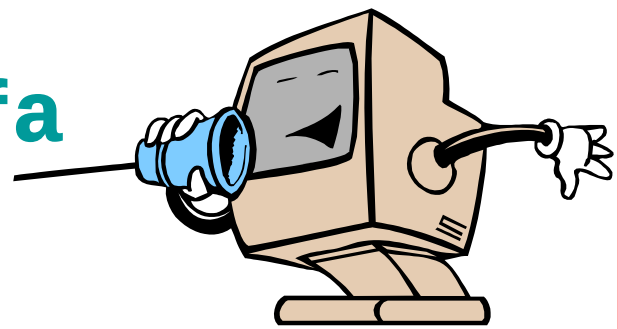
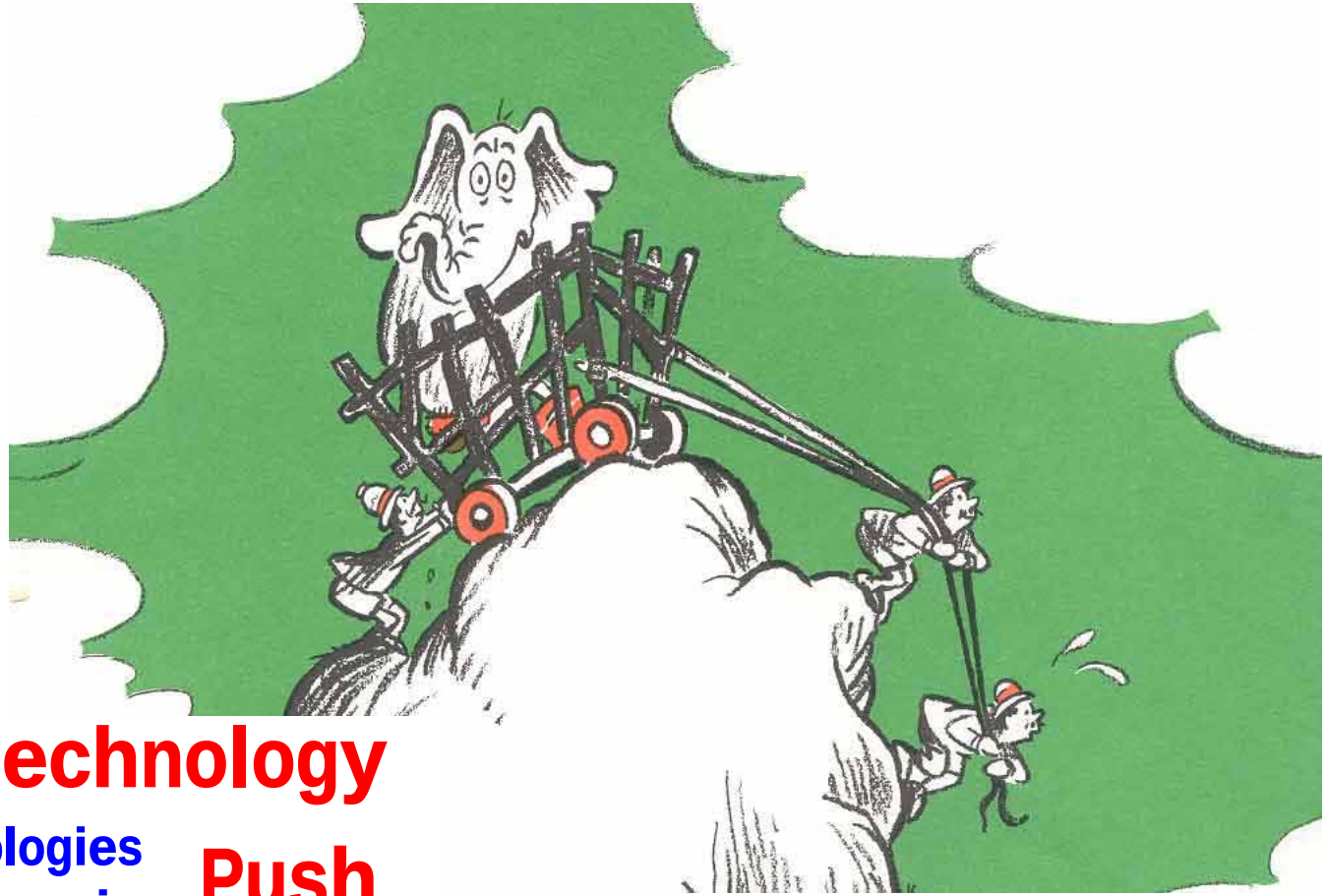
Advantages and Disadvantages of Synchronous Online Learning in the Health Care Professions

Tamar Weiss, Rotem Harpaz, Naomi Schreuer, Orit Palmon, Michael Konja & Naomi Josman

University of Haifa





Technology Push

Enabling Technologies
for Distance Learning

Market Pull

Convenience of
Distance Learning
Student & Lecturer Interest

Attributes of Teaching Formats

	Face-to-Face Same time, Same place	Asynchronous Any time, Any place	Synchronous Same time, Any place
Facilities & Technologies	Classroom, Laboratory Computer projector	Desktop computer Modem High Learn	Desktop computer Modem Interwise Videoconferencing*

