Etai Forum
English Teachers' Association of Israel
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ETAI Mission Statement

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

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

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

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

ETAI Membership Dues

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

*must present a valid student ID card

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

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

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

The new school year is starting with a new schedule, a new crop of students, and lots of unknowns. Every September we begin afresh with feelings of excitement and apprehension. After a summer of rest, relaxation and preparation we're ready to get on the high-speed train that barrels full steam ahead throughout the school year with no stops to get off until the close of the school year in June. By then, the excitement has faded and our energy has been depleted. But luckily, that's just when the ETAI National Conference in Jerusalem takes place, giving us the opportunity to recharge our batteries, share ideas and reconnect with acquaintances. This summer the conference took place at the Academy High School on the Givat Ram Campus of Hebrew University. It was a busy, stimulating, successful event full of sessions with presenters and attendees interacting and developing professionally. But there is one particular thing from the conference which made a great impression on me and I'd like to share with all ETAI members, so even those of you who couldn't attend the conference can consider and benefit from it at the start of this school year.

The theme of the conference was "Keeping an Open Mind." The program opened with a message from the conference convener, Susan Bedein. She wrote: "Stop and think for a moment of the many times we jump to conclusions about a student without having all the facts, or when we say words without thinking of the consequences, or when we prejudge a colleague without talking about the situation first. These are all occasions when we need to keep an open mind, and I am sure you can all think of many more examples.

This year's conference aims to help all of us to keep an open mind, both as educators and as learners. So … always try to remember that a closed mind will only lead to poor results. We all need to keep an open mind in order to grow professionally and to be even more successful as teachers."

I have taken this message to heart and intend to do my best to keep an open mind throughout the school year while dealing with all the challenges that I am certain to encounter.

Michele Ben
ETAI Chairperson

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

It was an honor and a privilege to be able to help with the ETAI Forum for this issue. The outgoing editors, Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, deserve a large round of applause for all the wonderful work they have done in editing the Forum. I also want to thank Karen Berzon, the ETAI office secretary for her amazing work in organizing this edition. I know that the whole community is grateful for these "jewels in the crown ETAI."

One of the joys of editing the Forum is recognizing the achievements and strength of the ETAI community. So many teachers choose to do extra work by writing for the Forum. This issue is jam packed with practical tips for the classroom and covers a wide range of topics highly relevant to teachers at all levels. I urge everyone to delve in and explore all the great ideas found in these pages.

L'shana Tovah and may everyone have a successful year of teaching.

Yechezkel Bund

Mini Conferences ALL Around the Country.

This year saw, as we have come to expect, several mini conferences all around the country. And by all around the country, we mean it. We had conferences in Kazrin in the north of the country, and in Eilat in the south, and in all these locations in between: **Haifa**, **Maghar**, **Ramat Gan**, **Jerusalem**, **Nes Ziona**, and **Beer Sheva**.

The **Haifa** conference, held at Gordon College, was a new kind of ETAI mini-conference, one designed by and for students. Students from three northern teacher trainer colleges, Gordon, Ohalo and Oranim worked together with ETAI to produce a very successful conference. Penny Ur spoke about an issue that worries students and new teachers, Classroom Management and Discipline, and gave the participants useful advice to reassure them, and help prepare for their chosen career.

In **Nes Ziona**, the annual event with over 160 participants was honoured to host Jeremy Harmer, a leading ELT teacher and teacher trainer, who entertained and educated us at the same time. ETAI would like to thank the British Council for sponsoring this lecture.

Joan Leegant, a visiting writer at Bar Ilan University and sponsored by the US Embassy, graced the **Maghar** mini-conference with her presence and her fascinating lecture on Teaching Creative Writing in the Classroom. As always, this event was well-attended.

ETAI would like to thank all those who worked hard, in their "spare" time to make all the mini-conferences a success: Fran, Jennifer, Yosef, Aviva, Miriam, Michele, Amanda, Valerie, Mitzi, Rose and all the presenters who volunteered their time so willingly.

Spring and Summer, Yaffo and Jerusalem

Michele Ben *(mggben@gmail.com)*

Part of the adventure of attending an ETAI conference is getting to the conference venue. This year the spring conference took place in Yaffo, returning to the Tel Aviv area after taking place in the North for many years. The National Summer Conference, which always takes place in Jerusalem, found us at a new venue.

The spring conference at Ironi Zayin Comprehensive High School, Yaffo, called "What's Literature Got To Do With It?: Teaching English Through Literature," focused primarily on ways to use literature in the EFL classroom. The literary atmosphere was set by the porridge breakfast sponsored by the British Council in honor of Charles Dickens centennial. After Lyn Barzili's enriching plenary lecture called "Red Riding Hood and All the Rest" in which she outlined a lesson structure that is applicable to teaching literature at all levels, we listened to Chief Inspector Judy Steiner's informative lecture about current trends and changes in English teaching. Following the break for lunch and browsing the materials exhibition, participants had a choice of 22 different presentations and workshops to attend, spread over three sessions.

The ETAI Annual National Conference called "Keeping and Open Mind" took place on Tuesday, July 3rd and Wednesday, July 4th at The Academy High School at Hebrew University, Givat Ram Campus, Jerusalem. The two-day conference was packed full of exciting and stimulating presentations and workshops and parallel key-note speakers, both local and from abroad.

The atmosphere at the conference was electric. The air buzzed with people discussing ideas, networking, sharing and caring. The conference closed with a Pecha Kucha organized by Leo Selivan. The conference committee Eleanor Satlow, Mitzi Geffen, David Young, Leo Selivan, Judi Aloni and Nihad Aweidah chaired by Susan Bedein once again did a tremendous job organizing an outstanding conference.

This year, for some the conference began a day early! On July 2nd, there was an ETAI pre-conference event organized by the British Council called "Integrating Technology into Language Teaching." Attendees were treated to fantastic sessions given by Gavin Dudeney, a guest speaker from the UK, Leo Selivan, Jane Cohen and Elana Salomon. We hope the PCE will be a continuing tradition preceding the national conference.

None of these great professional development opportunities would have been possible without the hard work and cooperation of all those who contributed their time and knowledge by presenting at the conferences. Nor would the conferences have been successful without all the participants who came to listen, learn and share their knowledge with others. ETAI certainly gives us a lifetime of shared professional development!

Michele Ben is the current chairperson of ETAI. She has been teaching English in both the Jr. and Sr. high school in Ginsburg Comprehensive Six-year School in Yavneh for the past 12 years. Before retraining in EFL, Michele was a special education teacher for 18 years in Israel.

ETAI in the North
Winter Conference Comes to Nahalal:
Aviva Shapiro *alshapirose@hotmail.com*

Well, after quite a few years of 'celebrating' ETAI in the spring up north, we (the planning committee) decided to do something different. We changed the season from spring to winter and the location, from within Haifa to the outskirts of Afula. Our hope was to attract more teachers from the far north of Israel.

The conference was not as large as we had expected, however around 130 – 140 teachers found the time and energy to join us on December 28th for a full day of very interesting and informative talks, workshops and lectures.

Our plenary was given by Gunther Volk, a teacher trainer from Germany, who opened our eyes to thoughts outside of Israel and expanded our horizons. His talk was followed by our very own Chief Inspector, Dr. Judy Steiner, who updated us with the ongoing changes in the field and, of course, answered questions and calmed us down.

In our unique set up at Wizo Nahalal High School (with round buildings – like the Moshav) we went round and round to view the many publishers who joined us with their wonderful wares. Naturally, the finale was the now famous ''Pecha Kucha" session hosted by Leo Selivan of the British Council. This new and fun way of presenting always puts a smile on teachers' faces and this time was no different.

As one of the conveners of the Northern Conference, I must express my great appreciation for the other members who worked long hours to get this conference off the ground and make it a success.

Thanks to Jennifer Spigelman, Jackie Teplitz, Fran Sokel, Amalia Asadi, Penny Ur, Sarah Cove, Tracy Piada (and her staff) and Dr. Avi Tsur (who unfortunately has left the committee so we are now accepting applications for new members!!)

I think the conference was of great value to all participants and I hope to see many more teachers attending ETAI conferences in the future. I also look forward to more teachers joining us to present their new ideas or old ideas which still work!!

Mini-conference at Beit Yerach High School:

In February, Beit Yerach Regional High School, just outside of Tiberius, hosted a mini-conference from 16:00 – 19:00. Our opening speaker, Dr. Avi Tsur (our Rural Inspector), spoke about meaningful teaching and learning. He definitely made us all more aware of our capabilities as teachers.

Then we broke up into three workshops lead by Jennifer Spigelman, Ilana Saloman and Leo Selivan.

We were happy to have 8 publishers join us and the wonderful English team of teachers at Beit Yerach worked very hard to organize this special event. Thanks to Helen, Malka, Lizi, Tali, Geffen, Yael, Astrid and Lynn.

Again, although our turn out was not as high as expected, the teachers who attended were serious and their interest level was high.

We will see everyone again in two years time. In the meantime, let's hope someone else or some other school will host a mini-ETAI up North next winter. Let me know and I'll lend a hand.

Aviva Lana Shapiro is a teacher and coordinator at the Beit Yerach Comprehensive High School in the Jordan Valley. She is also a REED (Rural English Education Department) counsellor in the North. She has a BSc. from the University of Maryland, USA and an MBA from Leicester University, England.

Do you want an ETAI mini-conference near YOU?

Please contact the ETAI office for further details:

02-5001844

or

etaioffice@gmail.com

Share your knowledge and experience with ETAI Forum readers!

We are looking for contributions that cover topics of interest to EFL teachers at all levels, from young learners through university: practice-oriented articles that inspire and suggest improvements to teaching and learning. Here are some ideas:

- helpful information for professional development
- ideas for improving teaching
- sharing of personal growth experiences that have influenced your own teaching
- opinions based on experience and new ideas
- descriptions of programs,
- research-based solutions to problems with an emphasis on explaining and interpreting results, rather than on methodology.

The deadline for submission is Oct. 10, 2012. Articles can be up to 2500 words long. Please send your article to: etaiforum@gmail.com as a WORD 2003 (.doc) (not Word 2007, .docx) file in an attachment to an e-mail. The name of the file should be your family name and the title of the article, or part of it: e.g. Jones-Teaching vocabulary.

Keep the language non-sexist; use they rather than he/she.

If you include references, they should be written out in APA style. You can find this in the "OWL Handouts" published 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 biodata of about 30 words in length, including your official job title, your institution/affiliation, and your email address. This information will be included with your article.

Note that you must be a member of ETAI to publish in the ETAI Forum. To join or renew your membership, contact Karen at the ETAI office. Contact details and membership forms can be found on our website http://www.etai.org.il .

Past issues of the ETAI Forum might be posted on the ETAI website. If you do not wish that your article appear online, please notify the office in writing or by email.

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A Further Look at Classroom Management Systems: Exploring Cross Cultural Disciplinary Beliefs and Practices

Julia Schlam Salman *(julia.schlam@mail.huji.ac.il)*

Introduction

The first time I set foot in an Israeli school, I did so primarily as an observer. I watched, from the sidelines, as my colleague forced her students to behave, utilizing hierarchical, highly authoritarian methods of discipline and allowing no outbursts, discussions or negotiations. Even as an observer, I felt the heavy hand of her disciplinary tactics. A strong believer in philosophies of education which emphasize caring, respect and responsibility (see for example *Rogers, 1969 and Noddings, 1994*), I felt torn between my ideological presuppositions and disagreement with her tactics and the stark reality that she appeared to have total control over the classroom.[1]

One Tuesday, due to her absence, I was asked to substitute teach for her class. The lesson started – and finished – in near chaos; my carefully planned lesson untouched and never delivered. This circumstance, along with others, has led me to reevaluate and reconsider disciplinary tactics. "How do we put it all together?" ask educators Glazer and Burke. How do we manage a classroom with X number of students so that children thrive, develop, learn responsibility and progress both as individuals and members of a collective classroom (1994, p.225)?

A second force which propelled my inquiry into disciplinary tactics and classroom management systems relates to the unique nature of the school where I teach. The school – what I will henceforth call the Bilingual School – is part of a national initiative which "[seeks] to initiate and foster egalitarian Palestinian-Jewish cooperation in education primarily through the development of bilingual and multicultural coeducational institutions" (Bekerman & Horenczyk, 2004). The school is categorized as nonreligious and is partially funded by the Israeli Ministry of Education. It uses standard, nonreligious state curriculum but utilizes both Arabic and Hebrew as languages of instruction (Bekerman, 2005, p.6).

Teaching EFL in this distinct educational environment instigated a plethora of questions and concerns regarding educational needs in general and disciplinary needs in particular – specifically within the field of foreign language acquisition. In addition to being relatively new to the Israeli-Jewish educational context, I had also previously had little exposure to Israeli Muslim or Christian schooling processes.

Over and over again, I found myself wondering if and how cultural and socioeconomic background influenced students' EFL educational needs. Were economically disadvantaged students or ethnically/culturally marginalized students inherently students with special educational needs (SEN)? If yes, did they subsequently require particular classroom management systems which differed from those used in "mainstream" English as a Foreign Language classes?

My recent reading of research educationalist L. Delpit's book *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* prompted further questions. While Delpit's work looks primarily at marginalized populations in the United States and minority children's acquisition of English literacy skills, I found that her arguments bore relevancy to the multiethnic, multilingual milieu of the Bilingual School. One point, in particular, has repeatedly occupied my mind. Delpit quotes a progressive-minded, white teacher as saying the following:

It's really a shame but she (that black teacher upstairs) seems to be so authoritarian, so focused on skills and so teacher directed. Those poor kids never seem to be allowed to really express their creativity. (And she even yells at them) (1995, p.33).

