



International Spring Conference 2016

**CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE
DIRECTIONS FOR ENGLISH IN HIGHER
EDUCATION:
WIDENING HORIZONS FOR TEACHERS,
STUDENTS, AND GRADUATES**

**February 8 - 9, 2016
Tel Aviv University, Israel**



08.45 – 09.30	<i>Registration</i>
09.30 – 09.45 Webb 01	Welcoming Remarks Dr. Rosalie Sitman Head of Division of Foreign Languages, Tel Aviv University
09.45 – 10.15 Webb 01	Introducing HINET Aims and Structure of the New Umbrella Association Keren Goldfrad / Bar Ilan University, Tal Levy / Ruppin Academic Center, and Tina Waldman / Seminar HaKibbutzim College
10.15 – 11.15 Webb 01	Keynote Chair – Rosalie Sitman Assessment for Global Standards Professor Barry O’Sullivan Head of Assessment Research & Development, The British Council, London
11.15 – 11.30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.30 – 12.30 Webb 01	Plenary Session Chair – Tal Levy Current Trends and Future Directions for English in Higher Education: Widening Horizons for Teachers, Students, and Graduates Professor Ofra Inbar Tel Aviv University
12.30 – 13.30 Webb 01	Plenary Session Chair – Daniel Portman A Framework for English in Higher Education in Israel Lisa Amdur, Iair Or and Elana Spector-Cohen Tel Aviv University
13.30 – 14.30	<i>LUNCH</i>
14.30 – 15.15 Webb 001	Plenary Session Chair – Ruth Fortus Implementing a Common Framework: The European Experience Sonia Munteanu / Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Ewa Hajdasz, / Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Poland, Fatima Carla Bassi / University of L'Aquila, Italy
15.15 – 17.15	Parallel Paper Sessions
	Webb 01, Webb 102, Webb 104

09.15 – 09.45	<i>Registration</i>
09.45 – 11.00 Webb 001	<p>Plenary Session: Chair – Tina Waldman</p> <p>From Framework to Classroom: The Magic is in the Mix</p> <p>Daniel Portman and Miriam Symon / IDC Herzliya Ingrid Barth and Shaya Kass / Open University</p>
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee Break
11.30 – 12.45 Webb 001	<p>Plenary Session: Chair – Noa Kadman</p> <p>Research, Rating, Writing and Rubrics</p> <p>Ruth Fortus / NITE, Clive Lawrence / University of Maastricht</p>
12.45 – 13.45	Lunch
13.45 – 14.45 Webb 001	<p>From Framework to Assessment Assessment Workshop</p> <p>Ruth Fortus / NITE, Clive Lawrence / University of Maastricht</p>
14.45 – 15.00 Webb 001	<p>The TEMPUS ECOSTAR Project Information session: how to become involved</p> <p>Linda Weinberg / ORT Braude College of Engineering</p>
15.00 – 16.00 Webb 001	<p>H-INET Panel - Discussion and Planning Session</p> <p>Summing up – Current Trends and Future Directions for English in Higher Education</p> <p>Implications of recent CHE initiatives and where we go from here</p>

Tuesday, 9 February 2016

Session 1: Webb 001 Chair - Valerie Jakar, Shaanan Academic College of Education	
15.15 – 15.45	LET'S MOODLE: Gamifying Professional Development Tal Levy, Karen Eini, Debbie Lahav / Ruppin Academic Center
15.45 – 16.15	“Sticky” E-learning – The Best of Both Worlds Sara L. Tilleman / Ono Academic College
16.15 – 16.45	Project based learning: A transformational odyssey for teachers and learners Noa Kadman / Afeka College of Engineering
16.45 – 17.15	Our inner “Note-taker” or “inner reading GPS” Naomi Kruger-Arram / Hebrew University