* Students same place, lecturer any place

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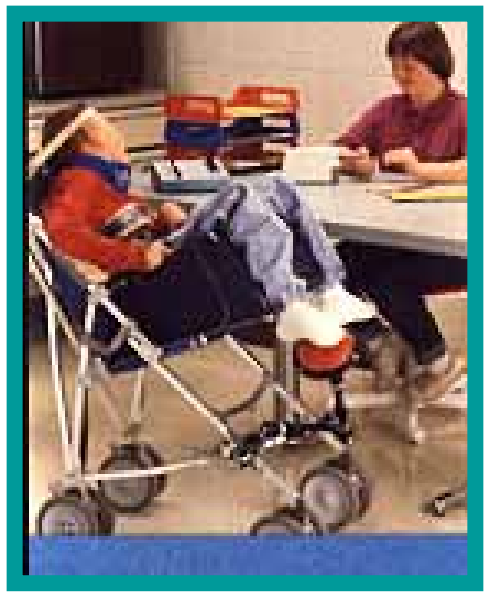
Cost	No extra cost?	E-learning platforms, Support center, develop courseware	E-learning platform, Equipment rental, Technical support

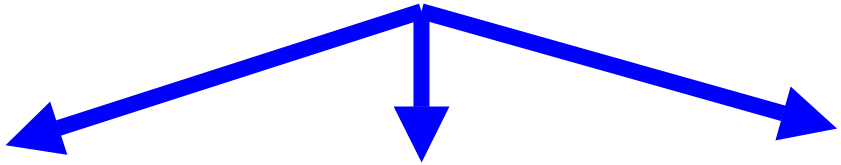
The Course: Assistive Technology in Occupational Therapy

Level	Master's and Continuing Education
Format	Ten 2-hour Interwise lectures Nine presenters Five 3-hour face-to-face labs/visits HighLearn web site
Scope	Overview of assistive technology
Students	17 female students (14 occupational therapists, 3 special education teachers (mean age = 35.3 ± 10.1 yrs.) from North and Center of Israel

Assistive Technology Topics



AT Course delivered via 3 coordinated teaching formats



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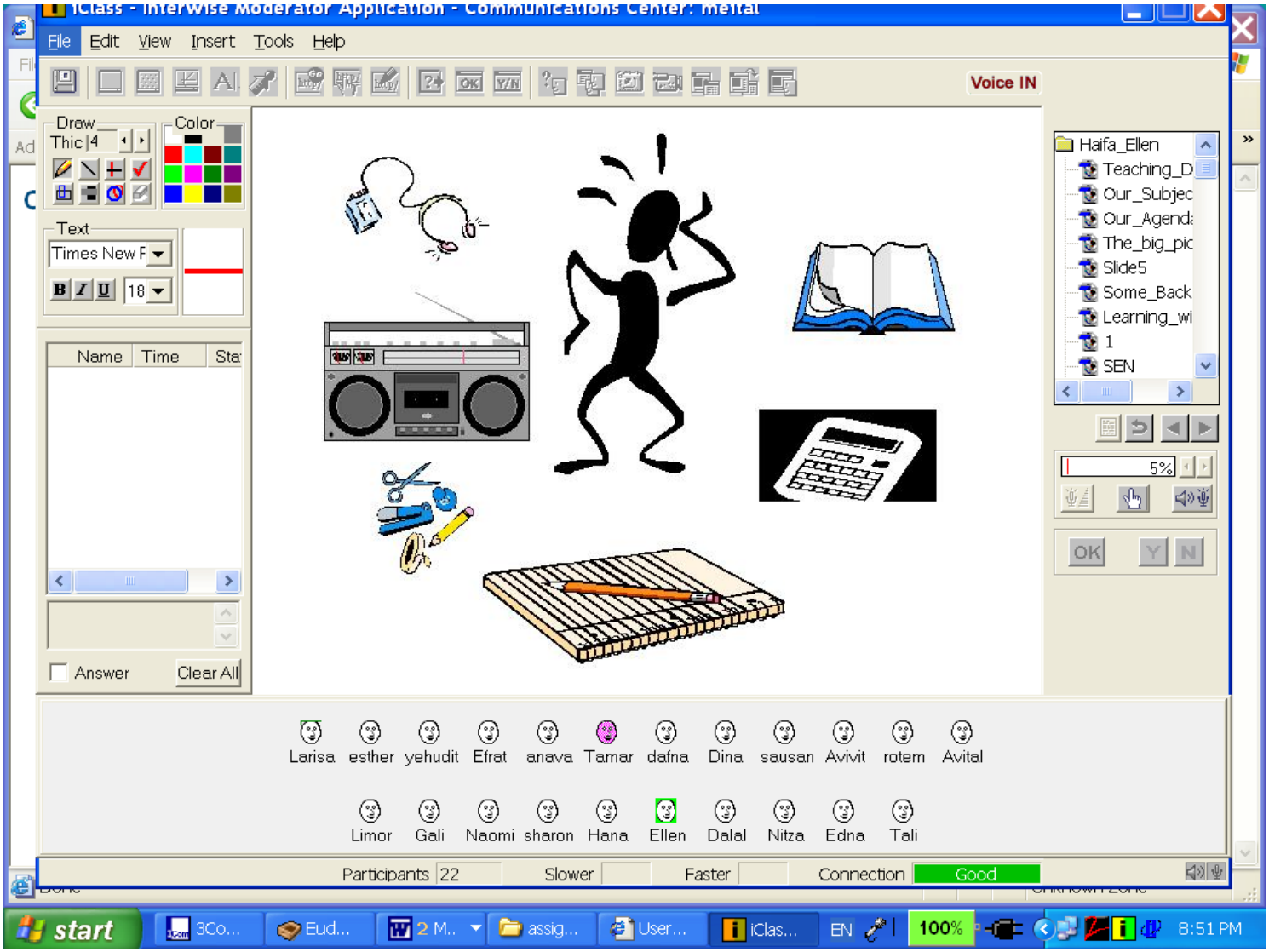
The Interwise Platform:

