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Encountering Challenges,
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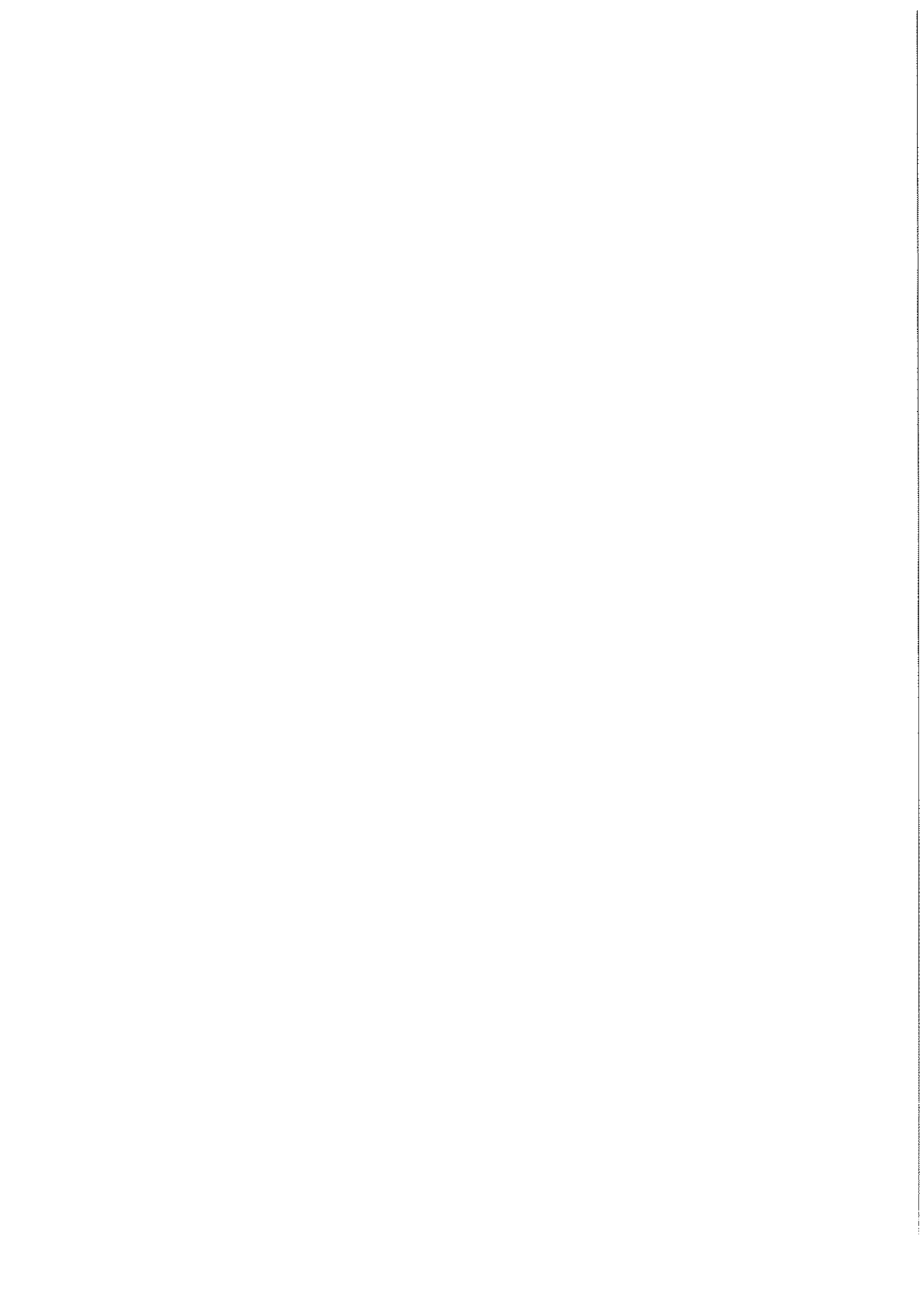
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Experimenting in Online Learning in Language Teaching

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Abstract

The paper will highlight the importance of utilizing modern technology in enhancing learning in general and English language teaching in particular. It will describe two experiments that I have been participating in implementing in this area. The first one is a co-project between the British Council, Al-Quds Open University and the University of London. It was running a training course in English language teaching through videoconferencing between Al-Quds Open University in four centers and the University of London and the British Council. The experiment will be described and evaluated. The second one will be describing the researcher's experience in working on preparing an online course in English language teaching titled "Remedial English" through "The Rufo Project". The experience will be presented with all its processes and challenges.

Introduction

Application of technology in education is nowadays an integral part of the educational process. The rapid and constant advancement of instructional technology and the revolutions in the communications systems make it more and more imperative to utilize technology to give added values to education. A more specific reason is that QOU adopts the system of ODL in its educational strategy, so it becomes increasingly important to utilize the options provided by modern educational technology to maximize the values of using this system.

Many studies showed the importance of using technology in teaching. Art St. George (2007) in his essay "Imagining Tomorrow's Future Today" explains how IT has moved to a place where new technologies are not simply replacing older ones but are increasing in complexity and are interweaving themselves with other technologies as well as the social and economic systems that support them. Anderson in his book on online learning (2004) explains the benefits of online learning e.g.:m how tutoring can be done any time and from anywhere and how online materials can be updated and the learners can see the changes at once .Furthermore, if designed properly, online learning systems can be used to determine learners' needs and current level of expertise to achieve the desired learning outcomes. The study of Shih-Jen (2000) tried to explore how students adjust themselves in learning English with the aid of multimedia computers. Tove Johannesen and Elsie Margrethe Eide (2000) explained how video conferencing technology was very useful in training, tutoring and professional training of nurses .

This paper aims at highlighting the researcher's recent experience at Al-Quds Open University in two projects which involved applying technology in teaching English as a foreign language as well as teaching English language teaching methodology.

These projects are :

- 1. The video conferencing project.**
- 2. An online English course called "Remedial English" done through what is known as "The Rufo Project".**

The Video Conferencing Project :

Introduction

This project was the result of the cooperation between the British Council, Al-Quds Open University, The University of London and the IATEFL association. It was sponsored by the British Council . The project consisted of a number of videoconference sessions held during the academic year 2006 -2007 This project was the second phase of a similar project started a year before 2005 / 2006 and took place at the British Council centers in Ramallah, Gaza and Jerusalem where a number of English major students attended the sessions held at these centers .The second phase was exclusively for the students and staff of the English program at Al-Quds Open University.

Description of the Project

1. A General Idea:

It consisted of a number of three-hour sessions . Each addressed an issue in English language teaching that meet the needs of the students and staff of the English program .These were in two tracks:

- A:** Sessions where participants were students at the English program at Al-Quds Open University in its various locations.
- B:** Sessions where participants were instructors at the English program at AL-Quds Open University.

2. Number and frequency of the VC sessions:

The expected sessions were held monthly. There were around ten sessions ; the majority of them were for the students and the rest were for the instructors of the English Department.

3. Number and place of locations that were linked:

The sessions were held at four locations at Al- Quds Open University educational regions. These were: Jerusalem, Ramallah, Gaza& Hebron (as these are the sites that have VC facilities.) These were linked with the University of London through the office of the British Council in England.

4. Number of students participating in each VC session:

The expected number of students participating in each of the four sites were (15 to 20) depending on the capacity of each site. The number of instructors for the teachers' sessions was less. The students attending the various sessions were the same in all sessions to guarantee commitment in attendance and to be able to give them some sort of participation certificate to further encourage them to be committed to the project. Students participating in these VC sessions showed full commitment in attendance and participation.

5. The topics or areas for the VC sessions:

- A.** Topics for students' sessions: These were mostly issues in the area of ELT methodology chosen according their needs.
1. Developing Writing Skills.
One of the areas that students need to focus upon is the techniques that will be followed in improving their students' writing abilities.
 2. Teaching communication skills in large classes.
Since most of our students will be facing this problem when teaching, it will be useful to help them find solutions and techniques to deal with it.
 3. Lesson Planning
The students who are being trained to become teachers need a lot of practical training on how to design lesson plans for various teaching purposes and how to use class time efficiently to include all needed skills and activities.
 4. Teaching pronunciation.
Teaching of Phonological aspects is one of the areas that our students need to be prepared to do especially if it is done by native speakers.
 5. Teaching Structure
Choosing the right methods and approaches of introducing structure is an area that requires training because this topic is often wrongly and traditionally approached.

6. Teaching mixed ability classes.

This issue will be a problem that our prospective teachers will need to deal with when they become teachers.

B . The topics for the teachers ' sessions;

The teachers of English at Al-Quds Open University are faced with a big challenge which is teaching English as a foreign language in a system that provides limited class meetings and interaction. Thus, the need is always there to train teachers to invest technology in ELT and to think of all possible methods to make up for this shortage of class interaction. Therefore , I think that the following topics were of vital need for the teachers in our situation. I believe that choosing teachers with experience in these topics to give the VC sessions was of great help because they were able to guide our teachers in this field.

1. Designing and using E- learning materials in English language teaching .
2. How to develop English language self- learners.

6. Benefits of the VC sessions :

The VC sessions helped to achieve the following goals:

- Utilizing technology in language teaching.
- Offering training in needed topics.
- Increasing cooperation between different institutions.
- Encouraging interactivity through face to face discussions between all sites as well as through e-correspondence between learners and instructors and learners themselves.
- Securing a number of audio visual aids to be used later from the DVD tapes of these sessions and from the following site provided for these sessions by the British Council:

http://dpx.com/_bc_2/dpx.php?cmd=autoplay&type=autofocus&pres=442&media=wm&dpxuser=dpx_bc_2

Future plans:

Starting the third phase:

- The plan is to launch the third phase of the VC project in the coming academic year.
- The plan is to link the sessions to a certain course (Linguistics) to be given and evaluated on line.
- Students will be given suitable credit hours for participation.

The Second project :

The Online English course called "Remedial English" of the Rufo Project.

Description of the Project

1. General features :

- It is an e-Learning project which is part of a larger project called " The Rufo Project " which comprises a consortium of five universities in the West Bank in addition to three in France, two in Spain and one in Belgium. Each of the five Palestinian universities participating in this project is to develop an on line course jointly with another university in the West bank.
- "Remedial English" is a partnership between Al-quds Open University and Birzeit University.
- It is a general English course aimed at intermediate level students to improve their English language skills including reading skills, listening comprehension, vocabulary building, structural competence, functional language use, oral & communicative skills and writing skills.
- It is blended learning in nature comprising face to face and on line teaching.

2. Members of the team of the project :

- The team includes five members organized as follows :
- Four members as subject matter experts and instructional designers:

- Dr. Insaf Abbas – Al-Quds Open University, Coordinator of the project.
- Mr. Nael Abu Arqoub- Al-Quds Open University.
- Mrs. Faten Khalaf – Birzeit University.
- Mr. Mahmoud Abd Alfattah- Birzeit University.
- Mr. Tareq Battat as multimedia specialist - Al-Quds Open University.

3. Added Educational Values for the Course :

“Remedial English”is expected to:

- provide training in studying by a blended system of e-learning.
- facilitate the role of the learner by enhancing his autonomy and self motivation.
- involvesynchronousandasynchronousinteractionandcollaboration between the learners themselves and the teacher.
- help personalize learning and emphasize the identity of the learner and increase his creativity and involvement.
- combine formal and non-formal ways of teaching.

4. Expected Outcomes for the Project :

- Enhancing good cooperation between two universities.
- opening the way for more endeavors of the sort.
- producing new strategies for autonomous learning.
- providing English e-learning on formal and non formal levels.

5. Major Challenges Encountered :

Some serious challenges were encountered while designing this on line course. Some are related to the electronic infrastructure and technical support; others are related to the lack of electronic literacy. These challenges are similar to those faced in similar conditions.

Al-Kahtani (2007) refers to similar problems in his experience in Saudi Arabian universities while Wu (2008) illustrates more challenges.

In this project, the challenges were quite similar to the ones that

would be faced in any developing country. However the degree of these problems vary from one institution to another and even from one person to another. Following is a brief description for the basic challenges that were faced .

- Infrastructure : this refers to availability of the necessary equipment and connections with the World Web which is needed for designing and implementing the on line course whether on institutional or individual levels. The problem varies according to geographical and socioeconomic factors. This course is to be implemented at Al-Quds Open University which hosts around 50 thousand students scattered all over Palestine. It is questionable whether the intranet of the university will hold the big number of first year students who will be using the course. Another problem is to be able to provide enough computers for students who will be using the course.
- Lack of experience: Designing an on line course is not an easy thing to do especially by teachers who have spent many years of teaching by traditional methods. This problem was solved by giving the instructors who designed the course some training. The designers also referred to references and previous experiences in this area. The students were given some face to face introduction about on line learning before using the course.
- Electronic illiteracy: Most of those who taught the course lacked the sufficient and appropriate knowledge and experience to teach an on line course. Some training was given to solve this problem.
- Resistance to change traditional methodology. This problem was faced on the teachers' level .
- Cooperation between team members: It was difficult for team members to work together as each teacher has his own schedule and things to do.
- Time : This was a very crucial challenge as the members were overloaded with their own responsibilities.
- Cost: The course took longer than was expected and the budget for the course was very modest and not given on time.

6. Implementations :

The first trial implementations were at Al-Quds Open University in two regions: Ramallah and Hebron during the second semester 2008. Four groups were used: two as controlled and two as experimental. Each group consisted of (15) students. The following site was used <http://courses.qou.edu> and the (moodle) platform was used for the management of the course. The second trial implementation will be at Birzeit University during the first semester 2008 / 2009.

• Students' Results :

The results of the students in both groups were calculated and analyzed. A written face to face test was given for all groups. The results of the two groups which used the e-course were slightly better than the other two groups who used the face to face lecturing. See the following table:

Percentage	Total	Fail	Pass	Learners
70% pass	30	9	21	E- learners
60% pass	30	12	18	T-learners
	60	21	39	Total

• Feedback from students and teachers

After the first trial implementation, there was some significant feedback from students and teachers who participated in the experiment. This can be summarized mainly in the following areas:

- students' preliminary fear: This was clear from the hesitation of the students to take part in the experiment.
- Satisfaction in the end: At the end of the experiment and when the students who participated in the e-course were asked through interviews and written comments, they expressed their satisfaction of the effectiveness of the experiment and that they will be willing to take more courses in this method in the future.

- More demanding and time-consuming for teachers: The teachers expressed their feeling that such courses are interesting and teach new skills but they are more demanding and take more time from the teachers as they have to be following the e-communication with the students.

Future Implementations and Evaluations.

The project will be implemented on a wider scale in the future. Once problems of infrastructure will be at least partially solved, the project is to be widely implemented by Al-Quds Open University and on a smaller scale by Birzeit University. Other universities might also implement the project. It is also expected that it could be implemented on informal levels for non university students as well.

As for evaluation, the project is to be evaluated by various means after final modifications which will be made according to feedbacks from first trial implementations. The evaluations will be using various methods such as interviews, questionnaires, checklists which will all be analyzed by experts.

Conclusion:

Using technology in teaching is a favorable thing which has to be encouraged and taught in spite of all possible problems that might be encountered. The added educational values for doing this are worth the trouble and effort that are spent in such endeavors. The implementation of such projects will be an encouraging incentive for other teachers to explore in this respect and to increase their knowledge in on line learning.

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Learner- Centered Projects and its effect on Palestinian University Students' EFL Achievement and their anxiety toward EFL learning

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the effect of cooperative learning strategies on Palestinian EFL learners' achievement and their anxiety toward EFL learning. The participants of the study consisted of two sections (80 students) of those EFL learners at Al-Quds University as experimental and control groups. Two instruments were used in this study, namely, the reading comprehension achievement test, and the foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS). The experiment lasted for 10 weeks and the experimental group was taught by cooperative learning strategies while the control group was taught by the traditional method. ANCOVA was used to examine the significance of the treatment on the dependent variables. Based on the results of the present study, it was recommended to encourage teachers to adopt cooperative learning strategies while teaching EFL for the effectiveness of those strategies in improving students' academic achievement and alleviating students' foreign language anxiety.

Introduction

This paper is for foreign language instructors who are interested in finding out how learning strategies can help their students become better language learners. In fact, probably all language teachers have wondered why some of their students leap ahead in language learning while others plod slowly no matter how hard the teacher works to make the language class interesting and enjoyable. Part of this difference between more and less effective language learners may be due to differences in ability, motivation and effort. But an important factor seems to be knowledge about the skill in using "how to learn" techniques or learning strategy (Chamot, 1998).

Recently, there has been a paradigm shift away from the traditional teacher-centered classroom toward the learner-centered classroom since it has been proved by many researchers that there are a lot of problems involved in the traditional lecture based method, among them are (Johnson et al., 2000):

- 1 . Students' attention to what the instructor is saying decreases as the lecture proceeds.
- 2 . Lectures presume the listener is oriented towards auditory learning.
- 3 . Lecturers tend to promote lower-level learning of factual information.
- 4 . Students tend not to like lectures.

According to Chamot (1998), some students may attribute their lack of success in learning a language to an inherent trait such as ability or language aptitude. Some students may tell us, " I'm just not good at languages ". When students have a low estimation of themselves in the language classroom, the role of teachers is to convince such students that their lack of success is due to the way they go about language learning rather than to internal forces beyond their control.

So, this is the point at which teachers can demonstrate some of the learning strategies that students might want to learn how to use.

Thus, this paper introduces the learner centered projects for teaching English as a foreign language to Palestinian university students at Al-Quds University. It is interested in finding out how learning strategies can help EFL students become better language learners.

But how can we define a learning strategy?

In brief, learning strategies are the thoughts that students have and actions that they can take to assist their comprehension, recall, production and management of their language learning. And the intent of learning strategies instruction is to help all students become better language learners (Chamot, 1998).

According to Chamot (1998), there are five important reasons for teaching learning strategies in the foreign language classroom:

1. Strategic differences between more and less effective learners have been documented through research.
2. Most learners can learn how to use learning strategies more effectively.
3. Many strategies can be used for a variety of tasks, but most students need guidance in transferring a familiar strategy to new problems.
4. Learning strategy instruction can increase students' motivation in two main ways:
 - by providing students with specific techniques for successful language learning.
 - by increasing students' confidence in their own learning ability.
5. Students who have learned how and when to use learning strategies become more self-reliant and better able to learn independently.

Literature Review :

As we began to incorporate learner-centered ideology into our classes, we may consider group-work and cooperative learning as a good method of instruction.

According to Kagan (1994), one of the effective instructional approaches in promoting the cognitive and linguistic development of English as a foreign language is cooperative language learning. Furthermore, Olsen and Kagan (1992) defined cooperative learning as a group learning activity organized in such a way that learning relies on a socially

structured exchange of information between learners in groups. In such an exchange, each learner is held accountable for his/her own learning and is motivated to enhance the learning of others. They noted that Cooperative learning increases interaction among learners as they restate, expand, and elaborate their ideas in order to convey and/or clarify intended meaning.

Furthermore, it has been established that Cooperative Learning enables learners to process information beyond the level of receptive understanding. In addition, Thomson & Pledger (1998) noted that Cooperative Learning encourages active participation in genuine conversations and collaborative problem-solving activities in a class climate.

Researchers have established the theoretical relevance of cooperative learning in foreign language instruction based on the premise that cooperative learning provides maximum opportunities for meaningful input and output in a highly interactive and supportive environment (Ghaith, 2003).

In addition to the effect of the teaching method and learning strategies on students' EFL learning as noted by several researchers, others have investigated to explain why some students have difficulties in learning foreign languages. Among the explanations are:

- Different intelligence to learn a foreign language (Carroll, 1990).
- Attitude (Carroll, 1990).
- Anxiety (Aida, 1994)

While on the one hand, the teaching of foreign languages is very important in education, on the other hand, there is anxiety among students who take a foreign language class.

In the context of foreign language learning, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) have identified anxiety as one of the affective variables that play a role in influencing learners' language performance. They suggested that there is a strong negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and foreign language proficiency. That is, the more anxious a foreign language learner about learning a foreign language is, the lower his/her foreign language proficiency will be.

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), foreign language anxiety manifests itself when students avoid conveying complex messages in the foreign language, when they display a lack of confidence or freeze up in role-play activities, and when they forget previously learned vocabulary or grammar in evaluative situations. They believed that such anxiety causes the student to be unreceptive to language input. Also, they believed that, for many students, a language class can be the most anxiety-provoking course in their program of study, and perhaps no other field of study poses as much of a threat to self-concept as does language study.

Background:

The social and learning context of the present study is an environment where Arabic is the native language and English is taught as a foreign language and is valued for its educational and social significance.

Driven by the awareness that many EFL learners in the secondary schools and colleges in Palestine still have problems in acquiring the basic EFL skills, there must be a change in the EFL classroom practices. Moreover, since anxiety hinders foreign language learning as noted by several scholars, an investigation of students' attitude toward EFL and of whether cooperative learning practices can improve EFL skills will provide valuable information.

Thus, this study is employing a learner centered project for teaching EFL which is represented by cooperative learning method in order to investigate its effect on Palestinian EFL university students' achievement and anxiety toward EFL learning.

So, this study addresses the following questions:

- 1 . Is there a difference in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' achievement between the experimental and the control group that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching?
- 2 . Is there a difference in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' level of anxiety between the experimental and the control group that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching?

The hypotheses underlying the present study are the following:

- 1 . There is no statistically significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' achievement between the two groups that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching (cooperative learning vs. traditional).

- 2 . There is no statistically significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' level of anxiety between the two groups that can be attributed to the strategy of teaching.

Methodology:

Study Design and participants:

This study employed a pretest- posttest control group design and focused on the variables of EFL anxiety and cooperative learning strategy as well as EFL learners achievement. Two sections of the freshmen EFL course were selected as two groups for the purpose of the study (experimental & control) with 40 students for each. The experimental group was taught through cooperative learning strategies; however, the control group was taught through the traditional way.

Instruments:

For the purpose of the study, two instruments have been used:

- 1 . A reading comprehension achievement test of 40 items which was used for pre- and post testing in order to measure students' level of reading comprehension before and after implementing Cooperative Learning strategies.
- 2 . A Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale which was used to measure students' actual level of Anxiety before and after implementing the new strategy. It is adopted from Horwitz et al. (1986).

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

1. Validity and Reliability of the Test

In order to guarantee the validity of the reading comprehension test, a jury of judges comprising experts from departments of English and departments of curriculum and instruction at Palestinian universities was invited to comment on the test. On the basis of their comments, a modified version of the test was prepared by the researcher and the jury was again requested to assess its validity.