Delpit goes on to explain the subtleties of culturally influenced oral interactions. She contends that members of the middle and upper class tend to give directives in the form of a question (Is this where the scissors belong?) whereas members of the working class are more likely to give directives in the form of commands (Put the scissors on the shelf). Delpit, quoting Heath, suggests that both black and white working class children have difficulty interpreting "indirect requests for adherence to an unstated set of rules" (1995, p.34). I hypothesize that non-white, non-western children might also respond better to directives in the form of commands, rather than the disciplinary and educational methods associated with "liberal" ideology. What I had perceived

[1] Here, I intentionally chose the verb appear. According to A. Mendler (1992), teachers exemplifying the above described disciplinary model may ultimately lose the classroom control they have seemingly garnered. He suggests that, "[t]he seeds of retaliation and rebellion are invariably sown when people feel robbed of their personal freedom to make choices" (37). I intend to explore Mendler's contention further and to attempt to gain a clearer understanding of effective disciplinary frameworks—be they authoritarian or otherwise constructed.

as my colleague's unbearably authoritarian teaching and disciplinary style might in fact be the most appropriate method of pedagogy and classroom management given the classroom makeup. However, I was not entirely convinced.

As such, I decided to interview other EFL teachers about discipline, disciplinary tactics, perceptions of special educational needs, relevance of socioeconomics and culture and, if applicable, classroom management. I had "heard" – both from Jewish and Arab teachers – that behavior problems abound; children lack respect and that many classrooms teeter on the edge of chaos. However, my first hand knowledge was limited. As such, I decided to conduct four ethnographic interviews in an attempt to further enrich my understanding of how "real" English teachers manage their EFL classrooms.

Methodology

The conducted study utilized methodological approaches based in the qualitative and ethnographic traditions. Ethnography can be defined simply as the study of culture. From an ethnographic perspective, every context has its own cultural constructions and particular patterns (see Wolcott, 2001). The task of an ethnographic interview is to uncover these nuances via open-ended descriptive and structural questions as well as observation and hearing (Westby et al, 2003). According to Frank (1999), "in an ethnographic interview, the ethnographer conducts the interview in order to learn something, not in order to explain something" (p.28). With the stated priority "to get into the heads" of experienced EFL teachers and learn from their perspectives, I interviewed four, female EFL teachers from varying cultural, religious and social backgrounds. The interviews were fully transcribed, analyzed and coded around points of commonality and repetition. In my analysis, I will address six of these topics.

Findings and Discussion

As previously mentioned, my analysis of the conducted interviews yielded striking similarities. This occurred despite cultural, ethnic, religious and social diversity among the interviewees, variables which, in other research, have sometimes accounted for variation in perspective or opinion. I have chosen to discuss six foci which emerged as particularly salient and, in my opinion, relevant to English language teaching and special educational needs.

- **Theme (1): "Active Classrooms"**

  The first theme emerges out of the first question I asked all of the interviewees; how important did they think discipline was in their teaching on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest)?. I immediately substantiated the question by asking them to define discipline. All four interviewees awarded a high number to discipline (9 or 10). When asked to elaborate on their definition of discipline two patterns emerged. Two of the teachers related to the fact that silence need not be equated with discipline. R argued that "it's impossible to have a quiet classroom even 50% of the time." S made a similar remark saying, "I don't define discipline as having the classroom silent." On the contrary, S argued that discipline is "when I am teaching and the students are active and interacting and learning." M and N also emphasized the importance of an active learning environment where there is "constant give and take and … a lot of structure and variety."

  According to D. Metzger (2005), "the profound equation, 'inspired instruction = positive and productive student behavior," is at the center of an effective teaching/learning process. Well-planned lessons that include engaging, relevant, and active student involvement greatly influence positive student behavior" (p.15). The interviewees seemed to agree that student engagement inherently reduces behavioral problems and the need for rigid discipline. "Active classrooms" became a preventive, rather than a reactive, disciplinary measure.

- **Theme (2): "Ground Rules"**

  The emphasis on "Active Classrooms" went simultaneously with the second commonality addressed by all participants, namely "Ground Rules." According the interviewees, participatory learning must emerge out of clear and effective classroom structure established from the very first day of school. All four interviewees discussed the process of setting up rules and expectations along with clear guidelines and consequences, should the rules or expectations not be met.

  R uses a system where students keep track of their points earned (points were awarded depending on how each individual student worked and behaved throughout the lesson). S described drawing up the rules, as well as the consequences, with her students. She stressed that she teaches teenagers and that "they know what they want."

  Moreover, according to S, when they take part in constructing the rules, they are more likely to follow them and to adhere to the established consequences. She reported that once they had clearly defined the rules, enforcement was relatively easy. "I just remind them … that we agreed to a sort of contract … they respect me and I respect them and I can discipline

the class in that way." The interviewees seemed to agree that in order to create classroom structure that works they needed to establish guidelines and limits based on firmness and respect (Mackenzie, 1996).

- **Theme (3): "You Can Just Tell" (Identifying Special Educational Needs)**

  The third theme which emerged from the interviews directly relates to my desire to better understand the interviewees' definitions of special educational needs. I asked each of the interviewees to elaborate on their definitions. Both R and M mentioned previous evaluations, associating SEN with diagnosed learning disabilities such as dyslexia or attention deficit disorder. However, they both also mentioned a "look in the eye", an ability to "spot" those students that were likely to cause behavioral problems and require special educational needs. S, like R and M, also mentioned the importance of intervention and special educational programs for severely disadvantaged students. However, she also highlighted the importance of giving responsibilities to SEN students who present some disciplinary problems.

  Both S and N had nearly identical responses to the question of how they define SEN. They did not respond with a definition, but simply described how they had previously dealt with a student with special educational needs. They both stressed the importance of creating opportunities for contribution and responsibility. "I think that they need more, more caring, more attention with their special needs they need to be loved" reported N.

- **Theme (4): "The Rules Should Be for Everybody"**

  One of my central questions going into the interviews was whether students with special educational needs should function within the same disciplinary system as the rest of the classroom – assuming that the teacher has some sort of system in place. I also wanted to know whether the interviewees considered socioeconomically disadvantaged or culturally marginalized students SEN. What emerged out of these questions echoed recommendations reiterated by R. Curwin (in his well known book *Discipline with Dignity*).

  All four interviewees – whether consciously or unconsciously – referred to components of the discipline with dignity philosophy. When constructing a disciplinary system, for example, Curwin recommends having a range of alternatives for consequences. He suggests that the range works best when it is not sequenced; the teacher needs discretion in choosing the best consequence to match the particular situation" (1988, p.66).

  When I asked R whether students with special educational needs should function within the same disciplinary system as the rest of the students, she replied that "the rules should be for everybody so everybody should be taken into account." In other words, the range of alternatives available in the devised management system must be wide enough to include those students that fall towards the margins – whether academically, economically, culturally or otherwise. "My expectations for all of the [kids] are the same" reported M. That said, all interviewees acknowledged the need to address special educational needs on a case by case basis and to utilize outside support and infrastructure when necessary.

- **Theme (5): "No Teacher is an Island"**

  R, S and M referenced outside infrastructure when addressing the disciplinary and educational needs of students with severe special educational needs. S, M and N reported working extensively with social workers, homeroom teachers, school management, supervisory staff and parents. All four teachers articulated a very clear point; No EFL teacher should attempt to or be forced to deal with ALL special educational needs, disciplinary problems included. Moreover, as in the case of S and M, ideally the school management articulates clear guidelines which are relayed and understood to parents, students and staff. When the school establishes a clear set of guidelines it seems the teachers have an easier time establishing and implemented their own individualized classroom guidelines.

- **Theme (6) "Just Say No to Martyrdom"**

  The sixth and final theme identified from the interviews might be seen as an extension of Theme five and was articulated by both S and M. I chose the title "Just Say No to Martyrdom" because I believe it encapsulates a message relevant for teachers. When describing a student with severe dyslexia, S reported "that I couldn't teach her as the rest of the students." Rather than be a martyr, which would not serve S's best interests or the best interests of the girl, S referred her to the special education teacher. S recognized her limits as a teacher, and sought outside help. Knowing one's limits and limitations seems like an imperative skill in EFL teaching – regardless of whether these limitations are pedagogical or disciplinary. According to M – the most senior of the interviewees (both in years and experience), "there are students that no matter what you try and how

you try, they cannot help themselves and you cannot help them … But they don't have any right to keep anyone else from learning and once that's clear, a large percentage of the disciplinary problems tend to resolve themselves."

Conclusion: "Disciplinary Blueprints?"

"Is there such a thing as universal discipline?" I asked all of the interviewees. "Are there 'blueprints' for classroom management and disciplinary systems regardless of the classroom population?" S laughed when I asked her this question. "Students are human" she said. "They are humans and they differ." This statement rings true with profound depth. Students need guidelines, clear expectations and consequences and disciplinary systems based on respect and responsibility.

No system, however, is full proof and every system must give leeway for flexibility. I return again to my authoritarian colleague and understand better my objections to her tactics. She sets the rules and the students have no say or understanding in their rhyme or reason. In contrast, the above interviewed teachers appear to invest considerable time in building effective classroom structure including understood rules and consequences. Are their employed methods appropriate for *every* culture, class and society? Certainly not, but their common denominators, despite cultural and religious differences, help shed light on practices for success within the Israeli school system.

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THE COOKIE TEST: AN ACTIVITY FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Yechezkel Bund *(yehezkal18@yahoo.com)* and Diane Eisenberg *(diane1207@gmail.com)*

Introduction:

"The Cookie Test: An Activity for Classroom Management and Conflict Resolution," is a fun and innovative activity for students based on the famous "Marshmallow Test" conducted by researchers at Stanford University in 1972. In "The Cookie Test", students use critical thinking skills to develop tools for improved self-discipline and control, building enhanced interpersonal skills and a more harmonious classroom. The activity was presented at a workshop given by the authors at the Summer 2010 ETAI International Conference. It has been done in several classrooms in Israel with positive results.

Rationale:

Managing the classroom has perhaps become the greatest challenge facing educators throughout the international community. The challenge of classroom management is especially daunting since it can be mastered only through the classroom experience and not through case studies in a didactics class. Yechezkel Bund developed "The Cookie Test", while examining the dynamics of classroom management. He came to realize that classroom management difficulties and students' poor academic success seem to be rooted in the inability of students to understand the necessity of delaying gratification.

We all know students who do not study for tests or do homework because they are unable to see the benefits of sitting down and preparing adequately. Often, they are unable to put off the fun of "Facebook" and other distractions in the on-line world. Many students clamor for good grades without having done the groundwork to get good grades. Students who seek short cuts to success, unrelated to investing in the process of acquiring a second or third language, are often frustrated without understanding the roots of their frustration.

Inside the classroom overt and subtle behaviors relating to the students' desires for immediate gratification interfere with individual learning and are pernicious to the classroom dynamic. How often do students take the time necessary to carefully listen and follow directions before starting a task? How many check their work upon completion? How many times in the crowded Israeli classroom do all the students demand their teachers' immediate and personal attention and create an atmosphere of stress? Many students have lost the ability to pay attention as they are unable to postpone talking to their classmates or playing on their cell phones.

Unfortunately, these negative behaviors are reinforced by society. Children and adolescents, two groups not developmentally wired for patience, are growing up in a world that encourages lack of self-discipline and the need for immediate gratification. In our modern life, everything is instant, push-button. We get instant meals, instant entertainment, instant money from the ATM, instant text messages, instant weather and traffic updates, instant everything! Even adults who grew up in the pre-computer era, have quickly gotten used to the immediate gratification which accompanies all our actions.

The desire for immediate gratification not only disturbs the learning process outside and inside the classroom, but is also at the root of many conflicts. These can be international conflicts between countries, within families and within the self. The need for immediate gratification also affects the dynamics of student teacher relationships.

Goal:

The basic concept of "The Cookie Test: An Activity for Improved Classroom Management and Conflict Resolution" came from the famous "Marshmallow Test" done at Stanford University. In that study four-year-olds children were given a marshmallow. If the children were able to delay gratification and not eat the marshmallow for twenty minutes, they were given another marshmallow. It was found in follow up longitudinal studies, that the four-year old children who were able to control immediate gratification and receive another marshmallow were markedly more successful in their future lives in all areas.

The Cookie Test is not simply an activity of giving students a cookie and seeing if they can wait to eat it or not. It is an enjoyable project done by a class during several lessons. First, students are guided by their teacher facilitator to identify the problem of immediate gratification in themselves and others. In the next stage of the process, students are led to identify their own behaviors relating to immediate gratification which inhibit academic achievement and progress in life, particularly in the area of interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict. As students gain this awareness, they gain the potential to incorporate important life skills such as self-discipline and being better members of the community.

The Basic Outline for the Activity:
These six parts are crucial and each must be incorporated in the lesson activities to obtain the desired results.

Part A: Students begin to do activities and worksheets that, unknown to them, revolve around the concept of immediate gratification and their relationship to it.

Part B: The concepts of immediate and delayed gratification are revealed to the students. Students learn about the original Marshmallow Test.

Part C: Students analyze and focus on how the desire for immediate gratification can prohibit maximum academic performance, both in and outside the classroom.

Part D: Students begin to evaluate immediate gratification as the root of many conflicts.

Part E: Concluding or activity to sum up the project and for the teacher to see if the immediate goal of student awareness has been reached.

Part F: Follow up activities, so students can begin the process of incorporating the ability to delay gratification and develop self-discipline are currently being designed. These are based on follow up research from student participants in the Cookie Test.

The Cookie Test can be modified for any level class, age or cultural group. The Cookie Test works best as a class project done over several lessons. The activities can include worksheets, drama/role playing, computer presentations and activities and video clips.

The project reinforces reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension of English. It can also be used to teach grammatical concepts such as the present progressive and incorporate the learning of new vocabulary.

Diane Eisenberg's experience with Cookie Test project in her 9th grade class:
The entire program lasted about six lessons, which included a homework assignment in the middle. Although relatively short, I saw a distinct difference in the behavior of the students from the onset to the end. They spoke to each other in a different way – they were more respectful of one another and respected each other's feelings. They didn't interrupt as much as in the past. I also got to know my students better and am convinced that they were on the road to understanding that by listening and waiting, they could get a lot more out of each lesson. Needless to say, it was clear that kids love chocolate chip cookies, and my class suddenly become suspiciously popular.

