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The editorial board welcomes articles that contribute to a broad understanding of educational issues particularly those related to Malta.

Submitted articles are referred at least once and copies of referees' comments will be sent to the author as appropriate. The editors reserve the right to make editorial changes in all manuscripts to improve clarity and to conform to the style of the journal. Photographs, drawings, cartoons and other illustrations are welcome, however, authors are responsible for obtaining written permission and copyright release when required. A manuscript, including all references, charts, figures and tables must not exceed 12 double spaced typed pages. Notes and references must be kept to a minimum and should be placed in single quotation marks but long quotations should form

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EDITORIAL

INSET: In-Service Education for Teachers

Most people generally associate the work of the Faculty of Education solely with the Bachelor of Education course which is that of providing prospective teachers with the esoteric knowledge and skills, the commitment and ethos required to join the profession. Pre-service or initial teacher education does form one of the Faculty's major responsibilities. However, the Faculty must foster and support the professional development of practising or in-service teachers: hence, its INSET programmes.

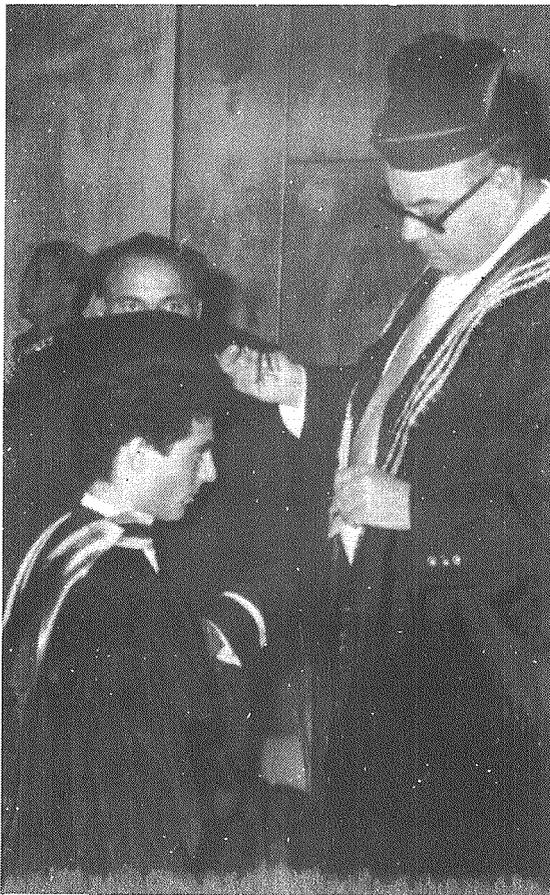
INSET programmes are based on the principle that teachers are constantly developing professionals who view the continuous challenge of educational growth as a significant attribute of vocational life. In-service programmes contribute to the teachers' professional growth by exposing them to the latest developments in educational theory and practice, and by providing opportunities for them to upgrade and update their instructional content and pedagogical techniques.

INSET programmes are problem-solving oriented and since they respond to the teachers' needs as these arise from their practical experience in the classroom they normally yield the best results. The educational axiom that people learn most through activities in which they are actively engaged applies equally effectively to teachers, who will accomplish most when they participate in developmental work that will influence what and how they teach. Thus conceived, the professional development of teachers and curriculum innovation become integrated within, not in isolation from, instructional situations. For these reasons, INSET offers a strong basis for close and relevant co-operation between teachers, educational officers, and lecturers to enable them to work together, and in a tangible way on various types of educational issues: academic, methodological, managerial.

The Faculty and the educational authorities must be constantly aware, however, that in-service courses will be most beneficial when participation is not envisaged as a form of disciplinary or remedial action for lazy or incompetent teachers; that attendance at these courses is not added on to a heavy teaching load; and, that teachers should be made to feel that they are contributing to their own learning. The Faculty is committed to INSET (*vide infra*) because it strongly believes that in-service education affords considerable potential for the improvement of the quality of education in our schools. The Faculty's INSET programmes offer local educators the opportunity to reflect upon their experience, to interact with their colleagues and university lecturers, and to evaluate and utilize their experiences with a community of fellow professionals.

Bachelor of Education (Hons) Course

- aims and objectives



The Honours Level five-year B. Ed. course was introduced in 1977 to replace the three-year Certificate course. Its aims are to produce educated men and women who are well-equipped to find fulfilment in their future profession as teachers. The course aims to produce:

1. professionally competent teachers, capable of deployment both in the primary and secondary levels of education;
2. teachers who have the necessary expertise and frame of mind to understand, initiate and adapt to social change in Malta and overseas, particularly in the Mediterranean region.

Specific Course Objectives

The B.Ed. (Hons.) programme seeks to develop in course participants;

1. A professionally based knowledge in the theory and practice of education;
2. A commitment to the teaching profession and its important role in Malta's economic, social and cultural development;
3. An understanding of students, their abilities and potentialities and the social contexts within which they live and learn;
4. An ability to assist students to reach their full intellectual and social potential;
5. Competence in the marshalling of evidence on which reasoned judgement in the field of education may be reached;
6. The communicative competence to share knowledge and skills with their students and colleagues;
7. A knowledge in a special area of study at graduate level and its function in the education of their students;
8. The ability and motivation to further their learning and professional growth throughout their lives.

