

July, 2015

Miriam Alfassi Ph.D.

Date of Birth 7 April, 1956

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Ra'anana, Israel.
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Education Loyola University of Chicago - Chicago, Illinois
Major: Educational Psychology
Specialization: School Psychology
Secondary Specialization: Assessment and Counseling
Degree: Ph.D. (Awarded January, 1991)

Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel
Major: Educational Counseling
Degree: M.A. October, 1986

Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel
Major: Educational Counseling
Minor: Jewish Philosophy
Degree: B.A., Teacher Certification in Jewish Studies, June, 1982

Current Employment

Lecturer, Educational Psychology and Literacy, School of Education,
Bar Ilan University, Israel.

Head of the Special Education Division, School of Education, Bar-
Ilan University, Israel (1995-1998).

Awards

2000 Albert J. Harris award for an outstanding contribution to the area of reading disabilities from the International Reading Association.

Research Experience

Graduate Assistant - Loyola University Chicago. Working in collaboration with Dr. Ronald Morgan on research projects in learning theory and instructional techniques (1988-1990).

An Investigation of Cognitive Growth as a Function of Reciprocal Teaching Examined across Individual Differences in Learning Potential. Loyola University (1991).

Cognitive and Motivational Modifiability as a Function of Instrumental Enrichment and Initial Cognitive Modifiability. Bar-Ilan University, (1986).

Correlation between general and specific assessments of modifiability. Loyola University, (1990).

Publications

1. Alfassi, M. & Tzuriel, D. (1994). Cognitive and Motivational Modifiability as a Function of Instrumental Enrichment Program, *Special Services in the Schools*, 8(2), 91-128.
2. Alfassi, M. (1998). Reading for Meaning: The Efficacy of Reciprocal Teaching in Fostering Reading Comprehension in High School Students in Remedial Reading Classes, *American Educational Research Journal*, 35(2), 309-332.
Prize (Albert J. Harris award) for outstanding contribution to the area of reading disabilities awarded for this article from the International Reading Association, Indianapolis, USA.
3. Alfassi, M. (2000). The Use of Technology (ICT) as a Medium for Fostering Literacy and Facilitating Discourse within the Classroom, *Educational Media International*, 37(3), 137-148.
4. Alfassi, M. (2002). Communities of Learners and Thinkers: The Effects of Fostering Writing Competence in a Metacognitive Environment, *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology*, 2(2), 119-136.
5. Alfassi, M. (2003). Promoting the *Will and Skill* of Students at Academic Risk: An Examination of a School Intervention Geared to Foster Achievement, Self-Efficacy and Motivation, *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 30(1), 28-41.
6. Alfassi, M. (2003). Literacy Learning and/or Strategy Instruction: The Effects of Integrated Strategy Instruction on the Ability of High School Students to Construct Meaning from Text, *Reading Improvement*, 40, 51-62.
7. Alfassi, M. (2004). Reading to Learn: Effects of Combined Strategy Instruction, *Journal of Educational Research*, 97(4), 171-184.
8. Alfassi, M. (2004). Effects of a Learner-Centered Environment on the Academic Competence and Motivation of Students at Risk, *Learning Environments Research*, 7, 1-22.

9. Alfassi, M. (2004). From Policy to Practice: Applying Educational Change in Israeli Schools for Students at High Academic Risk, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 19(2), 255-266.
10. Alfassi, M. (2005). The Design of a Learning Environment that Promotes Literacy. *Education and Society*, 23. 83-100.
11. Alfassi, M. (2006). Literacy Learning in Communities of Discourse: Reading to Learn and Writing to Communicate. In S. N. Hogan (Ed.) *Trends in Learning Research*. New York: Nova Science Publications.
12. Alfassi, M., Weiss, I., & Lifshitz, H. (2009). The Efficacy of Reciprocal Teaching in Fostering the Reading Literacy of Students with Intellectual Disabilities. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 24, 291- 305.
13. Alfassi, M. (2009). The Efficacy of a Dialogic Learning Environment in Fostering High Literacy. *Reading Psychology*, 30, 539-563.

