



# FORUM



## ETAI News

Letter from the Chair .....	Mitzi Geffen .....	3
Letter from the Editors .....	Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan .....	3
The First Mini .....	Jennifer Spigelman .....	4
A Conference in Winter and One in the Spring .....	Michele Ben .....	4
A February of Minis .....	Michele Ben .....	5
What ETAI Conferences Mean To Us .....	Jennifer Spigelman .....	5

## Remembering Esther Lucas

Remembering Esther Lucas .....	ETAI Forum .....	6
--------------------------------	------------------	---

## For the Classroom

Cycles of Recycling: Part Two		
More Activities for Recycling Lexical Chunks .....	Leo Selivan .....	9
Leveraging Facebook for Pedagogic / Didactical Advantage .....	Eduardo Lina .....	13
Grammatically Yours... In a Song .....	Laurie Ornstein .....	15

## Culture in the Classroom

Cultural Codes in the Israeli Classroom .....	Sharon Azaria .....	17
Analysis of the Cultural Aspects in "Results for Four Points" Textbook ..	Tareq Murad .....	23

## Issues in Testing

How to Lower Frustration: Post-Test Satisfaction		
Among Advanced Students of EFL .....	Marsha Bensoussan and Bonnie Ben-Israel .....	27
Framework for Designing a Diagnostic Oral Skills Assessment .....	JoAnn Salvisberg .....	30

## Perspectives

Experience and Observations from the Field vs. Research and a PhD .....	Kara Aharon .....	34
UK Teachers Learn from their Israeli Counterparts .....	Leo Selivan .....	35
Digging Up The Past .....	Raphael Gefen .....	36

## Book Review

Balderdash & Piffle (by Alex Games BBC Books, London, UK, 2006) ...	David L. Young .....	38
---	----------------------	----

<b>National Chairperson</b>	Mitzi Geffen
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Michele Ben
<b>Treasurer</b>	Eleanor Satlow
<b>Office Director</b>	Marna Snyder

**National Executive Committee**

Elaine Alcalay	Amanda Caplan	
Judi Aloni	Mitzi Geffen	Eleanor Satlow
Nihad Aweidah	Ahuva Kellman	Fran Sokel
Susan Bedein	Debbie Lifschitz	Micki Zaritsky
Michele Ben	Jennifer Spigelman	

<b>Ex-Officio</b>	Raphael Gefen	Susan Holzman	Nava Horovitz
	Valerie Jakar	Brenda Liptz	Elite Olshtain
	Judy Steiner	Penny Ur	Ephraim Weintraub

**Editors** Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan

**Advertising** Marna Snyder

**Layout** Eric Cohen Books

The *ETAI Forum* is published by ETAI (English Teachers' Association of Israel)  
POB 7663, 91076.

Tel: 02-5001844; Fax: 02-5001851

e-mail: [etaioffice@gmail.com](mailto:etaioffice@gmail.com);

website: [www.etai.org.il](http://www.etai.org.il)

**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**

<b>Members</b>	<b>185 NIS</b>
<b>Full-time students*</b>	<b>130 NIS</b>
<b>New immigrants / New teachers</b>	<b>130 NIS</b>
<b>Retirees</b>	<b>130 NIS / 100 NIS**</b>
<b>Overseas members</b>	<b>200 NIS</b>

\*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

Naomi Epstein sent a link to an article by Austin Kleon, entitled “How to Steal Like an Artist”, to the ETNI list. If you haven’t read it yet, I strongly suggest you do. The link is: <http://visualisingideas.edublogs.org/2011/04/25/notes-for-teachers-on-how-to-steal-like-an-artist-by-austin-kleon/> in case you missed it. The reason I bring it up is its important relevance to ETAI, in general, and to the recent summer conference, in particular. Here’s a quote from the beginning of the article:

“Great teachers don’t constantly strive to reinvent the wheel. They **read, listen** and **talk** to other teachers and let their students benefit from a wealth of accumulated experience and creativity. The great teacher uses whatever strategies and ideas are useful and suitable and makes sure to go where these can be found!”

ETAI conferences are where this wealth of accumulated experience and creativity can be found! This summer, when we gathered at Himmelfarb High School for our annual conference on July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, there was such a wealth of sessions from literature to technology, and from academic to practical, that it was very difficult indeed to choose.

ETAI conferences also provide that unique opportunity to talk to other teachers from all over Israel and compare notes and ideas, exchange e-mail addresses and phone numbers, and know that answers to your questions and suggestions for specific lesson plans are just an e-mail message away!

Since you are already reading the Forum, I don’t need to tell you what a treasure it is. I would, however like to encourage you to share this valuable resource with your colleagues at school and encourage them to join our ranks if they are not already members.

If you have ideas about how to make ETAI better, or would like to volunteer to help us with regional or national conferences, we would be very happy to hear from you.

Looking forward to seeing all of you there!

Mitzi Geffen (*mitzi100@gmail.com*)  
ETAI Chairperson



## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

This issue of the ETAI Forum is full of interesting and varied articles touching on culture, discipline, technology, testing and language. There is also a special section dedicated to the memory of Esther Lucas.

This issue of the ETAI Forum is late. It has been difficult for us to juggle work and volunteer responsibilities this year. As teachers, we’re sure you all understand the amount of time our job entails. We had much heavier teaching loads this year than during the previous years in which we were Forum editors. So we apologize for the delay in publication. Hopefully, the Summer issue will come out in October and the Winter issue at the end of December so that we will publish three issues in this volume. However, this depends on your contributions. Please consider writing for the Forum. Follow the guidelines in the “Call for Articles.”

Wishing you all a wonderful and restful summer!

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, ETAI Forum Editors

## THE FIRST MINI!

Jennifer Spigelman (*jenspig@gmail.com*)

This year's first Northern Mini conference was held at Oren School in Afula. The conference was held early in the school year to try to offer practical ideas that could be worked into school plans. We were delighted by a turnout of over 90 participants and 10 materials exhibitors. Teachers browsed, ate, and greeted colleagues with wishes for a successful school year

In our desire to emphasize the "first" we aimed at attracting first time presenters to share their ideas from the field. We achieved this by offering them the opportunity of presenting for 10-15 minutes only. This led to another first, we had group sessions where teachers shared the 45 minute slot. We had a diverse group with representation from all sectors and grade levels. The presenters used this opportunity to calm their fears and most said they would be willing to do it again and for a full session.

The conference started with a plenary given by Leo Selivan of the British Council sharing ideas for using film in the classroom. We then had three parallel

sessions divided by grade level where nine teachers presented, based on their experience and knowledge. The topics included how to introduce music, art, drama and authentic English into elementary school lessons. Junior High teachers had the opportunity to learn about being a coordinator and about a successful pen pal project. High School teachers heard about incorporating learning styles, task based learning and preparation for the oral Bagrut.

The conference ended with three parallel traditional 45 minute sessions on topics including storytelling, teaching vocabulary in the upper grades and favorite ideas for the elementary school classroom.

The mini was an overall success for teachers, presenters, material exhibitors and organizers and was hopefully the first of many other successful minis.

*Jennifer is a teacher at Emek Yizrael school in Kibbutz Ginnegar, a counselor and active ETAI member.*

## A CONFERENCE IN THE WINTER, AND ONE IN THE SPRING NOT A SEASON PASSES WITHOUT AN ETAI CONFERENCE TO ATTEND.

Michele Ben (*mggben@gmail.com*)

Winter saw an exciting and interesting conference held again at Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva on December 5, 2010, generously hosted by the Foreign Literatures and Linguistics Department. The rich program included three plenary lectures. Dr. Judy Steiner, Chief Inspector for English Language Education, Ministry of Education, opened the day with her talk, "Teaching in the 21st Century: Redefining Our Classrooms." After lunch, attendees were treated to an enlightening lecture called, "The Truth Behind Auxillaries; or, How to Teach Auxiliary Verbs" given by Prof. Yishai Tobin of Ben Gurion University. Dr. Elisheva Barkon of Oranim Academic College of Education enriched everyone's knowledge on reading and vocabulary in the closing plenary, "Still Barking on About Fluency." Between the plenary talks, attendees enjoyed 12 sessions and seven workshops given by ETAI members from around the country. There was also time for browsing at the book exhibition, networking, meeting new people and catching up with old friends. Conference committee: Mitzi Geffen, Michele Ben and Laura Shashua

Spring saw a terrific conference held on April 13th, 2011 generously hosted by the Arab Orthodox College High School in Haifa. After registration and time for browsing, the conference opened with a choice of eleven different sessions and workshops. The first plenary was given by Dr. Judy Steiner, Chief Inspector for English Language Education, Ministry of Education, whose interesting lecture focused on Teaching in the 21st Century and also introduced the new site for teaching literature, TLC. Following the lunch break, Zvi Ophir gave a fascinating plenary talk about non-verbal communication called "Successful teaching depends on effective communication in the classroom." Following this, attendees chose from a selection of seven different sessions to attend. The day ended with an entertaining Pecha Kucha session. The staff at the school were extremely helpful throughout the day and contributed to the success of the conference. It was a wonderful day! Conference conveners: Sarah Cove, Yosef Daghsh, Lily Khoury, Miriam Melamed, Aviva Shapiro, Fran Sokel, Jennifer Spigelman, Avi Tsur, Penny Ur.

## A FEBRUARY OF MINIS

Michele Ben ([mggben@gmail.com](mailto:mggben@gmail.com))

During February, many ETAI members and teachers from all attended one of three highly successful and enjoyable mini-conferences.

**The first February Mini** was held in the center in Nes Tziona. Close to 200 teachers came to the Ben Yehudah School to enjoy a lecture by Dr. Judy Steiner followed by a break with browsing and refreshments. Then teachers broke into groups to participate in one of four sessions offered. Everyone went home at the end of the day delighted that they had made the effort to attend after a long day at work!

**The second February Mini** was held in the north at the Har VaGai Regional High school on Kibbutz Dafna. The plenary session was given by Penny Ur about using the mother-tongue in ESL teaching. There were over 70 participants who then chose one of two sessions to attend. Everyone also enjoyed browsing in the book exhibition and meeting friends. The end of the day saw happy teachers heading home after a stimulating afternoon and evening.

**The third February Mini** was held in the south in Netivot at Hammer High School. As in the north and center, teachers enjoyed the sessions, talks and browsing. Nearly 40 people attended this mini, which was held in Netivot for the first time. The event was described as “absolutely fabulous” and people are already looking forward to next year!

If you’d like to organize a mini conference in your area, please contact the ETAI office. It’s definitely worth the effort!

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

## WHAT ETAI MINI CONFERENCES MEAN TO US

Jennifer Spigelman ([jenspig@gmail.com](mailto:jenspig@gmail.com))

This year another successful mini conference was held in Maghar on March 1st. We had excellent speakers and a large materials exhibition. But what did the conference give the teachers on a personal and professional level? To answer this question I turned to three different teachers and asked them what the ETAI mini conference at Maghar gives them. All three teachers chose to be identified by their initials.

“H” is a teacher doing her internship (נט) and is a first time attendee.

“Wow, I was never in a place with so many English teachers. I didn’t know any teachers, but in a session I had to turn to the girl next to me and talk. She was also a new teacher and has been teaching for two years and we continued our talk after the session. I wanted to go home early but I stayed for Penny Ur’s talk and was happy that I did. It was great. I didn’t know that there were so many different people selling English games in Israel. I liked looking but I didn’t buy. Maybe I will next year when I come again.”

“S” is a veteran teacher of 15 years and this was her first ETAI event ever.

“I heard about the conferences in the past and was busy. I thought it would be like another Hishtalmut. I got a

surprise, it was fun. I saw a lot of teachers that I know and we talked. I really liked the shopping. I bought books and stickers for my children to help me teach them English at home. I liked the session on storytelling and the woman from Amman who talked about good teachers. I left before the end since I have small children. I may come again next year.”

“M” is a veteran teacher of 9 years and comes every year to the Maghar mini conference.

“It is like a big party. There is food and friends and it is noisy and fun. I like looking at all the books and games. Every year I buy some small thing. I like the speeches in the auditorium. Every year there is someone new. It is good for my English since there are a lot of native speakers to listen to. There are too many choices for the sessions and I want to go to them all. Why is it only a few hours and not a whole day?”

These short interviews show what a mini conference can give to different teachers. To help organize an ETAI mini-conference in your area, contact the ETAI office [etaioffice@gmail.com](mailto:etaioffice@gmail.com), 02-500-1844.

*Jennifer is a teacher at Emek Yizrael school in Kibbutz Ginnegar, a counselor and active ETAI member.*

## REMEMBERING ESTHER LUCAS

*(etaiforum@gmail.com)*

There was no one like Esther Lucas. She was amazing. Her comments, insights, wisdom, and energy contributed immensely to ETAI throughout its existence. She will be sorely missed. This section of the ETAI Forum is in memory of Esther.

Esther introduced herself on the ETNI site in December 2010. She wrote the following:

**Dr. Esther Lucas**

Born before the end of WW1, in Helsingfors (now Helsinki), Esther was taken at age two to England, where she went to school in London with one term in France. It was after she joined a school trip to the League of Nations in Geneva in 1935 that her interest in global issues began. After graduating in French and German from Oxford in 1940, she joined the Royal Institute of International Affairs, soon taken over by the Foreign Office Research Department. When WW2 ended she was seconded to the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, and so was present at the first Security Council and General Assembly in London



Though offered a place in the UN in New York, Esther flew to Palestine via Egypt in 1946 to join kibbutz Kfar Blum. The following year she served briefly in the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, liaising with UNSCOP, the UN Special Committee on Palestine. She claims her only encounter with Ben Gurion was when he invited her to his office and asked her if she could do shorthand and typing. When she replied no, he said: they told me you couldn't but I wanted to hear it myself.

Moving to Herzliya Pituah in 1950 she decided to teach because it seemed the only worthwhile thing to do at that time without travelling to Jerusalem. Having been a youth leader in Great Britain, she felt she knew something about young people. There was no training available at the time and almost no literature on teaching EFL existed, so she learnt from experience and read as much as possible. Esther taught different levels for a year at Kibbutz Gilil Yam and then was asked to teach at the only High School (now Harishonim) in Herzliya, where she became class teacher, EFL coordinator and briefly deputy head. She says she loved teaching and soon introduced a number of innovations, such as pen-pal correspondence (no Internet yet), the annual performance of a play in English, (the first one, Julius Caesar) as well as an English school newspaper and for a while a choir. She produced several textbooks, one of which was used in many high schools in Israel.