Catching Them Young: Teaching “History” to the 4-7 Age Group

Michael Sant



If we accept that all normal children, irrespective of their age, are possessed with the desire to find out about the world around them; if it is true that gaining knowledge is a powerful human desire, as basic to life as the need for love, physical safety, trust and security, then it must be the teacher's concern to give a modicum of Social Studies education to children as early in life as one can. Social Studies education teaches children about the nature of people, about the world, and about human relationships and all these are not alien even to young children of the kindergarten and infant classes.

How can teachers impart this kind of education? Certainly not by stuffing children with indigestible facts but by accepting the primacy of concepts. Facts, as every educationalist will tell you, are too numerous to learn, date very quickly, and, because they are unrelated to children's experiences, are quickly forgotten. Concepts, on the other hand, while not rejecting the use of facts, always have to do with meaning. They help

children (as well as adults) to process, associate, categorize, interpret, respond to stimuli, order experiences - in short to make sense out of their world and out of the changes they encounter.

This is not the place and time to discuss how sensory experiences of children give rise to perceptions and how these in turn are the beginnings of concepts. Nor should one dwell at length here on how concept formation is influenced by emotions, conditions of health, language, experience, personality, social relations and the like. If we accept at this stage that concepts, among other characteristics, are hierarchical and cumulative, then it must follow that even the very young child can have certain notions or concepts, very simplistic and vague, even inaccurate and incomplete, misconceptions rather than concepts if you like, but nonetheless concepts in the Brunerian rather than the Piagetian sense. Bruner strongly believes that it is possible to teach the foundations of any subject at any age in some form.¹

His basic thesis is the idea of the spiral curriculum in which the child is introduced to concepts at ever increasing levels of sophistication as he goes through the enactive, iconic and symbolic stages of intellectual development.

The Social Studies curriculum, then, should be built on concept formation. Key concepts from each of the various social studies disciplines - History, Geography, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, etc. - can be identified and these can be ordered from the simplest, most concrete to the more abstract and complex. Taba *et al* suggested that eleven key concepts could serve as the basis for an entire elementary social studies programme. These concepts were causality, conflict, cooperation, cultural change, differences, interdependence, modification, power, societal control, tradition and values.² Teachers should not feel surprised at, even less sceptical of the advocacy of developing concepts from such subjects as Economics and Sociology. Even pupils in the infant stages can be taught such basic concepts as consumption, goods and services, wants and needs in Economics and concepts such as food, clothing, language and so on in Sociology. Research has shown that certain elements of understanding can be conveyed to young children and the groundwork for a more mature study of the subject developed in the earliest years at school, provided that the kind of understanding it seeks to create is clearly appreciated and the methods used appropriate to the child's ability.

Spodek³ concluded that: 1. Kindergarten children can begin to develop significant social science concepts; 2. Kindergarten children bring a background of knowledge with them to school; 3. Kindergarten children gather information in many

ways; 4. Kindergarten children can deal with ideas over long periods of time; 5. Kindergarten children use the tools of the social scientist and 6. Kindergarten children transfer their understanding in approaching new situations. Decaroli⁴ disclosed that children at the kindergarten level and higher were able to utilize the basic processes of concept formation. A critical variable in concept development was the degree of abstraction of the concept; the more concrete the examples, the easier it was to learn the concept. Schwab and Stern⁵ concluded that superior learning occurs with the presentation of fewer concepts. McKinney and Golden⁶ concluded "that many abstract concepts can be taught more efficiently through an appropriate activity which requires the child's direct experience as opposed to methods which rely solely on verbal and symbolic modes of presentation."

Although I happen to be one who firmly believes in an interdisciplinary approach to Social Studies even with the very young, I feel it best in the present context to concentrate on just one discipline, History, and suggest ways in which a few basic concepts of the subject can be conveyed to the very young child. Ideas expressed here can of course be transferred to the teaching of Social Studies in general.

But first a word on the inherent difficulties of History as a subject. Professor G.R. Elton⁷, and others too, are very pessimistic in their views about what kind of History can really be taught below sixth-form level when students are supposed to have gained the necessary maturity to understand 'serious' History. Watts⁸ tantalizingly puts forward arguments against the teaching of History in the Primary School. Among these one finds that (1) History is nearly all about adults and their behaviour; schoolchildren do not know what it is like to be an adult, and do not understand adults' behaviour, so they cannot understand history⁹; (2) small children cannot distinguish historical stories from fairy stories, and if the history we teach is to be confused with fairy stories this will instil in the children the wrong attitudes to the subject; (3) small children cannot reason systematically - but history is a subject which makes much use of systematic reasoning - so it is impossible to teach it properly; (4) children learn from immediately observable objects rather than from words or ideas, and as history is essentially non-observable, they cannot learn it; (5) small children do not understand chronology or the concept of time - but history depends on consideration of time - and so children cannot understand it; (6) Finally, history is about people who are dead, and about the processes of death and dying, but children may not have a proper concept of death until the age of nine or ten, so