As for the reliability of the test, the researcher conducted a pilot study by trying out the test on a group of 15 students from the population, who

were excluded from the participants of the study. The purpose of piloting were to discriminate questions that could be answered based on the examinees' general knowledge, and to estimate the appropriate time for the test and to measure its reliability. After two weeks, another test was applied on the same group. The computed reliability for test re- test was computed using Pearson correlation formula . The obtained value of reliability on the overall achievement was (0.87) which is considered acceptable for the purpose of the study.

2 . Validity and reliability of the FLCAS

To establish the validity of this instrument, comments and criticism on the original draft of the instrument were solicited from a jury of professors and educational experts. Each member of the jury was asked to comment on the accuracy of the scale and its suitability for the purpose of the study. On the basis of the jury's feedback, modifications were made. Some statements were deleted and mistakes were corrected.

To establish the reliability of the scale, it was tried out on a group of 15 students that was selected from the population, outside the participants. The purpose for piloting was to estimate the time needed for completing the scale and to measure the scale reliability. The time needed was 20 minutes. The test was re-administered after two weeks on the same group. The reliability coefficient was computed using Pearson correlation formula. The obtained value was (0.92) which was high and accepted for the purpose of the study.

The Study:

This study was implemented during the second semester of the academic year 2007- 2008, and it lasted for 10 weeks. During this period, the reading comprehension test and the foreign language classroom anxiety scale were administered to the two groups as a pre-test to measure their actual level in reading comprehension and EFL anxiety. Then, the content was taught to the control group using the traditional way of teaching, while the experimental group was taught using cooperative learning strategies.

At the end of the experiment the two instruments were re-administered to both groups as a post-test after instructing both of them .in order to measure the difference in their achievement and their level of EFL anxiety after implementing the two methods of teaching (cooperative versus traditional method).

Results:

1. Results related to the first question which is:

Is there a difference in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' achievement between the experimental and the control group that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching?

To answer this question, the following null hypothesis was formulated: "There is no statistically significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' achievement between the two groups that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching (cooperative learning vs. traditional)".

As can be seen from this table, the experimental group's mean score on the post reading comprehension test was much higher than the pre-test 29.25, 14.83 while the control group's mean score was slightly higher than the pre-test of the same group 17.65, 13.73.

This indicates that students have shown improvement in their achievement after implementing cooperative learning strategies.

Table (1)

Means and standard deviations of reading comprehension achievement of both groups on the pre and post tests.

Overall Reading Comprehension achievement	group	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Means	SD	Means	SD
	experimental	14.83	5.262	29.25	4.301
	control	13.73	5.782	17.65	6.997

To test the significance of these differences, the Analysis of Covariance statistical procedure (ANCOVA) was computed as shown in the following table :

Table (2)

Results of ANCOVA between the Two Groups on the achievement in the Post-test

Source	Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Squares	F	Significance
Pre	2211.288	1	2211.288	406.068	0.000
Group	2199.727	1	2199.727	403.945	0.000
Error	419.312	77	5.446		
Total	5321.800	79			

The results indicate that F value of 403.945 is significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) and so the first null hypothesis was rejected. This means that students achievement was improved due to the treatment in favor of the experimental group which was taught by cooperative learning strategies.

2 . Results related to the second question which is:

Is there a difference in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' level of anxiety between the experimental and the control group that can be ascribed to the strategy of teaching?

To answer this question, the following null hypothesis was formulated:

“There is no statistically significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of Palestinian EFL learners' level of anxiety between the two groups that can be attributed to the strategy of teaching”.

Table (3)

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of both Groups on the Pre- and Post-test of the FLCAS

Group	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Means	SD	Means	SD
Experimental	3.54	0.38	2.42	0.48
Control	3.64	0.38	3.13	0.39

As can be seen from this table, the mean score of the experimental group on the FLCAS post-test was decreased more than the control group in comparison to the pre-test

To test the significance of this differences, the Analysis of Covariance statistical procedure (ANCOVA) was computed as shown in the following table:

Table (4)

Results of ANCOVA on the FLCAS on the Post-test between the Two Groups

Source	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F	Significance
Pre	13.9719	1	13.9719	910.8199	0.000
Group	7.149585	1	7.149585	466.0771	0.000
Error	1.181174	77	0.01534		
Total	25.28901	79			

This table indicates that the F value is significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). S, the second null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the students' level of foreign language classroom anxiety on the post-test was decreased due to the treatment in favor of the experimental group which was taught by cooperative learning strategies.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

The findings of the current study provided evidence for the effectiveness of cooperative learning in developing EFL learners' reading comprehension achievement and decreasing their level of anxiety toward FL learning. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Applying different types of strategies in teaching English as a foreign language since the results of this study have proved that cooperative learning strategies increase students EFL achievement.
2. Applying different strategies in order to alleviate students' level of EFL anxiety as the results of this study showed that there is EFL anxiety among EFL learners.
3. Providing universities as well as schools with enough materials and instruments so as to facilitate the use of learning strategies. And one of the most important facilities is decreasing the number of students in each class, so as the use of learning strategies will be more effective.

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Language 1 in the Teaching, and Learning, of English Language and Literature

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Abstract

This paper revisits the pros and cons of using translation (more exactly, the mother tongue) in the teaching and learning of a foreign language and literature, and concludes the use of L1, if used properly and judiciously, is a needful, and worthy, pedagogical ally in the teaching, and learning, of English, as language and literature, across all levels from basic school through university.

It has often been held as anathema to use translation as a tool in foreign language teaching. However, considering recent research in bilingual education, applied linguistics and TEFL, new attitudes in foreign language teaching and teachers' experiences, mine including, I argue translation can be had as a worthy ally not only in foreign language teaching, in our context, English, but also in foreign literature teaching, and, again, in the Arab context, mostly English literature, at school, college and university levels.

Since the heyday of the attitude to language as communication (1950s and '60's, in particular) and the later modification (1970s) to this attitude by cognitive theories towards learning (see Colina (2002:2), there has been a resurrection of respectability to translation as a tool in language learning, and teaching, amongst language teaching professionals (see Alan Duff (1989)) in the Oxford University Press publication *Resources Books for Teachers*, and Margherita Ulrych (1996) in the Cambridge University Press publication *Cambridge Language Reference News*, in Kirsten Malmkjaer, ed., *Translation and Language Teaching* (1988:1).

As Malmkjaer (Ibid:1) points out, support for the revival of the practice of translation in foreign language teaching has been coming from recent research in applied linguistics. She quotes Cook (1996) asserting translation promotes multilingual competence, and, therefore, serves as a valuable tool in language teaching, and Selinker (1992; 1996) arguing for translation playing a role in interlanguage competence.

In her (edited) book (Ibid), the articles by Klein-Braley and Franklin, Stibbard and Anderman also adopt similar views. Stibbard (Ibid:69) argues first language is a "valuable resource" and "its use in EFL settings is not detrimental to foreign language development". In fact, he goes so far as to suggest that translation as an "ongoing element in a teaching program" serves as a "fifth skill alongside the four other skills..." He (74) concludes that translation can be "aimed at helping learners to develop communicative strategies, oral fluency and the skill of using the foreign language creatively".

Stibbard, however, wisely warns that for translation to be used usefully as a pedagogical tool, teachers, as well as students, need to be aware of the principles of translation theory lest they fall into the quagmire of the grammar Translation Method. This is especially true when translation is used at an advanced level.

Anderman (Ibid:45) says, with confidence, "language teaching through translation is now reasserting its position on the school curriculum after a few decades in the cold..." She refers to a survey of the teaching of translation at British universities, in which nineteen out of twenty-one institutions responding to a questionnaire indicates "translation

was taught as a way of improving students' linguistic proficiency, that translation is used to consolidate L2 constructions for active use and monitor and improve comprehension of L2". She (46) concludes the survey shows students are attracted by translation courses, a finding that is corroborated by many an Arab university teacher's experience. She (46) rightly adds translation as a teaching exercise leads to text awareness on the part of students. Drawing upon my experience, it is awareness not only of the target (language) text (TT) but also of the source (language) text (ST) as well. Popovic (www.sueleatherassociates.com/pdfs/Article_translationinlanguageteaching.pdf:2) also finds that translation as a teaching strategy raises (students') awareness of the inevitable interaction between languages 1 and 2.

Popovic (Ibid:2) cites two empirical studies that prove that translation does promote language learning and proficiency. The first is undertaken by O'Malley and Chamot to investigate learning strategies used by students of English as a second language, and also by learners of Spanish and Russian in a foreign language setting. One big finding is that translation has accounted for over 30% of strategy uses. Popovic (2) concludes translation as a teaching method "should receive due treatment".

The second study is by Fried-Lander (1990). One finding of this study is that "Translation from the native language into English appears to help rather than hinder writers: they were able to access more information when working in their first language" (2).

Shiyab and Abdullateef (2001:7) also mention an experimental project conducted at the Polish University of Poznan, which "confirms that student groups at the English Department that were trained by translation techniques had better results in developing the skills of speaking and writing than the groups that did not use translation techniques". The two researchers agree translation is a significant technique in the teaching of foreign language skills.

In this last context, I cannot but agree with an old-time researcher, Paul Kern (1905), that translation, in the forms of transmission, paraphrasing or reproduction in the foreign language, must be sometimes used,

perhaps often but never always, that the more divergent the expressions, the more necessary translation becomes, that translation enriches vocabulary and deepens feeling for the language (and for L1, I can add), and that the center of gravity is always to be had in the FL/2nd L.

I am also in support of Colina (2002) when she says that “in 2nd language acquisition, translation, as a form of language use, is not a language transfer exercise or a search and replace operation, but an activity performed with the objective of achieving a particular communicative function across cultural and linguistic barriers”. i.e., translation as a method that facilitates language acquisition through emphasis on language use for communication.

Colina ends her article (Ibid) by calling for “fostering closer interaction among SLA, language teaching and translation studies”, the lack of which has, perhaps, been behind the many arguments, always reiterated, against the use of translation in the F/2nd L classroom. These arguments are summed up by Newson, in Malmkjaer (1998:634-), and rephrased by Shiyab and Abdullateef (2001:4) – *intevalios* – particularly in regard to first language interference, to deprivation (of student) of the whole use of target language, to the illusion (on the part of student) that there is a one-to-one correspondence (between the two languages), to the harm (translation) does to fluency, to the inhibition (of student) of thinking in the foreign language, to the production of compound (rather than coordinate) bilingualism, and, lastly, to the direction of student’s attention (that translation causes) to formal properties of the language (rather than to its communicative functions).

Malmkjaer (1998) herself, in her Introduction (29-) sketches – succinctly – the objections (to the use of translation in learning and teaching) and the rebuttals and, convincingly, concludes that “translation might profitably be used as one among several methods of actually teaching language...” (9).

Shiyab and Abdullateef (2001) further refer to studies by Harris (1978), Bolinger and Sears (1981), Faerch and Kasper (1980), Marton (1973), Bouton (1974), and to other studies in translation and bilingualism, which-all-cause all the arguments against the practice of translation in the F/2nd L setting, to fall one by one: especially that conscious learning

of the foreign language, in fact, reduces 1st language interference, that mental translation (Harris's term is natural translation) is always there in the learning of a foreign language, that translation becomes a really helpful and useful exercise in contrastive linguistics at the levels of the grammar, phonology and lexis of two languages (e.g., Arabic and English), that translation helps learners to monitor code-switching and helps them to develop an "anti-interference immunity and resistance" (7), and that translation in teaching can be "like medicine, which, when administered in the right dose and way, has a curative effect..." (7).

So, assuming the usefulness and the necessity of (judicious) translation practice having now become obvious, the question remains of what type of translation? For what function? At what level? And through what medium?

The type is, of course, interlingual (as Shiyab and Abudllateef quote Andrzej), and the function is to expound grammar and teach words to the young and, to the advanced students, demonstrate phonological, semantic and grammatical patterns in both languages (Shiyab and Abudllateef amongst many others), besides the promotion of the four language skills (Popovic quoting Duff).

Stibbard (in Malmkjaer, ed.) proposes written translation as amenable to the development of critical, thoughtful reading, and spoken, to enhance the skills.

As Stibbard and Shiyab and Abudllateef, inter alios, affiran, translation can also be used at the basic school level. I enlist, here, my experience with my 5th grade daughter who is often given exercises in one-sentence-bilingual translation. Not only is my daughter excited about them, and enthusiastic about their doing, but by time she understands there is no one-to-one equivalence between the properties of English and Arabic. In fact, the exercises have enhanced her English skills, especially those of reading and writing.

Stibbard (in Malmkjaer:71) refers to, what he calls, affective-humanistic approaches in TEFL as a justification for the use of translation. He says these approaches "emphasize the need to reduce anxiety in the early stages of language learning by allowing some use of the mother tongue".

Now, drawing upon Widdowson's ideas in his *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* (1975), chiefly chapters 4. ("The nature of literary communication") and 5 ("Literature as subject and discipline"), and particularly the idea of literary communication as language use in usually unconventional grammar and lexis and the interpretation of this combination, I will outline my own experience in enlisting the help of the mother tongue in the teaching of English literature.

Firstly, I use translation to sharpen and deepen students' understanding of, and let them feel, concepts and terminology in literary criticism, and literature, in general, e.g., realism, naturalism, metaphor, metonymy, classicism, romanticism, structuralism, deconstruction, poetics, aesthetics, etc. Needless to say, many of such have long been naturalized into Arabic.

Secondly, I use it to teach colloquialisms, especially the ugly, pun-loaded ones in Shakespeare's plays, to help students understand the (English) idiomatic expressions, and to dramatize the extra-linguistic features of (English) tone, stress, intonation, accent, rhythm, etc., particularly in modern (English) drama. Without which help, the Arab student will be at a loss of what to make of all such and will never be able to discover their implications and (semantic) significations. In this context, Stibbard (73) suggests colloquialisms as one area of language that lends itself profitably to translation.

Thirdly, in my long experience of teaching Shakespeare, I have always found that students not only gain most but also get fondest, when they have come closest to visualizing who Shakespeare was, and is, as I sometimes use the mother tongue to teach his multi-layered fabric of imagery, his convoluted, unusually winding and inverted syntax, his (often) strangely knitted web of words, his vulgar, but wondrously meaningful, puns and, above all, his serious, troublesome, nagging, gnawing thoughts given the sublime but troublesome and crossword-puzzle form(s) sketched above: for how can one teach the syntax of Brutus's small oration, as one small example of Shakespeare's strange uses of syntax, rhetorical strategies and tone of Antony's oration, the histrionically grand Roman talk in Shakespeare's Roman plays, or, to be brief, the sublime in Shakespeare without succumbing to the temptation of referring to, and drawing upon, grand classic Arabic rhetoric and the sublime in thought in (especially classic) Arabic poetry?

In Shakespeare, there are verbatim renderings of lines in classic Arabic poetry, e.g., in "Coriolanus" III, iii, 185, and IV, i. 15, are almost word by word renderings of the Arabic.

- سأرحل عن بلاد أنت فيها.
- وفي الليلة الظلماء يفتقد البدر. respectively.
And one general intention (of the play) echoes
- أضاعوني وأي فتى أضاعوا.
"The Tempest" V, i, 2728- are literal rendering of the Arabic sayings,
- العفو عند المقدرة. و
- الصلح سيد الأحكام
"Antony and Cleopatra" II, ii, 227 is a rephrasing of the Qur'anic verse
(ونسأؤكم حرث لكم).

I need not stress the frequent thematic and ideational resonances of the Qur'an and the Hadith, and the echoes and wholesale reworking of biblical matter and style, in Shakespeare. So, how can one effectively teach Shakespeare without making pedagogical capital of all this that is serious, worthy, enduring, sublime and eternal?

Again, Stibbard (Ibid:74), amongst others, comes to mind when he suggests culture-bound words, culture-loaded ideas and grammar patterns that differ in the two languages, as another language area in which translation can be gainfully used.

Fourthly, at the level of our MA Program in Applied Linguistics and Translation, moving often between English and Arabic is required (by the nature of the courses, and purpose, of the program), natural and helpful.

Lastly, a word of caution is needed. Translation is a legitimate pedagogical tool if used properly and judiciously. As Popvic (Ibid) says, it is not giving students a text and asking them to translate; rather the translation activities, uses, interferences are to be integrated into the language skills / properties / categories under exploration-all depending on the teaching moment, context and situation.

So, I would restrict my phraseology and say not translation (lest the word be misunderstood) but mother tongue, or L1, whose help should be cultivated in the learning / teaching of a foreign language and literature (in the Arab region, usually, English-both). For without understanding

the linguistic and extra-linguistic media of communication, the thematic, ideational, intellectual and philosophical implications, significations or intentions, beneath them, will not be adequately gleaned. After all, the use of L1 in the learning and teaching of English language and literature does not purpose to train would-be translators but to help students understand the sign and make the correct interpretation.

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Implementing Computer In Daily English Lessons

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Introduction

Quotation 1

" The human is the enemy of what he does not know " - Proverb .

Quotation 2

" If technology is to be used by students , then teachers must possess the confidence , understanding , and skills to effectively incorporate technology into their teaching practices . This only occurs by providing adequate training and development of teachers ." (Brand ,1988) .

Quotation 3

"No matter how good teaching may be, each student must take the responsibility for his own education." ~John Carolus.

The following feature provides a discussion of tips and basic strategies for using a computer effectively in an ESL class setting.

Computers should be used as a language learning tool - just as any other piece of equipment (i.e., tape recorder, VCR, blackboard, etc.). It is important the computer NOT become the center of attention of the lesson. There are situations when activities at the computer can become the center of attention, however these situations should be avoided and left to students to decide when, and if, they want to utilize such activities (in self-access). Planning a lesson around such an activity requires the teacher to first consider the scope of a particular lesson. Once the content of the lesson is decided on, the teacher can then consider if the use of a certain computer based activity meets a desired objective of the lesson. At this point, the teacher can then decide at which stage of the lesson to use a computer and for what purposes.

Computers as a Language Learning Tool

For some tasks, computers can provide distinct advantages over more traditional approaches. The use of a computer for listening exercises often provides not only sound, but also visual input providing students with more contextual clues. Students interacting with a computer are also using motor skills as well, which can have a strong reinforcing effect on the learning process by connecting physical actions (clicking, typing) with desired results. Students are also allowed more control over their own learning process as they make the decisions when to repeat questions, exercises and sequences based on their own progress. In this manner, student needs and individual issues are further pushed to the forefront of any given activity, as it is the student making decisions for him/herself rather than the teacher for the group. Probably the strongest argument for the use of the computer in the classroom environment is that of student self-pacing. Especially in the field of pronunciation, students can employ a computer to record themselves to compare their pronunciation to a target pronunciation. This can be repeated endlessly until a student is satisfied with his/her result. These pronunciation exercises are often combined with visual aids (such as intonation graphs) to help the student recognise how his/her pronunciation compares to the target pronunciation. Common tools such as spell checking can also provide the student with valuable self-analysis instruction.

Finally, with the aid of the Internet and CD-Rom based materials, teachers can quickly access documents addressing individual student needs. This is especially effective when teaching English for Special Purposes such as Business English. An example would be white papers put up on a company web-site discussing certain technologies in English that students are currently employing. Another example is glossaries provided for specific business sectors (port, banking, insurance, etc.). Using these materials, the teacher can often provide content addressing specific student needs, thereby improving motivation and effectiveness.

Making the student comfortable with the technology

- Admittedly, the computer can be an overwhelming and imposing instrument to students and teachers. The complexity of the computer.
- not to mention the overwhelming choice of possibilities - can put students and teachers off as they lose time grappling with how to use the computer. There are a few basic principles that should be followed in order to help the student (and teacher) feel more at home using the computer.
- The computer should always be turned on, booted, and the program loaded (preferably the exercise chosen) before the class begins. In this manner, students focus on doing the task at hand rather than getting to the point where they can do the task.
- Students who are not comfortable using computers should be placed with students who are. These students should not be forced to use the mouse or type at the keyboard. As they become more familiar with the technology, they will often begin to play a more active role - even if they don't, the ability to use the computer is not the issue.
- Students more comfortable with the computer should be strongly discouraged from using other resources available in the program itself, or in other programs. These students should be encouraged to explore these resources on their own by taking advantage of self-access programs.
- Use of the computer should be phased in; instead of introducing a complex series of exercises to be done for a lesson, teachers should begin by doing a limited amount of work with the computer (i.e. one listening exercise followed by an interactive quiz).

Computers in EFL Pedagogy are divided into :

a. **Computer- Aided Instruction (CAI_)**

b. Computer -Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

A. * **Computer- Aided Instruction (CAI)**

is a term most often refers to of educational instruction performed almost entirely by computer.

B. * Computer -Assisted Language Learning (CALL) .

* **CALL is a form of computer-based learning which carries two important features:**

bidirectional learning and individualized learning. It is not a method.

* **CALL materials are tools for learning.**

* **The focus of CALL is learning, and not teaching. CALL materials are used in teaching to facilitate the language learning process. It is a student-centered learning material, which promotes self-paced learning.**

* **CALL is not a method. It is a tool that helps teachers to facilitate language learning process.**

* **CALL can be used to reinforce what has been learned in the classrooms. It can also be used as remedial to help learners with limited language proficiency.**

At the beginning there are some important points to remember :

Computers :

* have developed rapidly .

* have become more powerful, faster, smaller, cheaper and easier to use.

" Multi - media " is the a buzz word today in the field of computers. *

have established a powerful presence in foreign language pedagogy.

EFL Teachers' Misconceptions : Some teachers think that ;

* Computers will take their places.

* Computers are not useful .

* Uninterested in learning how to use computers.

Expensive for little return. *

It is better to wait until the development stops *

- * Only computer experts or experts in CAI should use computers in language teaching .
- * Learning by computer is not really learning at all. They think that it is mainly playing.
- * Students will not learn using a computer, because the computer does the work for them.

Advantages of CALL& CAI :

- Computers are " patient " with learners' errors.*
- Computers are " fair " .
- They are fast- ss get immediate feedback.
- Learners work at their own pace.
- They add variety and change to the class.
- They address different learning styles.*
- * They are useful in teaching and practicing reading , vocabulary , grammar , writing, etc.
- Students can become more computer literate.
- They can present materials in various ways.
- Computers are flexible and untiring.
- Computers have a clock .
- Computers can keep records accurately.*
- * Students think materials are new and fresh if they are presented on computers.
- Learning can be individualized .
- * They have access to various types of aids, including dictionaries, pictures, *
- graphs of intonation, and voice recordings .