Among educational activities, she founded and worked in a local Scout troop, and spent many years furthering the educational aspects of UNICEF. Esther is Hon. President of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project in Israel. Over the years, these interests enabled her to represent Israel at various conferences worldwide as an active member of IATEFL, TESOL, AILA, ISA, WEF, and IFUW. She is now on the board of the local International Women's Club, and though no longer a dancer, organizes the Club's Folk Dancing Group.

Esther retired thirty two years ago from school and twenty five years ago from Tel Aviv University where she trained EFL teachers. She continued teaching EFL for several more years however, to drop outs, Russian immigrants, soldiers needing Bagrut, and privately to adults. Esther took her degrees in three countries, Oxford, Tel Aviv and Lüeneburg Germany. Though in her ninety third year, she is still very interested in EFL, and tries to appear at major conferences and ETAI Board meetings. A couple of years ago she became "Yekirat Ha'ir" in the city of Herzliya, awarded for her educational work. She has recently published her memoirs and some of her poetry.

## Remembering Esther

This morning's newspaper brought sad news about our most veteran and esteemed ETAI member, Esther Lucas. I know that others knew her and about her great contribution to English teaching in Israel and to the foundation of ETAI, long before I joined the team, but since I joined the ETAI Board, 5 years ago, I have had the privilege and the pleasure of getting to know Esther. We have all benefited from her wisdom and experience - her clarifying and perceptive comments contributing to every board discussion, and have so enjoyed her sharp sense of humor and enthusiasm. We will miss her smiling presence at our meetings and events terribly. May her memory be a blessing and an inspiration to us all.

*Mitzi Geffen\**  
ETAI Chair

Esther Lucas will always stay with me. I see her clearly now, as I write, sitting behind her UNICEF table at ETAI conferences and presenting her project to teachers, one and all. I was honored to do a UNICEF project with Esther and the wonderful experience was shared by everyone.

Esther always had a good word to say and took an interest in new developments in the field as well as in special projects. She was an incredibly special woman. Her rich life work is truly a celebration of life.

*Laurie Ornstein\**

I would like to express my condolences to Esther's family and to all the English teachers in Israel on the passing away of an amazing woman.

I did my teaching certificate at Tel Aviv University many years ago. Esther Lucas was my *madricha pedagogit*. Since then, Esther and I have remained in contact, mainly through ETAI. We spent many hours traveling to conferences together. I admired Esther so much and always was amazed at how a woman of her age could have so much energy and initiative and have such a full and fulfilling life.

We will all miss her terribly.

*Margaret Porat\**

Esther was my Pedagogical Advisor 42 years ago and was such an inspiration and role model.

We kept in touch throughout the years through our activities in ETAI and at ETAI conferences. Traveling with Esther on the bus to ETAI in Beer Sheva was always a special experience because she had such wonderful stories about her life to share with us.

As Mitzi wrote she also had much to contribute the ETAI board meetings.

Esther attended as many IATEFL conferences as she could and we met up years ago at one in Dublin. A shared experience there was getting electric kettles for our respective rooms.

Because Esther remained active in the field of teaching English, there were lots of opportunities to meet up with her. She never seemed to age and was always alert and positive. She will be sorely missed but her contribution to me personally and to many others will live on. We will cherish her memory.

*Nava Horovitz\**

Esther inspired my colleague and me to do the UNICEF project with our deaf and hard of hearing 10th graders. She took an active interest in the process and invited us to her home for updates and advice. Esther even provided us with motivational stickers and buttons beyond the material that came with the standard pack. Esther read EVERY SINGLE ONE of the 18 projects and commented on them. Then she delighted us all and came to our classroom to return the projects. Each student received a warm smile and words of encouragement along with the UNICEF certificate. The students were very impressed that such an important and dignified person had come to the class because of their projects!

I often read Esther's interesting tales or words of advice on ETNI. The last letter of hers that I read was a comment on my query about the origin of the letter "h" in the name Esther!

I feel lucky to have known such an inspiring teacher!

*Naomi Epstein*

Esther attended ETAI board meetings whenever she could. After a board meeting in January, 2011, Esther wrote the following poem:

**An ABC for the ETAI Board** by Esther Lucas

<b>A</b> <i>our Association, it's second to none,</i>	<b>B</b> <i>is the Board that decides what is done.</i>	<b>C</b> <i>stands for our Chair, she truly is great,</i>	
<b>D</b> <i>the Discussions deciding our fate</i>	<b>E</b> <i>the Board's Energy, now at its height,</i>	<b>F</b> <i>is the Forum for which we should write.</i>	<b>G</b> <i>General Meeting, AGM is a must,</i>
<b>H</b> <i>stands for HOTS, not always discussed.</i>	<b>I</b> <i>stands for Israel, ETAI's domain,</i>	<b>J</b> <i>is Jerusalem our conference terrain.</i>	<b>K</b> <i>is the Keeness Board Members display,</i>
<b>L</b> <i>is the Language we teach every day.</i>	<b>M</b> <i>Meetings and Members, we need more of the latter,</i>	<b>N</b> <i>National Conferences, an annual matter.</i>	<b>O</b> <i>Office Manager flying higher and higher,</i>
<b>P</b> <i>for the Publishers seeking a buyer.</i>	<b>Q</b> <i>stands for Questions on projects and deeds,</i>	<b>R</b> <i>Resolutions the Board always needs.</i>	<b>S</b> <i>for the Schools, our sources, no doubt,</i>
<b>T</b> <i>Teachers and Treasurer we can't do without.</i>	<b>U</b> <i>our Uniqueness, not found everywhere,</i>	<b>V</b> <i>is the "Vice", our respected ex-Chair.</i>	<b>W</b> <i>our Website where there's much to admire,</i>
<b>X</b> <i>is the eXcellence to which we aspire.</i>	<b>Y</b> <i>stands for Youth, the future is theirs,</i>	<b>Z</b> <i>is the Zeal that all the Board shares.</i>	

**Esther's zeal, uniqueness and energy touched the lives of us all.  
It is she who was "second to none" and "truly great."  
Thank you, Esther, for giving so much of yourself!**

**CYCLES OF RECYCLING: PART TWO  
MORE ACTIVITIES FOR RECYCLING LEXICAL CHUNKS**

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

In my previous article in the EFL Forum we looked at two fairly simple activities aimed at recycling collocations which themselves can be recycled and reused: collocation pairs and collocation forks. In this second part we will look at two more revision cycles.

**CYCLE 3 – Collocation cards**

One of the most important aspects of word knowledge is knowing collocations (Nation 2001). Students may be familiar with the word party but may not know the verbs have, give or throw that go with it and therefore may produce ungrammatical ‘make a party.’ This activity enables students to expand the collocational knowledge of the nouns they already know, but can be adapted for other parts of speech. The idea is to get them to record the lexis on vocabulary cards where they not only write translation, but add collocations and possibly examples.

**Activity 1 – Collocation dictation**

You will need a lot of postcard-sized cards for students to record collocations on. Distribute the cards so that each pair or group of three has 11-12 cards. Tell students to draw a vertical line in the middle of one side.



Write 10 nouns on the board and add one or two “distractors” to keep the activity challenging as you reach the end of the list.

- advice      sight
- campaign   result
- election    permission
- goal        responsibility
- vision      purpose
- exam

Then dictate a few verbs and adjectives that collocate with the nouns. When dictating, make sure you start from weaker collocations and move to stronger ones. For example, for the noun advice start with get or give because these can go with at least two other nouns on the list and then move on to more restricted collocations such as follow.

1. **get / give / take / useful / follow / practical / professional** (advice)
2. **start / launch / election / run / advertising / successful** (campaign)

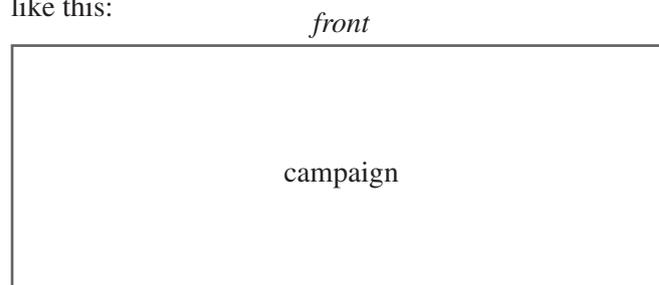
3. **general / hold / parliamentary / lose / win** (election)
4. **have / new / good / share / clear (adj.) / fulfill** (vision)
5. **lose / pretty / familiar / (at) first** (sight)
6. **get / give / parental / ask for / written / signed** (permission)
7. **main / set / important / reach / achieve / meet / unrealistic** (goal)
8. **have / main / serve / practical / specific** (purpose)
9. **get / similar / produce / direct / see / achieve** (result)
10. **take / personal / social / parental / accept / share / individual** (responsibility)

As you dictate, the students (in pairs or groups of three) should write the verbs and adjectives in two separate columns on a card: verbs in the left and adjectives in the right, as shown below.

For a more theoretical discussion on the issue of recycling, see Leo’s article Recycling lexis: quality or quantity? on the British Council website for teachers: [www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

V	Adj
launch	presidential
start	election
run	military

When they guess what the key word (noun) is they should turn the card over, write the noun in the centre of the card (it works better if they are using a marker or felt-tip pen), and hold the card up. They are not allowed to shout out the word as their guess may be wrong. Continue until all or most students are holding up the card with the noun written in the middle. The cards should look something like this:



back

V	Adj
launch	presidential
start	election
run	military
other useful chunks and / or examples can be written here	

You may want to add space for “other expressions” for students to write at the bottom of the card. For example, you can add a lack of (vision), a sense of (responsibility). Also, if you feel it is confusing to dictate both adjectives and verbs together, you can dictate them separately, first the verbs and then the adjectives.

NB. Nouns acting as adjectives can also be included (e.g. election in the example above).

The pair or group which guessed the word and held up their card first gets a point (you may also choose to give points to the two runners-up).

### Activity 2 – Guess the key word

Now that your students have collocations recorded on vocabulary cards, you can do a number of follow-up activities in subsequent lessons.

Put your students in groups of 4-5 and get them to put their collocation cards face down (the collocation side up). They should look at the collocations and guess the word on the back. The one who guesses correctly keeps the card. The winner is the student with most cards.

### Activity 3 – Recall the collocations

This is the opposite of the previous activity, where students should have their cards facing upwards and try to recall as many collocations for the word on the card. They can turn over the card to check.

### CYCLE 4 – Revisiting texts

We often encourage our students to infer words from the context as they read and, as a result, they fail to notice useful lexis in the texts they read. This is especially true in case of chunks consisting of the words students already know. For example, students may be familiar with run and risk but not know the collocation run a risk. However, since the meaning is transparent they will probably “glance over” it when meeting it in the text. The next activity is aimed to draw students’ attention to the useful lexis in the texts.

#### Activity 1 – Extract useful lexis

A sample text, taken from the LearnEnglish website is given at the end of the article but the activity can be adapted for any text or dialogue (reading or listening). After students have become familiar with the content of the text, ask them to silently underline the following:

1. An expression which means “to watch without giving all your attention” (para. 1)
2. A chunk which means “almost did not touch books” (para. 1).
3. Adjective + noun collocation which describes a person who is very interested in something and does it regularly (para. 2)
4. Noun + noun collocation which means “opinions” (para. 3)
5. A two-part verb which means “searched” (para. 3)
6. Adverb + adjective collocation in which the adverb which usually means “not alive” means “very” (para. 3)
7. A chunk which means “it cannot be easily explained and you don’t know why it happened”. (para. 4)
8. A chunk which means “you need a lot of time to deal with something” (para. 4)

#### Answers:

1. have half an eye on...
2. hardly turned a page
3. avid reader
4. points of view
5. hunted out
6. dead serious
7. for some reason
8. take a long time to get through

Make sure you give students a paragraph number not to make the activity unnecessarily daunting.

After they have underlined the lexis you think should be pointed out, tell students to compare with their partners in pairs or groups, then check with the whole class.

This activity not only highlights useful lexis but also sensitizes the learner to the kind of language they should notice while reading.

#### Activity 2 – Reconstruct the text

A couple of weeks later you can give students the same collocations and chunks as above (you can also add more) and ask them to recall why these chunks were used in the text and try to retell the story using the chunks provided. Another variation of this activity is to get students to put the chunks in the correct order as they appeared in the text.

#### Activity 3 – Correct the teacher

The teacher is usually the one correcting language in class. However in this fun activity students and teachers reverse the roles: students correct the “mistakes” the teacher makes.

Read the text aloud and deliberately change the chunks that you have focused on earlier. For example, “As I write this, I have my eyes glued to an old James Bond

film...” (instead of “*I have half an eye on*”). Make a short pause after the wrong chunk to allow your students time to think and produce the correct chunk.

Teacher: “*I suppose I was a lazy reader... of literature between the ages of...*”

Students: *Avid reader!*

Shouting out is encouraged here, however you can also get your students to write the chunks individually and then compare with partners. Here is a part of the same text taken from paragraph 5 with “wrong” lexical chunks.

Working life was hard to get used to after so much theory. It was the end of books for me. There didn't seem to be much in books that would actually help me in life. To do things you had to answer the telephone and work a computer. You had to go all over the world and speak to people who weren't at all interested in philosophy. I didn't stop reading, you can't avoid that. I read all day. But no books entered my life, only manuals and pamphlets and contracts and documents. Maybe most people satisfy their need for stories and ideas with TV and, to tell you a lie, it was all I needed for ten years. In those days I only had a book available for the duration of aeroplane flights. At first I would come home and watch TV while eating. Then, I moved the TV so I could watch it from bed. I even rigged up a switch so I could close the TV without getting out of bed. Then, one fateful day, my TV broke and my landlady removed it.

You will see that the activities in this cycle move from receptive, where learners merely guess or recognise collocations, to more productive, where they are encouraged to produce the new lexis.

## Conclusion

Learning vocabulary requires frequent recycling. The teacher should keep track of the lexis encountered in a lesson and encourage learners to do so. It is also important that the teacher make an effort to recycle the lexis as much and as often as possible. Short but frequent recycling activities, revision spots and quizzes should be administered consistently and systematically, and become a classroom routine.

