

Palestinian IATEFL Conference

Ramallah, Palestine, August 13-14, 2007

Curriculum and Classroom Practices: A Need for Teacher Empowerment

Background

Since its inception, Al- Qattan Centre for Educational Research and Development has been dedicated to improving the quality of English language teaching in Palestine, be it in the Ministry of Education, UNRWA or in private schools across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In recent years, QCERD has supported a number of practical initiatives aimed at strengthening English teachers' capacities to implement the Palestinian English Language curriculum by adapting the English for Palestine textbooks and implementing their content via communicative teaching strategies. These initiatives have consisted of workshops and seminars which have done the following: introduce teachers to recent trends in EFL pedagogy; help teachers to critically evaluate a range of internationally-produced EFL textbooks, games and activities; provide teachers with a chance to work together to devise ways of adapting materials to the specific classroom realities of Palestine; and enable teachers to supplement the curriculum with a wide-range of culturally relevant stories appropriate for elementary level pupils.

The conference

In the course of conducting these workshops and seminars, it has become evident that Palestinian

educators have great strengths to build on. The Palestinian IATEFL conference, held by QCERD in partnership with the British Council, is one attempt to build on these strengths by bringing EFL professionals (both Palestinian and international) together to share their experiences in areas crucial to the development of English language teaching in Palestine. The conference strands of curriculum and textbook development, young learners, classroom management, teacher and student motivation, teacher development, ELT methodologies, materials development, and learning styles all contribute to the empowerment of English Language teachers in Palestine.

Our Guests

We are pleased to host a group of expert professionals and trainers in the field of English Language Teaching:

- Dr. Scott Thornbury, an Associate Professor on the MA TESOL program at the New School in New York and who is currently the series editor of the Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers. Dr. Thornbury will work with teachers in two different sessions on dialogue as a means of 'framing' learning opportunities and on his ten favourite grammar lessons.
- Dr. Jeanne Kattan is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at Bethlehem University and

