (lkirshenberg@gmail.com)

The new Bagrut requirements focus on reading and writing skills. These should be taught and practised in the light of a content based approach while emphasizing language in context. The challenge is to do this in an interesting way that motivates students to read and write while truly enjoying the process.

Impossible mission? Difficult perhaps, but definitely possible.

Choosing interesting, relevant texts, geared to the interests of Israeli students is the first step. The variety of the texts, such as essays, articles, stories, poems (from the course book currently used in class, from the Internet and from the extensive and intensive reading selection) is equally important. A thorough analysis of the text, using a large variety of reading strategies should be followed by carefully guided writing tasks.

All these reading and writing strategies can be applied to the project students have to prepare in the tenth and eleventh grade. The oral presentation of the project, a requirement of the Oral Bagrut, is another way to combine and integrate all domains covered in the syllabus.

Why is Reading Comprehension so important?

Acquisition of high education and successful integration into a modern economy require a high level of proficiency in reading comprehension and high quality communication skills. Due to the enormous quantity of knowledge accumulated over the years, students will not be able to rely solely on the knowledge acquired at school. They will have to develop higher order thinking abilities in order to access information, analyse and critically evaluate it and apply this knowledge to different contexts.

The act of reading and the skills to be taught have been reconceptualized. Reading is now seen as an active search for meaning instead of a passive, mechanical translation from written to oral code. It is an active process in which the reader constructs meaning from text cues.

Examining the concept of reading and reading comprehension leads to the subject of literature. The new approach to teaching literature centers on the need to develop higher order thinking skills – HOTS – to enhance Reading Comprehension – to improve and deepen understanding and interpretation of texts.

According to the policy of the Ministry of Education, the whole educational system is now moving from a focus on rote learning towards a focus on higher order thinking strategies and deep understanding, as stated in

the “Pedagogical Horizons for Learning” document (A. Zohar, 2007, Ministry of Education).

The concept Higher Order Thinking Skills seems frightening and has evoked emotional reactions on the part of teachers who support or reject this approach to teaching reading in general and literature in particular. The HOTS have caused unnecessary confusion and endless “hot” debates. Actually, a deeper look at what lies behind the term may reveal the fact that many teachers have been teaching and developing HOTS in their classes for years without knowing or using the formal term. Therefore, no dramatic changes in the methods of teaching reading comprehension are required, other than a stronger emphasis on what has been done already by many teachers throughout the years.

And what are these famous HOTS? They actually derive from cognitive categories in Bloom’s taxonomy.

The concept of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) refers to complex thinking that goes beyond basic recall of facts. The HOTS refer to the thinking and problem solving strategies that enable students to access, sort and digest enormous amounts of information, solve problems and make choices and decisions. HOTS refer mainly to analysis, synthesis, application and evaluation. The student first analyses the knowledge, the information. Then he considers next step options and finally constructs a new product, decision or value.

The main objective is to develop a deeper understanding of the text by using reading strategies based on Higher Order Thinking (HOTS) processes. Putting the accent on facts and recall doesn’t in turn spontaneously generate higher order thinking.

When should we start teaching HOTS, where and to whom?

I think we have to adopt this approach to reading instruction from the very beginning. Reading is not just decoding words, but finding the meaning between the lines, behind and beyond the lines. Perhaps the best definition I have ever found concerning reading appears in the following old Chinese proverb:

*Not to let a word get in the way of its sentence
Nor to let a sentence get in the way of its intention
But to send your mind out to meet the intention as a guest
That is understanding.*

Chinese proverb, fourth century B.C.E.

Reading is indeed a dialogue between the reader and the text and all along the process of reading new

meanings are uncovered and a new mass of knowledge is accumulated.

There is no linear sequence between lower order thinking skills, knowledge and basic understanding, and Higher Order Thinking skills, analysis, synthesis, application and evaluation. Every text, at every level, can provide the opportunity not only to identify and recall facts, but to compare, combine facts, classify, manipulate information, analyse, discover new meanings, evaluate, solve problems and apply to real life situations.

And who needs HOTS?

Everybody does! But mainly weak students or students with learning disabilities do. Good readers automatically activate prior knowledge, find the most important ideas, ask questions about the author and the text, use imagination, make inferences, recall what they have read and guess when comprehension breaks down.

Good readers are not even aware of the ongoing dialogue carried out in their mind while reading (thinking of questions, making connections / inferences about what the story is about, deciding whether a piece of information is significant, summarizing what they have read). This ongoing and simultaneous process – the dialogue within the mind – metacognition – thinking about how they think - is hard for children with special needs. Their energies are absorbed in the decoding process. Therefore, they need to be taught the processes of comparing, classifying, etc that may seem so obvious to the experienced reader.

Are reading comprehension and literature two different fields?

No, reading comprehension is not limited to unseen passages, whatever that term may mean. To the best of my knowledge, these passages are clearly seen by both students and teachers. Reading comprehension and all the skills and strategies that have to be developed apply to any reading done in class be it of a story, a poem, an essay, an ad, a letter and so on, or at home through carefully guided extensive reading.

And how should it be done?

Predicting and anticipating content by analysing a title or a paragraph and guessing the following paragraph teach sequence of events. Graphic organizers can encourage students to convert a mass of data / information / ideas into a graphic map. To create the map students must concentrate on relationships between items, prioritize information, determine what is important and should be focused on and where each item should be placed on the map. Deleting irrelevant sentences, putting paragraphs or sentences in correct order, summarizing, evaluating

arguments supporting or rejecting a claim (for and against) and solving problems are only a few of the activities that can encourage students to use and develop HOTS.

We, as teachers, must remember that we teach English, not unseens, listening comprehension, writing or grammar as isolated topics. We teach everything at the same time and everything in context. In real life we do not decide that Sundays are devoted to speaking, Mondays - to reading, Tuesdays - to listening, etc. Likewise, at school we must integrate domains and combine oral activities with reading and writing activities involving grammar analysis, thus creating interesting, enjoyable and creative lessons where real effective development of English verbal and writing proficiency is achieved while both teachers and students enjoy the process.

And let me finish with the words I used at the end of the first paragraph: Impossible mission? Difficult perhaps, but definitely possible!!

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CHOREOGRAPH YOUR LESSON

Eleanor Satlow (satlow_m@netvision.net.il)

Teaching for over 30 years at the Jerusalem Academy High School has had its effect on my teacher persona and I've found that the metaphor of music and dance can be helpful in organizing my lessons – how they're planned and how they unfold (and we Israeli teachers know that things very often do “unfold” in our classrooms in unexpected ways).

Consider, first of all, the music. Let's take a leaf out of the classical composer's book and contemplate the sonata, a useful model, with its fast-slow-faster structure, for the average 45-minute lesson.

The first movement, **allegro moderato**, is your opening flourish: it challenges your students, wakes everyone up and brings them all together, establishing your presence and avowing your expertise.

The second movement, **andante**, is lyrical and dreamy, compensation for the challenge posed by the first and a reward for paying attention. It consists of the “tachlis” part of the lesson, everyone working nicely and quietly (ha!) in groups, pairs, alone or with you as conductor.

The third movement, in this case **allegro**, is meant to be impressive and fun; it picks up the pace again, waking up those who slept through the **andante** and bringing everyone back to the here and now. Tell them what you've done, summarize, quiz the vocabulary, and then, when they're least expecting it – the lesson's over, leaving everyone with a taste for more. Or for the sandwich waiting in their bag.

The first movement, the opening volley, might be built something like this:

Exposition introduces the subject (often two subjects) with elements that are complementary and contrasting (or even contradictory, as in a spirited discussion or dialogue).

Development does just that: developing the subject, actually including a sort of improvisation.

Recapitulation tells them what you've told them, tidily recapping what's happened so far. This last bit brings your audience – I mean students -- back together, and puts you back on stage.

Consider, next on the program, the dance. And if we agree that “all the classroom's a stage,” and that we teachers are all frustrated performers anyway, the next item up for scrutiny is **choreography**. What's my style? Quiet soloist, commanding a presence from a single spotlighted point? Extroverted jumper, leaping from

upstage to down while explaining the third condition for the 452nd time? Pas-de-deux expert, partnering with one or another kid in a vibrant dialogue, then moving on to the next partner? Prima ballerina or subdued member of the corps de ballet?

Do you position yourself on a chair behind a desk? Sit on the chair back, feet on its seat? On the desk (skirt-wearers beware)? Stuck in a corner? Glued to the board? By the way, this might sound basic, but if you haven't learned yet how to stand by the board and write on it without turning your back to the class you need a refresher, because that's a huge mistake.

Wherever you are in the classroom, remember that it's yours – take the podium, raise the baton, smile (but not before Hanukah), and knock 'em dead. Be aware of your eye-contact prejudices -- we all have a tendency to look at one side of the room or the other; the light from the window can attract our gaze, or the door can be more interesting. The extroverts in the front of the room or the high achievers in the back left corner – all can serve as eye magnets which must be more equitably distributed around the room if we want everyone equally involved in that 230th version of the lesson on indirect speech.

Anyone heard of coaching, have a friend who's a coach or been to a coaching session? Here are some tips from the coaching field: Listen to and be aware of all the components in the environment. Have your antennae out for elements such as how kids are dressed (What could that mean?); what they're doing with their hands (including messing with phones, iPods, tissues, their history homework); where they're sitting and where they've located themselves in the room and in the group; where their heads are even if their faces are staring at you in a fantastic imitation of attention (Where could they be? Is there a math test today? That girl who came in late – what happened to her on the way to school?). If you take even a short, unobtrusive breath through your nose you'll find you've bought yourself some time and some mental resources to deal with a latecomer, a cell-phone delinquent, or a crackling bag of Bissli.

Other elements begin before your dance hits the stage, such as in the hall on the way to or from class or being ambushed on the way to the staff room. Dealing with this is part of how we are perceived in the classroom. Our relationship with our students is first of all a human interaction; we can expect this relationship to develop with civility and respect. This is related to classroom management, formerly called discipline. In fact, what

we're doing is managing the classroom in the most artistic, creative way possible.

Here's How it Might Look in Real Life

Our lesson is about an article for reading comprehension. Here's a plan for integrating it into the perfect sonata of a lesson:

Allegro Moderato:

Exposition – Preview the topic of an article, ask questions, a few vocabulary items on the board, elicit examples.

Development – develop the theme, hand out the article, ask the students to skim and scan for specific information, perhaps including the words on the board. Write three serious comprehension questions on the board that came up in the discussion. Remember these for later.

Recap – Agreement / disagreement with the thesis of the article, relate it to our lives, figure out what we've learned. This is when you write the homework on the board. This may be connected to today's lesson or prepare for the next one. Specify what to bring. Remember that once the lesson ends and the break begins, you are history! (English? We had English today?) We do not want to find ourselves at the end of the lesson with chairs scraping and everyone talking, saying: "And don't forget...".

That is a foolproof recipe for forgetting.

Andante: Read the article and answer the comprehension questions from the board, perhaps in pairs or threes. This will also increase the decibels in the room from piano to forte, which is as it should be. (Here you take attendance – silently.)

Allegro: Brainstorm words we've learned, quick informal quiz on them. Go back to components of the article; check that the students retained the message. Quiz questions: What are you bringing on Thursday? What does ____ mean? How do I say ____ in English? Ask me a question about the article! Ask ____ a question about the article!

Hafsaka – Have a good day.

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.

TEACHING ADULTS – A WHOLE DIFFERENT WORLD?

Sarah Dembinsky (Sarah26759@gmail.com)

After teaching in schools for over 25 years I thought it was time to face new challenges. The thought of entering a classroom full of students my own age or even older (!) filled me with both delight and horror. The thought of teaching English to business people, Members of Knesset, senior board members, hi-tech professionals and others filled me with apprehension and caused me to question my own ability and knowledge. However, upon entering a classroom populated by adults, it became clear that students are students no matter how old they are. They enter the classroom with the same apprehension, nervousness, and, in some cases, overconfidence and arrogance, as all students do. They look at the clock, they fidget, they doodle, they chatter but they also ask questions, get involved in discussions and enjoy the learning experience.

The wonderful opportunity of teaching adults in many different situations, in different sized groups and also of all different levels has given me new experiences and insights.

I find that I spend more time actually teaching and less time on discipline or giving instructions or directions

than in school. The lesson time is 45, 60 or 90 minutes and very little time is wasted. (Although there are always those who come in late or leave early!) I also find myself preparing a great deal of material and making sure that there is always more than needed for the lesson. As a teacher of adults I have to be very aware of who is in front of me and what their requirements are. A great deal of pre course preparation is required. Potential students are interviewed and tested in order to provide appropriate material and relevant lessons. Adult learners are very clear about what they want to learn but not always realistic about their level or the level they need to reach.