## Recommended resource books

- Hill, Jimmie & Lewis, Michael (1997). *The LTP dictionary of selected collocations* Hove: LTP
- McCarthy, Michael & O'Dell, Felicity (2005). *English collocations in use*. Cambridge: CUP

## References and Further reading:

Lewis, Michael (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach*. Hove: LTP

Lewis, Michael (2000). *Teaching collocation*. Hove: LTP

Nation, Paul (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: CUP

*Leo Selivan is an EFL teacher, teacher trainer and materials developer at the British Council Tel Aviv. He has been at the British Council for the last 7 years. He has also taught in Cyprus, Turkey, the UK and Russia. Leo writes for the British Council website TeachingEnglish and regularly presents at ETAI conferences. He is particularly interested in using multimedia in the classroom and is a proponent of the Lexical Approach.*

card games from

# gamelish

the fun way to learn English



**These games saved my life in class!**

E.R. - Elementary school teacher and counselor

**The kids actually learn while playing these games!**

R.G. - Junior and High school teacher

**The students would do anything for a game.**

L.V. - Private teacher

**A great variety of reading, grammar and vocabulary card games**

**Order your games today from**

**www.gamelishcards.com  
tel: 054-5488377**



## Article: Ten years without books by John Kuti

As I write this, I have half an eye on an old James Bond film that is showing on my computer. But this is a story about how I stopped watching TV and began reading again for pleasure, after ten years in which I hardly turned a page.

I suppose I was an avid reader of "literature" between the ages of nine and fourteen. I had enough time to be *White Fang*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Bilbo Baggins* and *Jeeves*. Of course there was room in the schoolboy's imagination for some real historical figures: *Scott of the Antarctic*, all of the Vikings, and *Benjamin Franklin* were good friends of mine.

Then, in adolescence, I began a long search for strange and radical ideas. I wanted to challenge my elders and betters, and stir up my peers with amazing points of view. Of course, the only place to look was in books. I hunted out the longest titles and the authors with the funniest names, I scoured the library for completely unread books. Then I found one which became my bible for the whole of 1982, it had a title composed of eleven long words and an author whose name I didn't know how to pronounce. It was really thick and looked dead serious. Even better, it put forward a whole world-view that would take days to explain. Perfect. I took it out of the library three times, proud to see the date-stamps lined up on the empty library insert.

Later, I went to university. Expecting to spend long evenings in learned discussion with clever people, I started reading philosophy. For some reason I never found the deep-thinking intellectuals I hoped to meet. Anyway, I was ready to impress with my profound knowledge of post-structuralism, existentialism and situationism. These things are usually explained in rather short books, but they take a long time

to get through. They were the end of my youthful reading.

Working life was hard to get used to after so much theory. It was the end of books for me. There didn't seem to be much in books that would actually get things done. To do things you had to answer the telephone and work a computer. You had to travel about and speak to people who weren't at all interested in philosophy. I didn't stop reading, you can't avoid that. I read all day. But no books came my way, only manuals and pamphlets and contracts and documents. Maybe most people satisfy their need for stories and ideas with TV and, to tell the truth, it was all I needed for ten years. In those days I only had a book "on the go" for the duration of aeroplane flights. At first I would come home and watch TV over dinner. Then, I moved the TV so I could watch it from bed. I even rigged up a switch so I could turn it off without getting out of bed. Then, one fateful day, my TV broke and my landlady took it away.

My new TV is an extra circuit board inside my computer. It's on a desk in front of a working chair and I can't see it from the bed. I still use it for the weather forecasts and it's nice to have it on while I'm typing this... but what to do last thing at night? Well, have another go with books.

Now, I just like books. I have a pile of nice ones by my bed and I'm reading about six simultaneously. I don't want to BE any of the characters. I don't care if a thousand people have already read them. I don't have to search through libraries. There are books everywhere and all of them have something to read in them. I have the strange feeling that they've been there all along, waiting for me to pick them up.

**LEVERAGING FACEBOOK FOR PEDAGOGIC / DIDACTICAL ADVANTAGE)**

*Eduardo Lina (eduardolina@yahoo.com)*

Blasphemy alert. I am a fifty-four year old high-school English teacher and I am not afraid of using Facebook with my teenage students. It is not because I like to sound “cool”, chat endlessly on this social network, upload pictures to show around, or whatever. I simply favor using Facebook as a companion to my English lessons, or even as a “virtual” extension of one physical classroom where I teach at Kugel High School, Holon ([www.kugel.org.il](http://www.kugel.org.il)).

“Blasphemy alert,” indeed. I wouldn’t have thought of this opening had I not seen it on one of the texts that one of my pupils chose, read, commented on and recommended as part of the sharing that takes place on the Facebook group I have created.

I know that “The writing on the wall” and that “For disgruntled students, Facebook has become a forum for expressing their frustrations with teachers” (Arad, 2011). Similarly, I am aware that I might have been, might now be or might soon be the target of an attack on a Facebook page I don’t even know exists. And yet, I believe we teachers of English can leverage Facebook for pedagogic / didactic advantage.

We have all heard that everybody is on Facebook. Well, I don’t know about everybody, but I do know that most Israeli teenagers are there. For them, Facebook is familiar territory in which they feel at ease to communicate. Incidentally, English is the language most people on earth use to communicate on the Internet and beyond, so in using this popular social network we can get pupils to use English in a somewhat authentic context.

We shouldn’t be afraid of Facebook since this network is really no more than a tool. The tool is not bad in itself: some people use it in a bad way. Accordingly, as we go about using Facebook with our English class, we can help pupils learn the basics of Netiquette (Internet Etiquette) ([http://www.livinginternet.com/i/ia\\_nq.htm](http://www.livinginternet.com/i/ia_nq.htm)), and specifically Facebook Netiquette as introduced, for example, on Education Coffehouse (<http://www.educationcoffeeshouse.com/students/fbnetiquette.htm>).

Why and how can Facebook be used? You may ask. “Educators using Facebook” (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=7036945291>) may prove useful here: Facebook is social. It can increase a sense of belonging; build bonds between classmates, and increase bond between students and instructors. You can create a “teacher” profile separate from your personal profile, permitting access only to those people (your pupils)

you want there (that is what I have done). You could ask students to create a limited profile with controlled settings, friend you, and add you to the limited profile list (I haven’t done this). You can create a “closed group.” Groups allow you to manage basic information, memberships, photos, videos, links, and a wall. You can make lists of classes and message an entire list. You can publish notes, which are like blogs. You can share videos, which you simply embed from You Tube, Google videos, or wherever or even upload them from your own computer. You can share photos, examples of worksheets, third party applications, experiences, status updates, jokes, testimonials, grammar explanations, links to vocabulary items, you name it... I wouldn’t go as far as writing that the sky is the limit, but you can decide what the limit is. Many of these ideas came from “Educators using Facebook.”

What have we, my pupils and I together, sharing, done with a Facebook group so far? We have been using it as a follow up to what we manage, and don’t manage, to do in class. We have posted comments on what we have read and done in class. We have shared content related to the units of our class textbook: uploaded video clips and then commented on them; recommended reading (or avoiding) texts (articles, poems, posts, etc.) on different subjects from selected websites; chosen and embedded video clips containing songs and then commented on them; posted the lyrics and discussed them; offered recommendations to others. We have tried to get a glimpse of what a Community of Practice, an important tool when sharing knowledge, is or can be; we have seen that Facebook is a social network that functions well in English and not just in Hebrew. Needless to say, English is the only language allowed in the group. Mind you, I have written “we” because pupils are as much responsible for posting as I am.

Since everybody in the group can see everyone else’s contributions, the postings are not meant just for the teacher. The teacher has to be there to serve as moderator and do the following: give (positive!) feedback, explain words and clarify concepts in a general way without embarrassing anyone, deal with errors in a post and open the way for further treatment of a subject in class, etc. Remember: this is public because the entire group can see it. Facebook does not replace class work, but can be a welcome addition.

We have been working on a unit on Space Exploration, on Ilan Ramon, ז”ל. I have embedded the “David Bowie

Space Oddity Original Remastered - Major Tom - The Right Stuff - 1983 part movie” You Tube clip (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p2eBA-7OZE>), which contains great music and outstanding pictures, and then copied and pasted the lyrics right below. I also placed a link to the NASA website, encouraging pupils to have a look at the site, the photographs, the information, the activities, and so on. Pupils are then encouraged to comment on their likes and dislikes. I have also placed a link to an Ilan Ramon page in English so that we can learn more about him. One of the by products of this work is a “What makes a Hero?” opinion composition using an old but familiar technology, pen and paper, handed in to the teacher.

You probably won’t be shocked to learn that some pupils can’t see the connection between using a Facebook group in English and studying English. “That is not studying”, some say. It seems that some pupils have a clear idea, a mental model, of what studying English at school is: doing unseen texts, writing the correct form of the verb in brackets and the like. Mind you, I said some, but not all. Incidentally, having the means to show the Facebook page in class every now and then helps win over these pupils.

I teach pupils who are willing to try something new. They are neither computer students nor absolutely crazy about computers. These kids are regular kids, as most kids are. They use Facebook as much as many other kids and, surprise, not all of them had a Facebook account before I required them to open one for our course.

I can’t show you the real page because it is a closed group and having strangers, even other teachers, around will kill creativity. You may, however, get an idea of what the page looks like by checking the following Google shared presentation (I will be uploading new print screen shots as time goes by): [https://docs.google.com/presentation/view?id=dfqz74dv\\_1fgfr78dn&interval=5&autoStart=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/view?id=dfqz74dv_1fgfr78dn&interval=5&autoStart=true)

There is no point in burying our heads in the sand. This is an Information Age and the Social Media is around whether we like that or not. It is not a question of “If you can’t beat them, join them!” It is simply a question of leveraging Facebook for pedagogic / didactical advantage, to paraphrase the title of a good book, *Leveraging Communities of Practice for Strategic Advantage* (2003). “Here Comes Everybody (2008)” -- we as English teachers can make use of “The Wisdom of the Crowds (2005)” -our pupils. (Who says the time of books is gone?)

Try a Facebook group and enjoy yourself. It’s well worth it.

### References

- Arad, Daphna. (January, 18th 2011). *The Writing on the Wall*. Haaretz. Retrieved Jan. 18, 2011 from <http://www.haaretz.com/culture/arts-leisure/the-writing-on-the-wall-1.337642> .
- Saint-Onge, Hubert and Wallace, Debra. (2003). *Leveraging communities of practice for strategic advantage*. Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Shirky, Clay. (2008.) *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. USA: Penguin Group.
- Surowiecki ,James. (2005). *The Wisdom of the Crowds*. USA: Random House.
- Eduardo Lina works at Kugel High School as an English and Spanish teacher. He holds a B.A. , M.A. and Teaching Certificate in English from Hebrew University, a Diploma for teaching English to L.D. students from Bar Ilan and is currently a struggling first year Bar Ilan University M.A. student in Knowledge Management.*

## GRAMMATICALLY YOURS... IN A SONG

Laurie Ornstein (laurenmadeline@gmail.com)

I won't go into the rhymes and reasons for teaching grammar; I will however, suggest here an alternative form of grammar practice. Sing it!

Songs can be sorted to teach and reinforce grammatical structures. During the course of my workshop at the ETAI winter conference in Beer Sheva, I focused on the tenses, from Present Progressive to Past Perfect and a look into the Future. Although we did not have time to sing and discuss all the songs in the handout, participants got a chance to polish their vocal chords and try out a few. A question and answer session developed between songs and suggestions were made. The session was lively with college students and experienced teachers from all sectors interacting and participating.

I will briefly recap the highlights of the workshop.

A traditional children's song such as, "Are You Sleeping?", can be used for fun and creative grammar practice in a class of young learners. After teaching the few lines of this classic, we can do some simple songwriting with the pupils and suggest answering the question sung. For example,

I am sleeping (2x)

Yes, I am (2x)

Morning bells are ringing (2x)

Ding dong dong (2)

We can change the pronoun and sing, "Are we sleeping?" and answer accordingly. Extra value and grammar practice! Add mime to the song and let the class suggest new verbs and hand movements (yawning, playing, dreaming, etc.) or prompt verses with pictures.

The nursery rhyme, "Row, Row, Row Your Boat", which has Present Simple and Imperative forms, sung in a round of two or three parts, turns your class into a choir! It also lends to dramatization; pupils can "row" in rhythm as they sing.

"Kumbaya", a song which became popular in the USA 60's folk revival, and whose possible African origins are disputed, can be sung with classes of all levels; it features again Present Progressive tense. For advanced classes

and further enrichment, bring the story behind the song for reading comprehension and discussion on the "folk process". There are many recordings and articles written about this song. Try creating new verses, too.

"Walk the World Children" by John Forster, Michael Mark and Tom Chapin seemed extremely relevant on the day of the December conference with the Carmel Mountain range still ablaze. An ecological lesson is wrapped up here in a song which allows practice of the Imperative and Future Simple forms.

All the songs suggested offer grammar practice of both the simple and complex tenses. Some are suitable for elementary level and others for junior and senior high school classes. MP3 files and You Tube versions can be found for most of the songs listed. Do not be deterred from singing just because you are shy or do not play an instrument. Engage a musically talented pupil to learn and accompany a song you would like to teach. A guitar can be replaced with a CD. If you have a Smart Board in your classroom, connect to the Internet and You Tube. Or sing unaccompanied!

Long songs, with many verses, can be taught in one go or in stages, one verse per lesson. Songs can come at the start of the lesson, midway or at the end. There are no set formulas. You can sing your way through the lesson. Choose folksongs, rap, pop or rock. Compile the songs you sing throughout the year into a booklet and have a class songbook.

Sing along, clap along, stomp along and enjoy! Grammatically yours...in a song!

*Laurie Ornstein teaches at The High School for Environmental Studies at Midreshet Ben Gurion and is a counselor for EFL teachers in the ORT Abu Basma Bedouin schools. She is a folksinger who performs and conducts workshops in EFL classrooms. She facilitates workshops at teachers' colleges and conferences, showing teachers how to incorporate songs and songwriting into their lessons. Laurie recorded and released her first album, "Time Flows Backwards."*



**Bar-Ilan University**

**The Faculty of the Humanities  
Department of Translation**

**M.A. Program in  
Translation and Interpreting Studies**

**Hebrew-*English*-Hebrew  
Track**

Applicants must have a recognized BA (in any discipline) with an average grade of 80 or above.

The department offers an M.A. program (with or without a thesis), combining practical training in translation and interpreting as professions, and in-depth study and research in translation and interpreting studies.

Admission is contingent on an entrance exam and a personal interview.

