

**Title of Session:** EuroLang - Israel/USA Joint Writing Project

**Moderator:** Phil Benz

**Guest Speakers:** Elaine Hoter and Harry Markowicz

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**PhilB:** Tonight's session of the Euro Language Teachers Forum features Elaine Hoter and Harry Markowicz, speaking about their joint writing project between Talpiot College Tel Aviv Israel and Gallaudet University Washington.

**PhilB:** We usually begin with introductions...

**HarryM:** Elaine, would you like to introduce yourself?

**PhilB:** Can everyone please introduce yourselves?

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania, US and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

**PhilB** teaches English and does teacher training in EdTech integration in southern France.

**ZivaGst3:** I am a math teacher in Jerusalem College, Israel

**MichaC:** Phil, where in Southern France. I am from Avignon

**PhilB:** Please, don't be shy, Micha, Curtis, Elaine, Harry, Brad...

**ElaineH:** Hi my name's Elaine and I'm head of IT at Talpiot Teachers College Tel Aviv Israel.

**PhilB** is in Aubenas, in the Ardeche - right next door.

**HarryM:** I am an English teacher at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

**CurtisB:** I am a preservice teacher in Oregon

**BradAL:** My name is Brad. I am a 5th year science teacher from Indiana, USA. This is my first chat on Tapped in, so I am here to listen and learn, and poke a few questions in when I can. Thanks for letting me in.

**MichaC:** I am a preservice teacher in Oregon as well

**PhilB:** Super! I think that's everyone. Now let's listen to Elaine & Harry's opening presentation.

**MichaC:** and I feel the same way as Brad

**HarryM:** Gallaudet University is located in Washington, D.C. about one mile from the Capitol. If my office faced the other side of the building I would be able to see the Capitol Building right now.

**PhilB:** it's an open forum, we're glad to have you all.

**ElaineH:** ok that's everyone we're both really pleased to be with u tonight

**HarryM:** It's a new experience for me.

**ElaineH:** we've planned an introduction for you all then we'll go to the site and show you around meet back again and we have some surprises for you too

**PhilB:** Sounds good, Elaine.

**HarryM:** Let me tell you a little about Gallaudet Univ. so you can understand our project better.

**HarryM:** Gallaudet is a Liberal Arts university for deaf and hard of hearing students. It was established on this location in 1864 and it's still the only one of its kind in the world.

There are about 2000 undergraduate and graduate students. Students come from all over the world to study at Gallaudet.

**HarryM:** and here is a short description of the project:

**HarryM:** The Gallaudet-Talpiot intercultural writing project is now in its fifth year. Students in English courses at Gallaudet University and Israeli students training to become English teachers at Talpiot Teachers College in Tel Aviv, Israel, work in pairs and small groups to complete writing assignments. They learn about each other's culture while improving their literacy skills.

**ElaineH:** Talpiot College is a religious girls college for students who wish to get a BEEd in teaching. The class I'll talk about today are first year English major students

**ZivaGst3:** Are your students "heavy users of computers?"

**HarryM:** The students in the project over here are second year students whose knowledge of English is limited.

**ElaineH:** we'll come to that soon Ziva- first we want to tell you more about the course itself

**ElaineH:** mine are first year students whose English needs a lot to be desired.;

**HarryM:** This semester, the Talpiot college students are learning about the deaf community and the Gallaudet students are learning about the Holocaust through readings, such as Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize-winning Maus, a book that graphically describes his parents' experience in the holocaust, an article about Dr. Eugene Bergman, a deaf Holocaust survivor who is a retired member of the English Department, as well as other texts written by other survivors.

**HarryM:** The students also viewed the movie "The pianist" and attended two presentations: one by a historian at the US Holocaust Memorial museum on "The Nazi Persecution of Disable People" and the other by a Holocaust survivor. The Israeli students were able to watch the same presentations through Gallaudet webcasts. All of these resources are discussed online by both groups of students. A video-conference is planned for the last week of classes.