I am convinced that this activity is a positive one and can teach our students behavioral and social skills which will guide them throughout their lives. This is our responsibility. We must make them understand that it is in their best interests to learn that nothing in this world worth having comes easy.

For more information about The Cookie Test: An Activity for Improved Classroom Management check out: http://sites.google.com/site/braveconflictresolution/. The authors of this article can be reached at BraveNewCR@gmail.com.

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Yechezkel Bund is an active member of the EFL teaching community in Israel and of CRELL.

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TEACHING ENGLISH TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Imbar Golt *(imbar@netvision.net.il)*

Having a student with a disability in your class can be a daunting prospect, especially if it's the first time. However, you can make this experience much more pleasant for yourself and for the students.

Here are a few tips to make your task easier.

1. See to it that the student/s have all the texts in a format they can read, such as large print, Braille, audio. If your student/s with special needs is not able to read print in the usual manner, try to connect with an organization or individual who can format clozes, unseen passages, etc in a manner most appropriate for your student/s. Being able to read the printed word, if possible, be it in large print, Braille, or enhanced computer fonts is especially beneficial for the student/s' spelling.
2. Auditory resources, when relevant can be a great boost to learning. Radio broadcasts, films with different accents and audio books are very beneficial tools, and not just for students with special needs.
3. Involving other senses - touch, smell and taste can – add to the children's interest in the material and increase their vocabulary. If your student/s lack one of their senses, utilising the other sensory channels for learning is necessary.
4. Writing about what interests the children and not simply assigning random topics is much more efficient, since some children with special needs are not exposed to all the topics their peers, who do not have a disability, are very familiar with such as driving lessons, tests and licences, army service, etc.
5. Hands on teaching and, if needed, enrichment lessons for individuals and small groups can help those who lag behind and those who are interested in learning more than what the regular class is being taught.
6. Singing songs the children know, working on them, analysing and discussing them is beneficial. Such emotion-arousing artistic pieces can bring out many topics that can also deal with the student's disability and thus enrich your class dynamics.
7. Read aloud when possible. Although this done by and for regular students as well, when children with special needs are given this assignment it can have additional benefits, boost their self esteem and make them more confident in their linguistic abilities.

I hope these tips helped you and gave you ideas and inspiration. If you have questions or comments, I would love to hear them. Please write me at: imbar@netvision.net.il

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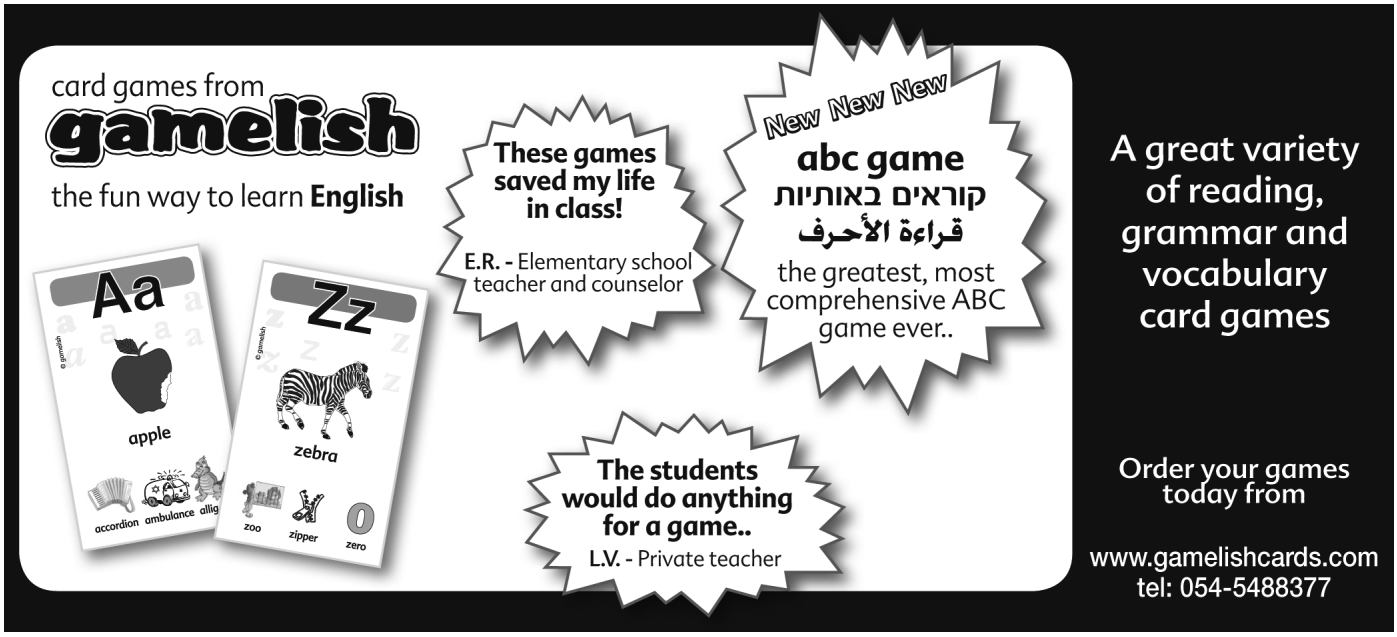

AN EXPERIMENT IN VOCABULARY TEACHING

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Can you learn a language without knowing its words? Obviously not! So, vocabulary teaching in ELT is vital. Furthermore, EFL students need to learn the most frequently used lexical items to function in the target language. For further reading I highly recommend Schmitt's (2008) review article. Last year, I experimented with my approach to teaching vocabulary. As part of my vocabulary teaching program, I used the Longman Communication 3000 booklet with two A stream classes, one 8th grade and one 9th grade.

Before I introduced the concept of frequency to my pupils, I completed this chart on the board as my pupils raised their hands to indicate knowledge:

Form of Transport	How many pupils know what this word means?	How many have travelled in / on it?
bus	37	37
car	37	37
train	37	30
plane	34	20
ferry	3	5
hovercraft	1	0

I then asked why they thought the whole class is familiar with car and bus, but so few knew ferry and hovercraft. The pupils deduced that cars are used more frequently than hovercrafts, at least in Rehovot! From here it was relatively easy to explain the concept of high and low frequency words, and why in the short time we have available in school, we need to concentrate on the more useful lexical items.

At this point I gave each pupil a copy of the Longman Communication 3000 booklet and instructed them to put their names on it - it was their own personal property. The graph on page 1 gives examples of words from the 10,000 most frequent words in the Corpus and reinforced my explanation of frequency. The word list and some of the explanation can be found at http://www.lextutor.ca/freq/listsdownload/longman3000_list.pdf

The next stage was to explain the "code" associated with each word: S1, W1, S2, W2 etc. To me they look like the London postal codes, to the pupils they had no meaning at all. I explained that **S**1 means that the word is in the 1000 most frequently used **S**poken words, and **W**1 in the 1000 most frequently used **W**ritten words. The meanings of S2, W2, S3 and W3 were then clear. We then discussed why a word might be S1 yet only W3, and soon the logic of frequency lists began to make sense. Clearly the most useful and therefore important words are in the S1 / W1 category so this was our starting point. For homework, I asked the pupils to choose up to three letters of the alphabet and to read though all the S1/ W1 words starting with these letters. They highlighted each word they 'know'. Once they had found five words they didn't know, the pupils had to email them to me. For my purposes, 'knowing' a word meant being able to translate the word into L1 (Hebrew) and being able to spell it. However, it's important for a teacher to understand what knowing a word means; Nation (2005) thoroughly explains the complex issue of word knowledge.

Over the next few days the words poured into my email box. Occasionally I was surprised: leg, husband. I realised that my pupils are familiar with the words but either didn't recognise them out of context, or had learnt them so long ago and had not needed them since. Indeed, how often does a 13-year old talk about a 'husband'? It's not nearly as useful as 'homework' which appears in K7 (words in the seventh group of thousand words by frequency) according to the BNC list (Kilgarriff)! A small number of pupils wrote saying that they knew all the S1, W1 words. They were instructed to move on to the less frequent words in the list.

I collated all the words into one Word document per class. Each week I chose ten words for the class to learn. At first the classes complained that my 'ten' words were usually closer to 30 as I always included other members of the word family and collocations. Until the Chanuka holiday the pupils were expected to write the word / collocation correctly when I dictated it and to give a translation into Hebrew. For the rest of the year, I said the item in Hebrew and the pupils were required to write it correctly in English. Production was much harder for the pupils, but when I explained the rationale behind 'being cruel to be kind', the pupils accepted their fate quietly. In order to recycle the vocabulary each week at least one of the items tested was from a previous list. This was another move that the pupils didn't like but understood. Every few lessons the pupils were expected to look through the vocabulary booklet and send me more words for them to learn.

This method of vocabulary teaching had several advantages. Firstly, the pupils themselves chose the words they were not familiar with – there was no guesswork involved as to their knowledge. The class was

reasonably heterogeneous, and this method empowered each pupil. Everyone had the opportunity to learn new words, and as all words were K3, even the weaker pupils benefited from learning them. The first 3000 words are the absolute minimum required for basic communication. Secondly, the most frequently used words were the ones the pupils could choose from, meaning that the words they learnt were automatically useful words.

In the 8th grade class the pupils sent me words on a regular basis; they needed little reminding. The booklets became part of their learning environment. Words in their SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) or in texts we read in class were greeted with "We had that word last month in a quiz", proving that the words they were learning from a frequency list were indeed frequently used! Moreover, sometimes when I introduced a new lexical item the pupils checked to see if the word appeared in the 3000 word booklet. If not, I was 'reprimanded' as I was teaching words that 'aren't useful'. This led to discussions about the social and cultural context of words, or about professional and technical vocabulary. For example, the collocation 'youth movement' was crucial for many pupils even though it is hardly used by the English speaking population at large. Finally, work with adjectives was facilitated by using the booklets on their tables rather than turning to the more cumbersome dictionaries.

I had intended to collect the booklets from both classes for evaluation every 4-6 weeks, but due to work overload, I only collected them after four months. The 8th graders' books were covered with the shocking colours of highlight markers. I was not surprised. This class was highly motivated and their class participation indicated that they were using the booklets intelligently and consistently. Some pupils had worked methodically from A, to B, C etc., while others had chosen their letters randomly. Some pupils were still going through S1, W1 words; others had progressed to S3, W3 words.

A different kind of shock met my eyes when I opened the booklets belonging to the 9th graders - hardly any words were highlighted. With hindsight this should not have been a surprise. Few pupils had sent me words when I had first asked for them, despite continual reminders. This class was doomed from day one– timetabling, inappropriate streaming and other administrative issues severely affected motivation. In addition, these 9th graders seem to be more affected by teenage issues than the 8th graders. However, a teacher must take responsibility for her teaching and not blame everything on the environment. For example, I could have picked up on the lack of co-operation earlier, allowing just a few minutes in class for highlighting the words instead of at home. I should have collected the booklets after three weeks not after four months and would then have uncovered the lack of work sooner.

Reflecting on the year, how can the booklets facilitate the vocabulary learning?

- The emphasis is on frequently used lexical items and not on those from the textbook which may or may not be high frequency items.
- The pupils are able to efficiently find words they do not know, which allows me to tailor the vocabulary teaching to their specific needs rather than my educated guess of their needs.
- Vocabulary use and spelling improved in the 8th grade class more than in the 9th grade class. Closer monitoring may reduce these kinds of differences.
- Use of the booklets can be expanded to other vocabulary issues such as prefixes, word families etc.

In any vocabulary program, careful thought must be given to the items taught. Classroom time is precious and teachers cannot afford to 'waste' time on infrequently used vocabulary which will not serve their pupils' needs. Frequency lists such as the Longman's booklet or the Kilgarriff online lists facilitate the teaching of useful vocabulary and therefore benefit pupils.

In conclusion I offer these suggestions:

1) Teach useful vocabulary.
2) Help your pupils determine which vocabulary items they need to learn.
3) Put the onus on the pupils, not on yourself.

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WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

Hamlet (Act 2, scene 2.) By Bev Stock *(bev@macam.ac.il)*

The title of the 2011 summer ETAI conference was "The Power of Words." This title inspired me to think about vocabulary teaching in our classrooms. The more I work in the college classroom and visit schools, the more I believe this area of language learning to be vital. Without words our students cannot develop basic speaking, reading and writing skills. And the acquisition of vocabulary begins in the elementary school classroom.

We all know words are the building blocks of language and as such they are the ideal place to start when teaching English. Words are the mainstay of each of the domains which inform our curriculum. Access to information - words make up texts which we have our students read and/or listen to. Social interaction - how can we communicate without using words? Appreciation of literature, language and culture - here words are referred to and used continuously. Presentation - the students have to use words either orally or in writing. Words are everywhere.

The importance of vocabulary teaching has been brought home to me in my work as an instructor of reading comprehension at the college level. In my reading I have come across the claim that a native speaker knows about 20,000 words. How many words does a person need in order to read and understand an academic text written in English? Schmitt (2000) claims we need to know between 90-95% of the words in the text. The number I have heard repeated several times is in the vicinity of about 9000 word families. And a good 5-point Bagrut" student leaves school with a vocabulary of around 3500 word families. There is a huge gap here which has to be bridged.

But what does this mean to the elementary school teacher? We have to concentrate on helping our students acquire words, words and more words.

Start with developing a word-rich environment. What do I mean by this? Make sure your classroom has words all over the place. Stick words as labels on classroom items such as the door, the window, the ceiling, and the blackboard (whiteboard). Permanently display posters showing the days of the week and the months of the year. Place an ABC frieze on your classroom wall.

Use flash cards as a way of both teaching and reinforcing vocabulary acquisition. Leave flash cards stuck on a board so the students see them String a clothes line up across your classroom and attach words to the line. These ideas are probably known to you. They are part of a word-rich environment which is so important in the vocabulary acquisition process.

