



Higher Education in Israel Network of English Teachers



THE 9TH INTERNATIONAL H-INET CONFERENCE

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ISRAELI FORUM OF ACADEMIC WRITING (IFAW)

PROGRAM AND BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



CONFERENCE THEME:

NEW VANTAGE POINTS IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2026

SEPTEMBER 6 - ONLINE | SEPTEMBER 7 - FACE TO FACE

THE ARAB ACADEMIC COLLEGE OF EDUCATION - HAIFA, ISRAEL

Editor: Devora Hellerstein, PhD



SPONSORED BY:



PROGRAM AND BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

The 9th International H-INET Conference
in collaboration with the Israeli Forum of Academic Writing
(IFAW)

Editor
Devora Hellerstein

September 6-7, 2026

September 6 - Online
September 7 - Face to Face
The Arab Academic College of Education - Haifa, Israel

CONFERENCE THEME

NEW VANTAGE POINTS IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The 9th International H-INET Conference invites the higher-education English teaching and academic-writing communities to examine language education from new vantage points. The 2026 program brings together work on artificial intelligence and academic writing, English-medium instruction, virtual exchange, inclusion and wellbeing, learner and teacher agency, assessment, vocabulary, speaking, and interdisciplinary course design.

Held in collaboration with the Israeli Forum of Academic Writing (IFAW), the conference creates a shared space for research, pedagogical innovation, professional dialogue, and practical approaches to the changing needs of students and educators in higher education.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Conference Co-Chair: Dr. Devora Hellerstein, The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College

Conference Co-Chair: Dr. Roseanne Kheir Farraj, The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

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College, Tel Aviv

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Mr. Eldad Cohen, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo

Dr. Leor Cohen, Open University, Raanana

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Ms. Tal Levy, Ruppin Academic Center, Emek Hefer

Ms. Elana Spector-Cohen, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv

Dr. Bridget Schvarcz, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Dr. Anna Volsokovich, Kibbutzim College of Education, Tel Aviv

Sunday, September 6, 2026

Workshop

Session Moderator: Devora Hellerstein, The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 08:45 - 09:45

08:45 - 09:45

THE EMPATHY FRAMEWORK: LEVERAGING HUMAN CONNECTION TO BOLSTER STUDENT MOTIVATION
Batsheva Guttermann

Opening

Sunday, September 6, 2026 09:45 - 10:00

Dr. Leor Cohen, Chair of H-INET, Dr. Roseanne Kheir Farraj, and Dr. Devora Hellerstein, Co-Chairs

Keynote Presentation

Session Moderator: Leor Cohen, Open University, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 10:00 - 11:00

10:00 - 11:00

ENGLISH CLASS AS SCHOOL OF LIFE: THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE TEACHER IN HIGHER EDUCATION
Chaya Fischer
Independent consultant, Do.ability®, Spain

Break

Sunday, September 6, 2026 11:00 - 11:15

Parallel Session A1: AI-Enhanced Academic Writing and Research

Session Moderator: Mónica Broido, Tel Aviv University, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 11:15 - 12:30

11:15 - 11:30

THE GHOST IN THE CO-AUTHOR: A NEW VANTAGE POINT ON STUDENT WRITING WITH AI
Mónica Broido, Leor Cohen
Open University, Israel

11:30 - 11:45

SUPPORTING REFLECTIVE ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH AI-ENHANCED FEEDBACK PRACTICES
Laura Soriano-Gonzalez, Paula Amoros-Marco
University of Alicante, Israel

11:45 - 12:00

INTEGRATING AI LITERACY INTO B1 AND B2 EPIC COURSES
Maya Harel
Tel Aviv University, Israel

12:00 - 12:15

NOVICE RESEARCHERS' ADVERSITY QUOTIENT AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING IN ACADEMIC WRITING
Chin-Wen Chien
National Tsing Hua University, Chinese Taipei

12:15 - 12:30

THE REFLECTIVE RESEARCHER JOURNAL AS A SHAPING SPACE WITHIN A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE OF ACTION RESEARCH

Hagit Horowitz¹, Noam Lapidot-Lefler^{2,3}, Gilat Katz^{4,5}

¹*Kibbutzim College of Education, Israel*

²*Oranim Academic College of Education, Israel*

³*University of Haifa, Israel*

⁴*Kerem Institute, Israel*

⁵*David Yellin Academic College of Education, Israel*

Parallel Session A2: English Education Today: Identity, Inclusion, and Innovation

Session Moderator: Dara Barnat, Tel Aviv University, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 11:15 - 12:30

11:15 - 11:30

EPIC LEARNING DESIGN FOR AI ERA COMMUNICATION AND HUMAN IMPACT

Tal Levy

Ruppin Academic College, Israel

11:30 - 11:45

WHAT'S THE STORY?: TOOLS FOR RESEARCH, WRITING, AND LISTENING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Dara Barnat

Tel Aviv University, Israel

11:45 - 12:00

MAKING EMI MATTER: NURSING STUDENTS' VIEWS ON CONTENT COURSES

Roseanne Kheir Farraj, Mira Sabbah-Khoury

Yezreel Valley College, Israel

12:00-12:15

AUGMENTED REALITY AND AUDIOVISUAL VOCABULARY LEARNING THROUGH ENGLISH: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mar Fernandez-Alcocer

University of Alicante, Spain

12:15 - 12:30

ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH LD IN EPIC CLASSES: A NEEDS ANALYSIS AND PROPOSED RESEARCH-INFORMED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Susie Russak¹, **Leor Cohen**²

¹*Beit Berl College, Israel*

²*Open University, Israel*

Break

Sunday, September 6, 2026 12:30 - 12:45

Panel Discussion

Panel Moderator: Tzipora Rakedzon, Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 12:45 - 13:45

12:45 - 13:45

GRADUATE ACADEMIC WRITING PROGRAMS IN ISRAEL: MODELS, PRACTICES, AND COLLABORATION

Mónica Broido¹, **Zhanna Burstein**², **Tzipora Rakedzon**³, **Ayelet Sasson**², **Tanya Sermer**⁴

¹*Tel Aviv University, Israel*

²*Bar Ilan University, Israel*

³*Technion, Israel*

⁴*Hebrew University, Israel*

N.I.T.E. Update

Session Moderator: Leor Cohen, Open University, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 13:45 - 14:15

13:45 - 14:15

THE NITE WATCH: THE SEQUEL

Debbie Mishaly

National Institute of Testing and Evaluation, Israel

Lunch

Sunday, September 6, 2026 14:15 - 14:45

Loora

Sunday, September 6, 2026 14:45 - 15:00

14:45 - 15:00

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CEFR ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR HUMAN-AI SPOKEN INTERACTION

Sylvia Johnson

Loora, Israel

Parallel Session B1: Digital Tools for Speaking and Language Practice

Session Moderator: Karen Eini, Ruppin Academic Center, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 15:00 - 16:00

15:00 - 15:15

VIRTUAL SCENARIOS FOR REAL GRAMMAR: AR IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Miguel Marcos, José Belda-Medina

University of Alicante, Spain

15:15 - 15:30

BEYOND SCRIPTS: ENCOURAGING SPONTANEOUS STUDENT SPEAKING THROUGH IDENTITY-BASED TASKS

Karen Eini¹

Ruppin Academic Center, Israel

15:30 - 15:45

RETHINKING DIGITAL TOOLS FOR INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

Paula Amoros-Marco, Laura Soriano-Gonzalez

University of Alicante, Spain

15:45 - 16:00

JOB INTERVIEW AI-BASED APPLICATION: PRACTICING SPOKEN ENGLISH IN A NON-THREATENING WAY

Rina Raichlin

Ramat Gan Academic College, Israel

Parallel Session B2: Virtual Exchange and English-Medium Instruction

Session Moderator: Devora Hellerstein, The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 15:00 - 16:00

BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

Idit Avram, Roseanne Kheir Farraj

Yezreel Valley College, Israel

15:15 - 15:30

EXPLORING EMI TEACHERS' IDENTITIES AND MOTIVATIONS: A CASE STUDY

Elli Kichik

Tel Aviv University, Israel

15:30 - 15:45

LOCALIZING VIRTUAL EXCHANGE FOR EMI READINESS

Jerjes Eady

Braude Academic College of Engineering, Israel

15:45 - 16:00

FACE- TO- FACE STILL MATTERS:STUDENTS` VIEWS ON EMI LEARNING MODALITIES

Mira Sabbah Khoury, Roseanne Kheir Farraj

The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, YVC, Israel

Parallel Session B3: Inclusive Learning and Wellbeing

Session Moderator: Anna Volsokovich, Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 15:00 - 16:00,

15:00 - 15:15

HELPING THE DAY RISE

Victoria Martynov

Ariel University, Israel

15:15 - 15:30

EXISTENTIAL CIRCLES OF COMPASSION: YALOM'S FOUR GIVENS IN ELT

Daniel Svoboda

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Republic of Korea

15:30 - 15:45

EXPLORING CREATIVE METHODS FOR VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AMONG ADHD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ISRAEL

Shila Baddiel, Naomi Sapir, Tal Behar, Svetlana Fichman

Talpiot College of Education, Israel

15:45 - 16:00

A MODULAR, PROCESS-ORIENTED APPROACH TO CEFR-ALIGNED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN TIMES OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL UNCERTAINTY

Ira Slabodar, Miri Kriši

Ashkelon Academic College, Israel

Break

Sunday, September 6, 2026 16:00 - 16:15

Keynote Presentation

Session Moderator: Daniel Portman, Azrieli College of Engineering Jerusalem, Israel

Sunday, September 6, 2026 16:15 - 17:15

16:15 - 17:15

RELATIONAL VANTAGE POINTS ON AGENCY AND DESIGN IN ELT

Amber N. Warren

Vanderbilt University, USA

Panel Discussion

Panel Moderator: Melanie Gobert, TESOL Arabia, United Arab Emirates

Sunday, September 6, 2026 17:15 - 18:15

17:15 - 18:15

AI and the Future of Academic Writing

Melanie Gobert^{1,2}, Patrick Dougherty³, Garrett Cromwell⁴, Jennifer Lewin⁵

¹*Universitas Pattimura, Indonesia*

²*TESOL Arabia, United Arab Emirates*

³*Akita International University, Japan*

⁴*University of Saint Mary, USA*

⁵*University of Haifa, Israel*

Monday, September 7, 2026

Reception

Monday, September 7, 2026 09:00 - 10:00, , Floor 0

Opening

Monday, September 7, 2026 10:00 - 10:30, Floor 0, Room 56 (Auditorium)

Keynote Presentation

Session Moderator: Jennifer Lewin, University of Haifa, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 10:30 - 11:30, Floor 0, Room 56 (Auditorium)

10:30 - 11:30

READING AND WRITING IN THE AGE OF AI

Ilana Blumberg

Bar Ilan University, Israel

Break

Monday, September 7, 2026 11:30 - 11:45

Parallel Session C1: AI-Mediated Writing and Synthesis

Session Moderator: Daniel Portman, Azrieli College of Engineering Jerusalem, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 11:45 - 12:30, Floor 0, Room 58

11:45 - 12:00

WRITING WITH AI AS MEDIATION: A CEFR-BASED APPROACH FOR EPIC

Daniel Portman, Mónica Broido

Azrieli College of Engineering Jerusalem, Israel

12:00 - 12:15

TEACHING SYNTHESIS IN THE AI ERA: A TWO-PHASE APPROACH

Aviva Soesman

Tel Aviv University, Israel

12:15 - 12:30

FROM EXPRESSIVENESS TO ARGUMENTATION: STUDENTS' INCOMPLETE ENCULTURATION OF LITERARY ANALYSIS

Jennifer Lewin¹, Roseanne Kheir Farraj²

¹*University of Haifa, Israel*

²*Yezreel Valley College, Israel*

Parallel Session C2: Enhancing Learning: Engagement, Communication, and Growth

Session Moderator: Eldad Cohen, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 11:45 - 12:30, Floor 0, Room 60

11:45 - 12:00

STOP READING YOUR SLIDES: POWERPOINT THAT ACTUALLY TEACHES

Eldad Cohen

The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

12:00 - 12:15

EXPLORING AI-SUPPORTED SELF-REGULATED SPEAKING WITH SNORKL

Ibtihal Assaly, Usnat Atamna, Omayya Abu-Mokh

Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education, Israel

12:15 - 12:30

EPIC as a Bridge Across Disciplines in Physical Education Teacher Education

Devora Hellerstein, Eran Sabag, Hadas Brodie Schroeder

The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

Parallel Session C3: Exploring Vocabulary and Language Variation

Session Moderator: Ruti Bardenstein, Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 11:45 - 12:30, Floor 0, Room 61

11:45 - 12:00

VOCABULARY - NOT QUANTITY BUT QUALITY: PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

Judith Golan Ben-Uri

David Yellin Academic College of Education, Israel

12:00 - 12:15

MAKING COLLOCATIONS STICK: RETRIEVAL PRACTICE AND CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS IN EPIC

Ronit Breslaw

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

12:15 - 12:30

REIMAGINING ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA CLASSROOMS: A PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK

Julia Schlam Salman, Bridget Schvarcz

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Assembly

Monday, September 7, 2026 12:45 - 13:15

Sponsored Session

Monday, September 7, 2026 13:15 - 13:30

13:15 - 13:30

GoEddy - AI-Powered English Speaking Practice & Assessment

Tali Gansel¹, Leah Goldberg²

¹*GoEddy, Israel*

²*Open University, Israel*

Lunch

Monday, September 7, 2026 13:30 - 14:20

Keynote Presentation

Session Moderator: Brigitta Schvarcz, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Khanh-Duc Kuttig's visit to Israel was made possible through the support of the Visits of Distinguished Fellows at the Hebrew University grant, awarded to Dr. Brigitta Schvarcz by the Hebrew University International Office and the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology.