Lecturer's Desktop



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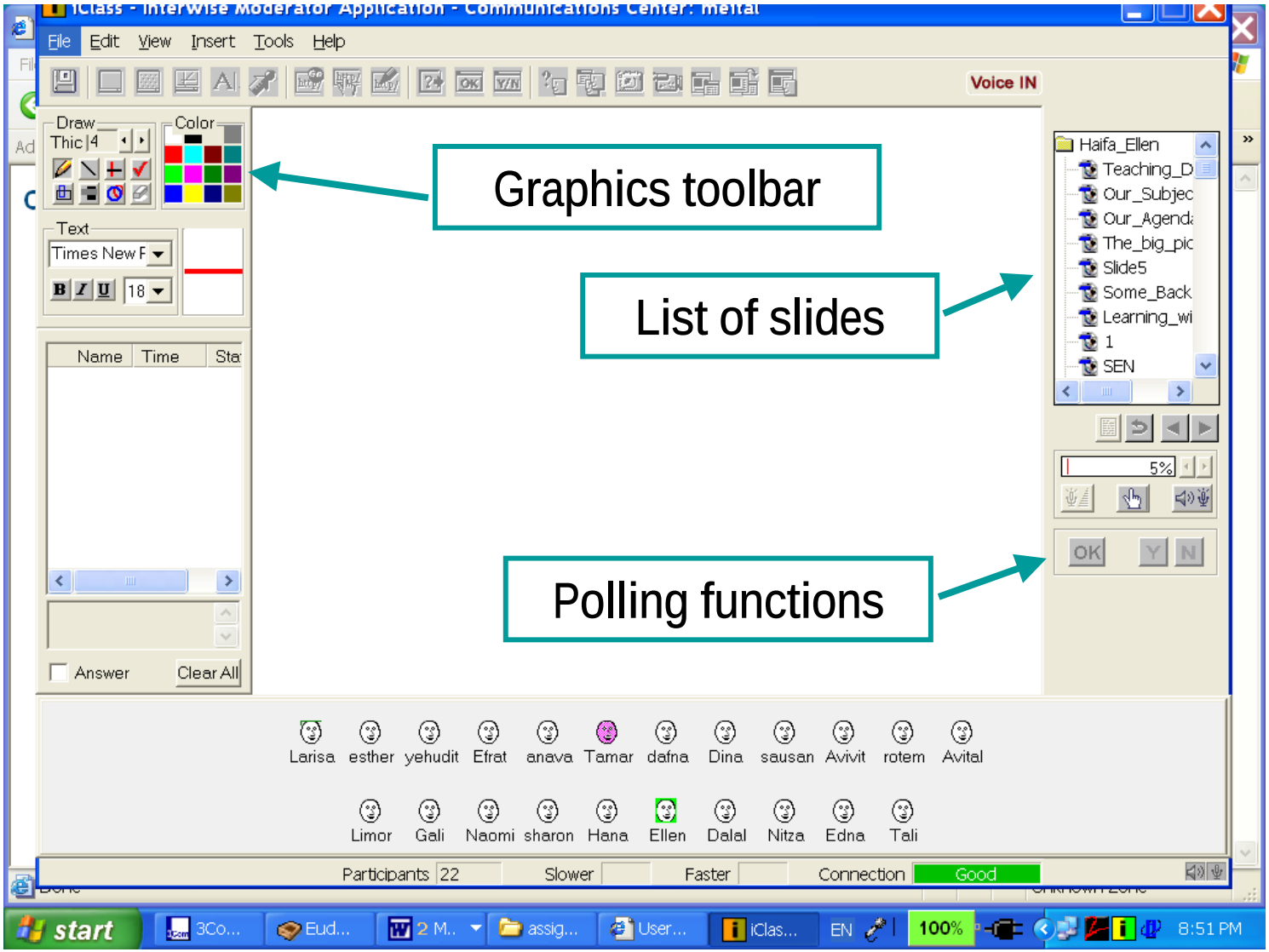
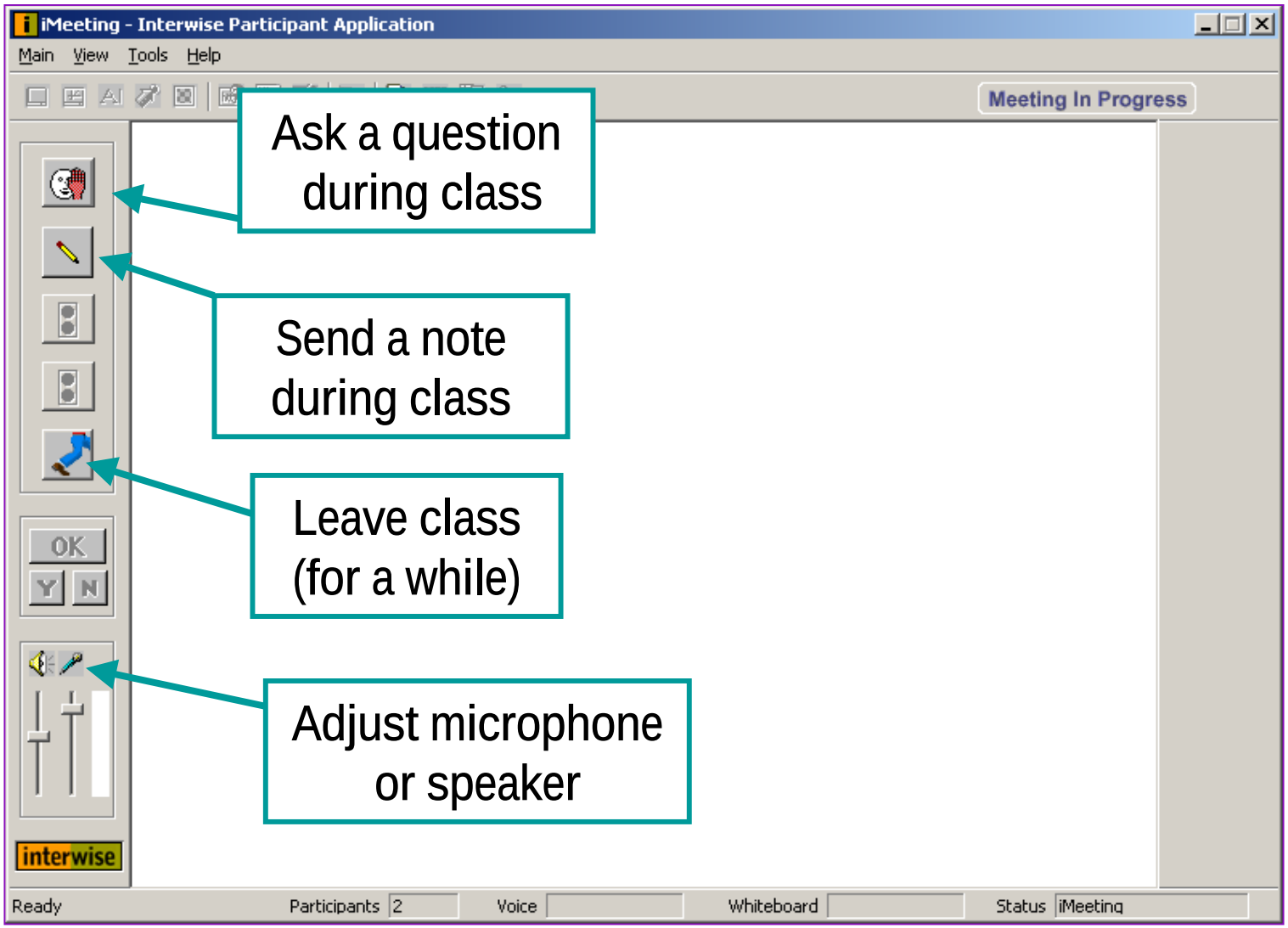