Groups must be organized not only by ability but also by the hierarchy within the company. There are some companies where the CEO does not want to learn with his department heads or general workers. I have to be aware of different learning styles and vary techniques. As in school there are students with a huge variety of abilities and learning styles and the teacher must be able to deal with different situations.

I have the privilege of being able to teach groups of

different sizes from individual lessons to groups of 12+. If only everyone could teach in groups of 12 wouldn't our job be easier? I also teach in different environments. For example, I maybe teach in a student's home in the morning, in an office in the afternoon and at neutral premises like a coffee shop, library or classroom in the evening. Each of these environments influences the student and teacher. Many older students feel much more comfortable on home ground. They like the security of familiar surroundings whether it is at the workplace or their home.

Our students in school often say that if what is done in class isn't part of the Bagrut exam then they shouldn't have to learn it. It seems that the main reason school pupils learn English is to pass the Bagrut. The reasons the adult learns English vary. There are those who learn due to professional requirements like a promotion, a new position or relocation. There are those who are told to take the course by their superior. This can sometimes, but not always, cause friction between teacher and student but so far I have overcome this well. There are those who study solely for personal satisfaction and take great pride in the fact that they are studying. Learning must have relevance to real life tasks organized around life/work situations. They need to improve their English in order to perform better in some aspects on their lives. Many of the students are internally motivated and this sparks self confidence which in turn creates higher self esteem and a better atmosphere. Sometimes there are students who aren't willing to take responsibility for their learning but this occurs less among adult learners than in school.

The adult learner may feel anxious and lack confidence due to prior failure. There is also a further concern and worry about their ability to learn as they age. Many of the students haven't been in a formal classroom environment for many years and take some time to adjust to the situation. Although homework is not a priority, I recommend that students review the material at home. This is challenging for older students whose time is limited due to other responsibilities and commitments.

The adult learner brings a wealth of knowledge and life experiences to the classroom. These can enrich discussion, bring added value to different topics and open the classroom to a huge number of subjects.

As a teacher of adults:

- a. Know your student.
- b. Use appropriate materials
- c. Be encouraging and patient
- d. Be ready to receive criticism on a regular basis
- e. Be ready to change direction

Familiar? You bet!

The following are examples of material that were written in order to help very different adult students.

Example one is for junior managers at a cement factory aiming to improve their writing skills.

Writing prompt: Ibrahim and Shlomo, the engineering and production managers, were going over some of the production reports of the manufacturing plant in Israel. The plant wasn't meeting its quota of fuel oil and there were reports of other problems.

There were several important contracts in the pipeline and at the current rate of production the plant wouldn't even come close to meeting its delivery schedule for the first quarter.

The biggest problem was that the kiln had to be shut down on a regular basis due to the new safety regulations. Also the loading area was being transferred to a new section causing delays in transportation.

Task: Write a memo or email to your department explaining the new concerns you have over the loading area transfer and new safety regulations.

Example two: The student is an interior designer who is working with many overseas clients and needed to improve his spoken English in his field. Using this short article I introduced new vocabulary and created a subject for discussion.

There are plenty of tricks with color that can be used to **enhance** the size of room/s in a house. Careful use of color can offer a simple, but effective way of making a home feel cozier. One should follow these design rules to **transform** an existing living space into a dream home

To make a room appear larger-

- choose from the cool end of the color wheel.
- paint all surfaces the same color.
- use the deepest tones of color near the floor and the lightest shades on the ceiling.

So, is teaching adults a whole different world? My answer to this question is yes and no. What do you think?

Sarah Dembinsky is a wife and a mother of three, a teacher of English, an enthusiastic cook and still a Manchester City supporter.

LET'S NOT BE AFRAID OF (TEACHING) GRAMMAR

Iris Shenkman (iris1648@yahoo.com)

Grammar – YES! Grammar – NO! Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

Doesn't that fluctuating, inconsistent view drive you crazy?

The question really isn't if we should teach grammar. Everyone deep down inside knows that accuracy, and to some extent fluency, cannot be achieved without a firm basis of grammar. Kirshenber (2007) emphasizes that "the question is no longer whether grammar should be taught, many of us still find it hard to believe that we could ever do with out it, but how it should be taught (p.22)." I take this a step further and say that the questions we should be asking and answers we should be seeking are: How? When? and What?

Once we answer these questions we will no longer be afraid to teach grammar. Subsequently, our pupils will realize that we know what we are doing and will no longer be afraid to learn grammar. Young (2008) summed it up by saying, "Love it. Hate it. It's here to stay (p.15)." Grammar is important, and can be learned if it is made relevant, logical and fun! Let's not be afraid to teach or learn grammar.

One of my most important goals and beliefs is that grammar must be taught in context, otherwise it will remain a bunch of rules that are easily forgotten. The usual teaching scenario is the teacher giving the rules. The teacher will usually give a few examples and then ask, "Who wants to give a sentence?" Then the teacher will usually give a worksheet of sentences that has absolutely no connection to anything else, or will sometimes use their textbook, which isn't much better. Teachers seem to expect that the pupils internalize proper grammar without the necessary and important repetition, guided practice and more practice. Guided practice is imperative, because "Practice does not make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect." If the pupils make mistakes they will fossilize mistakes. Guide and teach before you test!

What do I mean by context and how can we use it successfully? Of course, we have to use our textbooks. They are filled with chapters that supposedly teach grammar. We can, we must, use our books, but it is our duty to provide lessons of enrichment in which we focus on one topic at a time. If we are teaching a section that has to do with food, or the Olympics, or travel, or sport, we should stick to that topic and not bring in a story or worksheet to practice a grammar point with sentences on a different topic.

We should frequently take advantage of what is going on in the pupils' lives. When the holidays come around, use them. The days preceding Lag B'omer are a perfect time to teach, review, and strengthen so many structures and tenses. The pupils are all consumed with collecting wood so discuss it with them: When are you collecting wood? Where are you keeping the wood until the bonfire? Who is helping you at the bonfire? What are you bringing to the bonfire to eat? Pupils will happily and successfully use Wh questions and answers when the topic is important to them.

Days like Holocaust Remembrance Day and Memorial Day demand that we put the usual material aside. When pupils at any level go home and tell about a moving and informative English lesson relating to the day that they had, it makes a good impression on parents. We must cater to our pupils' affective and cognitive side. We must always set a good example and work on teaching values.

The following is a sample lesson:

On Memorial Day a very serious reading and writing lesson can be implemented with 5th and 6th graders using the three main tenses. The board is divided into three sections and together we write short stories - no pictures, no flashcards, just talking and writing, talking and reading, talking and using the language in context.

← past	present ↓	future →
<u>HOLOCAUST DAY</u>	<u>MEMORIAL DAY</u>	<u>INDEPENDENCE DAY</u>
Last week was Holocaust Day. It was a very sad day. We heard a siren. We stood quietly for two minutes. We thought about the six million Jewish people murdered by the Nazis ... men, women, boys and girls. WE MUST REMEMBER!	Today is Memorial Day. It is a very sad day. We hear a siren. We stand quietly for two minutes. We think about all our soldiers who were killed. Our soldiers fight and protect Israel. We love our soldiers.	Tomorrow will be Independence Day. It will be a very happy day. It will be Israel's 61st birthday. We are happy that Israel is a free country. The fun will start tonight. There will be shows, parties and fireworks all over the country. Tomorrow we will have a barbeque.

This is just an example. You can compare Holocaust and Memorial Days (past and present) or Memorial and Independence Days (present and future) or all three. You can make these stories shorter or longer depending

on your classes. It can be done in the 4th grade. It can be done in junior high or in high school. You guide the writing. You ask guided WH questions. You encourage them to ask WH questions. You write the stories in the younger grades. Ask them to help you spell words. You may allow older or more advanced pupils to pupils write on the board. You read together and then you or they ask reading comprehension questions once the stories are completed. This is all oral practice of the answers in preparation for an optional worksheet (see Appendix) in which they will write their answers in full sentences using correct sentence structure and correct grammar. Then they copy. It is a serious and different lesson.

HOMEWORK

1. Read the stories to your family.
2. Happy Independence Day

I am not an avid fan of having pupils copy lengthy material from the board. The time is better spent in reading and doing oral communicative activities. However, since they participated in the creation of these texts, they deserve to take them home.

There are so many topics that interest our pupils. Whether the topic is the circus, going on a safari, magic and Harry Potter or birthdays, you must build your lesson on specific vocabulary and sentences. Teach it orally first and then practice in sentences in preparation for the reading and writing. From your motivation and warm-up through the developmental practice, conclusion and evaluation, stick to the same topic and vocabulary. A reading passage and / or worksheet will reinforce the same topical vocabulary so that you can focus on the grammar structure that you are using in the lesson.

The golden rule in language teaching:

When teaching new grammar, do it in the context of known vocabulary. When teaching new vocabulary, use only known structures for practice. The lessons relate one to the other. Take the topic “The Circus,” for example. You might want to go to the circus, virtually of course, if you have read that it has come to town. First teach lots of interesting, new words like acrobat, juggler, lion tamer, trapeze artist, tightrope walker, which you can practice in singular and plural. The next day, do role playing and practice the present progressive:

“Look, I am a juggler. I am juggling four balls at a time.”

“Look, I am a trapeze artist. I am swinging way up so high.”

Or use the present simple to tell a story: “Every year we go to the circus ...” Whatever you need to reinforce and review can be done, but again stick to the topic. To teach effectively you must carefully consider how you introduce, teach and review a grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Grammar must be used and not abused.

If we teach grammar in a memorable way, our pupils will remember it. If we teach it grammar an enjoyable way, they will enjoy it, and so will we. Learning grammar can be fun by using songs, acting, role play games and action. Most tenses describe some sort of action so let’s let the kids do grammar. For example, on the simplest level:

A. SONG (which can be rapped or chanted)

This is here and that is there.

This and that are everywhere.

These are here and those are there.

These and those are everywhere.

The older the kids, the more songs there are that can be exploited to teach and practice more complex grammatical structures (Solomonov, 2005).

B. JOKES AND RIDDLES are an excellent way to learn WH questions and are a motivating way to practice questions and sentences in a kid-friendly way. They will have many jokes and riddles to share with you as well. Encourage them to share them using correct English.

For example:

1. Where is the only place that success comes before work? Success comes before work only in the dictionary.
2. Why did the boy throw the clock out of the window? He wanted to see time fly.
3. Why did the girl throw the butter out of the window? She wanted to see the butter fly.
4. Why didn’t the skeleton want to go to the party? The skeleton had nobody/ no body to dance with.
5. What is black and white and red all over? An embarrassed zebra is black and white and red all over.
6. What is black and white and read all over? (You must do this orally). A newspaper is black and white and read all over.
7. What time is it when the clock strikes thirteen? When the clock strikes thirteen it is time to buy a new clock.

8. Which three keys cannot open locks?
Monkeys, donkeys and turkeys cannot open locks.
9. Why did the chicken cross the street? The chicken crossed the street to get to the other side.

Pay attention that answering in full sentences is important. The pupils can learn these jokes by heart to present in class. "Knock, knock" jokes are great as well.

Knock, knock. Who's there? Apple. Apple who?
(Do this three or four times)

Knock, knock. Who's there? Orange. Orange who?
Aren't you glad it's not another apple?

What is Grammar?

Now that we know that grammar must be taught with interesting topics and relevant contexts, there are some additional points which must be taken into consideration.

- A. **FORM** – The grammatical structure is formed by using certain words.

For example: I am / He is big boy/boys I go / He goes We have been

The form is not retained through irrelevant and non-contextual practice that teachers often over emphasize. By saying "We ARE sitting" stressing the "to be" and "...ing" will not cause the pupils to learn the form. The textbooks and workbooks provide plenty of practice. So the teacher in her enrichment lessons and creative worksheets must work otherwise.

Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance that the teacher, or student teacher, impeccably knows the structure that s/he is teaching. Knowing the material "On the teacher's level" is a personal goal of every teacher. Many native speakers speak English but do not know the correct names and explanations of some grammatical items, and many non-native teachers make mistakes that are unacceptable. It is our duty and responsibility to improve our own English so that we do not teach mistakes.

- B. **USAGE** Our pupils will understand what they hear or say, read or write, because each grammatical structure has an inherent meaning.

1. Use examples of language that are grammatically correct and have a logical, communicative value. Examples such as: *I have a dinosaur.* OR *I am standing* (when the child is not standing, but sitting in the classroom) have little meaning.

They do not help us teach our pupils to be logical or organized and we certainly are not teaching them to think. So always have meaning in your teaching. This can also be more easily achieved with your contexts.

2. Usage also means that some structures have more than one meaning. For example, the present progressive sometimes means the future (intent, a plan).