Monday, September 7, 2026 14:30 - 15:30, Floor 0, Room 56 (Auditorium)

14:30 - 15:30

DESIGNING FOR ENGAGEMENT: ACADEMIC READING, COMMUNITY, AND THE GEN Z STUDENT

Khanh-Duc Kuttig

University of Siegen, Germany

Parallel Session D1: Building Engagement and Learner Confidence

Session Moderator: Roseanne Kheir-Farraj, Yezreel Valley College, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 15:45 - 16:45, Floor 0, Room 58

15:45 - 16:00

DISENGAGEMENT VERSUS EMERGENCE: USING VR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Hila Weiss

Kinneret Academic College, Israel

16:00 - 16:15

FROM HESITATION TO ENGAGEMENT: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF REPEATED VR PRACTICE

Roseanne Kheir Farraj, Idit Avram

Yezreel Valley College, Israel

16:15 - 16:30

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A LIVING LANGUAGE: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY OF COMMUNICATION AND LEARNER CONFIDENCE

David Levy

Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel

16:30 - 16:45

IN THE NAME OF SELF-ESTEEM: PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CULTIVATING BELONGINGNESS AND CONFIDENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

Noa Cooper

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Parallel Session D2: Flexible Course Design for Changing Contexts

Session Moderator: Yohanna Levy, Reichman University, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 15:45 - 16:45, Floor 0, Room 60

15:45 - 16:00

FROM UNSEEN EXAM TO REAL-WORLD CAMPAIGN: REDESIGNING A COMMUNICATIONS ADVANCED B COURSE THROUGH SCENARIO-BASED LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT INNOVATION

Yohanna Levy

Reichman University, Israel

16:00 - 16:15

JUST A PHONE: TEACHING EPIC BY TELEPHONE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Carol Tillman

The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

16:15 - 16:30

EVERY STUDENT DESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUCCEED: HOW THE TRANSITION FROM EAP TO EPIC CAN BE OPTIMIZED FOR CREATING ACCESSIBLE LEARNING CONTEXTS FOR STRUGGLING LEARNERS

Esther Emma Vaisman¹, Susie Russak²

¹*Haifa University, Israel*

²*Beit Berl College, Israel*

16:30 - 16:45

INSTILLING HOPE USING PLAIN LANGUAGE: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Hadas Marcus¹, Itai Roffman²

¹*Tel Aviv University, Israel*

²*The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel*

Parallel Session D3: AI-Mediated Writing and Teacher/Learner Agency

Session Moderator: Carmella Shahab, The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel

Monday, September 7, 2026 15:45 - 16:45, Floor 0, Room 61

15:45 - 16:00

RECLAIMING STUDENT AGENCY IN AI-MEDIATED WRITING: A STRUCTURED DEBATE PROJECT

Carmella Shahab

The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel

16:00 - 16:15

EXPLORING HUMAN-AI INTERACTION IN THE EFL WRITING CLASSROOM: LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND REVISION BEHAVIORS IN AN ARAB EFL SETTING

Rawia Hayik, Hala Hanna-Irsheid

Sakhnin College, Israel

16:15 - 16:30

FROM CURATORIAL TO ORCHESTRATIONAL BOUNDARY-SPACE NAVIGATION IN AI-INTEGRATED ENGLISH TEACHING

Aya Onallah Adawi, Roseanne Kheir Farraj

The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel

16:30 - 16:45

INTEGRATING GENERATIVE AI BOT IN ACADEMIC ENGLISH: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

Olga Gupol, Ilana Solomon, Rony Levi, Racheli Shimshon

Holon Institute of Technology, Israel

Abstracts

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

ENGLISH CLASS AS SCHOOL OF LIFE: THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE TEACHER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Chaya Fischer

Independent consultant, Do.ability®, Spain

Language teachers in higher education are often viewed as accessible, supportive and committed service providers, yet their professional expertise is frequently underestimated and their positioning within academia remains fuzzy. Despite the significant shifts the local field has been undergoing in policy, practices and efforts to rebrand, many students, academic staff and decision makers still perceive English class as solving unseen or as a technical prerequisite to fulfil. The rapid advent of AI has led to further misconceptions regarding the necessity of language classes.

Teachers now face the challenges of how AI can be harnessed, attempting to avoid the traps of constantly questioning the integrity of their students' work. Adapting is unavoidable and hopefully an opportunity. One could argue that rather than making teachers obsolete, AI highlights the growing importance of educators who can design meaningful learning and guide learners through increasingly complex needs-driven up-to-date pathways. Yet this remains a hard sell.

This presentation will argue that language education can and should serve a pivotal role in our learners' higher education, yet the proof is in the pudding, and here we could be going significantly further as a professional community, at the national level.

Examples from current initiatives in redesigning Hebrew as an additional language in Israel illustrate how rigorous application of API education (Action-oriented, Plurilingual, Intercultural) and the CEFR in their most recent forms reshapes the qualifications, identity and expertise of the contemporary language education professional.

A new vision of the interpersonal communication facilitator shifts the focus from teaching and assessing language use per se to becoming recognized experts in leadership and team building, learning design (architecture), project management, coaching, intercultural communication, technology integration, and more. Taking full ownership of our evolving role is more in our hands than we may recognize;

adopting a “can do” mindset in navigating the development of our own profession is a good place to begin.



Chaya Fischer, Do.ability, Spain

**ENGLISH CLASS AS SCHOOL OF LIFE: THE EVOLVING ROLE OF
THE LANGUAGE TEACHER IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Chaya Fischer is the founding director of the Hebrew University Language Center (2017-2024), where she led a comprehensive, CEFR-driven paradigm shift across eight foreign languages. She has stepped down from this role and relocated with her family to Madrid, where she currently works remotely as a consultant for Israeli and European organizations. Her primary focus in the Israeli context is shaping policies and practices of preparation for higher education and employment for Arabic speakers and immigrants, geared toward social mobility and equal opportunity.

RELATIONAL VANTAGE POINTS ON AGENCY AND DESIGN IN ELT

Amber N. Warren

Vanderbilt University, USA

How can language education serve as an invitation for teachers and learners to notice, interpret, imagine, and act? In this presentation, I explore teachers' pedagogical design work as the purposeful creation of learning conditions where agency can emerge. I conceptualize this work not as a way of predetermining outcomes, but as a relational practice through which teachers and learners make sense with one another, respond to unfolding conditions, and participate in the ongoing construction of meaning, knowledge, and possibility.

Drawing on a decade of research and teaching with language teachers and teacher candidates, I consider what becomes possible when language educators approach design from a relational vantage point. I describe pedagogical practices that cultivate interpretive and epistemic agency by positioning teachers and learners as knowers and designers; inviting inquiry into how language choices shape participation and meaning-making; creating space for imagination, play, and rehearsal; and supporting action as an ongoing process of response, reflection, and return. Across these practices, I highlight pedagogical design as a matter of attunement to learners, contexts, and emergent possibilities for action.

I close by considering how this view of teacher expertise can support more responsive approaches to English for international communication, where interaction depends not only on competence, but also on the relational work of making meaning with others.



Amber Warren, Vanderbilt University, USA

**RELATIONAL VANTAGE POINTS ON AGENCY AND DESIGN IN
ELT**

Amber N. Warren, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Multilingual Education at Vanderbilt University, USA. Her work examines how teacher education can support educators in interpreting and transforming the social, political, and institutional conditions of language education, while advancing critical multilingual approaches to qualitative inquiry. As a teacher educator and former English language teacher, she is deeply invested in work that brings research and pedagogy into dialogue while honoring teachers' expertise. Her own teaching is a central site of this work, where she approaches teacher education through design, inquiry, and professional learning. Recent outlets where her scholarship has appeared include *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *ELT Journal*, *TESOL Journal*, *Language and Education*, *Critical Discourse Studies*, and *Qualitative Research*. She is co-editor of *Activism in Language Teaching and Language Teacher Education* (Bloomsbury, 2024), *Toward Equitable Futures in Online Language Teacher Education: Designing for Criticality, Dialogism, and Advocacy* (De Gruyter, 2026), and the forthcoming *Language Teacher Educators at a Crossroads: Exploring the Intersections of Identities, Emotions, and Agency* (Routledge). Dr. Warren serves as Classroom Explorations Editor for *TESOL Journal*, Chair-Elect-Elect of the TESOL Teacher Educator Interest Section, and as a board member of Tennessee TESOL.

READING AND WRITING IN THE AGE OF AI

Ilana Blumberg

Bar Ilan University, Israel

How do we help our students understand the value of reading and writing -- both independently and socially -- when AI can do these things for them? How can we build environments in which reading prompts writing and writing prompts reading? How can we cultivate a practice of reading, writing, and discussion that allows students to develop curiosity, respect for difference, and an ability to listen to others as well as to address ideas analytically? To address these questions, I will draw on classroom experience as well as research from the fields of life writing and education. In addition, I will offer the most practical suggestions for teaching students at a range of levels, opening possibilities for writing--and reading-- in a wide range of genres.



Ilana Blumberg, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

READING AND WRITING IN THE AGE OF AI

Ilana Blumberg teaches English Literature at Bar Ilan University where she is Assistant Dean for Pedagogy. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Ilana is the author of two memoirs and two scholarly studies in Victorian studies, the most recent, *George Eliot: Whole Soul*, for which she won the Bar Ilan Rector's Prize for Scientific Innovation in 2025. Her memoir, *Houses of Study: a Jewish Woman Among* *Books* received the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature Choice Award. Ilana has won teaching awards from the University of Pennsylvania and Michigan State University, and two research grants from the Israel Science Foundation. Her research focuses on teaching life writing as a way of building democratic culture in conflict zones.