The Interwise Platform:

Student's Desktop



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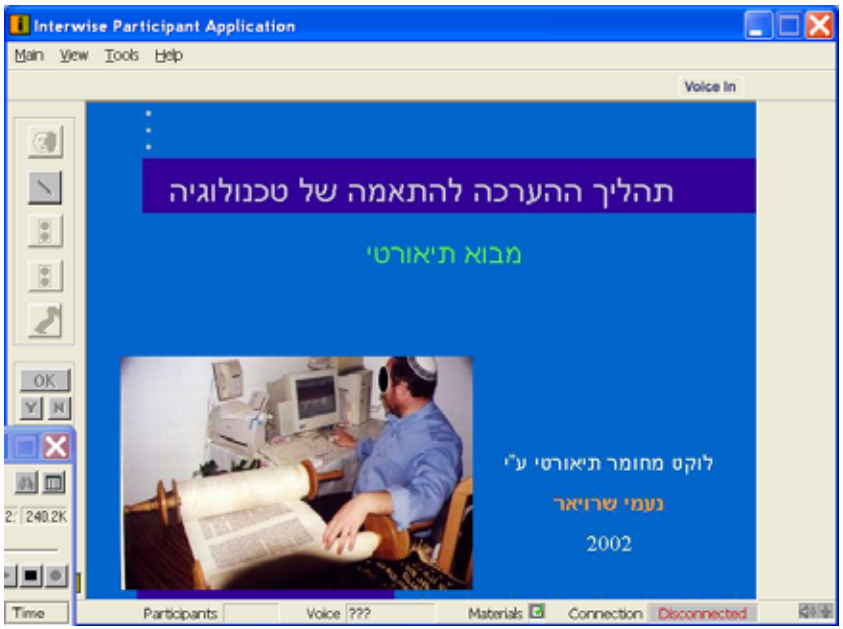
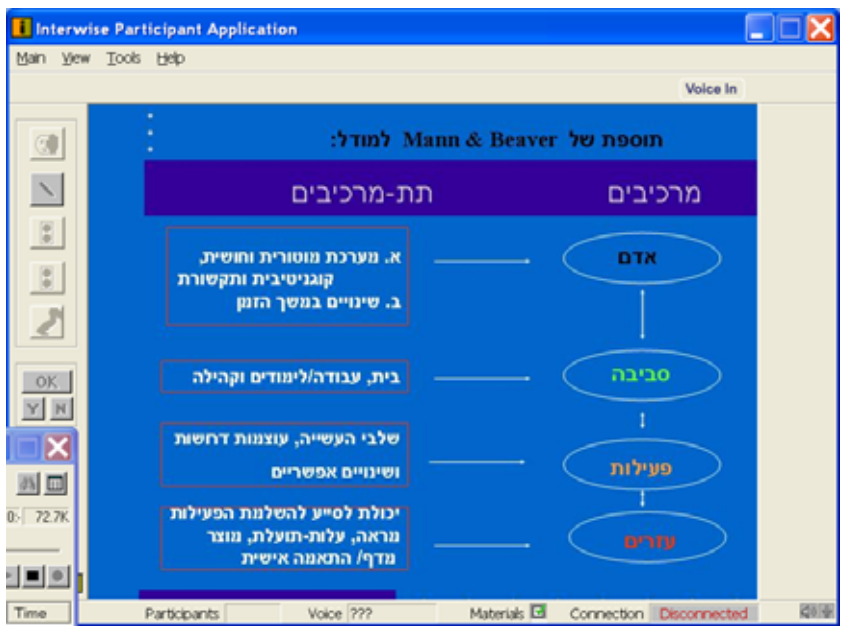