I am going to the movies tonight.

The present progressive sometimes is a call for help or a polite request:

The phone is ringing. The baby's crying.

All the examples in a particular lesson should be consistent. We should have several lessons to teach the multiple usages of a structure.

- C. **USE** – Use is the way in which a speaker uses a particular language form to communicate about something in particular and is often neglected in the classroom. The use of a form may be described in terms of its real function or communicative purpose. We have to provide activities that allow the pupils to practice speaking and writing for a purpose. For example, the use of YES/NO questions has significance when you do not see the person whom you are relating to. They are used when we are on the telephone. So set the scene, have the props and let the pupils communicate in context.

I recently saw an excellent grammar lesson in the 6th grade where the teacher taught the form and function of Yes / No questions in the present progressive enjoyably by reading "Where's Spot?" The kids loved it, they got the point, and they communicated orally. They also communicated in writing as they made their own books as a performance-based task. They really learned.

Don't make the classroom learning experience full of examples that show only form/structure without a context. Take all of the above into consideration when planning and executing your lessons. Do not rush.

JOKE: Teacher 1: What did you do last lesson?

Teacher 2: Well, I did the present progressive.
Next lesson I'll do the present simple.

Teaching must be logical, methodical, thorough and meaningful.

Points to remember:

1. Choose a context and stick to it for the entire lesson. The topic and vocabulary that you choose will be

used throughout the lesson: in the presentation, the practice, the reading, the writing, the worksheets, the homework etc.

2. When teaching and practicing grammar it is useful to base the lesson on prior knowledge. Remind the pupils of a structure they know well and then make a comparison or contrast with the new one.
3. The new structure is practiced orally first and then in reading and writing. There must be a sufficient amount of drilling. The drilling, however, must be as varied as possible and take into account the chronological age and academic level of the pupils. Demes da Cruz (2006) suggests that we vary the tasks to enhance motivation. We have to develop a potpourri of activities to take into the classroom. Remember even textbook activities can be adapted and improved.
 - a. An EFL joke: Q: What is the dictionary definition of a drill?? A: A device for boring people.
This is usually true, but not in your class or mine. We want to have as much variety as there are individuals in our heterogeneous classes.
 - b. With all the drilling, please remember that there must always be controlled practice before free practice, and a lot of classroom activity (Hubbard et al, 1999).
 - c. Remember that we always go from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract taking into consideration the level and age of our pupils.
 - d. In controlled practice the teacher initiates and slowly allows for more and more freedom. Some examples of drills, in the correct order of difficulty are: listening, discriminating, repeating, substituting, expanding, cueing, changing (Hubbard et al, 1999).
 - e. In free practice or production the opposite is true. The teacher and other pupils listen. The teacher repeats or paraphrases what the pupil said, or corrects.

4. REMEMBER: USAGE AND USE. Don't use random sentences. Stick to one function of the structure at a time. Stick to the vocabulary and the context – the communicative purpose.

I hope that I have motivated and encouraged all of you to try other ways to lead your pupils to greater achievements. Most importantly, I hope that you will no longer be wary of (teaching) grammar. That's my message.

I can hear the wheels turning. I can imagine the brainstorming that you are doing to get some really good contexts. I am sure that you are saying to yourselves "Let's do grammar!"

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Appendix:

Name School

Date

I. Answer the questions about Holocaust Day.

1. What kind of day was Holocaust Day?

.....

2. What did we think about last week on Holocaust Day?

.....

3. What did we do during the siren?

.....

II. Answer the questions about Memorial Day.

1. What kind of day is Memorial Day?

.....

2. What do we think about on this day?

.....

3. What do our wonderful soldiers do?

.....

III. Answer the questions about Independence Day.

1. What kind of day will Independence Day be? Why?

.....

2. What will we have tomorrow?

.....

3. When will the fireworks and shows take place?

.....

4. How do you celebrate Independence Day?

.....

Happy Independence Day! IRIS

COPING STYLES AS MEDIATORS OF TEACHERS' CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Ramon Lewis (r.lewis@latrobe.edu.au) and Joel Roache (j.roache@latrobe.edu.au)

Classroom management

Recent research in Australia, China and Israel has addressed the effectiveness of a number of classroom management techniques, (Romi, S., Lewis, R. & Katz, Y., 2009; Lewis, R., Romi, S., Qui, X. & Katz, Y., 2008; Lewis, R., Romi, S., Xing, Q. & Katz, Y., 2005). These studies reported the impact of various techniques on a range of outcomes, including levels of misbehaviour and responsibility, attitude to schoolwork, and connectedness to school. Two management techniques, hinting and involvement, appear moderately successful in all three national settings, whereas recognition of responsible behaviour and discussions with misbehaving students about the impact their behaviour has on others is linked to

greater responsibility, less distraction, and more positive students. In contrast, teacher aggression, comprising strategies such as group punishment, humiliation and yelling in anger, appears to be associated with less student responsibility more student misbehaviour and higher levels of negative student attitudes towards learning in classrooms.

Teaching, stress and coping

The cost of workplace stress is a critical issue in many professions, especially those involved in social services, such as teaching. (Roache, J., 2008). If a teacher has limited or ineffective coping responses, the result of high levels of workplace stress can be burnout, a condition

resulting in cynicism, depersonalization of students, and emotional exhaustion in response to chronic stress, all of which are particularly prevalent in jobs where individuals work with people, whether patients, students, or the public at large. (Fleishman, J. A., 1984). According to Roache (2008), the sources of teacher workplace stress include the following: factors intrinsic to the job (e.g. classroom management); role in organization (e.g. role ambiguity or conflict); career development (e.g. fixed contracts); work relationships (e.g. poor collegiate support); and organizational structure / climate (e.g. little involvement in decision-making).

Classroom management and issues of behaviour and discipline have long been reported as consistent sources of teacher stress, especially in the secondary school sector, which affect levels of job satisfaction, intention to leave, and relationships with students and colleagues (Australian Education Union, 2007; Austin, V., Shah, S. & Muncer, S., 2005; Jarvis, M., 2002). However, this needn't be the case. There has been extensive research into classroom management and the effectiveness of various styles of discipline, much of which can be implemented in schools relatively quickly, cheaply, and with almost immediate results. (Lewis, R., 2009).

Coping & Classroom management

This paper examines the relationship between the stress teachers feel as a result of student misbehaviour, the coping strategies they use in response to that stress, and the management techniques they use to deal with the student misbehaviour. Chan (1998) investigated the role of coping strategies used by teachers in mediating the effects of stressors on psychological distress. According to his findings, the direct effect of stressors on distress is sizably reduced when coping strategies are involved. Coping can thus mitigate or exacerbate psychological distress regardless of the stressors confronted. Chan's findings also indicate that the effects of stressors on distress can be conceptualized as effects mediated through the use of coping strategies.

Lewis (1999) examined teachers' estimations of the stress that arises when they are unable to discipline students as they would ideally prefer and the way teachers cope with any stress that arises. The results indicated that teachers who report more stress are those most interested in empowering their students in the decision-making process. Associated with increased concern is a greater use of such coping responses as worry, self-blame, tension reduction, wishful thinking and keeping concerns to oneself, often resulting in a greater tendency to get sick as a result of stress. According to Lewis, these findings suggested the need for professional development

curricula for teachers to assist them in effectively sharing power with students and in reflecting upon a range of more productive coping strategies.

Individuals generally refer to a certain repertoire of coping strategies when faced with stressful events. However, the choice of these strategies can be influenced by the situational context of the stressor. In general, individual coping behaviours may include: problem solving skills (e.g. time management, direct action); personality traits such as self-belief, mastery, resilience, hardiness, and a sense of moral purpose; and other strategies, such as positive appraisal of events, reward substitution, passive acceptance, and selective ignoring (Austin, V., Shah, S. & Muncer, S., 2005; Fleishman, 1984; Pearlin, L. I. & Schooler, C., 1978). Critically, teachers with more adaptive coping strategies show a lower degree of burnout than teachers with coping strategies based on ignoring or avoiding problematic situations (Van Dick, R. & Wagner, U. , 2001). Adaptive coping strategies, such as solving the problem, working hard, and relaxing, have been associated with better health outcomes.

Method

Sample: The 515 teachers who participated in this study were drawn from two samples. There were 363 working in 30 secondary schools in the North Eastern region of Victoria, Australia and an additional 152 teachers from four secondary schools in the North Eastern Metropolitan region of Victoria. In total, the 34 schools sampled in this study were situated in a range of socio-economic areas and had student populations ranging from less than 150 to over 600.

Measures

Participating teachers were asked to complete a survey with reference to their 'next' class. The questions focused on assessing the level of misbehaviour in this class, the stress associated with this misbehaviour, their perceptions of the way they attempted to cope with this stress and the management techniques they employed in response to the misbehaviour. Two questions were designed to measure perceived level of student misbehaviour and levels of teacher concern. The first asked after the number of students expected to misbehave ranging from *None to Nearly all*, the second ask how concerned with misbehaviour and discipline teachers were, with answers ranging from *Of no concern to Of major concern*. Both were coded 1 to 5. An additional 24 items assessed six frequently discussed discipline techniques. Responses were on a 6-point scale indicating how frequently the teacher acted in the described manner when dealing with misbehaviour. Responses ranged from 1 – *Never* to 6 – *Nearly always*.

Teachers indicated the extent to which they:

- Recognise the appropriate behaviour of individual students or the class;
- Give consequences to students who misbehave, increasing them if necessary;
- Talk with students about their impact on others, and negotiate on a one-to-one basis;
- Involve students in classroom discipline decision-making;
- Hint and give non-directional descriptions of unacceptable behaviour; or
- Use aggressive techniques.

Coping was measured using the *Coping Scale for Adults* [CSA] (Frydenberg, E. & Lewis, R.,1997), each item of which describes a specific response to a concern. Respondents indicate how often the response described occurs, from *A great deal* to *Doesn't apply* (or *Don't do it*), by circling the numbers 5 to 1, respectively. Each of 18 items reflects a distinct coping strategy, whilst one additional scale, '*Not Cope*', assessed an inability to

cope [see Table 1 below].

Results: Coping Styles

To determine whether scales could be generated from coping items, factor analysis and reliability analyses were performed. As a result, three coping scales which measured coping styles were developed. The first, Passive Avoidant Coping, comprised attempts to ignore the issue and not letting others know about it. The second coping style is called Social Problem Solving and encompassed attempting to solve the problem by working hard, seeking professional help and spending time with good friends. The third coping style, called Relaxation, comprised strategies involving doing something relaxing, retaining a sense of humour, and accepting one's own best efforts.

Table 1 records the means scores, standard deviations and, where applicable, internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) coefficients for each of the measures used in this study.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Alpha	No. Items
Expectations for Misbehaviour	2.29	0.72	n/a	1
Level of Concern	3.05	1.21	n/a	1
Discipline Strategies				
Recognition	17.18(4.3)	4.46	.87	4
Discussion	19.75(4.9)	2.91	.78	4
Aggression	7.66(1.9)	2.45	.70	4
Punishment	13.34(3.3)	4.20	.78	4
Involvement	7.80(3.9)	2.49	.58	2
Hint	15.83(4.0)	3.58	.70	4
Coping Styles				
Passive Avoidant	12.89(1.8)	4.23	.69	7
Social Problem-solving	20.02(3.3)	3.55	.68	6
Relaxation	11.69(2.9)	3.08	.60	4

Table 1. Perceived misbehavior, levels of concern, Classroom discipline and Coping.