We need to continuously throw words at our students. I literally do this with my students. Sometimes, I throw a ball at a student and say a word. The student who catches the ball has to do something with the word (for example repeat it, translate it, use it in a sentence, or say what part of speech it is).

How do we actually teach words? I find the 'hear-see-use concept' a useful method. Students hear you say the word and they have to repeat it. Show the students the word. Have them do something with the word (for example read it, draw it, translate it, use it in a sentence, match it to something, or build a sentence with it).

Research tells us that to acquire a new vocabulary item 6-10 encounters are required (Webb, 2007). A word-rich environment is one way to increase the number of times the student encounters the word. Every time they come into your classroom they see these words. Another related idea is to use your blackboard effectively. Leave a column on the side and note new lexical items as they come up in the class. Leave them there until the lesson is over. I encourage my students to take 5 minutes at the end of the class and write the words down for themselves. Copying a word is yet another encounter with the word.

Copying in the elementary classroom develops motor skills which is very important at the beginning levels of learning. Have a special notebook for the kids. Have them make flashcards which are then put on the word wall. Use the wall in your teaching. For example look at 4 words. Take one away and ask them which word is missing. Say a word in English or use a picture and have them find the word on the wall.

Vocabulary notebooks can take several formats. They can be in dictionary style - in other words the students make their own dictionaries over the year. They can be chronological or it can be arranged by topics. While I like the idea of a dictionary or topic organized book, my experience is that this is not as effective as simple chronological entries. Too much time is wasted on deciding under which letter to write a word or under which topic. Do they just copy the word? In the beginning I have them copy words and add a picture or translation. While I try to use only English in the classroom, bilingual lists do have a place in word acquisition. Later on I have them use the word in a sentence. Having to write sentences is a further encounter with the word. It helps them to

use and understand the words. It is simply not enough to be able to translate words. I have college students who can sit with a text and translate every word and still not understand the text. Comprehension and using words is more than just being able to translate a word. Therefore bilingual lists are not enough and one of the reasons why I keep translation to a minimum.

A fun activity is word searches. We all use word searches, but it is important that they are more than a simple find-the-word type. Different ideas include you giving the definition and the student finding the word, giving only the topic and saying something like: “Find 5 words connected to our topic food” or “find the word and write it under the correct heading.” After finding words in the word search, have them write sentences with x number of words. Giving a differential task where one student will write 10 sentences and another 3 caters to different ability levels in our classrooms.

Crosswords are another idea for using and reinforcing words taught in the classroom. Like most activities we use, it is an activity which lends itself to different approaches. At a level where scaffolding is used, some of the letters already appear in the crossword so the students are helped in guessing the answer. The traditional crossword has students using clues to come up with the answer. A kinesthetic approach lets the student fill in the answers by placing letter tiles on a board. You could use the answers to the crossword and have the students supply the clues.

Encourage your students to read. It used to be claimed that extensive reading was one of the most efficient ways for students to increase their vocabularies. Today this has been challenged (Zahar et al., 2001; Schmitt, 2008). New lexical items are acquired very slowly - about one for each 1000 words read. But don’t throw out extensive reading. It has value in developing and increasing reading fluency. Furthermore, it recycles common lexical items. Remember I mentioned earlier that a student needs 6-10 encounters with a word in order to learn it. Part of our teaching strategy should be to provide numerous encounters with the target word. Extensive reading is one way to achieve this.

Another common belief is that we teach words in topic lists. Recent research has shown that it is much more effective and efficient to teach a word in combination. Chunking of words help students acquire the words and not merely memorize them for a test. A student will remember the word blue if taught a blue sky rather that just the word in isolation - even if it is part of a list of colours.

When I first started teaching reading comprehension at tertiary level, vocabulary was taught in context and by the students guessing the words. In other words the focus was on indirect teaching of vocabulary items. Today I often introduce words before beginning a new text. I directly teach these words - how do you pronounce it? What does it mean? Write it down. Use it in a sentence. Underline it in the text and read the sentence. Students need to know words before they can use the words.

At the elementary level you want to use as many word activities as you can in order to facilitate the learning process and increase the number of encounters with the target item. Extensive reading, word searches and crosswords have been mentioned above. Here are some more ideas for activities.

Word snakes. Here you draw a snake and write letters in it. The letters can be a series of words or can be a number of words divided by isolated letters. The student needs to circle the words.

Write a word or phrase on the board and challenge the students to find as many words as they can. For example: How many words can you make from the letters in the phrase “school supplies”?

Give the students a group of words and have them categorize the words. Words can be written in a list, pulled out of a bag or dictated. Categories can be grammatical or topic based. For example the 10 words belt, dress, eyes, head, leg, nose, pants, shoes, sock and teeth can be divided into clothes and the body or into singular and plural.

Check that your students understand by giving them activities which focus on word meanings. You can require the students to match words to definitions, pictures or translations. An activity which requires higher order thinking skills is to use the words in sentences. Provide a word bank and have the students fill in the missing words in sentences, in a paragraph or in a story.

Word games include word Dominoes, word recognition where students listen to the teacher say a word and then circle the word, Bingo and Concentration. Other word games use commercial games such as Boggle, Scrabble and Bananagrams.

Activities directly related to memory and memorization are also a good way to facilitate vocabulary acquisition. Have the students study a list of items. After a few minutes send a student outside and remove one of the words. Call the student in and challenge him/her to remember the word which was removed. Instead of sending one student outside challenge the class to recall x words from the list and write them down.

Vocabulary acquisition is vital to our students. It underpins all the skills they need to be competent language users. As teachers we must be aware of the importance of words and develop an arsenal of methods to facilitate their acquisition.

Bev Stock teaches English at the David Yellin College of Education.

SOME READING

"How many words should my students know?"

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SOME WEB BASED MATERIALS

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http://www.graves.k12.ky.us/powerpoints/elementary/winmparham.ppt#2

http://www.vocabulary.co.il/

http://www.learnenglish.de/gamespage.htm

http://esl.about.com/od/engilshvocabulary/English_Vocabulary_Builder_Beginning_Intermediate_and_Advanced.htm

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ON METAPHORS, SIMILES, SYMBOLS AND OTHER STRANGE FIGURES OF SPEECH

Debbie Lifschitz *(debbiel@netvision.net.il)*

Many teachers who have not studied literature have asked for some background information that would help them analyze literary texts. The present article does not analyze any classroom texts; rather it seeks to give teachers tools to apply when *they* analyze texts. In what follows, several terms used in the analysis of literature, and especially, though not exclusively, in poetry are defined, exemplified and where appropriate, discussed.

Metaphor

In order to understand metaphors and similes, we must first remember that they share a common ground with analogies. An analogy juxtaposes two things to show their similarity, for the purpose of demonstration, explanation or insight. Often, by pointing out the shared characteristics of two things, new insights will be gained regarding other characteristics. Douglas Hofstadter has suggested that "Analogy is the core of cognition" , meaning that we explain things and learn new things by using analogies. It is a basic building block of thinking. Following are some examples:

- *A locomotive is to a train as a horse is to a wagon.* (Both the horse and the locomotive are the power source up-front for the vehicle behind.) This is called an analogy of proportionality, and the Greek word for 'proportion' is *analogia*.
- *hand: palm:: foot: sole.* This type of notation is used in analogies, often for testing purposes.

Analogy is the underlying structure of metaphor in which one thing is described in terms of being another thing:

- The game of love (love is like a game that has rules and strategies, is exciting and challenging, and has winners and losers)
- "all the world's a stage" (people have different parts to play in life just as actors play different roles in a play presented on stage. We can watch the lives of some people, like we watch the actions of characters in a play; life happens in public, in front of an audience; some people/actors are heroes, others are villains; some have large parts to play, others have small ones.)

In metaphor we call the major term of the topic the **tenor** (*love*, in the first example; *world*, in the second example), while the second term to which the first is conjoined, is called the **vehicle** (*game*, in the first example; *stage*, in the second example.). A rule of thumb for metaphor, then is that both the vehicle and the tenor have to be or should be **explicit**.

Let's take the notion of bouncing. Its primary meaning is to describe objects that have the characteristic to rebound, like balls. However, we can also say that "the check bounced", in which case we mean that there were insufficient funds to cover the check and it was not honored by the bank. We can also describe objects moving around in a space capsule in zero gravity: "objects were bouncing around in the cabin". Or we can speak about "kids bouncing off the walls", when children are over-excited or over–stimulated. In each of these metaphoric idioms, both the vehicle and tenor are explicit. Indeed, we would not be able to determine any new meaning if we only had the tenor, or only had the vehicle.

I.A. Richards in his book, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* says: "In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction." (p.93)

Thus, "the co-presence of the vehicle and tenor reside in a meaning (to be completely distinguished from the tenor) which is not attainable without their interaction." (p.100) Metaphor, therefore, takes us beyond the literal, dictionary meaning of a word (or phrase) by conjoining it or yoking it to another word or phrase.

Take for example the following lines:

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick …

(W.B. Yeats, *Sailing to Byzantium*)

In this metaphor, the image of an old man is first described as a "paltry thing", a contemptible thing of no worth. This adjective based description is then disembodied and transferred to the tattered coat on a stick. This is not merely a visual image, but a conceptualization of old age as objectification (turning someone into an object), almost as something that is worn out and ready to be thrown out. It includes an image of old age as loss of body mass and as loss of identity. And finally, it includes the image of a scarecrow, this "tattered coat upon a stick". Notice that we do not have to choose between these associations, nor do we have to integrate them: they are co-present in the complexity of the image.

So we learn two new principles: First, that "metaphor is not fanciful 'embroidery' of the facts. It is a way

of experiencing the facts. It is a way of thinking and of living; an imaginative projection of the truth." The dictionary definition is ignored, avoided – even violated. Metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon that stretches language.

Second, we learn that metaphor demands the participation of the reader. "It gives us work to do. The pattern of thought it proposes is, as it were, referred from … (the poet's) mind to our own, and requires our participation"

The prevalent misinterpretation of Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken", as a metaphor for the road of life, when the tenor is completely absent from the poem, can only be considered a misinterpretation and misapplication of the term 'metaphor'!!! Nowhere does Frost mention the word "life" which would act as the tenor. It is possible to interpret the poem as being about life, as we will explain later, but NOT through the prism of metaphor!

Following is a very short poem by Ezra Pound that uses metaphor:

In a Station of the Metro
The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet black bough.

This poem demands much work from the reader. First, the poem, which is obviously influenced by Japanese Haiku, contains no verb. Because the poem is so compact the title is not merely the framework of the poem, but participates in the image of the poem. These faces that flash before us as an apparition are contextualized by the title as being in the subway in Paris (metro). It is "these faces" rather than "the faces" because in some way "these" stand out in the crowd, "these" are the content of the apparition. As for the petals, they do not necessarily all belong to the same flower, they could just as well be fragments of flowers left after the rain ("wet black bough"), so they serve to indicate separateness and individuality (petals, rather than flowers), but are also indistinguishable in their sameness (we can't differentiate the petals, they remain a group). Similarly, these faces which flash before us as an apparition, share the same dual nature as the petals: they are individuals, but are indistinguishable from each other. The two lines are separated, but also linked, by a semi-colon form a juxtaposition which creates a surprising image for the reader. The faces become petals and echo a rich Western tradition of comparing people (but especially women) to flowers; and of flowers implicitly connoting spring, and therefore optimism. This superposition of faces and petals, (or perhaps convergence), contrasts with the other darker terms, the wet, black bough, and the implicitly dark, underground metro.

However, another reading starting precisely from these darker elements would view the "apparition" as something sinister and uncanny. The wet, black bough would, in this reading, represent some menacing umbilical cord of Nature above ground, while the crowd of faces would be frozen in some infernal underground. In this reading, the two images remain parallel, but there is no convergence.

The power of the poem derives from the poet's avoidance of using a verb to explicitly join the two lines of the poem, instead only suggesting and indicating some syntactical connection by the use of the semi-colon. Ezra Pound believed that "An image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time". Both readings of his poem above exploit the intellectual and emotional complex presented by the poem. Neither reading is exhaustive or pre-emptive. Each reading multiplies meanings and interpretations, but remains consistent within that reading.

Similes

Analogies also underlie the structure of simile. We sometimes use analogies to bolster arguments or explanations using expressions such as: "it's the same as … "; "think of it as … "; "this is similar to … ". In these instances we compare one process to another, one phenomenon to another, one idea or concept to another, where the first process, phenomenon, idea or concept (the tenor) is **unfamiliar** and the second (the vehicle) is more **familiar**. We understand the new, the unfamiliar, through the comparison to the known and the familiar. In these instances, the unfamiliar and the familiar remain distinct and their juxtaposition is for the purpose of elucidation not integration or assimilation.

Simile does much the same thing. It compares two different things (by using tell-tale tags: like or as) to create new meanings. Here are some examples:

- The explanation was clear as a bell (the sound of the bell is very clear and loud. So whatever is being explained is completely clear, with nothing left out.)
- The human eye is like a camera (the way a camera works by first inverting the image and then imprinting it is similar to the process of vision of the human eye.).
- "My love is like a red, red rose" (The beauty of the lady I love is as stunning as a very red rose; a beauty that I am conscious is also soft, fragile and passing, but right now it's at its prime …). Had the poet said: "My love is a red, red rose" he would be suggesting not only the qualities already listed but

also the thorns of the rose, which would complicate the image by insinuating that there is also danger in loving her and this would be counter-productive for the image the poet wants to create.

As in metaphor, simile has the same two terms, the vehicle and the tenor, which here are connected by the tags "as" or "like". Because simile, by definition, must have a comparison of two terms and a connecting word, most people find this the easiest of all poetic figures to identify.

In simile the two entities are not related as closely as in metaphor. It's not a question of one thing **being** another thing (metaphor), just of one thing being **similar** in a given aspect to another thing. Notice the difference of impact between these two figures, even if they seem similar at first:

- Days come and go like waves upon the sand.
- The ebb and flow of days.