Session 2: Webb 102 Chair - Harriet Rubin, Tel Aviv University	
15.15 – 15.45	Does mindfulness meditation improve outcomes in English for Academic Purposes courses? Shaya Kass / The Open University of Israel
15.45 – 16.15	Creating a project-based course: the case of Economics Advanced 2 Monica Broido, Daniel Portman / IDC, Tel Aviv University, Beit Berl
16.15 – 16.45	Lessons in content-based instruction in EAP in Israel Vera Kitaev / Kinneret, Western-Galilee, Emek-Yizrae'el
16.45 – 17.15	“Translanguaging” in EAP reading comprehension tests Claire Gordon, Ann Marks, Esther Klein-Wohl, Alaa Jabran and Katrina Maroun / The Open University of Israel

Session 3: Webb 104 Chair - Natan Ophir, Lev Academic Center / Ono Academic College	
15.15 – 15.45	Discipline and language professors' collaboration in the uOttawa Immersion Program Alysse Weinberg / University of Ottawa, Canada
15.45 – 16.15	Fostering critical thinking skills and language proficiency in the EAP class Suzy Esquenazi Cohen and Linda Weinberg / ORT Braude College of Engineering
16.15 – 16.45	Genre assessment of scientific writing in and outside academia Tzipora Rakedzon & Ayelet Baram-Tsabari / Technion-Israel Institute of Technology
16.45 – 17.15	Bedouin Students in EAP Classes in Israeli Academia: from Weakness to Strength Ira Slabodar, Galina Gordishevsky, Yulia Muchnik-Rozanov, Jennie Goldenberg / Ashkelon Academic College

**Current Trends and Future Directions for English in Higher Education:
Widening Horizons for Teachers, Students, and Graduates**

Ofra Inbar-Lourie
Tel Aviv University

The spread of English as the contemporary lingua franca, a pre-requisite for personal, academic, and vocational mobility, necessitates a critical reconsideration of some of the basic assumptions underlying the field. Research in the last decade has addressed the challenges involved in attempting to match the goals, contents and teaching methods of EAP courses to present needs. This talk will discuss some of the dominant features and dilemmas that currently typify the EAP profession in light of its present role as a means to widen the horizon and opportunities available to students and graduates. In particular it will look at issues pertaining to the EAP knowledge base and hence to EAP teacher qualifications, the growing use of English as a medium for conveying academic content and the challenges such use entails. Finally it will consider possible means to support the stakeholders involved in this complex dynamic process.

A Framework for English in Higher Education in Israel

Lisa Amdur, Iair Or and Elana Spector-Cohen
Tel Aviv University

The Common European Framework for English (CEFR) originated as a framework for providing descriptors of language ability (at 6 proficiency levels) across Europe, but has become a primary framework for English across the globe. An important aspect of the CEFR is that it is descriptive rather than prescriptive, and that it can be localized and adapted for any context. One of the primary aims of the EU-funded ECOSTAR (English as the Cornerstone of Sustainable Technology and Research) project was to study the CEFR with the intention of adapting it to the Israeli tertiary context. This study resulted in a proposed *Framework for English in Higher Education in Israel*, which will be distributed and introduced in this talk. Some of the potential benefits of aligning with the CEFR include a common set of standards for EAP courses in Israel, mutual recognition of levels of English achieved by transfer students, the promotion of physical and virtual mobility of students (e.g., for international student exchange programs requiring candidates to have a B2 CEFR level in English), a focus on effective communication in both the academic and professional domains, and integration of the four language skills—reading, writing, speaking and listening. This presentation will also include details with regard to the development process involved in creating the localized framework, including the collection of information through an extensive needs-survey that included 2,394 students, 89 English instructors, and 175 lecturers from a range of faculties and departments in institutions throughout Israel. Detailed results of this survey will be described.

**Implementing a Common Framework:
The European Experience**

Sonia Munteanu, *Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania*
Ewa Hajdasz, *Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Poland*
Fatima Carla Bassi, *University of L'Aquila, Italy*

