

NETWERK *network*

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Għaliex dan u mhux xi haġa oħra ?...

Xi wħud li għal dawn l-aħħar snin segwew l-iżvilupp tal-proċess Let Me Learn f'Malta jistaqsu – għaliex minn tant strumenti li jeżistu li jagħtuna ħjiel fuq l-istili tat-tagħlim intagħżel propju dan il-proċess? F'dan l-artiklu, fir-raba' ħarġa ta' din ir-rivista 'Netwerk' ħa naqşam magħkom żewġ raġunijiet li propju wassluna sabiex inkomplu naħdmu u nwettqu dan il-proċess partikolari.

L-ewwel raġuni ħierġa minn analiżi tal-letteratura fuq strumenti li jkejlu l-istil ta' kif wieħed jitgħallem (learning style instruments). It-tieni raġuni hi mibnija fuq dak li jgħidu ndividwi li esperjenzaw dan il-proċess partikolari tal-Let Me Learn, dik li tissejjaħ evidenza anedottika. Din tal-aħħar ingabret matul iż-żmien minn fost l-għalliema, amministraturi ta' skejjel u ġenituri, kemm dawk lokali kif ukoll barranin. Għall-iskop ta' dan l-artiklu żgħir ser nieħu siltiet minn *e-mail* li bagħtet ġenitur wara seminar ta' jumejn f'wieħed mill-kulleġġi.

L-istudji...

Studji pjuttost riċenti li saru biex janalizzaw mudelli ta' stili ta' kif wieħed jitgħallem (Bedford, 2004; Cassidy, 2004; Coffield, Moseley, Hall u Ecclestone, 2004) juru b'mod ġenerali li hemm problemi tista' tgħid f'kull strument/mudell li ġie evalwat. Ngħidu aħna Coffield u l-kollegi tiegħu bdew billi studjaw 71 mudell li mbagħad irriduċewhom għal 13 fuq bażi ta' teorija (jew nuqqas tagħha),

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il-livell ta' użu minn istituzzjonijiet akkademiċi jew kummerċjali u/jew fuq l-impatt li l-mudell partikolari għandu fuq l-istudji tal-'learning styles'.

Permezz ta' dan l-istudju fejn gie analizzat b'mod sistematiku kull mudell l-aktar popolari, dan il-grupp ta' riċerkaturi wera li hemm dgħufija psikometrika kemm mill-att ta' validità xjentifika kif ukoll fuq il-kejl ta' kredibilità jew konsistenza statistika (reliability). Barra min hekk dan l-istudju qabel ma' studji oħra li semmejna u oħrajn li ġew qabel (Sewall, 1986; Curry, 1987) li hemm konfużjoni u nuqqas ta' koerenza fid-definizzjoni ta' kuncetti u termini wżati li ħafna drabi huma wżati b'mod ambigwu. Fl-aħħarnett sabu li hemm nuqqas serju ta' riżultati sodi ħierġa minn replikazzjoni ta' testijiet ta' analiżi.

Min-naħa l-oħra, fi studji li jsegwu l-linji gwida tal-istudju ta' Coffield u sħabu (2004), Patricia Maher u Ruth Slotnick wrew li l-proċess Let Me Learn għandu sisien teoretici robusti li jinkludu kuncetti ċari tar-relazzjoni bejn il-moħħ fiziku u l-intellet; hemm ukoll żvilupp ta' lessiku li permezz tiegħu persuna tista' tikkomunika mal-oħrajn l-esperjenza tagħha tat-tagħlim; li dan huwa proċess li mhux biss jinforma lill-għalliem u l-metodologija, iżda wkoll u aktar importanti, jagħti għodda f'idejn min qiegħed jitgħallem biex isir konxju tal-proċess li għaddej minnu

huwa u jitgħallem u jagħtih għodda biex jitgħallem b'mod strateġiku. Il-validità ta' dan l-istudju tibbaża fuq il-fatt li r-riżultati konkreti li ħarġu, ħarġu mill-użu ta' dan il-proċess u ġew mistħarrġa kemm b'modi kwantitattivi, anedottali, intervisti kif ukoll osservazzjoni.

Din l-analiżi hija konferma ta' numru ta' studji oħra li saru f'dawn l-aħħar snin fuq aktar minn 15,000 persuna bejn is-6 u t-18-il sena li kienu jattendu fi skejjel, kulleġġi u universitajiet differenti, studenti b'kundizzjoni ta' *dyspraxia* u bi problemi newroloġiċi oħra. Saru wkoll studji oħra ma' 7000 adult fi professjonijiet differenti (Learning Connections Resources, 2004; Addy, 1996; Borg & Calleja, 2006; Calleja, 1998; Campbell, 2005; Johnston, 2006; Kottkamp & Silverberg, 2006 u oħrajn).

Saħħa fl-esperjenza...

Izda konferma oħra barra dik li jagħtuna n-numri, ġejja mir-rakkonti personali ta' dawk illi b'xi mod jew ieħor iltaqgħu ma' dan il-proċess. Hawnhekk fost l-għexieren ta' esperjenzi miktuba li rċevejna matul iż-żmien minn għalliema, ġenituri u oħrajn nixtieq naqsam magħkom siltiet minn *email* ta' omm:

“Jiena ġenitur ta' tifel ta' tmien snin li qiegħed fir-raba' klassi primarja. Ġenitur ukoll ta' tifla ta' erbatax-il sena li qegħda fir-raba' sena fis-sekondarja. It-tagħlim (kważi fuq kollox) jinteressani. Jimpurtani li nkun naf, u minkejja li dejjem kont naħdem kważi full-time, skond iċ-ċirkustanzi, dejjem sibt ħin biex naqra u nattendu laqgħat ta' tagħlim dwar it-trobbija u l-edukazzjoni tat-tfal. Qatt ma naf li kelli opportunita' li nattendu għal xi laqgħa l-iskola jew x'imkien ieħor u ma ħallejtx kollox u attendejt. Mat-tifla b'sodisfazzjon ngħid li kont suċċess.

Anzi nipprova nfakkarha biex ma tinsix li dak li qed tiegħu huwa għall-ħajjitha, u ma jkun għara xejn meta f'xi test jew eżami titef xi marka li tkun setgħet akkwistat imma dak il-ħin tat-test aljenat jew ma setgħatx iġġib.