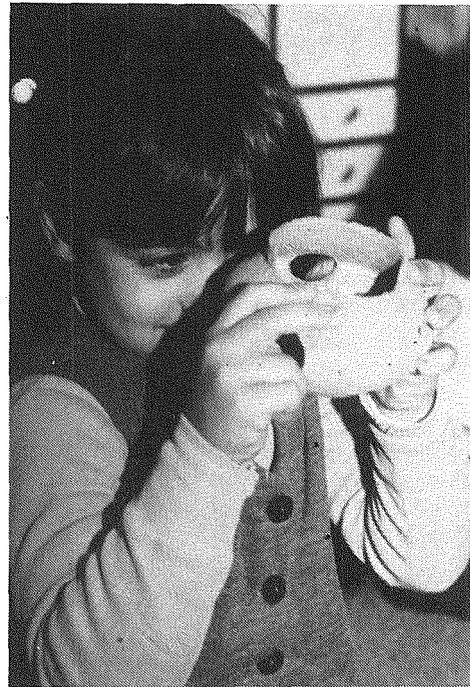


that they cannot really follow what is happening.

Now, it would not be too difficult, I think, to rebut these arguments. But it is enough to quote Professor Peel¹⁰: "The feeling for humanity can show itself at several levels and with junior children it is fortunate that the acts of men and their consequences can be described without the need to refer too much to their intentions. The latter we must introduce gradually and appropriately, not expecting penetrating imaginative inferences until mid-adolescence." So we have to reject traditional historical matter and methods of history teaching at the primary stage. Chronological outlines, abstract generalizations, causes and effects, human motivation and the like which are the very sinews of academic history, lie outside the range of a young child's understanding and as such should be shunned by the teacher¹¹. But while there is no place for formal teaching in the kindergarten and infant school the process of being acquainted with the past which really starts at home, begins to take clearer shape here, and it may be that the teacher should accept a greater responsibility for establishing foundations for the later study of history. It is in these early years that such key concepts of history as *cause, change, evidence, time, conflict, the past* and others can be implanted or nurtured in young minds.¹²

How can teachers do this? What methods are advocated? One method, hallowed by time and accepted by all educators with the possible exception of Pollard¹³ is story-telling. To quote Watts¹⁴, "In the phrase 'Once upon a time....' the affective function of history has common origins with literature; when we have uttered those magic words, the child can safely experience the thrilling and sometimes painful events that follow."¹⁵ Infants and even children in the pre-school years begin developing a balanced and alert response to stories. They start establishing self-concepts of behaviour and relationships. They progress gradually from identifying first with animal children, then with imaginary children in stories, afterwards with imaginary children in history and thence with real children of the past. "All the time the stories are acting as mirrors against which the child rehearses and plays out concepts of what he is and what he ought to be, raising questions and suggesting answers about relationships with people, and personal bearing, about conduct and morality."¹⁶ It is also in these years that children, in search of security, can be fed with stories which accentuate the "father-figure", the hero, the exemplar.¹⁷ It is in this "mythic" stage of children's lives, as Egan¹⁸ points out, that children should be allowed real heroes and villains who can be absorbed into, and dialectically help to expand their known world.

While never specifically disowning the story approach, Pollard¹⁹ stresses that school history in



the Primary schools should start with family affairs and in the very early years not even with that but with themselves. In this way, he says, "the beginnings of history - or, to use a term more appropriate to the scale of the work, 'time studies' link conveniently with the sort of news-gathering which goes on naturally in most classrooms."²⁰ If objectives are simple and limited, if teachers do not think at this stage in terms of giving children a sense of historical perspective, young children can be successfully taken back into history and concepts of *time, change* and *the past* can appear in embryonic form.

Joan E. Blythe,²¹ describes how she worked on life-lines with a group of six-year olds. It is worth, I think, quoting her rather at length: "Life-lines was another word for time-lines but was related to my life and their lives instead of national events. After looking at my life and its main events we studied the six years of my life which co-incided with their whole lives. The children then made their own life-lines from a prepared sheet and I went over their work individually in 'private interviews'.²² The final efforts on life-lines were pasted into their Books of the Past as the first piece of work. This work on life-lines drew on knowledge which did not have to be taught therefore allowed us to concentrate on difference (between them and me), time and sequence. This thinking of themselves in relation to a short period of the past broadened out into consideration of them in relation to their families, thus involving more people and people of three different generations. I started with my own family as far back as grandparents on my father's side."²³ The family plan worked from right to left,