Limitations of Call for Teachers :

- * Student expectations and school policy.
- * EFL Teachers' Misconceptions about CALL .
- * Technical expertise .
- Teachers' inability to ingrate and link the CALL ACTIVITIES to objectives and the curriculum.
- * Training teachers.

Limitations of Call for Students;

- Some students are afraid of computers .
- Learners' lack of interest .
- Wide range of English ability.
- Broad range of computer skills in any class.

Limitations of Computers;

- Computers cannot recognize normal speech.
- Computers cannot make intelligent decisions.
- Computers can only recognize what they are programmed to recognize.

Limitations of Call in Palestine Schools;

- Limited lab number and time for CALL.
- Limited software selection.
- Lack of a network setup.
- Staff need ongoing training.
- Need for ongoing technical maintenance.

The structure of the CALL Session:

A . The Pre-CALL Phase

- Make lesson objectives clear .
- Prepare the learners thoroughly .
- Expose the learners to the target teaching point .
- Contextualize the target teaching point .
- Connect the teaching point with the syllabus .
- Use communicative activities .

B . CALL Phase

- Teacher is an active facilitator .
- Learners engage with the working stations .
- Encourage learners to monitor their own progress .

C. Post-CALL Phase

- Schedule follow-on activities soon .
- Provide opportunities for more practice of the target point .
- Use all language skills whenever possible .
- Tie the Call lesson to the curriculum .

D. Evaluation of Software : Design

- Is it easy to use and understand ? .
- Do the ss have the computer skills to use it ? .
- Does it let ss skip questions without answering correctly ? .
- Does it provide explanations and help screens ? .
- Is the presentation of materials interesting? (Color , pictures and sounds) .

E. Evaluation of Software : Content

- Do the tasks match the students' level ? .
Does the content match the objectives of the lesson ? *
- Is it culturally appropriate ? .
- Is it aimed toward EFL students ? .
- Are the tasks and language authentic ? .
- Are there clear enough explanations for the students to understand ?

F. Evaluation of Software : Exploitation

- Where should each lesson occur in the syllabus ? .
- What kind of pre-teaching is necessary for each lesson ? .
- How could pair or group work be utilized ? .
- What kind of follow - up activities would be appropriate for each lesson ? .
- How can students be evaluated for each lesson ? .

Practical Activity Software

- Flyers .
- Interactive English .
- Say it in English .
- Movers .
- Hot Potatoes .
- Reading Plaster .
- Ready For School .
- Kids Work .
- Reading Plaster .
- Ready For School .
- Kids Work .
- Triple play Plus ! .
- Call Lessons 0304- .
- Fun with English .
- Have Fun with English .
- Learn to speak English .
- My amazing dictionary .
- English Games .
- Learning Ladder .
- Alphabet Train .

Using Technology in Teaching English Language at Elementary Schools in Gaza Governorate

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Introduction

Technology is an ever-increasing part of the English language arts classroom. Today's teachers are developing new and exciting means of integrating language, writing, and literature with innovative technologies.

Technology defined as human in action that involves the generation of knowledge and processes to develop systems that solve problems and extend human capabilities. Also it can be defined as the innovation, change, or modification of the natural environment to satisfy perceived human needs and wants. Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning; various technologies deliver different kinds of content and serve different purposes in the classroom. (Becker,1994)

Each technology is likely to play a different role in student's learning ,rather than trying to describe the impact of all technologies as if

they were the same, researchers need to think about what kind of technologies are being used in the classroom and for what purposes .(Reeves,1998; Ringstaff and Kelley, 2002) .

In teaching language, using technology has distinct advantages that relate not only to language education preparing students for today's information society , technologies are the powerful tools for assisting language teaching.(Wang,2005) .

In recent years much attention has been focused on using technology in classes. It is the age of technology. Technology plays a very important role in our life. Identifying the value of technology in schools has challenged educational researchers for more than 20 years. Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning .The types of technology that are available in the classroom are OHP, LCD and Computers (Power Point) which can be easily experienced. One of the most amazing developments of the century has been found is OHP ,the best way to use OHP takes teachers talk and show while large groups of students listen. OHP was first seen during world war two, it was used as a tool to train large numbers of servicemen in 1950s and 1960s , it crossed over into classroom as an educational tool and then into business .

Also computer are the most important technical aid to teachers. Especially basic power point was found by Robert Samuel Heathcote. Microsoft Power Point is leading graphics package for using in designing presentation.

Finally LCD that stands for Liquid Crystal Display this technology used to project images. After viewing many researches ,I think researchers have found that using technology can increase students achievement across a variety of subject areas including mathematics, science and English. As we can see various technology types deliver different kinds of contents and serve different purposes in the classroom , teachers are becoming more comfortable with the use of technology. At the end, technology makes our life more comfortable because it is useful and helpful and teachers can easily accustomed to use the same .

The Problem of Study

The researcher discusses using OHP, LCD and PowerPoint in teaching English Language at Elementary Schools in Gaza Governorate .The study

will answer the main question :Do students understand their teachers and get more information and get the idea of the lesson more quickly and easily by using OHP, LCD and PowerPoint than ordinary teaching way? The following sub-questions arise from the main question :

- 2 . Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in using OHP, LCD and PowerPoint in teaching process referred to and based on teachers' gender?
- 3 . Are OHP, LCD, and Power Point useful and helpful for the lesson ?
- 4 . Do OHP, LCD, and Power Point increase the students' ability?
- 5 . Do students have an active and motive response while learning English by OHP, LCD and Power Point?
- 6 . Are students differences considered while learning English by OHP, LCD and Power Point ?

The importance of the study

The researcher noticed during his career and teaching English as a foreign and second language that technology plays an important role in teaching English .The importance of study lies in the following points:

- 1- The research formulate a list of useful techniques and procedures for TEFL by using technology.
- 2- The study will upgrade the level of English language teacher by using technology.
- 3- The research shall draw the attention of the persons in charge and the officials to the importance of providing suitable environment and financial requirements to improve English language teaching by using technology.
- 4- The study will draw the attention of persons in charge and the officials to the importance of teacher's role in achieving and carrying out effective English Language teaching by technology.

The Objective of the Research

The main objectives of using technology system in the elementary schools are:

- Improving teaching and learning by using technology as tool that may enrich the existing teaching practices and opening new methods for presenting linguistic information and knowledge.

- Promoting self-determination learning instrument that can be used collectively at school .
- Enabling the teachers to manage technology using in the classroom and evaluate using different types of technology.
- Enabling the teachers to use the types of technology effectively in the classroom in order to save their time and efforts and to convey the lesson perfectly.
- Introducing basic features of information technology.
- Drawing the attention of teachers to the importance of using technology .
- Determining the attitudes and opinions of English teachers regarding education technology in their classes.
- Creating a great individual freedom and breaking down the rigid and standardized classroom practices.

Limitations of the Study

The study has three limitations :

1. Limitation of time
The study will be applied in the second term of the academic year 2007/ 2008.
2. Limitation of place
The study will be carried out in Gaza Governorate Elementary schools.
3. Subject Limitation
The study will deal with and study using technology(OHP , LCD, and Power Point) In teaching English Language at Elementary Schools in Gaza Governorate.

Definition of Terms

- Technology : OHP ,LCD ,and Power Point .
- EFL : English Foreign Language
- TEFL : Teaching English Foreign Language

Previous Studies

Many researches dealt and studied using technology in teaching English Language . The study of Peter Chandra (1987) shows and introduces the views and opinions of teachers about their using of

various teaching methods and teaching resources. The study was limited to a single secondary, where questionnaire was given to a small sample of 15 teachers in four departments. It was found that in the ideal world (where every thing that was needed was available) the reasons given for various teaching methods used were many pupil dominated, but when it came to the actual methods being used, the reasons were mainly personal constraints of the teacher or organizational constraints. The dichotomy widened from the humanities field to the science field. Salwa Al-Nabris(2003) in here study aims at exploring the extent to which English Language teachers use teaching aids in teaching English in the elementary stage so that they can facilitate teaching-learning process for students and find out whether years of experience influence using teaching aids at elementary schools. The researcher conducted this study in Khan Younis Elementary schools, in the first term of the scholastic year 2002 / 2003 on 31 male and female English language teachers .Teachers were chosen according to across-sectional sample out of 40 English teachers. The questionnaire was composed of 34 items and it was developed to be used for data gathering. The study of Shih-Jen (2000) aims at exploring how students adjust themselves in learning English with the aid of multimedia computers . The literature of past research in the Communicative Language Teaching Approach and computer-assisted language learning usually look into the topics in their own domain. The research combines the two fields which are not common so far ,makes this study very important. This study addresses three questions. First, what are the similarities and differences of languages teaching and learning between traditional classroom and multimedia language lab. under the communicative framework? Second, are there any changes in the roles of teachers and students when they are in different teaching environment from traditional classroom ?Third, what are the implications of the communicative language teaching approach (CLT approach hereafter) in a multimedia computer language lab in teaching ?

Comments

In comparison with the studies carried out on using technology in teaching English Language at elementary schools in Gaza Governorate, they do not have and include many studies on the advantages and disadvantages of using technology. The majority of these studies pointed

at and focused on the technology in general without mentioning the influence and effect of the same on learning and teaching English language. The research is distinguished from the other previous studies that it provides a brief account on the new possibilities that technology may supply the English language. The research presents a general changes that technology may introduce. Such research shows the followings :

- 1 . Advantages and disadvantages of using the technology.
- 2 . The technical requirements for using technology.
- 3 . The programs and requirements that necessary for using the technology .
- 4 . Analysis of stages of methodology related to technology.
- 5 . Methodology of teaching English language skills by using technology.
- 6 . The study deals with OHP, LCD and Power Point.

The Method of Study

The researcher will follow the analytical descriptive method in this study.

A . Population

The population of study is from English teachers at the elementary schools in Gaza for the scholastic year 2007 / 2008.

B . Sample of Study

The researcher will choose a random sample from the population of study composed of (123) teachers who teaches English Language.

C . The instrument of Study

The researcher will design a questionnaire composed of 51 items.

The Validity of the questionnaire

1. Agreement of referees

The questionnaire was introduced for a group of specialized linguistics university tutors and lecturers at Gaza Governorate. They provided their recommendations and suggestions about the validity of the items of the questionnaire .The researcher amended and modified the same upon the suggestion and recommendations of the referees.

The Stability and Reliability of questionnaire Internal Consistency

The stability of the questionnaire was estimated by using Person method. The coefficient correlation of each item is (0.01) and (0.05). The questionnaire is proved to be reliable. Alpha Cronbach coefficient is (0.524) and the split-half coefficient is (0.676) such thing indicates that the questionnaire can be applied in the study. This indicates that the questionnaire is highly enjoyed with high stability and liability which may give the researcher confidence to apply the same on the subjects of study.

Using Technology in teaching

Technology is defined as human innovation in action that involves the generation of knowledge and processes to develop systems that solve problems and extend human capabilities ,also it can be defined as the innovation, change, or modification of the natural environment to satisfy perceived human needs and requirements. Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning, various technologies deliver different kinds of content and serve different purposes in the classroom. (Becker 1994). Each technology is likely to play a different role in students's learning, rather than trying to describe the impact of all technologies as if they were the same , researches need to think about what kind of technologies are being used in the classroom and for what purposes.(Reeves,1998, Ringstaff and Kelley, 2002)

In teaching language, using technology has distinct advantages that relate not only to language education preparing students for today's information society, technologies are the powerful tools for assisting teaching (Wang,2005).

Technologies available in classroom today range from simple tool-based applications (such as word processors)to online repositories of scientific data and primary historical documents, to handled computers, closed-circuit television channels, and two-way distance learning classrooms. Even the cell phones that many students now carry with them can be used to learn(Prensky,2005). Bruce and Levin, for example, look at ways in which the tools, techniques ,and applications of technology can support integrated, inquiry-based learning to "engage children in exploring,

thinking ,reading , writing ,researching , inventing ,problem-solving and experiencing the world." With four technology as media .They developed the idea of different focuses: media for inquiry(such as data modeling, spreadsheets, access to online database, access to online observatories and microscopes, and hypertext),media for communication(such as word processing, e-mail, synchronous conferencing. Graphics software, simulations and tutorials),media for construction(such as robotics, computer-aided design ,and control systems),and media for expression (such as interactive video, animation, software and music composition). In a review of existing evidence of technology's impact on learning Marshal (2002) found strong evidence that educational technology "complements what a great teacher does naturally," extending their reach and broadening their student's experience beyond the classroom. "With ever-expanding content and technology choices, from video to multimedia to the internet . "Marshal suggest "there's an unprecedented need to understand the recip for success, which involves the learner, the teacher, the content and the environment in which technology is used."

It is not enough to be just a dynamic and exciting instructors .Technology provides an effective way to engage learners in the world in which they are familiar, Here in the research I'll mention just three types of technology used in Gaza's schools. Each technology is likely to play different role in students learning. The three types are visual aids using slides to present the lesson or the learning material. Slides presentation are highly effective method for enhancing classroom presentation and aiding students productively and electronic presentation. They also help ,clarify, visualize, emphasize, organize and summarize information .

Over Head Projector

An OHP is a very basic reliable form of projector, it displays images onto a screen. It comes in variety of makes but all have similar features. A projector which sits on a speaker's desk and projects images on a screen behind it. The instrument is mainly suitable for the fields of scientific research, academic exchange and audiovisual education program. The

over head projector is one of the most frequently tool in education and training today. OHP is the most useful and versatile visual aids that is available to the modern teaching.

OHP is a simple machine, it displays images onto screen or wall. Teachers can use it as an visual aid to show the class the main point of the lesson. And use it for presenting information to group. It is the easiest way of showing students and get their attention. It can be used as a tool to develop ideas.

OHP helps students to get information in useful manner , also helps the teachers in producing and illustrating the new lesson and to save the time.

OHP provides the following useful benefits :

- Learning in groups and by that they share information with each other.
- Students can understand the lesson in simple manner.
- Helps students understand exactly what ought to be taught.
- The written material don't erase so they can write and take notes.
- All the class pay the attention so there is no muss in teaching and they hear every word said by the teacher.
- It is very helpful for students ,they can learn new and revise subjects.

The rational development of visual aids resources for teaching with large institutions requires information on the use made of media by teaching staff.

Despite its near universal use, many teachers fail to get the best out of the OHP for previous reasons. Many of these reasons relate to the use of the machine itself, failure to use the entire area of the screen make it difficult for pupils at the back of the class to see details. Also dirty or dusty surfaces can reduce image brightness and detract from the clarity and quality of the display and that because of the misuse of the projector. Teachers think it wastes their time. The hassle of moving the OHP around by hands has pushed the teachers away from using it because of its equipment. Teachers also hate to use it because the shortened life of the bulbs, and blank screen was small price to avoid the risk of a bulb blowing and the disruption that cause.

There are many advantages of using OHP :

- The teachers always face the class and it can to maintain eye contact with learners.
- It presents a series of images in sequences and it is easy to modify.
- It is flexible and can be used in a large auditorium.
- OHP is easily to store in suitable boxes blocked out thus allowing students to take notes. It is also quite, clean and very effective.
- The ability to engage with the students and helping them to convey the important visual message.
- Teachers can use it to display assignment information and present examples.

OHP also has some disadvantages :

- The OHP includes the fact that it requires a power supply and needs a suitable flat surface on which to project its images .
- The OHP requires a certain amount of routine maintenance. Presentation visuals can be lost or get out.
- The OHP are also liable to breakdown occasionally generally at extremely time.
- It needs darkened room and that not available in our classes, and images is shown for limited period of time.

The LCD

It is an abbreviation for "Liquid Crystal Display" is the technology used for displays. The LCD is made with either a passive matrix or an active matrix display and every LCD projector follows a basic design ,that all LCD projectors must have at least a few basic component: 1) light source 2)Fresnel lens 3) LCD panel .

LCD displays images onto screen. Teachers use it to clarify meaning and examples. Teachers also use it to project images and its away make a show for students to get the ideas clearly. Finally LCD simplify the information.

LCD has clear pictures, helps the teachers, useful in teaching, more exciting, and summarizes and organizes materials. LCD can be used

to modify and obtain new ideas and concepts. Using LCD makes different presentation to the subject that we learn by using this kind of technology.

LCD supplies the following benefits:

1. Enjoyable for students and gets their attention.
2. The picture conveys the information to the students.
3. Simplifies the information for student.
4. Outlines their tasks for the lesson.
5. Exchanges knowledge.

When the teacher fasts the moving object, moves across a LCD screen the delay of LCD technology causes, there are trails or blackness of the image since the screen can not keep up. Even teachers wish to use LCD they need so many equipment to be taken to the class and requires a period of time to switch it on and use so many cables. LCDs are rapidly becoming popular as useful presentation tool for business but the teachers find it is difficult to use. The high cost of the LCD make schools can not offer it for their teachers.

LCD has many advantages :

- LCD does not have an electron gun. It is comfortable for the students eye.
- More than one visual at a time can be shown. Quality units have good brightness levels.
- Can present video and animation. Can be used in a large auditorium.
- Its images can appear clearly. It also displays the images naturally.
- It is easy to obtain, modify, and create.
- It provides pictures and other graphics supporting the material .

LCD also has some disadvantages:

- High cost, it is too expensive , limited viewing angle.
- LCDs can have many weak or struck pixels, which are permanently on or off.

- LCDs have difficulty in producing black and very dark grays.
- Requires electricity and teachers hardly know to use it .

The power Point

The power point software is a part of the Microsoft office package .It is a presentation authoring software creating graphical presentation with or without audio. Also it is a software that allows you to create slides , handouts and outlines. It is a popular presentation program and it is a product by Microsoft. Power point is used to create effective slide show presentation. Power Point presentation can be designed on any subject right across the curriculum.

Microsoft Power Point is generally used for presentation in meeting, schools and private parties. It is supported by high lightened key points. It presents tips and out lines, presents examples, provides pictures and other graphics supporting the materials and materials and display assignment information.

Computer generated slides presentation can enhance the effectiveness of classroom lessons. It can emphasis main points and key announcement and it can enhance such presentation with graphics, such presentation become more organized, flexible and easily to update or rearrangement .You can learn power Point by yourself . Microsoft Power Point is a powerful tool to create professional looking presentations and slide shows. Power Point allows you to construct presentations from scratch or by using the easy to use wizard. There are different views within Microsoft Power Point that allow you to look at your presentation from different perspectives.

Power Point introduces the following useful benefits :

- 1 . It is interesting, stimulates interest of students.
- 2 . Clarifies information, makes the material clear to their understanding.
- 3 . Helps the students understand and remember better.
- 4 . Helps the students stay focused on the material and follow more a long easily.

To use slides presentation in class you will need computer or a work station that is rarely you can found in schools. Computer should have a fairly large hard driver and you will need more time before and after class to set up trouble shoot and turn off your equipment. You will need sufficient time to learn to setup and use the equipment .

The Power Point has the following advantages :

- 1 . Power Point is flexible and easy to learn. It is easy to be obtained and modified.
- 2 . Its slides cannot get lost. It can be used in a large auditorium.
- 3 . It can present complex computer graphics and animation.
- 4 . It stimulates students interest by using of clipart and cartons.
- 5 . It can be used to teach new ideas and concepts to students , reviewing ideas which have already been taught and for the test.
- 6 . It is providing wizards to guide the user through the creation process.

Power Point also has the following disadvantages :

- 1 . Power Point presentation may encounter technical difficulties, when that happens the teacher stucks.
- 2 . Requires electricity , projector and a darkened room.
- 3 . Only one slide can be shown at a time .
- 4 . It takes time to produce or adopt .

Analyzing The Results

The sample based on the following :

Table (1)

The distribution of the sample according to the gender .

Gender	No.	%
Male	51	41.5
Female	72	58.5
Total	123	100.0

First: Answering the first question

The first question is: Do the students understand their teachers and get more information and get the idea of lesson more quickly and easier by using OHP, LCD and PowerPoint than the ordinary teaching way?

To answer this question the researcher used the frequencies, the sum of responses, means, std. deviation and the % weight and rank of each item from the questionnaire ,table (2) shows this:

First : Part one : OHP

From table (2) we can notice that the most two difficulties are:

- No. (27) " Do you take along time to prepare the lesson by using the OHP ?"occupied the first rank with percent weight (%75.610).
- No.(48)" Do your students have a satisfactory response to the OHP?" occupied the second rank with percent weight (75.610%).

And the least are:

- No. (12)"Do you think that the OHP improve the students competence?" occupied the fifteenth rank with percent weight (50.407%).
- No. (18)" Is OHP the best way to clarify and explain the lesson ?" occupied the sixteenth rank with percent weight (44.715%).

Table (2)

frequencies, the sum of responses, means, std. deviation . And the % weight and rank of each difficulties from the nature of drama .

No.	ITEM	Never	Sometimes	Often	Usually	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight	Rank
1	Is OHP available in your school ?	0	15	99	9	240	1.951	0.441	65.041	8
4	Do you use the OHP in your class ?	15	66	0	42	192	1.561	1.088	52.033	14
7	Do you prefer to use OHP ?	6	54	12	51	231	1.878	1.021	62.602	10
12	Do you think that the OHP improve the students competence ?	9	75	6	33	186	1.512	0.970	50.407	15

15	Is it important to use the OHP in class ?	9	63	0	51	216	1.756	1.081	58.537	12
18	Is OHP the best way to clarify and explain the lesson ?	12	81	6	24	165	1.341	0.904	44.715	16
21	Are there problems in using OHP?	9	66	12	36	198	1.610	0.989	53.659	13
24	Using OHP is to some extent easy .	12	45	9	57	234	1.902	1.104	63.415	9
27	Do you take along time to prepare the lesson using the OHP ?	3	39	3	78	279	2.268	0.992	75.610	1
30	Using OHP in class help the students to understand the lesson .	3	33	18	69	276	2.244	0.935	74.797	3
33	Do you have difficulties in using OHP ?	15	45	15	48	219	1.780	1.098	59.350	11
36	Using OHP in class help the teachers and the students achieve the lesson aims .	3	42	3	75	273	2.220	1.004	73.984	5
39	Do you think the OHP has an affective influence on students ?	3	36	24	60	264	2.146	0.929	71.545	6
42	Does OHP need a suitable atmosphere ?	0	12	69	42	276	2.244	0.619	74.797	4
45	Is OHP used in a certain stage ?	15	27	15	66	255	2.073	1.117	69.106	7
48	Do your students have a satisfactory response to the OHP?	3	30	21	69	279	2.268	0.915	75.610	2

The researcher refers such thing to the refusal of some teachers for using this kind to technology, the prefer the old method of teaching and they think it wastes their times, it takes long time to prepare the lesson and they need every second in their classes. The teachers also do not satisfy with their students' response, and they refer such thing that most students just prefer looking at the colours of the writing or drawings and the do not pay attention to the main point of the lesson.