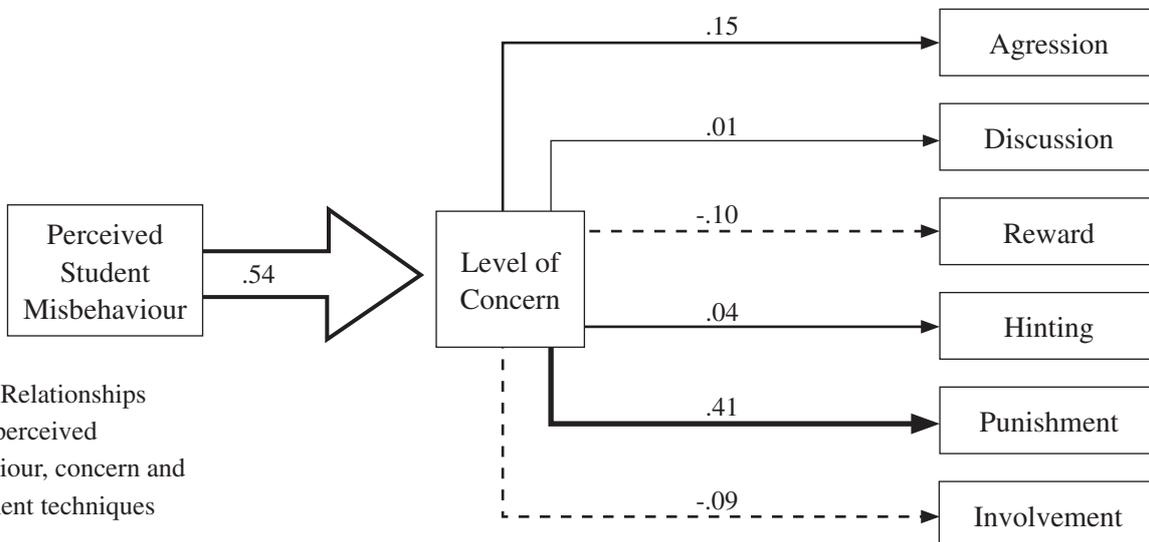


Figure 1. Relationships between perceived misbehaviour, concern and management techniques

Levels of student misbehaviour and teacher concern

On average, the teachers expected slightly more than ‘hardly any’ of the students in their classes to misbehave. Nevertheless, approximately one third of the teachers expected ‘some’ students to act inappropriately. This appeared to cause, on average, minor concern, although it needs to be noted that 39% of respondents identified student misbehaviour as a ‘moderate’ or ‘major’ cause of concern.

Teachers’ Classroom Management

The teachers reported that they allowed students to have input into expectations and consequences, recognized and rewarded appropriate behaviour, held discussions with students who misbehave in a bid to allow them to see the impact their behaviour had on others, and used hinting to highlight a problem with students’ behaviour, without attempting to control. On average these

use of each of the classroom management strategies [see Figure 1]. The second considered the mediating impact of the three coping styles on management behaviour by inserting coping responses between concern and choice of each of management techniques [see Figure 2].

Inspection of the statistically significant paths in the analysis in Figure 1 indicates that teachers who are more concerned about student misbehaviour and classroom management use slightly more aggressive classroom management (e.g. Sarcasm, Yell in anger). In addition, the analysis also shows that regardless of teachers’ level of concern about misbehaviour, those who perceive their classes as more badly behaved make more use of consequences and aggression.

As reported above, the second path analysis considers the mediating impact of each of the three coping styles on teachers’ management behaviour [see Figure 2].

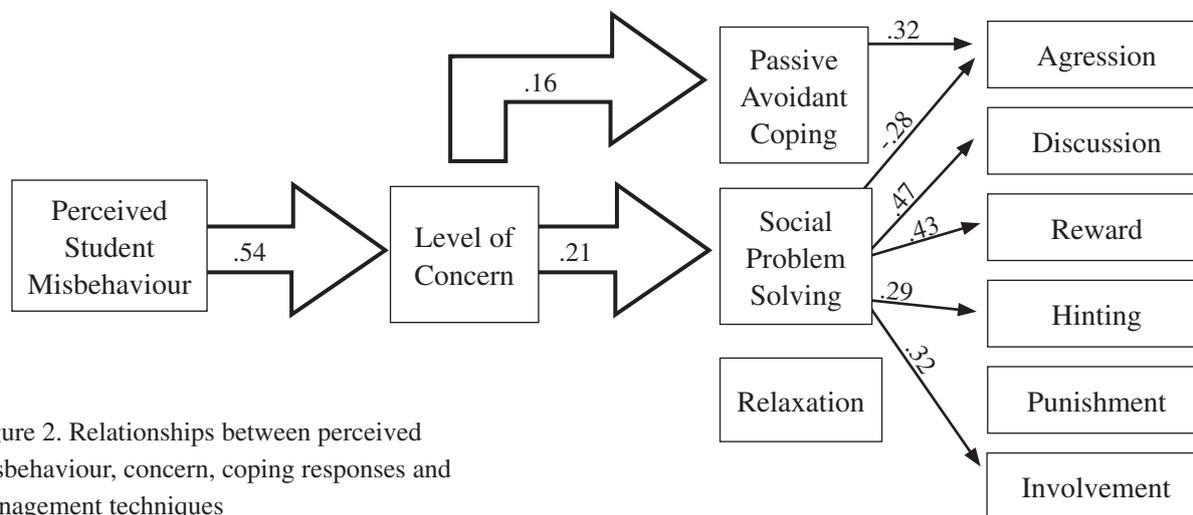


Figure 2. Relationships between perceived misbehaviour, concern, coping responses and management techniques

techniques were used between ‘some of the time’ and ‘a lot’. Consequences were used between ‘hardly ever’ and ‘sometimes’ and aggression ‘hardly ever’ occurred.

Teacher’s Coping

Interpretation of the coping data in Table 1 shows that the teachers reported they more than sometimes attempt to remain socially connected, while trying to solve the problem. They sometimes turn to relaxing activities and less frequently engage in passive, emotion focused, avoidant strategies.

Teacher coping and Classroom management

To examine the relationship between classroom management and teacher coping, two path analyses were used to investigate potential causal links between the variables measured. The first examined the impact of perceived student misbehaviour on the teachers’ expressed concern, then the impact of this concern on

Because there are so many potential paths in this analysis, only the statistically significant paths are reported.

The path analysis reported in Figure 2, shows that teachers who use Avoidant and Passive coping strategies employ more coercion and aggression towards students [e.g. manage less productively]. In contrast, teachers who use more Socially oriented problem solving coping strategies use more inclusive management techniques such as discussion, involvement, hinting & rewarding, and are less aggressive [e.g. manage more productively].

Discussion

The results indicate that teachers’ coping can be conceptualised in terms of three styles - Passive Avoidant Coping, Social Problem Solving and Relaxation. The second style is both the most common form of coping used by teachers and the most effective in this study. The use of social support systems is reported to be

among the most commonly utilised and effective forms of coping, acting as 'buffers' in the coping process by reducing the emotional distance between teachers and students, ameliorating the onset of stress, and constituting potentially the most important form of support for alleviating burnout (Howard, S. & Johnston, B., 2004; Griffith, J. Steptoe, A. & Copley, M., 1999; Greenglass, E., Fiksenbaum, L. & Burke, R. J., 1996). Also seen as highly beneficial is a network of relationships with people who understand teaching such as experienced colleagues, mentors, administrators and parents. Moreover, these factors can also act as buffers for stress even when the causes or stressors themselves are out of reach or unable to be directly altered or removed (Chan, 1998).

Critically, teachers with more adaptive coping strategies show a lower degree of burnout than teachers with coping strategies based on ignoring or avoiding problematic situations (Van Dick & Wagner, 2001). Such adaptive coping strategies reduce the effects of stress and burnout in tangible ways, increasing a teacher's sense of self-efficacy, reducing physical symptoms associated with stress, and reducing the rate of absenteeism from the workplace as a result of burnout.

Although student misbehaviour typically rates as one of the most important sources of stress, the results of this study indicate that, on average, teachers' concerns about misbehaviour are associated with relatively few students. Moreover, the teachers in the sample used here were, on average, not particularly concerned about misbehaviour, yet this doesn't mean that it is not a major issue for some teachers.

Although the favoured explanation in this paper is that coping mediates the impact of a teacher concerns over student misbehaviour on his or her classroom management techniques, alternative explanations are possible. It is possible that there are underlying personality factors or traits that cause teachers' selection of coping styles and choice of management techniques. What is required at this point in our understanding is an interventional study in coping education, which allows teachers, through professional development programs, to increase their use of Social Problem Solving and to decrease reliance on Passive Avoidant Coping, to see what effect it has on their classroom management behaviour.

There certainly is a small, statistically significant relationship between teachers' levels of concern and classroom management techniques. The use of aggressive punishment seems, in this regard, to be an unconscious 'programmed' response to concern over misbehaviour. That is, on average, an increase in level of concern predicts increased aggression, but nothing

else. However, and in strong contrast, when we consider divisions among teachers based on their preferred coping styles, there are substantial relationships between coping styles and discipline techniques. Moreover, it appears that teachers who employ poor management techniques, such as aggressive punishment, contribute to their own problems by reacting with strategies that serve only to exacerbate the very problems they are intended to overcome or prevent (Lewis, R. & Roache, J., 2009).

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WORKSHEETS THAT WORK

Elisheva Kronman (elishevakronman@gmail.com)

Why?

Worksheets have a bad reputation as being “busy work” meaning work that does not contribute to learning. This is not necessarily true. If you bear with me you will see that the worksheets that I devise focus on enhancing comprehension and thinking. I did not invent the wheel; I synthesized ideas encountered during my 25 years of teaching, and added others. I find worksheets are very helpful and effective, especially with a group of learners having difficulties, even though nearly every textbook is accompanied by a workbook.

There are some clear advantages to “home-made” worksheets.

- You know best – A worksheet that you make is best geared towards your students, because you know your students best. For example, since I teach in Beer Sheva, I know that my students will identify more with a sentence about a grandmother in Ofakim than a grandmother in London. No textbook can be that specific.
- Practice makes perfect – I find that in order to master the correct use of new vocabulary and grammatical structures, students need many encounters with the material. Recycling previous material is of paramount importance. In the workbooks, the exercises are divided by units thus creating an artificial boundary between subjects and topics that were taught before. Therefore, I feel that the exercises in the workbooks are not sufficient to support the process of language acquisition.
- One step at a time – Worksheets give me a chance to “break down big rocks into little stones”. Often I find that the exercises in the workbooks involve too much at one time. For example, for a very weak class I prepare one worksheet for drilling “don’t” sentences, a second one for “doesn’t” sentences and only then do we drill both.
- Don’t hold back your horses! – Some students work ahead in their workbooks. If they enjoy doing extra English work at home, I don’t want to hold them back. Yet on the other hand, it creates a situation in which these students cannot take part in class, when you want to use the workbook in class. They can’t complete worksheets that they don’t have!
- Psychology in a nutshell – Students seem to prefer worksheets over doing the same exercise in the notebook. My guess is that the format of one sheet with

clear boundaries is more welcoming. It is a task that can give instant gratification. Added to this is the thought that some of the writing has been done for them so less toil is demanded.

- And one more thing – For all the students who have forgotten their notebooks at home (what a rare thing!) – there is no excuse for sitting and doing nothing in class!

Why not?

I agree that worksheets have one great disadvantage: You, the teacher, must work to make them! Yet, now with computers, it’s easier. I save my worksheets in separate files titled by the names of the books I am using. Each worksheet’s title contains the page number of the book which it refers to. This way I can re-use and make changes without having to work hard again.

How?

Learning a new language is not easy and for some students, it is actually intimidating. Therefore, layout is important. The worksheet should look inviting with proper sized letters and a spacious layout.

Here are my suggestions:

1. Use font size 12 for good classes and font size 14 for weak classes.
2. Always put a space and a half in between lines.
3. Always emphasize the instructions. Use underlining, bolded letters or both.
4. Very weak learners prefer font types that have distinct letters. The capital “I” should not look like a lowercase “l”.
5. Change the font type that you use to vary the appearance of your worksheets and make them look interesting.
6. Each worksheet should contain a variety of exercises (2–3 types). This keeps students interested yet not overwhelmed.

Look at the difference between the boxes. Which layout do you prefer?

A.

Circle the word that doesn’t belong:

1. cat, dog, banana
2. happy, cheerful, sad

B.

Circle the word that doesn’t belong:

1. cat, dog, banana
2. happy, cheerful, sad

I assume that you agree with me that box B is much more inviting.

Working on vocabulary

Reading grid:

Create a grid with the target words. Students receive it and are asked to locate the word the teacher says. For example: street– C, 1. The teacher can say the word in Hebrew to check comprehension. The students like competing to find the word first. Such a grid can be used for reinforcing vocabulary on all levels, using big grids or small ones.

Added tasks for a grid:

Circle words according to given categories. Circle the verbs in the grid. Find words that don't belong. Say a sentence with a missing word and ask the pupils to find the word in the grid.

Odd one out:

This type of exercise works best with four words in each group. Once when teaching a group of very weak learners with very limited vocabulary, I created groups of three words and asked them to explain their choice in Hebrew. For example:

- left, street, right, _____

Explaining this one wasn't easy for my pupils having difficulties. They finally did come up with "Kivunim" = directions. Since thinking is essential to learning, it is acceptable to let weak learners explain their choice in Hebrew. I was surprised to see how difficult it was for them to phrase their explanation in Hebrew! Hopefully, our students will eventually reach a level at which they will be able to answer in English.

This type of exercise is great for recycling previously taught vocabulary.

Every time I prepare such an exercise I plant words from their general knowledge in English. Here a simple example:

- superman, policeman, fireman

Although I did not mention "Superman" in our lessons, I would expect them to realize that it is not a profession.

Right one in:

In this exercise students group words rather than exclude them.