For further information: <http://www.biu.ac.il/HU/tr/translationstudiesenglish.htm>

Department of Translation: [trans@mail.biu.ac.il](mailto:trans@mail.biu.ac.il)

Registration continues on the:

Hebrew ↔ French

Hebrew ↔ Arabic

Hebrew ↔ Russian Tracks

## CULTURAL CODES IN THE ISRAELI CLASSROOM

*Sharon Azaria (sharonandisrael@gmail.com)*

Israel, a multicultural society, has had constant waves of immigrants throughout its short history. The immigrants have hailed from a variety of countries each with its own culture and accepted set of social behaviors and beliefs typical of that particular society. All have immigrated to a young Jewish democratic state.

There are immigrant students in all Israeli classrooms. Some were born in Israel to immigrant parents and some immigrated themselves. To teach in culturally diverse Israeli classrooms, it is crucial that teachers gain an awareness of the background of their pupils' values, social behaviors, and classroom interactions. Only upon developing this awareness, can teachers deal with their pupils effectively and understand their specific behavior patterns.

On the surface, the differences between the various immigrant students in the classroom may not be noticeable. However, there are codes of behavior and hidden messages that students receive at home which may vary from accepted behavior at school and vice versa. Teachers and other classmates may not be aware of these differences and the students themselves may not know how to interpret the differences or relate to them. This may result in conflicts between the student and the teacher or among the students.

As a teacher trainer, I have tried over the years to understand this situation and feel that it is very important to pass this understanding along to my students.

### **Course Background**

There are many immigrants from Ethiopia and the Ethiopian culture is poles apart from the Israeli culture. Therefore I encourage pre-service and in-service teachers to become aware of the cultural elements that may affect their reactions and learning.

When teaching a group of new immigrant students from the various countries of the former USSR, I discussed a number of social skills that are related to Ethiopian children's culture. Among them are: being well-behaved, sitting quietly, being obedient, respecting adults, accepting adult authority, talking only when addressed, never criticizing a teacher (Azaria, 2002; Rosen, 1985; Rote, 1999).

The immigrant student teachers stated that this is true in their culture as well. Upon further discussion we saw that their social behaviors were quite similar, despite the enormous differences between the countries.

Student teachers who hail from the former USSR noted that as a result of the particularities of the Soviet administration and the standards prescribed by the government, every school, teachers and pupils were constantly concerned about not losing face. To prevent losing face, students preferred not to be noticed, were obedient, sat quietly, accepted authority and talked only when addressed.

The result was that the society followed the same prescribed social skills which were characteristic of the Ethiopian culture. Although the reasons differ, the results were similar.

After learning this from the immigrant teachers from the former USSR, I became interested in discovering social skills and other interactions peculiar to other immigrant groups in Israeli society. In a course that I taught on multiculturalism for three consecutive years (2007, 2008, and 2009), students interviewed the oldest member of their family to understand their own roots. The results of the student interviews were combined according to the country of origin of each family. Within the class there were groups of students whose parents had immigrated from Morocco, former USSR, Algeria, Europe, etc.

Students then interviewed other groups in the Israeli society and made comparisons. Emphasis was placed on understanding the differences in teacher/student and student/student interactions. The information gathered from the interviews was then related to four specific dimensions in the society (Pedersen, 1994) where conflicts may be observed.

### **Interviews**

To put the interviewees at ease, the interviews opened with questions regarding traditional foods, languages spoken with the different members of the family and superstitious beliefs.

Then, the students asked an additional twenty questions which were more personal. All of the questions were analyzed according to the four dimensions in society where conflict can be observed (Pedersen, 1994). The four dimensions included: individualist vs. collectivist society, feminine vs. masculine society, small power distance vs. large power distance society, and weak uncertainty avoidance vs. strong uncertainty avoidance society.

The questions were formulated according to the following four dimensions:

**I) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Individualism versus Collectivism Dimension (Hofstede, 1986)**

<b>Collectivist</b>	<b>Individualist</b>
Acquiring certificates, even through illegal means (cheating corruption) is more important than acquiring competence.	Acquiring competence is more important than acquiring certificates.
Individual students will speak up in a class only when called on personally by a teacher.	Individual students will speak up in class in response to a general invitation by the teacher.

**II) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)**

<b>Weak Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	<b>Strong Uncertainty Avoidance</b>
Students feel comfortable in unstructured learning situations: vague objectives, broad assignments, no timetables.	Students feel comfortable in structured learning situations; precise objectives, detailed assignments strict timetables.
Teachers are allowed to say "I don't know."	Teachers are expected to have all the answers.
Teachers are expected to suppress emotions (and so are students).	Teachers are allowed to behave emotionally (and so are students).
Teachers seek parents' ideas.	Teachers consider themselves experts who can not learn anything from parents and parents agree.

**III) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Power Distance Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)**

<b>Small Power Distance Societies</b>	<b>Large Power Distance Societies</b>
Students may speak up spontaneously in class.	Students may speak up in class only when invited by the teacher.
Teacher expects students to initiate conversation.	Students expect teachers to initiate conversations.
Younger teachers are more liked than older teachers.	Older teachers are more respected than younger teachers.
In teacher/student conflicts, parents are expected to side with the student.	In teacher/student conflicts, parents are expected to side with the teacher.

**IV) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Masculinity versus Femininity Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)**

<b>Femininity</b>	<b>Masculinity</b>
Teachers avoid openly praising students.	Teachers openly praise good students.
Teachers use average students as the norm.	Teachers use best students as the norm.
System rewards students' social adaptation.	System rewards students' academic performance.
A student's failure in school is a relatively minor accident.	A student's failure in school is a severe blow to his or her self-image and may lead to suicide in extreme cases.
Students admire friendliness in teachers.	Students admire brilliance in teachers.
Students practice mutual solidarity.	Students compete with each other in class.
Students try to behave modestly.	Students try to make themselves visible.
Corporal punishment is severely rejected.	Corporal punishment occasionally accepted.
Students choose academic subjects in view of intrinsic interest.	Students choose academic subjects in view of career opportunities.

## Results

### I) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Individualism versus Collectivism Dimension (Hofstede, 1986)

What is more important: acquiring a certificate or knowledge?

Ethiopian	Kavkaz	Former USSR	Moroccan	Bedouin	Western
Not conclusive	certificate	certificate	not conclusive	certificate	knowledge
	collectivist	collectivist		collectivist	individualist

### II) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student/Student Interaction Related to the Strong or Weak Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)

1. Do pupils feel comfortable in structured or unstructured learning situations?
2. Should teachers always have an answer or may they say, "I don't know"?
3. Are teachers allowed to behave emotionally?
4. Can teachers learn from parents?

Ethiopian	Kavkaz	Former USSR	Moroccan	Iraqi	Bedouin	Western
structure	structure	structure	structure	structure	unstructured	structure
strong	strong	strong	strong	strong	weak	strong
answers	answers	don't know	answers	answers	don't know	answers
strong	strong	weak	strong	strong	weak	strong
not	not	not	not	emotion	emotion	emotion
weak	weak	weak	weak	strong	strong	strong
no	yes	no	not conclusive	possible	yes	yes
strong	weak	strong		weak	weak	weak

### III) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student / Student Interaction Related to the Large or Small Power Distance Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)

1. Should pupils initiate communication?
2. Are younger or older teachers more respected?
3. Should parents side with the teacher or with the pupil?

Ethiopian	Kavkaz	Former USSR	Moroccan	Iraqi	Bedouin	Western
no	no	no	no	no	students	students
large	large	large	large	large	small	small
older	older	not conclusive	older	older	older	not conclusive
large	large		large	large	large	
teacher	teacher	teacher	teacher	teacher	not conclusive	teacher
large	large	large	large	large		large

### IV) Differences in Teacher / Student and Student/Student Interaction Related to the Masculinity versus Femininity Dimension (Pedersen, 1994)

1. Should teachers openly praise pupils?
2. Should teachers use the best or average pupil as the norm?
3. What should be rewarded, social adaptation (making friends) or academic performance (doing well in school)?
4. Is failure in school a major or a minor problem?
5. Should teachers be friendly or brilliant?
6. Should pupils cooperate or compete with each other?

7. Should pupils try to make themselves visible or behave modestly?
8. Under what circumstances is corporal punishment accepted?
9. Should pupils choose careers according to opportunity or intrinsic interest?

Ethiopian	Kavkaz	Former USSR	Moroccan	Iraqi	Bedouin	Western
only strong	sometimes	openly	openly	openly	openly	avoid
masculinity		masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	femininity
average	best	best	not conclusive	best	average	average
	masculinity	masculinity		masculinity	femininity	femininity
academic	social	not conclusive	academic	academic	academic	not conclusive
masculinity	femininity		masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	
major	major	major	major	major	minor	major
masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	femininity	masculinity
brilliant	brilliant	brilliant	brilliant	brilliant	friendly	friendly
masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	femininity	femininity
coop	coop	coop	not conclusive	not conclusive	coop	coop
femininity	femininity	femininity			femininity	femininity
modest	modest	modest	not conclusive	modest	modest	visible
femininity	femininity	femininity		femininity	femininity	masculinity
accepted	against law	rejected	accepted	accepted	occasional	rejected
masculinity	femininity	femininity	masculinity	masculinity	masculinity	femininity
opportune	opportune	intrinsic	opportune	intrinsic	Intrinsic	not conclusive
masculinity	masculinity	femininity	masculinity	femininity	femininity	

## Discussion

### Individualism vs. collectivism

When comparing the large vs. small power distance society dimension we see a striking difference between all of the ethnic groups in comparison to what we are familiar with in the Israeli school system. While Israeli teachers expect the students to initiate communication, the only groups that feel that the students should initiate are the Westerners and the Bedouin. (Note: Of all the groups interviewed, the Bedouin group was the only one that was young as it was not possible to interview the older generation.) All of the groups felt that veteran teachers are more respected. Frequently on the radio and newspapers veteran teachers are referred to as being burnt out – exhausted, depersonalized, and unaccomplished (Farber, 1991). Furthermore, there is a claim that more young and new teachers are needed. Yet, only veteran teachers are referred to as being burnt out, although young and new teachers may also experience this phenomenon (Friedman, 2000). In addition, the “New Horizon” program raised salaries for younger teachers, while the veteran teachers’ salaries were increased insignificantly although they are required to add many more hours of work at school (Ministry of Education, 2009). These points may help us understand the Israeli preference for younger teachers. The Bedouins were divided on this point.

All the groups agreed that the parents should side with the teachers. In Israel today parents tend to side with the students when the teacher has a problem with the student. To a certain extent, this continues in the army where parents will confront the commanders when they have gripes.

In terms of power distance, it appears that Israel is a small power distance society, while all the other groups appear to be large power distant societies.

Differences in the weak vs. strong uncertainty avoidance society dimension are not as clear cut. The first question regarding whether pupils feel more comfortable in a structured or unstructured learning situation is difficult to answer in regard to Israel today as there has been a change in the Israeli classroom. Ten years ago there was more of an emphasis on an unstructured learning environment. Today most of the classes are more structured which should make all of the groups more comfortable. Only the Bedouins preferred an unstructured learning environment.

Should teachers have all the answers or are they allowed to say that they don’t know? In Israel today, teachers are allowed to say that they don’t know. However, it is expected that they will then look up the answer and inform the pupils. The only groups that agree with this are those from the former USSR and the Bedouins.



The David Yellin Academic College of Education



## The Continuing Education Department

Are you an English teacher with at least 3 years experience, and interested in developing supervision skills and strategies, while supporting novice professionals? If so, you are eligible for the **Mentoring and Mentorship Course** offered by the David Yellin College of Education. The course grants 60 hours of gmul to "Ofek Hadash" teachers, 112 hours to non-Ofek Hadash teachers, and is subsidized by the Ministry of Education. For further information contact Dr. Aliza Yahav at: [aliz@dyellin.ac.il](mailto:aliz@dyellin.ac.il)

Interested in diversifying your career options? Consider our **programs in Editing and New Publishing** at David Yellin College of Education. **Hishtalmut** credit available. Classes start in early November 2011. For further information visit our website at: [www.dyellin.ac.il/newpublishing](http://www.dyellin.ac.il/newpublishing). To learn more and arrange an interview contact Ms. Robin Miller, Tel. 077-3200909 or at: [faharan@hotmail.com](mailto:faharan@hotmail.com). Also available: **So You Want to Write**, a course in fiction and creative nonfiction with noted instructor Judy Labensohn

In Israel it is generally accepted that teachers are allowed to behave emotionally. Three groups feel the same: the Iraqis, the Bedouins and the Westerns.

Today in Israel, most parents feel that the teachers can learn from them. Some feel that not only can the teachers learn from them, but that their knowledge is much better than the teachers. The Ethiopians, those from the former USSR and the Moroccans do not agree. They feel that the teachers can not learn from the parents. The Iraqis think that it is possible.

While in two out of three of the questions, Israel tends to be a weak uncertainty avoidance society, most of the others appear to be strong. In the one question where Israel appears to be strong, most of the others are weak.

In the masculine versus feminine dimension some differences are pronounced. Should a teacher be brilliant or friendly? In Israel there seems to be the opinion that a teacher should be friendly. Only the Bedouins and the Westerners agreed with this feminine dimension. The other groups prefer that the teacher be brilliant.

Should pupils be modest or visible in the classroom? Teachers from Israel expect the pupils to be visible, to speak up and contribute. The Westerns agree with this. All the others feel that the pupils should be modest in the class and not stand out, a feminine dimension.

Lastly, should pupils choose their profession according to opportunities or intrinsic interests (feminine)? In Israel it is widely accepted that pupils will choose according to intrinsic interests. Three groups disagreed with this. They were the Ethiopians, the Kavkaz, and the Moroccans who felt that professions should be chosen according to opportunities.

### Conclusions

When looking at the older generations from all of the different groups, there appears to be a consensus regarding the interactions between the teacher and the pupils. Furthermore, in the societies where the immigrant parents are more influential they continue to pass on these social beliefs to their children. The social beliefs which the students held before immigrating may conflict with the social beliefs which are seen in the Israeli classroom. Often children of immigrants who experience this clash, find it difficult to understand the new societal rules. Many go overboard with their behavior and are not aware of the expected Israeli boundaries. They have to learn the new societal behaviors. For these children this is part of a hidden curriculum at the school. To avoid unnecessary conflict, the hidden norms must be made explicit to the new immigrant children, stating what is expected of them in the new environment. Also, teachers cannot expect that all the borders will be instantly clear even after explaining.