Part two : LCD

Table (3)

frequencies, the sum of responses, means, std. deviation . And the % weight and rank of each difficulties from the nature of drama .

No.	ITEM	Never	Sometimes	Often	Usually	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight	Rank
2	Is LCD available in your school ?	9	3	102	9	234	1.902	0.620	63.415	9
5	Do you use the LCD in your class ?	63	51	3	6	75	0.610	0.764	20.325	16
8	Do you prefer to use LCD?	33	66	6	18	132	1.073	0.951	35.772	14
13	Do think that the LCD improve the students competence ?	9	63	9	42	207	1.683	1.027	56.098	11
16	Is it important to use the LCD in class ?	18	54	3	48	204	1.659	1.144	55.285	12
19	Is LCD the best way to clarify and explain the lesson ?	21	78	9	15	141	1.146	0.846	38.211	13
22	Are there problems in using LCD?	6	30	33	54	258	2.098	0.936	69.919	7
25	Using LCD is to some extent easy .	51	45	9	18	117	0.951	1.039	31.707	15
28	Do you take along time to prepare the lesson using the LCD ?	3	15	33	72	297	2.415	0.799	80.488	1
31	Using LCD in class help the students to understand the lesson .	6	30	27	60	264	2.146	0.955	71.545	4
34	Do you have difficulties in using LCD ?	15	27	42	39	228	1.854	1.006	61.789	10
37	Using LCD in class help the teachers and the students achieve the lesson aims .	6	45	12	60	249	2.024	1.028	67.480	8
40	Do you think the LCD has an affective influence on students?	6	33	21	63	264	2.146	0.981	71.545	3
43	Does LCD need a suitable atmosphere ?	0	12	72	39	273	2.220	0.608	73.984	2
46	Is LCD used in a certain stage ?	15	24	18	66	258	2.098	1.104	69.919	6
49	Do your students have a satisfactory response to the LCD?	6	30	30	57	261	2.122	0.946	70.732	5

From table (3) we can notice that the most two difficulties are:

- No. (28)"Do you take along time to prepare the lesson using the LCD ?" occupied the first rank with percent weight (80.488 %).
- No(43)" Does LCD need a suitable atmosphere ?" occupied the second rank with percent weight (73.984%).

And the least are :

- No (25) " Using LCD is to some extent easy ." occupied the fifteenth rank with percent weight (31.707%).
- No (5) " Do you use the LCD in your class ?" occupied the sixteenth rank with percent weight (20.325%).

The researcher refers such thing to some teachers can not use the LCD because they could not switch it on and it is new kind for all teachers. It has used at schools since 2004 or 2995 and they need a workshop to learn how to use this technology. LCD also requires special equipments to be operated and to work on and that take long time. Specifying a special display room is the most difficult issue that faces the teachers.

Part three:- PowerPoint

From table (4) we can see that the most two difficulties are:

- No (29)"Do you take along time to prepare the lesson using PowerPoint ?" occupied the first rank with percent weight (84.553%).
- No(44)" Does PowerPoint need a suitable atmosphere? " occupied the second rank with percent weight (78.049 %).

And the least are:

- No (26) " Using PowerPoint is to some extent easy" occupied the fifteenth rank with percent weight (41.463 %).
- No (6)"Do you use PowerPoint in your class ? " occupied the sixteenth rank with percent weight (24.390%).

Table (4)

frequencies, the sum of responses, means, std. deviation . And the % weight and rank of each difficulties from the nature of drama .

No.	Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Usually	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight	Rank
3	Is PowerPoint available in your school ?	12	6	93	12	228	1.854	0.721	61.789	9
6	Do you use PowerPoint in your class ?	54	57	3	9	90	0.732	0.830	24.390	16
9	Do you prefer to use PowerPoint?	18	78	0	27	159	1.293	0.973	43.089	13
14	Do think that the PowerPoint improve the students competence ?	9	66	6	42	204	1.659	1.031	55.285	12
17	Is it important to use the PowerPoint in class?	9	63	0	51	216	1.756	1.081	58.537	11
20	Is PowerPoint the best way to clarify and explain the lesson ?	15	81	9	18	153	1.244	0.853	41.463	14
23	Are there problems in using PowerPoint ?	9	42	30	42	228	1.854	0.981	61.789	10
26	Using PowerPoint is to some extent easy .	33	51	15	24	153	1.244	1.058	41.463	15
29	Do you take a long time to prepare the lesson using PowerPoint ?	0	12	33	78	312	2.537	0.669	84.553	1
32	Using PowerPoint in class help the students to understand the lesson .	3	39	21	60	261	2.122	0.946	70.732	4
35	Do you have difficulties in using PowerPoint?	9	24	42	48	252	2.049	0.940	68.293	7
38	Using PowerPoint in class help the teachers and the students achieve the lesson aims .	3	48	3	69	261	2.122	1.021	70.732	5
41	Do you think the PowerPoint has an affective influence on students ?	6	39	27	51	246	2.000	0.967	66.667	8
44	Does PowerPoint need a suitable atmosphere?	0	9	63	51	288	2.341	0.612	78.049	2

47	Is PowerPoint used in a certain stage?	15	24	18	66	258	2.098	1.104	69.919	6
50	Do your students have a satisfactory response to the PowerPoint?	3	33	30	57	264	2.146	0.902	71.545	3

The researcher refers such thing that some teachers are unable to use computers and they have no idea about computers programs and software. Teachers who use computers believe that it takes time to prepare the slides of the lessons. The teacher also requires a special room to display the images and not all schools have computer lab.

To conclude the results, the researcher used, the sum of responses, means, std. deviation . And the % weight and rank of each field from the questionnaire and table (5) shows such thing .

Table (5)

sum of responses, means, std. deviation . And the % weight and rank of each field from the questionnaire .

Field	No. of Items	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% weight	Rank
OHP	16	3783	30.756	7.106	64.075	1
LCD	16	3462	28.146	6.380	58.638	3
PowerPoint	16	3573	29.049	6.261	60.518	2
TOTAL	48	10818	87.951	18.756	61.077	

On viewing and considering table (5) It is noticed that (OHP) occupied the first rank or grade under percentage 64.075%, (Power Point) occupied the second rank under percentage (60.518) and the last one (LCD) occupied the third rank under percentage of (58.638).

To answer the second Question:

Second: Answering the second question "Are there any statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in using OHP, LCD and PowerPoint in teaching process referred to and based on teachers' gender?

To answer such question the researcher used T. test table () shows this:

Table (6)

means, std. deviation t. value , and sig. level to know the difference between male and female .

Field	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	Sig. level
OHP	Male	51	27.882	6.396	4.000	sig. at 0.01
	female	72	32.792	6.916		
LCD	Male	51	25.941	5.853	3.360	sig. at 0.01
	female	72	29.708	6.312		
PowerPoint	Male	51	26.059	5.282	4.852	sig. at 0.01
	female	72	31.167	6.061		
TOTAL	Male	51	79.882	16.631	4.293	sig. at 0.01
	female	72	93.667	18.160		

"t" table value at (121) d f. at (0.05) sig. level equal 1.96

"t" table value at (121) d f. at (0.01) sig. level equal 2.58

As shown in the above mentioned ,the value of "T" is less than the calculated value of "F" at the level of significance table(0.05) in the post-LCD, or that there is no statistically significant differences refers to gender variable.

The value of "T" is greater than the calculated value of "F" table level indication(0.05, 0.01)in the post-OHP, Power Point, in the class, there are statistically significant differences refers to gender variable ,such differences for the benefit of females.

Question Three : Are OHP, LCD and PowerPoint useful and helpful for the lesson ?

Table (7)

Item	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Never	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight
Recurrence	3	63	27	30	207	1.683	0.871	56.098

Table (7) shows that teachers who believe that they are useful and helpful are (56.098).

Question Four:- Do OHP, Power Point and LCD increase the students ability ?

Table (8)

Item	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Never	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight
Recurrence	12	60	24	27	189	1.537	0.943	51.220

Table (8) shows teachers who believe OHP, LCD, and Power Point increase the ability of students are (51.220%).

Question Five : Do students have an active and motive response while learning by OHP, LCD, and Power Point?

Table (9)

Item	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Never	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% Weight
Recurrence	3	18	27	75	297	2.415	0.829	80.488

Table (9) shows teachers who believes that they increase the motivation of students, and their percentage is 80.488%.

Question Six : Are students differences considered while learning English by OHP, LCD and Power Point ?

Table (10)

Item	usually	often	sometimes	never	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% weight
Recurrence	3	9	30	81	312	2.537	0.739	84.553

Table (10) shows that technology take into its account the differences among students, the percentage is 84.553%.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends the followings :

- 1 . Supplying the new technology for Palestinian schools.
- 2 . The Ministry of Education and UNRWA should supply the schools with OHP , LCD and Power Point sets.
- 3 . Concluding training courses for teachers about new technology i.e. OHP, LCD and Power Point.
- 4 . Introducing LCD, OHP and Power Point for both teachers and students.
- 5 . Encouraging the teachers to use LCD, OHP and Power Point.
- 6 . The Ministry of Education and UNRWA should hold seminars on LCD. OHP and Power Point.
- 7 . The Ministry of Education and UNRWA should hold and adopt training workshops for teachers to train them how to use OHP, LCD, and Power Point.
- 8 . The Ministry of Education and UNRWA should construct and establish suitable labs. And rooms for OHP, LCD and Power Point.
- 9 . The Ministry of Education and UNRWA should supply the necessary accessories for LCD, OHP and Power Point.
10. Introducing the advantages of LCD, OHP and Power Point.
11. The Ministry of Education, UNRWA and the administration of the school should help the teachers to overcome the difficulties of such sets ,i.e. OHP , LCD and Power Point .

Suggestions

The researcher suggests the followings :

- 1 . Carrying out more researches on teaching by using new technology .
- 2 . Adopting researches on using the technology in teaching.
- 3 . Carrying out more researches on OHP,LCD and Power Point.
- 4 . Carrying out researches on another kinds of technology such as computers, internet for information ,CD Rom information etc.

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Motivation, Attitudes and Orientations among Palestinian Students towards Learning English

Rana Suruki

Abstract

This study involves the investigation of motivation towards learning English as a foreign language among Palestinian students from the age of 12 to 18 years old, specifically in the Jerusalem area. Data collection was done using a questionnaire measuring learner attitudes towards English. The students were further required to fill in a sheet with background information about their parents' academic levels and types of careers. Factor analysis was done in order to see how items cluster together, resulting in four factors dealing with attitudes towards the language, and three goal orientations. Then, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to show the impact of the motivation factors on type of school. In addition, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to show the impact of the motivation factors on the educational level of the parents. Results support that English certainly has a great impact on Palestinian learning and thus motivating them to

learn. Instrumental orientations are found among Palestinian students, emphasizing the importance of English for daily and future use of the language in studies and jobs. Significant differences in relationships of the type of school and parents' academic level were also observed according to each of the factors.

Keywords: motivation, English as a foreign language, Palestinian students, orientations, attitudes, learning context, culture

1. Introduction

Motivation is one of the key factors influencing rate and success of second/foreign language learning yet it is indeed very difficult to define. The traditional conception of motivation concerns "those factors that energize behavior and give it direction"(Hilgard, 1979: 281). Motivation is also defined as the impetus to create and sustain intentions and goal-seeking acts (Ames and Ames, 1989). This is important because motivation determines the extent of the learner's active involvement toward learning, and the energy s/he will put to work towards that goal.

Sometimes a distinction is made between positive and negative motivation. Positive motivation is a response which includes enjoyment and optimism about the tasks that you are involved in. Negative motivation involves undertaking tasks for fear that there should be undesirable outcomes, for example, failing a subject, if tasks are not completed (<http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/motivation/>)

Educational psychologists point to three major sources of motivation in learning (Fisher, 1990): (1) the learner's natural interest: intrinsic satisfaction, (2) the teacher / institution / employment: extrinsic reward, (3) success in the task: combining satisfaction and reward. However, learning an L2 is different from learning other school subjects in many ways. While a second language can be a "learnable" school subject in that elements such as grammatical rules and lexical items can be taught explicitly, it is also socially and culturally bound. This makes language learning a social event involving the integration of a wide range of elements of the L2 culture (Dörnyei, 2003). It is increasingly recognized, for example, that learner attributes and activity are deeply influenced by the socio-cultural environment, such that motivation itself could be

considered to be a feature not of the individual but the interaction of the individual with the environment (Hickey, 1997; McGroarty, 2001). The importance of culture is reflected in the concept of "situated cognition," in which the setting and the activity that knowledge is developed are an integral part of the learning (Oxford, 1996). Research in social psychology has shown that answers to questionnaires are affected not only by true attitudes, attributions, and interests, but also by conceptions of an ideal self, which with little doubt are greatly influenced by cultural values (Schmidt et. al., 1996).

In this study, there will be a closer look at learner motivation within a context that is very influenced by culture and status of living, Palestine. Considering the present situation in Palestine and the role English plays in people's lives there, the motives that drive learners to study a foreign language will certainly be affected by the context (culture and values) in which the learning takes place. Most of the past studies on Palestinians' attitudes towards learning English have been done before the second Intifada and the major changes in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict took place. These political events are likely to have impact on a language that most Palestinians see as an important vehicle to achieve modernity. Some of these studies have been carried out at Bethlehem and An-Najah Universities (Tushyeh, 1986; Khalil and Sanbee, 1987; Barqawi, 1995; Bakir, 1996; Shakhshir, 1996). Since the Palestinians are in a transition state, and at a stage of State formation, English is perceived as a "window on the world" (Amara, 2003). Thus, there is a call for continuous studies involving younger learners considering the constantly altering situation in Palestine.

Variables like type of school, parents' academic level of education, student grade level (age), and achievement are expected to have significant impact on the attitudes students have towards learning English. The first part of this study analyzes student responses to questionnaire items assessing learner attitudes, motivation, and orientations using factor analysis. Next in the second part of the analysis, two types of relationships related to motivation are explored¹. First, the relation of the factors obtained with the type of school the students attend is examined in order to investigate the impact of the

1. The investigation of the two variables and their impact on motivation and attitudes presented in this paper are part of a larger study that further explores other variables including student grade level and achievement.

learning context on attitudes and motivation. Second, the relationship of the factors with parents' educational level is analyzed to see what impact it has on student attitudes and motivation. In the Palestinian context, both type of school and parents' educational level can be related to the socio-economic status of the family, which has shown to also have impact on student achievement and attitudes towards learning a foreign language (Barqawi, 1995).

2. Motivation in Palestine

During the past two decades the majority of studies on the attitudes and orientations of Palestinians towards English that have been carried out in the West bank indicated that students considered English an important and useful language. There was also a significant trend for instrumental motivation for learning (Bakir, 1996). However, attitudes towards the English-speaking people and their cultures varied (Tushyeh, 1986; Khalil and Sanbee, 1987; Shakhshir 1996).

In addition, the importance of motivation in accounting for success or failure (achievement) in learning English was emphasized in the findings of a study carried out by Bakir (1996). Instrumental motivation was an important factor since students pursued the social advantages of learning English. Shakhshir (1996) further investigated students' attitudes towards English at the secondary stage in Nablus, in the West Bank and showed that achievement scores of students who had positive attitudes towards learning English, towards the English language teaching situation at their schools, and towards the culture of English speaking people were higher than those scores from students who had negative attitudes towards these three factors.

Tushyeh (1986) revealed in his study among English majors at An-Najah National University that the students expressed positive attitudes towards English; however, they had mixed attitudes towards the English community and their culture. Another study (Khalil and Sanbee, 1987) with similar results was conducted at Bethlehem University; Palestinian students thought that learning English helped them in their college work and offered good job opportunities. But, unlike the students at An-Najah, this group was interested in meeting and communicating with native speakers of English even though they were not interested in adopting the native speaker's way of life and mentality.

The importance of English within the new Palestinian Curriculum and status was outlined in a lecture delivered by Professor I. Abu Lughod at Bethlehem University in 1997. The implications of the importance of English for the Palestinians are that there is a socioeconomic value of English, that the culture of the language should be taught, and since English is the universal language of the modern world, it should be taught from the first grade and this means that there will be more for English and more jobs for English language teachers in Palestine.

As the status of English further develops in Palestine, research assessing this development and its relation with motivation and achievement in Palestinian schools is called for.

It is important to acknowledge that the world has changed greatly since Gardner and Lambert first established their classical approach toward motivation and second language acquisition, both in Palestine and other parts of the world. Their ideas of integrative motivation are based upon a world with obvious and identifiable social groups associated with particular languages. However, in the case of English, concepts like globalization and the rapid growth of technology should be considered nowadays. In many countries today learners may not associate English with a particular cultural group, but with an international community including "business, technological innovation, consumer values, democracy, world travel, and the multifarious icons of fashion, sport and music" (Lamb, 2004). In most previous research done in Palestine findings have revealed that there was a significant trend for instrumental motivation for learning English. This can imply that there exists a negative attitude towards the English-speaking community or it can support the notion that the learners don't associate the English language with a certain cultural group.

3. Languages in Palestine

Beginning with the spread of Islam in the seventh century when Palestine was conquered by the Arabs, then the Crusades (French, German, and English were used), the Ottoman Turks in 1517, the British Mandate in 1917, the establishment of Israel in 1948, till the present situation, Palestine has been in contact with many different countries

all over the world each introducing a new language into the region, therefore affecting the development of foreign language education and policies (Amara, 2003). According to Amara, the new Palestinian Curriculum shows that an international orientation is clearly part of the policy, thus, the learning and teaching of languages is a major concern for the development of this identity.

The existence of so many diverse languages in Palestine is due to several historical factors such as political developments, studying abroad, immigration and resettlement, trade, tourism, travel, and the founding of several religious missionaries and institutions (Amara, 2003). Alongside Arabic, English and Hebrew have developed into critical languages throughout the years in Palestine. In dealing with European countries, modern European languages such as French, Spanish, German, Italian, and Russian, are also spreading. Nevertheless, English will remain by far the most widely known and used foreign language among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

The spread of English began after the First World War with the British Mandate in Palestine. Since the main language of the government at that time was English, it became the first official language of Palestine (Dweik, 1986; Amara, 2003). Moreover, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict resulted in the following three important consequences increasing contact with the international world:

1. Millions of Palestinian refugees were forced out of their homes moving to foreign countries.
2. Palestinian immigration to other countries seeking better living, educational, and career opportunities.
3. Many international media and humanity organizations were established in Palestine. Effective NGOs, such as United Nation organizations, became part of the daily life of Palestinian people.

As regards educational policy, the English language has had an important/influential role since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank 1967 -1995 and Gaza 1967 -1994. During this time, the Jordanian and Egyptian English language curriculum were used in these two Palestinian areas. More recently, the development of a new Palestinian

curriculum in 1998 integrated a strong presence of the English language, where English is compulsory at all grade levels, and it is taught a minimum of 46- classes per week.

At university level, there has been an increase in the use of English during the past three decades. It is taught as a required subject for first-year university students in all types of academic institutions and universities throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Students are required to sit for an English placement exam before university registration. Moreover, English is the medium of instruction in the sciences and mathematics at all universities, and in other fields such as nursing, business, political science and cultural studies at some universities (Tushyeh, 1990). In sum, nowadays English is the first foreign language of the Palestinians; generation following generation, Palestinian students at school and university levels are constantly exposed to the English language.

4. Methods

4.1. Subjects

Participants in this study were all Palestinian learners of English as a foreign language from four different schools (2 public and 2 private) in the Jerusalem area and its neighboring town Abu-Dis in Palestine. Data were collected in March 2006 from a total of 155 students representing a range of grade levels from the 6th grade to the final year of high school, 12th grade (see table 1). The sample includes 42% males and 58% females.

All the students are native speakers of Arabic and are learning English as a foreign language. The students from the private schools have also been exposed to a third foreign language, in most cases French. Nevertheless, there is always more emphasis on the acquisition of English as a foreign language.

4.2. Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from an existing validated 55-item questionnaire created by Cid, Grañena and Tragant and addressed to secondary schools students in southern Europe (2002).

Some of the items were deleted and other new items were added to better suit the clearly different learning context of the present study set in Palestine.² Moreover, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic.

The questionnaire was Likert-type with a response scale of six levels. The questionnaire was made up of a total of 42 items divided into two sections. The first section with 27 items aimed at measuring attitudes in which students were asked to respond by choosing among six levels of agreement.³ The second section with 15 items was aimed at measuring goal orientations in which students chose among six levels of importance. Visual aids (small symbols) were used alongside the answering scale in order to ensure complete comprehension and to increase reliability of the choices the children made. Means and standard deviations of the items are provided along with the English translated questionnaire in Appendix B. The students were also further required to fill in a sheet with background information including age, English achievement grades, their parents' academic levels and types of careers. The questionnaires were administered by the teachers during English class on the basis of carefully predesigned instructions.

4.3. Analysis of Data

Because the questionnaire used in this study measures various factors dealing with attitudes, motivation, and orientations its analysis will not yield a single composite score; responses to the individual items were subjected to Factor analysis, where principal components analysis was run and a Varimax rotation was performed. These procedures were conducted in order to obtain estimates of the initial components, to discover patterns among the values, and to determine the underlying factors that represent the data. Then, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to show the impact of the motivation factors on type of school. In addition, a one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to show the impact of the motivation factors obtained on educational level of the learners' mother and father. The significance level for the results of this test was set at $p < 0.05$.

2. The questionnaire was adapted from Cid, Grañena and Tragant (2002) in order to be able to conduct a comparison of the results obtained from the two studies later on.

3. Part 1 of the questionnaire contains 10 negative items. For data analysis, the responses to these items are computed in the opposite way with 'strongly agree' inserted as 1 and 'strongly disagree' as 5.

The total number of fully completed questionnaires was 127 questionnaires (82%). In order to avoid deletion or omission of questionnaires with missing cases when running factor analysis, a multiple imputation approach was used to fill in missing items and make use of all the data collected (n=155).