Use the words in the box to complete the list:

1. hospital, clinic, _____
2. waiter, restaurant, _____
3. nice, fantastic, _____

wonderful
food
nurse

This kind of activity helps students remember words by chunking words that share the same topic. When words are grouped together they are remembered more easily. This is a method that our brain uses for remembering. Obviously, the example above which demonstrates groups of three words is used for weak learners. An average short memory span is usually limited to seven items, By chunking words we are able to enlarge that capacity.

Simple sentences:

At first we strive to make our students read and understand words since it is important to have a rich vocabulary. Nevertheless, we cannot stop there without making our students use words in context. In the worksheets, they get a chance to practice reading comprehension in simple tasks that are not intimidating. Reading comprehension is definitely the most important skill needed for university. I write simple sentences containing the desired vocabulary and use several "tricks" to make the students want to understand what they are reading. What they must do is read and decide if a sentence is:

Right or wrong for me. "I live close to school."

This type of exercise makes it relevant to the student. Once you make something relevant you create interest and motivation.

logical / ridiculous "Cats like to read comics." / "Cats like to eat fish."

This exercise adds humour and develops the imagination.

good / bad "I never save money"

This exercise gives them a chance for value judgment. I remember students having arguments about such sentences, which means they were involved!

Working on grammar

For a while, grammar was a "dirty" word in the TEFL / TESL world. The idea that students can "pick up" English without any systematic teaching of grammar, just like a baby picks it up, was considered the ultimate truth. But a junior high student is not a baby and has already acquired a mother tongue for self expression. Furthermore, babies don't look for explanations or rules, our students do! Some students do not have a natural inclination for learning a language. By teaching and drilling rules we help them overcome the feeling of being lost. The exercises I suggest are ones that lead students to creative writing and therefore are a necessary step in the development of independent writing.

Substitution tables

Maybe, you remember it from the old grammar books. I use it to help my students learn to put a sentence together.

I		watch	in sports
You	don't	take part	water
He	doesn't	own	a pet
She		drink	TV

1. _____ הוא לא משתתף בספורט.
2. _____ אני לא שותה מים.

Weak learners need the Hebrew sentences below the table to form sentences and to be aware of the meaning of what they are writing. Good students can be asked to write sentences and translate accordingly. Such a table can be used for a variety of grammatical structures. It is a needed crutch for learning to create a sentence.

Jumbled sentences

In English word order is very basic, unlike Hebrew in which word order matters much less. Therefore, students need to “play around with the words” to find the correct order. In the worksheet, there are jumbled sentences. I use slashes between the words rather than commas so the jumbled words don't look like a real sentence.

For example:

1. own / doesn't / He / a pet
2. usually / don't / in / I / take part / sports
3. She / not / drink / wine / will / the

Again, I use this for very simple sentence structures and difficult ones. It is great for learning to correctly place time expressions in the sentence. In the process of putting the sentence together, I see my students reading to themselves as they are writing, asking themselves if a sentence sounds right or wrong. This exercise serves as a building block towards independent writing.

Limited multiple choice

Learners having difficulties may get overwhelmed by too much information. For example, modals are often presented in textbooks in one unit. I let my students familiarize themselves with the modals gradually. At first I give an exercise dealing with two modals:

For example:

School rules (Choose **must** or **may** to complete the sentences)

1. Students _____ come to school on time.
2. Students _____ bring a cell phone to school.

After such exercises, students can cope with a wide multiple choice task because they have become familiar with each modal and feel more secure. This can lead them safely towards writing sentences containing modals. Weak learners cannot “jump” from the stage of introducing a concept, right into writing sentences independently. The above exercise also demonstrates the use of relevance since the modals are used to discuss actual school rules.

When teaching different tenses, we seem to teach one tense and then move on to another one, assuming that each one is fully mastered. We drill each tense separately having our students do exercises such as,

Fill in: am/is/are or Choose: do/ does

Then we ask our students to write sentences and we get gems like:

- *My mother is work in the mall.* – Meaning : My mother works in the mall.

Or, better yet:

- *I am not like chicken.* – Meaning (I hope!): I don't like chicken.

Since I believe there is no escape from treating the language learning process as a thinking process, I present my students with a choice that demonstrates the difference between two types of sentences:

don't / aren't

1. We _____ bad boys.
2. They _____ have a test.

doesn't / isn't

1. My mother _____ work in Tel Aviv.
2. She _____ looking for a job now.

Since English is not their native language, I must make them aware of the sentence structure, the verb form, etc. Then later, I can ask them to finish a sentence such as:

My mother isn't _____

My mother doesn't _____

Odds and ends

Common mistakes and confusions can also be a topic for a worksheet.

I remember teaching the word “like” in the sense of “similar to” and then realizing that the students keep thinking of it in the sense of “אוהב”. For an English speaker, there is no confusion, but for my students it was very confusing. I knew that explaining the difference between the two meanings would not be enough. So, I prepared a worksheet dealing with the difference and it

helped.

Worksheets for supporting a text

What happens when the book that has been chosen is too difficult for your learners? This situation is sometimes purposeful, to enable students to switch from group to group during the school year. Sometimes the reason for using a higher level book is to avoid insulting the students. In such cases, worksheets are a must.

This is what I do; I choose a short text from the book, present the vocabulary involved. I create worksheets that reinforce the new vocabulary. Then, I create worksheets that support that text. The worksheet makes the students read the text. The worksheet may include: yes / no questions, true / false statements, simple information questions. In this way, even the learners having difficulties use the same book that their peers are using and get a chance to deal with it on their own level. Without such worksheets I found it very difficult

for lower-level students to use their textbook.

Conclusion

I enjoy making worksheets for my classes. The lower the level – the more creative I have to be. Making worksheets brings out my creative self. Worksheets can be effective. They can help students focus on reading and writing skills. From my experience, students are cooperative when doing them. Since my colleagues often enjoy using my worksheets in their classes, am happy to share them with my colleagues – the ETAI community.

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TEACHING GRAMMAR LEXICALLY

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

Background

This article is going to talk about teaching grammar, but I would like to start by clarifying a terminological confusion regarding the word lexis. Nowadays the word “lexis” seems like a fashionable alternative to the word “vocabulary”. We don’t teach vocabulary anymore – we introduce new lexis. However, few people understand that the two words are not interchangeable. The Lexical Approach, proposed in the 1990s (Lewis, 1993), rejects the grammar / vocabulary dichotomy claiming that language consists of lexical chunks. In this light unlike vocabulary, which has been traditionally seen as ‘single’ words, lexis is viewed as consisting of lexical items which include collocations (*achieve a goal, silly mistake*), fixed expressions (*by the way, on the other hand*) as well as grammatical chunks, such as ‘*I don’t know*’, ‘*I was born in...*’, ‘*Have you been to...?*’

It is perhaps ironic that the little influence the Lexical Approach has exercised on ELT has been in the realm of vocabulary teaching. Most coursebooks now include sections on collocations (particularly of the verb + noun kind) or word combinations. However the grammar syllabus in most coursebooks has remained largely unchanged, i.e. “grammar-based”. While most ELT practitioners have embraced the idea of vocabulary being more important than grammar, they miss the point that within the Lexical Approach language is viewed as consisting of lexis, in other words, both grammar and vocabulary are inextricably connected.

Seeing vocabulary and grammar as part of one whole calls for implementation of different teaching techniques. Just like teaching the grammar of the word (responsible is followed by for, afraid is followed by of), many grammatical structures could be taught lexically, by drawing students’ attention to the surrounding text (co-text) and words which frequently occur in these patterns.

Rules: oversimplifications or useful generalisations?

What comes to mind when you see the following words?

already yet never

That’s right. Favourite for some and the most hated by others – the notorious Present Perfect.

Likewise *always / usually / sometimes / rarely* would probably conjure up the Present Simple. Most of us actually do draw our students’ attention to these time words frequently occurring with one tense / form or another, referring to them as “time indicators”. What it means is we do quite often refer to these generalizations in order to streamline the teaching and, hopefully, learning process by offering our students these ‘crutches’ in the form of adverbials of time.

Are these generalizations helpful or do they oversimplify the grammar to the point of not making any sense? After all, it is obvious the Present Perfect is not the only form where *already* can occur:

We are **already** doing a lot to combat crime in the city.

Ben was **already** 17 when we moved to Birmingham.

Similarly, time expressions traditionally associated with the Present Simple are used in variety of other forms.

I’ve **never** been to Portugal but I’ve always wanted to.

Sometimes we spent hours going over our homework.

I believe these helpful oversimplifications are a necessary tool in the EFL classroom.

A lot of supposed “rules” often distort the view of the language

Main criticism levelled by the proponents of the Lexical Approach at the traditional grammar teaching is that most of the supposed rules

at best oversimplify the real picture of how a particular structure is used to the point of absurdity, but in most cases are plain wrong (Lewis, 1993)

- “The Present Perfect is used when an event has just happened”.

However, imagine a scene: a flashy car zooms past you and your friend walking down the street. *Wow! Did you see that?!*

- “The Present Perfect Simple is used when an action is complete, while Present Perfect Continuous is used when an action continues up to present”.

However, consider these scenarios. You walk into a smoky room. You can smell cigarettes. *Ugh! Someone has smoked / has been smoking in here.*

A woman reproaches her drunken husband who shows

■ You may have been to Leo’s workshop on this topic Lexicalise Your Lesson at the last ETAL in Jerusalem. Look out for this workshop at future ETAL conferences.

■ This article and many useful ideas can be also found on the British Council website www.teachingenglish.org.uk

up at the door. (Sorry if this looks like a scene from EastEnders) *You have drunk / have been drinking again.*

It is clear that the Present Perfect Continuous is a better, more natural choice in the above two examples which invalidate the “supposed” rule about complete/incomplete action. However, a lot of learners I have come across have this erroneous perception inculcated by their teachers or grammar books.

It is a fact that the view of the English language that applied linguists hold and that of teachers’ classroom practices do not always concur.

Some would argue we cannot entirely do away with these useful oversimplifications and short cuts because they make learning, or rather our teaching, easier to digest. Indeed, what I advocate is actually using more of these “crutches” but using the ones of the lexical variety, i.e. the ones which draw students’ attention to the language which frequently occurs with particular grammar items.

Some practical ideas

Present Perfect

Notoriously difficult to teach and master. Too often teachers spend hours of their class time going over the use of the Present Perfect resorting to presentations and lengthy explanations. However, students still fail to produce it in speaking or writing. Wouldn’t it be easier to draw students’ attention to frequently occurring patterns using Present Perfect and remember them as unanalysed wholes? Memorise, don’t analyse! Even students who know the rules well inevitably fail to apply them correctly when they speak.

Pre-Intermediate students usually come across superlatives towards the end of the 6th grade. It is quite possible to introduce a simple pattern using the Present Perfect:

the best I’ve (ever) + past participle.

Just present it as a useful pattern without delving deep into the use of the Present Perfect. Tell your students that this is the form we normally use with Superlative:

It’s the best movie I’ve ever seen

It’s the best book I’ve ever read

Get your students to make similar sentences using prompts:

cake / present / joke

and appropriate past participles (*have eaten, have received, have heard*).

You can ask your students to elaborate on what they have told you and they would have to use the Simple Past. This way you indirectly expose them to another important aspect of the Present Perfect – its function as a conversation starter.

Most coursebooks are organised topically. When you get to the topic of Travel you can introduce the chunk:

Have you (ever) been to...?

Once again, there is no need to explicitly address the function of the Present Perfect; you can simply tell your students that it is a pattern we use a lot to talk about travel. Later it can be reintroduced when you get to the topic of cinema / books.

Have you seen Armageddon?

Past Perfect

Another form which students find relatively easy to comprehend but rarely produce in their writing or speech. I once tried teaching it together with the verb expect and students started producing this form effortlessly.

A very common chunk is

more/-er ... than I had expected

I enjoyed the film more than I had expected.

Other common verbs which fit into this pattern are:

than I had thought

than I had imagined

Third person S

Another challenge for teachers. The problem with the third person -s can be alleviated if some verbs were simply taught as chunks. One such verb is *depend*. *Depends* is much more common than *depend* in the British National Corpus (BNC), particularly in the spoken language where occurrences of *depends* significantly outnumber *depend* (by more than four times). Therefore the verb *depend* should be taught as a chunk (a more familiar word “expression” can be used to label this idea in class instead of “chunk”), ideally accompanied by the nouns it frequently occurs with:

<i>It depends on</i>	<i>the number (of)</i>
	<i>the size (of)</i>
	<i>the type (of)</i>
	<i>the weather</i>

Similarly, *It doesn’t matter* is almost four times more common than *it matters* and therefore should be taught as a chunk and not as the infinitive form of the verb *to matter*.