**ElaineH:** the students as we said work asynchronously to communicate with each other - in a normal situation my students would never be able to communicate with deaf people but in our case it was a second language for both classes

**BradAL:** How did this program come into being? What was the ultimate goal behind pairing these two distinctive groups of students?

**ElaineH:** In Israel we also invited a guest lecturer from SHEMA the Israeli center for the deaf and we viewed documentary movies on the deaf and Deaf communities

**HarryM:** I should explain that most deaf people don't achieve native-like competence in a spoken language even in its written form.

**ElaineH:** the goal is to improve the written proficiency of the students

**ElaineH:** but in a real situation

**PhilB:** I see that your project allowed for a lot of common ground between students \*before\* they ever got started communicating with their distant partners.

**HarryM:** It was purely by chance that we connected. Elaine was already doing international linking with other institutions and I came across her website.

**ZivaGst3:** Do they form personal connections with each other?

**ElaineH:** very much so- they know more about each other's personal lives etc than we would ever find out

**HarryM:** Yes, that is part of the activities but it is not limited to that.

**ElaineH:** In order not to get lost when we go into the course we have given you clear instructions of our suggested tour of the site on the announcements page.

**BradAL:** How long has this program been functioning?

**ElaineH:** Are there any more questions before we take you to the course. By the way the course is closed to the public- we asked permission from our students to let you in

**HarryM:** This is our fifth year. Each time it's different. We keep evolving

**BradAL:** Sorry, late question.

**ElaineH:** last time we were into online debating

**ElaineH:** this is the first time we've used the holocaust and it's in my opinion been amazing

**PhilB:** \*\*\*\*\* Any more questions before we move on to see their work on the web?  
\*\*\*\*\*

**HarryM:** That was an interesting way of getting my students to get ready to write argumentative essays.

**ElaineH:** as you're see Harry's students realized as they learned more that although they aren't Jewish it could have been them too because they are also labeled disabled

**HarryM:** Computer literacy is expected of all our students here. (Reply to a question above)

**HarryM:** This is also the first time that we focused on two themes throughout the semester: the Holocaust and the deaf community.

**ElaineH:** my students learned to be more computer proficient as they went on and now they can all type quickly!

**ElaineH:** Harry shall we move on?

**PhilB:** \*\*\*\*\* Let's look at your web material. \*\*\*\*\*

**HarryM:** Sure, we can talk more and answer questions later.

**ElaineH:** now your password and user name for tonight is.....

BJ thinks this project should have been one of the presentations during Global Learn day!

**ElaineH:** tapped in

**ElaineH:** original no?

**BJ** smiles

**BJ** . o O ( easy to remember )

**HarryM:** Elaine, anymore instructions before I post the URL?

**ElaineH:** now please go to the site and put in the user name and password and then click on the course name intercultural

**HarryM:** <http://highlearn.macam.ac.il/NewLoginFrames.asp?TopLang=972&lang=972>

**PhilB:** You can all click on this URL to view their project.

**ElaineH:** then open the announcements

**ElaineH:** click on English to see everything in English:0

**PhilB:** Yes, it definitely helps to view it in English. <g>

**ElaineH:** please click on the course when you get in Intercultural writing project

**ElaineH:** the instructions are all there under announcements- especially for this tapped in session

**ElaineH:** the other showcase is our back up just in case someone has a mac

**HarryM:** The alternate web site is

<http://courses.gallaudet.edu/courses/ENG/forums/ENG203Marf.nsf>

**BJ:** Harry, will we be able to access

<http://academic.gallaudet.edu/courses/ENG/resource/ENG203MarLib.nsf/?OpenDatabase>

**PhilB:** Question: Elaine, Harry, do you find that your linguistic goals with your students converge? Does your joint project help motivate them in other areas, when they're not online writing to each other?