In the actual presentation it was possible to view samples of an Interwise session. Anyone interested in viewing these should contact Tamar Weiss (tamar@research.haifa.ac.il)



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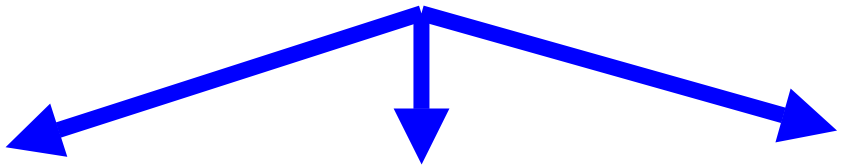

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Five Face-to-Face Meetings

University computer laboratory for software instruction

Assistive technology display & “hands-on” experience at Karten-Haifa

Evaluation & Discussion with AT users at Beit Noam Center

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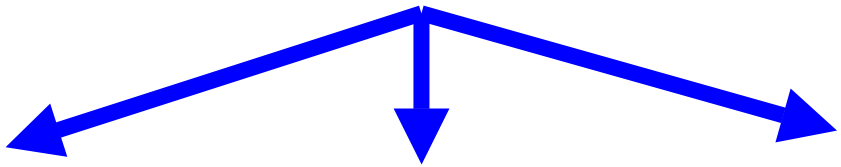

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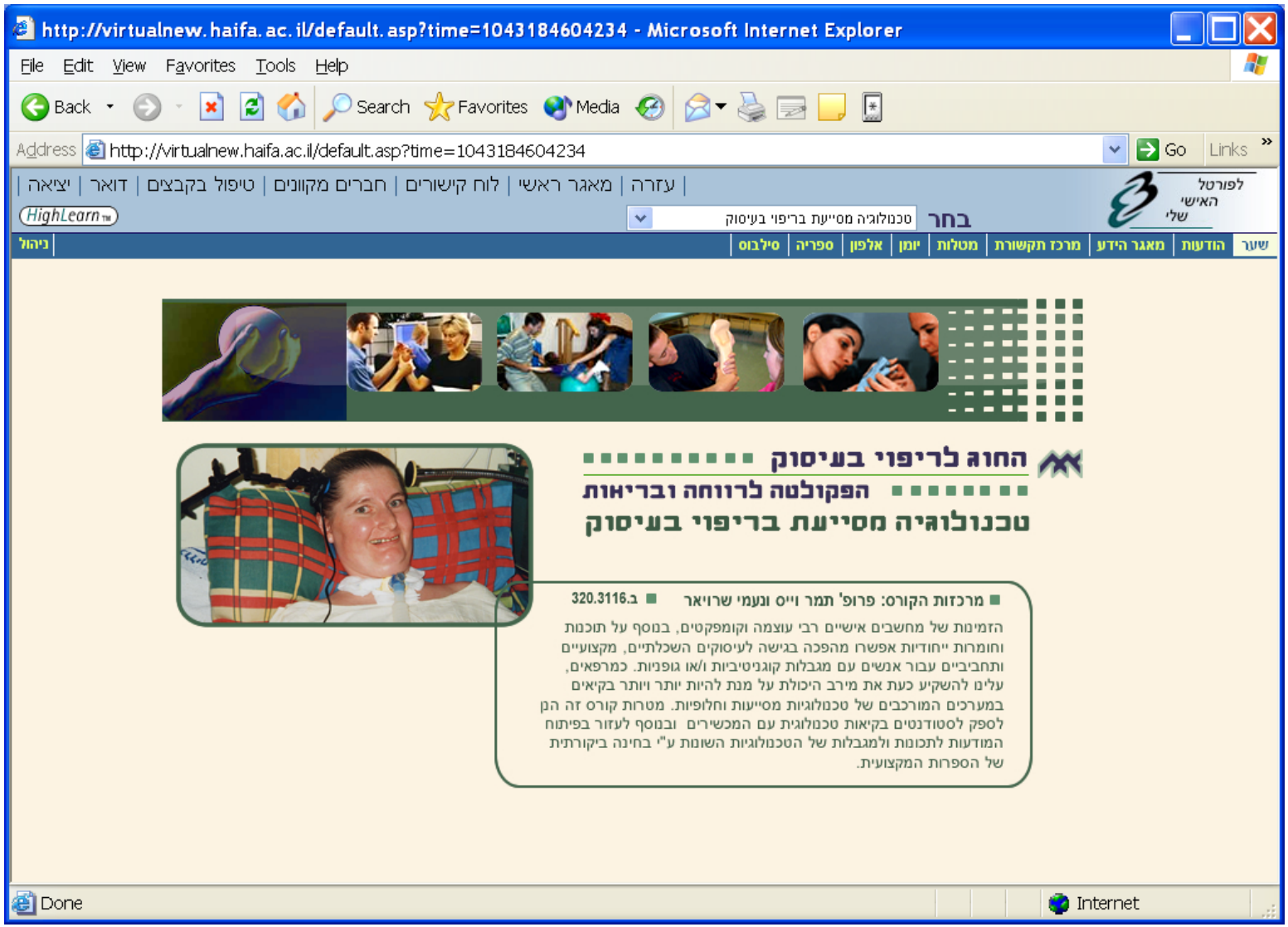