DESIGNING FOR ENGAGEMENT: ACADEMIC READING, COMMUNITY, AND THE GEN Z STUDENT

Khanh-Duc Kuttig

University of Siegen, Germany

How can higher education move reading from a private act of compliance to a shared practice of participation? This talk explores Academic Reading Circles (ARCs) as a practical framework for making reading visible, social, and purposeful across the semester (Seburn, 2016). Across higher education contexts, collaborative reading is associated with stronger confidence, belonging, motivation, and peer connectedness, while some studies also show gains in comprehension, critical reading, and academic performance (Afdal et al., 2022; Ament et al., 2025; Saville et al., 2023). Reading circle research also suggests that structured peer discussion can reduce anxiety, increase learner autonomy, and make reading more interactive and enjoyable (Cowley-Haselden, 2020; Vartola, 2024; Xu, 2021). For Gen Z students, this matters because reading engagement appears to improve when learning is designed around clear roles, interactive participation, varied texts, and digitally supported collaboration rather than passive transmission. Evidence also suggests that collaborative meaning-making works best when we, as educators, provide scaffolds such as templates, contingent feedback, integrated synchronous and asynchronous structures, and space for students to question interpretations and co-construct understanding (Afdal et al., 2022; Vartola, 2024). Participants will leave with a concrete model for implementing ARCs, practical design principles for role-based and hybrid discussion, and strategies for turning course reading into shared intellectual work that supports agency, engagement, and community

References

- Afdal, H., Spernes, K., & Hoff-Jenssen, R. (2022). Academic reading as a social practice in higher education. *Higher Education*, 85, 1337-1355.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00893-x>
- Ament, J., Tort-Cots, I., & Pladevall-Ballester, E. (2025). Implementing academic reading circles in higher education: Exploring perceptions, motivation and outcomes. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*.
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- Cowley-Haselden, S. (2020). Building knowledge to ease troublesomeness: Affording theory knowledgeability through academic reading circles. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.53761/1.17.2.8>
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- Seburn, T. (2016). Academic reading circles. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
- Vartola, A. (2024). Research Education for Architecture Students - Case Study of an Academic Reading Circle. *Architectural Research in Finland*. <https://doi.org/10.37457/arf.146878>
- Xu, Q. (2021). Incorporating reading circles into a task-based EAP reading scheme. *Elt Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccab012>



Khanh-Duc Kuttig, University of Siegen, Germany

**DESIGNING FOR ENGAGEMENT: ACADEMIC READING,
COMMUNITY, AND THE GEN Z STUDENT**

2021 Teacher of the Year, **Khanh-Duc Kuttig** is an EFL instructor, teacher educator and current Chair of TESOL'S Professional Development Professional Council. Her research interests lie in teacher research, classroom discourse and grammar teaching. She is currently a doctoral student at the Heidelberg University of Education.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

GRADUATE ACADEMIC WRITING PROGRAMS IN ISRAEL: MODELS, PRACTICES, AND COLLABORATION

Mónica Broido¹, Zhanna Burstein², Tzipora Rakedzon³, Ayelet Sasson², Tanya Sermer⁴

¹Tel Aviv University, Israel

²Bar Ilan University, Israel

³Technion, Israel

⁴Hebrew University, Israel

Graduate academic writing programs are a key component in training future researchers, particularly in non-English-speaking contexts where scholars are expected to publish in English. In Israel, these programs, including writing courses and writing centers, have developed locally in response to institutional needs and resources, with limited centralized oversight from the Council for Higher Education (CHE). This has resulted in a diverse landscape of approaches across universities.

This roundtable brings together representatives from major universities in Israel (Bar-Ilan University, Haifa University, Hebrew University, Tel Aviv University, and the Technion) to map the current state of academic writing support for graduate students. Participants will compare program models, share institutional data, and exchange best practices related to curriculum design, writing center support, and student engagement. By examining similarities and differences across institutions, the session aims to identify key challenges and opportunities, including the evolving role of AI in academic writing support.

Expected outcomes may include establishing a collaborative network of centers, identifying shared recommendations to strengthen graduate writing support, and expanding research collaboration. The presentation should be interesting to all levels of academic involvement in such programs, from lecturers looking to expand their work at academic institutions, to academic coordinators, and especially to department heads and other university faculty who recognize the importance of academic writing programs in the age of AI.



Melanie Gobert is a teacher educator, researcher, editor, and international conference organizer with more than three decades of experience in English language education across the United States, the Middle East, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Her research interests include teacher professional development, extensive reading, academic writing, and the pedagogical integration of artificial intelligence. She has served as editor of *Perspectives*, President of TESOL Arabia, Conference Co-Chair of the TESOL Conferences & Exhibition, and is currently co-editing a Springer volume on English language teaching in Indonesia. As a reviewer for international journals and book publishers, she has observed firsthand the growing challenges AI presents for scholarly writing, peer review, and publication ethics. Her current work explores how educators can harness AI to strengthen student learning while maintaining academic integrity, critical thinking, and the development of authentic academic writing skills.



Garrett Cromwell

TEACHER TRAINER & ACADEMIC WRITING SPECIALIST

AI and the Future of Academic Writing

Garrett Cromwell is a teacher trainer and academic writing specialist with over twenty years of experience across Asia, Latin America, and the United States. He recently completed a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellowship in Thailand, where he led faculty development and AI-integrated teaching. His work with AI centers on purposeful, framework-based use that supports learning rather than replacing it. He is completing a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction, with research on student motivation in online college classrooms.



Patrick Dougherty is a Professor of International Liberal Arts, the Dean of the Faculty of International Liberal Arts, past Director of the Active Learning and Assessment Center, and past Head of the English for Academic Purposes Program and Foreign Language Education at Akita International University. He holds a Master of Arts in History and a Master of Education from Northern Arizona University (NAU) and a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics from the University of Southern Queensland. Additionally, he holds a Doctorate in Education in Educational Administration from NAU. He has been an educator for almost four decades and has taught high school or university courses in the USA, Japan, Bangladesh, and the United Arab Emirates.

As a founding member and past President of the Japan based non-profit Teachers Helping Teachers, he has worked in faculty development programs and conferences throughout the Asia Pacific region, with a special emphasis on promoting responsible evolution of pedagogy and learning. He currently is working with his own academic community to develop rational and productive teaching and learning interactions with AI components. When not running teacher development programs, or writing textbooks and articles on grammar, language pedagogy, or student and faculty motivation, he likes to reflect and write poetry and short stories which are often focused on his experiences in the classroom.



Jennifer Lewin teaches and researches academic writing and early modern English literature at the University of Haifa, where she is on the faculty and where her responsibilities include Writing Skills Coordinator. Her forthcoming book on dreams in Renaissance poetry will appear in April 2027.

AI and the Future of Academic Writing

Melanie Gobert^{1,2}, Patrick Dougherty³, Garrett Cromwell⁴, Prof. Jennifer Lewin⁵

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AI has fundamentally changed the landscape of academic writing, creating new opportunities alongside complex pedagogical and ethical challenges. This panel brings together teacher educators, researchers, and publishing professionals to explore how AI is reshaping academic writing in higher education. Discussion will address teaching writing both with and without AI, the risk of overdependence among less proficient writers, the democratization of academic writing through AI-supported language assistance, and the persistent question of whether students rely on AI because they struggle with English proficiency or because they lack writing expertise. Panelists will also examine how AI can foster learning through formative feedback and how assessment rubrics can reward transparent, responsible AI use while preserving academic integrity. Drawing on perspectives from journal reviewing and academic book editing, the panel will further consider how scholarly publishing is adapting to rapidly evolving AI technologies and expectations.



Tzipora Rakedzon is an Assistant Professor, Head of the Language & Communication Lab, and Head of the Academic Writing Program in the Department of Humanities & Arts at the Technion. Her research focuses on digital and AI-based pedagogies, particularly the integration of AI in STEM and EFL contexts for teaching and assessment. Specifically, she develops and studies structured human-AI learning models and AI-based tools that foster critical engagement and support inclusive, multilingual communication across disciplines.



Ayelet Sasson is a tenured senior faculty member in the English-as-a-Foreign-Language Department at Bar-Ilan University, where she coordinates the Graduate Writing Program. She holds a PhD in English with specializations in Teaching English as a Second Language and Teaching Writing/Composition. She has extensive experience teaching academic and scientific writing to graduate and doctoral students across disciplines. Her research interests include reading and writing processes and the cognitive and linguistic factors underlying language and literacy development.



Mónica Broido is the Head of the Writing Programs and the Head of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) at the Division of Languages at Tel Aviv University. In addition, she is a board member of the European Association for the Teaching of Academic Writing (EATAW) and a member of the editorial board of the Journal of English for Purposes of International Communication (JEPIC). Her research interests include: writing pedagogy, writing with AI, plurilingual writing, and the nexus between academia and the industry.



Zhanna Burstein-Feldman is Head of the English as a Foreign Language Unit at Bar-Ilan University. She holds a PhD in English linguistics from Bar-Ilan University and has taught academic writing in English at the MA and PhD levels. Her research interests include bilingualism, the social dimensions of language acquisition, second-language acquisition in bilingual families, and language and identity construction. In recent years, she has focused on developing and expanding the academic writing in English program for PhD students at Bar-Ilan University.



Tanya Sermer is faculty in the Unit of English as a Foreign Language at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and serves as coordinator of EFL's Academic Writing Program. She has developed graduate and undergraduate courses in academic writing across the disciplines and teaches at all four campuses of the Hebrew University. She holds a Ph.D. in musicology from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and brings her multidisciplinary approach to her language teaching. Her research interests include language and identity, writing and conflict, and the politics of music and sound in nation-building, gender politics, and the production of space.

WORKSHOP

THE EMPATHY FRAMEWORK: LEVERAGING HUMAN CONNECTION TO BOLSTER STUDENT MOTIVATION

Batsheva Gutterman

This workshop presents a framework and specific techniques that teachers can use to encourage empathy-based authentic interactions in the EAP classroom. Humanizing student interaction, even in mixed classroom settings, can be consciously cultivated by teachers if done purposefully.

In the age of AI-driven efficiency, deep, empathetic human interaction has become increasingly redundant in students' lives. As teachers, we can treat the language-learning classroom as a place to double-down on authentic human interaction. Developed over several semesters at Hebrew University – where students with mixed ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds learn language together – this workshop uses empathy-based interaction (Broome, 2017) to bolster intrinsic motivation in contexts often lacking it.

The presentation will first give a general framework for implementing empathy-based authentic interactions in the classroom (Olivares-Cuhat & Zimotti, 2023). The framework allows for teachers to create unique opportunities for their students to emotionally open up in a low-stakes environment while classroom rigor is preserved. We will then review multiple examples of tried-and-tested empathy-based activities as well as templates for teachers to be able to apply this knowledge to their own unique courses. Examples that will be presented include group podcasts, role-playing, telling student peers' personal narratives, mentoring sessions, scenario-based wellness coaching, as well as more minor activities such as content lead-ins and vocabulary priming.

Participants will then be guided to take a few samples of their own classroom materials and activities and convert them into interactive activities where students are set up to interact in motivating, authentic ways.

References:

Broome, B. (2017). Intercultural empathy. In K. Yun (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of intercultural communication*, (pp. 2-6). Wiley.

Olivares-Cuhat, Gabriela and Zimotti, Giovanni, "Empowering L2 Learners: The Role Of Relational Empathy In L2 Learning" (2023). Faculty Publications. 5365.
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/facpub/5365>

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Parallel Session A1: AI-Enhanced Academic Writing and Research

THE GHOST IN THE CO-AUTHOR: A NEW VANTAGE POINT ON STUDENT WRITING WITH AI

Mónica Broido, Leor Cohen

Open University, Israel

When students use generative AI to write academic texts, are they learning or outsourcing? Current approaches oscillate between prohibition and uncritical acceptance—neither of which serves students or teachers well. This talk offers a different vantage point. Drawing on a position paper, it presents the Asymmetrical Sociocognitive-Functional (ASC-F) Framework, which reframes human-AI co-writing as a system organized around two poles: an intentional pole (epistemic responsibility, critical judgment, accountability), which remains exclusively human, and a generative pole (idea production, alternative framings, textual elaboration), which is shared between writer and AI.

This structure makes visible the distinction that matters most for language education: the difference between distributed cognition, where AI broadens the writer's thinking while the writer retains intellectual control, and displaced cognition, where AI gradually replaces the cognitive work that writing instruction is designed to develop. The talk illustrates this continuum through concrete scenarios immediately recognizable to language teachers.

Participants will be introduced to the Epistemic Reconstructability Rubric (ERR), an assessment tool that shifts the evaluative question from whether students used AI to whether they can explain and defend the reasoning behind their own texts. The session will also present strategies for designing assignments that make AI engagement pedagogically productive: reflective interaction logs, structured teach-back tasks, and process-oriented assessment.

The central argument is that AI literacy in academic writing is a matter of epistemic judgment, not technological policing—and that this reframing offers language educators a principled basis for assessment and course design in the generative AI era.

SUPPORTING REFLECTIVE ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH AI-ENHANCED FEEDBACK PRACTICES

Laura Soriano-Gonzalez, Paula Amoros-Marco

University of Alicante, Spain

The growing presence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education is reshaping how English academic writing is taught, revised, and supported. As AI-generated feedback becomes increasingly accessible to students, there is a growing need for pedagogical frameworks that encourage meaningful engagement with automated suggestions rather than passive acceptance. Addressing this challenge, the present study explores the development of an AI-assisted rubric aimed at supporting academic writing practices in university English language learning contexts. The rubric design was informed by findings from a systematic review investigating recurring differences between L1 and L2 academic writing. Through thematic analysis of empirical studies, key linguistic and rhetorical features were identified and transformed into practical assessment descriptors intended to help learners interpret, evaluate, and apply AI-generated feedback during writing revision tasks. To examine the rubric's pedagogical potential, a pilot implementation was conducted using a small set of student essays evaluated by two raters. The study explores the rubric's usability and its role in facilitating clearer and more reflective interactions with AI-supported feedback. By combining systematic review research, rubric-based assessment, and AI-enhanced learning practices, this study contributes to ongoing discussions surrounding innovation in language education and the integration of emerging technologies in higher education. More broadly, it highlights the importance of pedagogically informed AI applications in promoting learner autonomy, transparency, and reflective academic writing development.