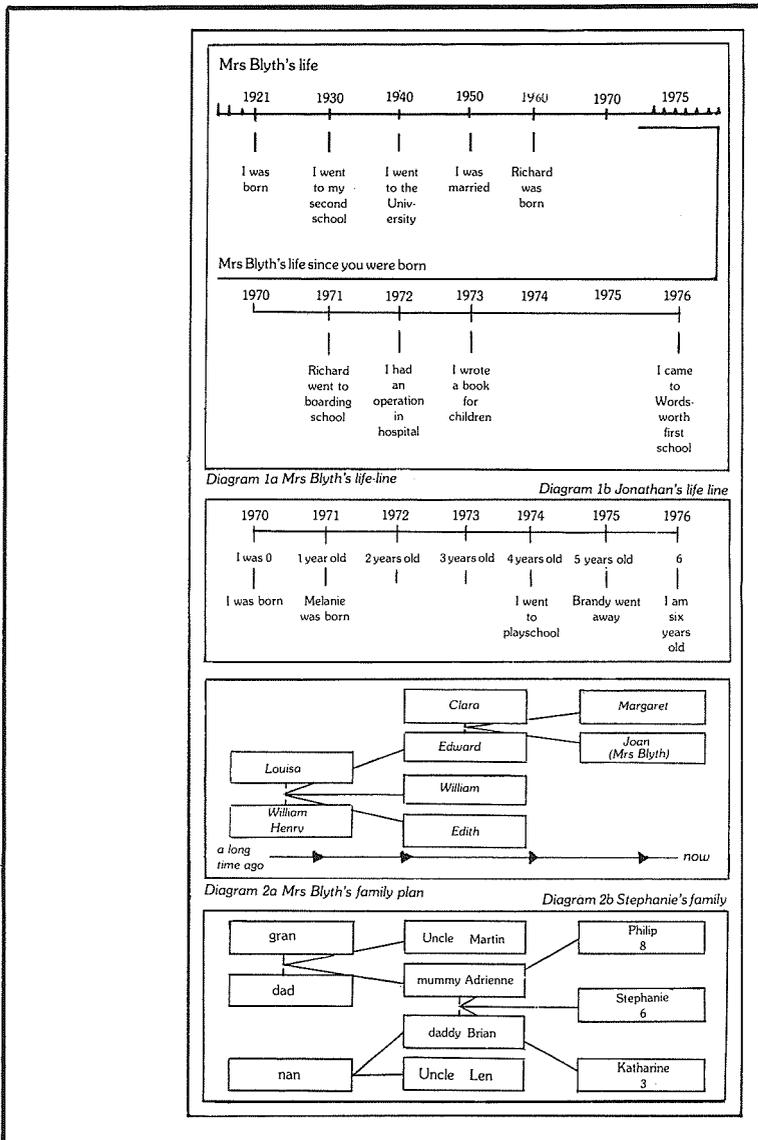
marriages were shown by dotted lines and children in relation to parents by straight lines. After much discussion of my family they made their own, but included all four grandparents".²⁴

My students have been encouraged to adopt a similar approach in infant classes with invariably encouraging results.

The study of history is a time-oriented one, but the concept of "historical time" is undoubtedly one of the most knotty and difficult to grasp, even by adults.²⁵ Babies live entirely in the present and toddlers have only a confused concept of such times as "Yesterday", "tomorrow", "this morning" and so on. Hess and Croft²⁶ report some of the type of questions children ask in relationship to time. They are as follows: Is today a long time? How old will I be when I am forty? How much time is ten o'clock? What does four-thirty mean? When will it be tomorrow? They further report that Mark, a

five-year old was asked, "How long is a day?" He replied, "It's today until you get to tomorrow". He was then asked, "How long is that?" Mark replied, "Today is when you get up and you play and you eat lunch and you play some more and you go to school and you come home and it's nice outside and then it's night and you go to sleep and when you wake up it's tomorrow." It is only some time between the ages of 5 and 7 that a child jumps the great hurdle of realizing that other people have been in existence before he was born. This takes a long time to be accepted completely. Until a child reaches a certain stage in his mental development he sees all life as existing in time simultaneously. He does, however, eventually realise that time is not synonymous with consciousness, and that lives have been lived before his own. He comes to grasp the time concept. What eludes the child - and even many grown-ups - is any real recognition of the different layers of the past. Various people have suggested various ways to help young children, and older ones too, develop a time sense. The personal and family time-line, referred to above, is one such method. Typical time-lines which can be used in the early school years include (1) a series of pictures of children of various ages to show their progression from birth to their present age; (2) a series of pictures to show the child's daily routine, with each picture depicting an event such as eating breakfast or arriving at school; (3) a line drawn along a lengthy stretch of chalkboard divided to show the weeks and months of the school year, providing the opportunity to enter words or sketches to record significant school events as they occur; and (4) the rearrangement of a calendar by clipping it so that the dates of a month run in a continuous horizontal line.²⁷ One way to help very young children to develop time concepts is to stress routines, or predictable procedures in the pre-school. These help to develop understanding of time as well as a feeling of security.²⁸ Another method suggested is to read stories to the children that deal with the concept of time. Teachers are also exhorted to take every opportunity to convey ideas about time to the children. They should give children the correct time words to connect their experiences, such as "today", "this afternoon", "first", "last", "sooner", "before", "a little later," "yesterday" and "last week".

