
**UNIVERSITY “ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI”
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
BITOLA**

**Third International Conference
EDUCATION ACROSS BORDERS**

**EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
ACROSS TIME AND SPACE**

(1100th Death Anniversary of St. Clement of Ohrid)



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A Word on the Slavic Patterned Teachings

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AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION – THE MODEL OF ISRAEL

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Abstract

In this article I will address of those perspectives on what being an integrative approach in the context of Early Childhood Development and Education in Israel. My overall goal is to share my experience from study visit in Israel and help us clarify, to ourselves and to others unfamiliar what is an integrative approach, how Israel does it, how our society to be more aware for the early childhood development and education, and how to be "integrative educator." The preschool curriculum is rich and varied, constituting the foundation for the child's world of knowledge. Learning is a process of reorganizing existing knowledge and assimilating new knowledge. I will present an example: "The Wheel for Visualizing the Integrative Topic" is based on the principle of deriving contents from various disciplines and interweaving them within then integrative topic. The topics appearing in the wheel are: seasons of the year, animals, occupations, I and We, the home, nutrition, transportation, holidays and hygiene. Planning of each of the aforementioned topics necessitates selection of contents from the following disciplines: science and technology, social sciences, the arts, language and literacy, cognition, health and safety, tradition and holidays, Old Testament and even mathematics. The mixture of contents is chosen by the teacher according the points of emphases which seem most appropriate when teaching the subject.

Key words: an integrative approach, early childhood development and education, Israel.

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Objectives and program of studies

Through introductory lectures, professional study visits; Observation, workshops, and discussions; Early Childhood Education and Care in Israel; Attitudes and priorities in early childhood education; Developmental needs of children from birth to 6 years; Main psychological theories of development and learning; Building of supportive and stimulating learning environments; Alternative ways and strategies for instructing – music, art, storytelling, etc. A variety of early child development settings and kindergartens working according to different approaches and intervention strategies; Empowering strategies as professional trainers; Evaluation programs of children's progress and needs; The role of the child care provider, teacher and the teacher trainer; Supervision, monitoring and evaluation of training programs; Interventions and services provided to children with special needs.

Introduction

For Israel, Geography, Demography, Social and Economy system

The geography of Israel is very diverse, with desert conditions in the south, and snow-capped mountains in the north. Israel is located at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea in western Asia. It is bounded to the north by Lebanon, the northeast by Syria, the east by Jordan and the West Bank, and to the southwest by Egypt. To the west of Israel is the Mediterranean Sea, which makes up the majority of Israel's 273 km (170 mi) coastline and the Gaza Strip. Israel has a small coastline on the Red Sea in the south. Temperatures in Israel vary widely, especially during the winter. Coastal areas, such as those of Tel Aviv and Haifa, have a typical Mediterranean climate with cool, rainy winters and long, hot summers.

The population of Israel, as defined by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, was estimated in 2017 to be 8,673,210 people. It is the world's only Jewish-majority state, with 74.8% being designated as Jewish. The country's second largest group of citizens are Arabs, at 20.8% (including the Druze and most East Jerusalem Arabs). The great majority of Israeli Arabs are Sunni Muslims, including significant numbers of semi-settled Negev Bedouins; the rest are Christians and Druze. Other minorities include Arameans, Armenians, Assyrians, Black Hebrew Israelites, Circassians, Maronites and Samaritans. Israel also hosts a significant population of



non-citizen foreign workers and asylum seekers from Africa and Asia, including illegal migrants from Sudan, Eritrea and other Sub-Saharan Africans.

Upon independence in 1948, the country formally adopted the name "State of Israel" (Medinat Yisrael) after other proposed historical and religious names including Eretz Israel ("the Land of Israel"), Zion, and Judea, were considered and rejected. In the early weeks of independence, the government chose the term "Israeli" to denote a citizen of Israel, with the formal announcement made by Minister of Foreign Affairs Moshe Sharett. The names Land

of Israel and Children of Israel have historically been used to refer to the biblical Kingdom of Israel and the entire Jewish people respectively.

The economy of Israel is technologically advanced by global standards. As of 2015, Israel ranks in the top 18 nations in the world on the UN's Human Development Index, which places it in the category of "Very Highly Developed"—the highest ranked in the Middle East, allowing the country to enjoy a high standard of living rivaling other Western countries such as Austria, France and Finland.

The major economic sectors include high-technology and industrial manufacturing; the Israeli diamond industry is one of the world's centers for diamond cutting and polishing. Relatively poor in natural resources, Israel depends on imports of petroleum, raw materials, wheat, motor vehicles, uncut diamonds and production inputs, though the country's nearly total reliance on energy imports may change with recent discoveries of large natural gas reserves off its coast on the one hand and the leading role of the Israeli solar energy industry on the other.