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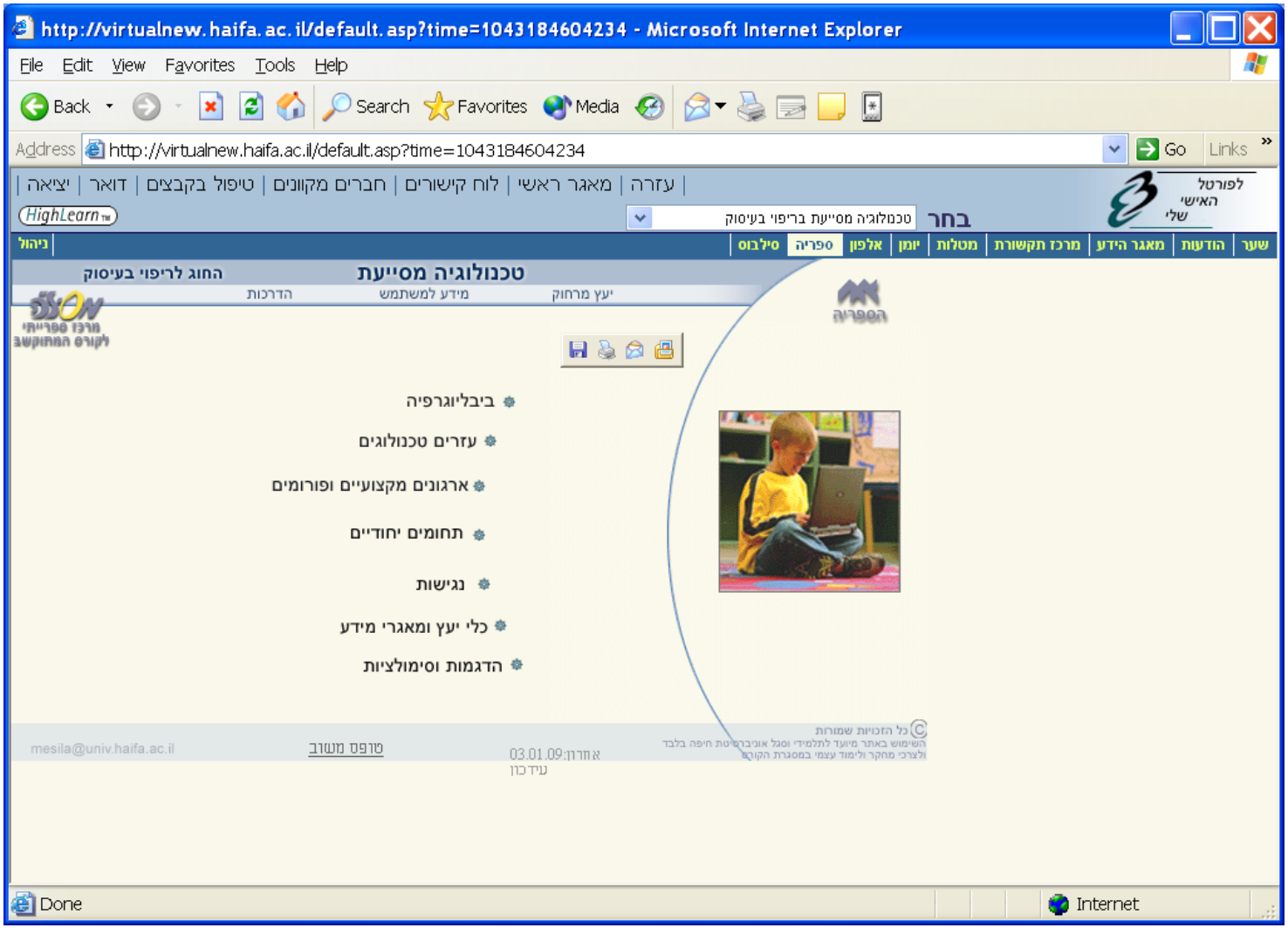