Research seems to indicate that children do not tell conventional time before the age of seven,²⁹ so the use of arbitrary measures for measuring time is often advocated for the four to seven age group. This gives the children experience with the concepts of duration, sequence of events and temporal order which will prepare them to tell time in the traditional way. Among these arbitrary measures one can include



the use of the stop-watch, the hour-glass, cooking-time and alarm clock for children to use independently with activities structured by the teacher.

To develop a sense of the passage of time, teachers are advised to capitalize on the child's egocentricism by concentrating on his own life through use of a "history booklet". Snapshots taken throughout the year, pieces of work the child has completed, paintings or stories he has dictated or written, records of weight and height, some of the interesting things he has said can all be recorded in such a "history" book. At the end of the year the child will have a booklet of his own life, a booklet that will give him a meaningful understanding of the passage of time.³⁰

Other suggestions to implant the time concept in young children's minds include painting a 'road' all the way round the walls of the classroom, illustrating time sequence in the "train" or "kite" fashion, using the historical time-clock³¹ and other ingenious but questionable means to an end. But while one should by no means decry such methods, they have to be used with caution. We are in no hurry, and we can wait. Let not the concept of time be forced upon young minds. Let the teacher through her stories, through the introduction of a variegated number of artefacts in class, through incidental teaching, and the like, help children clarify this concept as much as she can, but misconceptions, as we all know, are bound to remain.³²

The introduction of various artefacts in class helps children to clarify such concepts as "the past" itself as well as relative ones like "change," "evidence" and so on. Teachers can set the ball rolling by bringing to class specimens of such objects as pieces of pottery, old coins, old tools, photographs, postcards, oil lamps, old dolls and other "antiques". Children will then be invited to do likewise and bring to class old objects from the family collection. To facilitate parents' cooperation a deliberate approach to them might be made in the form of a letter. Experience has shown that both children and their parents are normally very co-operative and one sees in some classes a paraphernalia of antique objects like old toys, heavy keys, sherds of pottery, old school books, discarded tools and the rest. Of course, some of the objects might be too treasured by parents to stay without them for more than a day; others might have an antique value which would make it foolish for the teacher to attempt to keep them in a classroom without tight security. But other objects might find a semi-permanent place in a classroom corner as the nucleus of the class's own miniature museum.

Such objects of varying antiquity and provenance provide first of all golden opportunities for talk between teacher and

children. They trigger off interest in "the past"; they stimulate children's imagination ("empathy"); they are the very beginnings of family history, currently very much in fashion.³³ Children will be given opportunities to compare, to classify, to relate, to use evidence, to reason logically. Concepts of "time", "oldness", "change", "evidence" will develop from pure hunches to words with some, even if still nebulous, meaning. Chasing simple and practical objectives the teacher might succeed in having children classify their artefacts as "very, very old", "very old", "old" and "not old" in the way Joan E. Blyth did.³⁴ It would then be an easy step for children to associate "very, very, old" with great-grandparents, "very old" with grandparents, "old" with mummy and daddy and "not old" with the children themselves.³⁵ It is all very imaginative, stimulating and enjoyable. It all depends on the innate qualities of the teacher, her capacity for hard work, and the amount and manipulation of ideas and resources in the process.

The study of history is, in many respects, the study of change. The record of human existence is a record of change. Such an important concept can and ought to be implanted in children as early in life as one can. Some suggestions on how this could be done have been implicit from the above. Teachers do not have to be reminded, I think, that the immediate environment offers children many



an opportunity to experience change. Changes in the classroom, in the school building, in the immediate neighbourhood can all be utilized to make children aware of the continuous nature of change. Changes in nature (trees, animals, etc.) can be used to explain historical changes themselves. Above all, since children themselves change, they can explore the many ways they have done so since they were born. Statistics of growth, eating habits, items of clothing, new skills acquired, friends made and lost can all be used by the teacher to illustrate the inevitability of change in life - and in history.

But if life is continually changing, there is a continuity to human experience and even young children of 4-7 can be given a sense of this continuity. The family is one illustration of such continuity and it would be wise to get young children "interview" parents and grandparents about their own past. Family history comes in very useful in this dialectic of constant and variants; continuity and change.

In recent years there has been shifting emphasis from history as a body to a form of knowledge, from the product of history to its process. The cry has been raised to "make the child a historian". This does not mean that the pupil has to be trained in the art of historical investigation but in the art of thinking historically. Much pen and paper have been used to show how this could be done with the 11-16 age group.³⁶ Primary sources have of course been introduced to younger children as well.³⁷ Can the methods of the historian be introduced with 4-7 age groups as well? Educationalists think that this could be done at any level. One word of warning, though. History must not be seen as a narrow academic discipline; both mind and eyes have to be kept wide open. The mind must be ready to admit the likely value of the whole range of environmental material, geographical, economic, sociological and so on, as well as historical³⁸. The eyes have to be trained to observe beyond the obvious and the routine. Even the very young child, as we have seen, can be trained to gather information and data (from various resources: people, places and objects); observe, analyse and infer from this information and data (through use of structured questions by teachers)³⁹ and reach conclusions (often tentative, inaccurate and incomplete). This is the scientific method of the professional historian, it is true, but there is no reason why such a method, a training for life after all, be not introduced to children from as early in life as we can. All one asks is that objectives be kept simple and very limited as befits the tender age and minds of the children under consideration.