Minn naħa tat-tifel ma nistax ngħid l-istess. Minn mindu kien żgħir ħafna kien juri abiltajiet differenti. Jitgħallem malajr. Jiskopri. Jesperimenta. Id-dar ma jkolli l-ebda kantuniera mingħajr kartun u kull tip ta' mudelli. Ikun irid iżomm kollox. “Dik tarmiħiex għax irrid nagħmilha ...” Inwaħħallu dak li jpenġi mal-*cupboards* tal-kċina u fl-uffiċċju tiegħi fuq ix-xogħol. Jien nifmu u nirrealizza kemm għandu abiltajiet. Nagħtih l-ispazju li għandu bżonn. Il-problema bdiet meta beda jmur l-iskola għax beda jkun frustrat. Kull filgħodu jibki u jitlobni jekk jistax jibqa' d-dar. Qabel jorqod jiftakar u jinkwieta li x'ħin iqum irid imur l-iskola. Il-Ġimgħa filgħaxija qabel jorqod jinkwieta li t-Tnejn għall-iskola, flok jieħu pjaċir li ser ikollu s-Sibt u l-Hadd fejn ma jmurx skola. Sas-sena l-oħra, jiġifieri sat-tielet sena tal-primarja, kien għadu kull filgħodu jibki u jsaqsini jekk hux possibbli jibqa' d-dar u għalfejn irid imur l-iskola bilfors. Kont niddiskuti dawn il-problemi mal-għalliema tal-iskola u ma kelliema li jkunu għamlu xi taħdita fuq it-tagħlim u kont ngħidilhom li jsibha diffiċli. Qatt hadd ma qalli kif nista' ngħinu. Minkejja li bil-ħafna

insistenza ma jmurx ħażin fit-testijiet, pero' naf li hu kapaċi aktar minn hekk.

Kellhom ikunu l-laqgħat li għamilt int din il-ġimgħa biex fl-aħħar ninduna li din mhix problema tat-tifel tiegħi biss. Dak li għidtilna fuq it-tfal li għandhom il-parti teknika fihom huwa kollu verita'. Jien bħala ġenitur kont ilni li rrealizzajt li:

Il-kitba fit-tul iddejjq

- **Jitgħallem pjuttost malajr, imma x'ħin jiġi biex jikteb dak li jaf, ma jimpurtahx kif jiġi**
- **Meta jagħmel web għall-komponent ikollu ħafna idejat imma l-komponent jagħmlu qasir**
- **Ġieli ma jzommx mas-sugġett tal-komponent**
- **Jaf ipinġi ħafna imma jekk ittih tpingija lesta ma jtihix kulur pulita**
- **Ma jiktibx pulit u l-mod kif jipprezenta x-xogħol ma jagħtix kasu**
- **Jiddejjaq jistudja. U ħafna drabi dak li jkun ħa, ikun ħadu waqt il-lezzjoni u mhux mill-istudju**
- **Jħobb jilgħab b'affarijiet li jagħmel hu jew bl-għodda u l-kompjuter u mhux b'gugarelli mixtrija**

Imma minkejja li rrealizzajt dan kollu qatt ma fhimt għaliex kien jagħmel hekk.

Issa għandu tmien snin. Din il-problema tant rajtha kibret li dan l-aħħar waqqaftu l-istudju għal kollox. Qiegħed jagħmel biss il-HW. Bdejna noħorġu l-Hadd u neħduh f'postijiet ta' nteress. Kontinwament bqajt nipprova nfehmu li jmur l-iskola huwa mportanti għalih, u nfehmu kemm dak li qiegħed jitgħallem l-iskola qiegħed jgħinu biex ikun jista' jagħmel dak li jixtieq. Issa li għandu tmien snin, forsi beda jifimni. Dan l-aħħar iltaqjna ma' piloti li wara li wrewh l-istrumenti li għandhom fil-kabina tal-ajruplan, ħallewh ukoll jipprova xi affarijiet. Huma qalulu kemm hu mportanti li joqgħod attent l-iskola u li jrid ukoll jistudja. F'dawn l-aħħar xhur irranġa ħafna l-prezentazzjoni tax-xogħol tiegħu u anke l-kitba. U minn ftit ġimgħat 'l hawn beda jinteressah li jgħib marki tajbin fit-testijiet. Fi Frar li għadda, għamel l-eżamijiet għall-ewwel darba u hu ma wriex interess biex ikun jaf x'marki ġab. Issa beda jkun herqan li jkun jaf kemm ġab marki. L-għalliema qaltli li l-iskola għamel kambjament kbir. Issa qiegħed iġib marki li aktar juru dak li verament jaf. Ċertament naqbel ma' dak li għidtilna int li biex jipprova jagħmel xi haġa, jrid jara l-bżonn u l-użu tagħha.

Għaliex qiegħda nikteb dan kollu?

L-ewwelnett nixtieq nissuġġerixxi biex ikun hemm nies ittrenjati biex jagħtu laqgħat bħal ma għamiltilna int fl-iskejjel primarji kollha. Dawn għandhom isiru kull sena għall-ġenituri tat-tfal tat-tieni sena tal-kindergarten u tat-tfal fit-tielet sena tal-primarja. F'dawn il-laqgħat għandu mhux biss jiġi muri lilna l-ġenituri kif ngħarfu l-modi differenti ta' kif jitgħallmu t-tfal, imma wkoll tiġi spjegata tattika u jingħataw tips kif ġenitur jista' jgħin b'mod prattiku, dejjem skond il-mod li bih uliedu jitgħallmu. ...