Released in 2001, The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages synthesized decades of research in language learning and teaching, and offered a comprehensive and coherent body of knowledge for practitioners, experts in language teaching and language policy, as well as for language learners. Since then, the CEFR has had a huge impact, first in Europe and, soon after, worldwide. Implemented by top-down and bottom-up approaches, used to redesign language learning and assessment, criticized and praised, the CEFR has become the reference in European educational systems in the field of languages. But the experience with its adoption and/or adaptation to national educational systems in Europe has been very diverse. For many countries, the CEFR implementation overlapped with the Bologna process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area. This presentation aims to provide three perspectives on how the CEFR has impacted the national and local educational systems in Italy, Poland, and Romania. Focusing on higher education institutions, the presentation will point out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats met on the way of implementing the CEFR in the three countries. Although running shoulder to shoulder, all three paths revealed differences in approaches, objectives, areas of implementation and solutions found to the challenges of integrating the CEFR principles and level descriptions into the local educational context. On-going experiences, the Italian, Polish, and Romanian stories of meeting, falling in love and 'marrying' the CEFR can serve as illustrative examples of understanding and 'localizing' a body of knowledge which is much more than just 'reference.'

LET'S MOODLE: Gamifying Professional Development

Tal Levy, Karen Eini, Debbie Lahav
Ruppin Academic Center

As higher education language instructors (HELI) we are responsible for preparing Generation Y for an uncertain future; a future with jobs that do not yet exist. Being open to learning and new ideas enables us to better provide our students with the skills they need to become successful lifelong learners.

We talk a lot about learning experiences for students but what about learning experiences for HELI? Today, teachers are expected to incorporate an array of technology in their teaching, in particular, extensive use of the MOODLE LMS platform.

After conducting a mini needs-analysis, we found that many of our teachers were familiar with a limited number of MOODLE functions, thus not exploiting the tool to its full potential. In considering how best to conduct a professional development session (PDS), we decided to use elements of gamification to create a meaningful and engaging learning experience.

Harnessing technology to enhance gamification as part of the learning process is relatively new. Werbach and Hunter (2012) suggest that SLL can benefit from gamification, as it uses game elements and game design techniques in non-game contexts. As we aim to incorporate gamification as part of our EAP instruction, we felt the need to practice what we preach.

This talk will present how gamifying a PDS led to greater engagement and better understanding of the various tools available on MOODLE. This talk demonstrates how principles of gamification can be adapted to meet the needs of team development by focusing on practical skills yet adhering to sound pedagogical practices.

As George Dorsey said, "Play is the beginning of knowledge." Gamification affords educational experiences that empower, engage, and enable learning via a non-formal, fun atmosphere. It involves critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration, the 4Cs that we and our Gen Y will need to stay in the game!

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"Sticky" E-learning—The Best of Both Worlds

Sara L. Tilleman
Ono Academic College

The teaching landscape in the 21st century is undergoing a technological "tsunami" and great uncertainty exists regarding the application and effectiveness of these new innovative instructional technologies. With the proliferation of web 2.0 educational tools as well as the ubiquitous use of technology, higher-education institutions are eagerly adopting e-learning courses as an alternative, cost-saving medium of instruction.

There is a lot of "hype" about e-learning which is frequently viewed as a generic one-size-fits-all type of instruction. In reality, however, based on my experience, this is not the case. Numerous pedagogical options need to be considered regarding course structure and content as well as types of online learning activities.

In the summer of 2015, I conducted an e-learning pilot with ESL law students to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching via blended learning. My goal was to create a meaningful innovative course vs. a "clicky-clicky bling-bling" (Bean, 2014) course where traditional materials, such as a text with questions, are just "dumped" on a computer platform.

This talk will present the results of the blended pilot course (70% frontal classes vs. 30% online). I will address the essential design principles or "blueprint" used to design the course as well as demonstrate an original multi-media asset that I created. Overall, student feedback was overwhelmingly positive and they expressed an interest in continuing to study in the same blended learning format in future semesters.

References:

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**Project Based Learning:
A Transformational Odyssey for Teachers and Learners**

Noa Kadman
Afeka College of Engineering

In my college, traditional reading comprehension courses have been receiving negative feedback in the classroom for the last few years due to the fact that students could not see the relevance of studying towards a high stake unseen exam. This triggered the shift to Project Based Learning (PBL) that encourages communication, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration while students work in groups towards an authentic task that teaches these real life skills. In addition, it integrates all four language skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This combination creates a more holistic approach to language learning. However, the challenge was to create a PBL course that ensured that students were still learning the reading comprehension skills required for the mandatory unseen exam.