Enough has been said, I think, to show that while it is possible and, indeed, desirable, to teach History (and Social Studies) to the 4-7 age groups,

doing so is no easy task at all. The sheer list of what is expected of teachers in general and Social Studies teachers in particular, is by itself formidable: teachers have to explain, inform, show how, initiate, direct, administer, give security, clarify attitudes, beliefs and problems, diagnose learning problems, make curriculum materials, evaluate, record, report, organize and arrange classrooms - and that is not the end of the list either⁴⁰. This may be frightening especially to the inexperienced, the idealist or the non-committed. Practical teachers will answer that none of us mortals can ever hope to attain a high degree of perfection in all these tasks, and if we were to wait for such perfection we would never start teaching at all. So the good teacher will do his or her best at a given moment, but will never stop striving for more competency. But this can only be attained if more positive action is taken by educators to build a Social Studies programme concerned with the total development of the young child.

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1. J.S. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (N.Y., Vintage Books, 1960).
 2. H. Taba; M. Durkin; J. Fraenkel and A. McNaughton *A Teacher's Handbook to Elementary Social Studies: An Inductive Approach* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1971).
 3. B. Spodek, 'Developing Social Science Concepts in the Kindergarten,' *Social Education*, 27, 1963, pp. 253-256.
 4. J. Decaroli, 'Concept Teaching,' *Social Education*, 37, 1973, pp. 331-333.
 5. L. Schwab and C. Stern, 'Effects of Variety on the Learning of a Social Studies Concept by Pre-School Children,' *Journal of Experimental Education*, 38, 1969, pp. 81-86.
 6. J.D. McKinney and L. Golden, 'Social Studies Dramatic Play with Elementary School Children,' *Journal of Educational Research*, 67, 1973, pp. 172-176.
 7. G.R. Elton, 'What sort of history should we teach' in M. Ballard (ed.) *New Movements in the Study and Teaching of History* (Temple Smith, 1970), p. 221.
 8. D.G. Watts, *The Learning of History* (Students Library of Education, 1972), p. 13.
 9. This is G.R. Elton's view in *The Practice of History* (Methuen, 1967), p. 182.
 10. E.A. Peel, 'Some Problems in the psychology of history teaching' in W.H. Burston and D. Thompson (eds.) *Studies in the Nature and Teaching of History* (Routledge, 1967), p. 161.
 11. See in this context K. Davies, 'The Syllabus in the Primary School' in W.H. Burston and C.W. Green (eds.) *Handbook for History Teachers* (Methuen, 1972), pp. 51-52.
 12. Some hold the view that History is unique in the sense that it has no key concepts of its own at all, except, maybe, 'the past', but that it borrows all its concepts from other Social Studies disciplines like Geography, Economics, Sociology etc. The argument is, however, only of academic interest in the present context. See J.A. Banks, *Teaching Strategies for the Social Studies*, (Addison-Wesley, U.S.A., 1977), 7, 'History: Structure, Concepts and Strategies,' pp. 211-218.
 13. M. Pollard, *History with Juniors* (Evans Modern Teaching, 1973).
 14. *op. cit.*, p. 70.
 15. It would be useful to quote here M. Bowen, 'Another Approach to History for Young Children', *Teaching*