5. Results

5.1. Factor Analysis

Prior to performing factor analysis, two statistical measures are carried out by SPSS to check if factor analysis is appropriate: Bartlett's test of sphericity and the Kaiser Meyer- Oklin measure of sampling adequacy (Pallant, 2001). For the first part of the questionnaire, the value obtained for Bartlett's test was .000, which is considered significant ($p < .05$). The KMO measure was .808, with .6 suggested as the minimum value for a good factor analysis. As for part two of the questionnaire, the values for Bartlett's test and KMO were also appropriate (Bartlett's test .000, KMO .716). Accordingly, factor analysis can be run for both parts of the questionnaire.

5.1.1. Part 1: Items 127 -

After running factor analysis for part 1 of the questionnaire, there were eight factors with eigen values exceeding 1 explaining a total variance of 65%. However, after taking into consideration other criteria (the screed plot, the variance explained, and mean eigenvalue) for determining the number of factors, the initial eight factors were reduced to four factors explaining a total variance of 47%. The rotated component matrix revealed that each component had a number of strong loadings. By focusing on the content of those items with the higher loadings, the four factors are interpreted and labeled in the next paragraphs. Table 2 presents a summary of the results of the factor analysis and the factor loadings of each item in this section on the four rotated factors.

Factor 1: Motivation, Interest and Attitudes towards the English Language.

The content of the items that received the highest loadings in Factor 1, which explains 27% of the variance, show that the students have interest and a positive attitude towards learning the English language. The two items with the highest loadings are item 27, 'I am not interested

in the English language' (loading=0.81) and item 8, 'I am not interested in learning English' (loading=0.77). Two other items with high loadings in this factor are about students' interest in the English-speaking people and the ability to speak with them.

Factor 2: Positive Attitudes towards the Learning Environment.

The items with the high loadings in Factor 2, which explained a total variance of 7.5%, refer to the learning situation. The first two items are item 15, 'In the English lesson I pay close attention to the activities that the teacher tells us to do' with a loading of 0.64, and item 21, 'English is the sign of an educated person' loading 0.62. Factor 2 also includes items that show positive opinions towards learning in the classroom. Positive words found in these items include easy, fun, do very well, and pay close attention.

Factor 3: Perceptions of English Language Skills and Use.

The items for this factor, which explains 6.3% of total variance, show students' perceptions of need to understand and speak English in general terms as well as for specific purposes such as finding a job and traveling. Items in this factor also include students' perceptions of difficulty in understanding English tapes and movies. The following two items received the two highest loadings under this factor: Item 7, 'I don't think you need to speak English because nowadays almost everything is translated or dubbed' (loading= 0.74) and item 5, 'You don't need to speak English in order to find a job' (loading=0.65).

Factor 4: Interest in Foreign Languages.

The items with strong loadings in Factor 4, explaining 6% of the total variance, show students' appeal towards English and foreign languages. Students show interest in learning other languages apart from English, and awareness of the importance of speaking languages other than Arabic (items 12 and 18). Item 18, 'I would like to learn more languages apart from English' (loading=0.72) has the highest loadings for Factor 4. Although item 16 'There are other foreign languages that I like more than English' has a negative loading (loading= -0.61) it also supports the same concept adding that students like English as a foreign language more than other languages.

5.1.2. Part 2: Items 2842 -

Principal component analysis revealed the presence of six factors explaining a total variance of 66.9%. The same criteria as in part one were used to determine the number of factors kept, thus three factors were retained explaining a total variance of 45%. To aid in the explanation of these three factors, Varimax rotation was performed and the factors are interpreted. Table 3 provides a summary of the factors obtained for goal orientations and the factor loadings for each item in this section.

Factor 1: Importance of English and Its Modern Uses.

The items with the highest loading of this factor, which explains 25% of the variance, show the importance of English as a world language and include important daily uses such as understanding written English from everyday life and using the computer. The first two items with the highest loadings under this factor are item 41, 'I want to learn English because English is a language that many people in the world speak and nowadays you must be able to speak it' (loading=0.75) and item 39, 'I want to learn English to understand things written in English from everyday life like notices, advertisements, t-shirts, brand names, etc' (loading=0.72).

Factor 2: Career and Academic Orientations.

This factor, with a variance of 10.6 %, includes items that reflect a future use of the English language in view of career and job opportunities. In addition, there are items about the necessity of learning English for academic purposes such as university studies and reading books (textbooks). Another goal is living abroad, which is often connected to studying in a foreign university and having better career opportunities/prospects. The items with the highest loadings in this component are item 35, 'I want to learn English because I want to read books in English' (loading=0.70) and item 31, 'I want to learn English because I will need it in the job I would like to have' (loading=0.58).

Factor 3: Pleasure and Entertainment.

Greater loadings for factor three, with an explained variance of 9.2%, include items that make reference to wanting to learn English for pleasure and entertainment. The highest two of these items are item 42, 'I want to learn English to be able to sing and understand the songs that

I like' (loading=0.78) and item 36, 'I want to learn English so I can watch movies without translation in original version' (loading=0.65). Other items in this factor include traveling for touristic reasons and interacting with people from other countries. The variance explained by factor three is 9.2% of the total variance.

5.2. Factors and Type of School

In this section the results will be presented from the independent-samples t-test that was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the type of school language learners attended to (private n=96, public n=59) and the factors obtained from part 1 and 2 of the questionnaire. As for part one, there was a statistically significant difference in scores for Factors 2, 3 and 4. For Factor 2 (Positive attitudes towards the learning environment), the value for public school learners (M=0.22, SD=0.94) was higher than that for private school learners [M=-0.13, SD=1.01; $t(153)=2.165$, $p=.032$], although the magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared = .03). In contrast, the mean values for Factors 3 and Factor 4 were lower for public school learners. As for Factor 2 (Perceptions of English language skills and use), the value for public and private schools were M = -0.509, SD = 1.16 and M=0.313, SD=0.735 respectively; $t(153)=-4.88$, $p=.000$ and the magnitude of the differences for this factor is considered large (eta squared = .13). For the fourth factor (Interest in foreign languages), the values for public and private schools were M=-0.23, SD=1.08 and M=0.14, SD=0.92 respectively; $t(153)=-2.277$, $p=.024$ even though the magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared = .03).

As for part two of the questionnaire, there was only a statistically significant difference found for Factor 3 (Pleasure and entertainment) ($p=.000$). The mean values from public school learners (M=-0.44, SD=1.04) were significantly lower than those from private schools [M=0.27, SD=0.875; $t(153)=-4.531$, $p=.000$]. The eta squared statistic (.12) indicated a large magnitude difference in the means.

5.3. Factors and Parents' Level of Education.

Before examining the relationships among the father and mother's level of education and the factors, a brief introduction to the general

distribution and percentages of the data is necessary. Table 4 shows the general distribution of mothers and fathers according to the academic level from the whole sample (n=155).

In Palestine there are four levels of education: primary, secondary, Tawjihi, and university level. After completing secondary education, students sit for a series of exams called Tawjihi. If these exams are passed then the student is given a Tawjihi diploma. Due to its great importance, it is considered an academic level itself. By taking a general look at the table, we can see that as we move higher along the academic levels, the percentage for mothers' increases. However, it should be noted that the percentages of fathers' levels of education is highly influenced by the type of school their children attend (see table 5), something that is not the case with mothers. Hence, it is in the public schools where we find a greater difference between mothers and fathers' levels of education.

In examining the relationship of the factors obtained from the first part of the questionnaire and the fathers' level of education, no significant difference was found for any of the four factors. For part two, however, there was a statistically significant difference for Factor 1 (Importance of English and Its Modern Uses) [$F(3,151)=5.89, p=0.001$] and Factor 3 (Pleasure and Entertainment) [$F(3,151) =4.82, p=0.003$]. The actual difference for Factors 1 and 3 can be considered between moderate and large (eta squared=0.10 and 0.09 respectively). Post-hoc comparisons for Factor 1 (using the Tukey HSD test) indicated that the mean score for the primary group ($M=-0.62, SD=1.27$) was significantly lower than the other three groups (secondary, $M=0.38, SD=0.82$; Tawjihi, $M=0.05, SD=1$; university, $M=0.14, SD=0.82$). As for Factor 3 the Tukey HSD test points out that the mean score for the primary group ($M=-0.46, SD=1.03$) was significantly lower than the university group ($M=0.22, SD=0.93$). The mean scores for the other groups did not differ significantly.

In examining the relationship of the factors obtained from the first part of the questionnaire and the mothers' level of education⁴, there were no statistically significant differences for any of the factors in part 1 or 2 of the questionnaire.

4. The group 'primary' was not included in the tests because there was only one case in that group.

6. Discussion

In order to provide a meaningful discussion the results of the factor analysis and the impact of both type of school and parent's educational background will be discussed simultaneously, focusing on each of the factors. The factors found will also be further compared to the two studies (Cid et al., 2002 and Tragant, 2006) from which the questionnaire used in this study was adapted. Factor analyses in the present study display seven factors in total. Part one of the questionnaire provides us with four factors that show student attitudes towards learning English, while part two displays three goal orientations for learning English.

6.1. Part 1

High mean values for responses to the items with the highest loadings under the first factor (Motivation, interest and attitudes towards the English language) reveal that students have positive attitudes towards learning the English language. Students show high motivation and a strong interest for learning English. High mean scores for items 26 (I would like to meet people who speak English) and 25 (I would like to be able to speak with English people) show an interest in members of the L2 community, that is native English speakers. A favorable attitude towards the L2 community and openness to other groups in general are part of Gardner's (2001) construct of 'integrativeness'. For example, students want meet L2 speakers rather than just pass an exam or get a better job. Data from this study on motivation among Palestinian students illustrate that elements from this model exist; however, since items 25 and 26 receive low loadings under this factor and do not make a factor on their own we cannot affirm that 'intrinsic motivation' and/or 'integrativeness' are valid concepts to describe how learners view English language learning.

Responses to the items belonging to this factor appear to be constant; outside variables like type of school and parents' academic level do not have significant impact on how students feel towards the English language. This motivation and interest can be traced back to the society as a whole and its view towards the language. The Palestinian people are constantly exposed to English in their daily lives. English is used in everyday things like watching television, shopping, reading, studying, etc. Generation after generation they have been learning English. All this

exposure has developed a sense of belonging to the English language community; whether they view this community as a global one or not is still a question to be studied.

As for Factor 2 (Positive Attitudes towards the Learning Environment), mean values for items are considered positive but to a smaller degree than responses to items in factor one, part one. Unlike the first factor, the relationship between Factor 2 and type of school discloses significant differences. The values for public schools were higher than private schools, even though the variance explained is low. This could be explained by the fact that the majority of the students in the private schools sample are from a school which is located in an urban area in the Jerusalem district while the public school sample comes from a rural area in the same district. According to Burstall (1980), the size of the school and its location, urban or rural, do have an effect on student attitudes and achievement in the classroom; pupils in small rural schools tend to form a closer student-teacher relationship at an early stage, thus having higher levels of achievement and developing positive attitudes towards learning. Accordingly, the majority of students from public schools that participated in this study come from an area with a village type of culture in the community which may also be reflected in the classroom. In this area people have closer family relationships among each other than people from bigger urban areas in the city of Jerusalem where all sorts of people come to live.

Examining Factor 3 (Perceptions of English Language Skills and Use) the word 'speak' is used in the two items with the highest loadings under this factor, items 5 and 7. Responses to these items are relatively high; the mean values are 4.12 and 3.88, generally showing student agreement to the statement. These student opinions towards having the ability to speak English show that they are aware of the importance of this skill in language use nowadays. Responses to other items give you an idea about student perceptions of their ability to understand English tapes and movies.

Understanding and speaking English are important skills learned by Palestinian students. These skills are used daily in the life of youth as well as adults in the Palestinian society. First, as mentioned before, English is the language of instruction at all universities in Palestine. Another

daily activity that involves understanding English is watching television. English movies are not dubbed in Palestine; Arabic television channels sometimes provide Arabic subtitles but they do not provide the viewer with an accurate translation of the meanings. As a result, developing good comprehension skills is important. Speech skills on the other hand are important today for expressing identity and ideas as Palestinians to the world. The establishment of foreign media organizations and other organizations for aid has increased contact with people from other countries and the language used for communication between foreigners and Palestinians is English.

According to the significant relationship found between the type of school and Factor 3, students from private schools recognize the importance of English language skills and use more than students from public schools. Private schools are known to have better qualified teachers and tend to concentrate greatly on foreign language teaching, English and other languages such as French. Generally speaking, students develop better skills in English language use (comprehension, speech, reading and writing) because the teachers can concentrate on students developing these skills without constant supervision and pressure of having to go through the syllabus provided by the end of the semester, which is expected from teachers in public schools. In contrast, in public schools the teachers are underpaid and not much attention is given to their teaching abilities. Moreover, classes in public schools tend to have twice the number of students in each classroom. This makes it harder for teachers to control the class and for students to receive the attention they need for learning. Consequently, these conditions may well have an effect in the perceptions students have towards English language use and towards the level of difficulty in developing their skills.

In most cases, responses to high-loading items in Factor 4 (Interest in Foreign Languages) show that Palestinian students are interested in other foreign languages as well as English. Data confirm that students strongly agree that it is important to speak a language other than Arabic (item 12). The low loading for item 16 (There are other foreign languages that I like more than English) emphasizes that students are interested in English as the most important foreign language. Furthermore, students do agree that they would like to learn other languages along with English (item 18).

According to the significant relationship found between this factor and the type of school, students in private schools show to have more interest in foreign languages than students in public schools. This can be explained by the difference in exposure to foreign languages in the two types of schools. In addition to the above mentioned different conditions regarding the teaching of English in these two contexts, the private schools in this study both teach French as an L3.

In comparing the factors found for the first part of the questionnaire in this study to the two studies carried out by Cid et al. (2002) and Tragant (2006), many similarities are expected to be found because similar questionnaires were used. All three studies ended up with seven factors in total from both parts of the questionnaire. However, there was slight difference in the number of factors for part one; Tragant found four factors very similar to the ones found in this study, while Cid et al. (2002) only reveals three factors. Beginning with factor 1, we can see that a similar factor labeled 'Assessment of English and its role' was found by Cid et al. (2002). Items loading highly under this factor also refer to an interest and a determination to learn English and an awareness of the importance and need to learn the English language in general.

Tragant (2006) also reveals a similar first factor 'Awareness of the importance and need to learn English for the future', but items receiving the highest loadings under this factor refer to the student awareness of the importance of English when they grow up. However, the first two items in Factor 1 found in this study simply refer to the interest in the English language and learning it. As for factor 2, we find that this factor is also comparable to the third factor found by both Cid et al. (2002) and Tragant (2006), all dealing with positive perceptions towards the learning situation. Similarities were also found between the third factor found in this study and the factor labeled 'Learner's perceived level of learning English- Language aptitude', in the study done by Tragant. The factor called 'Self-assessment as a language learner' obtained by Cid et al. (2002), however, differs slightly in content from the other two studies. This factor reflects the students' interest in English and other foreign languages together with an L2 aptitude. Thus, it presumably equates to both factors 3 and 4 found in the present study.

If the factors found in part one of this study are compared with those of other studies, a number of similarities can be noted. The third factor labeled 'Attitudes toward teacher/method' in Julkunen's (1989) work is similar in content to factor 2 (part 1) in the present questionnaire. A similar factor has also emerged repeatedly in work done by Gardner associates (see for example Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) labeled as 'Attitudes toward the learning situation.

6.2. Part 2

Student responses to items in Factor 1 of part 2 (Importance of English and its modern uses) reveal their awareness of English as a global language and its modern daily uses. Mean values for these items are all above 4 (between 'important' and 'very important') suggesting that the level of awareness is quite high. English has entered the lives of all people in Palestine through everyday things like food labels, shop signs, and advertisements. In addition, English is also used through computers and the internet, which has developed into an important means of communication today.

In order to explain the significant relationship found between this factor and the fathers' academic background we should consider that in Palestine, fathers, unlike mothers, are considered the supporter and leader of the family. Thus, his view towards things will certainly affect ideas and views others in the family have, especially the children. Fathers with a very low level of education have had very limited exposure to English, and therefore may have a more limited awareness of the importance of English as a global language and its uses today. Moreover, the socio-economic level of these families is usually low due to the limited career opportunities these fathers have. This idea can be further supported by the fact that the mothers' academic level had no impact on any of the factors in both parts of the questionnaire.

The relationship between socio-economic status and student attitudes was also explored in the context of French Primary schools in England and Wales by Burstall (1980) who found that high mean scores tended to coincide with high-status parental occupation and low mean scores with low-status parental occupation. Moreover, Burstall found that

around puberty there was a positive tendency for the percentage of pupils with favorable attitudes towards learning French to increase with social status. Although more research is still needed, the results from this study shed some light on this very idea.

Items belonging to Factor 2 (Career and academic orientations) reveal that career and academic orientations for learning English are among the most important for the Palestinian students. As it was mentioned earlier in this paper, education and therefore English are very important to the Palestinian people since the English language plays a very important role in Palestinian education. The mean values of responses to items under this factor are reasonably high. Item 37 (I want to learn English because I will need it in university studies) has the highest mean value of the items part two of the questionnaire, with 85% of the students choosing the 'very important' option. The most common goal for learning English is university studies because English plays a large part in Palestinian universities. The next most important source of motivation to learn English is to have more job opportunities. This is not unique to Palestinian students but is a general goal for many people worldwide. Conversely, considering the difficult situation in Palestine and the hardships the Palestinian people endure, responses to items that deal with pleasure and entertainment (Factor 3, Pleasure and entertainment) are expected to be lower than in other factors. The findings support that Palestinian students are more highly motivated in learning English for future academic and career purposes than for pleasure and entertainment. Mean values for students wanting to learn English to be able to sing and understand songs, watch and understand movies, are slightly lower than values in factor 2.

Results showing the relationship of factor 3 to type of school and the father's academic level further add to what was mentioned earlier about the impact of socioeconomic status of the students on orientations and attitudes toward language learning. Pleasure and entertainment reasons are usually associated with higher socio-economic classes. Private schools in Palestine are very expensive, so most of the students at these schools are from a higher socio-economic level than students at public schools. Moreover, the difference in the father's academic level, especially between the primary group and the university group, which

can reflect two classes with very different socioeconomic status, shows that the reasons for learning English will certainly be affected by the socio-economic condition students live.

In comparing the orientations found for part two of the questionnaire with those of other studies, we expect to find more differences than similarities in the factors due to the different learning contexts. First, we can see that the only factor shared by Tragant (2006), Cid et al. (2002) and the present study is the factor dealing with career and academic orientations. The rest of the questionnaire items were clustered differently revealing different orientations in the Palestinian context which include the daily and modern uses of English and learning English for pleasure and entertainment purposes.

Tragant and Cid et al., on the other hand, do have other similarities; the functional use factor is found by both but is absent in the present study. Tragant makes a further distinction between the functional use orientation and her third factor which involves using English for activities requiring a higher level of proficiency such as reading books, watching movies, listening to the news, and studying/working abroad. Cid et al. (2002) reveal another two factors that which are intrinsic in nature, in contrast to the other two factors mentioned which are extrinsic in nature. They consist of more intrinsically-motivated goals for learning English to develop one's knowledge ('intellectual orientation') or to communicate with or meet people from other countries ('interactive orientation').

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, one can say that motivation and attitudes in learning the English language differs due to the different roles the language plays in different contexts. Results in this study support that English certainly has a great impact on Palestinian learning and thus motivating pupils to learn. Instrumental orientations are found among Palestinian students and they also appear to show interest in foreigners and English speaking people. Yet, further research is still needed to observe if this type of integrative motivation is towards the actual English speaking countries and cultures (USA and Britain), or if the English language is seen as "a window on the world." Dornyei and Csizér (2002: 454) argue that "the term may not so much be related to any actual, or metaphorical,

integration into an L2 community as to some more basic identification process within the individual's self-concept". This does not conflict with Gardner's original notion but provides a more flexible and broader frame of reference explaining motivation within different learning contexts even if there was little or no contact with L2 speakers (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2002).

The frame of reference for integrativeness in the Palestinian context as well other countries continues to change as the status of the English language becomes more global. Findings in studies carried out by Lamb (2004), Kaylani (1996), Yashima (2002), Dörnyei and Csizér's (2002) have shown that English is not associated with a particular English culture or community but is viewed as an international language used for communication among all people in the outside world. Yashima (2002) explains his findings by saying that for Japanese students "English symbolizes the world around Japan." It is very likely that for Palestinian students there is a similar case; findings in this study shed some light on the idea of integrativeness and English as a global language.

Nevertheless, education will remain very important to Palestinians. Due to the continuous conflict generation after generation, they are motivated to work hard and be successful hoping to open new and more hopeful opportunities for the future. Results revealed that one of the most important orientations for learning the English language is to continue studies at the university level. Again this is a result of the large role English plays in the education system, which continues to grow and develop. Yet further research is still needed; in order to get a more complete picture more data should be collected from a larger and more representative sample of Palestinian students. Moreover, direct comments from students and responses to open-ended questions are also needed to provide essential information to form a complete picture and understand the types of motivation and attitudes Palestinian students have towards learning English.

As the situation in Palestine continues to change for the better and sometimes for the worse, attitudes towards learning and especially towards the languages taught in the schools will continue to be affected.

The Palestinians continue to develop their own English curriculum and educational system thus constantly changing learning conditions, always leaving room for more and more research in the field of motivation.

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Teaching Two Levels of Instruction
(Combined classroom)
and Defining Groups for Cooperative
Learning Activities:
A Case Study

Tagreed Bajes Butros Abed

Abstract

This case study presents the challenge of teaching two levels of instruction within the same class and examines how grouping for cooperative learning tasks might be handled.

A school principal informed the teacher of English that he would have to teach a combined class of English II (15 students) and English III (5 students) in the same room. Although the teacher tried to convince the principal to establish two separate classes, using every pedagogically sound argument he could think of, the principal could not change the situation, except by not offering English at all. The teacher rejected the choice.

Now, as he ponders the class list, he is thinking about how he will handle the two- ability levels of the class, especially in speaking tasks. The teacher regularly assigns his students short speaking tasks that

can be completed in pairs or small groups- sometimes as many as four tasks during a class period. "How, he asks himself, "will an English III student be able to talk with an English II student?" Then as he recalls the performance of the students on the class list in last year's English classes, he realizes that more than two levels are presented in the class anyway. For speaking tasks, he decides to organize the students into groups of four to five for carrying out speaking tasks and activities such as games, role playing, and problem- solving.