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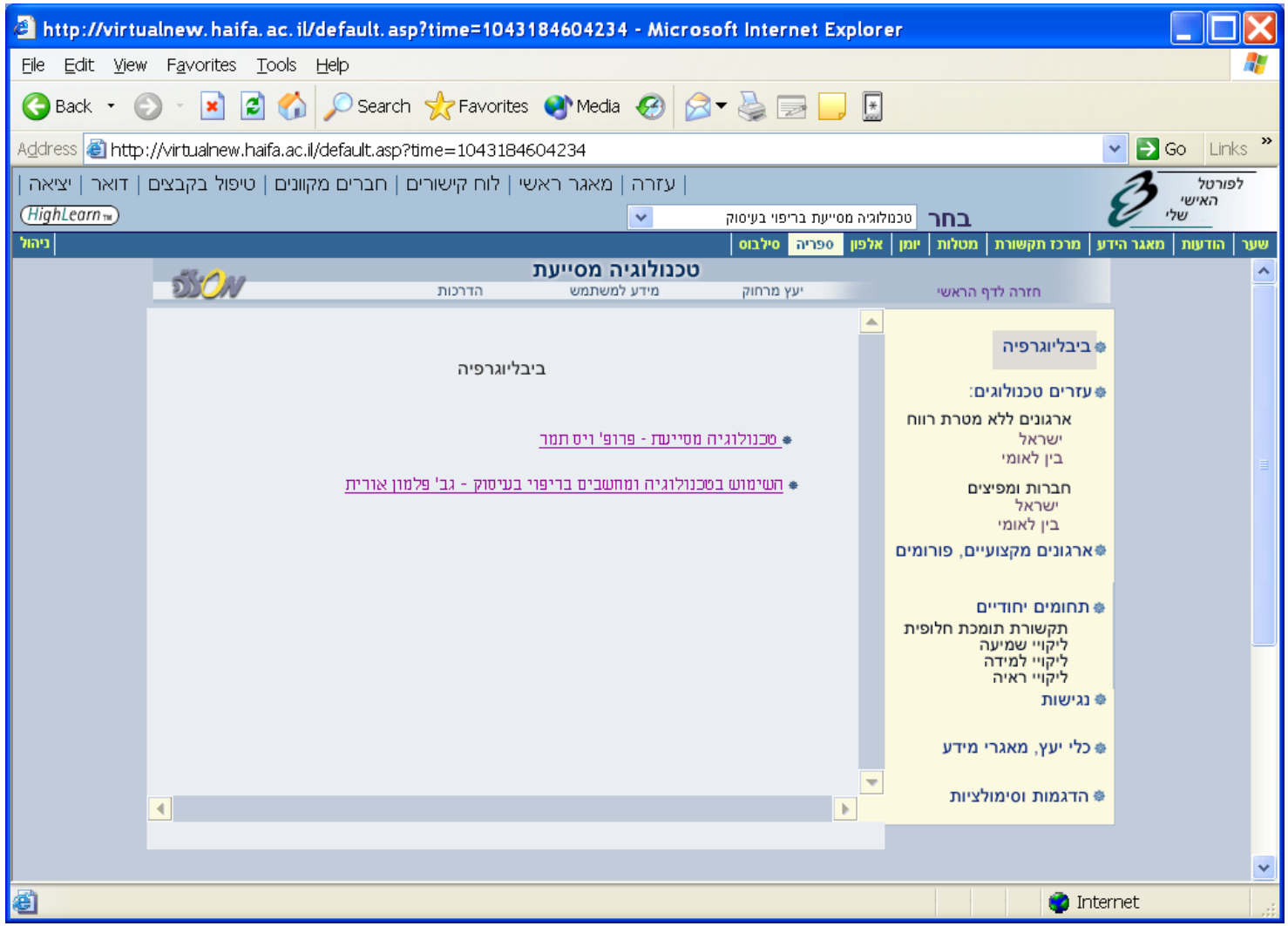