Israel's quality university education and the establishment of a highly motivated and educated populace is largely responsible for ushering in the country's high technology boom and rapid economic development. With its strong educational infrastructure and high quality

incubation system for new cutting edge ideas has allowed the country to create a high concentration of high-tech companies across the country backed by a strong venture capital industry. Its central high technology hub "Silicon Wadi" is considered second in importance only to its Californian counterpart. Numerous Israeli companies have been acquired by global corporations for their reliable and quality corporate personnel. The country was the destination for Berkshire Hathaway's first investment outside the United States when it purchased ISCAR Metalworking, and the first research and development centers outside the United States for companies including Intel, Microsoft, and Apple.

Educational goals, work plans, preschool curriculum and syllabus

The development of preschool-age children is characterized by fundamental changes in every area: physical, emotional, social, lingual and cognitive.

- Emotional and Social Changes,
- Language Development,
- Sensory-Motor Development,
- Cognitive Abilities.

Work plans and activity schedules help the preschool teacher implement educational goals into daily practice. The work plan is determined by the teacher-manager, in cooperation with the members of staff, and promotes shared educational practice processes. It includes both pedagogic and administrative elements.

The syllabus includes goals that reflect the policy the Ministry of Education, county, local authority and the community, as well as the aims outlined in the education programs and the professional beliefs of the preschool staff. Work plans should define differential responses for specific children based on teacher's assessments and will allow expression of the children's socio-cultural context (community and family needs).

The curriculum is an educational tool to help the teacher implement the preschool's educational goals into practice. It contains both educational and administrative elements that allow the teacher and her staff to organize and carry out their work.

Preschool children learn constantly, everywhere. They learn from experiences, either spontaneous or directed, and every experience contributes to their development. During their daily activities children acquire intellectual and social skills, knowledge and learning skills.

The aims of the syllabus are determined by the teacher and staff whilst adhering to the policies of the Ministry of Education, the local authority and views that educators strive to promote. Planning the work of the preschool should also demonstrate the professional expertise of the teacher regarding children's development, learning programs and her familiarity with the specific group of children at her class that particular year.

Preschool staff

The regular staff of the preschool include: the teacher-manager and an assistant as well as a supplemental teacher and assistant. The teacher-manager is responsible for planning, preparing and carrying out the preschool program. She directs the staff's pedagogic-didactic work and is in charge of follow up and assessments; she maintains contact with parents and other professionals and is responsible for all the organizational aspects of the preschool. In some preschools, there are other professionals such as a special education preschool teacher, a physical education teacher, a rhythm and music teacher as well as volunteers, who add to the regular staff.

In some preschools, there are other professionals such as a special education preschool teacher, a physical education teacher, a rhythm and music teacher as well as volunteers, who add to the regular staff. Also, in Israel's preschool system there are external specialized professionals who are sources of support for the preschool, providing instruction and professional assistance to the teacher and staff. They are: The Area Supervisor, Disciplinary Instructors, Psychologists (from the local Educational Psychology Services), Educational Counselors and other staff from the local authority, etc.



Picture 1: The Area Supervisor, The Teacher Manager, **Picture 2:** A Rhythm and Music Teacher, Supplemental Teacher and Assistant.

All preschool teachers must ask yourself the following questions when devising work plans:

- What are my professional beliefs?
- What does the education system ask of me?
- Which administration policy documents do I need to read?
- Who are the children and their parents enrolled in the preschool this year?
- What are the cultural characteristics of the community?
- What resources are at my disposal?

The education work program provides answers to two questions:

- Where we going and what are the desired outcomes?
- What practices are necessary in order to achieve the desired results?

Teacher - child interaction

Interactions between the child and the preschool teacher are highly important due to their impact on the child's development. A good relationship forges a trusting and confident foundation. The preschool teacher is, together with the child's parents, a major role figure in his early childhood.

In cases where the teacher feels she needs advice from a counselor or psychologist, she should first talk with each child at the preschool for some 10-15 minutes as part of the routine preschool program. The teacher should hold 4 or 5 individual meetings every day as, when and where she judges appropriate. It is important to write a summary of each such individual meeting. These summaries form the basis for future conversations and for steering their involvement in the preschool daily activities.

Integrative Planning

The three magic words for planning: Why, What and How?

