

**Abstract**

From Jabberwocky to English:  
Making the Transition from the US and Britain to Palestine  
via the English Language.  
Mary Fattash  
Language Center  
An-Najah National University

Central to this paper is the issue of the lack of any coherent recognizable context for the learning of the English language in Palestine. This is particularly true of the university-required courses at An-Najah National University, whose curricula are based on textbooks of American or British origin. What happens when English is presented in the context of cultures and situations completely alien to the experiences and world-view of the Palestinian students? What meaning can this language have for them under these circumstances? How relevant is context in the language learning process, particularly in light of the manner in which the first language is acquired? How can English be made to express what matters to young Palestinians rather than what interests the writers of foreign textbooks? These are some of the questions I shall attempt to answer, with samples from our test papers and textbook vocabulary exercises, to illustrate my thesis and to demonstrate what we can do as teachers within the constraints imposed on us by the prescribed textbooks to place English in contexts familiar to our students and to work towards its more effective integration into their daily lives and concerns.