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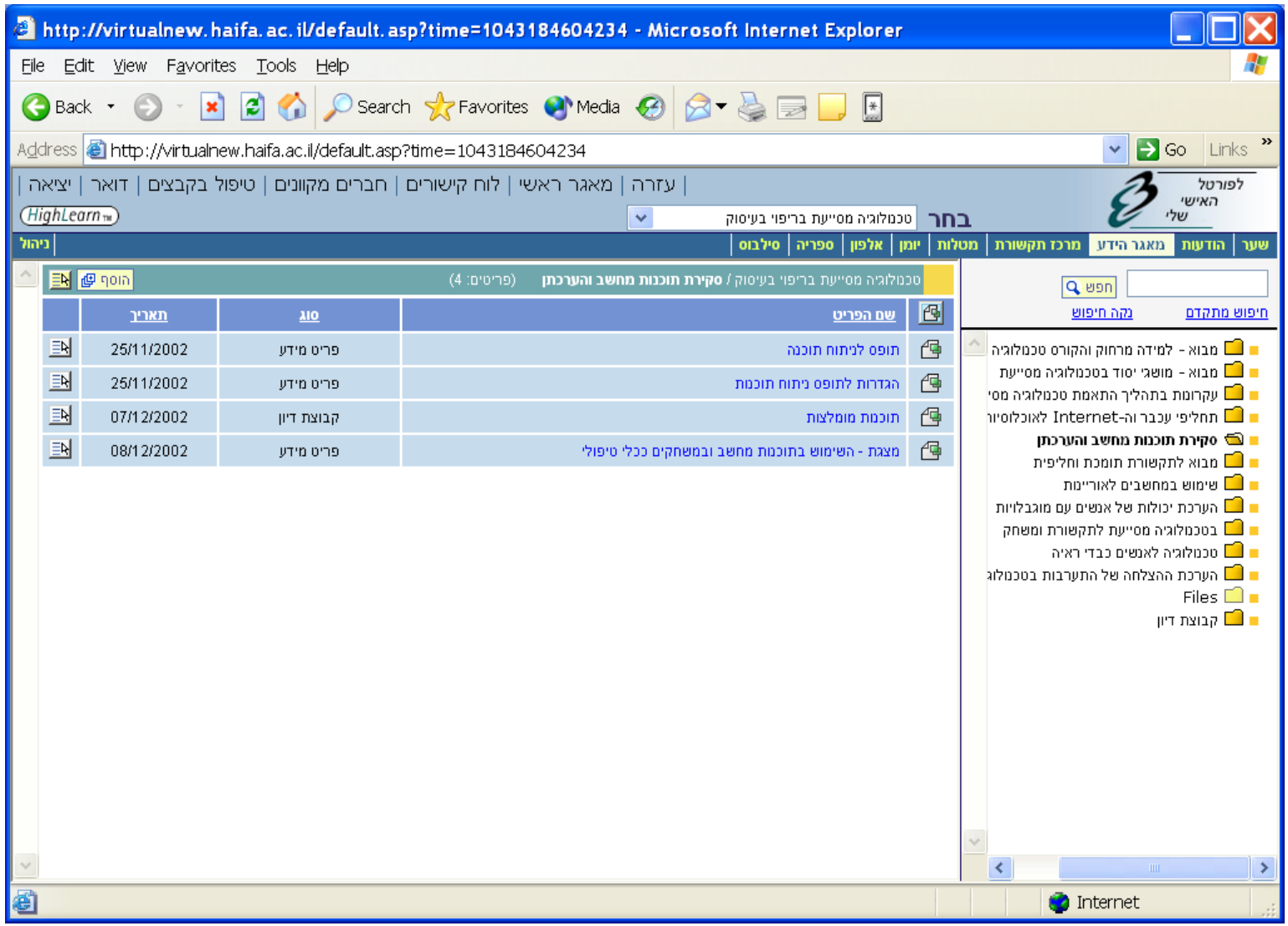

Evaluating the Course

Tools

- Pre-course questionnaires included:
  - Demographics and technology familiarity
  - Learning styles
- Post-course questionnaires included:
  - High Learn usage
  - Course evaluation
  - Student perception of control
  - Mark in course
- Post-course discussion and in-depth interviews

What have we learned ….

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Support	Online support was good	Essential to give students confidence and remove burden from lecturer

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Type of Material	Interwise not suited to dynamic multimedia such as videoclips, software demos	These aspects must be supplemented with HighLearn and Face-to-Face sessions

Factors contributing to success …..

Technical Support

Inter-University
Computing Center
University of Haifa
Computing &
E-Learning Centers

Lecturer Attitude

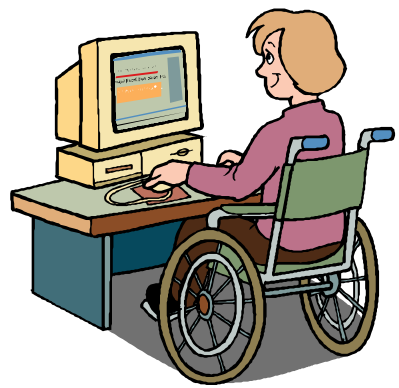
Effort
Risk
Time

Student Characteristics

Age
Motivation
Independence
Computer literacy

Subject Material

Diverse
Practical

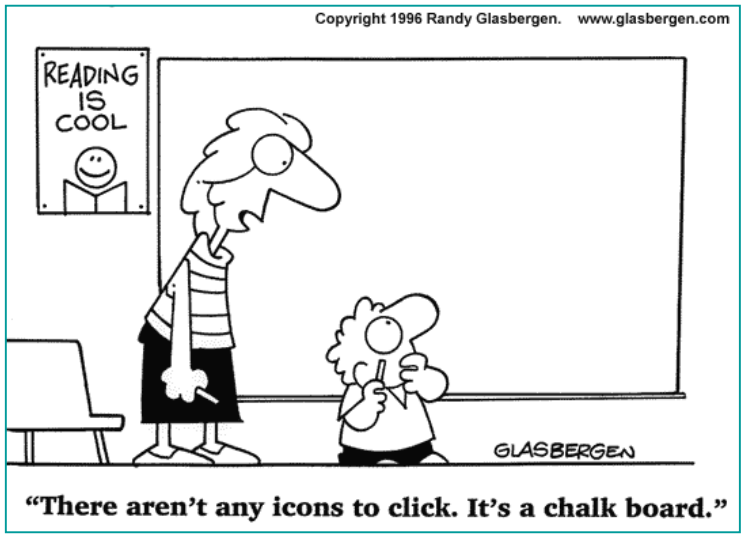


Relative Merits

	Face-to-Face Same time, Same place	Asynchronous Any time, Any place	Synchronous Same time, Any place
Convenience for Student	✓	✓	✓
Interaction	✓	✓	✓
Independence	✓	✓	✓
Multimedia	✓	✓	✓
Access to Experts	✓	✓	✓

Acknowledgements

- Dr. Tami Almog, Noam Zachs & the E-Learning Center of the University of Haifa
- Iris Igra & the University of Haifa Library staff
- University of Haifa Computing Center
- Larissa Ya'akobov
- Sigal Sher & the IUCC



"But I don't want to go!
You have ADSL here!..."