Nghid il-verità fil-laqgħa li għamiltilna nhar it-Tnejn ma tgħallimt xejn ġdid. Izda wara l-laqgħa tat-Tlieta, kkonfermajt li din ma kinitx problema tiegħi u tat-tifel tiegħi biss. U tgħallimt għaliex it-tifel tiegħi jaġixxi bil-mod tiegħu. Xtaqt bis-sħiħ li din il-laqgħa kelli l-aċċess għaliha ħafna snin ilu (din hija s-sitt sena li t-tifel qiegħed jattendi l-iskola). U issa ngħid: 'Possibbli li lili li tant fittixt l-għajnuna mingħand l-għalliema u nies oħra midħla tal-edukazzjoni tat-tfal, ħadd ma kellu xi suġġeriment kif nista ngħin lit-tifel tiegħi f'din il-problema? Ħadd ma kellu xejn x'jirrikmandali jew jirreferini għand xi ħadd fejn stajt insaqsi għal aktar tagħrif? S'issa kelli nkun jien bid-determinazzjoni u biż-żmien li nsib xi ftit tips dwar kif nista' ngħin lil ibni?' Kurt hu tifel li għandu

karattru tal-ġenn. Fil-klassi hu wieħed mill-aħjar tfal, izda meta jiġi biex juri dak li jaf bil-kitba ma tagħmillu l-ebda differenza kif tiġi.

Nixtieq verament li ġenituri oħra bħali jkollhom l-opportunità - li jitgħallmu kif jidentifikaw l-modi kif uliedhom jitgħallmu minn kmieni ħafna. Dan huwa l-aktar importanti fuq kollox biex tfal li għandhom fihom il-parti teknika qawwija ma jbatux u ma jintilfux. ”

Din l-email mhix xi prova xjentifika ta' suċċess, izda bla dubju hija ta' kuraġġ għalina li qiegħdin naħdmu fl-edukazzjoni tat-tfal, fl-istess ħin ta' 'challenge' għalina biex nagħtu dejjem l-aħjar lit-tfal kollha. Ir-rakkont ta' din l-omm hu ta' sosten għalina li tul is-snin sostnejnja li dan huwa proċess validu u ta' fejda fl-edukazzjoni. Dan sostnewh ukoll għalliema li ta' kull sena japplikaw biex b'sagrificċju jattendu għat-taħriġ li norganizzaw bħala centru. Tajjeb ukoll insemmu li aktar minn 10 universitajiet Amerikani u għadd ta' skejjel fl-Istati Uniti ilhom għal numru ta' snin jużaw dan il-

proċess. Fl-Ewropa, permezz taċ-ċentru tagħna, numru ta' ċentri għall-adulti, skejjel u Universitajiet bdew iħaddmu dan il-proċess. L-Università ta' Rovira I Virgili, Tarragona, Spanja hija waħda minn dawn l-universitajiet li din is-sena bdiet taħdem mal-istudenti tal-ewwel sena fil-fakultajiet kollha. Università oħra fl-Italja bdiet il-proċess biex fil-Fakultà tal-Edukazzjoni jibda jithaddem dan il-proċess ukoll. Barra minhekk tajjeb ngħidu li kemm fl-ewwel każ, kif ukoll fl-Università fl-Italja, għandna żewġ *trainers* mil-lokal li qiegħdin imexxu l-proċess. Dan barra li hemm numru sabiħ ta' *trainers* oħra madwar l-Ewropa li konna ħarrigħna bl-għajnuna ta' proġett Ewropew fuq medda ta' tliet snin.

Nittama li din il-ħidma tkompli tissokta b'aktar investiment, b'mod speċjali f'pajjiżna, permezz ta' aktar persuni li jitharrġu biex ikunu jistgħu jutilizzaw dan il-proċess li, kif rajna, qiegħed jgħin lill-proċess tat-tagħlim.

Colin Calleja
Kordinatur Nazzjonali u Ewropew
Ċentru Let Me Learn – Malta

Let Me Learn in Peru

Colin Calleja

In February of 2009, a group of teachers from the Diocese of Lurin in Peru learned about the Let Me Learn Process during a three day seminar entitled 'I Seminario Internacional De Pedagogia Y Economia Internacional' organized by Instituto Superior Tecnológico Privado, San José Del Sur.

The seminar was conducted by Mr. Colin Calleja from the Let Me Learn – Malta Centre at the University of Malta. Assisting Mr. Calleja was Ms. Jessica Vlásica who has received Let Me Learn training while studying at the University of Rovira I Virgili in Tarragona, Spain.

During this seminar the teachers had the opportunity to explore how they could learn about the learners' learning profile through the administration and interpretation of the Learning Connections Inventory and then differentiate instruction to respond effectively to the learners' needs. The teachers were very enthusiastic about the process and discussed how they could learn more so as to be able to use it within their schools. Ms. Jessica Vlásica who has now returned permanently to Peru is very willing to keep working with this group of teachers to help them apply this process with their learners.

The Malta centre is also exploring the possibility of hosting a small group of educators from Peru who will eventually become trainers in the Let Me Learn Process.



A School in Evolution:

— ST ALOYSIUS' COLLEGE —



If we were to look at the history of the College, we would see that as far back as 1997 when Father Bob Slattery S.J.

visited Malta to deliver a series of talks on Ignatian Pedagogy, the College was in the process of moving from the old to the new approach. What did this mean? It meant moving away from the *know the subject to know the child, teacher source of knowledge to teacher source of guidance, from competition to collaboration, student passive to student active, from academic evaluation to comprehensive evaluation* and the list goes on.....

As an educational establishment, we were already working on some of these goals and obviously teachers were using both the old and some of the new but it was here that we addressed the question: Where is the emphasis going to be? Am I as a teacher going

to guide my student to actively appropriate his knowledge, attitudes, priorities, values?

One area of concern that at the time could not be addressed was the method by which children entered the College. This was through the Common Entrance Exams for Church schools.

Through Staff development programmes, the College continued to travel along the NEW ROAD, introducing change slowly and only after reflection on its implications. In 2003, as part of this change, the College set up a Support Department with the aim to serve the needs of all our students but with particular emphasis on the children who were identified as having different styles of learning.

In 2008 the Society of Jesus took another important step on this journey when they added a Primary section to the College, namely Stella Maris Primary school, previously belonging to the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. This was a big event for both schools. At the Secondary section we were

now going to be teaching a diversity of learners. At Primary section the children would no longer need to sit for an exam to enter Secondary school as promotion would be automatic.

In what ways did the College administration prepare the staff and students for these changes? First of all, much research and much soul searching was carried out. Much work went into introducing a new culture of how to work. Many of the staff Seminars in the Secondary section were dedicated to inclusion and to diversity issues. The staff was invited to think inclusively and to prepare their work with diversity in mind. In the Primary section the focus was more on the integration process within the Ignatian Educational family. All staff members are being invited to reflect and act within the new framework of continuity in our students' Educational project. Indeed these are ongoing programmes.