- History, May 1972, V. II, No. 7, p. 255: '... Of course no dates were mentioned; the aim was to create in the children's imagination a stage in time, not a chronological period. It was found helpful to introduce stories (as opposed to class discussion) with a recognized formula, which set the time scene as it were ('Once upon a time, not yesterday, not last week, not last year, but hundreds and thousands of years ago...') Young children are capable of imagining a time before they existed, but they need help with the transition, and a familiar repetitive phrase is as good as any other aid.'
16. Watts, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
 17. As far back as at least 1955 it was recognized even in Malta that the story approach is ideal for Primary School Children. A Commission appointed by the Hon. Minister of Education in 1955, while making no recommendations for the teaching of History in the Infant stages, suggested a selection of specific stories for Standards I to III (present Years 3-5). See *The Teaching of History: Report of the Commission appointed by the Hon. Minister of Education in 1955*, pp. 8-11.
 18. K. Egan, 'Teaching The Varieties of History,' *Teaching History*, June 1978, No. 21, pp. 20-23.
 19. *op. cit.*
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
 21. J.E. Blyth, 'Young Children and the Past; An Experiment with Six-Year Old Children,' *Teaching History*, June 1978, No. 21, pp. 15-19.
 22. See Diagrams 1a and 1b.
 23. See Diagram 2a.
 24. See Diagram 2b.
 25. See G. Partington, 'Teaching Time: Children's Understanding of Time', *Teaching History*, June 1980, No. 27 pp. 31-34 for a comprehensive list of researchers in this field and a brief summary of their findings. One is also advised to read, among others, P. Mays, *Why Teach History?* (University of London Press, 1974), I, pp. 9-18; I. Steele, *Developments in History Teaching* (Open Books Publishing Ltd. 1976), 3, 'Psychology and History Teaching', pp. 18-26 and J. Lello, 'The Concept of Time, the Teaching of History and School Organization,' *The History Teacher*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, May 1980, pp. 341-350; and of course, J. Piaget, *The Child's Conception of Time* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1971).
 26. R.D. Hess and D.J. Croft, *Teachers of Young Children*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972, p. 197).
 27. R. Preston and H. Herman, *Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School*, 4th Edition, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974, p. 319.
 28. D. Springer ('Development in Young Children of an Understanding of Time and the Clock,' *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 80, 1952, pp. 83-96) described the development of clock time in four to six year olds. Children, he concludes first begin to associate activities with the regular daily class schedule. Soon they associate the schedule and time by the clock, developing concepts of hour, half-hour and quarter-hour.
 29. L.B. Ames ('The Development of the Sense of Time in Young Children', *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 68, 1946, pp. 97-125) for example, found out that four year olds can distinguish between morning and afternoon, five year olds can tell which day it is, and seven year olds can tell clock time in the conventional sense.
 30. I am indebted to C. Seefeldt, *Social Studies for the Pre-School Primary Child* (Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1977), pp. 107-111 for many of the above ideas. I have also made extensive use of R.K. Jantz 'Social Studies', in C. Seefeldt (Ed.) *Curriculum for the Pre-School - Primary Child* (Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co. 1976), pp. 83-103.
 31. See P. Mays, *op. cit.*, p. 12 for an illustration of such a device.
 32. Some researchers feel strongly, however, about the need to inculcate time concepts in young children. M. Dunfee (*Elementary School Social Studies: A Guide to Current Research*, Washington D.C., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1970, p. 29) reported 'a review of the studies of time concepts seem to indicate that children may be able to understand time and chronology concepts at an earlier age than previously predicted and that many children are receptive to planned instruction in these areas. Other researchers even recommend certain guideposts in teaching time concepts.
 33. See, for example, D.J. Steel and L. Taylor *Family History in Schools* (Phillimore and Co. Ltd., London, 1973); D. Balmori, 'A Course in Latin American Family History', *The History Teacher*, Vol. XIV, No. 3, May 1981, p. 401, attempts an explanation of why Family History has exploded into print in the last few years.
 34. *Op. Cit.*, p. 16. Incidentally the author's latest publication, *History for Primary Teachers* (McGraw Hill, 1982), has not been available to me by the time this paper was written.
 35. See J.E. Blyth (1978), Diagrams 3a and 3b.
 36. See, for example, Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, *The Teaching of History in Secondary Schools*, (Cambridge Univ. Press) Fourth Edition, 1975, 'Primary Source Material', pp. 83-113, M. Palmer, 'Using Stimulus Material' in R. Ben Jones (Ed.) *Practical Approaches to the New History* (Hutchinson, 1973), pp. 84-101; I. Steele, *op. cit.*, 6 'Classroom Strategies', pp. 54-57; G. Jones and D. Watson, 'Archives in History Teaching - Some Problems', *Teaching History* Vol. I, No. 3, May 1970, pp. 188-192; R.G.E. Wood, 'Archive Units for Teaching', *Teaching History*, Vol. III, No. 9, May 1973, pp. 41-46 and other contributions.
 37. See J. Blyth, 'Archives and Source Materials in the Junior School', *Teaching History*, 1, No. 1, 1969, pp. 24 ff.; M. West, 'History and the Younger Child', *Teaching History*, I, No. 4, November 1970, pp. 258-264 and J. West, 'Testing the Use of Written Records in Primary Schools, 1979-80', *Teaching History*, No. 32, February 1982, pp. 32-35, among others.
 38. Though the present Social Studies Syllabus for Primary Schools in Malta starts only with Year III and is inadequate in many ways, it does at least embrace this 'width' dimension. We read (p. 2) 'The scope and content of General Social Studies is determined by the point of view that it is the young pupil who must learn to know and understand his environment in its widest sense. The scope of his study is therefore his social, economic, natural and physical environment, since these aspects make up the 'world' in which he lives and moves'.
 39. M.B. McAndrew ('An Experimental Investigation of Young Children's Ideas of Causality', *Studies in Psychology and Psychiatry*, 6, 1943) investigated the problem-solving abilities of children three to six years of age. She found that the type of questions asked influenced the thinking behaviour of children. B. Bloom (*Taxonomy of Educational Objectives; The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I; Cognitive Domains* (1956)) developed a taxonomy of Cognitive objects that can be used as the basis for structuring questions requiring higher level thinking. J. Fraenkel (*Helping Students Think and Value: Strategies for Teaching the Social Studies* (1973)), suggested that pupil responses relate to the questions teachers ask. He proposed a taxonomy of questions that include a 'classification in terms of the purposes which teachers might have, the actions required or desired of students, and the types of questions which teachers would accordingly ask' (p. 177).
 40. L. Raths, quoted by L.S. Kenworthy, *Social Studies for the Seventies - In Elementary and Middle Schools* (Xerox College Publishing, Sec. Ed. 1973), 15, p. 226.