WHAT

- What are the objectives?
- What is the main content I want to teach within the chosen topic?
- What is most relevant and suitable for the child's experience, needs and interests?
- What do I want the student to know at the end?
- What disciplines can I integrate in this topic?
- What are the most significant values within this topic?
- What are the most significant skills within this topic?
- What are the strategies I should choose?

HOW

- How will I teach, what activities will I use? (i.e. outdoors/indoors activities, small/large group work, games, storytelling, etc)
- How to plan the time? (For how long will I teach this topic?)
- How will I plan the daily schedule?
- How should I build the learning environment in the classroom to support this topic?
- How will I evaluate the learning process?

WHY – should be asked after every what and how question

- Why is this topic relevant to the children?
- Why teach it now?

DAILY TIMETABLE FOR PRESCHOOL

| Approximate Time | Recommended Activities |
|------------------|--|
| 07:30- 08:30 | Children settle in at the preschool at their chosen activities |
| 08:30 - 08:50 | Meeting with all the children (explanation of the timetable for that day, prayers) |
| 08:50 - 11:20 | Open and close the snack bar |
| 08:50 - 09:50 | Divide children into two groups (indoor and outdoor) Indoor group – role-playing, construction, games, looking at books and activities with books, experimenting with materials, spontaneous experiments initiated by the children and the teacher, computer games; other children either individually or in a small group with the teacher for educational activity and development. Outdoor group: physical activities on fixed equipment, ball games, taking care of animals, gardening, play with natural materials, creative play. Individual children or a small group lead by the assistant teacher at the teacher's instruction. |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 09:50 - 10:50 | Groups change over |
| 10:50 - 11:20 | Most of the children outside organized by staff on outdoor duty. |
| 11:20 - 11:40 | Meeting with all the children for summary of the day so far and discussion (current events, songs, individual incidents, etc.). |
| 11:40 - 13:30 | Indoor free activities. Individual conversation between the teacher and small groups of up to three children. Light meal. |
| 13:30 - 14:00 | Final meeting of the day to plan "tomorrow" (musical activities, reading a story, friendly games, theater, art, etc.). |