Submitted

1. Alfassi, M. Guiding Knowledge Construction of High School Students at Academic Risk through Peer Collaboration: Effects on Academic Achievement, Motivation and Self-Efficacy. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*.
2. Alfassi, M. Literacy Learning: The Effects of Fostering Covert Self-Regulation Processes in a Collaborative Inquiry Based Environment. *The Journal of Educational Research*.
3. Alfassi, M. Putting Talk to Work: The Efficacy of Structured Classroom Dialogues in Fostering Student Discourse and Reading Literacy of Students with Intellectual Disabilities. *European Journal of Special Needs*.

Ongoing Research

1. An ongoing multiple year research program has been carried out at a junior high school in central Israel (N=250). The research program is designed to evaluate the implementation and efficacy of progressive collaborative inquiry learning methods. The implementation of the innovative collaborative inquiry learning methods includes the professional development of teachers, the design of learning environments and the integration of enabling competencies such as reading, writing and technological sophistication into the specific domains of content learning. The research paradigm is designed to document and evaluate the effectiveness of transforming classrooms into sites of collaborative inquiry. The

collection of data includes quantitative measures such as students' achievements in specific content areas. In addition, qualitative methods such as observations and video-taping have been applied to document classroom discourse and student participation.

2. A comparative study designed to evaluate the efficacy of embedding instruction of enabling competencies such as reading comprehension, writing competence and computer skills within a disciplinary content is being currently implemented. The study is situated within three seventh grade mainstream classes (N = 100). Traditionally the enabling competencies are taught within the schools as discrete entities independent of any specific content domain that result in few overt connections made between the curricula of the different subjects. This study examines whether integrating instruction of the enabling competencies into a specific content domain that includes overt connections made among knowledge, skills and ideas across curricula fosters students' applied computer skills, reading comprehension, writing competence and achievement within the specific content domain.
3. An intervention program designed to foster reading comprehension and use of meta-cognitive strategies is being currently implemented within special education classes for students with mild and moderate intellectual disability (N = 40). Most academic programs designed for persons with intellectual disability have concentrated on imparting basic functional reading skills that do not include reading comprehension strategies. Reciprocal teaching implemented in this study is a method that aims to promote thinking while reading and is designed for students who experience difficulty understanding text. This study evaluates the efficacy of reciprocal teaching in fostering the reading comprehension of students with intellectual disability. In addition, qualitative measures will assess change over time in classroom discourse and student participation.
4. A study designed to evaluate the effects of hypertext on the reading comprehension of junior high school students. To implement the study a specific site that includes linear and hypertext reading passages followed by questions has been constructed. All students (150) are exposed to the different modes of reading passages. This study evaluates the differential effects of modes of text on student reading comprehension.
5. A comparative study designed to evaluate the effects of teaching high school students at academic risk to construct meaning from historical texts through peer collaboration and negotiation has been implemented. The study was situated within two 10th grade History classes of students who have been identified as under-achievers. The study evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention program in fostering academic achievement in the realms of reading comprehension, writing skills and knowledge of history. Additional variables such as: student engagement, motivation, self-efficacy and academic self-concept are examined, too.

Presentations

Literacy Learning: The Efficacy of a Community of Practice Designed to Foster Socially Shared Regulation. Paper to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, Illinois. April 2015.

The Effects of Fostering Self-Regulation Processes in a Collaborative Inquiry Based Environment. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. April 2014.

The Effects of a Learning Community on Classroom Discourse and Academic Achievement. Paper presented at the Eleventh Scientific Conference of the International Association of Cognitive Education, Boston, Massachusetts. July 2011.

The Efficacy of a Dialogic Learning Environment in Fostering High Literacy. Paper presented at the 13th Biennial Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction, Amsterdam, Netherlands. August 2009.

Reading to Learn and Writing to Communicate in Communities of Discourse. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, New York. April 2008.

Effects of Combined Strategy Instruction on High School Students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois. April 2007.

A Case Study: Fostering Reading Comprehension and Knowledge Construction. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, New-Orleans, Louisiana, August 2006.