This paradigm required a shift from the role of a "sage on the stage" teacher to the role of a facilitator, guide, and consultant. Paradoxically, expecting students to be more accountable for their own learning process through self directed work improved their experience and outcomes. The course was transformed into an adventure for me and the students alike.

Using technology and social media tools to optimize the delivery of the course was another unique aspect. By doing so, the interface of the course became more user friendly and bridged the gap between academic and real life settings.

Following the success of the pilot classes, the current challenge is to create a positive and supportive framework for other teachers to implement this approach, and overcome both the inherent resistance to change as well as the limiting beliefs about what teaching should look like.

In this presentation, I will introduce the course, the challenges, the triumphs and the process of ushering other teachers into this new and exciting paradigm.

Our Inner “Note-taker” or “Inner Reading GPS”

Naomi Kruger-Arram,
*Hebrew University
Institute of Education, University College, London*

By the time students begin higher education, they have been reading texts for school, in at least two languages, for several years.

For students who have been diagnosed with reading disabilities, reading at the academic level, especially in a second (or third) language such as English, presents a new challenge: that of reading long texts in a relatively short amount of time, and being required to remember information in those texts, even several days after the reading.

Most testing for reading disabilities is done at the letter-word-sentence level, with the longest texts being just a few sentences, and recall being required a few moments later. And yet, most of the time, this is not how we're required to read or remember texts at the academic level, or really, in life in general.

This gap between diagnostic texts and those in real-world situations can have adverse effects on students with reading disabilities and on the instructors who try to help them, and even on formerly efficient readers who now have to struggle with longer, more complex texts than they are accustomed to.

There has long been the concept in reading theory of an “inner voice”—the idea that people subconsciously vocalize while reading.

Over the course of my thesis research on reading and memory, I have come to realize that there may also be an “inner note-taker” or “inner GPS” which helps efficient readers remember information in long texts.

The purpose of this presentation is to call attention to the differences between word / sentence / short paragraph reading and that of longer texts, and lead towards creative solutions. By exploring how effective readers successfully employ strategies to search for, and locate, information, we may be able to formulate practicable suggestions and strategies for both weak readers and educators to utilize.

Mindfulness in Learning

Shaya Kass

The Open University of Israel

Does mindfulness meditation improve outcomes in English for Academic Purposes courses?

Working memory is very important for language acquisition, particularly second language acquisition. Swanson, Orosco and Lussier (2015) show that growth of certain parts of working memory predicts success in learning a second language in children. Verhagen and Leseman (2016) found that verbal short-term memory is a significant predictor of success in vocabulary learning in children learning a second language. Link, Osthus, Koeth and Bunting, in their meta-analysis of working memory and second language acquisition, found that working memory tasks, which require executive control specifically, are predictors of success in second language acquisition.

Mindfulness practices have people turn their attention to their thoughts and to the present moment. It is theorized that these practices, in turn, allow people to sustain their attention on specific stimuli and to be able, at will to switch their focus (Chambers, Chuen Yee Lo, Allen, 2008). Being able to focus attention and switch attention may facilitate second language learning where students must focus on the material before them and switch between one language and another. Quach, Jastrowski-Mano, Alexander (2015) found that adolescents who participated in mindfulness meditation had a significant boost in working memory that was seen in neither a yoga group nor a waitlist group. This boost in working memory may also facilitate second language acquisition.

The purpose of this study is to investigate if meditation practice might help college and university students improve their grades in English for Academic Purposes courses in Israel. While others have studied participants after a 10 day meditation retreat (Chambers, Chuen Yee Lo, Allen, 2008) or after a twice weekly, 4 week course (Quach, Jastrowski-Mano, Alexander 2015) these do not seem sustainable for most college students. Thus, the participants will be asked to devote 5 to 15 minutes per day in meditation to test if this minimal mindfulness practice can show some of the benefits of longer, more intensive mindfulness practices.