At the same time, the administration felt the need for Professional staff development with input from professionals in the field of education. The College decided to organize a

Conference addressing the methods of teaching a diverse population of learners. This led to the International Conference 'Promoting Potential' held in February. This conference was addressed by several foreign and local experts.

Meetings were organized for both the Parents and the children. The administration prepared a Transition Programme that includes visits, meetings and a handy booklet.

The need for concrete steps to ensure continuity from Primary to Secondary was felt also on a curricular level. A concrete first step towards creating curricular continuity was an exercise in stream-lining the Primary and Secondary curricula at least in terms of the core, obligatory, subjects of English, Mathematics and Maltese. Over the period of a year, the Department teachers of English, Mathematics and Maltese in the Secondary section had a number of meetings with the Year Six teachers. Together, new syllabi were drawn up for Year Five, Year Six, Form 1 and Form 2. The intention of these Syllabi is to slow the learning process down in the Primary section, now that the pressure of the Common Entrance Examination is relieved, thus helping all students master those skills and that knowledge that they would need to carry into their years at secondary school. Also we intended to avoid the unnecessary repetition normally carried out during the Form 1 year

when students from different Primary schools come together within a new environment. This is the first year of the application of these new syllabi. There is much to fine tune and to continue to work at. The discussion between staff members in the different sections must continue.

Now that the first group of students is with us at College, how are we addressing their education? This is being done in many ways. Firstly, we have attempted to create methods of team teaching within core subject areas in Form 1. Teachers and Support Teachers (LSAs) are working within the classroom as a team supporting each other and complementing each other to reach all students within the wide spectrum of diversity. Next, we have identified those students in Form 1 who have still not mastered all the learning skills one would expect at their age. These are being given extra time to master these skills in

a programme we are calling 'Plus programme'. These experiments are already reaping great fruits but need more time and resources to reach their full potential.

The College realized the importance of having their staff confident and competent. The Rector, through consultation with the staff and the organizers of the Let Me Learn Malta Centre decided that it would be of great benefit for our students that members of our staff attended the Let Me Learn Professional Learning Process. We are pleased that members of staff started attending the training in January.

The College is currently also looking into the use of technology to further develop cognitive and meta-cognitive skills in our students.

This is an evolving, exciting journey for all at St. Aloysius' College.

Jane Callus & John Busuttill



L-Esperjenza ta' Assistent Kap ta' Skola

Meta ġejt maħtur bħala assistent kap ta' skola primarja, kelli x-xorti tajba li nibda l-ħidma tiegħi fl-iskola Primarja B f'Raħal Ġdid. Mill-ewwel indunajt li f'din l-iskola tingħata importanza kbira lill-kwalità tax-xogħol kurrikulari li jitwettaq. L-istaff kollu, immexxi mill-kap tal-iskola, is-sur David Caruana, iħaddem diversi għodod ta' tagħlim sabiex jintlaħaq l-għan tal-iskola li l-istudenti tagħna jizviluppaw il-potenzjal kollu tagħhom.

Fost l-għodod imħaddma, hemm il-proċess imsejjes fuq il-'Let Me Learn'. Kull sena l-għalliema li jibdeu il-ħidma tagħhom f'din l-iskola jintbagħtu għal taħriġ organizzat miċ-ċentru tal-'Let Me Learn' f'Malta. Dan isir b'sagrifiċċju kbir minn kulħadd għax mhux faċli li l-għalliema jitolqu għal taħriġ waqt il-ħin tal-iskola. Imma nemmnu li dan is-sagrifiċċju jissarraff f'ħidma utli li tħalli riżultat tajjeb fuq il-kwalità tat-tagħlim li jieħdu l-istudenti li jattendu f'din l-iskola. Jien ukoll kelli l-opportunità li nattendu għal dan il-kors bejn Jannar u Mejju 2009 u mill-ewwel għaraft li jekk jithaddem sew, il-LML għandu l-potenzjal li jkun għodda oħra siewja f'idejn l-għalliema u t-tfal.

L-iskola dejjem emmnet f'dak li jissejjaħ 'a whole school approach' u din is-sena tfassal pjan t'azzjoni fejn ġie identifikat eżatt x'għandu jkun l-irwol tal-għalliema u kif l-iskola tista' tagħmel l-aħjar użu mis-servizz tal-'mentoring' offrut miċ-ċentru

tal-LML. L-għajnuna offruta miċ-ċentru hi waħda konkreta u sostanzjali. Minbarra li ġew ipprovduti l-inventarji għall-istudenti kollha, il-koordinaturi tal-LML offrew li

- jgħinu lill-għalliema gradwati għodda meta ssir l-'awareness session';
- jagħtu l-għajnuna tagħhom lil tfal li jkollhom bżonn għajnuna individwali, waqt il-mili tal-inventarji;
- jgħinu fil-proċess tal-validazzjoni tal-inventarji speċjalment fil-każ ta' dawg dubbjużi;
- jgħinu fit-tfassil tal-'class profiles';
- joffru ideat prattiċi ta' kif jista' jintuża l-LML waqt lezzjonijiet differenti, speċjalment fil-kuntest tal-kitba tal-istejjer – aspekk kurrikulari li din is-sena qed jingħata importanza kbira fl-iskola tagħna.

Sabiex jitwettaq dan ix-xogħol siewi, jeħtieġ li regolarment jkollna diskussjonijiet bejnietna biex bħala SMT inseddqu x-xogħol organizzattiv marbut mal-LML u fl-istess ħin insostnu lill-għalliema fit-twettiq tal-LML bħala parti mill-metodu tat-tagħlim tagħhom. Kultant niltaqgħu ma' xi problema jew oħra, bħal per eżempju, il-fatt li kull sena jinbidlu xi membri tal-istaff. Min-naħa l-oħra, iżda, ma nistax ma nsemmix il-ħidma u l-koooperazzjoni li nsibu mill-għalliema tagħna, għax mingħajr l-impenn tagħhom, l-isforzi kollha li nkunu ppjanajna fl-SDP jisfaw fix-xejn.