In the first image, the simile draws a comparison between days that follow inexorably one after another just as the waves keep coming towards the shore, and then recede. There is never one day without its yesterday or its tomorrow. In the second image, the metaphor presents a day as a phenomenon that inevitably recedes, and fades away, but also inevitably returns and rises again. The flow of a day behaves like the tide of a sea, rising and falling. Each day, with its sunrise, the day brings a new surge of hope and energy, which recedes again with the sunset at the end of the day. The metaphoric image actually reverses our usual way of thinking about the phenomenon (sunrise, followed by sunset) and places the ebbing day before the flow of the new day, thus emphasizing the hope reborn each day. The metaphor seems to go deeper than the simile in its comparison, and packs a tighter thought for us to think about.

In simile we do not ignore or dispose of the dictionary definition of either term. The terms retain their original meaning but our attention is called to an aspect of similarity, a shared property, or characteristic, between the two entities (or the sharing of several such properties).

To return for a moment to the Pound poem above, the first reading suggests that the connection between the two lines of the poem is as a metaphor, ("these faces in the crowd" **are** "petals on a wet, black bough"), while the second reading would view the two as separate phenomena that have something in common (the menacing, sinister context of each one), like a simile ("these faces in the crowd" **are like** "petals on a wet, black bough"). And it is precisely the lack of semantic guidance (not writing "are" or "are like" in the poem), that allows readers two such different readings.

Symbol

A symbol is the substitution of an abstract or invisible idea or concept with a concrete object. The object usually, but not always, represents the idea or concept by association, resemblance or convention. Some symbols are well known:

- The dove is a symbol of peace.
- The bald eagle is the symbol of the United States.
- The owl is a symbol of wisdom.

Sometimes, the same symbol can take on different meanings depending on context:

- A simple cross can represent Christianity.
- A red cross can represent emergency medical care (The International Red Cross).
- A white cross on a red background represents Switzerland.

Similarly:

- A Star of David represents Judaism.
- A yellow Star of David represents discrimination, and persecution, and by extension the Holocaust.
- A red Star of David represents emergency medical care (Magen David Adom).
- A blue Star of David on a white background with two horizontal blue stripes represents the State of Israel.

These kinds of symbols are over-determined (because they have come to mean several things) and depend on context in order to de-code their meaning. So a symbol might mean one thing in one context and something quite different in another context.

Similarly, objects in literary texts can be symbolic in one of two ways: either by cultural convention (a ring as a symbol of a bond, a commitment; Sabbath candlesticks symbolizing a cultural or religious tradition) or as a contextually specific symbol (Piggy's glasses in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, as symbolic of knowledge, perception, civilization, etc). Some symbols are carried through a text, and some symbols appear only at certain points of a text, but they always represent a surplus, something more (and more abstract) than their concrete, literal function in the text.

The danger for novice interpreters is to assign symbolic meaning to too many objects, to see symbolisms everywhere in a text. This often leads to what Umberto Eco calls over-interpretation, when a reader looks

for connections in a text that may not really be there. For example, if the character of a story, a young girl, is wearing a necklace with a Magen David pendant, it may be quite valid to infer that she is emphasizing her Jewish identity. It would be much less valid to suggest that she also identifies with the State of Israel, or is remembering the Holocaust. Unless the context warrants these additional associations, they would simply be over-interpretation. A rule of thumb, in order to avoid this pitfall, is to consider an object symbolic only if it has some central function on the literal level. There may, of course, be hidden symbols in texts that we notice only after several readings, but for the novice interpreter avoiding over-interpretation is important.

Allegory

Allegory is symbolism extended to an entire text. It is a complete literary text that has both a literal and a figurative meaning. The two levels co-exist throughout the text, so that for every element on the literal level there is also a symbolic interpretation on the figurative level. The symbolic relation between the object on the literal level and its meaning on the allegorical/symbolic level remains stable throughout the text. Two well known allegorical texts are the Biblical *Song of Songs* (Shir HaShirim), and Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The farm, in *Animal Farm*, represents communist Russia consistently throughout the text. It does not all of a sudden represent Japan!

For teachers who feel that Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" must be interpreted as referring to life choices, and/or one's road in life, the interpretation needs to be based on allegory. That way, the literal meaning is preserved and the symbolic meaning can be derived from a consistent interpretation of the elements of the poem and the all too common error of calling the 'roads' a metaphor is avoided. Perhaps this becomes clearer when one compares the technique in "The Road Not Taken" with the technique in Walt Whitman's famous poem: "O Captain, My Captain", in which the name of Lincoln is nowhere mentioned but everywhere intended. The poem is an allegory of Lincoln's assassination just after he has been victorious in saving the Union.

Metonymy

Closely related to symbol, yet very different, is metonymy, which is the use of something concrete that is associated with the thing itself. These are iconic representations that carry specific conventional meanings. Following are a few well-known examples:

- Downing Street =The British Prime Minister
- The White House-= the President of the United States
- Capitol Hill = the Congress and Senate of the United States
- Buckingham Palace-=Queen Elizabeth

Synecdoche

This is a figure of speech which has a number of different types. Following are several examples:

1. A part is made to represent a whole:
   200 head of cattle crossed the prairie.
   There were several new faces at the meeting
   All hands on deck!
2. A whole is made to represent a part:
   The law was called in to break up the fight.
3. The material for the thing made from it
   He wore his woolies that day.

Lastly, following is a breakdown of some of the imagery in Langston Hughes' poem *"As I Grew Older"* that applies the terms defined above:

- Bright **like** a sun/ My dream – *simile (My dream is bright like the sun), with the added connotation of sun as a source of life*.
- And then the **wall rose**, / Rose slowly, / Slowly, / Between me and my dream – *symbol for an insurmountable obstacle*.
- Dimming, / Hiding, / **The light of my dream-** *metaphor (here there's no "like") and adds the connotations of 'guiding light' and spiritual anchor, now hidden and dimmed by the wall*.
- I lie down in **the shadow** - *symbol for the effects of the wall, and the absence of light, warmth and source of life*.
- **My hands! /** My dark hands! – ***synecdoche*** *for himself, but possibly also a symbol for the creative self (we do things, accomplish things with our hands). Is darkness only an external threat or do we sometimes cause ourselves to fail as well? How do we break out of what and how others see us to become who we truly are*?
- Help me to **shatter this darkness-** *symbol (darkness), metaphor (shatter darkness) breaking out of the cultural confines and overcoming obstacles*.
- To **smash this night** – *symbol (night) , metaphor (smash the night) similar to the above*.
- To **break this shadow /** Into a thousand **lights of sun –** *symbols (shadow, sun), metaphor (break, lights of sun) concept that shadows can be broken like glass or pottery and from this destruction light will emerge like so many crystals and the variety of different "suns"*.

- Into a thousand **whirling dreams-** *metaphor of creativity and goals to achieve here rendered dynamic by the sense of whirling*.

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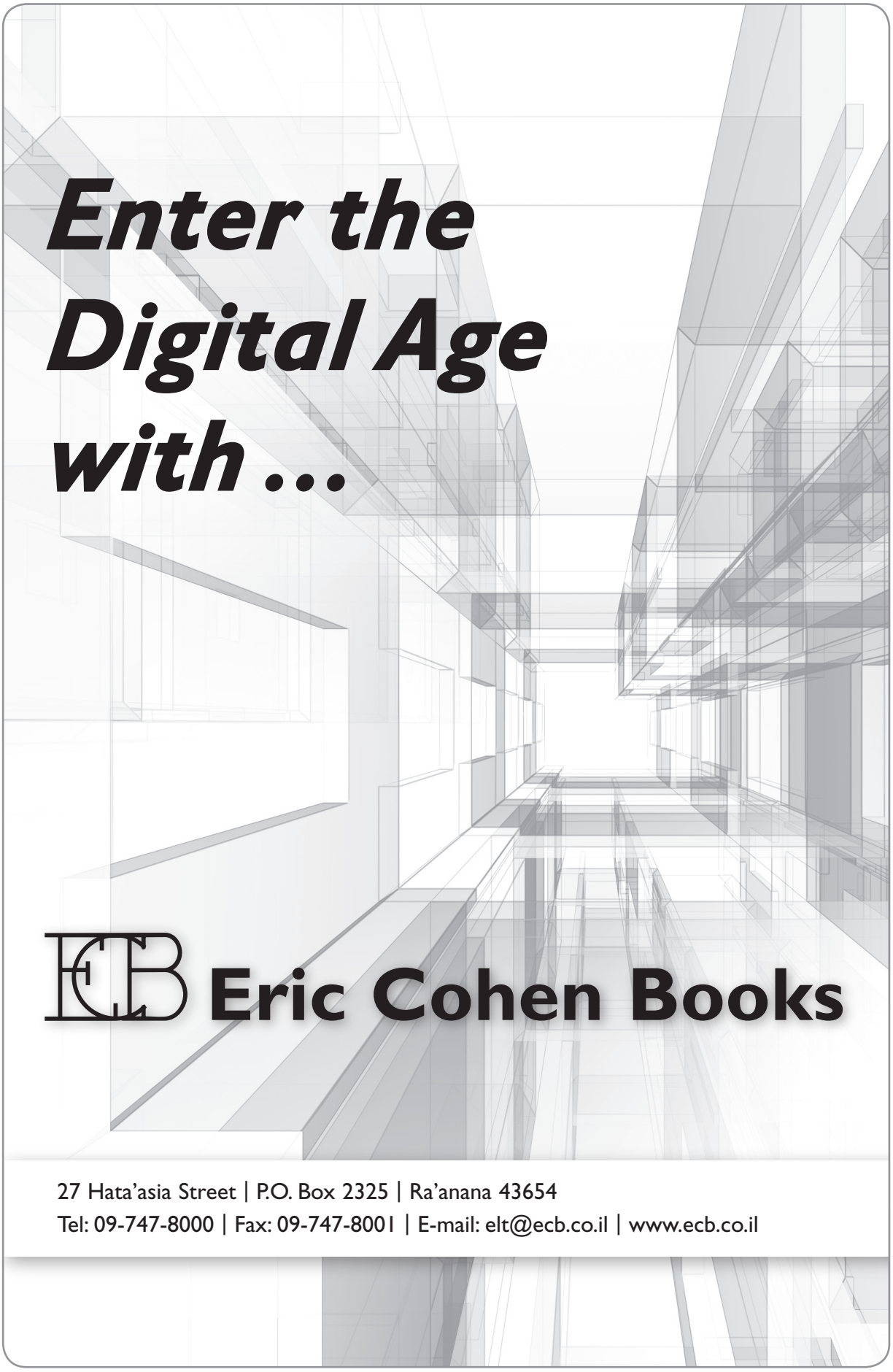
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IS HEBREW WELCOME IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM?

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Introduction

The question whether Mother Tongue (MT) should be used in English classrooms has been re-opened to controversy recently, after many years in which MT was totally banned in the process of EFLA (English as a Foreign Language Acquisition). This situation exists in many other countries where English is taught as FL/ TL (Target Language) given processes of globalization worldwide. As a former teacher of EFL in a secondary school, who is now teaching in an English Teacher Education Program in a College of Education, this professional issue has always preoccupied me from methodological, ethical and practical aspects.

In the past, it was quite impossible to incorporate Hebrew into EFLA because many English teachers were newcomers and did not speak Hebrew and classes were characterized by a multiplicity of MTs. Later on, when Hebrew became a common MT for more teachers and students alike, teachers often avoided using it in English classrooms. They considered it professional misconduct.

A number of issues should be considered as part of this discussion: the advantages and disadvantages of the use of MT in the process of EFLA; whether the use of Hebrew is compatible/incompatible with teaching EFL in class and the optimal 'dosage' of MT in a FL classroom.

How Attitudes Towards the Use of MT Have Changed Over Time.

For over 120 years, the prevailing attitude to FL teaching has been an anti-MT attitude and discouragement of MT in language teaching (Cook, 2001). The main principle of FL teaching was 'monolingual' or 'intra-lingual', rather than 'cross-lingual'. This happened, as mentioned above, because teachers did not speak the MT of their students, or because there were different MTs in the class. Also, the prevailing method of instruction was the Direct Method, which did not encourage the use of comparative analysis. The attitude to translation had pejorative overtones in teaching and was often avoided.

More recently, researchers have concluded that translation provides an easy avenue to enhance linguistic awareness. They recognized the importance of comparative analysis between the MT and TL and the fact that FLA does not aim at substituting MT. However, in practice, teachers used MT even when policies mitigated against it, and often felt guilty for straying from the path of TL, reporting it as professional misconduct (Cook, ibid.).

An example of how attitudes have changed overt ime is seen in the 2001 Curriculum for EFL in Israel, which refers to MT as an integral part of English language education. It consists of 4 domains of language abilities and knowledge which are: Social Interaction, Access to Information, Presentation of Materials, and Appreciation of Literature, Culture and Language. Appreciation of Language, in particular, is based on the rationale that learning a new language provides an opportunity to develop awareness of the nature and complexities of languages, how languages are structured and differences between languages. Thus, students can also develop further insight of their own MT. Despite changes in attitude, the present curriculum does not provide clear-cut instructions with regard to the extent of use of MT.

Why Should Teachers Be Discouraged From Using MT in the Process of EFLA?

Of course, the main argument that is also supported by research (e.g.Turnbull, (2001) is that sometimes the teacher is the sole linguistic model and main source of TL input. Also, the use of TL in class in different situations and for various purposes makes students see its benefits in real-life situations (McDonald, 1993). In addition, teachers who overuse MT deprive learners of an important language process which is trying to make sense of what is said in class in TL (Ellis, 1994). The use of TL in class influences students' achievements and proficiency because of the experience they gain in class. Below are some arguments from a survey conducted among EFL teachers against the use of MT (Timor, 2010):

1. "If I make more efforts to prepare teaching aids, students can understand me without using MT";
2. "If the need arises, I will make students use MT rather than myself";
3. "We should always explain in English, only if there is no other choice we should switch to MT";
4. "Teachers should be committed to FL in their teaching although students will always try to drag them into using MT";
5. "All immersion programmes advocate the use of MT in order to upgrade students' knowledge";
6. "Once the teacher starts using MT, there is no way back";
7. "The use of MT slows down the process of learning";

Why Should Teachers Be Encouraged to Incorporate MT in the Process of EFLA?