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**Creating a Project-Based Course:
The Case of Economics Advanced 2**

Monica Broido – IDC and TAU
Dr. Daniel Portman – IDC and Beit Berl

Creating a relevant course that is pedagogically sound—which addresses the developmental and linguistic level of students, while at the same time aims to provide Ways of Thinking, Ways of Working, and Tools for Working (Binkley et al., 2012) appropriate for today’s academic and professional worlds—is no easy task. In attempting to do so, we drew on a unique combination of 21st Century Skills (21S) and Common European Framework (CEFR) can-dos in our development of an Advanced 2 (*Mitkadmim Bet*) course for Economics.

This course was designed by first speaking to the dean, professors, and other stakeholders about the academic and future professional English needs of the students. Following this, three project units were created, each growing in length and complexity, building on the skills learned in the previous unit. The final unit culminated in a written economic report and an accompanying oral presentation.

The guiding pedagogical principle in such a course is that teachers enable students to navigate a problem-task, plan a strategy for addressing the problem-task, apply the strategy and then present findings. Thus, the course should be managed in a highly scaffolded manner, including detailed step-by-step instructions, process “deliverables” to ensure all the students are working in a productive manner throughout the process, and detailed assessment rubrics. This results in a student-centered environment in which learning occurs in small groups that collaborate and take joint responsibility for the discovery, formulation, and delivery (Smith, Sheppard, & Johnson, 2005) of their “products.”

In this presentation, we will illustrate how the principles of 21st Century Skills and the CEFR framework helped shape course design, activities, and assessment, hopefully providing a model for the creation of other such courses.

References

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Lessons in content-based instruction in EAP in Israel
Vera Kitaev, Kinneret, Western-Galilee, and Emek-Yizrae'el

Traditionally, the structural approach based on text attack and word attack skills has been the main focus of the EAP reading comprehension scene in higher education in Israel. More often than not, the organizational patterns of a text have been at the forefront of the considerations guiding the choice of an academic article, thus relegating the aspects of conceptual and thematic complexity to the second place. Moreover, while expanding "word & world knowledge" has been one of the loci of academic research aimed at improving the US national literacy problem, and while notions such as content-mediation gradually begin to gain ground in the field of first and foreign language acquisition, no research has proposed to systematically explore the effects of content based, thematic EAP instruction in colleges in Israel. Our paper proposes to fill this gap by discussing both the quantitative and the qualitative outcomes of a longitudinal case study in thematic EAP instruction conducted at an academic college in the north of Israel.

Key terms: EAP, TESOL, SLA, academic reading comprehension proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, EMI, content mediation, content-based/thematic instruction, pedagogical innovations in the classroom, higher education Israel.

“Translanguaging” in EAP Reading Comprehension Tests

Claire Gordon, Ann Marks, Esther Klein-Wohl, Alaa Jabran and Katrina Maroun
The Open University of Israel

Translanguaging relates to the flexibility in which multilinguals use their languages for different purposes. In institutions of higher education, policy dictates the degree to which multilingual students are permitted to utilize the full extent of their multilingual competence when performing academic tasks.

In the Open University of Israel (OU), where Hebrew is the language of instruction, students must pass an exam in reading English for academic purposes (EAP) in order to complete their degree. The English department allows students to answer questions in either English or Hebrew. Due to the sizable Arabic speaking population at the OU for whom Hebrew is a second language and English a third, it was decided to allow students the option of answering in Arabic. As Shohamy (2011) claims, allowing multilingual students to use their full linguistic repertoire when performing academic tasks enables them to demonstrate their true abilities. A study therefore, was conducted to examine translanguaging of Arabic speaking students when responding to EAP comprehension questions on exit exams at Basic and Advanced levels. In addition to examining the effect of language choice on performance, data was also analyzed to determine whether language choice was related to:

1. the level of information required by the comprehension question—explicit vs implicit
2. students’ EAP reading ability

A phone interview on a smaller sample was conducted to ascertain students’ rationale for their language choices.

Initial results indicate that students used Arabic less than anticipated. Students preferred English when information was explicit. The most common use of Arabic was translating questions and supporting answers, and Hebrew was used minimally. Basic level students exhibited more variety in patterns of language choice than Advanced level students. Students’ rationale for language choice will be reported, and implications for testing in multicultural contexts discussed.