Students' reactions to the research were very interesting. Many had a wonderful opportunity to get to know their grandparents or a different aspect of their parents' lives. Many of the students were very grateful for this opportunity. The students were surprised at how much they had in common with the other groups. All of the students felt that this research helped them better understand other groups especially new immigrants. It also gave them another perspective of the classroom in Israel with its cultural and ethnic diversity. The students felt that this research process will make them better and more understanding teachers and will help them create a more effective learning environment.

### References

- Azaria, S. (2002). *The Relationship between Social Interaction of Reading, Perception of Bilingualism, and Phonological Awareness of Pre-reading Literacy Skills*. Unpublished doctoral thesis: Hebrew University.
- Farber, B.A. (1991). *Crisis in Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Friedman, I.A. (2000). Burnout in Teachers: Shattered Dreams of Impeccable Professional Performance. *Journal of Clinical Psychology In Session*, 56: 595-606.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work related values*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Israel Ministry of Education. (2009). *New Horizon*. Retrieved September 2, 2009, from <http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/Units/Ofek/>.
- Pedersen, P. (1994). *A Handbook for Developing Multicultural Awareness*. Second Edition. Virginia: American Counseling Org.
- Rosen, C. (1985). Core symbols of Ethiopian identity and their role in understanding the Beta Israel today. *Israel Social Science Research*, 3, 55-6.
- Rote, E. (1999). Cultural transition: a lesson from one Ethiopian child who is blind. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 93, 298-304.
- Sharon Azaria teaches at Talpiot Academic College and at Achva Academic College. She holds a PhD from the Hebrew University in the fields of bilingualism and reading. She has authored various books, the most recent, *You Can Do It! (renewed version)*, is published by UPP. The multiculturalism course is an ongoing course at Achva College.

**ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL ASPECTS IN  
“RESULTS FOR FOUR POINTS” TEXTBOOK**

*Tareq Murad (tarenal22@hotmail.com)*

**Introduction**

Shatnawi (2005) asserts that there are two trends regarding the issue of including culture in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). The first supports the idea that culture should be included in TEFL, as culture and language are inseparable. The other trend supports the idea of minimizing the cultural loading in TEFL material. This is the case with programs that are geared towards English for specific purposes (ESP) and language for specific purposes (LSP) where the cultural loading is marginalized. The emphasis is on language skills. Evidence supporting the importance of imparting knowledge of culture in language teaching may be acquired from a variety of sources. One such source is teaching of literature in the foreign/second language classroom. Valdes (1986: 138) notes that “ an understanding of literature depends upon discernment of the values inherent, but not necessarily specifically expressed in the work.”

**Question: What are the cultural aspects that are implied in the first two units of the textbook Results for 4 Points?**

This report analyzes the first two units in the textbook Results for 4 Points using the sentence as a **unit of analysis**. The sentence is a group of words which have the following functions: Stating facts, asking about information, commanding, requesting, or exclaiming. **The criteria** that were used to analyze the cultural content of the first two units (“Driving Each Other Crazy” and “The Internet”, pp. 7-42) were adopted from Shatnawi’s (2005) research.

**Criteria of Analysis:**

The following criteria and definitions, adapted from Shatnawi (2005) and Cunningham (1999), were used to analyze the cultural content of the reading passages in the textbook Results for 4 Points.

**Historical:** Items that are related to events that happened in the past.

**Economical:** Items that give information about the economic system of certain governments.

**Geographical:** Items that give information about the location of different places in the world.

**Literary:** Items that give information about the biographies of writers, poets, scientists and storytellers.

**Man-woman relationship:** Items that are related to marriage and relationship between males and females.

**Political:** Items that give information about the political systems of the present and past governments.

**Religious:** Items that are related to the practice of Muslims and other religions.

**Social:** Items that are related to currency, beliefs, values, games, drinks, food, pets, greetings and festivals.

**Habits, customs and traditions:** Items that are related to habits, customs and traditions of people.

**Way of living:** Items which are related to the way people live in certain societies.

Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of the cultural aspects in the two reading passages of Unit One in the textbook Results for 4 Points.

**Table 1**

**Frequencies and Percentages of the Cultural Aspects in Unit 1 (Driving Each Other Crazy) of “Results for Four Points” Textbook**

Cultural Aspects	Frequencies	Percentages
Historical	0	0%
Economical	2	3.92%
Geographical	8	15.68%
Literary	2	3.92%
Political	1	1.96%
Religious	0	0
Social	17	33.32%
Man-Woman Relationship	5	9.8%
Habits, Customs, and Traditions	6	11.76%
Ways of Living	10	19.6%
Total	51	100%

Table 1 shows that the frequency ranges from 1 – 17, with a percentage that ranges between 1.96% to 33.32%. The ‘political’ aspect appeared at the lowest frequency and percentage (1 and 1.96%). Of particular interest was that the ‘religious’ aspect appeared at a frequency of zero percent. This may be due to the topic of the passages. The topic does not allow the occurrence of this aspect, or the authors are not interested in this aspect.

The **'social' aspect** appeared at the highest frequency and percentage. This is justified since the texts emphasize the relationship between teens and their parents, which is a completely social relationship. In these texts the authors refer to teens' behaviors and how their parents expect them to behave in certain circumstances.

#### Examples

"Parents are trying to force their teenage children to drive more carefully".

"I have always admired your tolerance".

The author seems to emphasize topics of interest to students. A text that is part of the students' culture will help students talk about their relationship with their parents while using English language since their relationship is part of their daily lives and is extremely familiar to them. The texts offer students an opportunity to draw a link between the events in the texts and their everyday lives with their parents. The authors began the book with a subject close to the students' everyday lives.

The **'ways of living' aspect** appeared at a frequency of 10 (19.6%). This is justified, since the first text deals with teenagers' driving habits and the parents' response to it. The second text is also about teenagers and problems they encounter in their daily life. The 'social' and the 'ways of living' aspects are very close and related in this context.

#### Examples

"Don't tell my parents about that thing".

"These teen crashes are usually caused by not looking in the right place at the right time".

The **'geographical' aspect** is also emphasized in this unit. It appeared at frequency of 8 (15.62%).

#### Examples

"We can also go to Eilat, spend some time with my cousins on Kibbutz Sde Boker and of course do some shopping in Tel Aviv".

The authors seemed to have ignored the fact that the textbook is also used by Arab schools. They did not mention any Arab place. This may affect the Arab students' interest in these texts. As an EFL teacher in Arab schools, I think that the authors should have mentioned names of places where Arab people live and frequent, in addition to other places in Israel. Mentioning Arab places may enhance Arab students' general receptivity to the text and specifically to English.

**'Habits, customs and traditions' aspect:** The texts also mention some traditions such as respecting parents. This strengthens the social ties within the community.

#### Examples

"I should respect my parents."

"Forget to signal or wear the seat belt."

"It takes about two to four years to gain driving experience on the roads and become a better driver".

**'Man-woman relationship' aspect** appeared at frequency of 5 (9.6%).

#### Examples

"We are planning to marry as soon as possible"

"I do not limp and I am going to marry a criminal 40 years older than I am".

The 'religious' aspect did not appear at all in this unit. This is, I believe, due to the fact that the text is talking about social relationships between parents and their teens.

The author's message may be to encourage teenagers' respect for their parents. They also presented the parents' fear and concerns regarding their children's behaviors. Students are introduced to these concerns and learn that their parents care about their children.

The following section will analyze the cultural aspects in unit 2.

Table 2 presents the frequencies and percentages of the 'cultural' aspects in Unit Two called "The Internet" in the textbook Results for 4 Points.

**Table 2**

**Frequencies and Percentages of the Cultural Aspects in Unit 2 (The Internet) of the textbook Results for 4 Points.**

Cultural Aspects	Frequencies	Percentages
Historical	0	0
Economical	1	3.57%
Geographical	1	0
Literary	0	0
Political	0	0
Religious	0	0
Social	12	42.84%
Man-Woman Relationship	1	3.57%
Habits, Customs, and Traditions	8	28.56%
Ways of Living	5	17.585
Total	28	100%

Table 2 shows that the ‘social’ aspect is the most predominant in this study unit with a frequency of 12 (42.84%). It was followed by the aspect of ‘habits, customs, and traditions’, with a frequency of 8 (8.56%). Next, the ways of ‘living aspect’ got frequency of 5 (17.85%). The ‘economical’, ‘geographical’ and ‘man-woman relationship’ aspects appeared at a frequency of 1 (3.57%).

The main aspect of this learning unit was therefore the ‘social’ aspect and also included all issues connected to habits and traditions. The text in this unit is about games on the Internet as a fatal attraction.

**Examples**

**Economical aspect:**

“Soon my family was thousands of dollars in debt.”

**Social, habits, customs, traditions and way of life aspects:**

“According to a recent study in America, 80% of adolescents have gambled in the past year.”

“I liked to surf the web, where I met people from around the world and chatting with them online.”

“Cyber Angels is an organization specially set up to help victims of cyber crimes.”

Table 3 presents the frequencies and percentages of the cultural aspects in the first two units

**Table 3**

**Frequencies and Percentages of the Cultural Aspects in the first Two Units of “ Results for Four Points” Textbook**

Cultural Aspects	Unit 1	Unit 2	Total	Percentage
Historical	0	0	0	0%
Economical	2	1	3	3.79%
Geographical	8	1	9	11.34%
Literary	2	0	2	2.2%
Political	1	0	1	1.26%
Religious	0	0	0	0%
Social	17	12	29	36.54%
Man-Woman Relationship	5	1	6	7.56%
Habits, Customs, and Traditions	6	8	14	17.61%
Ways of Living	10	5	15	18.9%
Total	51	28	79	100%

Table 3 shows all the cultural aspects in all of the learning units combined. The table shows that the frequency ranges between 1 and 29, with percentages that range from 1.26% to 36.54%. The religious and political aspects appeared at the lowest frequency and percentage (1 and 1.26%) while the social aspect received the highest frequency rate of 29, or 36.54%.

This table shows that the focus of the authors was on the social aspect. This implies that the authors dealt with this aspect because they are extremely familiar with the cultural, social and religious of this county; the people in this country are of different cultures and religious backgrounds. Textbook writers should be aware of this fact. They should take into account that textbooks address different students from different cultural and religious backgrounds. This is important in order to enhance the students’ receptivity to English.

**References**

Cunningham, S. and Moor, P. (1996). *Cutting Edge*. Upper intermediate students’ book. UK: Longman.

Shatnawi, M. (2005). The cultural dimension in TEFL: A case study of the cutting edge Series. Unpublished dissertation. Amman Arab University.

Valdes, J. M. (1986). *Culture bound: Bridging the cultural gap in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Tareq Mured has been teaching English as a foreign language in high schools since 1990, and has been teaching in Sakhnin College for Teacher Education since 2001. He holds a BA in English Linguistics and Literature from Ben-Gurion University, MA in English Linguistics from Haifa University, Pedagogical Supervision from Machon-Motet. TA and a PhD in English Curricula and Instruction from Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan. He has published articles in a number of different publications and has presented at conferences. He lives in Bueina-Nujidat Village, is married and is the proud father of five.*

**ECB** *ERIC COHEN BOOKS*

***You can  
depend on  
our support***



27 Hata'asia Street | P.O.B. 2325 | Ra'anana 43654 | Tel: 09 747 8000 | Fax: 09 747 8001  
email: [elt@ecb.co.il](mailto:elt@ecb.co.il) | website: [www.ecb.co.il](http://www.ecb.co.il)

## HOW TO LOWER FRUSTRATION: POST-TEST SATISFACTION AMONG ADVANCED STUDENTS OF EFL

*Marsha Bensoussan (bensous@research.haifa.ac.il)*

*Bonnie Ben-Israel (bonib@research.haifa.ac.il)*

### Introduction

Teachers are just as frustrated as their students by low test grades. In discussions, teachers expressed that a large part of the problem stemmed from the students' feelings of depression, resignation, and frustration which carried over from one test experience to the following one. If that chain could somehow be broken, perhaps the outcomes would also be different.

We began to ask questions such as "What do students want us, as teachers, to do?" Thus began our investigation into discovering what low achieving students want. It seemed no one had thought to ask them.

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). Students who have failed the same level course more than once are enrolled in remedial groups. Using specific teaching and testing procedures, these courses aim to improve English reading skills and enhance self-confidence. Bensoussan (2009) details a pedagogical approach developed to deal in the classroom with the special needs of such remedial classes. Our remedial students have experienced repeated failure in three principal areas: language learning difficulties, low motivation, and anxiety accompanied by low self-esteem. The entire issue of what students would like to happen arose from our experiences with these remedial groups.

Most researchers have found a significant inverse relation between pretest anxiety and test performance (Argaman and Abu-Rabia, 2002; Brantmeier, 2005; Hembree, 1988; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 1995; Saito et al., 1999; Shohamy, 1982). Because low grades lead to a downward spiral of anxiety and further low grades, it is important to deal with test anxiety. A number of studies are concerned with improving test scores by alleviating pretest anxiety (Bensoussan, 2009; Hembree, 1988; Horwitz, 2001; Kondo, 1997; Kondo and Yang, 2004; Saito et al., 1999; Sarason and Sarason, 1990; Shohamy, 1982; Young, 1991; Zeidner and Bensoussan, 1988).

Performance appears to be improved by a combination of treatments including cognitive treatments (such as group counseling) and behavioral treatments (desensitization, study skills training, and testwiseness training) (Hembree, 1988, pp. 49, 67, 73-74). Hembree (1988) states that performance incentives can benefit students at all test anxiety levels. He suggests the following conditions:

- for high test-anxious (HTA) students -- low-stress instructions (at the college level), provision of memory support, minimal distractions, and background music
- for low test-anxious (LTA) students -- ego-involving instructions, an easy-to-hard test item arrangement, and no music during tests (Hembree, 1988, p. 73).

The list of interventions by Sarason and Sarason (1990), intended to both reduce pretest anxiety and improve performance, also incorporates recent research studies: cognitive therapy, rational-emotive therapy, cognitive-behavioral treatments, systematic desensitization, relaxation training, biofeedback training, work on study skills and test-taking strategies, and a combination of all of the above (p. 490).

Are such interventions what students want AFTER they experience a disappointing performance? Suggestions for treating post-test anxiety for language learning have been sparse (Kondo and Yang, 2004). No research study has requested students' recommendations for alleviating their anxiety after taking language tests. Moreover, whereas research on language testing anxiety has focused on student achievement and motivation in the classroom, little attention has been given to testing in advanced reading comprehension courses.