Mr.
**Anthony
Caruana**



Ms. D. Portanier
Mifsud

I have attended the training of the Let Me Learn Process (LML) with great enthusiasm. Through this course I can now understand better myself and what's more important those around me (family, staff at work and, of course, the students I teach). I am now more aware of the four learning patterns, which I believe are useful tools in achieving success.

It is common that we particularly use one or some of the patterns more than others. For instance, a person may be more Precise but less Technical. However, when one identifies the learning patterns of others, one can understand better how we think, feel and act in particular situations. Moreover, we could finally understand why some students for instance do not do well in writing but then, when given a project where they have the chance to be creative (for instance, looking for information on the internet or doing a power point), then that same student gives more results. Thus we could understand better the persons around us and as a result have more success both on a personal and educational level.

The LML has enabled me to understand better how people learn. Having identified my learning patterns and

those of the students, gave more insights about myself and the learners. It also made me realise that I cannot expect the students to do or study their work in the same way that I would, because we all learn differently! Being conscious of such differences enabled me to reach them better.

I also realised that some students' learning patterns do not fit in the traditional school teaching methods and that giving them a positive learning experience is crucial. Students, who dislike listening so much, need to be more involved through a class discussion/participation method. Group work, where students with different patterns work together is another useful tool to enhance learning. Giving projects to students and assigning different tasks according to their patterns is also useful.

By acknowledging and providing for their differences, I hope that students will be freed from past failures. One way of achieving this is to give them the opportunity to express what they know in their very own way.

Should you require more information about this process, please visit the website:
<http://www.letmelearnmalta.org>

*A teacher's reflections
about the LML process*

The Let Me Learn Process presented at the Università degli Studi di Perugia (Italy)

Within the framework of the Fourth Transnational Meeting of the e-SPICES Grundtvig Learning Partnership (electronic Social Promotion of Intercultural Communication Expertise and Skills - 2008-1-IT2-GRU06-00547 1 - www.e-spices.net - a project funded by the European Commission within the LLP-Lifelong Learning Programme) the Italian e-SPICES team, guided by the transnational coordinator Gabriella B. KLEIN, has organised a "Conference on Let Me Learn" with the main objective of presenting the process, as a new pedagogical approach, to members of the Faculty of Education in Perugia.

The idea for a conference on Let Me Learn originates from the ongoing collaboration between the Italian University and the two Maltese institutions, Faculty of Education and Let Me Learn Centre (Università ta' Malta). A collaboration that has been established through European funded projects as well as Erasmus exchanges and that, among other

outcomes, brought the first two Italian certifications in the Let Me Learn Process of Gabriella B. KLEIN (Associate Professor in Linguistics teaching Dynamics in Social Communication at the Faculty of Education, University of Perugia) and Paola de ROSA (PhD student in Linguistics specializing in Sociolinguistics at the University of Perugia).

Together with the Italian members of the e-SPICES Partnership and the local university scholars and researchers, representatives of institutions involved in education from different European countries

participated in the conference held in Perugia (18-22 October 2009), where they followed the presentations, taking part in the workshop and giving a fruitful and interesting feedback within the conclusive roundtable.

The meeting started with a welcoming speech from Francesco F. MANCINI, Director of the Dep. of Humanities and Education at the University of Perugia, who underlined the importance of sharing and adopting innovative and successful practices in Education as well as the significant opportunity to cooperate with

other European professionals, a fundamental step toward a wider internationalisation. The same enthusiasm marked the speech of the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Romano UGOLINI, who welcomed foreign guests and shared his strong interest in the Let Me Learn approach.

It has been vital for the success of the event that key figures involved in the Let Me Learn process could attend the conference. Colin CALLEJA (Lecturer in the area of General Pedagogy at the Department of Primary Education and European Coordinator of the Let Me Learn Centre, Università ta' Malta), was the first conference speaker who exhaustively presented the Let Me Learn pedagogical approach, its theoretical framework and examples of how the process was implemented in two universities (Universitat Rovira I Virgili, Spain and University of South Florida, US).

Carmel BORG, former Dean of the Faculty of Education and Lecturer in Curriculum Studies, Critical Pedagogy and Parental



Involvement in Education (Università ta' Malta), gave an effective and vibrant presentation of the Let Me Learn approach in light of its value for educational research and the noteworthy results of its exploitation in Malta and the USA.

During her speech, the conference convener, Gabriella B. KLEIN, illustrated how the Let Me Learn process was used in a former Grundtvig Training Course project, SPICES (Social Promotion of Intercultural Communication Expertise and Skills - 224945-CP-1-2005-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G11-www.trainingspices.net) and the way its implementation affected positively the SPICES training methodology and accomplished the project main objective of creating tailor-made didactic materials for Intercultural Communication training that take into account the different learning profiles.

Maurizio PATTOIA, Senior lecturer in Media Education and Learning Technologies (with particular emphasis on e-learning and distance learning environments) at Faculty of Education in Perugia, has presented a discourse on "adaptive" e-learning.

The second part of the conference scheduled a more practical activity in which the Maltese team from the Let Me Learn Centre led a workshop meant to help participants to understand how the process works and its prospective application with the students also considering, as a first step, the teachers' learning profiles. This useful application of the process through effective examples and exercises was prepared and presented by Valerie SALERNO and Susan GRIXTI.

The conference conclusion consisted of a roundtable session where members from the teaching staff of the Faculty of Education in Perugia (Floriana FALCINELLI, Laura ARCANGELI, Rosario SALVATO, Francesco Claudio UGOLINI) have shared their reflections on the Let Me

Learn approach together with the convenor, Gabriella B. KLEIN, and conference speakers (Colin CALLEJA, Carmel BORG) as well as members of the Malta LML Centre (Michelle ATTARD TONNA, Susan GRIXTI, Valerie SALERNO).

As a major outcome deriving from the conference, a research team on Let Me Learn has been established within the Faculty of Education, under the direction of Gabriella B. KLEIN and with the collaboration of Paola de Rosa, with the aim to figure out possible ways in which the LML process can be implemented at the University of Perugia in the near future.

Paola de Rosa



Intercultural Communication Training and the Let Me Learn Process.

*Gabriella B. Klein
Università degli studi of
Perugia/Italy*

In this article I will explain how SPICES Guidelines and the SPICES methodology incorporate the LML process, by taking into consideration that different individuals have different learning patterns.