INTEGRATING AI LITERACY INTO B1 AND B2 EPIC COURSES

Maya Harel

Tel Aviv University, Israel

As generative AI becomes a common writing tool, English language teachers are increasingly faced with the question of how to help students use it well. According to Teng (2024), GenAI literacy has positive outcomes for L2 academic writing. In English for Purposes of International Communication (EPIC) courses, AI literacy involves helping students develop the judgment to evaluate AI-generated content, understand its limitations, and use it in ways that genuinely support their learning.

This session presents classroom activities for B1 and B2 English language learners in EPIC courses that integrate AI literacy into the academic writing process. Instead of treating AI as a shortcut, the activities frame it as a tool for analysis, reflection, and revision. Students work with AI-generated writing, identifying its typical features and comparing it with authentic student writing. They evaluate the quality of AI output and then revise AI-produced drafts to improve clarity, organization, and academic style. Through this process, students are encouraged to question AI-generated content rather than accept it at face value and to make informed choices about when and how to use generative AI.

The activities are intended to strengthen both academic writing and students' ability to use AI critically and effectively. By engaging with AI-generated texts and revising them purposefully, students become more aware of what effective writing looks like, more confident in their own decisions, and more independent in their use of AI.

Participants will receive adaptable activities and practical strategies that can be used in EPIC courses. The session will also consider how AI literacy can be integrated into writing instruction in ways that remain practical, classroom-based, and sustainable.

NOVICE RESEARCHERS' ADVERSITY QUOTIENT AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING IN ACADEMIC WRITING

Chin-Wen Chien

National Tsing Hua University, Chinese Taipei

Novice researchers are widely recognized as facing challenges in academic writing, yet relatively little is known about how they develop the skills needed to overcome these challenges. Addressing this gap is important because the ability to cope with academic adversity is essential for developing writing competence. Higher education institutions can support this process by implementing strategies and workshops that strengthen graduate students' academic resilience and enhance their adversity quotient. In addition to institutional support, self-regulated learning strategies may help novice researchers manage writing-related challenges more effectively and become more competent academic writers. Therefore, equipping novice researchers with both institutional and self-regulated learning support may enhance their adversity quotient and improve their academic writing competence.

To address this gap, this study aimed to examine how integrating genre writing instruction, dialogic collaging pedagogy, and reflective practice into an academic writing course influenced graduate students' academic writing development and adversity quotient. The intervention was implemented with seven graduate students at a university in northwestern Taiwan. Analysis of the writing samples, questionnaires, and documents collected from seven Taiwanese novice researchers yielded three major findings. First, participants identified writing the Results and Discussion sections and completing their theses as the most challenging aspects of academic writing. Second, exposure to exemplary journal articles, instructor modeling, and self-, peer-, and expert feedback helped participants strengthen their adversity quotient, particularly the reach dimension, while improving specific aspects of their academic writing, including organization, argument development, genre awareness, and revision practices. Third, the findings suggest that effective academic writing courses should incorporate activities that cultivate adversity quotient and academic resilience, emphasize academic literacy and the writing process, foster self-regulated learning through self-correction, and provide timely, constructive feedback.

THE REFLECTIVE RESEARCHER JOURNAL AS A SHAPING SPACE WITHIN A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE OF ACTION RESEARCH

Hagit Horowitz¹, Noam Lapidot-Lefler^{2,3}, Gilat Katz^{4,5}

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³University of Haifa, Israel

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⁵David Yellin Academic College of Education, Israel

This presentation focuses on the role of the reflective researcher journal as a shaping space in the formation of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) engaged in action research. The community consisted of three academic leaders from different teacher education colleges in Israel, each of whom conducted an independent action research project with her own students. Although the studies took place in different institutional contexts, reflective journal writing served as a shared mechanism for processing field experiences, examining professional dilemmas, and developing insights. A central component of the process was the researchers' meetings, during which they shared excerpts from their journals. These meetings became a dynamic interpretive space in which personal writing gained additional depth through mutual interpretation, dialogue, questioning, and collaborative conceptualization. Through this process, the journal evolved from a personal tool into a shared collaborative resource, expanding perspectives and deepening understanding of action research processes. The researchers' journals served not only as a means of documenting activities but also as a space that integrated self-awareness, interpretation, and emerging research questions. This form of writing created movement between personal experience and theoretical conceptualization, inspired by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). It enabled the researchers to examine their role within the research process and their influence on the field. In line with Wenger's (1998) model of communities of practice, which encompasses identity, belonging, meaning, and practice, researcher journal writing and the shared interpretive engagement functioned as a shaping space for both individual and collective research identity. The study demonstrates how reflective researcher journal writing operates as a formative interpretive mechanism in the development of research communities of practice in the twenty-

first century. References Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge University Press. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press. * The language of presentation will be Hebrew.

Parallel Session A2: English Education Today: Identity, Inclusion, and Innovation

EPIC LEARNING DESIGN FOR AI ERA COMMUNICATION AND HUMAN IMPACT

Tal Levy

Ruppin Academic College, Israel

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has reached a critical juncture, fundamentally redefining the purpose of education and demanding a profound shift in instructional philosophy. This paper explores the transition of English for Purposes of International Communication (EPIC) from a foundational academic subject to a strategic, professional competency aligned with the dynamic demands of the global market.

Central to this evolution is the "Multiplier Effect"—the exponential growth in information and communication complexity driven by AI. To navigate this landscape, the educator's role must evolve into that of an "EPIC Practitioner". This strategic facilitator moves beyond isolated linguistic rules toward a holistic, human-centric approach that bridges the gap between academic theory and the fast-paced workforce ecosystem. The focus shifts to high-impact "character skills," such as emotional intelligence and negotiation, which differentiate human interaction from AI capabilities.

Correspondingly, the "EPIC Learner" must prioritize mastery over traditional credentials, taking active ownership of their professional development. Drawing on research indicating that 90% of companies now prioritize skills over degrees, this abstract outlines a roadmap for fostering learner agency and strategic autonomy. By cultivating a continuous growth mindset and moving from device dependence to tool mastery, EPIC instruction ensures that graduates possess the functional communication skills and resilience required for success in a rapidly shifting global economy.

WHAT'S THE STORY?: TOOLS FOR RESEARCH, WRITING, AND LISTENING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Dara Barnat

Tel Aviv University, Israel

As one does research, reads, writes, and hopes to publish, it is rather common to experience varying degrees of enthusiasm and angst. Producing an academic article, book chapter, dissertation, and monograph entails (among other practices), reading widely; identifying a problem in the field; articulating the importance of the research question; situating one's research within the field; and forming a thesis. In this talk, drawing from my experience as a researcher (primarily in the Humanities), as well as an instructor of Academic Writing for undergraduate and graduate students, I will present tools that I hope will be applicable to those working on different types of research, with a focus on the research story. Andrew P. Johnson states that Academic Writing is "an art, a science, and a craft" (xi). Indeed, there are intriguing similarities when it comes to the research story across disciplines - EPIC, Education, Engineering, and beyond. I will share a concept that I have been developing for my Academic Writing (and Creative Writing) courses: one's research and writing can benefit when we actively listen to what it is trying to tell us. I will explain the benefits of this mode of active attunement to one's study, which can be a helpful, if overlooked, reflection at any stage of a project.

Works Cited:

Johnson, Andrew P. *Academic Writing: Process and Product*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2016.

MAKING EMI MATTER: NURSING STUDENTS' VIEWS ON CONTENT COURSES

Dr Roseanne Kheir Farraj, Mira Sabbah-Khoury

Yezreel Valley College, Israel

This mixed-methods study examined fourth-year nursing students' perceptions of English-medium instruction (EMI) content courses at a public academic college in northern Israel. In response to national higher education requirements, the nursing department required all students to complete two elective content courses in English during the final year of the undergraduate program. The study investigated how students experienced these courses across several semesters of implementation, with particular attention to their expectations, perceived challenges, and evaluations of course value and instructional support. The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected via questionnaires administered across five measurement points to 213 students from different cohorts. Qualitative data consisted of 52 semi-structured interviews.

Quantitative findings indicated that students generally reported moderate to positive EMI experiences: English was not perceived as a major barrier to content understanding, Hebrew integration was rated as highly beneficial, and students reported moderate gains in English skills, although willingness to take additional EMI courses remained only moderate. Qualitative findings showed that students initially encountered EMI with resistance, uncertainty, and unequal linguistic confidence, particularly regarding oral production. At the same time, they evaluated EMI positively when courses were perceived as relevant, professionally meaningful, and instructionally supportive. Students highlighted the importance of bilingual mediation, multimodal scaffolding, interactive pedagogy, and low-stakes assessment.

The findings suggest that students' experiences of EMI are shaped less by English proficiency alone than by the interaction of perceived value, linguistic confidence, and pedagogical design.

ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH LD IN EPIC CLASSES: A NEEDS ANALYSIS AND PROPOSED RESEARCH-INFORMED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Susie Russak¹, Leor Cohen²

¹Beit Berl College, Israel

²Open University, Israel

The diversification of higher education resulting from processes of massification, globalization, and widening participation has increased the presence of students with learning disabilities (LDs) in EPIC classrooms. For the purposes of this presentation, students with LDs refers to students who have been diagnosed by psycho-educational evaluations as struggling with any of the following areas or any combination: reading, writing, mathematical calculations, language processing, executive functioning, memory issues. In CEFR-aligned EPIC programs, students are required to engage with complex academic texts and produce discipline-oriented written work under standardized proficiency expectations. For students with LDs, these literacy demands may create barriers that are not fully addressed through formal accommodations alone. Although research has increasingly examined inclusion in higher education, less attention has been devoted to how EPIC pedagogy can systematically support students with LDs or to how EPIC teachers can be prepared for this work. This study examines the professional learning needs of 120 EPIC teachers in Israeli higher education, investigating both the content areas in which teachers seek greater expertise and their preferred modes of professional learning. Findings reveal a strong orientation toward practice-focused pedagogical knowledge, particularly in relation to adapting instructional materials, scaffolding academic reading and writing tasks, clarifying assessment expectations, and implementing alternative assessment practices. Participants also expressed a clear preference for interactive, practice-oriented professional learning formats, including workshops, modeled instruction, and instructional videos, over passive forms of training. Drawing on four sources of information: teacher responses, research concerning effective professional development, Universal Design for Learning Principles, best practices for including students with special educational needs in additional language classes, the study presents a research-informed professional development framework tailored to CEFR-aligned EPIC instruction. By systematically linking teacher-identified needs with established principles of

effective PD, the study offers a transferable model for strengthening inclusive academic literacy pedagogy for all students in higher education.

N.I.T.E. Update

THE NITE WATCH: THE SEQUEL

Debbie Mishaly

National Institute of Testing and Evaluation, Israel

Since March 2025, NITE has been piloting new item types that will be part of HILAL. These include listening comprehension items, multiple choice items testing grammar, and word production items. In April 2026, we added a new type of item: the writing task.

This presentation will share some of what we have learned thus far about the piloted item types, discuss issues related to the removal of the English chapters from the paper-and-pencil exam, and update what lies ahead for Hilal.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CEFR ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR HUMAN-AI SPOKEN
INTERACTION

Sylvia Johnson

Loora, Israel

Assessing spoken English proficiency at scale remains one of the most resource-intensive challenges in higher education language instruction. Traditional oral assessment depends on scheduled examinations, trained raters, and discrete testing moments, yielding rich but infrequent snapshots of learner performance. This paper presents a continuous, automated oral proficiency assessment framework developed at Loora AI, derived entirely from unscripted human-AI conversational interaction.

The framework assesses learners across multiple independently scored dimensions including vocabulary breadth and stretch rate, grammatical structure demonstration, functional communication objectives, audio-derived fluency indicators and pronunciation accuracy. Each dimension is mapped to an extended ten-band CEFR scale that adds intermediate steps to the standard six-band framework, making progress visible on shorter timescales than traditional assessment allows. Combined scores are updated continuously as learners engage in conversation, with no separate testing required.

Assessment validity is maintained through a quality-control gate system that anchors mastery claims to demonstrated production volume, and grounded through expert human calibration of CEFR-level outputs. Progress is tracked by comparing learner performance across early and recent session windows, making growth visible within a single academic semester.

We discuss the methodological implications of assessing oral proficiency through human-AI rather than human-human interaction, what this approach uniquely enables, where it diverges from traditional oral assessment, and how it functions as a continuous formative instrument alongside existing summative frameworks. Cohort data will be used to illustrate trajectory patterns across dimensions, including cases where dimensions decouple in pedagogically informative ways.