The study investigates the following questions:

- 1 . What reasons do you think the principal might have had for setting up the school schedule this way?
- 2 . What are some of the pedagogically sound arguments that the teacher might have used to convince the principal that the two English classes should not have been combined?
- 3 . What reasons can you give for organizing the groups in this fashion? What are some likely students' reactions?

For exploring the whole situation, I really played the teacher's role at both school and university levels. The study concludes that teaching combined classes could be successfully and easily handled if teachers are equipped with background knowledge of teaching methods, strategies and skills, and above all persistence to succeed.

When at the first glance I went through this case study I thought it would be easy to discuss the questions and suggest procedures. But, to be frank, I was shocked when I found out that to solve this problematic issue, many factors should be taken into consideration. For example, the individual differences, students' proficiency level, ages, needs and cognitive growth, learning styles and financial matters.

A positive view to be pointed out here is that the teacher of English tried to persuade his principal to establish two separate classes. As he had not been able to do so, he made up his mind to play the role heroically, comparing this situation to his English classes last year where more than two levels had been represented in the same class. For him, the alternative of accepting this offer was a better solution than neglecting the class and not offering English at all, as his principal had suggested.

As a former teacher at a government school, I could tell that this was, and still is, a common situation. There are many "combined classes" where students of more than two- ability levels are taught in the same class, due either to financial matters or to the lack of qualified teachers or unavailable space (class rooms).

Since the teacher is interested in raising his students' communicative abilities, what procedures can he follow? Is it easy or difficult to handle this situation? What reasons might the principal have had for taking that decision? These questions, in addition to others, will be addressed in this paper.

I .. What reasons do you think the principal might have had for setting up schedule this way?

I believe that the principal's insistence on combining the two ability levels of students could refer to various reasons:

The unavailability of qualified teachers, the ever- present financial obstacle that impedes appointing new teachers, especially for a small number of students (5 students in this case), and the scarcity of classrooms are, in my opinion, the primary factors. But since the focus here is on the learning of English, these materialistic factors will not be discussed here; instead the reasons related to students' linguistic abilities and proficiency will be of more importance. Some of the reasons could be :

- 1 . The principal wants to prove and practice the idea of being able to teach students of two levels in the same room. He might have said that "A teacher of English has an important task within the classroom context; he needs to possess a wide theoretical background knowledge of teaching methodology and should be equipped with the skills necessary for implementing a variety of teaching methods." Here the teacher should be able to use special techniques for handling this situation. His duty is to encourage students of both levels to ask and speak and to praise their performance and progress.
- 2 . The principal believes in the principle that the students of a lower level may benefit from those of a higher level. The teacher should encourage cooperative work to help the individual make contributions according to his ability. Here students of level II would benefit from students of level III who, in turn, would be very proud and pleased

to have done something good. It's really necessary to encourage the mutual relationship between students of different levels to activate the poor/weak students to equal or to "surpass" the other students. If the teacher makes use of groups, he'll stimulate the students' love and motivation to cooperate and teach the weaker ones. Mixing the two classes encourages students to cooperate, "we not only increase learning of course material, but importantly, help make students better citizens of their world" (Ilola and others, 1989, p: 7) .

3. Combining the two levels in one class and carrying out cooperative activities is an opportunity to change the traditional role of the teacher; he will be a counselor and advisor instead of being a controller, dictator or the dominant of educational process. This would in fact save time for the teacher to help, advise and direct the students who face some obstacles.
4. Having two classes doesn't necessarily mean having much linguistic difference. Sometimes the students of level II might have better cognitive, social, or even linguistic abilities and skills than those of level III. As a matter of fact "a cognitive drive is of a great importance in meaningful learning. It consists of the will to learn, understand and solve problems." (Eggen and others, 1979).
5. The teacher should realize that a good teacher is the one who is not restricted to the book. He should be able to adapt the textbook to the pupils' needs; he can do this by adding new material, selecting, modifying, omitting or rejecting. By doing this he can make dynamic activities in an interesting environment canceling the differences between the two - ability levels of students.
6. As for the lesson planning, it could be based on pupils' needs, which can be pointed out through diagnosing students' knowledge and skills or referring to students' records to find out prior learning experiences and backgrounds.

II .. What are some of the pedagogically sound arguments the teacher might have used to convince the principal that the two classes should not have been combined?

Being aware of the students' level and proficiency, the teacher might have used some pedagogically sound arguments to convince his principal to change his mind .He might have tried the following arguments. (The arguments are spoken on behalf of the teacher):

- 1 . Motivation is a basic element in foreign language teaching and learning. "Empirical studies indicate that highly motivated pupils learn faster and better than the ones who find the study of language distasteful, hence the need for pedagogical motivation" (Kalani; Muqattash, 1995, p: 16). The teacher should utilize different procedures and activities to improve his students' level in English. So, how could he tackle the issue of individual interests in a combined class?
- 2 . It would be better to teach a homogenous class than teaching a heterogeneous (two -ability levels) one. In this case the students of level III might have a better proficiency level than the other students, who, in turn, might feel that their work would not appeal to the teacher or to the other students. So the situation would be disappointing for them. To be frank here, we cannot guarantee homogeneity even in a single class or level
- 3 . It would be difficult to mix both levels because of the differences in their communicative competence. This comprises grammatical competence, socio-cultural, discourse, and strategic competence. Since the students are of different ages, they might differ in some other aspects. For example, their, cognitive growth, background knowledge, learning styles, etc. The oldest might have more knowledge of appropriate context for language use (socio-cultural competence), others might have more fluency, i.e. they might have the ability to put what they want to say or write into words with ease and correctness. So it would be better to separate the two classes. "Experiences reveal that foreign language learners differ in their ability to learn a language under apparently the same conditions of learning." (Kailani; Muqqattash, 1996, p: 202).
- 4 . The teacher might need to have two lesson plans with different objectives and activities which would be tiring for him. Further more, he would spend more time to make up for the information or experiences stored in the cognitive structure of level III students but missing in level II students, while busying the other group of students (III). So repetition and reinforcement are needed to develop fluency in English. He would focus on special activities to help pupils work with one another so as to enable the poor students to catch up with the rest of the class, which is time consuming.

5. lesson would not be enough to practice the activities with both levels. The teacher would provide the class with a wide range of learning activities to stimulate the two levels to interact. Here he should vary the content, the pace of learning or even the activities of the lesson. On the other hand, there is a curriculum which should be finished on time with supervisors attending classes to ensure that. The question remains: Would it be possible to accomplish that?

III .. What are some likely students' reactions?

It might have been possible for the two-ability level students to protest against this uncomfortable situation. Their reactions could vary depending on their abilities, cognitive awareness, and level of accuracy or proficiency. Placing oneself in the position of both levels is the best solution to feel the situation and avoid being biased to a certain trend.

1. First, **students of level III** might protest against being combined with students of lower abilities by claiming that the situation would be an obstacle against competition and would hinder their progress in learning English.
2. Furthermore, the same students would claim that being combined with less able students would be time-wasting since their role would be helping weak students .As a matter of fact, they would play the role of the teacher as participants and advisors, but not mainly as learners .On the other hand, they would say that if both groups were given an activity (depending on each group's ability) they would supposedly, but not necessarily, finish earlier than the other group and thus, would be waiting for the others to finish. This is another disadvantage of being combined .

As far as level two II students are concerned, a criticism might be frankly declared here.

- 1 . They would say that the lack of perfect ability of level III students might cause them to give students of level II inaccurate feedback .i.e. they could tell them that something was wrong when, in fact, it was correct i.e. "students of level III are not qualified enough to play the role of the teacher".

- 2 . Students of level II might refuse to be combined with the other students since it would be embarrassing and humiliating for them to be helped by peers or commit mistakes in front of better students.

Having accepted the challenge, the teacher conducted the activities by defining groups for cooperative learning activities in the ways clarified in response to the following question.

IV .. How did the teacher organize the students? What reasons can you give for organizing groups in this fashion?

Group work, pair work and other classroom activities in general should be determined by the pupils' abilities and different rates of learning. Obligated to teach students of different abilities in the same class room, the teacher must have had logic reasons for organizing the students into groups of four to five for communicative purposes such as games, role –playing, and problem solving activities.

- 1 . Since the groups are not homogeneous, the teacher hopes to find out points of weaknesses and previous background knowledge, or schema, which might, therefore, help him find the remedy and achieve “learning” and acquiring communicative skills.
- 2 . Problem solving activities require dividing the class into three or four major groups within each group the teacher forms appropriate sub groups of mixed abilities consisting of four or five students. Discussion takes place between the small groups and later with larger groups followed by a class debate. In this case, it's preferable to divide them in groups of four. **Three students of level II, with one student of level III, forming five groups.**
- 3 . Dividing the class in this fashion would help students contextualize the teaching points. Situations, dialogues, interviews, games, role-playing, problem solving, and other activities give the chance to proficient students to help the poor ones within the same group. The weak pupil might take part in the discussion in group work, where as he would not respond if questioned directly by the teacher in front of the whole class. In this case, pupils working in groups might be enhanced to provide correct answers by the values and ideas of their peers, more readily than by the teacher alone.

- 4 . Working in groups is more relaxing than working individually or even in pairs, especially for shy students. They will be provided, intentionally or unintentionally, with the correct answers the thing that raises their self-confidence and pushes them to respond to the teacher's questions.
- 5 . The amount of student talking time is increased because there are more opportunities that permit students to use language to communicate with each other. On the other hand, it's more dynamic than pair work since more people react and there is a greater possibility of discussion, information sharing and experience exchanging.
- 6 . Group work would develop the students' interest, clarify meaning, and remedy for boredom of the daily school routine, and above all, transfer the process of learning from "skill –getting" to "skill-using" and here lies the ultimate goal of using the activities in English. (Kailani; Muqattash , 1995,p:20) .
- 7 . A lot of teachers form groups where two abilities strong and weak students are mixed together. This is good for weak students (although there is a danger that they will be over powered by their stronger brethren and will thus not participate) and probable does not hinder the stronger students from getting the maximum benefit from the activity." (Harmer, 1983, p:208)

Question : If you were in Mr. Ansari's situation, what variables would you take into consideration as you are placing your students into groups?

If I were in Mr. Ansari's situation, I'd take the following aspects or variables into consideration:

- 1 . The level of students' cognitive growth.
- 2 . Their background knowledge.
- 3 . The students' mood and behavioral patterns, skills and needs.
- 4 . Their ages
- 5 . Their sex, gender.
- 6 . Their span of apprehension.
- 7 . Learning styles

For teachers of languages it would be preferable to have homogeneous groups or sub-groups with similar qualities to make it easier for the teacher to help and direct them .To clarify the above mentioned variables, certain points will be explained

The students' cognitive growth, according to Piaget's theory, determines the material which must be taught, and so do the students' behavioral skills and proficiency determine the ability and the implementation of a special lesson.

Here the teacher could use the following table for planning a lesson activity for groups:

Subject	skill	Students' level	Timing

Concerning the background knowledge and span of apprehension, some students might have either wide or restricted knowledge depending on their ages or experiences; they might also have limited span which requires the teacher to use certain techniques; he should vary his procedures and materials to comprise visual aids that might clarify certain terms or help students internalize and contextualize the content. In teaching level II students, the teacher could give separate words through pictures, or teach separate sentences, whereas he could present larger chunks, sentences or paragraphs for the students of level III, supposing that they've acquired more competence and information.

On the other hand, Schmuck and Schmuck, 1995 determined some characteristics that determine the effective groups:

- 1 . students' expectations
- 2 . leader ship
- 3 . acceleration
- 4 . criteria
- 5 . solidarity and continuity (جابر وآخرون . 1989)

Working side by side, teachers and students using all possible activities like co-operation, readiness for help, motivation, mutual understanding, interest, and solving problems, should be geared towards achieving the desired goal i.e. learning.

Having taken all the previous points and analysis into consideration, I now turn to the actual implementation of the case on my students. In general, when facing a similar situation, certain procedures might be followed.

First, a brief description of how the case of the two different levels in the same class (I called them level B /1: students directly placed, and level B/2: students who passed 101) was dealt with.

In fact, I actually put myself in the same situation, not only for the purpose of the study, but for achieving better learning outcomes. I played the same role six times: three times at school and three at university. For example, at the university, all students are required to undertake the placement test before being admitted to university. The students enrolled in 102 English communication courses were of two types : some were directly placed in the course, while others passed 101 or 102 pre-requisite courses. This indicates that students have different background knowledge or schema, possess varying skills and abilities and show diverse self-confidence that all have to be tackled well.

1. A diagnosis of the students' background knowledge is usually necessary. From the test the individual differences concerning the students' previous knowledge, communicative competence, language skills, cognitive growth, verbal-nonverbal abilities could be identified, and accordingly students would be divided into either homogeneous or heterogeneous groups . However, in my case, this was not carried out since the test cut scores upon which the distribution of students was met were clear. In addition, the study was conducted in the last two months of the second semester the thing that helped me as a researcher recognize the differences among the groups in the first two months from their tests, everyday activities and mid-term exam.
2. Examining the new language words, functions and other linguistic forms or communicative abilities to be introduced to the students, together with the different language activities involved was of great help to vary the pace and activities taking the individual differences and proficiency level into account.

3. Dividing the unit into an appropriate number of teaching steps was also necessary to ensure that the teaching load could be evenly distributed among the various steps.
4. Two separate lesson plans with specific objectives for each group was prepared.
The achievement of those objectives relied on the material and activities implemented in class.
5. The class period was divided into two halves working with one group at a time. Special activities were prepared for level B/1; at the same time other activities for Level B/2 were implemented. Being restricted to the allotted time for each activity is preferable despite the fact that the class room situation and the students' responses determine the extent and duration of the activities. Group work should be well – organized and the task must be made clear, as well as who would speak, with whom and for how long.
6. The last 10 to 15 minutes were devoted to doing worksheet, providing feedback to each other, evaluation and assigning homework for both groups. It is worth noting that the teacher played the role of advisor, counselor and participant.
7. As it would be difficult to decide the pupils' needs at schools, since one might not know their occupations in later life, a variety of activities to teach the four major skills would be applied. Teachers should produce material that satisfies the greatest majority of students, at the same time make provision for minority interests within the group. At Birzeit University, the English language material has been selected to suit the students' various proficiency levels, including material from different subject matters and future fields of specialization so as to equip students with the four language skills, mainly communicative ones. Therefore, many activities require students working in groups or in pairs. "Group learning and performance depends on both individual accountability and group interdependence; group numbers sink or swim together – i.e. for anyone in the group to succeed, everyone in the group must succeed." (Ilola and others, 1989, p:2).

In this kind of situation what types of oral activities might be particularly beneficial?

It is worth pointing out here that where there are students of different levels and interests in a class, different groups can be found that not all the students are necessarily working on the same material at the same time. On the other hand, it is preferable to have a small odd number of students less than seven; Five students is enough. The fifth student can be chosen to act as an organizer to make sure that the task is properly done. At the same time, this leader can act as a mini-teacher helping the teacher complete the task. Dividing the class into groups can change the classroom into a dynamic, interesting place where the students can work effectively in a cheerful, comfortable atmosphere to perform the following activities :

1. **Consensus activities** : groups work together ,divide things for a specific situation and agree on a consensus .e.g.

For example, a student has robbed the teachers off his watch, what punishment does he deserve?

- a. to buy a new one instead.
- b. to report to the police.
- c. to ignore the incident.

Students discuss and reach a consensus.

We can look at another example in details: Going to "New York City. Etc." In this activity students are told that they are going on a holiday and have to decide what ten objects to take with them.

Stage 1: Students write down the items to put in luggage for two weeks. **Stage 2 :** When they have finished, they are put in pairs to negotiate the list. Each member can change his list if (necessary).

Stage 3: When the pairs have finished, another two pairs negotiate together a new list that all four students agree on. **Stage 4 :** Groups can now be joined together and the list re-negotiated. **Stage 5 :**

A feed- back session is conducted with the whole class in which each group explains and justifies choices.

This activity which can be used from the elementary level up-wards is a great fun and produces a lot of English. Besides, it can be applied to a class of two or more levels(Harmer, 1983).

2. **Communication games** based on information gaps. e.g. find similarities and describe things, etc.
3. **Problem-solving.**

4. **Story-construction.**
5. **Flash cards** one also used to play games, create dialogues, prepare cross word puzzles and to teach new words and functions.
6. **Reading Magazines and discussing the latest news.** In addition, pupils can make use of pictures from magazines as teaching aids. The simple pictures can be used with level III and the more complex pictures with the advanced class IV.
7. **Attending different films on T.V or in the cinema and discussing the incidents in class on the following day.** Having attended different films students can describe them in class, and so they can keep abreast of many films not only one.
8. **Holding group competition:** Asking individual students to sum up, describe, discuss the mentioned activities will assess the value of the experience, i.e. give them time to talk about themselves and their families, hopes, aspirations, opinions, and other personal social or political issues.
9. **Recipes.**
10. **Likes and dislikes**
11. **Conducting interviews either in class or beyond the classroom.**
12. **Interpersonal exchange.** As we have seen, it would be possible to combine the two ability level students and perform certain activities. Through group work it would also be possible that the poor students might work hard to compete against the others. "Group work should be looked at as a teaching strategy which we should stick to and make sure that the students are aware of its benefits. (Kailani; Muqattash, 1996, p: 206). Modern educators say that: "Incorporating peer teaching and training to become autonomous into our methodology is not only a way of enabling our students to make the most of the English we have taught them by expanding it over years and years of fruitful self-directed learning; it can also be a convenient and rewarding way (for both teachers and students) of dealing with large, mixed-ability classes (Sionis, 1990, p: 91)

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Teacher Self-Development: a Risk-taking Process

Dr. Samir M Rammal

Abstract

Acknowledging the shortcoming of one's teaching can be painful. However, it is the most inevitable lesson that teachers usually learn sooner or later in the profession. This research paper discusses teacher self-development as a risk-taking process. The paper also tests the above hypothesis by focusing on issues related to research questions, including: (1) how can teacher self-development be a challenging process in cultures in which an individual is taught not to admit being wrong? (2) How can acknowledging one's own shortcomings help him/her develop their own professionalism? And (3) how can self-development be implemented as an ongoing process?

Introduction:

Acknowledging a shortcoming of one's teaching can be painful. However, it was the first inevitable lesson that I had to learn throughout

my long experience in the profession. The personal attitude that I have developed over time has always been proved to be a double-edge weapon, especially for a teacher, like myself, who belongs to a culture in which an individual grows up with the idea not to admit being wrong. However, acknowledging my own shortcomings as a teacher helped me develop my professionalism and thus made me consider adopting an ongoing self-evaluation process. Vivid evidence in this continuum is the gap that I have observed throughout the different phases of my academic educational achievements.

Keeping in mind that development is a basic educational goal as well as a strategy that teachers should actively employ, this paper will address professional development as a risk-taking process and how teachers' realization of their shortcomings can serve as an impetus to improve professional development. Finally, the paper will conclude with some recommendations for teachers and educators to consider and implement in the teachers' self-development process.

Teacher's Role:

Success in teaching, in general and in language teaching in particular, does not only depend on the new methodological innovations and textbooks which are designed to teach language, but also on realizing a number of teaching prerequisites including learners' needs and motivation, teacher's self-evaluation and self-development, and implementation of the latest teaching media and materials that help in making the teaching-learning process become interesting for both teachers and students alike. These elements, though crucial, are not sufficient to optimize success because in order to employ the findings of methodological advancements and use textbooks to help students learn the taught material effectively, we have to consider an important demand without which everything wouldn't be enough, that element is the teacher.

The teacher should not be regarded as the all-knowing person who enters the classroom and delivers information piecemeal into vacuous student minds. Indeed, a teacher who does so would mistakenly perceive all students as being alike and without any pre-existing knowledge, thus ignoring individual differences would yield negative impacts on those students' achievements. It is a well-known fact that no two individuals have the same responsibilities, character traits, and or learning styles.

A class with twenty different problems that a teacher has to deal with must be well known to him/her. If teachers do not acquaint themselves with their students' problems and learning needs, then they will not be able to claim success in their teaching. This assumption bears the question of how to identify the problems, needs, and other issues that arise during the teaching process.

The only agent who can recognize these problems, needs, and issues is the teacher himself/herself. This, however, does not imply that every teacher is capable of identifying all kinds of problems in a classroom. Problem identification is the product of increased awareness of one's professionalism (Gebhard, 1992).

Teacher Development:

Self-Observation as Part of Teacher Development

It is obvious that the teaching-learning process involves numerous factors that are inextricably woven, and the teacher should play a significant role in this process. Therefore, in order for the teacher to maintain this significant role, special attention should be centered on her/him. One important factor that can contribute to the significant role of the teacher is promoting self-development as an ongoing process. Richards (1990: 6) says "observation is employed not in order to demonstrate good teaching, but to provide data for reflection and analysis". Gebhard (1993: 3) emphasizes the importance of observation as a useful instrument available for teachers' use to "gain awareness of their teaching". In 'What Kind of Flower Is that? An Alternative Model for Discussing Lessons', Fanselow sees observation not only as an extremely useful means in the process of professional development, but also as being useful for "systematic and sustained research by those who have more time than teachers for very detailed analysis of communications" (Fanselow , 1982: 2).

Development is a process that enhances profound growth throughout the professional life of teachers. The acquisition of two skills is necessary for a continuous professional growth. These are self-inquiry and critical thinking. According to Freeman (1989) and Richards (1987), teacher development should help teaching move from a level where they are guided by external input, to a level where they are guided by reflection and critical thinking.

Teacher development does not assume that teachers lack some skills, but rather, the basic tenet of teacher development is that it begins by building on what the teacher already knows. The teacher identifies issues relevant to his/her in-classroom performance, competence, and awareness of his students' needs for learning. "An observation task," according to Wajnryb (1993: 7) "is a focused activity to work on while observing a lesson in progress." Hence, being an observer in his/her classroom, a teacher should assign himself/herself three major observation tasks namely: (1) pre-observation, (2) while-observation, and (3) post-observation (Rammal, 1995: 106). The first category is meant to help the teacher gain better understanding of classroom observation tasks. Consequently, s/he embellishes his/her ability to observe, analyze, and interpret what goes on in his/her own classroom. In order to practically implement this objective, the teacher should keep a self-observation journal in which s/he must record the minute details of the conducted activities in each class s/he teaches right after the class is over. Details such as covered material, types of questions asked, proportion of teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction, feedback, wait time, met and unmet lesson objectives, etc could be recorded in the self-observation journal.