### Research Questions:

- 1) What are students' suggestions about how to improve their feelings about their test scores and roles as test takers?
- 2) Do remedial students have different suggestions from the rest of the student population?

A summary of the literature indicates six activities that can help students of reading comprehension cope with test anxiety:

- 1) participating in class discussions (Horwitz, 2001; Young, 1991; Zeidner and Bensoussan, 1988)
- 2) having private discussions with the teacher (Horwitz, 2001; Sarason and Sarason, 1990; Young, 1991)
- 3) receiving encouragement (Bensoussan, 2009; Hembree, 1988; Horwitz, 2001; Kondo, 1997; Kondo and Yang, 2004; Young, 1991)
- 4) studying harder (Hembree, 1988; Kondo, 1997; Kondo and Yang, 2004; Sarason and Sarason, 1990)
- 5) taking another test on the same material, practice test (Bensoussan, 2009; Hembree, 1988; Kondo, 1997; Kondo and Yang, 2004; MacIntyre, 1995; Sarason and Sarason, 1990; Young, 1991)

- 6) doing nothing, resignation (Kondo, 1997; Kondo and Yang, 2004; Sarason and Sarason, 1990; Stoeber, 2004)

### Methodology

#### Sample

A questionnaire of nine items was administered during the Fall semester 2009-2010 to 265 students (74 men, 187 women, 4 missing) at the University of Haifa participating in the intermediate to advanced level courses in English as a Foreign Language. The native languages of these students were Hebrew (n=123, 48%), Arabic (n=104, 41%), Russian (n=23, 9%), and other (n=4, 2%). Among those students, 11 were remedial students who had failed their course at least once.

#### Questionnaire

The questions were designed to elicit student ideas about what they would want after receiving a low test grade. We labeled the answers to these questions "repair behavior." Students were given eight questions which suggested ways they could repair their feelings after failing a test (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient = .65):

If I could:

- a. participate in a class discussion of the test, I would feel:
- b. discuss the test with the teacher in private, I would feel:
- c. correct my mistakes and get a higher grade, I would feel:
- d. correct my mistakes even without a change in grade, I would feel:
- e. do an additional bonus exercise for 20 points extra credit, I would feel:
- f. take another test on the same material, I would feel:
- g. do nothing since I will get a better grade next test, I would feel:
- h. do at least one of the above activities, I would feel:

**dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 satisfied**

They were also asked to submit suggestions of their own:

- i. What else could I do to feel better?

During the time students were filling in the questionnaires, many students said that they were pleased to express their ideas about the testing process.

### Results

Results indicate clear student trends about desired repair behavior (see Table 1). Hierarchies of preferred post-test

behavior emerged for two groups of students (1 = lowest preference, 7 = highest) for the General group of students (n1 = 242) and for the Remedial group (n2 = 11).

**TABLE 1: Desired Repair Behavior: General group (n1 = 242 students)**

<u>preference</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>standard deviation</u>
1) correct for higher grade	6.36	1.02
2) bonus	6.20	1.06
3) another test	5.67	1.18
4) any one	5.43	1.29
5) teacher	5.15	1.51
6) group discussion	4.44	1.68
7) nothing	4.42	1.63
8) correct no change	4.02	1.71

On a Likert-type scale between 1 and 7, responses for repair behavior ranged between 4.02 and 6.36, displaying a positive set of attitudes ranging from neutral (close to the mid-point 4) to satisfaction (7). Most students reported that they would like to improve their grades, even if they needed to do extra work: correction of the test (6.36), bonus (6.20), take another test (5.67), or at least one of the suggested activities (5.43). There appeared to be a consistent standard deviation ranging between 1.02 and 1.29. Following these measures, students reported that they would like to discuss their test with the teacher (5.15). Additional effort in learning without improved grades (group discussion, doing nothing since they were sure they would do better in the next test, and correcting mistakes without changing the grades) was given lowest preference (4.44, 4.42 and 4.02, respectively). That is, the objective of raising the grade appears to come before the objective of learning. For these three items there was less agreement (SD ranging between 1.51 and 1.71).

The 11 students in the Remedial group presented a somewhat different hierarchy for Repair (see Table 2):

**TABLE 2: Desired Repair Behavior: Remedial group (n2 = 11 students)**

<u>preference</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>standard deviation</u>
1) correct for higher grade	6.83	0.39
2) bonus	6.75	0.62
3) another test	6.00	1.04
4,5) teacher, any one (tied)	5.50	1.31 (for both)
6) nothing	4.75	1.91
7) correct no change	4.67	2.15
8) group discussion	4.50	2.02

The remedial group also wanted to improve their grades by doing extra work (bonus, correct mistakes, take another test, at least one of suggested activities). However, they were prepared to learn from their mistakes without raising grades by talking to the teacher, correcting mistakes without changing the grades, and engaging in group discussion before doing nothing. Since they were not confident that their next test would produce better grades, their lowest preference was to do nothing.

Results for the total population, the general group and remedial groups were similar, ranging between 4.02 and 6.83, with the extremes found in the subgroups. Standard deviations for this group were more extreme than for the other groups and for other items. The low standard deviations (SD < 1.0) for the first two categories (correct for higher grade and bonus) shows agreement about their effectiveness in improving students' feelings; they were lower than for any other group. In contrast, the high standard deviations (SD ranging between 1.91 and 2.02) for the last three categories (nothing, correct no change, and group discussion) indicated general disagreement about how to feel better after having failed a test.

Students were also asked to submit suggestions of their own (What else could I do to feel better?). These suggestions are presented as additional to the eight submitted in the questionnaire (see Table 3). Presumably, they were added by students who wished to express their feelings about the results to a teacher or examiner

**TABLE 3: Suggestions from ALL Students**

**Suggestion\* (N = 265)**

1) Modify the testing and grading systems: cancel the present test, raise grades by adding a factor or a bonus, give a paper instead of a test, second chance, extra work	42
2) Improve test-taking skills, practice tests, another test, re-test	23
3) Resignation, avoidance: leave, go shopping, reduce anxiety, have a cup of coffee, flight, relax from test situation	19
4) Convince teacher, get attention from teacher	19
5) Study skills, learning, improving for own benefit, vocabulary practice, study harder, correct mistakes to learn	12
6) Have more time	9
7) Look at larger framework, educational purpose, place of English in life	6

**N = 130 comments**

\* Some students made more than one comment.

This list does not follow the statistical findings of the previous hierarchies. Although the question "What else?" was intended for students to add to the eight suggestions offered in the questionnaire, many students chose to repeat some of those eight, apparently for emphasis. Most students, however, chose to avoid answering this question.

A breakdown of the results of the total population (N=130) into General (n1= 118 comments) and Remedial (n2=12 comments) yields the following results (see Table 4):

**TABLE 4: Suggestions from Students (General = n1 and Remedial Groups = n2)**

<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>n1 ( % )</b>	<b>n2 ( % )</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Modify test system	41 (35 %)	1 ( 8 %)	n1 ' n2
Another test, practice tests	21 (17 %)	2 (17 %)	n1 = n2
Resignation, avoidance	16 (14 %)	3 (25 %)	n1 < n2
Teacher's Office Hours	15 (13 %)	4 (33 %)	n1 < n2
Study skills	12 (10 %)	0 --	1 ' n2
More time	7 ( 6 %)	2 (17 %)	n1 < n2
Larger framework	6 ( 5 %)	0 --	n1 ' n2

**Total:** 118 comments 12 comments

Both groups agreed on the need to improve test-taking skills and receive more practice tests. The general group thought more about bonus questions and modifying the test system. They also wanted to study harder and thought about the larger educational framework (the place of English in their lives) more than the remedial students. The remedial group (n2) appeared to be more resigned and wished to avoid tests. remedial students were more interested in getting attention from the teacher than the general group (n1).

**Discussion**

- 1) What are students' suggestions about how to improve their feelings about:
  - a) their test scores? b) their roles as test takers?
- 1a) Most students wanted some sort of basic change in the grading and/or testing system. (See Table 3). These suggestions often involved changes which were inappropriate such as assigning a paper instead of a test. Writing a paper brings up questions of authenticity of authorship, does not necessarily reflect reading comprehension in the target language, and may involve plagiarism. Other suggestions such as adding a "factor" to the test were not acceptable

to teachers who felt this would imply a defect in the test validity when the average grades in the class were not low.

- 1b) Another popular suggestion was to have a practice test or another test. This involves the active participation of the student and does not place the onus for the low grade exclusively on the teacher. So, many students are, in fact, willing to take an active part in rectifying their situation, if given the opportunity. However, the suggestion of having more time was an impractical one given the physical constraints on class time and space.
- 2) Do remedial students have different suggestions from the rest of the student population?

As seen in Table 4, remedial students did not have different suggestions than students in the general population, but they certainly relied more heavily on teacher-centered ways of rectifying the situation than students in the general population. Most remedial students made suggestions that required only passive involvement on their part or teacher-initiated activities. None suggested devoting more time to acquiring study or language skills, whereas 10% of the general population did suggest these activities.

### Conclusion

It was refreshing to see that student suggestions included ideas not found in the literature review. This “out-of-the-box” thinking could be the basis for further research. In addition, research might investigate learners of foreign languages other than English or ask students about their expectations about evaluation and assessment in language courses before they even begin their language studies.

Another avenue of investigation could focus on students of subjects other than EFL reading comprehension.

Certainly, the effectiveness of coping strategies in examination contexts should include more precise theoretical statements, continuous and longitudinal data collection, and the inclusion of situational and personal variables. Research is needed to clarify how a coping strategy resolves problems, relieves emotional distress, and prevents future difficulties (Zeidner, 1995). However, it seems clear now that the use of many low-stakes assignments such as practice tests and bonus questions may increase their motivation by alleviating anxiety about learning. It is equally clear that test anxiety and its alleviation are issues that need to be considered when teachers design a course and prepare a curriculum.

*Bonnie Ben-Israel is Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, University of Haifa. She received her M.A. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Surrey, England (1996). Her research interests include teaching English as a Foreign Language, multilingualism, and language testing.*

*Marsha Bensoussan, Ph.D., 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. She is also head of the English Department at Shaanan Academic Teacher Training College. Her fields of research are EFL reading comprehension and testing.*

## FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGNING A DIAGNOSTIC ORAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT

*JoAnn Salvisberg (joann.salvisberg@hslu.ch)*

The workshop and poster presentation, and ensuing discussion by ETAI International conference participants interested in Teacher Training and Assessment, focused on research undertaken to identify content criteria and validity measures needed to design a diagnostic speaking test for second language learners. Using the first draft of guidelines, teachers in Switzerland had designed diagnostic speaking tests for one or more of their own classes. Their feedback, as well as that of experts in testing, were then integrated into the final version of ‘flexible guidelines for formative speaking tests in EFL classrooms worldwide’ (Salvisberg, 2010).

### Introduction

As many of us know, people of all ages are often nervous about taking tests, including those in the language classroom. However, when conducted with sensitivity and based on sound testing principles, regular assessment of oral skills needn’t interrupt the communicative flow of learners’ language use. Formative assessment of communicative oral skills in English:

- focuses on what has been taught
- mirrors classroom tasks
- is relevant to the learners’ level and needs

- reflects a task-based approach to language acquisition
- is motivating

These ‘diagnostic’ tools should reveal where students’ strengths and weaknesses lie, where they have made progress and their linguistic skills which might need a bit of ‘tweaking’ (e.g. improvement in some way). There are practical measures which can be used to assess what students can do within communicative situations within a wide range of ages and levels. A formative, or diagnostic, speaking test would consider:

**Focus**

- feedback to help students improve
- real-world tasks relevant to the students
- meaningful exchange of new information
- not on grades – pass or fail

**Format**

- individuals
- pairs (peers)
- small groups
- whole class (global assessment)

**Components (Sample)**

Pronunciation	Range	Accuracy	Appropriacy	Communicativity
intonation	vocabulary	grammar	vocabulary	effective communication task fulfillment
enunciation	grammar	vocabulary	register	
fluency			structures	
stress			appropriate for the specific function	
rhythm				

**Critical Issues**

- content validity (e.g. Is the test content related to / does it mirror what students have been learning?)
  - authentic tasks (e.g. Do the tasks reflect what people actually do in the ‘real world’?)
  - formative versus summative (e.g. Is the purpose of the test to give a grade, or to give students and teachers feedback for future learning needs?)
  - norm- versus criterion-referencing (e.g. Norm-referenced means the answers are compared to others’ answers at the same level or age. By contrast the purpose of criterion-referenced tests is to find out what they can do and what they know rather than how they compare to others.)
- test reliability (e.g. Does the test actually measure what it is designed to measure?)

- inter-rater agreement (e.g. Would two different assessors arrive at the same, or nearly the same, ‘assessment result’?)

**Methodology**

The research conducted followed an exploratory method to identify and outline a framework that would integrate the components needed to guide teachers in the process of designing a diagnostic instrument for oral skills assessment for their EFL students. The study design made extensive use of survey research and the utilization of data that exists, such as assessment instruments available in the published literature and English language examinations and tests. The study samples were drawn from the population of EFL teachers and students in Switzerland.

In order to determine what types of oral language skills assessment EFL teachers in Switzerland use (e.g. criteria, method, validity, reliability, frequency, etc.), members within the English Teachers Association Switzerland (ETAS) were asked to fill in a questionnaire distributed at a national conference. Research identified the various components needed to construct a prototype framework for designing appropriate assessment tools for adult EFL learners that would be based on what they have been taught and, thus, would be expected to have acquired during their course of study.

A framework for designing a diagnostic instrument for oral skills assessment (FD-DIOSA ) was then developed and trialed to guide teachers in designing their oral assessments for their classes. Each test constructed thus offered teachers an applicable and relevant diagnostic tool to evaluate their students within their learning situation.

**Statement of the Problem**

Since valid formative assessment of language skills reflects prior classroom practice, the purpose of this study was two-fold, namely to investigate:

1. What type of flexible framework could be developed for teachers to assess EFL students’ oral skills, including:
  - a. the level of the learners
  - b. specific content and skills recently learned in class
  - c. specific criteria of teacher interest (e.g. accuracy, fluency, range, and communication of meaning)?
2. To what extent could this instrument be used successfully in EFL classrooms on a global basis?