Discipline and Language Professors' Collaboration in the uOttawa Immersion Program
Alysse Weinberg, University of Ottawa

This presentation will first discuss the University of Ottawa (uOttawa) French Immersion Study (FIS) program. The FIS is the largest tertiary immersion option in Canada. This program allows Anglophone students to complete an undergraduate degree while taking academic courses in their second official language (French). The FIS will be shown to be a useful model for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Israel.

The second part of the presentation will focus on the relationship between two major actors: the language professors and their discipline content counterparts.

An important issue raised by language professors discussing their experiences with content professors are the tensions regarding the selection and pairing of content with language professors that is imposed by the university administration and often minimizes the preferences and interests of both professors. Tensions arise also from the prestige and higher academic status of the content professors. The absence of an “informed” recruitment process leads to misunderstandings on the part of content professors. The language professor may be perceived as a “spy” who will judge the quality of his or her language and non-native French professors especially are even more nervous. Furthermore, the language professor has no guarantees of being able to work with the same content professor from year to year and there is the constant risk that one will have to rebuild a partnership every semester. It is difficult to justify the investment of time and energy required to build a strong partnership.

The last part of the presentation will focus on a fruitful relationship between a content and a language professor highlighting the benefits of establishing stable, protected, long term partnerships between them. Recommendations for best practices on implementing an EMI program will also be proposed.

Fostering Critical Thinking Skills and Language Proficiency in the EAP Class

Suzy Esquenazi Cohen and Linda Weinberg

ORT Braude College

Keywords: *Critical thinking skills, Thinking Approach, language learning proficiency, EAP*

Tasks are the tools with which learners can develop reasoning (thinking) and language knowledge. In task-based learning, the language goals are generally determined by the communicative and meaning-based needs of the task. The Thinking Approach to Language Learning (TA), developed from OTSM-TRIZ, which itself is derived from Altshuller's Theory of Inventing Problem Solving (TRIZ), enhances learners' competence in solving linguistic problems while simultaneously developing and applying problem-solving skills. From the pedagogical perspective, TA assumes learners are responsible for the construction of their own knowledge (critical thinking abilities and language competence), aided by carefully devised systems of tasks, which will promote active, independent learning, encourage analytical thinking, integrate data from different sources and focus more on process than on the result. TA is based on 5 'technologies': 'creative grammar technology,' which views language as a system and encourages students to explore its rules, 'text technology,' where analysis and interpretation of texts is used as a means for solving problems, 'self-study technology,' which aims to educate the new autonomous life-long learner, 'research technology,' which focuses on tools for transferring skills from one field to another, and the 'yes-no' technology, which gives learners practice in problem-solving models which can be applied in a wide range of disciplines.

In this paper we present aspects of TA that have been adapted and applied in EAP classes in an institution of higher education in Israel, and the challenges of promoting change from both the students' and the teachers' perspective.

Genre Assessment of Scientific Writing in and Outside Academia

Tzipora Rakedzon, Ayelet Baram-Tsabari

Technion – Israel Institute of Technology

Graduate students in universities around the world have to compete in the scientific world by publishing in academic peer reviewed journals, mostly written in English. Even students with a high level of English proficiency often find the requirements of academic writing style to be difficult; consequently, many academic writing courses are offered. However, other genres are necessary in the science world: graduate students as future scientists should also be prepared to communicate their research to the lay public and policy makers, as well as with colleagues in other science or engineering fields. To this end, an intervention lesson on popular science writing was added to a 14-week semester course on academic writing. We attempted to investigate whether teaching students these contrasting styles in an academic writing course in English may expand or hinder their academic writing and popular science genre outcomes. Since assessment for graduate writing, in general, and for popular science writing, specifically, are lacking in the literature, assessment of the course and intervention is done through a newly developed rubric. This rubric was tested in a pilot and implemented in two consecutive semesters to assess 177 non-native English, postgraduate students' pre and post tasks in a compulsory Academic Writing in English course. Pre and post tasks tested two genres, an abstract (academic writing) and a press release (popular science), at the beginning and end of a 14-week semester. Results indicated significant improvement in English writing skills, as well as in academic and popular science writing ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the writing tasks, lectures and oral/written feedback in the course provide an intensive experience facilitating improvement in both genres without creating interference. We conclude that students exposed to a range of genres and tasks may have increased flexibility in writing genres, facilitating improvement in L2 students' writing skills.