Moreover, and in order to make in-classroom self-observation tasks effective and reliable and yield useful result, another observation tool could be utilized for the while-observing activity, namely: checklists. For example, the teacher can use a checklist to observe how many questions s/he asked during a class, whether or not s/he uses wait time, and the types of questions s/he addressed to the learners.

The third category of observation tasks pertains to what the teacher should do after each taught class. This post-observation activity includes sitting alone and rewriting classroom observations, analyzing, coding, and interpreting them so as to make them easy to retrieve for future use (Rammal, 1995:108). Such items could be easily classified under categories pertaining to points of strength in one's classroom performance, teaching shortcomings, suitability of employed methodology, textbook selection, and curriculum modification and adjustment.

As a result of self-observation, the teacher's role as an observer of his/her own teaching in identifying the issues signals the bottom-up characteristic of teacher development. It starts from the bottom by identifying what the problem is. Then, the teacher takes the necessary

action by collaborating with teacher educators with the intention to explore possible options for professional development. But, the role of teacher educators, in this respect, remains that of the outside observer who can, sometimes, identify problems that teachers usually do not recognize in their own teaching. However, it is the teacher who needs to first identify the problem and then seek a meaningful resolution. For example, in the observation journal that I kept for one of my language classes, which I taught in the spring semester 2008, I wrote entries in which I recorded descriptions of what occurred during each observation session. Each entry included items related to classroom interaction including: student-student, student-teacher, and student-textbook interaction. Besides, the journal included entries about class time management, classroom atmosphere, practicing actual language skills, classroom participation, employed teaching aids, collaborative learning, evaluation, peer-response, and feedback. These and the like observation activities could be described as low-inference items.

The purpose of the above observed categories is not to evaluate the curriculum on the current theory and practice in teaching language skills, on the contrary, observation should focus on consideration of what occurs in one's taught classes in relation to context variables such as what the goals and objectives of the teaching-learning process are. However, in order for the teacher to work at gaining reliable results and to systematically observe the teaching-learning environment, s/he may utilize the following list of high-inference observation items:

1. Relevant brainstorming questions to the taught lesson; e.g., can you tell me a bit about your personal history of learning to read, write, and speak English? Can you remember any specific writing experience? Can you tell me something about your English teacher at school? What was your favorite subject at school? Such questions help to personalize the teaching learning process and create a more relaxed educational environment.
2. Ask yourself questions pertaining to the use of available teaching aids including blackboards, pictures, flash cards, wall-papers, software, internet resources, and other audio-visual aids; e.g.,
 - How often do use aids or some of them to promote the teaching-learning process in the classroom?
 - Do I use visual or audio-visual aids to encourage classroom interaction and thus promote learning inside the classroom? How often?

- How effectively are the aids used? (e.g. Judging by students' written or spoken language).

3. Ways the teacher uses to monitor group work:

- Spend most of the time with groups?
- Leave the groups work alone?
- Give students directing instructions as individuals or groups?

Teacher development can be achieved through self-awareness in the profession. Gebhard (1992) asserts that teacher development, mainly, depends on increasing one's own awareness of all factors related to the teaching process. Gebhard further suggests that teachers can use four approaches to gain awareness. These include: self-observation, observation of others' teaching, asking others to observe one's own teaching, and maintaining a journal or diary. A teacher interviewee sees observation as a useful instrument in the process of teacher development.

"Observation helps a lot. But the thing is that the majority of our teachers won't welcome the idea. It is a risk-taking measure. I myself welcome the idea because you get benefit out of that." (See Appendix A) .

Another teacher emphasized that observation is beneficial, although often, the technology needed for effective observation such as video equipment, is not available.

"We don't have these facilities," the interviewee asserts. "Observation" he maintains "is good, though it gives very sensitive conclusions and may cause embarrassment for teachers. Sometimes, I do it for others, but I haven't anybody coming to observe me. Maybe, this is done usually at the official level. I invite colleagues, I tell them if you like to observe my class, you're most welcome anytime, but this does not happen often." (See Appendix) .

Answering a question on how to introduce observation to promote teacher's self-development, the same teacher asserts:

"I guess that is possible if it is taken out of the official context. If it is followed according to colleague relationship, friendly basis where teachers do not feel they are threatened, or they are not there to be checked upon. If between colleagues, or people interested in the field, if they come and visit each other, observe each other for positive, constructive advice that

should work. Finally, I think this is the human nature. No body likes to be observed. That means a lot of sensitivity." (See Appendix)

Awareness and Teacher Development

Awareness is central to teacher development, as emphasized by Gebhard and Woo (1992). In order for teacher development to be successful, an increased awareness of one's own performance in the teaching-learning process is necessary.

"Teacher development is a process in which the teacher plays an active role," maintains an interviewee teacher. The teacher interviewee continues, "I read about the course I usually teach- writing for instance. I read about methods of teaching writing and try to see if they are workable for my classes or not, because every situation has its own potential, and you have to be aware and select what works with your own students. In order to be aware of my teaching, I usually carry out a kind of study, a plan, where I analyze the situation and diagnose the problems of my students and thus give recommendations." (See Appendix).

Thus, teacher development is a process in which the teacher plays an active role. A teacher diagnoses and identifies a problem related to either his/her teaching or to his/her students. His/her awareness of what is going on in the classroom is what makes the diagnosis-identification procedure possible. Once the teacher identifies the teaching problems he or his students face, he can seek remedial suggestions that may facilitate resolution of those problems. Indeed, we should remember that not all awareness is framed within a "problem solving" process. Some teachers, for instance, explore different teaching behaviors just to see what will happen, to gain fresh awareness, as Fanselow and Gebhard do.

The teacher educator plays an important role in the development process. He is a collaborator, a participant, an observer, and a facilitator. His role is mainly to give guidance and feedback in the form of suggestions or alternative ways for solving the problems among which the teacher can choose those which fit his/her case. The solution to be adopted is the choice of the teacher who, by employing his awareness, has diagnosed and identified a problem, and then, will decide which one of the options at his disposal would best solve the problem. For instance, when implementing a course outline, the teacher has to

follow a set of objectives leading to certain goals to be obtained before, during, and after the taught course is over. Thus, in order for him/her to successfully meet the course objectives, a teacher should adopt a n on-going evaluation process that would serve as an indicator towards a successful implementation procedure. Therefore, employing observation instruments including checklists, videotaping of the taught classes, and recording journals are useful tools for increasing teachers' awareness of what they do in classrooms.

As the concept of awareness is crucial to teacher development, ways of increasing teacher awareness must be sought :

- 1 . Observation : self and others' observations can be employed in the development process. Observations may be carried out in different ways such as videotaping, observing high and low inference items in the classroom interaction, micro teaching, etc.
- 2 . Keeping teacher diaries and or journals in which teachers record their observations and self-reflections.
- 3 . Self-reporting by using checklists in which teachers record information about what is being transpired during a lesson and what they didn't do (Richards, 1990).
- 4 . Project work addressing specific issues in a classroom such as questions and wait-time.
- 5 . Action research in which the teacher works as a data collector and researcher whose task is to observe and monitor actions and study them to create alternatives for improvement.

Teachers' Talk about Teaching and Teacher Development

One idea that can be employed is to organize meetings, which would create a non-threatening environment for teachers to get together and talk about their teaching. This development strategy should be initiated by teachers who intend to work out their own development. Hence, this is whatn I call self-motivation towards professional development. Interested teachers can raise issues relevant to their teaching environments and thus benefit from each other's experience.

Teachers' talk about their own teaching is an old practice that teachers have never thought of as a useful process for teacher development until recently. However, the most important part of this process is what we call collaborative professional development. Dunstan, et al.

(1989: 47) discuss self-disclosure as a form of teachers' talk about their own teaching "dealing with self-disclosure in the group has, indeed, built important bonds." Payne and Manning (1991) examined self-talk of student teachers and resulting relationships. The writers argue that the results of their investigation of sixty-nine female pre-service teachers recorded self-talk, indicated that "the pre-service teachers engaged in a majority of negative child-oriented external self-talk." On the other hand, Aspy and Roebuck (1982) state that "effective teachers must be more than purveyors of information; they must be persons who know something about themselves and how their own beliefs and feelings affect their work with students."

Therefore, teachers' talk creates an atmosphere of intimacy among peers and self-confidence for teachers who work out their own development. Fanselow's suggestion (1982) is extremely vital in this respect: "I believe that both in discussions of lessons and in lessons, most of what we do, we do, not because we are either clever or stupid, but rather because invisible rules control most of what we do." Hence, in order for our talk about our teaching to be fruitful and contribute to our own development as teachers in the profession, we should follow Fanselow's suggestion to be non-judgmental or over-ruled by any preconceived notions which Fanselow calls "invisible rules."

Gebhard and Woo (1992) emphasize teachers' talk about teaching as an effective means for self-observation. Citing Fanselow's (1992: 93) workshop approach, they maintain that :

"Teachers could be taught how to see teaching differently through Fanselow's (1992) workshop approach. Besides, observation projects could be initiated in which teachers video-tape their own and other' teaching, and later meet in groups to talk about teaching based on their taped classroom observations."

Teaching problems can also be negotiated with the intention to evaluate and explore possible solutions. Once teachers interact and receive input from their colleagues, they might be able to discover workable suggestions and insights for improvement. Such meaningful insights and feedback which can be held through "contrasting conversations" between teachers, will encourage them to "break the rules" (Fanselow 1992: 43) and promote an atmosphere of cooperation. For instance, the close classroom door policy, too much teaching, impressionistic evaluation of students' work, and conventional teaching methods can be

subjects for new and updated suggestions among conversing colleague. They will exercise a better understanding of the range of phenomena that can hinder successful teaching. These communications not only help teachers to recognize their problems in more details or at least in an objective perspective apart from their own, but may stimulate changes in teaching, for example, adopting different teaching methods or textbooks. The teacher and peers may enjoy a symbiotic relationship in which they learn from each other with respect to new methods, creative activities, and teaching styles.

Hence, in order for our talk about teaching to be fruitful and contribute to our own development as teachers, we may be wise to follow teacher educators' advice echoed in the findings of Fanselow and his student, Gebhard. Thus, teacher talk plays a significant role in teacher development because it doesn't only enable the teacher to identify areas for professional improvement, but it promotes points of strength as well. Finally, teacher talk promotes teacher awareness, which enhances and promotes self-development and builds on what teachers already know.

Findings and Implications for Teachers

As Johnson (1989: 10) notes, "Teachers, learners, and program resources combine and interact to create learning opportunities." What concerns teachers in this respect is risk-taking in the actual teacher development process. Teachers, in other words, should not wait for others to provide them with developmental opportunities. On the contrary, they should always create their own means for self-development.

Based on the findings of this study, the investigator concludes that teacher self-development should always be considered as a risk-taking process that might involve harsh criticism, unnecessary intrusion, and bias evaluation on whose basis a teacher's professional performance could be judged. However, teachers should always keep in mind that one's teaching is not always perfect. Therefore, the following implications can be useful for teachers to consider during a self-development process :

- 1 . Teachers should activate their role in curriculum planning as a decision-making process because it is the teacher who is going to be directly involved in the implementation of the curriculum.
- 2 . Teachers can engage in self-reflection, classroom observation, self-observation, and diary keeping.

3. Teachers can create a teaching environment where trust should be the prevailing factor through which collaboration can take place instead of official supervision.
4. Teachers should encourage peer classroom visits, team teaching, and peer feedback instead of locking one's self behind closed doors, thus becoming a slave to selfishness impervious to changes in one's professional development.
5. Teachers can employ teacher talk about teaching as a useful means for sharing experiences and exploring possibilities for self-motivation and self-development.
6. Finally, consulting a teacher educator for advice and problem solving remains another useful option in the teacher self-development process.

Conclusion

From the previous discussion, one can deduce that teacher development is a risk-taking process, especially in cultures where a teacher is always harshly criticized for the most trivial mistake. Therefore, the teacher hesitates, and most often retreats from risk-taking as an educational imperative in professional development. Thus, whether we partake in the role of learner, teacher, student teacher, or teacher educator, we must, as human beings, acknowledge our inherent shortcomings. We must also concede that there is always room for improvement, which we should eagerly seek and embrace.

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English For Specific or Academic Purposes at An-Najah Univ. with Reference to Electronic Learning

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Abstract

we aim to look at the teaching of English to various technical and scientific fields of study and the related insights brought about from such language applications with the methodology based on teacher's class observations, students' exams and a short questionnaire all of which have resulted in a paper including the :

- 1 . introduction(background of students, brief literature review, experience of West Bank universities with ESP or EAP) .
- 2 . the present situation
- 3 . innovative applications with reference to E-learning and .
- 4 . conclusions and suggested changes .

Introduction

As a lecturer of English teaching 10322 (Univ. Eng II for science students), I'd like to share my teaching experience with you. It sounds rational, at

least, to us to ask why we should teach miscellaneous English for scientific routes when we can teach English for specific or academic purposes?" That is, we can select books that would suit the various language needs of sub-fields of science such as electronically-biased books, agriculturally-biased, mechanically-biased, medically-biased, and so on. In the event where this is not possible, we can compile relevant handouts .

Background of students : It is roughly expected that 70% of the sts. of this university received education at public Palestinian schools, and 30% of them is estimated to be educated at private and UNRWA schools. We usually receive sts. after having had approximately 12 years of learning English as a foreign language.

Brief Literature Review

In a pre-conference event of 2008 on the ESP and EAP advances in the 21st century, it was convincingly argued that globalization, achieving higher levels of a suitable educational infrastructure and the expansion in the ways education is delivered have motivated ESP and EAP research. This paper is no exception; it has been influenced by these factors toward more oriented English.

Experience of West Bank universities with ESP or EAP

A survey of six universities: AAUJ, Beir Zeit Univ., Bethlehem Univ., Palestine Polytechnic University, Alquds Univ. of Abu Dees and Hebron Univ. which were asked via email the question of how they were catering for ESP/EAP of their scientific majors has indicated that Beir Zeit Univ. gives four communication (general English) courses for different levels. As for English for specific purposes, they have three compulsory English courses: English for law, English for public administration and English for journalism. Beithlehem Univ. has the following to say:

"In response to your question about how we cater for our science (biology, chemistry, maths, computer and information technology), business, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and nursing) students: we don't have a set textbook for any of these fields. In each of these fields, and sometimes a combination of fields, we have materials that we compile from different sources that we use as teaching materials. Part of the materials are work on word analysis including lists of stems and affixes. The emphasis on some reading sub-skills, most importantly identifying information needed for comprehension

questions, identifying discourse markers, or transition words, etc., summarizing important information in non-text form or transferring tabular information to text."

Palestine Polytechnic University gives the teacher the freedom to prescribe the textbook he/she thinks fit to meet their students' academic purposes; no well-defined program seems to exist. However, Abu Dees, AAUJ and Hebron Universities had nothing to say in response, despite reminders.

The Present Situation

As you probably know, the language needs of all scientific routes at an Najah Univ. are nourished by using Key Words in Science and Technology.

from cobuild series by Bill Mascull.

This book mainly contains topics about research and discovery, the environment, information tech, medicine, genetics, physics, space, etc. Being miscellaneous as one may realize, the book is thought to meet approximately the general needs of all science and technology sts. at this university.

However, there are voices among sts. and others showing disapproval of this technique and showing interest in books oriented towards specific sub-fields. To support our claim here, we ran a questionnaire across one class asking sts. if they would prefer the present book for their majors or one focused on their major. The result was as follows: the questionnaire was given out to 31 students who all responded with 22(71%) showing desire to change the book and (9)29% preferring to keep the present book in use.(a point of interest to the curriculum committee).

The present book, as you may all realize, is badly copied to the point that some sts. as well as teachers lost interest in it.

Also, the present situation lacks in electronic facilitation such as computers which clearly impairs teaching. Such a situation will force teachers to fall back on personal computers.

Innovative Applications

we will discuss as many as 10 points under this heading :

- 1 . Driven by instrumental considerations, i.e., career-related English, We made use of the insights obtained from teaching this course and

highlighted the question of register and its kinds (the varieties of English used in various fields of study) and made sts. aware of these kinds through exposure or listening to related recorded material. Sts., in their exams, reacted to this course fairly positively, ranging from learning many useful vocabulary items to getting engaged in scientific and technical discussions to wishing a repeat of similar courses. Some, however, expressed the desire to study purely specialized English such as medical, mechanical, electrical etc.

2. To meet the language needs of these sts., we asked them to further their readings in the specialized English of their particular majors with forms to be filled out with related vocab or reports to be written out. We also got sts. engaged in compiling a technical dictionary in the particular major of a group of sts., thus conducted in a framework of an ESP project.
3. We develop and expand their vocabulary in relation to pertinent word-formation by looking up the root and its various related word-forms and using these forms in a meaningful context.
4. Vocab. lists were, thankfully, introduced by Mrs Mizyed last semester. Following a discussion on this item in one of my classes, 15 out of 40 approved of them. The rest were reserved about them as a mere reproduction of the textbook, with a few showing interest in receiving them.
5. Supportive to the vocabulary list is a question list on the main texts to check comprehension and keep students busy in class and out of class.
6. In previous courses, sts. were encouraged to launch " ago-green campaign" to make the community more aware of a green (harmless) environment. It seems students need further encouragement and support on the issue from the university administration.
7. An incentive and innovative endeavor would be to integrate E-learning exercises in our teaching programs. For example, we can take sometime out to change sts.' atmosphere by working in your office or even at home. To implement such a plan, teachers would need to enroll in a training course.
8. an Najah Univ. has used the computer in the teaching/learning process as in computerizing marks and the whole registration process.

9. It has also recently started automating the attendance and absence of students.
10. Last but not least in importance is the first 10322 exam. Students' reaction to the exam was rather long to the point it caused them a negative feeling (affective filter_ a hypothesis of second language acquisition) and put them under real pressure of time. It sounds wise to us that the exam can have one part of writing either writing comments and answering questions or writing a paragraph as either can test the writing skill. I would think, in this regard, that this discussion can have its implications to other similar exams.

Conclusions and suggested changes

1. We enthusiastically back up the 22 sts. who propose changing the book for a more specialized textbook because A) this is likely to motivate students further and save them from the affective filter _negative learning experience/negative feeling based on the assumption that sts. crucially/ intrinsically(psychologically) care about their majors. B) It promotes their specialized knowledge and thus paves the way to a happy major where students become more able to gain the content of their subject more thoroughly.
2. The Google and electronic dictionaries can be good sources of knowledge, facilitation and illustration. The OCC, if constantly works well, is very good for efficient communication with sts., let alone the LCD projector which can make classes more interesting and entertaining, particularly in presentations, if they can always be made available. It seems there's growing interest worldwide to use computer in teaching. What a great comfort would it be if we could automate all our exams? However, I can talk about examples of failing technology on-line which represents a frustrating waste of time.
3. Related technical recorded material on cassettes or CD's can be offered as supplementary home material to improve their specialized English. For further acquaintance with a technical approach to teaching a technical/electronic text, you can visit our web :
<http://www.universalteacher site org.uk/lang/electronic text.doc>

Localizing the Academic Word list

Raja Rantisi

Rational

- 1 . ENC courses are mostly vocabulary programs:
 - a . In the course outline, voc. Occupies 60% of the expected learning outcomes. For example: voc. from context, affixes, roots, collocation, and transitions, word forms. Nevertheless, no time is allocated in the outline to teach voc. explicitly.
 - b . In the standardized exams, almost 66% of the course grade revolves around vocabulary testing.
- 2 . The department adopts the AWL as a basis for teaching vocabulary items; thus we adopted this list for our research.
- 3 . The words chosen are taught to our students through reading. However, the textbooks use topics that are culturally irrelevant and thus de-motivating for classroom activities. E.g. why so many Americans die in fire, heart disease, American immigration.

"The choice of content can be a major factor stimulating interest." (Nation, p.2001)
"Many listening or reading texts revolve around pre-selected topics which may have little interest for learners." (Griffiths and Keohane, 2000)

What is AWL ?

- 1 . It is a list of 570 word families: (not single words) but word families, meaning the stem plus the different derivative and inflectional lexical units (prefixes and suffixes).
- 2 . The list does not include the 2000 general word list (GWL) which was developed by Michael West in 1953.
- 3 . It resulted from a thorough study of 3.5 million words from different corpuses done by Averil Coxhead in 1998.
- 4 . Corpus: Norbert Schmitt defines corpora (pl) as large collections or data bases of language incorporating stretches of discourse ranging from a few words to entire books. Corpora evidence revolutionized the way we view language particularly words and their relationships to each other in context. Corpus evidence is now showing the extent of lexical patterning in discourse. Patterns like these might even be considered the language' building blocks. E.g. patterning and meaning, collocation and word frequency.
- 5 . AWL is a study of 28 subject areas organized into 7 general areas within 4 disciplines: arts, sciences, commerce, and law.
- 6 . The list is divided into 10 sub lists according to frequency. The first word families are the most frequent and the 10th being the least.
- 7 . Words included in the AWL are those lexical items which occur frequently (100 occurrence) and uniformly (25 in the four disciplines) across a wide range of academic material but are not among the first 2000 words in the GSL.
- 8 . Coxhead suggested that AWL might be used to set voc. Goals for EAP courses, and construct relevant teaching material and help students focus on useful voc. Items. (Coxhead, p.227).

Methodology:

- 1 . In search of our students' topic interests, we conducted a small survey on 107 students, 67 of the students showed interest in computers and internet, 64 for sports and youth problems.

"Teachers need to watch their learners carefully and seek their opinions about what stories and topics they find interesting. There is some evidence, Bawcom, (1995) of teacher views of what will be interesting do not match of what learners find interesting." (Nation, 2001)

- 2 . To meet the students' needs in their area of interest, a thorough search for authentic academic material was conducted in the university library, internet, and local institutions that deal with issues related to youth, e.g. Panorma, Paylara, and Muwaten, and Birzeit development studies center.
- 3 . We allocated this text "Arab youth today: The generation gap, identity crisis and democratic deficit" in the book Alienation or Integration of Arab Youth Between Family, State and Street edited by Roel Meijer for our research.
- 4 . We located the AWL words in the text and then chose to find only the first three frequency word family sub lists. We found all together 35 words. F1: 18 words, F2: 12, F3: 5.