**PhilB:** \*\*\*\*\* Questions, please \*\*\*\*\*

**HarryM:** That is something which is hard for me to evaluate, Phil.

**ElaineH:** they are much more fluent in English and get used to doing peer evaluation and writing drafts- don't forget my students are first year and new to all of this

**PhilB:** But Harry, you said that your students often have relatively low levels of written expression, I'm assuming one of your goals with this project is to encourage them to revise and improve their communication strategies?

**HarryM:** Yes, it is one of the goals and in this project it happens more naturally since they want to communicate.

**PhilB** nods

**HarryM:** They are not writing for their teacher, they have a live audience.

**ElaineH:** I hope everyone comes back and doesn't get lost in the site there's so much material there and students would never write this much in only half a semester

**PhilB:** Those are the same arguments I often use for my project. <smile>

**PhilB:** Yes, the site is very rich, I think we need a little direction.

**PhilB:** There are a \*lot\* of messages on there, not just since this September, I suppose.

**ElaineH:** weren't the instructions clear enough Phil

**ElaineH:** everything is since September

**PhilB:** Yes, there are just a lot of them. <smile>

**HarryM:** In this context writing is more natural. It is used to exchange information and then to write more formally.

**PhilB:** Question: How many hours do you see your students per week, and about how many do you devote to this project?

**ElaineH:** all my hours are devoted to the project and I see my students once a week for 4 hours

**ElaineH:** maybe I'll try and get everyone back

**PhilB:** One 4-hour block? That's a lot of language study for one afternoon or morning!

**HarryM:** I see my students 6 hours per week and we devote a great deal of time to the project or a different way of saying it is that everything we do, the reading, the writing, the lectures, the movies, everything relates to the project.

**HarryM:** We meet three times per week.

**PhilB:** \*\*\*\*\* Questions, please\*\*\*\*\*

**ElaineH:** did you have time to get an idea?

**ElaineH:** we wanted to show you part of the video presentation- you can watch it at your leisure but its very powerful and really worth spending the time to see

**PhilB:** It's interesting that you were able to find common ground around Maus and other holocaust-related materials. My students here in Southern France would probably not be drawn into that material, even though it is close to their personal family histories, if they just looked hard enough.

**HarryM:** We had two speakers come to Gallaudet and then we had webcasts made so that Elaine's students could also see/hear them.

**BJ:** how long will we be able to enter this site, Elaine? Just today?

**ElaineH:** tomorrow as well

**HarryM:** If you would like to see the webcasts here are the instructions:

**BJ . o O (** will the information like the videos be accessible later? )

**HarryM:** Use your Internet Explorer browser (Netscape doesn't work).

**HarryM:** Type in video.gallaudet. edu and hit ENTER.

**HarryM:** Click on Archived Webcasts (Under Program Guide to the right of Scheduled Webcasts)

**HarryM:** Click on "Survival--My Odyssey."

**HarryM:** You will be asked to type in your name and email address.

**HarryM:** Select a Player preference (Windows media, etc.) from the display area.

**HarryM:** The video will start after a short buffering period.

**ElaineH:** but come back after 5 mins so we can finish the presentation!

**PhilB:** Question: Do you use this website to manage all grade marking of the students' work, or just part of it?

**HarryM:** The speakers are Dr. Patricia Heberer, a historian at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum

**HarryM:** and Charlene Schiff who is a Holocaust survivor.

**ElaineH:** the link opens in a new window

**ElaineH:** we suggest going to Charlene's talk first

**ElaineH:** I give all grades here-its the platform we use in Israel

**HarryM:** That's video.gallaudet.edu

**ElaineH:** BJ-you can get into the videos through the links given by Harry after tonight's session

**PhilB:** <http://video.gallaudet.edu>

**HarryM:** Thank you, Phil.

**BJ:** Thanks, Elaine

**CurtisB:** thank you

**PhilB:** Actually, I'm not getting a video from that address, just a title page. Should there be more? <smile>

**ZivaGst3:** thank you so much, it is so interesting and unique

**ElaineH:** Our showcase is open to the public -but there you miss out on the forums and the process the students go through

<http://academic.gallaudet.edu/courses/ENG/resource/ENG203MarLib.nsf/>

**HarryM:** Phil, do you see Gallaudet Webcasting on the top left?

**PhilB:** Harry, Elaine, we are drawing close to the end of our time, can you sum up what you think your students are getting out of this project, and what you as teacher have got from it?