**Bedouin Students in EAP Classes in Israeli Academia:
From Weakness to Strength**

Ira Slabodar, Galina Gordishevsky, Yulia Muchnik-Rozanov, Jennie Goldenberg
Ashkelon Academic College

EAP courses are highly demanding and require complex lexical, syntactic and grammatical knowledge of the target language. Many students lack the necessary skills and knowledge to read and comprehend academic articles in English. This is particularly true of Bedouin students, whose RC foundation is very weak in their native language due to diglossia (Al-Batal, 1992; Ibrahim & Aharon-Peretz, 2005; Maamouri, 1988; Saiegh-Haddad, 2003). Numerous studies indicate that readers proficient in reading comprehension in their mother tongue apply their reading strategies to L2, while readers who lack firm RC foundation in L1 experience difficulties in comprehending written materials in L2 (Butler & Hakuta, 2006; McKeown & Gentilucci, 2007).

In addition, research shows that multilingual students are at a disadvantage regarding word retrieval, which leads to difficulty in reading comprehension (De Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2006; Lyons, 2009; Rowe & Levine, 2009). English is the third language of the Bedouin students, the first and the second being Arabic and Hebrew, respectively.

Based on classroom observations, we propose a two-fold solution to facilitate the acquisition of reading comprehension skills in English for Bedouin learners. First, as much research indicates, mother tongue mediation plays a vital role when learning a new language (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 2001; Harbord, 1992; Schweers, 1999; Seng & Hashim, 2006), Bedouin learners should be either taught by an Arabic-speaking teacher or be granted the opportunity to study in a homogeneous Arabic-speaking classroom. If Bedouin students are entitled to learn EAP courses in an Arabic-speaking environment, they are able to exchange ideas and explanations in their mother tongue as well as translate the unknown lexis.

Second, as Bedouin students are not competent enough in reading comprehension in their native tongue, they may benefit from instruction of reading comprehension strategies in Arabic prior to enrolling in the EAP courses.

In our presentation, we compare the progress of Bedouin students who study reading comprehension in homogeneous Arabic speaking groups with that of single Bedouin students who study in classes comprised mainly of native speakers of Hebrew.

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From Framework to Classroom: The Magic is in the Mix

Daniel Portman, Miriam Symon, *IDC*

Ingrid Barth, Shaya Kass, *Open University of Israel*

In this session, we will show some examples of how we have ‘translated’ the proposed framework into classroom activities. The session will illustrate a ‘mix’ that integrates the following elements: (1) all four skills—listening, speaking, and writing in addition to reading comprehension, (2) academic and occupational domains, (3) new technologies, and (4) classroom and ‘flipped classroom’ models. In addition we will present a repository of open educational resources that can be used by all, and discuss the ongoing development of a H-INET community of practice that will continue to contribute to these resources.

Research, Rating Writing, and Rubrics

Ruth Fortus, *NITE*

Clive Lawrence, *University of Maastricht*

The session has three parts. In the first part, research on the relationship between the CEFR scale and the AMIR scale will be discussed. The study was conducted as part of the ECOSTAR project, and involved 1,174 Israeli students and 353 European students. Methodological problems that arose in the course of the research will be presented, as well as solutions to those problems. The findings shed light on how the CEFR is applied in Europe, and how it might be applied here. In the second part, the overall levels of the CEFR will be considered and the CEFR will be examined in detail with regard to writing. We will explain how samples of written language can be assessed against the CEFR, and the CEFR will be compared with other known systems. In the third part, we will describe how a rubric for assessing writing at the Upper Intermediate level (Advanced B) was constructed based on can-do statements, and the rubric itself will be presented.

From Framework to Assessment
Ruth Fortus, *NITE*
Clive Lawrence, *University of Maastricht*

Based on the rubric for assessing writing presented in the previous session, participants will rate three pieces of work written by students at the Upper Intermediate level. The ratings will be collected and shared with the participants, followed by moderated rating and a group discussion of the rubric's performance standards.