Parallel Session B1: Digital Tools for Speaking and Language Practice

VIRTUAL SCENARIOS FOR REAL GRAMMAR: AR IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Miguel Marcos, José Belda-Medina

University of Alicante, Spain

This study investigates the potential of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) to enhance the teaching of English conditional structures in a Spanish secondary school. The intervention was conducted with 30 students in 4th year of ESO (aged 14-16) using the Onirix platform, which allowed the creation of interactive AR scenes linked to each conditional type. A mixed-methods design was employed, combining pre- and post-tests with surveys, student reflections, and teacher feedback.

Each conditional was associated with a specific immersive scenario designed to make the grammatical concept visually concrete: a boiling kitchen for the zero conditional, a study-to-exam sequence for the first, an imaginary wealth scene for the second, and a meteor-dinosaur extinction narrative for the third. Students accessed these scenes on personal devices and interacted with embedded objects to explore if-clauses and result clauses.

Results showed notable improvements in grammatical accuracy across all four conditionals. For instance, correct identification of the second conditional rose from 75.9% to 96%, and structural accuracy reached 100% in the post-test. Student feedback indicated increased motivation, reduced anxiety, and a preference for the AR-enhanced format over traditional instruction. Teacher observations confirmed higher engagement, though they also highlighted the need for structured classroom management when using immersive tools.

The findings suggest that AR/VR can effectively complement conventional grammar teaching by contextualizing abstract rules in memorable visual scenarios. While limitations include the small sample size and absence of a control group, the study contributes practical evidence supporting immersive technology integration in EFL classrooms.

BEYOND SCRIPTS: ENCOURAGING SPONTANEOUS STUDENT SPEAKING THROUGH IDENTITY-BASED TASKS

Karen Eini

Ruppin Academic Center, Israel

This session showcases a classroom-tested project that demonstrates how role-based speaking tasks help students transition from structured preparation to authentic, improvised communication. By combining collaborative role development, AI-supported preparation, image-only visual prompts, and interactive questioning, the project creates meaningful opportunities for authentic spoken interaction.

The project unfolds in five stages. Students are first assigned to family groups and assume the roles of different family members immigrating to Israel. They use a shared Google Document as a collaborative digital portfolio to gather information about their families and their roles and prepare answers to a list of basic questions they may be asked during the presentation. They then interact with teacher-created AI role-play chatbots that deepen their understanding of their character's experiences. Next, each student creates a single image-only presentation slide representing the character's life in their country of origin. The family then presents together. During the presentation, students respond in role to guiding questions they have prepared for, as well as unexpected questions posed by both the instructor and the audience, requiring them to communicate spontaneously while maintaining their character's perspective.

Although demonstrated in a B1-level classroom, the approach has been adapted across proficiency levels and teaching contexts. Participants will leave with practical strategies for designing AI-supported speaking activities that promote confidence, spontaneity, authentic communication, and active engagement.

RETHINKING DIGITAL TOOLS FOR INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

Paula Amoros-Marco, Laura Soriano-Gonzalez

University of Alicante, Spain

Language education is increasingly shaped by rapid technological and social change, requiring new perspectives on how digital tools can support more inclusive teaching and learning practices. In this context, assistive technologies and artificial intelligence offer promising possibilities for widening access to language learning, particularly for learners who face barriers related to reading, writing, comprehension or participation. However, their educational value cannot be assumed on the basis of technological innovation alone. It depends on how these tools are critically evaluated, pedagogically mediated and meaningfully integrated into classroom practice.

This paper presents a pedagogical innovation proposal aimed at rethinking the role of assistive technology and AI in inclusive language learning. Drawing on a scoping review of recent research on assistive and AI-supported technologies in inclusive language learning contexts, the study identifies the main types of tools described in the literature, the language areas and dyslexia-related barriers they address, and the challenges affecting their classroom implementation.

Based on these findings, the paper introduces a rubric designed to support pre-service language teachers in evaluating inclusive learning proposals involving assistive and AI-supported technologies. The presentation demonstrates how research evidence can inform teacher decision-making and promote a more critical approach to educational technology. Rather than viewing AI and assistive tools as inherently inclusive solutions, this proposal highlights the importance of pedagogical judgement, teacher mediation and responsible technology integration to foster meaningful participation in language learning.

JOB INTERVIEW AI-BASED APPLICATION: PRACTICING SPOKEN ENGLISH IN A NON-THREATENING WAY

Rina Raichlin

Ramat Gan Academic College, Israel

It is well known that students' receptive skills are usually much better than their productive skills; therefore, practicing spoken English is essential for language acquisition. Students in Israeli higher education must take English courses, yet classrooms of around 30 students limit opportunities for oral practice. Recent advances in artificial intelligence offer a promising avenue to overcome this barrier. This pilot study evaluated the effectiveness of practicing spoken English using an AI-driven job interview chatbot, developed on the Lovable platform, among 38 Israeli college students in discipline-specific programs (e.g., Computer Science, Management). The application provided students with personalized, program-specific interview questions and automated feedback. Preliminary qualitative feedback from a pilot survey, combined with instructor observations, revealed significant advantages: the tool enabled highly differentiated, self-paced, and non-threatening oral practice. However, pedagogical challenges emerged, including technical evaluation discrepancies that required teacher double-checking, and academic integrity issues where a few students attempted to record AI-generated responses. It is concluded that while integrating AI-based chatbots is a highly effective way to practice spoken English, it cannot stand alone; it must be carefully integrated with preparatory classroom activities and human teacher oversight.

Parallel Session B2: Virtual Exchange and English-Medium Instruction

BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

Idit Avram, Roseanne Kheir Farraj

Yezreel Valley College, Israel

Virtual Exchange (VE) has emerged as an effective pedagogical approach for promoting authentic communication and intercultural learning in higher education. This study explores the experiences of Advanced B English students enrolled in an English for Purposes of International Communication (EPIC) course at an Israeli college who participated in a six-week VE project. Students engaged in six online meetings with peers from several European countries, discussing university life, workplace culture, and social issues. A mixed-methods design was employed, combining questionnaire data with thematic analysis of end-of-project written reflections. Quantitative findings revealed a steady increase in students' confidence in communicating in English, with mean comfort scores rising from 3.59 in the first meeting to 4.42 in the sixth. Attendance remained consistently high throughout the project, indicating sustained engagement. The qualitative analysis identified four themes: (1) developing confidence in English communication, (2) intercultural learning and global awareness, (3) collaboration and sense of community, and (4) challenges and coping strategies. Students described reduced language anxiety, greater willingness to participate in discussions, increased awareness of cultural similarities and differences, and the development of relationships with international peers. Although scheduling difficulties, technological issues, and accent-related challenges were reported, participants viewed these obstacles as manageable through collaboration. The findings suggest that VE constitutes a valuable pedagogical framework for promoting communicative confidence, intercultural learning, and meaningful language use beyond the classroom. Furthermore, the results underscore the need for higher education language programs to incorporate authentic intercultural interaction and reflective dialogue as integral components of language learning.

EXPLORING EMI TEACHERS' IDENTITIES AND MOTIVATIONS: A CASE STUDY

Elli Kichik

Tel Aviv University, Israel

This study examines the motivations, challenges, and professional identities of lecturers engaged in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) at an engineering college in Israel. Drawing on qualitative interviews with four EMI lecturers, it explores why faculty choose to teach in English, how they perceive their roles, and what factors shape their engagement. Previous EMI research has highlighted the importance of teacher agency, institutional support, and professional identity negotiation in shaping lecturers' experiences of teaching through English (e.g., Dearden, 2014; Smit, 2018; Macaro et al., 2018). Thematic analysis revealed three key themes: (1) motivations to teach in English, including intrinsic factors such as professional development and extrinsic influences such as institutional expectations; (2) challenges in EMI practice, particularly the tension between delivering complex disciplinary content and accommodating students with diverse levels of English proficiency; and (3) evolving professional identities, with lecturers positioning themselves as both content experts and language facilitators. The findings highlight how motivation emerges from the interaction of personal interest, institutional support, and contextual pressures, in line with Self-Determination Theory. They also point to concerns about unequal student preparedness and its implications for equitable access to learning. The study contributes to EMI research by foregrounding lecturers' perspectives and underscores the need for institutional policies that support both teachers and students in EMI contexts

LOCALIZING VIRTUAL EXCHANGE FOR EMI READINESS

Jerries Eady

Braude Academic College of Engineering, Israel

As English-medium instruction (EMI) expands in Israeli higher education, English teachers are increasingly asked to prepare diverse local students for global academic and professional communication. This presentation examines a discussion-based Virtual Exchange (VE) embedded in a post-B2 EPIC course at an Israeli engineering college. The VE connected Israeli engineering students with European peers through online platforms to discuss and compare different aspects of culture and everyday life.

Former students of the course and VE from five years ago who later participated in EMI courses responded to survey and interview questions about whether and how the VE influenced their intercultural communicative competence (ICC), confidence in speaking English, and preparedness for EMI learning environments. Findings from the responses of 39 surveys and nine interviews suggest that the VE may have helped reduce foreign language and accent anxiety by giving students low-stakes opportunities to communicate with other non-native English speakers. Students described becoming more willing to speak spontaneously, tolerate mistakes, and participate in English-medium academic and professional contexts.

However, the study also highlights important limitations of the model in the local Israeli engineering context, such as the VE's short duration and discussion-based structure, among others, that may have limited its relevance for students preparing for discipline-specific EMI courses and technical workplaces. Framed through the CEFR's action-oriented approach and Byram's ICC model, the presentation attempts to identify gaps in the current VE model and explore possible implications for adapting VE initiatives according to specific student populations, disciplinary needs, and local educational contexts (Byram, 2021; Council of Europe, 2020).

Keywords:

Virtual exchange; EMI readiness; Israeli higher education; speaking confidence; intercultural communicative competence; engineering students

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FACE- TO- FACE STILL MATTERS:STUDENTS` VIEWS ON EMI LEARNING MODALITIES

Mira Sabbah Khoury, Roseanne Kheir Farraj
The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, YVC, Israel

Face-to-face Still Matters: Students` Views on EMI Learning Modalities

This study examines how nursing students perceive the effectiveness of different learning modalities in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) contexts; namely, face-to-face, synchronous online (Zoom), and asynchronous formats. Drawing on data from 17 semi-structured interviews and 124 structured questionnaires , the study explores how interaction, cognitive load, engagement, and learner characteristics shape learning experiences in contexts requiring simultaneous processing of disciplinary content and language.

Initial findings reveal that modality effectiveness is shaped by how learning environments support interaction and manage cognitive demands. Face-to-face instruction emerged as the most effective modality, primarily due to its ability to foster sustained interaction and real-time scaffolding. These features were found to reduce cognitive load by enabling immediate clarification and supporting comprehension in linguistically demanding EMI settings.

Synchronous online learning produced mixed outcomes. While some students reported improved concentration in controlled environments, others experienced reduced engagement , indicating that its effectiveness depends strongly on learners' self-regulatory capacities. Asynchronous learning was perceived as the least effective modality. Despite its flexibility, students reported low engagement, procrastination, and superficial interaction with materials, exposing a gap between its theoretical affordances and actual learning practices.

Across modalities, interaction emerged as a critical cognitive mechanism underpinning understanding. Importantly, the findings reveal a distinction between convenience and learning effectiveness, with students favoring structured, interactive environments over more flexible formats. Overall, the study supports a blended learning model in which face-to-face instruction serves as the pedagogical core, complemented by online modalities that are carefully aligned with learners' cognitive and self-regulatory needs.

AUGMENTED REALITY AND AUDIOVISUAL VOCABULARY LEARNING THROUGH ENGLISH: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mar Fernandez-Alcocer

University of Alicante, Spain

Augmented Reality (AR) has received increasing attention in education, particularly because of its potential to make learning more visual, interactive and engaging. However, whether these characteristics actually lead to better learning outcomes is still open to discussion. This study explores the use of AR for learning subject-specific English vocabulary in Audiovisual Culture, a secondary education subject in which students need to connect specialised terminology with visual concepts such as camera shots and angles.

The study followed a classroom-based quasi-experimental design with 21 first-year Bachillerato students aged 16-17. Students were divided into an experimental group ($n = 10$), which worked with AR-based materials, and a control group ($n = 11$), which used an equivalent printed booklet. Both groups worked with the same content, images and learning activities in English, with the main difference being how the materials were presented. Vocabulary learning was measured before and after the intervention, while students' perceptions of the experience were collected as complementary descriptive data.