The study also included research in the following areas:

1. What are the critical components needed for an effective instrument of oral language assessment in EFL classes in Switzerland (e.g. skills, content, functional language, etc.)?
2. What types of oral language skills assessment are EFL teachers in Switzerland currently using (e.g. criteria, method, validity, reliability, frequency, etc.)?
3. Do the diagnostic oral language skills assessment products available on the market match the language and skills Swiss EFL students are learning in classes (e.g. guidelines, framework, scales of descriptors, etc.)?
4. What can be said about feedback on the diagnostic assessment and improvement in oral skills with a sub-sample of students?
5. What are the components of a framework that would determine its success on a global basis?

### Sources of Data

The major sources of data were the sample of 57 ETAS members in Switzerland, the sample of five practitioner English language teachers and professional peers within the EFL community in Switzerland, and the students in the classrooms of the sample of the five English language teachers.

Other sources were data that existed in published information as: specifications, documents, and sample tests of various testing bodies, examining institutions and publishers but no samples of diagnostic tests of speaking skills for formative uses were found on the market.

Sources of data regarding the components in assessment instruments were taken from the test specifications, documents, and sample tests of various testing bodies, examining institutions, and publishers that were found on the respective internet websites, from published materials (books and articles), and information gathered at national and international teachers conferences.

### Population and Samples

Three samples of teachers and a sub-sample of five classes of students in Switzerland in population 1 were selected for this study for the following reasons:

1. The researcher teaches EFL in Switzerland.
2. The researcher has access to other teachers and classrooms through the English Language Association of ETAS.
3. With four national languages (i.e. Swiss German, French, Italian, and Romance), classes often comprise a combination of students of various first languages learning English as a foreign language in Switzerland.

Population	Sample	Research
1	1	Completed questionnaire
	2	Subset of Sample 1, interest in research project
	3	Agreed to read FD-DIOSA (i.e. guidelines), trial in class
	3b	Revised group 3; designed and trialed a test (sub-sample class); reported

Sample 4 in Population 2 comprised 1435 members of two international online discussion lists of English language teachers and practitioners from: EALTA and LTEST-L. Population 3, which comprised members of three international online discussion lists EALTA, LTEST-L and IATEFL Re-SIG. Sample 5 was composed of 36 EFL teachers and teacher trainers who participated in an online survey similar to that conducted among the first population of ETAS teachers. Sample 6 was selected from the Sample 5 teachers according to:

1. City where the teacher/trainer resides, just one per city.
2. With the proviso that the Feedback Report on the guidelines would be completed and returned by a certain date.

Population	Sample	Research
2	4	Feedback on availability of diagnostic tests on market
3	5	Completed questionnaire
	6	Read and gave feedback on FD-DIOSA

### Instrumentation

The next stage involved coordinating a research project involving volunteer teachers who each designed a formative speaking test for a specific class and trialed it with their students. The format and design of each oral test depended on the decision of each teacher in the sample, based on what was valid and appropriate for their class at that time. Reporting was done following instructions to the population, using the same Test Specification Sheet designed for the study to report the methods, procedure, purpose, and use of the results. After these were filled out following the tests, they were sent to the researcher by mail or email for data collection and analysis. The guidelines were then reviewed, revised and re-drafted.

The final stage of the research project involved a comparison of teaching situations, curricula and assessment practices among EFL teachers in Switzerland to those of EFL teachers abroad. In order to determine whether the framework would also be applicable for use among EFL learners around the globe, the researcher

contacted, other EFL teachers via email, including members of EALTA, IATEFL, LTEST-L, and asked them to complete a similar questionnaire to the one previously distributed to ETAS members.

### Significance of the Study

As expected, the study confirmed the premise that many teachers of general EFL classes in Switzerland did not conduct formative oral tests. Furthermore, among those who did conduct some type of assessment of speaking skills in their class, they did not offer diagnostic feedback to their students, which then would offer the students vital information and motivation to improve their speaking ability by focusing on areas of weakness.

Additionally, the research found no formative OSA tools available on the market that could be used, which match the content and skills of a language curriculum at any stage of the semester, and that the framework for OSA designed in this study offers a valid and useful guideline for EFL teachers both in Switzerland and abroad to design formative OSA tools for their own classes.

### Limitations of the Study

Language proficiency achievement of students may vary though they are enrolled in the same level for class instruction. Some examples of how they differ include:

- teaching skills and classroom management may affect how students receive and/or practice new language structures;
- students are individuals and make progress in second language acquisition (SLA) differently (i.e. some are more adept at learning languages and make quicker progress than their counterparts);
- if students are ill or miss class for other reasons, this may affect the amount of language input they receive, how well they integrate back into the class (e.g. if the other students are using new structures they have not learned, they may feel awkward about being the only one who does not know those structures).

### Summary

The exploratory research of the FD-DIOSA led to the development of guidelines for EFL teachers both in Switzerland and abroad to design formative OSA tools for their classes.

It was found through analysis of the data pertaining to the components necessary for designing an effective instrument of oral language assessment that many authors of the articles and books cited similar components, such as content validity, functional language tasks, and test reliability tasks. The inclusion of these components and issues were significant to the study as they were described and discussed in the guidelines of the FD-DIOSA as key

elements necessary to design appropriate and effective instruments of oral skills assessment.

The study suggested that many teachers of general EFL classes in Switzerland did not conduct formative OSA in their classes. Furthermore, among those who did conduct some type of assessment of speaking skills in their class, they did not offer diagnostic feedback to their students, which could have motivated them to improve speaking ability by focusing on areas of weakness.

Additionally, the research confirmed that there were no formative OSA tools available on the market that any teacher could use to match the content and skills of a language curriculum at any stage of the semester. The data revealed that the content of oral skills assessed in many examinations was selected for a wider, international population of English language learners being tested, rather selected for an assessment of a student's oral skills based on recent study in class. These findings had high significance to the study as it clearly showed that teachers with no experience of designing their own tests could not draw on resources available to the public. This confirmed the necessity for developing the FD-DIOSA to fill this gap.

### Conclusion

The participants in the workshop shared experiences and particular constraints within their own teaching situation. While the general view is that regular assessment with feedback to students on their oral skills would be valuable, the greatest challenge for most teachers remains, as always, finding enough time to effectively design and administer the tests. Perhaps networking and sharing resources with teachers using the same materials in similar classes would help lighten the load as we continue to strive for coherence in matching curriculum with classroom procedure as well as assessment of expected outcomes in language use and usage.

### References

Salvisberg, J. (2010). *Diagnostic Oral Skills Assessment: Developing Flexible Guidelines for Formative Speaking Tests in EFL Classrooms Worldwide*. Bern: Peter Lang.

*Dr. Jo Ann Salvisberg currently lectures at the University of Applied Sciences, Business College, Luzern, and works as a freelance trainer. She has been involved in TESOL since 1990, primarily teaching adult learners, and began doing teacher training in 2001. In addition to the CTEFLA, she completed her studies with an M.Ed. in ELT in 2001, and a Ph.D. in TEFL and Social Psychology in Education in 2007 with a primary research focus on communicative skills assessment in the EFL classroom.*

## EXPERIENCE AND OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FIELD VS. RESEARCH AND A PHD

*Kara Aharon (aharonmk@zahav.net.il)*

As someone who makes most of my living using songs and games to teach English to young children, I read with interest the articles in the last ETAI Forum related to these topics. Some would say that I should have considered a career change after reading about the study in which students who started learning English later actually performed better. A similar change was also suggested to me during a discussion in another article, regarding a study done in America which showed that CDs and DVDs have no significant affect on a child's verbal development. However, my grass-roots instincts make me question the conclusions of both these studies. In both cases, a vocabulary test was used as the measure of language acquisition. My experience as a teacher, a mother and a living, speaking, bilingual human being tells me that much more is required to communicate in any language, foreign or native. For starters, if a large vocabulary were the only thing necessary to communicate in a foreign language, Google Translator would do a perfect job every time.

When students go out into the real world, they will need to speak, read and write in English. Therefore, I suggest that the following parameters also be considered by anyone interested in researching language ability and development. I believe that they will find that children who begin learning at a younger age score better in all these areas.

### 1. Motivation

Both researchers and people with common sense consider motivation a significant factor in any learning experience. Children who have the opportunity to experience English first as something fun and non-threatening will be more motivated when difficult learning comes later.

### 2. Willingness and ability to understand spoken English

How do the children react when spoken to in English?

- a. Do they panic and insist that they don't understand, even when basic language is used? (I've encountered this many times in late elementary school).
- b. Do they try to understand even if they haven't learned every word in the sentence? Do they recognize language chunks?

- c. Do they respond naturally, without noticing or commenting on what language the teacher is speaking (the most common reaction among pre-K to 1<sup>st</sup> grade)?

### 3. Willingness to speak

- a. When spoken to in English, do they answer in English or in their native language?
- b. When shown a written word in English, do they read it out loud in English or give an immediate translation?
- c. How confident are they about speaking in English? How natural is it for them? Like anything else in life, the younger you develop a habit the more natural it becomes.

### 4. Pronunciation and listening

- a. How accurate is their pronunciation? Sounds that don't exist in the native language are difficult to acquire later in life, and young children are much better at imitating.
- b. Can they distinguish between vowel sounds?
- c. Can they distinguish between words like angry / hungry, tree / three, mouse / mouth, etc.?

Let's face it, you can't learn any language, and certainly not a language as inconsistent as English, by simply memorizing rules and lists of words. You need to be exposed to a language, hear it spoken correctly and, most important, use it. Younger children learn by doing and absorb information naturally. The early years are the ideal time for language learning. The older they get, the more they become accustomed to learning through books and exercises. They may be better at passing tests, but can they speak?

*Kara Aharon, aharonmk@zahav.net.il, a professional musician and native English speaker, combines both in English enrichment programs for pre-K through 6th grade, including directing a musical at Kol Yaakov Elementary School in Yerucham. She has released 4 CDs of songs for EFL teaching.*

## UK TEACHERS LEARN FROM THEIR ISRAELI COUNTERPARTS

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

Ever since the ethnic tensions in a number of UK cities in 2001, the term “community cohesion” has been coined to promote government policy aimed at bridging the divides between different ethnic groups. Every teacher in the UK is familiar with the term and schools have been provided with guidance on their duty to work towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging.

To promote community cohesion, groups of teachers from the UK are sent to other countries to learn from their experiences. When the British Council offered Israel as a possible destination for a study visit, it was met with scepticism on the part of some delegates. In reality, the experience of 15 teachers from the UK who spent one week (February 19-26) in Israel visiting schools and educational institutions was eye-opening, educating and at times emotional.

The climax of the visit was a reception at the British Council in Tel Aviv followed by a panel discussion on the topic of Inclusive Teaching, with representatives from the Ministry of Education and teachers from both countries.

What was striking about the discussion was that despite different teaching contexts the educators work in, the similarities they share outweigh the differences. This reflects how the British Council creates opportunities to build relations and fosters understanding between the UK and Israel.



*British Council Israel Director Dr Simon Kay and a group of teachers from Leicester*

# WIZ KIDS

## Israel's Only English Store!

Outstanding English Books, Coursebooks Teaching Materials and More...

- Coursebooks for Native Speakers for school or after school programs
- Coursebooks for EFL for after school programs
- Games, Flash Cards, supplemental teaching materials and classroom decorations.
- Outstanding children's literature.
- Gift Certificates Available

- ספרי לימוד באנגלית לדוברי אנגלית לביה"ס ולחוגים
- ספרי לימוד ללומדי אנגלית כשפה זרה לחוגים
- משחקים וקלפים ללימוד אנגלית
- קישוטים ופוסטרים לכיתה באנגלית
- ספרות באנגלית לדוברי אנגלית וללומדי אנגלית כשפה זרה.
- ניתן להשיג שוברי מתנה

Tel: 09-746-4224/3  
E-mail: info@wizkids.co.il

Order online at [www.wizkids.co.il](http://www.wizkids.co.il)  
or visit our store in Ra'anana



## DIGGING UP THE PAST

*Raphael Gefen (rayag@bezeqint.net)*

For the benefit of readers interested in the history of English Language Teaching in Israel, I have dug up from my memory the following portrayals. They refer to experiments or educational ventures in the 1960s.

### Skinnerian Programmed Learning

The 1960s were the heyday of Programmed Learning, based on Skinner's Behaviourism of stimulus-response-reinforcement, learning in graduated steps, and used in mother-tongue learning in all subjects at all levels (including university). In Israel, it was used for teaching English to slow learners (ability grouping C) in a number of schools, but most teachers were reluctant to use it, so that it died out, I am sorry to say without a proper assessment of its success or failure. It was an extreme exponent of the Audio-Lingual approach that was gradually replacing the Grammar-Translation method. I wonder if programmed learning is still in practice, for any subject, since its psychological parent has been largely rejected.

### “The Harvard Method”

This widely-propagandized and commercially-marketed project for teaching ELT taught what was named “Basic English” (no connection with ‘basic’, meaning an elementary knowledge of the language), a 1930s British system of a 1000-word vocabulary (but uncontrolled grammar). Foreign learners were able to communicate their needs using this vocabulary. However, since the 1000 words were not necessarily the most common ones but rather, were those with a multiplicity of meanings, it was highly unlikely these learners would understand when spoken to by a native speaker or when reading. Thus, the word ‘want’ was not on the list, but ‘desire’ was, so the learner had to say ‘I have a desire for X’. However, this ‘Harvard’ method (no connection to the university of that name) used extensive audio-visual techniques of films and pictorial textbooks, which were then a novelty. This method was quite popular in a number of schools (especially in some kibbutzim, which then and since have eagerly adopted new approaches), but aroused a lot of opposition, with which I agreed, and one of my first steps when I was appointed Chief Inspector was to urge its cessation. This aroused an enormous outcry from the publishers and teachers using the method, and the Ministry set up an academic committee (the forerunner of the English Advisory Committee of today), which also and unsurprisingly recommended cancelling the experiment. An attempt to revive this approach underlay some Readers in the 1980s, and my objections led to

personal attacks on me by the author's family.

### Pitman's Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA)

The “ITA” system (invented by the grandson of the inventor of Pitman's shorthand) was used in a small number of schools here to teach reading, by means of which beginners first learnt a simplified spelling of English and then graduated to the regular spelling. In other words, they first learnt and then ‘unlearnt’ the ‘initial’ alphabet (not just spelling but also some new letter-symbols) in order to proceed further. This ‘phonetic spelling’ was also a pre-World War Two fashion for teaching foreign languages in some British schools. This experiment was discarded in our schools, without a murmur.