The issue of MT in FLA has been explored with a variety of languages and mainly relates to the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis, to universal principles of FLA and multi-linguistic models. Studies on the transfer between MT and TL indicate a linguistic inter-dependence (Jessner & Cenoz, 2000) with regard to multiple subsystems (phonological, syntactic, semantic, textual) within MT and FL systems (Herdina & Gesser, 2002). Bouvy (2000) supported the theory of cross-linguistic transfer with regard to literacy skills. Similarly, Hauptman, Mansur & Tal (2008) used simultaneously a trilingual model for literacy skills among Bedouins in Israel whose MT is Arabic, and found that it created a support system for Arabic through L2 (Hebrew) and FL (English). Other researchers state that MT catalyses the intake process of TL (e.g. Ellis, 1994) as well as saves time and ensures understanding. Cook (ibid.) argues that a judicious and systematic legitimacy of MT will minimize the guilt feelings of teachers when MT creeps in through the back door.

While conducting this discussion a number of psycho-linguistic arguments which advocate the use of MT should also be considered:

1. FL teaching does not duplicate MT acquisition, because learners of TL already have a MT, a greater social development, a larger capacity of short-term memory, and they are more mature when they get acquainted with FL (Cook, ibid.). Therefore, there is no "competition" between MT and TL.
2. The belief in the 20th century was that MT & TL made distinct systems in the brain. However, evidence shows that languages are interwoven in the brain in vocabulary, syntax, phonology, and pragmatics. Therefore, EFL teaching should match the invisible processes in the brain and should not be separated from MT, assuming that the ability to 'transfer' between languages (code-switching) is a normal psycho-linguistic process (Cook, 1996; Cook, 1997b).
3. The process of FLA involves cognitive, social and emotional factors which are inseparable and are related to MT and to TL equally.

A survey that has been conducted recently among EFL teachers (Timor, 2010) sheds light on teachers' attitude with regard to the use of MT in English classrooms. The teachers' answers indicate that they can see the benefit of using MT in English lessons (100% of elementary school teachers (EST) and 87% of secondary school teachers (SST). 78% of EST and 62% of SST define the frequency of use of MT in their lessons as average-high. When asked to explain the benefit of using MT in EFL teaching, teachers brought up the following arguments:

1. "MT helps me to explain complicated issues";
2. "Young learners in lower grades demonstrate limited understanding of English. I find that when I speak in English and they don't understand what I am saying, they mentally zone out, so a good mix of FL & MT is useful to keep them going".
3. "Weaker students will be discouraged and frustrated if I do not use their MT; For them it is easier to understand grammar and vocabulary when they get an additional explanation in their MT";
4. "Explanations can be more thorough in MT"
5. "Explanations in MT provide confidence";
6. "Explanations in MT save time";
7. "In many cases the use of MT clarifies issues in the shortest and most efficient way";
8. "Because of the overpopulated (42 pupils), heterogeneous classes, the use of MT is a must, or else my weak pupils will become disruptive".
9. "MT reduces anxiety among students with learning disorders".

Implementation

While advocating the use of MT in EFL teaching, it is important to note that there are no criteria with regard to the right 'dosage' of the use of MT. Quite often teachers feel at a loss and decide to avoid using MT altogether, because they fear this will contradict the stance supervisors and headmasters take. Cook (2001) presents criteria for a judicious use of MT in the form of questions:

1. Efficiency: Can something be done more effectively through MT?
2. Learning: Will TL learning be enhanced by using MT alongside TL?
3. Naturalness: Do students feel more comfortable about learning some topics in their MT rather than in TL?
4. External relevance: Will MT help students with structures in TL they may need beyond the classroom?

Although these criteria may be useful to clarify the learning circumstances with regard to a certain class or topic, they certainly cannot substitute formal guidelines that should be defined practically and in terms of

quantity. Examples for such guidelines could be "while teaching tenses that exist in the student's MT, you may use comparisons to facilitate understanding", or "avoid literal translations and try synonyms or pictures instead". The use of clear instructions may reduce teachers' anxiety and guilt feelings, and legitimate the use of MT to a certain extent through the front door rather than through the back door.

Another point for consideration with regard to implementation is the type of learning tasks students engage in. For example, in TBL (Task-Based Learning) students may be allowed to use MT more than in other tasks, because they work in groups on their own and get involved in social interactions apart from the task itself. Naturally, they may tend to share ideas and discuss the task in their MT. Instructions of how to incorporate MT in TBL can be seen in the instructions in Willis (1996).

Another important issue with regard to implementation is the language domains for which teachers would prefer the use of MT over TL. Previous studies indicate that teachers use MT in EFL classrooms in order to convey and check meaning of words or sentences and explain grammatical structures (Cook, 1997b); organize tasks and give instructions (Nunan, 1995; Cook, 2001); maintain discipline in class and create rapport with individual students (Macaro, 1997); allow verbal interactions between learners in group work and TBL (Brooks & Donato, 1994).

A survey conducted among teachers of EFL (Timor, 2010) has examined practices of MT in EFL classes. Findings demonstrate that most teachers use MT in their lessons in order to teach grammatical structures which do not coincide between MT and TL (70% of EST and 75% of SST). This may be because it is more difficult to explain structures that do not exist in one's MT, so the use of MT might enhance understanding.

The examples teachers provided for structures that exist in English but do not exist in Hebrew were *Present perfect, Present progressive, and Past progressive*, or structures that have specific rules in English such as 'backshifting' in *Reported Speech*. Both EST and SST report using MT to a great extent in grammar teaching: EST use Hebrew mostly to teach Simple tenses (75%) and Modals (29%); SST, however, use Hebrew mainly to teach more advanced tenses (87%), Modals (63%), Conditionals (56%), Relative Clauses (44%), and Reported Speech (44%). It makes sense that SST rely on Hebrew in their explanations more than EST, because they teach more complex structures whereas EST teach mainly simple grammatical structures.

In the survey (Timor, ibid.), teachers report the use of Hebrew for various language domains. Indeed, 75% of SST use Hebrew to teach vocabulary, whereas EST use it to teach vocabulary (79%) and also reading comprehension skills (54%). Other cases in which teachers make use of Hebrew are: when they need to explain complex issues, give instructions, handle discipline problems, enhance learning habits, and create rapport with an individual student. These findings demonstrate that teachers appreciate the benefit students get from the use of MT with regard to areas of language they need to teach (grammar or reading comprehension), as well as areas of classroom management (discipline problems or individual talks with students).

Here is one example that can further advocate the use of Hebrew as MT in EFLA: let us assume that a teacher needs to teach the idiom "Making a mountain out of a molehill" whose equivalent in Hebrew is "Making an elephant out of a fly". If the teacher is able to provide the equivalent in the students' MT, it will facilitate the explanation, which, in the case of idioms, requires higher language skills of understanding figurative language. The obvious relationship of language-culture that needs to be set in language lessons and is sometimes neglected for reasons of 'ethics' or 'professional misconduct', seems to be the right methodology to help students benefit from the comparison between English and their MT. In this case, MT should be considered as an enabling factor because it facilitates understanding in a short, efficient way and does not present an ethical issue at all. Therefore, the belief that the use of MT in their classrooms should be banned might be considered as a limiting factor rather than an enabling one to language learning.

Conclusions

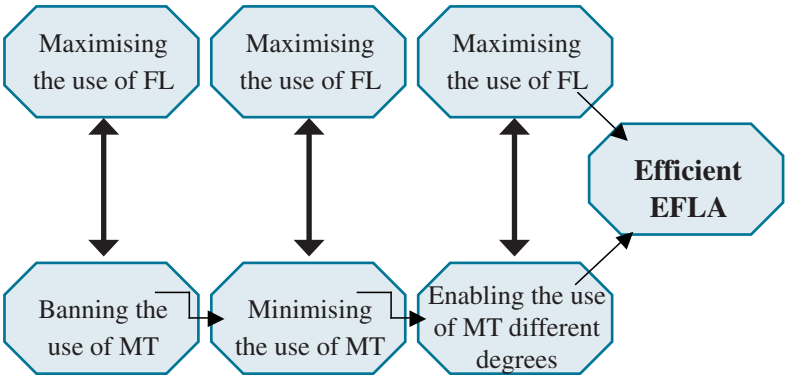
The article revolved around the question of whether or not MT should be 'brought back from exile' (Cook, 2001: 419). This article advocates that MT should and can be incorporated in EFLA based on empirical and theoretical literature.

Figure 1 below depicts the link between MT and FL/TL as a continuum. One end of the continuum would be "Banning the use of MT in class altogether"; the other end of the continuum would be "Enabling the use of MT at different degrees", depending on circumstances. Circumstances include the level of class, the goals of teaching, learners' age and motivation. A third option along the continuum is "Minimizing the use of MT in the classroom".

Of course, the possibility of an unlimited use of MT should not be considered as a feasible option because it clearly contradicts the objectives of teaching FL/TL. It is claimed that the top flags of "Maximizing the use of

TL" do not and should not contradict any of the bottom options presented in Figure 1, and should be taken for granted in EFLA. It is the combination between the top and bottom flags that matters, and the present study highly recommends the combination of "Enabling the use of MT to different degrees" with "Maximizing the use of TL".

Research and brain theories also encourage the use of MT, and it is high time that English teachers realized that they do not 'betray' their mission by introducing MT into class. On the contrary, they facilitate the process of EFLA for their students and demonstrate that a broad exposure to FL does not justify a total ban of MT.



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DOES IT WORK?
Implementing Student Suggestions for Alleviating Test Anxiety in an EFL University Course

Marsha Bensoussan *(bensous@research.haifa.ac.il)* and Bonnie Ben-Israel *(bonib@research.haifa.ac.il)*

Introduction

How do teachers' anxiety-alleviating activities affect student attitudes on English reading comprehension tests? A previous article (Bensoussan and Ben-Israel, 2011) presented student suggestions for alleviating their test anxiety. A questionnaire of nine items was administered to 265 students at the University of Haifa participating in intermediate to advanced level reading comprehension courses. Students reported that they would like two additions to the course, adding bonus questions to tests and taking more practice tests.

In the literature, suggestions for treating post-test anxiety for language tests have been sparse (Kondo and Yang, 2004). No research study has requested and subsequently followed 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 advanced reading comprehension courses.

According to the literature, even when anxiety was alleviated, better performance usually failed to accompany test anxiety reduction; only 18% of the treated groups showed significant performance improvement (Hembree, 1988, p. 48). Few studies have demonstrated significant performance improvement between treated and untreated students because an improvement of only about 6 points could be expected as a result of test anxiety treatment. Because of these statistical limitations, "better performance could not be expected to accompany testing anxiety reduction" (Hembree, p. 75). In the aggregate, however, Hembree (1988) argues that these effects possess a highly significant mean (p. 74).

In contrast, performance appeared 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).

In the absence of clear-cut trends, we decided to focus on student attitudes, not performance. To determine how teachers' anxiety-alleviating activities affect student attitudes on English reading comprehension tests, a second questionnaire was administered to 150 students during the following course.

Methodology:

Questionnaire 2

Questionnaire 2 was based on two questions in Questionnaire 1 which suggested giving a bonus exercise (20 points extra credit) and giving another test on the same material. During the second semester, as part of homework assignments and class quizzes, teachers gave a bonus question such as a short (10-15 word) summary for extra credit of 5-10 points. These students were not told about the results of Questionnaire 1.

Questionnaire 2 asked students whether special measures during the semester improved their reading and test-taking skills. Two questions were asked:

1) In my English tests, I can receive a bonus question for extra credit. For this reason, I feel comfortable reading texts in English / taking tests in English.

2) In my English course, I take enough practice tests to feel comfortable reading texts in English / taking tests in English.

An additional question invited students to describe what else would make them feel comfortable when taking tests.

Results:

Questionnaire 2

Results for the total population (N = 150) showed moderate satisfaction without significant differences for the total population, or across gender or native language (1 = lowest preference, 7 = highest preference).

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

The hierarchy of frequency from Questionnaire 1 changed for Questionnaire 2. Although it is true that there are some similarities, the question 'What else?' was intended for students to add to the four suggestions offered in Questionnaire 2. Many students chose to repeat some of those four, apparently for emphasis. Others, chose to avoid answering this question.

A clearer understanding of the differences between the perceptions of test anxiety in Questionnaires 1 and

2 emerges from a comparison of categories of student comments:

TABLE: Comparison of Categories of Student Comments Q1 - Q2 (%)

	Q1	Q2	Change %
Modify test system	32 %	28 %	- 4 %
Practice test	17	13	- 4
Resignation	15	5	- 10
Teacher's Office Hours	15	3	- 12
Study Skills	9	8	- 1
More time	7	35	+ 28
Larger framework	5	1	- 4
Satisfied	0	6	+ 6
TOTAL:	100 %	* 99 %	

Q 1: 130 comments Q 2: 99 comments

* 99% rounding errors

Students answering Questionnaire 2 ranked *More Time* first, whereas, it ranked only 6th in Questionnaire 1. *Modify Test System* and *Practice Test* followed, ranking 2nd and 3rd, respectively.

Notably, students answering Questionnaire 1 ranked *Resignation and Talking to the Teacher during Teachers' Office Hours* at 3.5 (tying for 3rd place), yet these two passive alternatives ranked only 6th and 7th in Questionnaire 2.

For Questionnaire 1, *Study Skills* (ranked 3.5) were less important than *Teacher's Office Hours* (5th). For Questionnaire 2, on the other hand, although *Study Skills* remained at about the same level (ranked 4th), *Teacher's Office Hours* ranked far below (7th). Furthermore, students answering Questionnaire 2 introduced a new category, *Satisfied*, which ranked 5th, and *Resignation* ranked 6th.

Thinking about the *Larger Framework* came in last place for both Questionnaire 1 (7th) and 2 (8th).