Conclusion

Many learners need explicit rules in order to understand when certain structures are used. However there is growing evidence that learners have a difficulty transferring formally learnt rules of the language no matter how well they have been learnt. While rule-based grammar teaching, when a particular grammar structure is selected for treatment during the lesson, still has a place in the EFL classroom, many authors on the subject argue that “for some learners what is needed is the learning and recollection of bits of text exemplifying useful “sentence patterns” (Gerngross, Puchta, Thornbury, 2007)

I hope my ideas and suggestions above will help teachers introduce a lexical component into the grammar teaching.

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- British National Corpus (BNC) <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>
- Leo Selivan is an EFL teacher, teacher trainer and material developer at British Council Israel. He has been working at the British Council for the last six years. He has also taught in Cyprus, Turkey, the UK and Russia. Leo is a mentor in the Clore English Learning Centres Project in Kfar Hassidim, Bat Yam, Beer Sheva and Kiryat Gat. He is particularly interested in using multimedia in the classroom and is a proponent of the Lexical Approach.*

REMEDIAL ADVANCED READING COMPREHENSION COURSES: A SMORGASBORD OF SOLUTIONS

Marsha Bensoussan, Ph.D. (bensous@research.haifa.ac.il)

At the University of Haifa, a small but persistent percentage of students (approximately 3% of all students enrolled) repeatedly fail a reading comprehension course at some level (beginning, intermediate, or advanced). As university students, they read academic texts in Hebrew, their L1 or L2, but have difficulty reading advanced academic texts in English, their L2/L3/Ln. For the last five years, students who failed the same level course more than once have been enrolled in remedial classes. Using specific teaching and testing procedures, these courses aim to improve English reading skills and enhance self-confidence. Since teachers need to consider each individual student, classes need to be small. The recommended maximum of 15 students.

Our remedial students have experienced repeated failure in three principle areas: language learning difficulties, motivation, and anxiety accompanied by low self-esteem.

English Language Learning Difficulties

Some of the language learning difficulties stem from general learning disabilities or a history of failure in language learning. Students may be disadvantaged for a variety of reasons: unsatisfactory previous English instruction, language interference from their L1, and insufficient background knowledge about English-language culture. In addition, minority groups and new immigrants may experience interference from Hebrew (their L2/Ln) as well as cultural conflicts between their family traditions and Israeli culture which hinder

English learning. These problems may appear when reading on the micro-level (vocabulary and sentence structure) as well as on the macro-level (paragraphs, logical connectors, and text / discourse).

Reviewing academic **vocabulary** every class lesson increases students' storehouse of words. We review the parts of speech because a word can have different meanings, depending on the context in a sentence. For example, the word 'mean' has different 'meanings' (significations) as a noun, verb, or adjective (the 'mean' average or a 'mean' person); there is also the 'means' towards an end. Small words may be especially tricky may have different meanings in a sentence, depending on the part of speech. For example, 'for' may be a preposition as in 'for me,' or a conjunction (connector) as in 'for he knew his horse was tired'. Students can be careless about a word's part of speech and find the wrong meaning in the dictionary.

Students are able to use a dictionary during all assignments and examinations. The only exception is the Quicktionary, which has a powerful scanner that can copy an entire text (or test!). The course begins with a comparative examination of the dictionaries available on the market so students come to each class with the dictionary of their choice. Dictionary use can be hazardous if students select the wrong meaning or spend too much time looking up words Students need to learn to use dictionaries sparingly and effectively.

Students receive a short vocabulary quiz each lesson. One of my favorite vocabulary quizzes is “Five key words.” After reading a text, students are asked to select the five most important words pertaining to the content of the text. Names and proper nouns are not included. For each word selected, the student needs to give a translation or explanation and the reason why this word was chosen as a key word. The total grade is 15 points (5 words + 5 translations + 5 explanations: 1 point per each item of information), which can be converted to a percentage. (14/15=.93=93%) This quiz is short and efficient: it takes ten minutes in class and very little time for the teacher to score. Another advantage is that it allows freedom of choice in vocabulary selection. Since there are many possible answers, the quiz shows whether students are copying from each other or doing their own work. This exercise is meant to produce high grades.

Analysis of sentence structure is an important skill in reading. Often students understand every word in the sentence but don’t know how to put them all together. Sentence analysis examines whether a sentence is simple, compound or complex, how many clauses (subject + verb) it contains, and whether they are dependent or independent, depending on presence or absence of connecting words (logical connectors). For example, analysis can clarify the relationship among the parts of the following sentence: *Although it was early, he stopped to rest for he knew that his horse was tired.*

Table: sentence structure

connector	subject	verb
Although	It	was early
--	He	Stopped
for	He	Knew
that	Horse	was tired

Students need to know how to find the verb (or verb phrase) and subject (ask: Who? or What? before the verb), to recognize noun phrase(s), and to find the independent clause(s) (the one(s) without the connectors). When readers have trouble understanding a long, complicated sentence, they can use sentence analysis to reduce the sentence to its most essential points. The gist of the sentence appears in the table. This technique works for any sentence, the longer and more difficult, the more effective.

On the macro-level, students need an awareness of paragraph structure and logical connectors. It is useful to make lists of connectors according to different functions (e.g., addition: ‘and;’ contrast: ‘but;’ cause: ‘because;’ effect: ‘thus;’ condition: ‘if’). Then students use markers

to color the connectors. In addition, a one-word summary of the function of each paragraph can be written in the text margin (e.g., contrast, cause/effect, conclusion, definition, example, explanation).

At the Advanced 2 level, students need to be able to read long texts of about ten pages of academic English and to be aware of text genre and register. Classroom work on micro- and macro-reading strategies, as well as schemata of content and form are helpful here. The “Five W’s” exercise activates students’ schemata and aids comprehension:

Five W’s:

- WHO is the author?
- WHEN do the events of the article take place?
- WHERE do the events of the article take place?
- WHAT happens?
- WHY did the author(s) write the article? (purpose)

This exercise is good as a pre-reading exercise of skimming and scanning, as well as a test of general comprehension. It gets students thinking about the text as a whole, weaning them away from reading word-by-word and getting bogged down in details. This exercise can be done individually or in pairs.

Students need to improve their critical comprehension. One of the components of the course is the Individual Project. Students bring an academic English text required in the bibliography of their own courses of study, preferably an experiment or discussion presenting different views. Textbook descriptions should be avoided because they do not provide different points of view. The teacher provides 3-4 macro-questions on the article about:

1. the ideas in the material presented,
2. the author’s opinion of this material,
3. the student’s position on the ideas presented in the text as a whole.

These questions of critical reading focus on schema and the opinions of the author and the reader, which may differ. The instruction to formulate their own opinion usually surprises students, empowers their reading, and gives them a new focus on the text.

Not least to be considered are the mid-term and final examinations taken by the students. Some classroom work needs to address the format schemata for exercises and exams. Practice exercises and tests are important to familiarize students with question types (e.g., tables, multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, open ended questions, summary completion).

Motivation

Given their history of difficulty learning English, students have low motivation. They exhibit diminished, low risk-taking behavior. It would be helpful for the teacher to adapt to the students' needs by speaking more slowly, speaking Hebrew when necessary, slowing down the rhythm of the lesson, and giving clear criteria and instructions. Pair and group work can be assigned, adding social interest and cooperation to the work, and further diminishing risk.

Motivation can be described as intrinsic (personal satisfaction with one's involvement in an activity) or **extrinsic** (success defined by external sources such as teachers and courses, grades and tests). Both forms of motivation need to be stimulated.

For **intrinsic** motivation, it is good to present the students with interesting, relevant texts in addition to the required course texts. I like to bring texts describing the students' culture in English. For example, a text on Bedouin customs or politics in the Arab world may interest a class where the majority of students are native speakers of Arabic. There is a novelty effect, because they usually read such texts in Arabic or Hebrew. Pleasant classroom atmosphere also enhances intrinsic motivation, and teacher patience is much appreciated. In addition, the Individual Project, in which the student chooses the text specifically and is given personalized attention, adds to the intrinsic satisfaction of the assignment. In many cases, this is the first time a student has ever read an academic English text, and there is immense satisfaction and excitement when the student succeeds.

To increase **extrinsic** motivation, practicing formal test items is helpful. Students feel good when class time is spent towards improving test performance on question formats that appear in our examinations. In addition, it is useful to reinforce reading skills using informal pre- and post-reading exercises.

If students are given a short quiz every lesson, they get used to handing in assignments for credit. At first, they are suspicious, but since the quizzes are designed to elicit high grades, class morale rises quickly. Because of the frequency of these quizzes, a low grade counts less and can be made up next time by a high grade. It is possible to tell the student that only the top five or ten grades will be counted towards the final class grade. Even if a student receives a low grade, the very fact that other students are receiving grades like 90% and 100% brings comfort: *This teacher is prepared to give us high grades.* A student believes that if other students in this remedial class are able to receive high grades, then it is worth the effort. Soon this extrinsic motivation becomes

intrinsic satisfaction with knowing English.

Whereas most students with extrinsic motivation usually blame the teacher for having failed a course (*S/He failed me!*), our remedial course aims to shift the locus of responsibility to the student. Each student is accountable for his or her own work and grades. Cheating is forbidden, and if discovered, the total grade for an assignment is divided by the number of students having illicitly cooperated. On the other hand, work in pairs and small groups is encouraged later in the course, once students have proved themselves capable of individual work, and the total grade is shared by all participants. Students are made to understand that they need to demonstrate effort and progress to pass the course and become autonomous learners.

My colleague Dr. Eleanor Avinor, who successfully taught this course for several years, suggested that each student write their own contract, signed by both student and teacher. The purpose of this contract is to shift the locus of responsibility to the student. In addition, students need to have expectations from the teacher as well as from themselves, to take an active part in their achievement. I have amended the process to give students a ready-made contract form (see Appendix) signed by both student (*I promise to ...*) and teacher (*I expect the teacher to ...*) which lists various factors that are needed to succeed in this reading comprehension course.

There are also class discussions of short- and long-term academic goals. An enumeration and discussion of the problems and the skills targeted in each lesson increases student awareness and participation in the classroom solutions. It gives them confidence that we are all sharing a process that will conclude in success by the end of the course.

The short-term goals involve passing the course. Students are encouraged to supplement their classroom lessons and assignments by ten additional hours of reinforcement exercises in the language laboratories. We have a CALL (computer assisted language learning) Center with 40 computers that have Internet, on-line dictionaries, language learning programs and text-to-speech programs (ReadPlease and Natural Reader), and an AudioVisual Language Laboratory (especially helpful to the visually challenged) where students can listen to texts and record their own speech, including answers to test questions.

Long-term goals include reading academic English texts for their courses, continuing studies after the bachelor's degree to graduate courses, using English as an international language in academic fields, business, and other areas. Students agree that it is important (and

possible!) for them to know English upon graduating from the university.

Anxiety and Low Self-Esteem

In addition to difficulties with language learning and test taking, many remedial students have personal problems and feelings of anxiety and low self-esteem. The teacher can be supportive by giving more class time for exercises and quizzes, making sure to give clear instructions. The teacher can also divide the material into small learning chunks, each with its own immediate, personalized feedback (orally or as a quiz). For every mistake, the student needs to know exactly what was wrong, how many points were lost, and how to fix it. Cognitive scaffolding (giving plenty of examples of exercises and

model practice tests) can be used to improve test-taking skills. Teaching metalinguistic strategies and schemata helps students cope with test taking skills as well as with language learning.

Conclusion

This smorgasbord of teaching and testing solutions constitutes of a menu of confidence-building procedures. If students and teachers improve oral and written communication and learn to listen to each other, they will be successful. Eventually, one or a combination of methods is bound to work when both sides – students and teachers – demonstrate genuine effort, awareness and understanding.

APPENDIX

CONTRACT

English Advanced 2 Remedial Course

Teacher: Dr. Marsha Bensoussan

Date

1. I promise to arrive on time and to attend the course twice weekly.
(name)
2. I will do my own work and will not copy from texts of from other students.
3. I undertake to be responsible for reading and doing homework and exercises for academic texts from the course syllabus, to work on my vocabulary, and to take the class quizzes and tests.
4. I will also read texts for my Individual Project and answer questions set by the teacher.

.....
(signature of student)

I expect the following from my teacher:

1. interesting lessons
2. a quiz each lesson
3. grades given promptly
4. clear explanations about homework and exercises
- 5.
- 6.

.....
(signature of teacher)

Marsha Bensoussan is a senior lecturer at the University of Haifa, teaching EFL reading and writing courses in the Department of Foreign Languages and courses in Testing as well as Multilingual Reading and Writing in the Faculty of Education, Department of Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education (M.A. Specialization in Mentoring). She is also head of the English Department at Shaanan Academic Teacher Training College. Her fields of research are EFL reading comprehension and testing.