Students in both groups improved significantly from pre-test to post-test (AR: $p = .016$; control: $p = .007$). However, no significant differences were found between the two groups in either post-test performance ($p = .587$) or learning gains ($p = .277$). In other words, AR did not lead to better vocabulary scores than the equivalent printed materials during this intervention.

These results suggest that the educational value of AR cannot be explained simply by introducing a more immersive or interactive technology into the classroom. Although AR can provide visual and contextual support for specialised vocabulary, especially when students are learning subject content through English, its effectiveness also depends on how the activity is designed and how students interact with the different forms of information presented to them. The findings therefore support a more cautious view of AR in language and content learning, where the technology itself matters less than the way it is integrated into the learning process.

Parallel Session B3: Inclusive Learning and Wellbeing

HELPING THE DAY RISE

Victoria Martynov

Ariel University, Israel

The Unexpected Role of Education and English Language Learning in Supporting Students with PTSD Recent work with students diagnosed with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (EBD), including post-traumatic stress disorder, has revealed an unexpected therapeutic dimension of academic engagement. Structured learning—particularly within foreign-language instruction—appears to offer stabilizing benefits for reserve soldiers and survivors of terror-related events. Routine, cognitive activation, social participation, and measurable progress can function as protective factors that complement clinical interventions. The events of October 7 produced profound and ongoing disruptions across Israeli society. As accounts of survivors grappling with severe trauma—and in some cases succumbing to its psychological consequences—circulated widely, a central question emerged: how can individuals who survived acute physical danger later be overwhelmed by its emotional aftermath? This question became academically salient during my Semester Bet course in the Anglit Yehudit program at Ariel University. One student, Nitzan, a survivor of the Nova festival massacre, exemplifies this phenomenon. For nearly three years, she experienced functional withdrawal from her profession, social networks, and daily routines, consistent with symptoms associated with post-injury stress disorder. Within the classroom, however, she encountered a structured, predictable environment that enabled gradual re-engagement. Her English-language presentation was not merely an academic task; it constituted a meaningful therapeutic milestone. As she stated, “I am paving the way back to normal life.” This moment illuminated the broader pedagogical insight emerging from the course: educational settings can serve as regulated, socially supportive environments that facilitate trauma recovery. For students whose lives were disrupted by violence, structured academic engagement may help restore agency, continuity, and a sense of future orientation. The experiences of other students in the course further reinforce this observation, suggesting that language learning—through its emphasis

on communication, cognitive flexibility, and incremental mastery—may hold particular value for trauma-affected populations.

EXISTENTIAL CIRCLES OF COMPASSION: YALOM'S FOUR GIVENS IN ELT

Daniel Svoboda

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Republic of Korea

The language classroom is more than a site of linguistic transaction; it is a convergence of human realities. Despite growing scholarly interest in teacher compassion and learner affect, the existential dimensions underlying both remain underexplored in English language teaching (ELT). This presentation proposes an existential-compassionate framework for ELT pedagogy, drawing on the existential psychotherapy of Irvin D. Yalom (1980). Yalom's four "ultimate concerns" – mortality, freedom, isolation, and meaning – are reframed as "compassion lenses" through which language teachers can better perceive and respond to the quiet struggles of their students and themselves. Grounded in Farrell's (2015) reflective practice framework, Mercer's (2020) emotional labor theory, and Noddings' (2013) ethic of care, the presentation presents four practical classroom activities, termed "existential circles," designed to transform ELT instruction into a more humanistic, meaning-centered, and compassionately grounded enterprise. The activities will serve as a springboard for additional discussion about how humanistic pedagogy can be incorporated into the classroom.

EXPLORING CREATIVE METHODS FOR VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AMONG ADHD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ISRAEL

Shila Baddiel, Naomi Sapir, Tal Behar, Svetlana Fichman, Dr.

Talpiot College of Education, Israel

This mixed-methods quasi-experimental study examined the effectiveness of a combined digital and story-based vocabulary-learning intervention for Grade 10 EFL students in Israel, with particular attention to students diagnosed with ADHD. The intervention integrated Quizlet activities, Blooket tasks, and collaborative story-writing activities using 60 Band II vocabulary words from the Israeli Ministry of Education curriculum. Participants included 23 students with ADHD and 14 students with typical development. Pre- and post-tests measured vocabulary acquisition, while classroom observations provided qualitative data regarding engagement, motivation, participation, and behavioral patterns during the learning process. The findings demonstrated significant improvement in vocabulary performance among all participants following the intervention, with large effect sizes in both groups and no significant differences between them. A notable decrease in non-recognized vocabulary items was also observed. Correlation analyses indicated that among students with ADHD, stronger oral proficiency was associated with higher post-intervention vocabulary scores. Qualitative observations revealed that the interactive and creative nature of the activities increased participation, confidence, and willingness to engage in challenging tasks, particularly among weaker students. Although academic gaps between weaker and stronger students remained, the intervention appeared to support greater involvement and motivation in the learning process. The findings suggest that meaningful, multimodal vocabulary instruction may positively contribute to vocabulary acquisition and classroom engagement in heterogeneous EFL classrooms, while offering practical implications for supporting students with ADHD and other struggling learners.

A MODULAR, PROCESS-ORIENTED APPROACH TO CEFR-ALIGNED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN TIMES OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL UNCERTAINTY

Ira Slabodar, Miri Krisi

Ashkelon Academic College, Israel

In response to the Council for Higher Education reform, English language programs in Israeli higher education have increasingly aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR expands traditional skill-based instruction by conceptualizing language use through four modes of communication: reception, production, interaction, and mediation (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020). This study presents a CEFR-aligned pedagogical model implemented at Ashkelon Academic College, informed by research emphasizing authentic, process-oriented assessment of communicative language ability (Bachman & Palmer, 2010).

The model was implemented across four proficiency levels (Pre-Basic, Basic, Advanced A, Advanced B), including approximately 80 courses and 2,400 students each semester. Moving beyond a previous model centered primarily on high-stakes summative assessment, the framework integrates modular, unit-based instruction and evaluation. Each unit incorporates reception, production, interaction, and mediation through reading, listening, speaking, writing, collaborative tasks, and content reformulation activities. Assessment is distributed across multiple components, including unit exams, oral presentations, participation, and ongoing coursework.

Institutional data following implementation indicate high completion rates, with approximately 95-96% of students successfully meeting course requirements. The model provides multiple opportunities to demonstrate competence, supports diverse learner strengths, and creates a structured yet flexible learning environment, particularly important during periods of educational and social disruption (Beauchamp et al., 2021; Marshall, 2020; Mufic, 2025).

By foregrounding principles of alignment, continuous assessment, and learner-centered flexibility, this model offers an adaptable framework for CEFR-informed language teaching across educational contexts.

Parallel Session C1: AI-Mediated Writing and Synthesis

WRITING WITH AI AS MEDIATION: A CEFR-BASED APPROACH FOR EPIC

Daniel Portman, Mónica Broido

Azrieli College of Engineering Jerusalem, Israel

As generative AI becomes part of students' writing practices, EPIC instructors face a practical question: what exactly are we teaching when we ask learners to write with AI? In an action-oriented approach, the answer cannot be simply "using a tool" or producing a polished final text. Learners also need to manage a communicative process in which they guide, question, evaluate, and refine AI-generated output in order to complete meaningful writing tasks.

This talk proposes that AI-supported writing can be understood through the CEFR concept of mediation, particularly the scale Collaborating to construct meaning. Although this scale was designed for human interaction, many of its underlying communicative functions are highly relevant to learner-AI collaborative writing: checking understanding, maintaining focus, developing ideas, asking for justification, challenging inconsistencies, and synthesising contributions. We will show how selected CEFR descriptors have been adapted to describe what learners can learn to do to collaborate effectively with AI during writing.

Drawing on examples from EPIC writing tasks, the session will illustrate learner prompts that reflect different levels of control, from simple requests such as making a text shorter or more formal, to more advanced moves such as asking AI to explain its choices, revise for audience and purpose, or generate a prompt for use in another AI system. The aim is to offer instructors a practical CEFR-based language for making AI-writing processes visible and teachable. We conclude by suggesting ways EPIC instructors can ask students to submit not only final texts but also selected evidence of effective and appropriate learner-AI interaction.

TEACHING SYNTHESIS IN THE AI ERA: A TWO-PHASE APPROACH

Aviva Soesman

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The widespread availability of AI raises questions about how writing should be taught and assessed in higher education. Some instructors have reverted to pen-and-paper writing to ensure authorship, but this does not reflect students' writing practices beyond the classroom. Others allow computer-based writing with AI assistance to maintain authenticity, yet this creates challenges around academic integrity. The assignment presented here seeks a middle ground. It preserves the authenticity of AI-integrated writing while keeping the critical thinking and drafting in students' hands. The assignment, which is scenario-based, aims to develop students' ability to synthesize two articles and work responsibly with AI. In Phase 1, students first create an essay outline consisting of a thesis statement and two supporting arguments, each taken from a different article. They then write, in their own words, a short paragraph that synthesizes the two sources, developing a third argument. This phase uses a standardized handout, submitted by hand. In Phase 2, also carried out in class, students first upload their Phase 1 plan and the two articles into an AI tool. Using a structured prompt, they then ask the tool to generate an essay based on their plan and the two sources. They respond to the AI output by answering a set of questions evaluating specific aspects of the generated essay (e.g., whether it kept the arguments from their outline and whether it used techniques for synthesizing). Finally, they submit the AI output along with their answers. As a pilot study, this paper presents preliminary observations and student responses for discussion.

FROM EXPRESSIVENESS TO ARGUMENTATION: STUDENTS' INCOMPLETE
ENCULTURATION OF LITERARY ANALYSIS

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This study examines how multilingual undergraduates negotiate academic literacy in an English-medium literary analysis writing course. Drawing on pre- and post-course interviews alongside a longitudinal analysis of written artifacts—from the entrance exam through multiple course assignments and the final exam—we argue that acquiring formal academic skills was only one aspect of writing development. Students entered the course with rich literacy histories: private expressive writing supported voice, symbolic sensitivity, and interpretive energy; reading-based literacies fostered attentiveness to texts; and school writing provided partial formal frames. Yet these prior literacies did not entirely facilitate meeting the epistemic demands of literary criticism, particularly the ability to construct delimited, text-grounded, evidence-bearing arguments.

The findings further show that the central difficulty of literary-analysis writing remained unresolved even after instruction, revision, and feedback. While students learned to move away from plot summary, unsupported claims, and loose organization toward stronger thematic structuring and more explicit interpretation, many continued to struggle with the most demanding aspect of disciplinary writing: transforming insight into justified argument. The one-time permission to use AI clarified this difficulty. AI proved helpful for transitions, wording, and structural support, but not for the epistemic core of literary analysis. Finally, students' imagined future uses of academic writing shaped their uptake of the course: those envisioning academic, professional, or writerly futures related to disciplinary writing differently from those who saw it as partially relevant. The study contributes to scholarship on academic writing by conceptualizing literary-analysis writing as a process of incomplete enculturation into disciplinary literacy.

Parallel Session C2: Enhancing Learning: Engagement, Communication, and Growth

STOP READING YOUR SLIDES: POWERPOINT THAT ACTUALLY TEACHES

Eldad Cohen

The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

PowerPoint is one of the most familiar tools in education – and one of the least examined. This session proposes a new vantage point: treating PowerPoint not as a formatting preference but as a pedagogical decision with measurable consequences for learning.

Research on multimedia learning consistently shows that conventional PowerPoint habits – excessive text, redundant narration, decorative imagery – increase extraneous cognitive load and reduce retention. Drawing on Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, this presentation introduces two foundational design principles with direct classroom applications: the Signaling Principle, which directs learner attention through strategic emphasis, and the Spatial Contiguity Principle, which reduces split-attention by aligning text with corresponding visuals.

These principles are applied through the Assertion-Evidence structure – a research-supported framework that replaces vague topic headers with full declarative claims backed by high-quality visual evidence. Unlike cosmetic redesign, this approach changes the cognitive relationship between presenter, slide, and learner.

The session balances theory with practice. Participants will analyze real examples, work through a before-and-after redesign sequence, and leave with a portable checklist applicable to their own materials. Strategies are relevant to both online and face-to-face teaching contexts – directly mirroring H-INET 2026's own hybrid format.

Language educators who have ever felt their PowerPoints were doing too much – or too little – will find this session both validating and immediately actionable.