The Design of a Learning Environment that Promotes Literacy. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San-Francisco, California, April 2006.

Reading to Learn: Fostering the Reading Comprehension and Knowledge Construction of High School Students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San-Diego, California. April 2004.

Fostering Literacy in Communities of Learners. Paper presented at the Scientific Conference of the Israeli Association of Educational Research. Ramat-Gan, Israel. October 2002.

Constructing Meaning through Collaboration and Negotiation: The Effects of Learning Communities in Fostering Students' Literacy Skills and Self-Efficacy. Paper presented at the

Sixth Scientific Conference of the International Association of Cognitive Education, Jyaskyla, Finland. June 2001.

Cognitive Modifiability as a Measure of Academic Growth Explored within the Context of Reciprocal Teaching Instruction. Paper presented at the Twenty Fourth Scientific Conference of the Israeli Psychological Association. Ramat-Gan, Israel. October 1993.

Is Cognitive Modifiability a General or Specific Attribute? Paper presented at the Fourth Conference of the International Association of Cognitive Education, *Nof Ginossar*, Israel. July 1993.

A typical Symptoms of Tourette's Syndrome: A Case Study. Paper presented at the Israel Tourette Syndrome Clinical Conference, Jerusalem. August 1992.

An Investigation of Cognitive Growth as a Function of Reciprocal Teaching: A Dynamic Assessment of Individual Differences in Learning Potential. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, San-Francisco, California. August 1991.

Reciprocal Teaching - an Instructional Technique which Promotes Cognitive Growth while Fostering Reading Comprehension. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Israel Educational Research Association, Ramat-Gan, Israel. January 1991.

An Investigation of the Role of Individual Differences in Cognitive Growth, Explored within the Context of a Reciprocal Teaching Environment. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois. October 1990.

The Revealed and Hidden Aspects of the Scroll of Esther. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of Zionist Women Book Club, Chicago, Illinois. February 1989.

Learning Potential Assessment Device - a New Approach to Assessing Thinking Skills. Paper presented at School Psychologists meeting at Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Illinois. December 1988.

The Ten Commandments - a Commentary. Paper presented at Learning Session of Zionist Organization of Amit Women, Chicago, Illinois. May 1988.

Modern Hellenism - Jewish Assimilation from a Historical Perspective. Paper presented at Congregation Ezras Israel, Chicago, Illinois. December 1987.

Cognitive and Motivational Modifiability as a Function of Instrumental Enrichment. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association, New York, New York. August 1987.

Instrumental Enrichment - an Israeli Approach to Learning Disabilities. Paper presented at the meeting of Association for Mental Health Affiliation with Israel Association for Mental Health, Skokie, Illinois. May 1987.

My Heart is in the East - Reflections on the Kuzari by Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi. Paper presented at Love of Learning Seminar of the Zionist Organization of Amit Women, Chicago, Illinois. February 1987.

Ongoing Student Supervision (co-supervision with other faculty members)

Ronit Broder - The Effects of a Learning Community Environment on Classroom Discourse, Academic Achievement and Sense of Belonging of Junior High Students.

Inbal Sofer- The Effects of Hypertext on the Reading Comprehension of Junior High Students

Navah Hukalu – The Effects of Reciprocal Teaching on the Reading Literacy and Classroom Discourse of Students with Intellectual Disabilities.

Nurit Greenberg - The Role of the Rabbi as Perceived by Women who seek Rabbinical Advice while Experiencing Medical Intervention.

Sharon Alfassi – The Effects of Reciprocal Teaching on the Reading Comprehension of Hypertexts.

Teaching Experience

9/91 - 6/94 **Lecturer in Educational Psychology**
Orot College for Women, Israel.

6/91 - 8/91 and 6/92 - 8/92 **Visiting Professor**
National-Louis University, Evanston, IL.
Teaching a course on the Contemporary Survey of Child Development.

6/91 - 8/91 **Visiting Professor**
Teachers Institute, Hebrew Theological College, Skokie, IL.
Teaching a course on Application of Learning Theories and Dynamic Assessment in the Classroom.