Trainers with a high score in any or all of the four patterns will find the SPICES Guidelines useful since it actually responds to all the four patterns. However, its overall structure responds particularly to Sequence since it follows a systematic and explicit plan. The Guidelines provide clear instructions how these should be used. The overall structure consists of an introduction, a presentation of the theories, followed by four sections:

1. Section 1 explains the **Actions** to be undertaken in order to apply the methodology for creating training packages for the target groups of the project.
2. Section 2 lists the **Sources** that the methodology is based upon (bibliography and sitography)
3. Section 3 provides possible **Tools** that can be used by trainers in order to undertake the necessary actions for the construction of training packs.

Between 2005 and 2007

we participated in a European Project named SPICES – Social Promotion of Intercultural Communication Expertise and Skills (224945-CP-1-2005-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G11 - www.trainingspices.net), in which the Let Me Learn process has been applied to various aspects.

The project SPICES aimed at producing a training methodology which would be flexible, adaptable to different contexts and different learner as well as trainer types, transferable and creative. We were looking for a pedagogical approach that could satisfy these criteria. The Let Me Learn process was found to be useful not only with the project's trainers and learners in intercultural

communication, but also to construct the training materials.

This training methodology addresses the interaction of so-called 'adults-in-mobility' and 'adults-professionally-in-contact-with-mobility' within bureaucratic-institutional contexts, thus focusing on the interaction between individuals perceived as 'foreigners' and individuals who are service providers. The training material consists of a number of sections aimed at trainers to help them construct learner-centred training activities. These are followed by some prototypical training activities for learners. These activities are presented in a pack known as the SPICES Guidelines.

LML

fil-klassi u issa fl-ufficcju

Kien madwar sentejn u nofs ilu meta s-surmast tal-iskola ta' fejn kont ngħallem laqqagħni ma' dan il-proċess. Kien waqt ir-riċeviment tal-Milied meta resaq fuqi u qalli, "Mr. Portanier għandi biċċa għodda interessanti li tgħodd għalik; la nidhlu mill-vaganzi nitkellmu." Biex inkun qed ngħid il-verita', ma tantx tajt każ għal dak li qalli, infatti f'qalbi għidt, "Hawn aħna ġejja xi biċċa xogħol oħra jew xi kors ieħor li minnu mhu ser nieħu xejn!"

Il-vaganzi għaddew u eżatt kif irfist l-għatba tal-iskola s-surmast reġa'

semmieh. Kontra qalbi, iżda b'rispett lejn is-surmast, aċċettajt li nattendi. Għall-bidu tant rajtu żejjed li mort għall-ewwel laqgħa qisni sejjer għall-forka. Iżda għal kuntrarju ta' dak li ħsibt, wara l-ewwel laqgħa l-affari ħadet xejra oħra. Mill-ewwel indunajt li kemm il-materjal kif ukoll l-għalliema kienu nies prattiċi u l-affarijiet li konna ser naħdmu bihom kienu kollha minn ta' din id-dinja. Fil-fatt ta' min jgħid li waqt il-kors rajt u s'fharriġt diversi metodi differenti ta' tagħlim u b'hekk stajt nara realta' oħra fil-klassi u fil-ħajja ta' kuljum.

Tul dik is-sena skolastika ppruvajt diversi affarijiet li qalulna. Bis-saħħa ta' diversi attivitajiet bdejt niskopri aktar lili nnifsi u 'l dawk l-istudenti li kelli quddiem. Skoprejt li diversi affarijiet li għalija kienu normali għal haddieħor setgħu ma kinux u għalhekk setgħu kienu problema kbira. Permezz tal-'patterns' sirt naf għalfejn ta' kuljum qabel ma nidhol norqod irrid ta' bilfors nagħmel dik il-lista ta' xogħlijiet li suppost irrid nagħmel l-għada, għalfejn id-'displays' tiegħi qatt ma kienu ta' kalibru meta mqabblin ma' ta' għalliema oħrajn, u għalfejn jiena u

l-mara tiegħi ma' konniex naqblu fejn tidhol organizzazzjoni. Insomma dan kollu wassal sabiex nifhem aħjar il-principji tal-'Let Me Learn' u kif jaħdmu fil-verita'.

Fl-aħħar ta' dik is-sena skolastika tkellimt ma' Michelle, il-'mentor' tiegħi, u għidtilha bil-mod ta' kif ridt nuża dan il-proċess fil-klassi. Urejtha x-xewqa li nibni l-lezzjonijiet tiegħi bil-LML integrat fihom. Wara li tkellimna dwar x'kelli nagħmel, l-ewwel ma bdejt kien li nagħmel l-inventarju mat-tfal. Wara bdejt naħseb kif stajt ninvolvi lit-tfal tal-klassi kollha mingħajr ebda distinzjoni ta' xejn. Issa stajt nara li bi programm tajjeb stajt immexxi l-klassi aħjar u bis-saħħa tad-diversità li kien hemm fil-klassi stajt nieħu l-aħjar li nista' mit-tfal kollha. Eżempju, skoprejt li fil-klassi kelli tfal li kellhom Teknika ħafna aktar għolja minn tiegħi u għalhekk, fejn kont niltaqa' mad-

diffikultajiet jien minħabba n-nuqqas ta' dan il-'pattern' partikolari, kienu jidhlu huma. Għaldaqstant, bis-saħħa ta' dawn it-tfal, stajna ntellgħu xogħol digitali bil-kompjuter. Hdimt ukoll fuq il-'powercards' li naħseb li għinu xi ftit lil dawk it-tfal li kienu qed jiffaċċjaw xi tip ta' 'learning difficulty' huma u jaħdmu.

Bla dubju ta' xejn dan ma jfissirx li bis-saħħa tal-LML is-sitwazzjoni nqalbet ta' taħt fuq u l-problemi fil-klassi ma dehrux aktar. Xejn minn dan; l-unika bidla kienet li bis-saħħa ta' dan il-proċess kulhadd kien qed jingħata ċ-ċans li jitgħallem.

Sal-aħħar tas-sena kien irnexxieli nħajjar kemm lil xi għalliema kif ukoll lil xi LSAs sabiex jibdeu dan il-proċess. Ninsab ċert li dawn in-nies illum il-gurnata qed jaraw id-differenza fil-klassi tagħhom li kont rajt jien f'tiegħi.