**ElaineH:** I don't know if any of you use guest maps but here is ours from our course where all the students marked where they and their family are from

**ElaineH:**

<http://pub11.bravenet.com/guestmap/show.php?usernum=924092018&lightmap=0&icons=0&&entrylist=0&zoom=0&welcome=1>

**HarryM:** It is a unique opportunity for two very diverse groups to get to know about another culture through direct contact with some of its members.

**PhilB:** Yes, Harry, but there is just one entry, for the title page "Click on archived Webcasts", but I see none to click on.

**ElaineH:** look at the tab above

**PhilB:** The map feature is really cool, especially for students as diverse as yours.

**HarryM:** Under Program Guide to the right of Scheduled Webcast click on Archived Webcasts.

**ElaineH:** this is a course our students never forget. They learn so much and it's not even the topic of their course. I was in Gallaudet visiting and I could see the enthusiasm there as well as in my class in Israel

**HarryM:** Yes, they are diverse. Out of 8 students, one is from mainland China and another from Burundi.

**PhilB:** My students' map pins would nearly all be on the same tiny corner of south central France. <g>

**ElaineH:** the only thing our students have complained about it that there is no trip at the end to really meet each other!

**HarryM:** Yes, Elaine is well known at Gallaudet.

**PhilB:** Yes, mine say the same thing.

**ElaineH:** Phil that's why you should link your class

**PhilB:** My problem is that I only see each class of students 2 hours a week, or less. So participating in even \*one\* project (currently the Viva project) is as far as we can reach.

**HarryM:** Linking makes the course more interesting and gives the students a reason for writing.

**ElaineH:** it seems that the other participants are still in the course... so we should just say goodnight and thank you all for joining us and giving us this opportunity to share our course with you

**PhilB:** I'd love to invite your students in to write about their experiences in \*our\* forums too.

**ElaineH:** great idea

**HarryM:** I hope you were able to see some of the benefits from our experience.

**PhilB:** Elaine, Harry, I do really want to thank you for coming tonight, I know there are several language teachers who could not be here now and they will be reading this archive to find out about your work.

**LakishaL:** thank you

**LakishaL:** I enjoyed the information

**BJ** applauds Harry and Elaine...wonderful collaboration! I hope to learn more.

**DavidEL:** Yes. What a wonderful project. Thank you.

**PhilB:** I know I enjoyed the presentation, it's always great to see other successful projects and think about ways to network together.

BJ agrees with Phil

**MichaC:** Great job!

**PhilB:** I want to announce to everyone that next week's Euro Language Teachers Forum will feature Vance Stevens on the Virtual Resource Center, but 2 hours \*earlier\* than our usual time, at 19 hours GMT.

**HarryM:** Thank you, all. Show N Tell is always fun.

**ElaineH:** thanks

**PhilB:** Vance is in Abu Dhabi (if memory serves) so we needed to move things up for him.

**PhilB:** Harry, Elaine, I hope we can see you here again for other future presentations.

**BJ** . o O ( webheads did a presentation during Global Learn Day...lots of enthusiasm )

**ElaineH:** great we had a great time

**HarryM:** Yes, I plan to come again.

**PhilB:** Yes, I suspect the "Global Learning Day" may have sapped some potential participants from tonight's session. <g>

**BJ** nods solemnly

**PhilB:** Thanks again, and bonne nuit!