1/88 - 3/88 **Visiting Professor**
National College of Education, Evanston, IL.
Teaching a course on the Method and Philosophy of the Learning Potential Assessment Device.

1/87 - 6/87 **Visiting Professor**

Teachers Institute, Hebrew Theological College Skokie, IL.
Full responsibility for lecturing and course material for the following courses: "Medieval Jewish Philosophy: Readings in the Kuzari."

"Existential Philosophy Readings in the Lonely Man of Faith by Soloveichik."

9/81 - 6/86

Educational Counselor

Harel Junior High and High School, Kfar Saba, Israel.
Offered consultation to the students, parents and school personnel. Helped design educational programs and instructional techniques. As part of a team, designed procedures to evaluate and implement educational policies and strategies. Developed curriculum for matriculation examinations.

9/80 - 6/81

Teacher

Division of Languages, Community Center, Bnei Brak, Israel.
Full responsibility for development of course materials and instruction of English as a Second Language to adults.

9/74 - 3/79

Various Positions with the **Bnei Akiva Youth Organization**, Tel Aviv, Israel, including:

6/78 - 6/79

Consultant/Instructor

Development and implementation of leadership training materials and skills used by group leaders.

9/74 - 8/76

Youth Coordinator

Full responsibility for coordination of after school activities for deprived children ages 10-18.

Field Placements and Professional Training

8/88 - 7/89

Professional Practice year (internship)

Practicum experience as a school psychologist in a high school in Chicago. Activities include consultation with administrators, teachers, support personnel and parents. Case studies done upon referral from Pupil Personnel Services. Development of instructional technique in conjunction with the Department of Reading. Served on Special Education Committee.

9/89 - 7/90

School Psychologist

Practicum experience as a school psychologist in an elementary school which consisted of 500 children. Grades: Kindergarten to third grade. Responsibilities included case study assessment upon referral from Teacher-Team meetings, consultation with administrators, teachers, support personnel and parents.

10/90 – 6/91 **Professional Practice (internship)**

Practicum experience as a psychologist at the Hadassah Wizo Canada Research Institute in Jerusalem. Activities included intake and assessment of children and young adults at the request of families and/or educational institutions. The assessment included dynamic evaluation of perception, sensory-motor skills, memory, attention, logical reasoning and problem solving, as well as speech and communication skills in addition to projective testing. Once assessment completed responsibilities included consultation with team members, teachers, administrators and parents, advocacy and follow up of recommendations.

1/92 - 6/95 **Educational Psychologist**

Beth Issie Shapiro, (Learning Center for Educationally Challenged Children), Ra'anana, Israel.

Member of a multi-disciplinary team which worked with children and their families. Responsibilities included assessment and treatment upon referral, consultation with team members, teachers, administrators and parents, advocacy and follow up of recommendations.

9/13 – 1/15 **Psychologist – Professional Training CBT**

Anxiety and Psychosomatic Clinic for Children Geha Mental Health Center Rosh Ha'ayin , Israel.

Member of a multi-disciplinary team which worked with children and their families. Responsibilities included assessment and treatment upon referral from psychiatrist. Treatment was based upon CBT methods coupled with biofeedback.

Additional Educational Experiences

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – Training at the Clinic for Medical Psychology at Schneider Children's Medical Centre, Petach Tikva, Israel. 2012 - 2014

International Convention on "The Implication of LPAD and Instrumental Enrichment in Different Cultures." July 1986.

"The Philosophy and Methodology of the Learning Potential Assessment Device." Year long training seminar under the supervision of Professor Feuerstein and Professor Rand. 1984-85.

"Instrumental Enrichment a Program for Enhancing Thinking Skills." Summer, 1983.

Areas of Specialization

Designing Collaborative Learning Environments
Cognition and Language
Literacy Learning
Literacy in Hypermedia Environments
Dynamic Assessment
Reciprocal Teaching
Learning Theory
Educational Psychology

Professional Objectives

Carrying out research and teaching in the areas of learning, assessing, fostering and enhancing cognitive skills through literacy.

Development and enrichment of psychotherapeutic methods.

References: Will be supplied on request.