Illum il-gurnata l-affarijiet inbidlu. Issa ninsab fuq in-naħa l-oħra tal-munita. Issa m'għadnix fil-klassi u minflok tfal ta' għaxar snin għandi staff adulti. Għalhekk qed nara kif se nipprepara u se naħdem ma' dawn in-nies permezz tal-LML. Naf li hija problema iżda naf ukoll li jekk jirnexxi, nkun nista' nifhem u naħdem aħjar ma' dawk ta' madwari... dejjem għall-ġid tat-tfal tal-iskola fejn jien qiegħed bħalissa u ta' fejn għad irrid inkun.

Jonathan Portanier Mifsud





An Interview: Ms Rebecca Tabone

WHY DID YOU START WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LML PROCESS IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

Being a newly graduated teacher, I have many aspirations and projections for the future in terms of my new teaching career. However, one 'idea' that always struck and held my interest is the Let Me Learn Process. The first time that I heard about this learning process was during my second year in the B.Ed Primary course. From that time onwards, I continued to search for information, ideas and practical strategies that can be used in the real primary classroom. To stretch this further and to continue to delve deeper into this subject, I decided to focus my dissertation ('The Let Me Learn Process: An Agent for Intentional Teaching and Learning') on how the LML is best implemented in primary classrooms and how the LML contributes to higher effective and intentional teaching.

It is evident that the first year of teaching brings about a lot of hard and new work. However, my philosophy of teaching focuses on the child as an individual learner and to reach and meet all the pupils I'm responsible to educate. I have always believed that the LML process can help me in doing this.

In most cases, teachers present strategies which target the Precise and Sequential patterns. This limits and segregates those learners who do not use the precise and sequential patterns on first-level basis and contrastingly use the Confluent or Technical Reasoning patterns. As a result, such pupils detach themselves from learning and are seen by the teacher as the unreachable students who just do not want to learn. Such labels are often misleading since the learning that is presented to them on a day-to-day basis contrasts with their own learning patterns and thus is not relevant and meaningful to them. Therefore, the LML process enables me to immediately recognise these learners, understand them in terms of their preferred learning patterns and act accordingly.

It is the key aim of the Let Me Learn process to reach each and every learner. To do this, I try to vary my lesson as much as possible; include discussions wherein I stretch the children's thinking, use a wide range of resources such as; Power Point presentations, ICT, hands-on activities, visuals, auditory and real life resources and examples.

The LML process has not only helped me to plan my teaching but also to intentionally organise my classroom's physical arrangement and space. For example, I use group work, pair work and even independent work since I know that the pupils who are highly Technical feel lost when they work in a group and feel more comfortable working alone. Additionally, I also believe that pupils need time to work independently using their own thinking skills.

I also strive to have structure and organisation in my classroom. Displays and children's work are also organised and grouped according to subjects. In doing so, I try to stretch the Sequential and Precise patterns of the learners who avoid these patterns since I believe that students need a model of how to organise themselves and their own learning. Such skills are needed and will remain with them even when they finish their schooling years.

The LML process has enabled me to create an appropriate classroom environment that nurtures, supports and challenges pupils throughout their learning journey.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE LML PROCESS?

When pupils are aware of how they learn, they start creating personalised learning strategies which they use in their own preferred way. In doing so, they facilitate and make sense of their learning journey and clear the pathway to achievement and excellence.

I believe that when learners know how they learn and are given multiple opportunities to learn in those ways, they can experience success and achievement more easily. As a result, the pupils' self-esteem is enhanced, their motivation to learn increases, and this is vital for successful life-long education.

In knowing how my pupils learn, I plan lessons, tasks and activities with full awareness of how each pupil learns and not just plan lessons around their interests and likes. As I recognise what augments and hinders their learning,



I seek to guide and support them in using their unique, personal learning patterns along the way.

To facilitate this process and make it more tangible to primary school students, I use the four characters that the LML Malta developed to represent the four learning patterns, namely Ġeru, Fina, Faru and Żringi.

These soft-toys present learning and the learning patterns in a more tangible way. I find them extremely useful as pupils (and myself) use them to communicate our internal thoughts and learning processes out loud such as;

“Miss, I need to stretch Żringi in order to find a lot of original ideas for my story!” and “Those of you who don’t learn like Fina, need to stretch her a bit to be able to do this cloze passage and those of you who are ‘strong’ in Fina can help a bit more here...”

The LML is also a tool in itself which helps me to give more importance to the process of learning rather than the actual product. This is more time-consuming but at the end of the day

I want to make sure that all pupils have grasped the concepts well. I believe that this will give them more confidence in what they are doing and retain learning for much longer.

The LML process has helped me (and is still helping me) to reach ALL learners, maximise their full learning potential and help them flourish in their most preferred way. This will yield greater success in learning.

If ‘for every child to succeed’ is the ultimate aim in education, then teachers should let students learn in a way that is meaningful, motivating and relevant to them!

HOW ARE YOU PLANNING TO MAKE USE OF THE SUPPORT OFFERED BY THE LML TEAM?

The LML team offer mentoring services to teachers who just started using and implementing the LML in their classrooms.

Since I am a new teacher using the LML process, I seek ways of how the LML team can help me implement it more effectively. The fact that you know that there is a mentor who can guide you and offer you support keeps you going and interested. The support I received so far was highly useful, informative and swift. The team is always there to help anytime and especially when the need arises.

Most of the time, I communicate with the team members through emails or when they come to visit my class. The response was always immediate and fruitful. Their positive feedback and constructive criticism encourage and keep you motivated to use the LML process in the most beneficial way!

Having such a dedicated team to mentor and guide you along the way is of immeasurable value since they help you to reflect on your practices and come up with additional strategies to improve and overcome your difficulties in a most supportive and friendly way!



Let Me Learn

1st The First Malta International Forum on Learning

Although we have organised a number of Let Me Learn International Conferences over the past years, this was the first time that we ventured into the organisation of an International Forum on Learning. The forum, open to all educators, was held at the Dolmen Hotel between the 25th and the 27th of June 2009. This event was organised by Let Me Learn Centre, Malta, in conjunction with the University of Malta. The DQSE also sponsored a number of educators who were interested in participating in this event.