Discussion:

These results are encouraging. A small shift in the system of determining grades – giving bonus questions and practice tests – resulted in a change in the students' mood and motivation. Giving students what they wanted resulted in more satisfaction and less resignation and dependence on the good will of the teacher out of class.

In addition, in the context of advanced English reading comprehension courses, task-relevant, cognitive-behavioral coping strategies (see Table) appeared to be more successful in alleviating anxiety in combination than separately. The strategies even resulted in moderate satisfaction for students. When students perceived that they had the encouragement of their teachers and the support of the course framework in the form of bonus questions and practice tests, they were willing to study harder and appeared to be less anxious. Then, with increased self-esteem, came satisfaction.

Implications for Further Research

Future research on the effectiveness of teacher activities and student coping strategies in advanced reading examination contexts is needed to clarify the extent to which a coping strategy can relieve distress and increase student motivation and progress in language learning. Test anxiety and its alleviation are issues that need to be considered when teachers design a course and prepare a curriculum.

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ON LITERATURE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND, SO IT SEEMS, IN A TEST-ORIENTED SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Raphael Gefen *(rayag@bezeqint.net)*

The "Ha'Aretz" English edition carried, in some of its October issues, a piece about the controversy surrounding the testing of English literature that focuses on "higher thinking" rather than on a knowledge of the texts, but the newspaper stated (twice) that literature was taken off the written Bagrut in the mid-1990s. This date rather intrigued me, since I was responsible for the examination's contents until 1993, and there had been no written literature examination since the 1970s.

The written literature examination was not only dropped in the early 1970s, but the literature syllabus itself was also changed. Hitherto, most schools had to plough through a Shakespeare play, usually "Julius Caesar", and noble works of 18th century prose, such as "Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son" that I read as a teacher here in Israel for the first time, even though I was a graduate of the British school system. Indeed, the whole aim of teaching English in Israel was stated in the syllabus in use till then as "to teach enough English language to appreciate the culture and literature of the English-speaking peoples".

The new syllabus/curriculum introduced in the early 1970s by the English Inspectorate and the English Advisory Committee headed by the late Professor Daniel Fineman of Tel-Aviv University emphasized English as a global language of communication, and therefore focused on the practical use of the language. The literature syllabus was drastically altered to include 20th century works, thereby contributing to communication skills. It was an integral part of the study programme in schools - but not as part of the Bagrut examination. "All My Sons" was now the favoured drama text.

"Shylock's Revenge"

This new literature programme aroused a lot of antagonism (not among pupils, I am sure), so much so that ten years later a professor in the English Department of one of our universities even accused me of being partly responsible for the moral decline in Israeli society because a Shakespeare play was no longer studied in schools. He wasn't convinced by my rejoinder that a Shakespeare play was part of the 'world literature' section of the Hebrew literature syllabus - "it's not the same" was his response. The tabloid British newspaper "The Daily Mail" ran a piece entitled "Shylock's Revenge" about our new syllabus. I wondered at the time how many of its readers had ever studied or seen a Shakespeare play.

"What's Not Tested Is Not Taught"

However, teachers complained about not testing the literature programme, on the grounds that "what's not tested is not taught" (by which they meant 'is not studied seriously'). The solution was to have a literature test as part of the oral test. The oral test had also been introduced as a compulsory test as part of the new curriculum, in which examinees were expected to discuss the contents of one of the literary pieces they had studied. In 1985, the Examinations Department of the Ministry of Education agreed to have a "battery" oral test, following an experiment in a Tel-Aviv school conducted by Elana Shohamy, the late Thea Reves, and Yael Bejerano, with an interview, a role-play and a discussion of a reading text. A fourth component, a group discussion, could not be implemented for technical reasons. Teachers and examiners were provided with a guidebook , which included a 'Scale of Marks (Grades)' for fluency and accuracy.

"Literary Competence"

In addition to 'Fluency' and 'Accuracy', the Reading test included a 'Level 5' mark/grade (when testing 5-point testees only) of 'Literary Competence' that stated "the pupil can narrate the contents (Level 2), make inferences from the events to the main pragmatic meaning (Level 3), and make relatively complex inferences to the historical, social or psychological context of the story (Level 4); in addition, he/she can make some literary inferences: a sample question "What is meant by the "Stream of Consciousness" with reference to the short story 'Eveline'?"

An article entitled 'Modular Questions in the Oral Bagrut' in the *English Teachers' Journal*, 35, June 1987, by Carol Goldfus, Pnina Rosenbluth and Suzy Secemski (reprinted in 'The Oral Bagrut Examination" booklet listed below) gave the following examples for this 'Level 5, Literary Competence': *Discuss the perspective of the story/play/poem from the author's, narrator's or reader's point of view. How far can the reader identify with the themes? Are they universal or culture-bound? What determines their validity?* But I stress that this is Level 5 of the 5-Point Bagrut, and not every 5-Point examinee was expected to reach this highest level.

In addition to the booklet sent to teachers and examiners explaining the 'battery' system, a video was produced by the English Inspectorate and the Ministry's 'Pedagogical Centres', with volunteer examiners and examinees from

the Gymnasia Ivrit in Jerusalem; in the early 1990s, similar videos were produced for 4-Point examinees by Instructional Television.

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Raphael Gefen was Chief Inspector for English 1967-1992 (1967-1971 for Primary Schools only).

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ALL IN A DAY "BAGRUT" DAY'S WORK!

Naomi Epstein *(naomi.shema@gmail.com)*

The first thing I learned on my first "Bagrut" day, way back in 1988, was that you have to come prepared. Invariably, things you assume will work may not do so. My wonderful stapler, which had worked like a charm, got hopelessly stuck when the exam started. (Students with a hearing loss need many papers stapled into their exams). Now I bring **three** staplers to every exam.

The second thing I learned was that being prepared does not ensure a quiet, uneventful exam day. Dramas can suddenly erupt, caused by a variety of forces, some of which are outside of our control.

Our readers' tales describe "Proctors from Hell", give advice on "Ensuring Proctors Don't Mess with the Radios" and relate "Assorted Dramas".

Proctors from HELL

** We once had a test that disappeared after the student had already handed it in. We couldn't find it in the final counting before sending the batch to the testing center. We turned everything upside down and even called the student who was already at home and quite worried when we told him. We were forced to result to canceling him on the report and deliver the tests to the center. The next day the student was summoned to the principal and psychologist and was advised to retake the test in MOED BET. During the conversation the proctor, an elderly lady, called to say, "Today while I was in the SHUK I found a BAGRUT exam in my bag which I had taken home by mistake." We told her that she needs to bring it urgently to school. She replied that she can't because she's too busy and besides, she doesn't have a way to get to the school!

We had to send a driver to get the test, have her write a letter, etc., but she didn't even realize the gravity of what she had done! (Nelia Kaplan)

** This year, I walked in at 3:10 to check that everything was ready with the listening. The proctor, who looked very bored, was sitting there with a piece of paper in her hands and slowly ripping it. Every 2 seconds you'd hear "ccchhhht", as she ripped the paper. I looked around and saw a few kids who looked like they wanted to rip their hair out. I whispered to her "Zeh Mafriah", she stopped, and I was the recipient of some grateful smiles. (Leah Harris)

** I had to orally test two girls on both F and G. I was in the examination room before the beginning of the exam. Then, before removing pupil # 1 to test her, I went up to the two girls with accommodations ("oral mutam exam") to check that they had been told which questions to do. The proctor started yelling at me, to the effect that I was giving the girls answers. (The notebooks had JUST been given out; how could I possibly know anything to tell anyone?!!!) Well, I removed pupil # 1 and tested her. When I returned to remove # 2, I gave the proctor a note explaining the protocol for testing girls with accommodations. I suggested that she should make sure she knows her business before she starts yelling at someone, causing embarrassment and causing needless stress to already anxious examinees. (Esther Revivo)

** We once had a proctor who must have been a little ADD – the modern way of saying "impatient". She had no patience for the kids who deserved extra time, so she literally stood over them, saying, "Are you almost finished yet? You have seven minutes left. Five minutes left. Aren't you done yet?" Needless to say, she made them so crazy that they couldn't concentrate at all and did terribly. (Leah Harris)

** One of the headaches that we have had is that they talk on their cell phones during the test, interfering with the kids' concentration. Before the test this year, I made it a point to ask the proctors to keep their phones OFF. Unfortunately, this measure did not solve the noisy proctor problem. During the last fifteen minutes one proctor kept announcing, "15 minutes until the end of the test ... 10 minutes ... 5 minutes." You can imagine how crazy the kids felt. (Dvora Dkidorf)

Ensuring Proctors Don't Mess with the Radios

** Tune all the radios to the correct station before the day of the BAGRUT. Put a COLORED sticker next to the volume dial, and write the station (AM or FM and the number) on the sticker.

On the day of the test, put the radios in the A rooms, turn the radio on, make sure it is on the correct station, and turn the volume to minimum, and tape the attached note (with the mention of E crossed off) on each one. Tape it OVER the station dial, so no one would touch that and change the station. After the proctors go into the rooms (a few minutes before the test) and make sure they understand what to do.

For E repeat the process.

The note taped over the tuning dial makes sure they don't change stations. The colored sticker next to the volume dial makes it easy for them to increase the volume before the listening. (Sara Gabai)

** In addition, use Tipp-Ex to mark the scale on the radio indicating the right frequency. These markings will keep for many years – no need to do this for each exam. (Dorian Cohen)

Assorted Dramas

** Way back in the day before students were granted CDs for their BAGRUT auditory dispensations, the Ministry would send out cassettes to schools. It was understood that there'd be an insufficient number for those students requiring use.

Our English Staff would organize a mini-recording studio in the main administration building. This would entail taking over at least one room, barring entrance from the rightful occupants, and hooking up tape recorders. We'd have to organize blank cassettes and from the moment the Bagrut bag was opened, we'd get to work duplicating cassettes.

As the English Learning Centre facilitator and the one with a bike, I'd be in charge of madly dashing between the distant English Centre and the satellite recording studio to locate and transport working double tape recorders, usable blank tapes and viable marking pens to make sure we'd be distributing the actual finished product and not some prior recording.

Even though the staff worked at the highest possible efficiency level, the duplication process was agonizingly slow, and students were forced to wait. Not a pleasant situation. In addition, there would be the inevitable breakdown of student-owned walkmans. A teacher or our school Bagrut administrator, would rush over with the message and I'd be off biking to the English room once more, where we kept a small collection of walkmans. Bagrut Day was always a good workout. (Judith Weinstein)

** I do remember that one year we didn't have enough papers of a certain level (don't know why- I think the person who deals with the registration had made a mistake) Anyway, I had to run off to the neighboring school to photocopy some extras! It was pretty hairy as I had to get back before the listening started. (Ruthi Sheffer)

** Back in the days before the modular BAGRUT, there were cloze-type questions in the 4-point-BAGRUT unseen passage. Deaf pupils had an accommodation of getting multiple choice options for these questions. These had to be created and photocopied after the exams were distributed. One year, as usual, I created the options for the two multiple choice questions (three blanks for each question, three choices for each blank). Another senior teacher looked at it and ran to the photocopy machine. I then discovered there was a power-failure at the school, which I later discovered had been a NATIONAL power-failure!) But I needed 12 copies immediately! I copied it out again and then two other teachers were able to copy from that copy. Then two more teachers joined in and we worked, pyramid style till all 12 copies were ready to be stapled into the students exams. (Naomi Epstein)

Naomi Epstein teaches English to deaf and hard of hearing students at Yehud Comprehensive High-School and is the "Shema" national counselor for English for the hearing impaired. She has been in this field for over twenty years. She holds a B.A. in "Education of the Hearing Impaired", a B.Ed. in "Teaching EFL" and an M.A. in "Curriculum Development." She is the author of "Apples and Zebras" *and* "The Book of Keys."

DEAR ISRAELI FRIENDS

Victoria Demidova *(redroseburns@yandex.ru)*

Victoria Demidova from Uzbekistan is an overseas ETAI member. Following the ETAI international conference she sent us a letter expressing her appreciation for ETAI and included a story about Samarkand, the third largest city in Uzbekistan. The story that follows Victoria's letter is accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that is accessible on the ETAI website. There is a slide for each number in the story.

Dear Israeli friends,

Happy new academic year! I wish you every success in your professional and personal life.

After returning to Uzbekistan I go on disseminating information about the ETAI International Conference which has become my brightest summer experience and one of the most memorable events in my life. Already at the beginning of August, during a 3-day Effective Resource Centre Management Training held in Tashkent by the British Council, I involved participants in discussion of the article *Testing Vocabulary in a Story* (ETAI FORUM, summer 2010, p.39), which all the participants found extremely useful. To make the discussion more vivid and practical the participants were asked to do testing of vocabulary described in the article using some books.

We had a similar discussion on 8 August in UzTEA Samarkand branch during one of PSG (Peer Support Group) meetings with EL teachers. In addition to the article by Phyllis Oded, we discussed Penny Ur's workshop on *Teaching Vocabulary* and shared our ideas and experiences on teaching and testing vocabulary. At the end of our meeting we played special cards as another possible activity to check students' vocabulary and entertain them (by the way these cards I purchased at the ETAI conference). I was glad to answer a lot of participants' questions about the conference, ETAI and EL teachers of Israel.

Penny Ur's other conference presentation, *Linking through Grammar*, was in the focus of PSG meeting on 22 August. This presentation encouraged the participants to expand on why our students don't like grammar and what to do to change their attitude.

