



SPECIAL NEEDS UNIT

DYSLEXIA ASSESSMENT RESEARCH PROJECT (D.A.R.P)

Background

The assessment of dyslexia for Maltese children and adults has been creating a number of challenges because the tests which are available to educational psychologists have not been developed for Malta and for the Maltese context. In Malta two languages are used in education and often one of them prevails at home. The tests that have been used, with one exception, have been derived from an English context in which only one language is used (English).

Objectives

The specific objectives of this project are to:

- a. establish what an assessment procedure for dyslexia should be like;
- b. develop standardised tests for dyslexia for different age groups of the Maltese population; and
- c. develop a system which will allow the certification of difficulties in respect of Maltese and English when assessing bi-lingual persons in different age groups.

Procedure

This project will be divided into a number of stages. The first stage will be launched through this seminar. The main objective of this seminar is to bring all interested professionals, parents and other interested parties together to establish how best to engage themselves. The seminar will seek to clarify the methodological and technical issues that are involved in the creation and validation of tests.

The second stage would consist of the creation of a set of instruments that would need to be standardised and validated for the Maltese population.

On the basis of the findings of the second stage a valid set of tests will be made available for assessment of literacy skills in Maltese learners. This will be the third stage, as a result of which Malta will start to benefit from an assessment procedure for dyslexia that takes into consideration all the relative factors at play in the development of literacy in Maltese society.



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Introductory Seminar - Wednesday, 21st June 2006

Programme

8:30 am	Registration
8:45 am	Session I <i>Professor Mario Vassallo, Chair</i> Introduction - <i>Professor Roger Ellul Micallef, Rector</i> Overview of Dyslexia Assessment in Malta: achievements and gaps. <i>Ms. Veronica Montanaro</i> Workshops*
11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 am	Session II Presentation and discussion on proposals made during the workshops
12.30 am	Conclusion: Creation of working groups for the implementation of the project.

***Main issues to be discussed in the workshops**

- What areas should an assessment test for dyslexia include and what priority should each area (Language Proficiency, Comprehension, Reading rate and accuracy) have?
- How can the bi-lingual situation prevalent in Malta be addressed?
- How can this research project be financed?