EXPLORING AI-SUPPORTED SELF-REGULATED SPEAKING WITH SNORKL

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Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education, Israel

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping language education by offering new opportunities for personalized learning and formative assessment. However, developing learners' speaking confidence remains a persistent challenge due to speaking anxiety, limited opportunities for oral practice, and the demands of assessing spoken performance. This qualitative study explores students' and teachers' experiences with Snorkl, an AI-powered formative assessment platform, in a CEFR-based English program at a higher education institution.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 students and four English language instructors following the integration of Snorkl into speaking activities. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Four themes emerged: (1) Snorkl as a psychologically safe environment for speaking practice; (2) AI-generated feedback as a catalyst for learner autonomy and confidence; (3) AI-assisted formative assessment as a means of enhancing teaching and learning; and (4) opportunities and challenges associated with integrating AI into a CEFR-based curriculum. Both students and teachers reported that the platform reduced speaking anxiety, encouraged repeated practice, and promoted self-reflection through immediate, individualized feedback. Teachers also highlighted the platform's capacity to reduce assessment workload and expand opportunities for speaking practice beyond the classroom. Participants identified the need for improvements in feedback precision and usability while emphasizing that AI should complement rather than replace teacher expertise.

The findings suggest that AI-powered formative assessment can effectively foster speaking confidence and learner autonomy while supporting sustainable assessment practices in English language education.

EPIC as a Bridge Across Disciplines in Physical Education Teacher Education

Dr. Devora Hellerstein, Eran Sabag, Hadas Brodie Schroeder

The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

This presentation describes an interdisciplinary initiative in a Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) program that positions English for Purposes of International Communication (EPIC) as a bridge between disciplinary knowledge, research literacy, and professional practice. The initiative connected three courses—EPIC, Basketball Fundamentals, and Class Management—around a shared framework addressing four dimensions of children’s development: physical, cognitive, social, and emotional.

Within this framework, the EPIC course moved beyond English as a separate academic subject. Students engaged with research-based texts and videos examining how basketball participation and coaching can contribute to children’s development. Through receptive and productive activities, they developed discipline-specific English vocabulary, practiced working with academic and professional sources, and strengthened their ability to interpret and communicate research-based ideas.

English-language learning was then connected directly to professional practice. Research and terminology encountered in EPIC informed the planning and delivery of basketball coaching activities, while concepts shared across the courses were applied to teaching and classroom-management scenarios.

The initiative illustrates how EPIC in higher education can be embedded within the disciplinary curriculum rather than operating alongside it. By linking English learning with research, professional communication, and authentic disciplinary tasks, the approach offers a model for making English instruction more relevant to students’ academic studies and future professional roles.

Parallel Session C3: Exploring Vocabulary and Language Variation

VOCABULARY - NOT QUANTITY BUT QUALITY: PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

Judith Golan Ben-Uri

David Yellin Academic College of Education, Israel

The decisive stage in language acquisition lies in its earliest steps, where a sense of capability determines whether the learner perseveres: one who can use the language from the first moment keeps going. The central question is therefore which words to select for level A1, and how to sequence them - a timely question in Israel today, as a new curriculum and materials are composed under the CEFR framework.

For minority students, Hebrew is not a second language but **a language not in use**: present in the environment yet absent from the learner's active repertoire. Because it is present, students are assumed to "already know" basic vocabulary; yet, unlike native speakers, non-native learners do not acquire high-frequency words from mere exposure (Nation, 2001). Presence is not acquisition.

A second assumption treats frequency as sufficient, delivering vocabulary as category lists. But quality is measured not by the number of words but by the ability to act through them. The decisive criterion is **usability**: words the learner can use immediately, which connect to existing knowledge and expand into new contexts. Such words, processed deeply and activated through use, are better retained (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Lewis, 1993).

Sequencing matters too: teaching semantically related words together creates interference that impairs learning (Tinkham, 1997). These claims are ethically testable by comparing retention across teaching methods (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). The lecture's contribution is identifying a **threefold failure** – skipped teaching, frequency-only selection, and interfering sequence – and establishing usability as decisive.

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MAKING COLLOCATIONS STICK: RETRIEVAL PRACTICE AND CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS IN EPIC

Ronit Breslaw

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

This session demonstrates an EPIC classroom-based approach to teaching collocations through form-focused instruction, retrieval-based activities, awareness-raising techniques, and strategic L1 use. Drawing on classroom-based research conducted with B1-B2 EPIC learners at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, it illustrates how these instructional practices can develop learners' receptive and productive collocational knowledge and promote more frequent and varied use of collocations in writing.

Participants will experience a sequence of classroom activities that can be readily integrated into EPIC courses, including dictogloss tasks, gap-fill retrieval exercises, oral presentations, awareness-raising tasks, and contrastive L1-L2 analysis. The session will demonstrate how these techniques help learners notice collocations, retrieve them from memory, distinguish restricted collocations from free combinations, and make more accurate lexical choices in writing.

Throughout the session, classroom procedures, sample materials, and feedback strategies will be shared, providing participants with ready-to-use ideas for incorporating focused collocation instruction into their own teaching.

By the end of the session, participants will have a practical framework and a set of adaptable activities for teaching collocations effectively in EPIC classrooms.

REIMAGINING ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA CLASSROOMS: A PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK

Julia Schlam Salman, Bridget Schvarcz

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

This session focuses on a practical framework for operationalizing English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in multilingual higher education classrooms. Such an ELF framework, offers an alternative to more traditional anglophone orientations that are centered in Kachru's (1985) inner circle (i.e. UK and USA). It also recognizes the increasing reality of English functioning as a language of wider communication (LWC) among students from diverse backgrounds (Baker et al., 2024).

We begin by acknowledging a growing body of literature that engages with decoloniality and ELT, alongside the need to translate such theoretical concepts into operationalized classroom practices. Based on Cappello, Schlam Salman and Kauppinen's (2025) 3M framework of mindsets, models and methods, we then describe our applied framework that includes four dimensions: 1) recognizing Global Englishes; 2) adopting a glocal pedagogical lens; 3) constructing emancipatory classroom climates; and 4) professionalizing (language) teaching and learning. For each dimension, we describe classroom practices we have enacted in our local context. We also address the practical complexities of implementation in areas shaped by extreme circumstances, duress and outright war.

Participants will then engage with the pedagogical practices that demonstrate how the four dimensions can be operationalized in multilingual, multicultural, conflict-affected educational settings. They will also examine the applicability of the dimensions in their own contexts.

By the end of the session, participants will have explored a practical framework for decolonial ELT, considered strategies for advancing ELF orientations and reflected on the relevancy of decoloniality in their own contexts.

Sponsored Session

GoEddy - AI-Powered English Speaking Practice & Assessment

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GoEddy is an AI-powered platform designed to help students practice and assess their English language skills, with a strong emphasis on speaking and oral communication.

From a pedagogical perspective, GoEddy supports CEFR-aligned practice and assessment and can be adapted to different proficiency levels, curricula, learning objectives, and specific topics.

Lecturers can create a wide variety of speaking exercises, including open conversations, debates, presentations, and role-play scenarios. They can also upload an article or other learning material, which GoEddy uses as the basis for an interactive conversation with the student.

For lecturers and academic institutions, GoEddy provides continuous monitoring and analytics of student performance. Lecturers can track usage and engagement while also measuring progress across key pedagogical indicators, including vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and overall speaking performance.

GoEddy is included in MEITAL's recommended educational technology tools repository

Parallel Session D1: Building Engagement and Learner Confidence

DISENGAGEMENT VERSUS EMERGENCE: USING VR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Hila Weiss

Kinneret Academic College, Israel

This paper examines how an immersive virtual reality (VR) environment, built and experienced through a no-code platform, can transform students' relationship with English as a foreign language in higher education. In a series of VR-based learning activities, students designed and enacted interactive VR scenarios in English. The project revealed a striking dissonance in which students who reported longstanding disengagement, anxiety, or lack of confidence in traditional English classes described themselves as playful, expressive, and increasingly agentive within VR. We conceptualize this shift as a move from disengagement to emergent language use, enabled by the altered social presence and perceived distance from the real-world classroom. Students reported high enjoyment, a sense of freedom from external judgment, reduced focus on linguistic correctness, and increased willingness to take risks in English. The paper describes the pedagogical design, analyses student experiences, and discusses implications for technology-enhanced language learning and the design of VR-mediated higher-education courses.

Keywords: Virtual Reality (VR), Language learning anxiety, Student agency and authorship

FROM HESITATION TO ENGAGEMENT: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF REPEATED VR PRACTICE

Roseanne Kheir Farraj, Idit Avram

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This study explores students' perceptions of using virtual reality (VR) across three consecutive sessions in an Advanced English course. The VR component was integrated into a sequence of learning activities in which students read a research article, prepared a presentation, practiced an elevator pitch, and rehearsed their presentations. The study examines how students perceived the repeated use of VR and how their perceptions evolved. Data were collected through post-course interviews with students and were analyzed thematically to identify recurring perceptions and shifts across the three sessions.

Findings indicate that students' early responses to VR were often marked by uncertainty, technical discomfort, embarrassment, or fear of the unfamiliar. However, for many participants, repeated exposure reduced these initial barriers and led to greater comfort, familiarity, and willingness to engage. Students commonly described VR as a lower-pressure environment for rehearsal, one that enabled repeated practice and, in several cases, strengthened their understanding of the article content. Many participants also reported becoming more aware of presentation-related features such as body language, eye contact, pacing, and the need to explain ideas in their own words. At the same time, perceptions were not uniform. While some students experienced VR as motivating, confidence-building, and highly supportive, others viewed it more cautiously, emphasizing the continued importance of teacher guidance, classroom conditions, or personal learning preferences.

The study suggests that repeated VR use can function as a meaningful pedagogical support in academic English courses, while also highlighting the need to account for variation in students' responses to technology-mediated practice.

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A LIVING LANGUAGE: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY OF COMMUNICATION AND LEARNER CONFIDENCE

David Levy

Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel

This action research study examines the disconnect between language learning in schools and the ability to use language as a communication tool. Many educational institutions emphasize grammar rules, written exams, and rote memorization instead of using language for everyday communication. This results in students receiving grades which do not reflect their ability to speak effectively. The purpose of this study was to explore how instructional practices influence students' communicative competence and confidence levels, and to examine ways to redesign classroom instruction to better support real-world language use. The study used a mixed-methods action research design. First, 57 undergraduate students enrolled in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) class at the Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yafo in Israel completed a questionnaire containing Likert-scale and open-ended questions. Second, follow-up interviews were conducted with six selected participants. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, while qualitative data were coded thematically using the constant comparison method. Triangulation of survey and interview data strengthened the credibility of the findings.

The results revealed a disconnect between classroom learning and real-life communication. Students reported that grammar-focused learning and exam-based assessments increased speaking anxiety and reduced confidence. A modest positive correlation was found between speaking opportunities and perceptions that classroom learning supported real-world communication. Findings also showed that students valued interactive, authentic, and media-based activities. Overall, the study suggests that language instruction should prioritize communicative fluency, authentic engagement, and meaningful interaction over excessive focus on grammatical accuracy and written examinations.

IN THE NAME OF SELF-ESTEEM: PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CULTIVATING BELONGINGNESS AND CONFIDENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

Noa Cooper

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

This presentation demonstrates how a single EPIC-aligned learning unit can simultaneously promote critical literacy, reflective writing, and learner self-esteem. Centered on Chapter 1 of *The Feel Good Curriculum* (Stout, 2000), which argues that teachers increasingly sacrifice academic standards in favor of promoting students' self-esteem, the unit integrates critical thinking, mediation, and reflective writing around the relationship between self-esteem and academic expectations. Throughout the unit, students engage in production and mediation activities focusing on claims, tone and intent, thereby strengthening their critical reading ability, academic writing, and communication skills. The unit culminates in a reflective essay whereby students either challenge or support Stout based on their own experiences.

The unit's ideas hold potential value across all levels of study as self-esteem directly influences learners' willingness to participate in language learning. Drawing on our experiences of implementing the unit in a Humanities-track Lower Advanced English course at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, serving a highly diverse student population, we will share practices and recommendations for how a strong sense of belonging and learner confidence can be cultivated across different populations.

Participants will engage in selected classroom activities, examine student tasks, and will leave with practical strategies that can be readily adapted to their own teaching contexts.