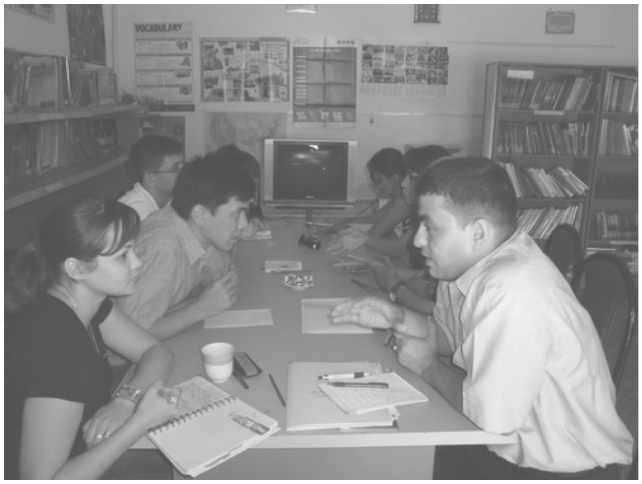
On 31 August eight EL teachers gathered together in order to discuss ways of motivating language learners. Besides personal experiences and ideas, we read and discussed a wonderful presentation by Zoltan Dornyei he gave at the ETAI International Conference.

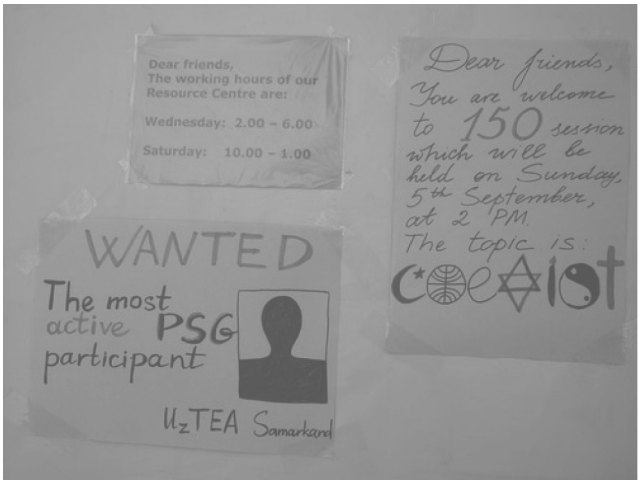
As I am the person coordinating Mentoring and Peer Support Group strand of ETTE project in Uzbekistan, I e-mailed these reports and the workshops to a big number of participants of the project in other regions of Uzbekistan. The last piece of information is connected to Reading Club, another project UzTEA Samarkand branch has been running since 2007. Yesterday we had 150th session of Reading Club. The topic was COEXIST and it was focused on information about the Baha'i Faith. Photos from Haifa and Akko were used by me during the session which was a big success.

Dear friends, you should know that now you have many friends in Uzbekistan. You are always welcome to my country and to my native city, Samarkand, which is famous for its rich history and cultural heritage. As a present for you, please find attached the presentation about Samarkand which I designed for another conference as a part of cultural programme. Hope you'll enjoy it.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Victoria Demidova
Uzbekistan





A LEGEND ABOUT HOW SAMARKAND GOT ITS NAME

1.
2. A sage who knows a lot of old stories told us a legend about how Samarkand got its name.
3. A long time ago in a region of Central Asia there was a city.
4. Hundreds of caravans carrying silk, gold and spices from the Orient passed through the city.
5. Its citizens were good at numerous crafts.
6. A ruler of the city was strong and powerful.
7. He had a young wife and a small daughter whose name was Kand which means sugar in Uzbek.
8. At the same time, Samar, a boy from a poor family, grew bright and brave.
9. Some years later a fame about Kand's fabulous beauty spread all over the world.
10. Samar became a talented poet, a musician and an artist.
11. He depicted everything he saw around him: dervishes
12. talking about adventures they'd had,
13. fearless warriors
14. and their leisure time.
15. But most of all Samar liked to draw his city:
16. its old buildings
17. and emerald walls,
18. its mosaic decorations
19. and its narrow stairs.
20. Samar liked painting his city in a sunny summer
21.
22. and in a severe winter
23.
24. and in a generous autumn
25.
26. but his favourite season was a tender spring
27. when nature begins to awaken
28. and cherry, apple and almond trees
29. are in blossom,
30. and when the whole world seems to be a magnificent garden emitting sweet fragrance.
31. Once when Samar was painting the garden he saw Kand strolling there.
32. Love, like a red rose, flourished in their hearts.
33. They met in the garden
34. and Samar painted bouquets of flowers.
35. The lovers were singing songs
36. about their love
37. and miracles of the spring,
38. and Samar wrote poems.
39. But before long Kand's father, the ruler of the city, learned about their secret meetings. He got furious because Samar was poor and the ruler ordered his soldiers to kill Samar.
40. Kand was crying day and night
41. and soon died from unbearable anguish.
42. The story about the ill-fated lovers made the kind citizens so sorrowful that they decided to rename their city Samarkand.
43. Musicians created a song about Samarkand.
44. A driver of camels heard it.
45. When he left Samarkand
46. He sang the song about the city
47. and its turquoise domes which could be compared with the azure of heavens,
48. the city which is wonderful at noon,
49. at night,
50. at dawn,
51. and at twilight.
52. Hundreds of years passed, but the legend about how Samarkand got its name is still being told by the citizens of the city.

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Make a drum

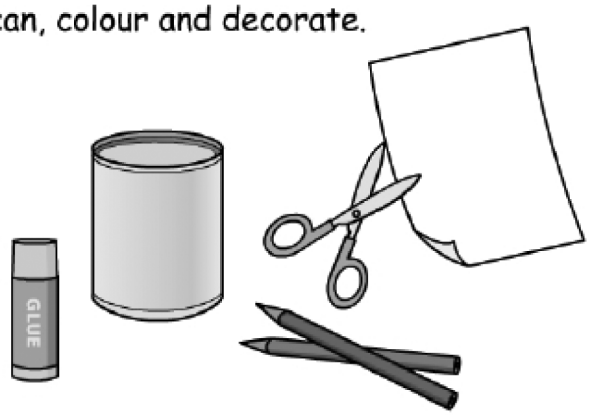
You need:

- A tin can
- Paper
- Glue
- 2 pencils

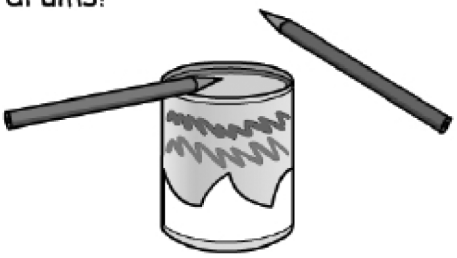
More ideas:

- Use 2 spoons as drumsticks. Do the drums make different sounds?
- Glue some paper on top of the can. What sound does your drum make now?

1. Glue the paper around the sides of the can, colour and decorate.



2. Use the pencils as drumsticks and play your drums!



Make a guitar

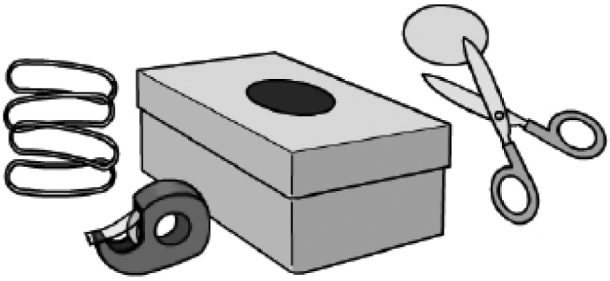
You need:

- A shoe box
- 4 large elastic bands
- Sellotape
- Scissors

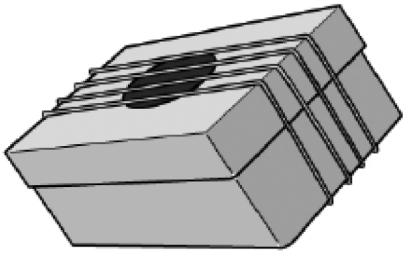
More ideas:

- Sellotape a ruler to the bottom of the box to make the arm of the guitar.

1. Cut a hole in the lid of the box.



2. Put the elastic bands around the box.



3. Play your guitar!

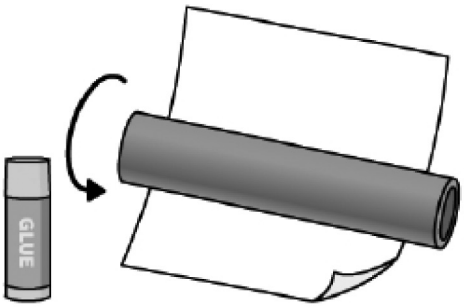
BRITISH COUNCIL Teachingenglish LearnEnglish Kids
www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids

Make a flute

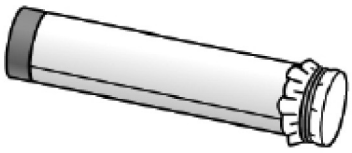
You need:

- A cardboard tube
- Tissue paper
- An elastic band
- A pencil

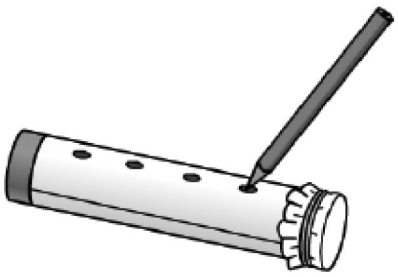
1. Glue the tissue paper around the sides of the tube.



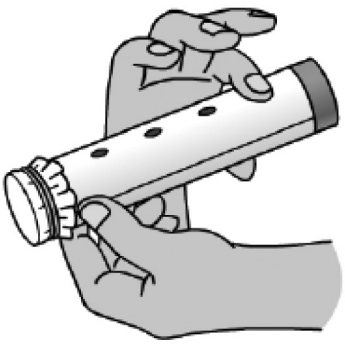
2. Cover one end of the tube with a small piece of tissue paper and hold it in place with the elastic band.



3. Carefully make 4 holes down one side of the tube with a pencil.



4. Play your flute!



More ideas:

- Take 4 glass bottles. Fill the bottles with different quantities of water. Now blow across the top of the bottles. Do the bottles make different sounds?

- Now tap the bottles with a pencil or a spoon. Which bottle makes the highest sound?

Make a shaker

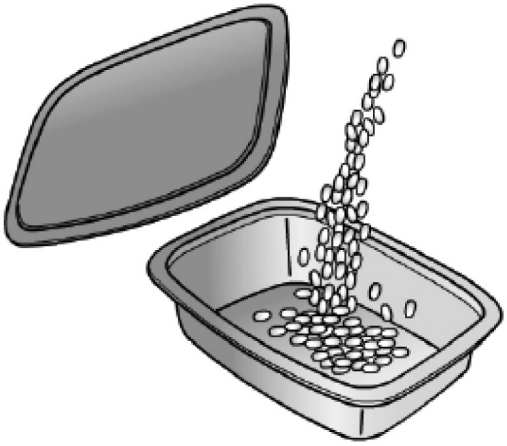
You need:

- A plastic container
- Rice
- Scissors
- Sellotape

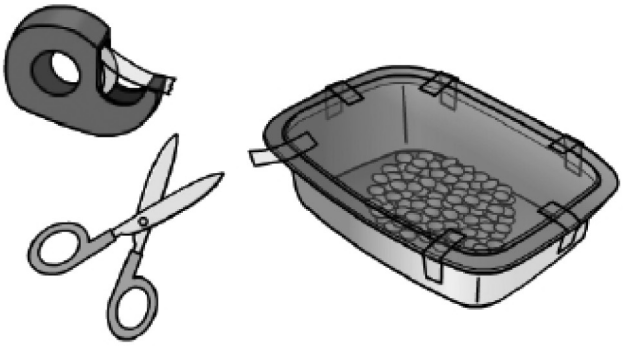
More ideas:

- Cover your container with paper, colour and decorate.
- Put some dried beans, lentils or pasta inside another container. Do the shakers make different sounds?
- Try putting some rice inside a balloon. Blow up your balloon and tie the end. What sound does your balloon make?

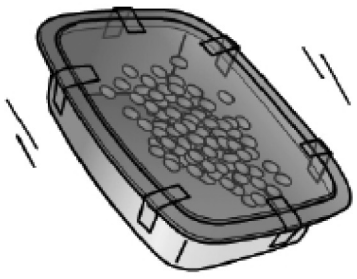
1. Put a handful of rice inside the container.



2. Sellotape the top of the container.



3. Shake your shaker!



INSIGHTS INTO BLOGS AND SITES

Ruth Sheffer *(rsheffer@gmail.com)*

Well to paraphrase the late Douglas Adams, author of the "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe" you may think it's a long way down the street to the Chemist, but that's peanuts to Space", and the same goes for the Internet. There are so many websites nowadays, how can you possibly find where are the best places to go? There are supposed to be about 155 million web pages to choose from! Of course, I will only tell you about a few of them.

There are two main kinds of websites useful to us as English teachers: there are the ones which have handy practical material to print off and use in class and there are the blogs of other EFL teachers worldwide which can help us to feel less isolated. The latter help us see that the kinds of problems we face in the classroom are universal.

I. Useful handy materials:

1. http://www.eslflow.com/
   This site has a wealth of useful pages to print off and use in class, all free. Most are in handy PDF format.
2. http://eflclassroom.ning.com
   One of my all-time favourites, has excellent karaoke clips , youtube movies and an excellent teachers' forum where you can communicate with other EFL teachers.
3. http://bogglesworldesl.com/ Another excellent site with lovely free worksheets, especially for creative writing for younger kids.
4. http://www.esl-galaxy.com/lessons.htm More free worksheets, ideas for lesson plans and some ideas for board games.

II. Now for the teachers' blogs:

There are literally thousands of these. If you just search on Google for efl +teacher you will find some.

It is really a question of taste who you hook up to. Here are the ones I particularly like:

6. http://theteacherjames.blogspot.com/ The blog of Englishman teaching in Thailand.
7. http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/ The blog of an American high school teacher.
8. http://esl-lab.blogspot.com/ A blog for Teachers and Students of English by Randall Davis.

Each of these sites will lead you on to other interesting sites, reminding us why we say "surfing the web".

Ruth Sheffer is a teacher of EFL from London who has taught in Israeli high school for over 30 years. She is now officially retired, living in China and teaching at Zheijiang University of Agriculture and Forestry.

Save the date

ETAI Winter Conference
Monday December 10th
at the Reali School in Haifa
See you there!