An Integrative Topic

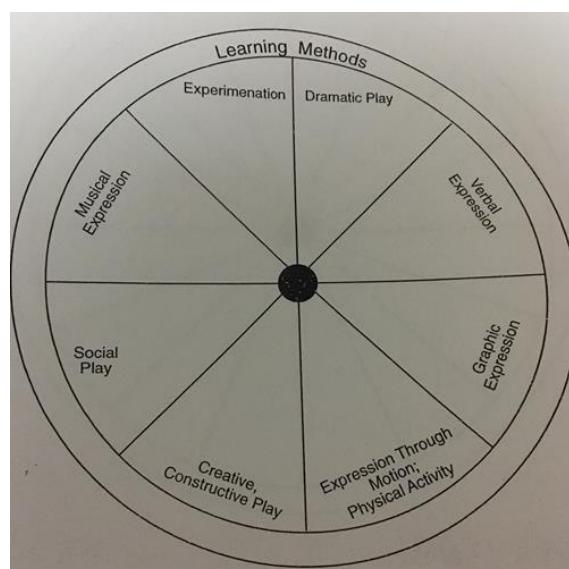
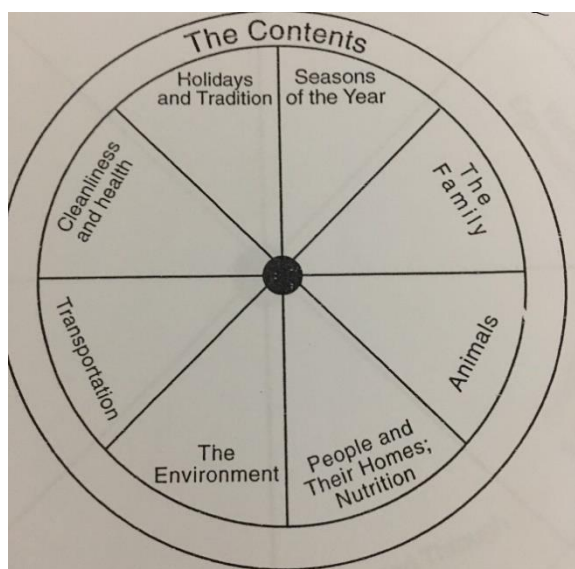
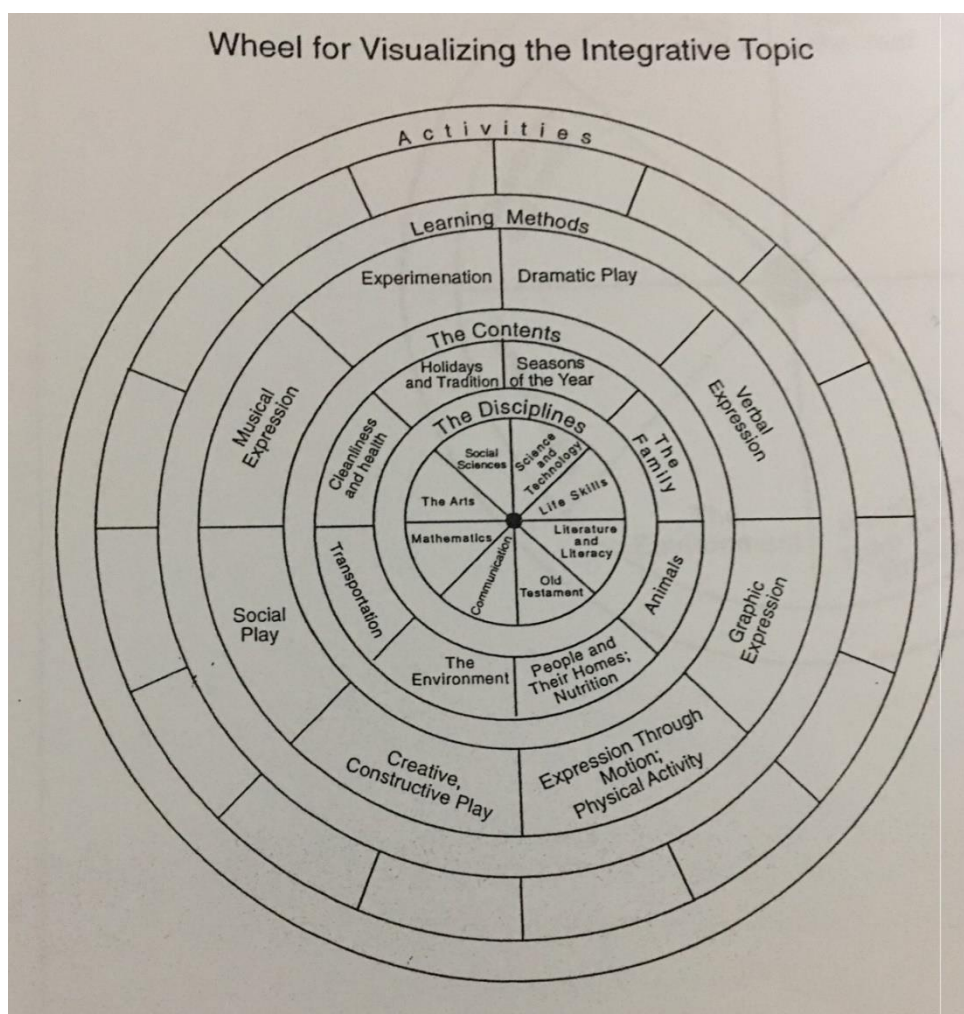
The preschool curriculum is rich and varied, constituting the foundation for the child's world of knowledge. Learning is a process of reorganizing existing knowledge and assimilating new knowledge. To enable the child to learn with efficacy, the preschool teacher must plan and organize activities so that they are appropriate for the child's ability, spheres of interest and level of interest at the time the topic is worked on.

Planning an educational experience is based on the principle of focused learning, i.e., on preparing content derived from various disciplines and adapted as an integrative topic that is meaningful for the child.

To plan the integrative topic, the teacher has to select appropriate topics from the content list in the master syllabus for preschoolers. The choice is based on two factors: how well the contents can be adapted to the child's developmental level and the extent of affinity between the content and the planned integrative topic.

"The Wheel for Visualizing the Integrative Topic" is based on the principle of deriving contents from various disciplines and interweaving them within the integrative topic. The topics appearing in the wheel are: seasons of the year, animals, occupations, I and we, the home, nutrition transportation, holidays and hygiene. Planning of each of the aforementioned topics necessitates selection of contents from the following disciplines: science and technology, social sciences, the arts, language and literacy, cognition, health and safety, tradition and holidays, Old Testament and even mathematics. The mixture of contents is chosen by the teacher according to the points of emphases which seem most appropriate when teaching the subject.

Activities should be planned with regard for a range of learning methods: free play, didactic games, conversation and discussion, creativity, physical activity, computer activity, watching television and movies, observing processes and so on. Moreover, the teacher should vary the organizational patterns of learning and treat the integrative topics in various manners: individually, in groups, and with the whole group, and perhaps also including parental participation.



Wheel for Visualizing the Integrative Topic
Example of Complete Wheel

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