START WITH A BANG AND HOOK THE STUDENT

Bev Stock (bevstock@gmail.com)

A sparkle in the eye. A desire to learn. Readiness to join in and take a positive part in the class. These are things all teachers hope to see in their students. At the 2009 ETAI summer conference held in Jerusalem I shared ideas of how to “hook the students” and engage them in meaningful learning.

As they entered the room each participant received a card. Their first task was to find their partner and sit down with them. I could see the puzzled looks on their faces but before I would explain we played “Hangman” to introduce the title of the session.

Once I had elicited the title and invited participation, I pointed out that that they were sitting in randomly formed pairs. I asked that they imagine that they are in grade six and called on five participants to read out what they had written on their cards. The whole group was then asked to guess the topic of the lesson.

The choices of follow up to such an activity are many – a reading text, a listening exercise, an introduction to project work, an activity to develop vocabulary. Hopefully, the pairing game catches the attention of the students. They associate English class with having fun while you learn. Perhaps you have aroused pupils’ curiosity. This is needed. Get your students “turned on.”

I vividly remember my ninth grade history teacher who once swept into the classroom dressed in jeans and a cowboy hat and riding a broomstick. What was going on? You could see the eyes of 30 girls wondering what had got into their teacher. This was her introduction to the topic of bushrangers. As she began to talk about the bushranger and his place in Australian history we all listened carefully. When we were set a task of reading and answering questions about the topic, we did so without resentment. We wanted to find out more. The teacher’s entry into the classroom had hooked us and we were thirsty for knowledge.

Another anecdote: My tenth grade English teacher walked into the classroom at the beginning of the year. She was young and dressed in the latest fashion. Removing her name-brand glasses she put her hand on her hip and said “Girls despite the way I look you will learn English grammar in this class.” This was so unexpected that she engaged us in the learning process from the word go. And I am thankful to her until this day as “grammar” was old-fashioned then as it is today. In my schooldays one didn’t learn grammar. Then, a young trendy teacher would definitely not teach grammar. By doing something that was contrary to expectation she

succeeded in capturing the attention of a whole class of students.

A few days before the ETAI conference, I was reading the magazine of my alma mater – Monash University – and an article about teaching mathematics caught my attention. “I use toys, gimmicks, movie clips, anything to put the hook out so that the students will remember what I’m trying to pass on to them. If they remember the plunger, they will REMEMBER the maths,” wrote Monash lecturer Dr. Burkard Polster on using unconventional methods for teaching maths. (1)

This is exactly what we want to do. We want to engage the student in the learning process by getting their attention. It may be by an action which is contrary to expectation. Perhaps the student can be hooked by a dramatic presentation by the teacher. A game to start the activity is also a way to involve the students and get them ‘hooked on learning.’

Two such games – pairing off and hangman – were mentioned at the beginning of this article. Hangman is simple and however many times I use it in the classroom the students all get into it and participate and wonder where I am going. I think a lot of the success of this activity is that everybody can take part. I can spice it up by racing against the clock, by telling them there is no way you will guess this as quickly as the other grade did or by using facial expressions to dramatize the building of the scaffold.

The students have guessed the topic of the lesson or the title of the text. What now? Use the momentum and “play” with the word/s. Brainstorm related vocabulary, predict contents of the text, challenge the students to guess what we will do next.

Another activity we experienced in the session was one I call ‘Round Robin.’ This involves going around your class and asking a question. At the conference, I asked “Why did you come to this session?” I then continued with a different question: “What’s your name and where are you from?” This time I used a variation where I was the second person to answer the question. “Your name is X and you come from Y. My name is Bev and I come from Jerusalem.” The third person continued and after answering the question, repeated the formula for the previous two people. After about 5 people, I changed track and asked the participants to respond to the prompt “HOTS are ____.”

In this way we played three versions of Round Robin.

In the first I asked a question. People responded. In a classroom situation I would use it as an opportunity to monitor the students' verbal ability. A carefully thought out question can then lead to a class discussion of the topic or lead into the reading text. In the next Round Robin version a memory element was added. This activity could be used in elementary school when we teach countries and where people come from – Israel – Israeli, England – English etc. In the last version of Round Robin a prompt as opposed to a question was used. This is the perfect hook for a discussion.

We continued with other activities. I dictated two words taken off the "Word for the Day" section of my computer home page. I then explained how we can dictate a list of words in order to engage the student in our classrooms. There must not be too many and the dictation must not be seen as a threatening situation. Say the word, use it in a sentence and then repeat the word. The words can be vocabulary words that you want to introduce before you begin a text, or they can be key words students will need for a discussion.

If you have access to a computer and a barco in your classroom, there are many film snippets from Youtube that can get the students involved. Songs are another good way to involve the students. Visual prompts are an excellent way to hook the student. Bring in a picture

to discuss. Alternatively bring in the actual item; when teaching clothing to grade four or five, bring in a basket with a variety of clothing items. Remove them from your basket and have your students name them. Have a piece of rope strung up in the classroom and peg them up. Then pull flashcards from your basket and have the students match them to the clothing item by sticking the flashcard on the item.

Go a step further and actually do something with the items you bring in. For example with clothes, get the students to bring in clothing items and dress up. Each student has to say what he is wearing: I am a pirate. I have a hat, earrings and an eyepatch. When teaching a unit on food bring in food items and actually concoct something – a fruit salad for instance.

Do whatever you have to in order to engage your students. Get them to take the bait. Hook them into your lesson. Get them turned on. Capture their attention. Motivate them to learn. Whatever you call it, this is what we are all trying to do in the classroom.

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Dr. Burkard Polster in MONASH magazine, Oct 2008

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

Book Review

POSH & OTHER LANGUAGE MYTHS

By Michael Quinion

Penguin Books, 2005

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

How often have you had pupils ask, "*Hamorah, lamah omrim OK?*" (Why do we say OK?) And you stand there, scratch your head, look out of the window, fiddle with a whiteboard marker and pray that the bell will ring. (For some, this is a permanent ongoing prayer!)

The answer to this and similar questions as "Why OK?" "Why do we have 'bugs' in computers?" and "Why are 'hot-dogs' so called?" can be found in *Posh & Other Language Myths* by Michael Quinion.

This is not the only book on the market explaining the sources and derivatives of such and phrases (see Further Reading list), but Quinion's book is certainly one of the most user-friendly books of this genre. And not only that: If Quinion thinks there is no definitive answer to 'What is the source of...?' he is not afraid to say so.

For example, when after a hard day's work in the

classroom, you offer your guests a 'cocktail,' do you think about where this word comes from? Are you offering them the tail feathers of a large domestic fowl? No, of course not. So what *is* the source of this drink? Quinion (p.74) quotes H.L. Mencken, the great American philologist and editor who wrote that he had found *forty* supposed etymologies for this weird and wonderfully named beverage. Some of these refer to a Pennsylvanian or Virginian innkeeper called Betsy, or Betty, Flannigan who allegedly used cock's tail feathers as swizzle-sticks when serving Union soldiers during the American Revolution over two hundred years ago.

If this isn't true, does 'cocktail' come from the old English drink known as cock-ale which was supposed to contain bits of old rooster as a taste enhancer? Or does the word come from *coquetel*, a French word which describes a drink consisting of various wines and which was brought

over to America by General Lafayette in 1777? And if you don't like that one, how about this explanation? Cocktail is derived from *kaketal*, a West African word for the scorpion which was supposed to have been put in the drink to give it an extra 'sting'! Quinion quotes another seven possible sources, including Dickens' use of the word in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844) and Thomas Hughes reference to it in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857). But whatever the truth is, Quinion does not provide a final and definitive answer to this puzzle.

Another drink-inspired phrase is 'the real McCoy.' Who was McCoy and what was so real about him or her? Quinion (p.216) suggests five sources: Elijah McCoy, a locomotive engineer; the famous Hatfield-McCoy family feud of 1880s; a well-known Prohibition-era rum-runner named Bill McCoy; the *real Macao* pure heroin imported from the Far East, and the American boxer Norman Selby a.k.a. Kid McCoy. After setting these five examples up, Quinion knocks 'em all down. It's not McCoy at all. It's MacKay, a Scottish whiskey. This drink was first referred to in the *Scottish national Dictionary* (1856) as "a drappie [drop] o' the real MacKay." This academic authority was supported by the *Oxford English Dictionary* which quoted Robert Louis Stevenson describing someone as 'the real MacKay.' Therefore, it seems that when this phrase traveled from the land of the thistle to the land of the free and the home of the brave it underwent a distinct vowel change from MacKay to McCoy.

From drink to the classroom. How often have you threatened your class with a "quiz" and wondered where this word comes from? According to Quinion (p.213), 'quiz' started life in a Dublin theatre or pub in the 1830s. Here, the owner, a Mr. Daly, had a bet that he could introduce the word into the language within a day or two. To do so, he hired a bunch of street urchins to chalk 'quiz' on every wall in the city so that by the next day everyone was talking about it. If this explanation is due to too much alcohol, then you may be pleased to know that it was actually used some fifty years beforehand. In 1782 a Fanny Burney was recorded saying "He's a droll quiz," when referring to an eccentric person. Although Quinion quotes the above examples, he thinks the most plausible theory is that 'quiz' is an abbreviated form of *inquisitive* (not *quizzical* which is a later derivation from quiz). He is also prepared to accept that 'quiz' comes from the Latin *Qui es?* meaning 'Who are you?' This was the traditional first question in Latin oral exams in British grammar schools.

And now to the best-known and widest-travelled Americanism of all: O.K. According to Quinion (p.194),

amateur etymologists have been obsessed with this word for the past 150 years! Possible sources range from Choctaw-Chickasaw, an American-Indian language where *okah* meant 'it is indeed', to the Greek *olla kalla* meaning 'all good' or maybe 'OK' comes from a mishearing of the Scottish *och aye*. Other 'OK' theories refer to *Old Keokuk*, an American Indian chief; *Obadiah Kelly*, a freight agent who initialed all his documents 'OK'; *Open Key*, a phrase, and later an abbreviation used by early telegraphers, or does 'OK' really come from *Orrin Kendall* the name of army biscuits issued to Northern troops during the American Civil War?

And if we are talking about the American military, one of the most popular theories for the source of 'OK' is that General Andrew Jackson used to sign various documents 'OK' standing for '*Orl Korrect*.' Quinion says this is untrue, besmirches the well-educated general and later president and, most importantly, there is no documented proof to back this theory up.

According to Quinion, quoting Professor Allen Walker Read in the 1960s, the source of 'OK' is derived from Martin Van Buren's 1840 political campaign, a campaign run to ensure his re-election for a second term. Van Buren's nickname was 'Old Kinderhook,' the name of his birthplace near Albany in New York State and his supporters used his initials and started the 'OK Club' to make sure he succeeded. However, everything was not OK. He was defeated by William Henry Harrison who had the least OK presidency of all. He died of pneumonia one month after giving the longest ever (one hour and forty-five minute) Inauguration speech.

And now to return to Quinion's title *Posh & other Language Myths*. Where does 'posh' come from. He states quite categorically that that it is not an acronym for the old P&O shipping notices stating the best berths were 'Posh Outward, Starboard Homeward.' Instead, he quotes other possible sources which include the character Murray Posh in the 1888 comic novel *Diary of a Nobody* by George and Weedon Grossmith; Walt Whitman use of 'posh' i.e. slush in *Leaves of Grass*, while the English etymologist, Eric Partridge, thinks that 'posh' may be an abbreviated and slang form of 'polished' - a way of describing upper class behaviour.

Quinion believes that the most probable solution (p.210) is that the word is derived from Romany or Gypsy slang of the 1830s referring to halfpennies and small change. However, this is hard to prove as slang was then unrecorded, but it was certainly used in 1892 when Montague Williams quoted it in *Down East and Up West*. Quinion adds that its present use, meaning 'well

off' probably comes from the First World War when to *posh up* meant to dress up smartly.

O.K?

David L. Young loves the English language and has been teaching it from junior school to university level since he came to Israel in 1968. Today he teaches at the Israel Academy of Science & Arts, Jerusalem. He edited "Communicating in English" and has had three historical novels published in England and his last one, "Of Guns & Mules" has been published here and in New York.

Further Reading

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Reproducibles

GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS – THE PLAY

British Council Israel (learnenglish@britishcouncil.org.il)

Children have listened to this story for many years and there are many activities that can be done in the English language classroom with this fairytale.

Stories provide an excellent basis for topic-based and cross-curricular work. On the British Council LearnEnglish Kids website (www.britishcouncil.org/kids) you can find many activities about the topic of fairy tales. The Goldilocks section contains printable materials and interactive materials for young learners to do in the computer room or at home. The materials include games, quizzes, reading tasks, writing fairy stories and the play published here for your use. These materials are great for introducing the story and practising the vocabulary based around this topic.