"It has now been realized that mere exposure to language and practice with functional communication will not ensure the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary (or an adequate grammar for that matter), so current best practice includes both a principled selection of vocabulary, often according to frequency lists, and an instruction methodology that encourages meaningful engagement with words over a number of recyclings."(N. Schmitt, 2000)

"If a teacher were teaching English for academic purposes (EAP), a general frequency list would be useful in showing the high frequency words that are common to most subject areas." (Schmitt, 2000) "Nation (1995) argues that the most frequent words occur so often in general language that they are essential for any real language use and worth whatever time and effort is required to learn them."(Schmitt, 2000)

- 5 . Based on several theoretical references for teaching voc. (Nation, Schmitt, Coxhead, Coady and Hucking), we designed our voc activities.

Theory

In designing voc. exercises, Paul Nation has pointed out 2 main principles to be taken into consideration;

- 1 . Aim of learning activity :
 - a . to provide a range of rich contexts which lead to 'noticing' and 'processing'

b. to allow repetition which also leads to 'noticing'.

"For explicit learning, however, recycling has to be consciously built into any study program. Teachers must guard against presenting a word once and then forgetting about it, or else their students will do the same. This implies developing a more structured way of presenting vocabulary that reintroduces words repeatedly in classroom activities. Learning activities themselves need to be designed to require multiple manipulations of a word." (Schmitt, 2000)

c. to expose students to different aspects of words which are word forms (grammar), affixes, spelling, pronunciation, and multiple meaning senses.

The idea of grouping orthographically similar words can be maximally exploited by working with word families instead of single words." (Schmitt, 2000).

2. Psychological conditions facilitating achieving the learning goals:

a. 'Noticing': when students realize 'inefficiency' or a 'gap'.

b. Negotiation: defining through discussion.

"Learners observing negotiation learn vocabulary as well as learners who do the actual negotiation." (Stahl and Vancil, 1986) .

c. Motivation and interest: topic /content /group work .

It [group work] promotes active processing of information and cross-modeling/imitation, the social context enhances motivation of the participants, cooperative learning can prepare the participants for "team activities" outside the classroom, and, because there is less instructor intervention, students have more time to actually use and manipulate language in class (Dansereau, 1998).

d. 'Decontextualization': through retrieval (repetition), negotiation (defining), and creative and generative use.

"Numerous exposures to a word in various contexts are required before it is usually mastered. This means that teachers should not make the assumption that because a word was covered once its meaning has been learned. A particular meaning sense might be learned for a particular context, but this does not guarantee that its meaning parameters will be known for other contexts." (Schmitt, 2000).

The idea of grouping orthographically similar words can be maximally exploited by working with word families instead of single words." (Schmitt, 2000).

The generation gap

As a result of the breakdown of the social consensus, and of the *political, economic* and social situation to which it has led, large numbers of young people turn their backs on the system and are *excluded* from modern production *processes*. Young people live on the periphery of the established social order, which means that their capacity both for integration and for *involvement* with *traditional* parties and unions is weakened. In fact, faced with their diminished prospects, young people have three choices: leave the countries they live in, trying to escape their situation and *emigrate* to Europe or the rich countries of the Arabian peninsula; submit to the situation and expect to find a solution which will allow them to take advantage of the 'system'; or they can distance themselves from the system and go in search of new actors and ideological references with which to *identify*.

According to sociological *surveys*, young people are in all *areas* highly dissatisfied with their lives. They barely *identify*, if at all, with the *political* thinking and behaviour of their elders and they feel let down and marginalised by society. *Surveys* conducted in Jordan, in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine between 1994 and 1995 reveal high levels of alienation among the young people asked about the inertia of the prevailing *political* and *economic* system. These studies *indicate* that the most profound alienation is found in those young people who have received an education or some form of academic training, and that the greater the alienation, the greater the degree of support for Islamic fundamentalism. On the other hand, no direct link could be *established* between alienation and personal religious beliefs, which confirms the hypothesis that Islamic parties *acquire* their wide popular support for sociological reasons, i.e. their capacity to change the status quo, not on account of an upsurge in religious feeling.

In reality, Arab society today is going through a conflict between generations, whereby *politics* is controlled by the older generation, made up either of nationalist leaders from the struggle for independence, or of those who have inherited their historical

legitimacy (which, in turn, stemmed from a break between the generations after World War II). Arabism, socialism and anti-imperialism were the values of this generation of heroic nationalist fighters, but they are not necessarily shared by the generations born after independence. The generation which *acquired* power and prestige due to its nationalist commitment and which laid the foundations of the post-colonial nation-state has thus found itself forced to explore new avenues and break new *political, economic* and social ground in order to integrate young people attracted by different social and *political* models where the affirmation of an Islamic identity plays a predominant role.

This reflects, incidentally, the *cultural* dilemma that characterises this new generation, torn as it is between the rediscovery of its own *traditional* values and its rejection of foreign influence. This dilemma can be explained by a double experience: the difficult relationship with the other (the West throughout the whole of the twentieth century), and, equally, the *complex* relationship with the Self, on top of the need to realise a reality of their own given the poverty of the results of *obtained* with *imported* models. *Consequently*, the *process* of 're- Islamisation' which Arab and Muslim societies are experiencing at present is closely linked to generational transition. It is far from being merely a return to *traditional* roots, but is more a phenomenon in which the young use the *benefits* of modernity and *invest* in the two public arenas that belong to them - cities and universities - and by doing so show how different they are from the *previous* generation. It is now common in urban and student communities for young women to choose to wear the hid jab (covering their heads but not their faces); by doing so, these women reject the *traditional* veil worn by their mothers – the shape of which is decidedly different - because it symbolises for them ignorance, superstition and seclusion, all things they have escaped from thanks to their education. Through the hid jab, young women clearly tell the outside world that they have broken away from their elders, without having to take actively part in conflict with them.

From this perspective it is important to understand that, in sociological terms, the Islamist movements - whose leadership and grassroots are *primarily* young and urban, which in turn underlines

the link between Islamic fundamentalism and the new generation - represent above all the emergence of a new *political* elite that is an integral part of the modernisation *process* of the Arab world. This phenomenon was born without any *conceptual framework*, brought about by what could be called 'socio-*economic* imperatives' - the drift from the countryside, *emigration*, consumerism, urbanisation, the evolution of family relationships, globalisation - and by the adoption of a modern *political framework*, that of the nation-state (whatever the prevalence of nepotism within the regime).

Consequently, in addition to the problems due to the modernisation and democratisation *processes*, Arab-Muslim societies have to overcome serious deficits in public confidence and, among other things, must give up the idea that modernity is the fruit of an experience that comes from the Other. The *concept* of *cultural* authenticity is therefore a significant *criterion* of credibility for a large *proportion* of the population.

This leads to the question of the Islamic *legitimacy* of the *political* agents of the modernisation *process*, a key symbol for this entire generation that is alienated from the prevailing system. Young people today represent in fact a new order in which - thanks to their education - they are able to oppose, with moral and intellectual *authority*, the power of their elders who were themselves condemned to illiteracy by the colonial power. The very nature of cities, coupled with the accelerated process of urbanisation, has disrupted the community structures which *traditionally* regulated relationships, and has opened unfamiliar territory to the initiatives of new, youth- focused groups which weaken both patriarchal *authority* and the *authority* of the elderly in society. Indeed, *individuals acquire* their autonomy with respect to the group at birth, which means a profound sociological change in societies where the family is the central institution, the supreme provider of socialisation, education and security. Even if, at present, the socio-*economic* crisis, the collapse of the *labour* market, and the failure of social mobility mean that the family recovers its former protective *role* in taking care of the unemployed, it nevertheless seems unlikely that the family will regain its hegemonic character,

since it works nowadays only as a compensation mechanism during *periods* of social crisis.

Faced with the immobility of a system that is totally locked and prevents any kind of renewal of the elites, Arab societies are confronted at the same time with *complex* transformation *processes* and deep social fractures. If no answers are given to these questions of *economic* and socio-*political* integration, the result could be serious social disruption and destabilisation.

The list of words from the AWL found in “The generation gap” in: “Arab youth today: The generation gap, identity crisis and democratic deficit”

F1:	F2:	F3:
Area	Acquire	Criteria
Authority	Culture	Exclude
Benefit	Invest	Immigrate
Role	Previous	Framework
Economy	Primary	Proportion
Establish	Survey	
Identity	Tradition	
Indicate	Obtain	
Individual	Consequently	
Involve	Focus	
Labour	Complex	
Period		
Policy		
Process		
Export		
Concept		
Legal		

Most of the exercises involve heavy processing and are recommended for advanced levels in EAP courses. Some are appropriate for first encounter with words, others are recommended for repetition. All of them are based on group work.

Exercises

Activity 1 :

Learners are expected to use their L1 and try to retrieve the equivalent L2 word to fill in the blanks. This activity is a contextualized activity where learners need to use the words in a political context.

Read the following paragraph and then fill in the blanks with the English equivalent of the Arabic words in the box :

منطقة , ثقافي , سياسي , فردي , يضم , مرحلة , عملية , أهمية

In the past sixty years, the Middle East -----, has attracted a lot of attention due to the Arab Israeli conflict. The -----, and the -----, dimensions that it contains. This particular conflict -----, a lot of parties, and players mainly, the Arabs, Israelis, and Muslims on the wider -----, level. As well as the Americans and Europeans on the global, international level. This conflict has undergone a -----, of ups and downs over the different historical -----.

Activity 2 :

This activity is an association activity, where students are expected to find words associated with the given words. This is an activity that encourages guessing and teaches learners the different collocations that lead to the meaning of the words.

The class is divided into groups, each group is given 23- words from the list and are asked to write associations for these words and give the to the next group who will try to guess the word.

Example: Group one is given the word tradition and they are expected to write words like: values, norms, food, clothes, wedding parties...etc.
Group two is given words like: immigrate and they are expected to write words like words, like new country, culture shock, new language, new friends...etc.

Activity 3 :

The students are given the following two lists of phrases or fragments derived from the text and are asked to match them. In this activity, students check their comprehension skills as well as noticing and negotiating the words taught in a context.

Match the phrases from list A with those in list B according to the reading passage "The generation gap".

List A :

- 1 . Young Arabs play an important role .
- 2 . Acquiring the right to education.
- 3 . Many factors such as, the complexity of historical changes .
- 4 . The Arab world adopted the structure of the western state model yet

List B :

- 1 . Played an important role in creating a variety of situations across the countries.
- 2 . The concept of a state remains a foreign notion such as ethical public services and collective action.
- 3 . Led to types of social and political renovation process taking place these days .
- 4 . in strengthening the authority of Islamic movements

Activity 4 :

The following exercise is appropriate for an after reading session in order to engage in a discussion which will involve negotiating the words in a new topic and then relating the words to the reading. The teacher needs to find sentences from unseen texts related to the topic of reading.

Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the sentences below. Ask them to attach the sentence to one or some part(s) of the reading text. No one correct answer is required and thus a lot of discussion will arise.

- 1 . On the one hand, the internet brings change in the *identity* of youth, caused by the many experiences of social interaction{

surfing, chatting}; on the other hand, the internet has almost the opposite affect 'non-change' or ' preservation' of the social system since the young people are going after change in cyber space rather than in real life. They are physically and mentally absent. (Baune, pp.1328-).

2. As long as the situation for young people is so hopeless, the internet is used as away of *immigration - emigration* - as a result of lack of hope for our youth. Some of the young use the internet to find a way to *immigrate - emigrate* – both to *emigrate* in reality by looking for an opportunity to leave the country (finding somebody to marry or a place to study or work), as well as to mentally *emigrate* by using the world wide web to escape the limitations of the social lives they live. ¹
3. The young people are expected to keep the concepts of previous identities while leading the nation into the globalized future(Meijer, p.161) .
4. In *conceptualizing identity*, Stuart Hall points out that it is often based on difference and exclusion rather than being an entity in and of itself [one on its own]. For this reason, identity is a fluid *conception* – becoming rather than being. ²

Activity 5 :

There are two main goals for this exercise; first to encourage productive use of the words through speaking and second to generate a discussion either before or after reading. The exercise involves re-conceptualization' {seeing in different contexts} the words and stimulates discussion and word generation through speaking or writing.

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group one sentence to memorize. After 5 minutes, ask each group to recall the sentence to the class, and then ask each group for another five minutes to re-order the four sentences according to what the group sees as representative to reality. After that, a lot of negotiation and discussion will arise.

¹ Baune,Ines. "Youth in Morocco." Youth and Youth Culture in the contemporary Middle East. ed. Jorgen Baek Simonsen.

² Ibrahim, Barbara and Hind Wassef. "Caught between two worlds: Youth in the Egyptian hinterland." Alienation or Integration of Arab Youht Between Family,State, and Street. Ed. Roel Meijer. Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000.

- 1 . *Traditionally*, the family is the source of socialization, education, and security in society.
- 2 . But due to the economic, political, cultural development, the position of the family is changing. It seems that the *authority* of the family will diminish.
- 3 . The economic and political crises have temporarily renewed its *role*.
- 4 . Because of the *economic, political, and legal* failures in the Arab world, the family takes care of the unemployed and provides protection in times of trouble. The family works as a 'security net' during periods of social crises. (Meijer,p.6).

Activity 6 :

This exercise is good candidate for a revision class. It makes space for the student to retrieve and generate the words for a second time both receptively and productively. It allows for student cooperation and negotiation over meaning and context.

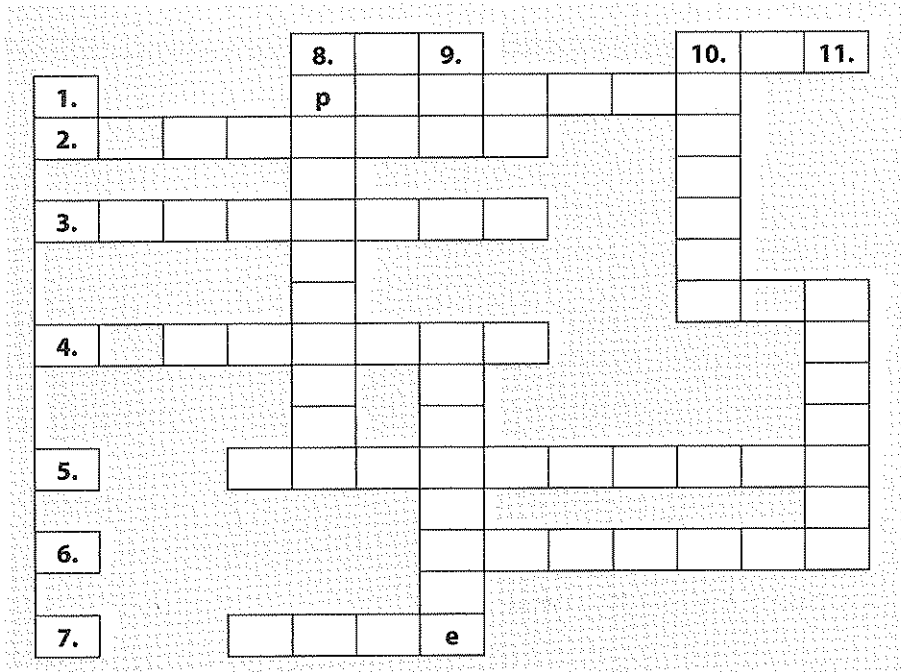
Divide the class into two groups. Give each group 10- to 15 words from the word list after they have seen the words or studied them. Ask each group to prepare a quiz for the other group in 20 minutes. The teacher answers the students' questions regarding grammar or meaning while monitoring the groups. After making copies, ask the students to answer the other group's quiz.

Interaction and peer correction will take place during the preparation time and the testing time. It is important that the teacher gives grammar or/and word meaning clarifications for key errors the next day for five or ten minutes. It is also extremely useful and enlightening to share information with the learner about the nature of test writing procedures or rules present in the teaching body.

Activity 7 :

Cross Word: This is a good exercise for word retrieval and noticing for the first time. It is fun, and encourages pair or group work and allows the student to start discovering the word list and writing the words.

Fill in the blanks and read the definitions below as you try and fill the crosswords below:



Row, horizontal :

- 1 . Learning is a -----, in the brains which requires time.
- 2 . The term stretches over a -----, of four months.
- 3 . The struggle between Israelis and Palestinians is a -----,one.
- 4 . Palestinians need to -----, permission to enter Israel.
- 5 . Each -----, has his/her own personality.
- 6 . Each individual must -----, computer skills in order to advance in his/ her career.
- 7 . The United States plays an unjust -----, in the Middle East struggle.

Column, down :

- 8 . Percentage, amount, part, or size of something.
- 9 . Point out, imply (not said openly).
- 10 . A study or a questionnaire.
- 11 . Be part of something.

What is the most repeated letter in the crossword?

Activity 8 :

This exercise allows the student to understand the different meanings of word families, and to identify word parts and inflexions, i.e to start noticing the grammatical aspect of the word.

Word forms: Look at the wheel of the word forms. In your groups, each student spins the wheel once and tries to insert the word form into the correct blank below.

Exercise variations: The teacher has a choice to provide the students with the part of speech depending on the students' proficiency level and whether the teacher would like to encourage the use of a dictionary.

Economy :

- 1 . The -----, growth in Arab countries is very small.
- 2 . The Opel is a very----- car.
- 3 . The car uses fuel -----.
- 4 . a. He is an ----- . B. There is a magazine called the -----.
- 5 . We're spending too much money. We must -----.
- 6 . Dr. Nidal Sabri is a lecturer in -----.
- 7 . The state of ----- in Palestine is very worrying.

Politics :

- 1 . ----- is the plan of action or ideals adopted by the party or government.
- 2 . We sometimes say that politics is in his/ her blood, they cannot live with out it.
- 3 . Saeb Irakat is a -----.
- 4 . Al-Aqsa channel is a ----- one.
- 5 . What happened in Gaza recently is a ----- sensitive issue.
- 6 . Many of our students are highly ----- d.
- 7 . When the fight began, he thought it ----- to leave.

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Websites

- <http://www.jbauman.com/aboutgsl.html>
A website for the General Service List (GSL), a 2000 word list thought to be the most frequent and useful vocabulary in the English language.
- <http://langauge.massey.ac.nz/staff/awl/index.shtml>
The Academic Word List itself.

The Rational

Many readily available English Language textbooks target a very specific audience (ESP books) or are designed for a non- English speaking immigrant or student population in English Speaking Countries. These textbooks use the cultural context of the original authoring countries. Many textbooks, for example, include a unit on traveling or traveling related issues such as culture shock, foreign food, or different cultures. When confronted, however, with students who have never left their villages- as the majority of our Palestinian students, then tackling the issue of traveling with such an audience can be a real challenge. For example, regardless of the fact that many of our students confuse traveling with immigration- since to many of them, both words connote the same experience-the topic itself does ignite somewhat politically originated negative feelings to those who have actually ventured outside the country. Traveling to them invokes the experience of traveling between cities. Traveling between cities in Palestine is a huge challenge because of the political situation. Traveling abroad means a trip across the Jordan River where the crossing – in which one needs usually a whole day- offers difficulties beyond any westerner’s authoring imagination. Even worse, some of the students are forbidden from traveling either for political or social reasons. So, personalizing such a topic involves talking about these issues which high jacks the fun out of the theme of traveling or distances us from the traveling related themes the various books offer. An interesting approach however, would be to do the opposite; to depersonalize the topic and make an imaginary trip aided with pictures of other countries but ultimately distancing the students from their reality and from the true experiences of traveling they know. It becomes all imaginary; a fictitious experience. This is just an example which epitomizes the dilemmas of everyday teachers dealing with culturally alien topics and emphasizes hitherto our main argument; the importance of localizing the topics especially in EAP courses and thus localizing the context of whatever vocabulary items chosen to be taught.

Many authors share our view of textbooks. For example, Griffiths and Keohane wrote, “Many Listening or reading texts revolve around pre-selected topics which may have little interest for learners.” (2000) Paul

Nation as well endorses the significance of content in his book *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, "The choice of content can be a major factor for stimulating interest." (2001) Jack Richards goes a step further and describes how usually textbooks are created. He argues that despite the fact that textbooks can be 'visually appealing', can help standardization, are structured on learning principles and offer well paced development for learners, still in order for textbooks to sell in the global markets, controversial issues are usually avoided and "instead an idealized white middle-class view of the world is portrayed as the norm...and may not meet the interests and needs of students." (2001).

In the department where we work at Birzeit University, Averil Coxhead's Academic Word List (AWL) is adopted as a list to be taught explicitly through chosen textbooks. The four EAP courses which our department offers heavily rely on vocabulary teaching. Vocabulary learning occupies 60 % of expected learning outcomes. Roots, affixes, collocations, word form, transitions are all emphasized. In addition, almost 66% of the course assessment revolves around the above items. The courses are mainly reading courses and the words are highlighted in the reading textbooks. Much research lately stresses the link between fluent reading and the different aspects of vocabulary recognition; orthographical, phonological and grammatical knowledge of words are inextricably salient for reading comprehension. Furthermore, the rising interest in lexical patterning in recent years, vocabulary teaching is seen as a key element in language learning. Norbert Schmitt writes in *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*, "We are finding a surprising amount of lexical patterning, and we may have to start thinking of vocabulary more in terms of lexical clusters than individual words." (2000) .

The AWL

Coxhead in her article "A New Academic Word List" suggests her list might be used to set vocabulary goals for EAP courses and construct relevant teaching material and help students focus on useful vocabulary items. (2000) The 570 word families – and which presupposes the knowledge of the 2000 General Word List- resulted from a study of 3.5 million words from different corpuses in 1998. It is a study of 28 subject areas organized into 7 general areas within 4 disciplines; arts, science,

commerce, and law. The notion of frequency is central to the list. The list has ten sub lists based on frequency; the first being the most frequent in the corpus studied and therefore these words are more likely to be useful for students in their academic life since they are more likely to be met later in their academic books. As the frequency drops, the words become less likely to be met later on. Thus, the higher the frequency of the words the more these words are worth to be taught explicitly in class.

Activity Theory

Our activities involve a wide range of rich contexts which allow 'retrieval', 'noticing' and 'heavy processing'. They also provide opportunities for repetition and for exposure to the different aspects of word learning; word form, affixes, spelling, pronunciation and multiple meaning senses. Some activities as well also involve 'negotiation' of word meaning and discussions of word definitions allowing thus room for introducing different word associations, collocations, and register; all important elements for vocabulary learning. The topic of some activities, for example family, is interesting for discussion which increases student motivation and participation. The notions of 'retrieval', 'recycling', and 'negotiation' is presented also through 'decontextualization' which means looking at words outside a language context but as a lexical item in itself. A combination of different contexts, decontextualization, negotiation and repetition will hopefully lead to generative and creative use of words.