Key note speeches were presented by Dr Grace Grima, Prof. Christine Johnston and Dr Tom Leney. For more details about the key note speakers, you may refer to the forum’s website: www.forumonlearning.org The aim of the International Forum on Learning was to provide an opportunity for established scholars, teachers, education administrators, school leaders, policy makers and other stake holders to present and discuss latest research, application and innovations in the field of learning. For this reason, concurrent sessions of Academic Paper Presentations and Professional Workshops aimed at the practitioner, were held.

It is with pleasure that we declare that this International Forum was a success. Workshops and presentations were conducted by leading professors and educators from various educational institutions in Malta, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Taiwan, Austria, Italy, Croatia, Spain, Macedonia, Poland, India, Sri Lanka and Slovenia.

The second Malta International Forum is planned for the year 2011. We hope that you will be a part of our next conference, either as a participant or as a presenter!

by Valerie Salerno



**Carrel Borg and Colin Calleja
Convenors of Forum on Learning 2009**



(photo by Koffi Dossou)



**The children’s choir of ‘Mariam Al Batool’
opened the Forum on Learning 2009**



*Valerie Salerno,
Susan Grixti*



Myriam Vella



*Dr Kathryn Riley conducted a workshop
aimed at school administrators*



*The Forum hosted an exhibition by Koffi
Dossou (photo by Koffi Dossou)*



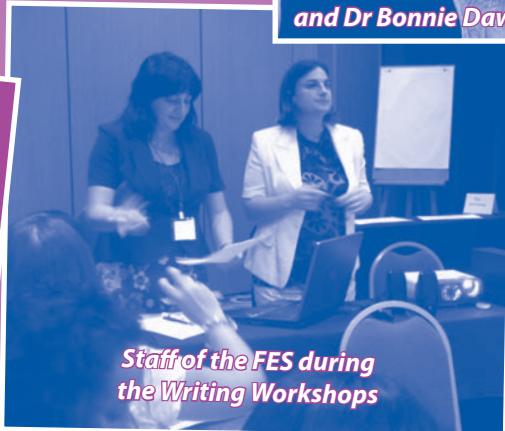
Panel Sessions



*Prof Christine Johnston
and Dr Bonnie Dawkins*



Workshops



*Staff of the FES during
the Writing Workshops*



*Luis Marques, Michelle Attard Tonna
and Jose' Maria Cela*

An interview with Ms. Annabel Desira

*TEACHER OF MALTESE & ITALIAN AT ST. ALBERT THE GREAT COLLEGE, VALLETTA
PART TIME WRITING TUTOR WITH F.E.S.*



How does the LML process merge with other processes that you use in your pedagogy?

The Let Me Learn process fits perfectly with different strategies I use in my teaching. Considering the fact that, the LML patterns are a starting point about the way we learn, I see them as a sound base for all my teaching methods.

For instance, the LML and the Writing Process work beautifully together because it is only beneficial when we combine wider perspectives and knowledge about the self with practical tools and strategies that are already in use.

Once the children are familiar with their learning patterns, it is easy for them to go around a task. They start taking more the "autonomous learning" road. They know when they need to stretch themselves and therefore think and/or ask for help whereas when they feel confident

enough they do not only do their assigned task but feel great they are achieving and feel the need to show it to others.

LML has helped me, as a teacher, in my group work settings with children. I try to vary as much as possible the groups because first and foremost I believe that diversity within the group helps enrich the learning experience.

I was surprised to see that the children actually ask more and more about the way we learn and they too started making connections once the process has been inculcated in their day to day learning. A boy once said that the patterns look like the DeBono Thinking Hats to him. I was very curious to see why he made that link. He simply told us that just like we use the different hats to identify what we are doing in the group, many times we do the same thing on our own with the learning patterns i.e. we choose the ones we need and use them according to the challenge presented.

This boy's insight was an eye opener for me as I had never linked these two before and I see it makes a lot of sense because that is the same reason why we find a task more difficult than another: maybe we need to stretch a particular pattern more, maybe we need to wear a different thinking hat. Seeing the same task from different angles/patterns is very similar to the "thinking outside the box" method.

In what ways do you believe that your students will benefit from the LML process?

Students are more aware of the way they learn and conscious of the differences between them. I guess that awareness of the four learning patterns has decreased labeling and added more definition to the way we perceive the world around us. Group work has become more efficient because I find it is more structured when there is a good balance of the four patterns amongst the individuals of the group.

This knowledge about the way we learn has also empowered students, led them to think and develop their own learning methods, thus leading them to life-long learning. Once I got to know the students' patterns more, I could also assign more challenging tasks for them, therefore they could stretch also the patterns that they tend to use less.

Let me learn in its holistic way of presenting itself helps children think about the way they behave even in situations outside the school premises. I found that the knowledge of the LML patterns helped me in my discussions with the children as a year co-ordinator. Children tend to argue amongst themselves over everything especially when they are playing. This behaviour repeats itself with teachers, parents and other people outside school. Using stories in the format of case-studies, I guided them towards finding a relation between the character's behaviour and their LML patterns. The boys were clearly attributing certain behaviour to certain patterns and that was when I popped up questions like : "What could they have done differently? Which pattern would have helped more in that situation? Which method would have been preferred and why?" The discussion ended up being more fruitful than I thought as the children had a sound idea of the patterns and what they entail

since I am not the only teacher in the school to re-inforce these methods.

What do you think of the Let Me Learn Professional Learning Process (training)? Would you recommend it to other teachers?

My participation in the LML Professional Learning Process certainly helped me envisage myself as a learner first and foremost. I guess that this shed even more light on how I see my students : the way they learn and perceive things and the *why* behind these various ways of learning.

There are times when we (as teachers), due to many other constraints tend to focus on the outcomes so forcefully that we have the tendency to give less importance to the processes that lead to these outcomes. We are constantly measuring our childrens' outcomes but which kind of tangible assessment do we have at hand? And where do we go from there? These are the questions I had before starting the LML Professional Learning Process and I was glad to finish this PLP and have some answers as a starter for better teaching and learning.

I recommend this training to other teachers because taking time out of our classes to reflect on our practices and share good practices can only help us become better teachers at the end of the day.