### Hebrew Superscripts

This method for writing the pronunciation in Hebrew above the word in English had an astonishingly quasi-political aspect to it, as its progenitor claimed it was geared particularly to pupils from Sephardi-Mizrahi homes! It was not clear to me why it wasn't also suitable for Ashkenazis, unless it was assumed (in the late 1960s!) that Ashkenazi-origin pupils also read a European language (i.e. Roman script, not Cyrillic). Special values were given to Hebrew vowel signs to correspond to vowels in English such as “a”, which had no Hebrew equivalent, in addition to the common practice used today for using a double ‘vav’ to represent ‘w’. It also meant that readers had to continuously move their eyes up and down all the time to read the transcription. This method/experiment was rejected by the Inspectorate, which then led to questions in the Knesset and an article in “Haolam Hazeh”, accusing me personally of ethnic discrimination.

### Cursive Writing

Textbooks at that time taught an elaborate system of English handwriting, as used in American and British schools a generation or two before, especially the shape of capital letters - very artistic, but a waste of time and energy for pupils and a glaring lack of fit with the reading alphabet. A new system of cursive writing was developed in the 1960s in the UK, which was similar to print and was in effect ‘connected print’, and therefore reinforced reading. This new method was eagerly adopted by primary schools here, especially those where the teachers were not graduates of American grade schools (there weren't many), but many high school

teachers rejected this 'children's writing' and obliged pupils to unlearn it.

### Neo-Phonic Reading

The introduction of neo-phonic reading (sound-spelling correspondences) became the recommended method for teaching reading, replacing the previous 'whole-word method'. It was called 'neo-phonic', as it stressed the word, as against the earlier 'phonic' system, based on the spelling-sound of letters. This new method was the one used by the "English for Speakers of Hebrew (ESH)" textbooks (i.e. their Pre-Reader), and was highly successful. However, I understand that the educational pendulum in the USA swung its way back to the 'Natural (= 'Whole Word') method, and then swung back again to "Back to Basics". It must be hard to be a teacher there, hoping to catch up with the latest trends. I am reminded of the book "Why Johnny Can't Read", written after the Russians sent their first sputnik into space and complaining about American education - and its successor some years later "Why Johnny Still Can't Read".

### The New Wave

Many of the new emphases and methods developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s were follow-ups of the work of "The Planning Centre for the Teaching of English", a project of the Ford Foundation, which was set up by the English Departments of the Hebrew University and Tel-Aviv University, working with the late Dr. Bamberger, the then Chief Inspector for English. The most significant follow-up of the Centre's recommendations was the "English for Speakers of Hebrew (ESH)" textbooks, referred to earlier, which soon replaced the existing textbooks written by English Inspectors in the various districts. An indirect result was the wonderful "Teaching English by Television", produced at a time when the only TV available in Israel was Educational TV, so that many parents watched the telecasts also.

*Raphael Gefen was Chief Inspector for English 1967-1992 and also taught at the Hebrew University School of Education 1969-1995*

### Call for articles!

Share your knowledge and experience with ETAI Forum readers! We are looking for articles that cover topics of interest to EFL teachers at all levels, from young learners through university. Articles that inspire improved teaching and learning, written in a conversational style are welcome. Here are some ideas: helpful information for professional development or improvement of teaching, things you have learned or personal growth experiences that have influenced your teaching, opinion pieces that include experience and ideas, program descriptions, research based solutions to problems with an emphasis on explaining and interpreting results, rather than on methodology.

The deadline for submission is **September 15, 2011**. Article length can be **up to 2500 words**. Please send your article to: [etaiforum@gmail.com](mailto:etaiforum@gmail.com) as a WORD (.doc) (not .docx) document in an attachment to an e-mail. The name of the document should be your family name and the title of the article, or part of it: i.e. Jones\_ArticleTitle.

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

If you include references, they 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/>. **Cite page numbers in the body of the article if you use a direct quotation.**

At the end of the text, include a bio of about 30 words in length with your official job title, your institution / affiliation, and your email address. This information will be included with your article.

You must be a member of ETAI to publish in the ETAI Forum. To join or renew your membership, contact Marna at the ETAI office.

We are anxiously awaiting your submission!

Thanks so much and don't forget the September 15th deadline!

Michele Ben, ETAI Forum editor  
[etaiforum@gmail.com](mailto:etaiforum@gmail.com)

**BALDERDASH & PIFFLE**  
**BY ALEX GAMES**  
**BBC BOOKS, LONDON, UK, 2006**

*A Book Review by David L. Young (dlwhy04@yahoo.com)*

**Question:** What do the following have in common: Chaucer, Milton, Shakespeare, J. K. Rowling, hip-hop, the Internet, international business, sport and aviation?

**Answer:** Their success is based, to a greater or lesser extent, on the use of the English language. According to Alex Games, the author of *Balderdash & Piffle*, 80% of Internet home-pages are in English. This is just one of the interesting facts in this 304-page book which is jam-packed with information on the history and development of English, the language that supplies us with our monthly bread and butter and, if we are lucky, sometimes jam (or jello).

The author, a biographer and BBC broadcaster describes his book as a guidebook. He tells us this in the blurb of the book and, as a bonus, supplies the history of the word 'blurb'. The term, he notes, was first used in 1907 by G. Burgess, an American humorist, to describe a buxom blonde, Miss Belinda Blurb, who appeared on the front of an American comic book. She was obviously sufficiently attractive for her name to be used for other book jackets.

*Balderdash & Piffle* is not merely a collection of word definitions and histories; it consists of twelve chapters which cover many aspects of the history and development of the English language.

Alex Games starts by discussing the power of words. He stresses the importance of using the language precisely noting, for example, that there is a major difference between bumping into and bumping off an old friend or enemy (p.17). Other examples he uses refer to swearing, bad language and what is considered politically correct, or not. 'Afro-American' is culturally O.K., 'nigger' is not. 'What do you make of these events?' is completely different from 'What do you make out of these events?'

From here, Games traces the history of English, from its Old Norse origins which were later influenced by the Norman French invasion of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. Several hundred years later, words imported from the British Empire and the United States left their mark on the language.

In Chapter Two, "Dr. Johnson's Big Idea," he describes how Britain's famous lexicographer and others, tried to bring some order into this linguistic chaos basing many of his definitions on the Bible, Shakespeare, Alexander Pope and William Law, an English cleric.

In the following chapter Games traces the development of Johnson's dictionary to its modern equivalent, the Oxford English Dictionary, the basis of our own beloved

Oxford English-English-Hebrew. In this chapter, and especially through the use of side panels, we learn how the original Oxford dictionary took seventy years from the project's date of approval to its actual completion. Since then, Games notes that this heavy (60kg) multi-volume dictionary has now been turned into a CD and that over seventy scholars, linguists, research assistants and technical personnel are hard at work on OED3.

From this use of modern technology Games steps back and investigates how the Bible and Shakespeare have shaped our language. He begins by outlining a history of the Bible in English, from the earliest versions by Caedmon, the seventh century monk and the Venerable Bede (673-735) through to the classic version of the King James Bible (1611). He carries out this survey via the Medieval and Tudor Bibles of John Wycliffe, William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale. This is not just a dry descriptive list; Games spices it with examples of how Tyndale introduced phrases such as 'long-suffering,' 'sea-shore' and 'stumbling-block' into English. The author also demonstrates how throughout the Bible, the topic of fruit has enriched our language. Examples include 'Adam's apple,' 'apple of his eye' (Deut 32:10) and 'sour grapes' (Ezek 18:12). He also shows how Biblical phrases such as 'to escape by the skin of one's teeth' (Job 19:20), 'a hair's breadth' and 'to be in the lion's den' have all become part of our daily parlance.

The New Testament has also played its part in enriching our daily language. We learn the derivation of 'salt of the earth' (Matt. 5:13) and 'hiding your light under a bushel' (Luke 11:13). The apostle, Matthew, was evidently popular with at least two modern American presidents. In his well-known reaction to 9/11, George W. Bush invoked Matthew when he declared, "He that is not with me, is against me." Reagan quoted Matthew when he talked about 'going that extra mile.'

However, Shakespeare, of course, took the language that extra mile. Many linguists have noted that the Bard introduced some 1700 (!) words and expressions into the English language, including 'assassination' (*Macbeth*), 'What the dickens' (*Merry Wives of Windsor*) and 'to eat me out of house and home' (*Henry the Fourth, Part 2*). But it must also be noted that some of the Bard's linguistic gems were somewhat flawed and never made the grade. Examples include: 'acture,' 'conceptious,' 'fusilitarian' and 'irregulous'.

In Chapter Five Games concentrates on various aspects of English such as local dialects which differ from the universal language of today before moving on to see

how our language fares in the worlds of Entertainment (Chapter Seven) and Science (Chapter Eight).

Regarding entertainment, he shows how sport, especially football and cricket and boxing (remember this is a BBC book written by a British writer) have contributed phrases such as 'to keep your eye on the ball,' 'foul play,' 'to keep a straight bat' and 'saved by the bell'. And a public figure may be described as a political or literary 'light' or 'heavyweight.'

In contrast to the language of sport and action, the language of music has given us 'blowing your own trumpet,' 'to play second fiddle' and 'it is music to my ears.' Of course, those who cannot 'make sweet music' probably assault our ears by playing and singing 'out of tune,' a sad situation which may cause the unfortunate listener to 'put the dampers' on this ear-splitting cacophony.

Today, the computer and the Internet have contributed to the greatest spread of scientific and technological language. Experts in these fields are often mocked as 'geeks,' a Shakespearean word from *Cymbeline*, while much of our electronic machinery is connected by 'cables' a New Testament word, while exploiting the 'web,' an Old English (c.1220) word and which may render our 'telephones' (first used 1835) out-of-date unless they are linked to 'satellites' (1611).

If you decide to show this book to your children, be careful about Chapter Nine – 'Mind Your Language.' Here, Games delves into the history and development of swearing, rude and crude language including the dubious use of various euphemisms. He notes how the Bible tells us about prostitution (Ezek. 23:8 and Hosea 1:2), rape (Gen. 39:7-23 and 2 Sam. 13:1-14) and incest (Gen.19:30-38). Incidentally, 'flashing' is not a new fad as Games informs us that this extrovert behaviour was referred to in days of yore in the time of King David and in the Book of Samuel (2 Sam. 6:14 and 16:20-23).

But the Bible was not alone in enriching our 'below the belt' language (another expression from boxing). Shakespeare did it too and Games suggests you study *Measure for Measure*, *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet* for further examples.

From here, the writer goes on to show how our habits of swearing – like all other aspects of the language – are continually changing. Today, he says, the word 'bloody' would hardly raise an eye-brow, but that was not the case when George Bernard Shaw used it in *Pygmalion* one hundred years ago. However, the word 'screw' used sexually - and not mechanically - has existed since the early 18th century and still has the same meaning. He also claims that the letter B is 'the rudest letter in the alphabet,' as it includes 'bloody,' 'bastard,' and 'bonk.' Incidentally, the adjective 'sexy' in its modern use does

not refer to sexual attraction, but that the object described is considered very attractive. A possible synonym might be 'cool.'

Balderdash & Piffle points out how films, fashion and pop-music have been responsible for the birth and death of words such as 'dude,' 'dandy,' 'supermarkets,' 'dumbing down,' 'double-think,' 'jeep,' 'bugging,' 'hot' and 'hippy.' Other words, such as 'Watergate,' a large building in Washington, spawned several modern derivatives including 'Irangate' and other political and military flavoured 'gates.'

At the end of the book, Games refers to one of the latest uses of language – texting - with its growing use of 'gr8' (great), 'tlk2ul8r' (talk to you later) and 'afaik' (as far as I know). He notes that this trend is so new that he cannot tell how the latest dictionaries will deal with it but adds that this shortened form of messaging is a way of speeding up modern communication. This is especially true when messages have to be communicated via relatively small screens.

At the same time, he invites his readers to contact the BBC if they know anything about the origin of words and phrases such as 'bonk,' 'full-monty,' 'gay' (homosexual, not happy), 'dosh' and 'Mackem' (a resident of the city of Sunderland UK where I studied) and other linguistic gems which appear on page 286. If you can help out, you should contact: [wordhunt@bbc.co.uk](mailto:wordhunt@bbc.co.uk)

In conclusion, this is a fascinating and readable book - good to dip into for fun and also good for serious reference. However, despite these words of praise, there is one drawback. I feel that this book has been produced on a shoe-string (sorry, couldn't find source of this, although Thoreau used it in *Walden Pond*.) The book is a very compact hardback 304 page volume, printed in black and white, including the side-panels and footnotes. This gives the book a rather dense, heavy and not user-friendly appearance and reminds me of the textbooks that Russian immigrants brought to this country in the 1990s. The use of colour and more white space would certainly have made this book look far more attractive. However, to end on a more positive note, this book has a comprehensive (if rather squashed) index which refers to all the aspects of language covered in the book: people, phrases, sources and vocabulary.

*David L. Young loves the English language and Shakespeare and has been teaching here from junior schools to universities since 1968. He has had one textbook and five historical novels published in the UK, USA and Israel. Two more books, one on Shakespeare and the other on the Jewish Brigade are due out soon. He is now working on an academic detective novel on the real author of Shakespeare's plays.*

# COM BOOKS LTD

ONLINE ENGLISH BOOKSHOP

Com.Books Ltd- The right place to order books...

Com.Books Ltd provides an easy and convenient way to purchase any English books from the world in all fields

Com.Books team will be happy to serve you in any matter or question.

Phone: 09-9524600 or email: [cs@combooks.co.il](mailto:cs@combooks.co.il)

Shimrit Nahum, ELT marketing rep. – 054-5405023



## Read, Listen and Watch as the world comes to life with the **Footprint Reading Library** with video from National Geographic

- 100 content based graded readers
- 5 themes:
  - Incredible Animals
  - Fascinating Places
  - Amazing Science
  - Remarkable People
  - Exciting Activities
- 8 levels from Pre-intermediate to Advanced
- Photocopiable activities and tests for the teacher
- DVD and audio available for every reader

Reading Explorer and the National Geographic Footprint Reading Library have been developed through an exclusive partnership between Heinle, a part of Cengage Learning, and National Geographic

[elt.heinle.com/ng](http://elt.heinle.com/ng)