Once the children are familiar with Goldilocks and the Three Bears in English then the story can be further exploited by using the play. Drama is one of the most enjoyable activities for young learners. Acting out the story allows teachers to cater for different learning styles and motivate children in a dynamic way.

You may like to choral drill part or all of the story first to get the children used to the repetitive structures. Then you could ask individual children to act out the parts; you may need to move the furniture in the classroom to make space. You can use the downloadable masks found on the website for the different characters. Cut out the faces, stick them on card and use a lollipop stick or pencil to stick on the back for children to hold the masks. They could even make their own for homework.

You will also probably need to provide some real items for acting out – a few plastic bowls and bits of cutlery to lay the table etc. Finally, you could ask the children to act out the play in groups. They can then perform their version for the rest of the class. Faster learners could be encouraged to ad lib or add more dialogue, or change the version you have given them e.g. the ending.

Adapted from an article by Sue Clarke on the British Council website

www.teachingenglish.org. For more ideas on how to use Goldilocks materials in class go to: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/try/teaching-kids/goldilocks-three-bears> For a wealth of materials on many different topics for Elementary school learners go to the British Council LearnEnglish Kids website: www.britishcouncil.org/kids





Goldilocks and the Three Bears: A Play

Instructions

Here is the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. You can use this to act the story out with your friends! You will need 4 people: Goldilocks, Daddy Bear, Mummy Bear and Baby Bear. You can draw or print masks for you and your friends.

You can also draw or make things for the play, for example, flowers and trees for the forest, or bowls of porridge. You'll also need a chair, and something to use as a bed – perhaps the sofa or a table.

The Play

Goldilocks enters. She walks through the forest singing. She sees a house.

Goldilocks: Oh, what a sweet little house!

(She knocks on the door.)

Goldilocks: Who's there?

(Nobody answers. She opens the door and goes in. There are three bowls of porridge on a table.)

Goldilocks: I'm hungry! What's this?

(Goldilocks tastes the first bowl of porridge.)

Goldilocks: Ugh! This is too hot!

(Goldilocks tastes the second bowl of porridge.)

Goldilocks: Ugh! This is too cold!

(Goldilocks tastes the third bowl of porridge.)

Goldilocks: Mmmmm! This is just right!

(Goldilocks eats all the porridge. Goldilocks yawns. She's tired. There are three chairs around the table. She sits in one of the chairs.)

Goldilocks: This chair is too big!

(She sits in the second chair.)

Goldilocks: This chair is too big!

(She sits in the third chair.)

Goldilocks: This chair is just right!

(The chair breaks! Goldilocks goes to the bedroom. There are three beds. She lies on one of the beds.)

Goldilocks: This bed is too hard!

(She lies on the second bed.)

Goldilocks: This bed is too soft!

(She lies on the third bed.)



Goldilocks: **This bed is just right!**

(Goldilocks goes to sleep. The three bears come in the house. They see the bowls and look at them.)

Daddy Bear: **Someone's been eating my porridge!**

Mummy Bear: **Someone's been eating my porridge!**

Baby Bear: **Someone's been eating my porridge and it's all gone!**

(The three bears see the chairs.)

Daddy Bear: **Someone's been sitting in my chair!**

Mummy Bear: **Someone's been sitting in my chair!**

Baby Bear: **Someone's been sitting in my chair – and it's broken!**

(The three bears go into the bedroom and see the beds.)

Daddy Bear: **Someone's been sleeping in my bed!**

Mummy Bear: **Someone's been sleeping in my bed!**

Baby Bear: **Someone's been sleeping in my bed – and she's still there!**

(Goldilocks wakes up, looks at the bears and screams.)

Goldilocks: **Help!**

(Goldilocks runs out of the house.)

Daddy Bear)

Mummy Bear) **What a horrible girl!**

Baby Bear)

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QUESTIONS FROM YOU!

**A column with questions, answers and advice from Aharona Gvaryahu
the National LD Counselor in the English Inspectorate**

(gvaryahu@ gmail.com)

Dear ETAI Forum Readers,

For this edition of the Forum I chose two questions that seem to pop up on a regular basis. The first is easy to answer, the second is philosophical and ideological.

The first question relates to the issue of reading the tests to our learners. The latest question is as follows:

Question 1:

*Does anyone know if a student who has “Hakra’a” can have the test read to him by a PERSON instead of a tape? One of the parents is insisting that such a thing exists.
Thanks. L.*

Yes, actually the parent is correct, it does exist. This recommendation is appropriate for our learners who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- A. These learners are in elementary school, do not have good reading skills in mother tongue, have a clear learning disabilities assessment that states that they need to hear the texts in addition to reading them. These learners have not had the chance to learn HOW TO USE recorded material, and in the elementary school, helping our learners with learning disabilities to feel a sense of success is of utmost importance, so that they continue to want to learn English. In this case, they should be read to.
- B. These learners are in junior high or the beginning years of high school (9th and 10th grades) have a clear learning disabilities assessment that states that they need to hear the texts in addition to reading them in ENGLISH. This is the time that you the teacher can begin to train the learner how to use recorded material. Sometimes, reading aloud to the learners helps them break the barrier of repeated failure and then they can begin to use recorded texts. In other cases this is terribly difficult, and then they belong in the next category.
- C. These learners are in Jr. High school and high school, have a learning disabilities assessment that states that they require a human reader, or they have a learning disabilities assessment that states that they need to hear the texts, while following as the text is read out loud.

The learners who really require a person to read to them, and by the time they are in high school cannot use recorded texts, are those learners who have demonstrated that it is extremely difficult if not totally impossible for them to use recorded texts. They tend to fall into one of the following groups:

1. Learners who have ADHD in addition to a learning disability. This makes it very difficult for them to listen to recorded material and at the same time not lose their concentration and their place in the text. There are those who cannot divide their attention between the recording device, the text, the questions, and the content that they are supposed to be listening to.
2. Learners who have severe reading difficulties, and as a result cannot listen to recorded material and read at the same time. The recorded material is often too quick for them.
3. Learners who need to have a “warm body” next to them. They seem to get terribly uptight when using recorded material and then waste all of their energy dealing with the recording, unable to begin to listen and pay attention to the text.
4. Learners who have the recommendation to both listen to the text and record their written work. This is often too complicated, requiring too much manipulation of recording and listening devices. All of the learner’s energy is wasted on dealing with the devices and leaving no energy for doing the test itself properly.

Schools need to do the following if their student requires a person to read to them on the Bagrut examinations:

Collect:

- The learning disability assessment
- A letter from an appropriate school administrator stating in Hebrew why the student cannot work with recorded material
- A copy of some of the student's written work
- The form for English teachers (the same one that is submitted to the regional committees when applying for oral or mutam examinations)

Then:

All of it should be mailed to

גב. אהובה סיידוף
וועדת חריגים
אגף הבחינות
משרד החינוך
רחץ שבטי ישראל 29
ירושלים

All of the above information, as well as the form for English teachers, can be found on line,

<http://cms.education.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/EA293F05-11D4-4231-9D7F-95CB47C99B6B/99900/11ddocfor09Sept10.doc>

Question 2:

What is the purpose of teaching children with special educational needs English in the first place? They have enough difficulty learning in their own language.

Actually, it is somewhat of a revolution to think that children with special educational needs have the right to learn another language. Very few countries require it. The idea here in Israel is that in most educational settings, our goal for all of our students, but especially those with special educational needs, is to help them become positive and productive members of our society. In this case, it is a good idea to know a little bit of English, for communication purposes, and for those who can, it is wonderful to be able to learn and to know how to read in English. We do not expect all of our Special Needs Learners, to reach the bagrut level. However, more and more students who attend special schools, or who study in special classes in the regular high schools are achieving some level of bagrut in English.

Learning English helps build self esteem, gives the learners a sense of being like the others and often helps to develop skills that have not yet been developed in the mother tongue. Most of the teachers who teach these special needs populations get a tremendous amount of pleasure and a true sense of achievement from individual learners in the special education classes. That is what special education actually is: Teaching the individual, and bringing that individual learner into the world of community! Learning English seems, in many cases, to be one of the keys to that.

If anyone is interested in learning more you can refer to: Adapting the English Curriculum for Students with Disabilities <http://cms.education.gov.il/NR/rdonlyres/EEE26E5E-3446-4BA1-AC29-BFD335635DDB/71242/English0137.pdf>



As always, I am available on line, happy to hear questions, not always able to answer them, but willing to do my best.

I am looking forward to receiving your questions and comments!

Aharona (gvaryahu@gmail.com)

NETSURFING

Miri Yochanna (miri.yochanna@gmail.com)

Hi All,

Isn't the winter grand? The most wonderful time of year when you can breathe in fresh cool air and finally wear those cool boots you bought on sale last year.

I've got some great sites for you. I hope you find them useful and as interesting as I do.

Remember, if you've got a good website that you come across, send it to me. Even if you think I might know it or have it, send it anyways. I'm available at miri.yochanna@gmail.com.

Enjoy the conference and have a wonderful winter.

Name	The English Companion Ning
Address: http://englishcompanion.ning.com	
Type	Social network
Features	<p>This is a Ning, it's a social network for English teachers. Right now it's mainly from the US but there are teachers from all over the world as well. The network enables you to chat with others, discuss common issues and to share ideas. There are many different curriculum concerns that are specific to English teaching and there is also a group for English Language Learners, like our students, so we can share ideas there too.</p> <p>There is an event log, a poetry round table and even a book club. It's a wonderful community to be part of and it will keep us connected to the rest of the world.</p>
Uses	There are forums, blogs and different groups to join. You can join and share your ideas, borrow ideas from others and simply enjoy being part of a worldwide English teaching community.
My favourite	I loved the groups. There are so many to choose from which ensured my finding plenty that interested me. The posts in each group are interesting and there is a lot to learn from others around the world, even if they aren't necessarily teaching the same type of context as you are.

Name	Real English
Address: http://www.real-english.com/	
Type	English learning practice online
Features	<p>This website offers a collection of audio and video clips with work for online practice.</p> <p>In the section called Real English, there are many video clips with a variety of topics and situations, and then there is practice. The practice includes audio where the students can listen and record themselves, answer questions, work on pronunciation. There is also writing practice through the listening activities.</p> <p>There is a new section, called WalkScore, which includes video clips and exercises on a special project called Walk Score. To find out more about that, you'll have to listen to the video clips.</p>
Uses	This could be used in class for whole class practice at a variety of levels. It's a great opportunity to work on listening comprehension and to practice pronunciation since there is also the record yourself feature.
My favourite	I loved the video clips and the fact that there is a version with no subtitles, so the students have to listen. There is also a version with subtitles, so those who need more reinforcement, have that too.

Name	Dictionary.com
Address: http://dictionary.reference.com	
Type	On line dictionary and resource site
Features	<p>There is a dictionary, a thesaurus, an encyclopaedia and a translator. The website gives access to definitions, synonyms, uses of words, links to various online references and a translating service with a variety of language possibilities.</p> <p>The words that are looked up are presented with references from a variety of online dictionaries along with an audio clip of how to pronounce the word, the phonetics of the word, different uses and even the history of the word.</p> <p>The thesaurus offers many different choices from a variety of resources online as well.</p>
Uses	<p>This could be used by you if you need references for words, or synonyms, etc. It's also a great tool to teach the students about, since it's something they will be able to use on a daily basis. Even the younger kids could use it because it's also got the pronunciation and simple examples of usage.</p> <p>The encyclopaedia offers links to many different resources. This gives the students a chance to look at something other than Wikipedia (not that I've got anything against Wikipedia, but it would be nice to see pupils using information from other sources as well).</p>
My favourite	I love the thesaurus. I use it all the time and it's been a lot of help when I'm looking for a different way to say what I've got to say. The dictionary is also fabulous. It's useful and easy to use, I've placed it in my favourites and it's opened up every time I write.

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.



ETAI Winter Conference

Theme: Sharing Ideas

Sunday, December 13th, 2009

8.30 - 16.30

Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva



Featuring:

- plenary speakers:
 - Judy Steiner - "Insights to Our Site"
 - Tova Rapoport - "Theoretical Linguistics and the Language Teacher"
 - Miriam Shlesinger - "What 'translationese' can teach us about learners' errors"
- interactive workshops
- a wide-ranging exhibition of books and educational materials
- Hannuka doughnuts

A light lunch will be available, thanks to the generosity of UPP and ETAI

JOIN US

Cost: ETAI members 25 (presenters 20)
 Non-members 60
 Students 20

There will be a bus leaving Ra'anana, cost 60 shekels.
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