Works Cited:

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Parallel Session D2: Flexible Course Design for Changing Contexts

FROM UNSEEN EXAM TO REAL-WORLD CAMPAIGN: REDESIGNING A COMMUNICATIONS ADVANCED B COURSE THROUGH SCENARIO-BASED LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT INNOVATION

Dr. Yohanna Levy

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This presentation explores the redesign of an Advanced B course for Communications students from a traditional EAP format into a fully scenario-based, action-oriented course grounded in authentic professional communication. While the final exam previously consisted of an unseen exam with reading comprehension questions and two academic writing tasks, the course was restructured around a semester-long scenario in which students acted as communication consultants developing awareness campaigns for real-world clients.

I will demonstrate how the course operationalized the four CEFR modes of communication through interconnected tasks leading toward two final products: a written campaign strategy report and a live “Agency Campaign Roundtable.” Throughout the semester, students engaged with news and academic research articles, podcasts, videos, infographics, and social media content in order to complete authentic communicative tasks situated within the scenario.

Particular attention will be given to one of the main challenges teachers face when transitioning from EAP to EPIC pedagogy: assessment design. Drawing on my experience both as course instructor and former CPD facilitator, I will present concrete examples of scaffolding strategies, grading rubrics, interaction-focused activities, mediation tasks, as well as the structure and logic of the new final exam.

My presentation will also address the responsible integration of AI tools through a “traffic light” framework as well as the use of AI chatbots for independent practice and the need to maintain AI-free in-class speaking and writing assessments. Finally, it will reflect on how the redesigned course enhanced student engagement, collaboration, and the perceived relevance of learning outcomes.

JUST A PHONE: TEACHING EPIC BY TELEPHONE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Carol Tillman

The Levinsky-Wingate Academic College, Israel

This paper presents a researcher-practitioner account of teaching a Pre-Basic EPIC course to a group of Ultra-Orthodox female students during a period of emergency disruption. When the Rising Lion War broke out, studies were moved online across the institution. However, for this particular student community, the use of internet-based tools was not permitted due to religious and communal norms. In response, the instructor sought a creative and culturally appropriate alternative that would allow learning to continue without requiring students to compromise community expectations. The course was therefore adapted for telephone-based instruction, using landline and kosher phones as the primary channel for teaching and communication.

The teaching model divided the students into small groups that met by phone at pre-scheduled times during the week. Printed learning materials had been distributed in advance, enabling students to participate from the first telephone lesson. Lessons included pronunciation practice, guided speaking tasks, instructed discussions, and listening activities. The absence of visual and digital support required students to rely more fully on listening, speaking, and concentration, potentially strengthening oral communication skills.

The paper discusses both the possibilities and limitations of audio-only teaching. Challenges included the lack of visual interaction, difficulties in classroom management, and variations in student participation. At the same time, the small-group format created a supportive environment and ensured that every student spoke in each lesson. Although telephone instruction cannot replace face-to-face learning, the experience suggests that it can serve as an effective alternative when classrooms and online platforms are inaccessible.

EVERY STUDENT DESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUCCEED: HOW THE TRANSITION FROM EAP TO EPIC CAN BE OPTIMIZED FOR CREATING ACCESSIBLE LEARNING CONTEXTS FOR STRUGGLING LEARNERS

Esther Emma Vaisman¹, Susie Russak²

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This presentation presents findings from a study examining how the transition from EAP to CEFR-aligned EPIC was leveraged to enhance support for students with diverse learning needs at Haifa University.

Using the retrospective reflection method from the Learning from Success approach (Ellenbogen-Frankovits, et al., 2011), implicit, intuitive knowledge was elicited through in-depth interviews with multiple stakeholders (HoD, teachers, students).

Our enquiry was guided by the following questions:

- What were the successful outcomes identified?
- What structural, contextual, and professional mechanisms facilitated these outcomes?
- What challenges arose and how were they addressed?
- What transferable principles can inform similar tertiary settings?

Thematic analysis yielded an action-oriented model comprising five components.

First, an empirical foundation was established by conducting a rigorous needs analysis of students' perceptions and achievements, and examining past and present support systems.

Second, a standardized, CEFR-aligned curriculum centered on highly scaffolded Project-Based Learning (PBL) units was developed replacing all EAP syllabi. Additionally, the student support system focusing on individual students' needs was redesigned. Specially trained teachers provided students with small-group tutorial lessons, applying research-based remedial teaching techniques (Segev Miller, 2020). Crucially, while scaffolding was intensive, final assessment standards remained uncompromised to preserve academic integrity.

Third, student support was optimized by implementing a protocol for identifying struggling learners and embedding explicit metacognitive training to help them navigate their unique cognitive profiles.

Fourth, faculty development was prioritized by fostering a collaborative "community of learners" that collectively reflected on pedagogical challenges and worked to perfect the teaching materials and strategies.

Finally, real-time quality control, retrospective teacher interviews, and frequent conversations with individual students ensured continuous, data-driven curricular iteration.

While the specific content of the EPIC courses was tailored to the Haifa University setting, all components of this model can be adapted and effectively implemented in other higher education contexts in Israel and abroad.

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- Ellenbogen-Frankovits, S., Shemer, O., & Rosenfeld, J. (2011). Promoting organizational learning processes: A handbook introducing learning from success and ongoing learning [Hebrew] (Report No. S-138-11). Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute.
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INSTILLING HOPE USING PLAIN LANGUAGE: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

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This joint presentation by Hadas Marcus, an instructor from the Division of Languages at Tel Aviv University, and Dr. Itai Roffman, a senior lecturer at the Yezreel Valley College and Co-Director of the Jane Goodall Institute, Israel, will address some effective strategies for instilling hope in science communication using plain language. Today, humanity must grapple with enormous global problems: escalating climate change, accelerating biodiversity loss, increasing mass extinction, collapsing ecosystems, growing epidemics, and dwindling natural resources. These monumental challenges impede attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and jeopardize life on our fragile planet. Communication strategies that promulgate fear and rely exclusively upon complex scientific data, rather than offering realistic, comprehensible solutions, often leave audiences confused and pessimistic regarding urgent issues. Yet, in times of apathy, we need to awaken and inspire audiences to make the world a better place for humans, wildlife, and the environment.

As science communication and conservation educators, we strive to engage people from highly diverse backgrounds by counteracting this trend. We strongly believe in instilling renewed hope, by using accessible language (not scholarly jargon), and incorporating visual media and storytelling in our teaching. Our presentation focuses on some of our experiences inside and outside of classrooms - from the Porter School of Environmental Studies (Hadas) to children in Mali and Bedouin youth (Itai). We will share poignant, optimistic messages by two iconic and legendary scientists, whose comforting voices have reached millions of people worldwide for many decades: the late Dr. Jane Goodall and Sir David Attenborough.

Parallel Session D3: AI-Mediated Writing and Teacher/Learner Agency

RECLAIMING STUDENT AGENCY IN AI-MEDIATED WRITING: A STRUCTURED DEBATE PROJECT

Carmella Shahab

The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel

The integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) into higher education has raised concerns regarding authorship, autonomy, and the erosion of critical thinking in academic writing. While AI tools can facilitate text production, scholars warn that they may also encourage cognitive outsourcing, whereby students delegate analytical and writing tasks to technological systems. These concerns raise questions about how AI can be integrated into learning without undermining student agency. This study examines how scaffolded pedagogical design can support responsible AI use while preserving student agency. The research investigates a structured “TV talk show” debate project implemented in an online English as a Foreign Language college course. Students first collected information on controversial topics and organized their findings in a template before using AI tools to generate and revise debate scripts. Throughout the process, students were encouraged to critically evaluate AI-generated outputs and avoid passive reliance on automated responses. The project culminated in the recording of a simulated talk-show discussion in the college television studio. This qualitative study draws on 21 semi-structured interviews with first-year students, which were analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings indicate that the scaffolded structure of the project significantly shaped students’ interactions with AI-generated content. Rather than delegating the entire task to AI, students reported critically reviewing generated scripts, revising arguments, simplifying language for clarity, and refining the coherence of their presentations. The study contributes to debates on AI-integrated pedagogy by demonstrating how instructional scaffolding can transform AI-mediated writing from passive automation into a process of critical engagement and revision.

EXPLORING HUMAN-AI INTERACTION IN THE EFL WRITING CLASSROOM: LEARNER ENGAGEMENT AND REVISION BEHAVIORS IN AN ARAB EFL SETTING

Rawia Hayik, Hala Hanna-Irsheid

Sakhnin College, Israel

This study investigates how AI-supported corrective feedback influences the writing development of forty first-year Israeli Arab learners of English enrolled in the English department at a teacher education college. Using a qualitative approach, the research integrates a PhotoVoice-inspired reflective writing task with revisions facilitated by ChatGPT. Students examine differences between their initial drafts and AI-generated feedback and, through guided reflection, decide whether to adopt or reject the suggested revisions. Analysis of paired drafts reveals recurring error patterns linked to cross-linguistic influence from Arabic, including sentence boundary issues, subject-verb agreement errors, phonologically driven spelling, and lexical imprecision. These account for most AI interventions, while higher-level discourse issues are less effectively addressed by the tool. Students' reflections indicate three main orientations toward AI feedback: vocabulary support, structural guidance, and the development of critical self-monitoring. Notably, learners vary in the extent to which they engage actively with the AI. The findings suggest that AI feedback is most effective as an initial diagnostic tool, enabling instructors to focus on more complex rhetorical and argumentative aspects of writing that remain beyond the reach of automated systems. Importantly, the study highlights that instructional design, particularly the structured comparison and reflection phase, plays a more decisive role in shaping learning outcomes than the technology itself.

FROM CURATORIAL TO ORCHESTRATIONAL BOUNDARY-SPACE NAVIGATION IN AI- INTEGRATED ENGLISH TEACHING

Aya Onallah Adawi, Roseanne Kheir Farraj

The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel

This qualitative study examined how one year of structured AI integration through an online professional development course influenced the professional roles of tertiary-level English teachers, both Arab and Jewish, in Northern Israel. Building on an earlier pre-integration study, it compared teachers' perceptions before and after one year of AI-supported teaching. The study addressed two research questions: (1) How did tertiary English teachers initially perceive their professional roles in relation to AI integration? (2) How were these role perceptions adapted after one year of enacted AI-supported teaching?

Twenty tertiary-level English teachers participated in in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted before AI integration and after one year of implementation. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The findings reveal a shift from curatorial to orchestrational boundary-space navigation. Initially, teachers focused on deciding what should remain central to English teaching and what could be supported by AI. After one year, they shifted toward coordinating human teaching, AI tools, task design, foundational learning, assessment, and students' AI use within everyday practice. The language-knower role expanded into sequencing, editing, and gap-bridging; the emotional carer role broadened to preserving authentic human presence, relational trust, and teacher legitimacy; the supervisory role developed into designing accountable AI use; and the AI-augmented pedagogue role became more operationalized as teachers used AI to enhance instruction while teaching students to use AI effectively for learning. Course-level coordinators also emerged as mediators who translated AI possibilities into course-specific practices. Theoretically, the study refines boundary-space navigation by emphasizing orchestrational coordination within enacted pedagogical practice.

INTEGRATING GENERATIVE AI BOT IN ACADEMIC ENGLISH: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

Olga Gupol, Ilana Solomon, Rony Levi, Racheli Shimshon

Holon Institute of Technology, Israel

This study examines the pedagogical integration of the English Bot, a generative AI-based interactive learning tool developed at the Holon Institute of Technology (HIT) to support independent Academic English learning in higher education. Designed for Advanced Academic English courses, the tool generates personalized reading comprehension and vocabulary tasks aligned with CEFR B1-C1 proficiency levels and provides automated formative feedback, self-assessment opportunities, and explanatory support. The study explores how structured AI-supported asynchronous learning can enhance learner engagement, confidence, and autonomy while maintaining pedagogical alignment and instructor guidance. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study combined quantitative and qualitative data from student surveys (N=49), open-ended reflections, and comparative analyses across multiple instructional conditions. A key methodological contribution is the inclusion of three distinct comparison groups: a traditional non-AI control group, an alternative AI group using other generative AI tools, and a limited-exposure group with optional access to the English Bot. This design enabled a nuanced examination of the effects of structured AI integration, pedagogical mediation, and learner engagement. Findings indicate high levels of student satisfaction (over 90%), with participants reporting increased confidence, accessibility, and motivation resulting from immediate and personalized feedback. Although no statistically significant differences were found in formal assessment outcomes across groups, students using the English Bot demonstrated consistently higher levels of engagement, self-efficacy, and perceived learning. The study further proposes techno-pedagogical principles for responsible AI integration, including pedagogical prompt engineering, guided asynchronous learning, distributed learner agency, and ethical AI use. The findings position generative AI as a complementary instructional resource that can enrich language learning when embedded within structured, teacher-guided educational frameworks.

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