Froebel on Education *

J. Liebschner



Froebel lived at a time when children were considered as something apart from adults, something which needed moulding and forming, something to be used, at best something to be tolerated. This attitude towards children led to violence, arson, revolt, mutiny. The following occurrences in renowned British schools are evidence enough:

- 1818 Winchester - two companies of troops had to be called in to suppress an uprising of pupils.
- 1818 Rugby - pupils set fire to desks and books, withdrew to an island which had to be taken by assault by the army.
- 1783 Eton - Revolt against the headmaster with rooms pillaged and windows broken.

The last mutiny occurred as late as 1851 (Marlborough).

Historians tell us that the picture was the same all over Europe. In France, Italy and Germany, Austria and Spain, tutors were busy working out how to control the wild hordes of young people.

Yet, at this very time in history, an Inspector who had been called to Froebel's school in Keilhau to inspect the school because of rumours that pupils in this school were undisciplined, had long hair and lots of freedom, wrote the following report:

I found here a family which is held together because of its strong bonds of mutual confidence and because every member seeks the good of the whole, everything - as if of itself - thrives in happiness and love.

While in other schools all over Europe children were beaten into submission, in Froebel's schools discipline was (and still is) a matter of *matching* the teaching material with the level of understanding of the learner. In all of Froebel's writings you will not find an article on discipline and punishment. It was not an issue which needed discussing.

* This article is an abridged version of a talk given by J. Liebschner at the German Circle, Valletta, in December 1982, to commemorate the bi-centenary of Froebel's birth.

Education for "Unity of Life"

Friedrich Froebel was a natural scientist by self-education and vocation. He started from the basic idea that all growth and development of man is similar to the development of all organisms. All development in this world is a matter of mediation between opposites, and this becomes known in Froebel's writings as the Spherical Law, where Nature mediates between God and Man and the Spirit between Man's inner Life and the outer world. In as much as man and nature proceed from the same source, they must be governed by the same laws.

The laws of Nature are the laws of Life, and the laws of Life are the laws of Education. There was unity in all things and schools had to express this Unity too.

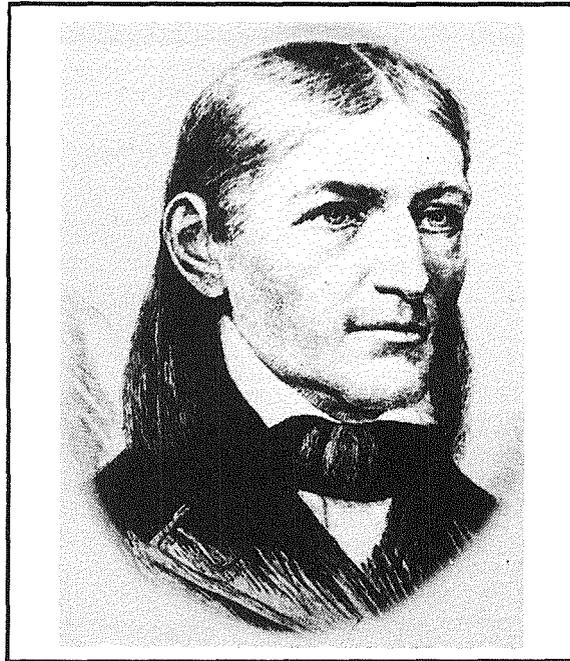
This basic notion of 'Unity of Life' underlies all of Froebel's thinking. It is the foundation of his relationships with children, the cornerstone for his educational ideas and the basis from which he developed the Kindergarten, the Gifts and the Mother-Song Book. The Lack of Unity which Froebel experienced in his schooldays in the village school may also have influenced Froebel's determination to search for this Unity. About his school days he writes as follows:

"We repeated our task parrotwise, speaking much and knowing nothing, for the teaching of a subject had not the least connection with real life; nor had it any actuality for use, though at the same time we could rightly name our little specks and patches of colour on the map. My teacher wished to advance further with me and so took me to the Geography of England. I could find no connection between that country and the country where I dwelt myself, so that of this instruction I also retained but little."

During his time at the University Froebel recorded in his Diary the beginnings of his search for order, for unity. Froebel believed that everything functions in relation to the Creator, the total unity. Yet each man, woman and child was uniquely different. How were those two great opposites to be reconciled? Froebel records:

"Here then bedded and open to my soul, one lovely bright Spring morning, when I was surrounded by nature at her loveliest and freshest, this thought, as it were by inspiration, that there must exist, somewhere, some beautifully simple and certain way of freeing human life from contradiction, or as I then spoke out my thoughts in words, some means of restoring to man, himself, - at peace eternally, and that to seek out this way should be the vocation of my life."

Froebel searched for this Unity - or at least for the theoretical justification for this idea - all his life.



However difficult it may prove for us to understand the meaning of his writings on this subject, we will have no difficulties in observing and understanding the connection of his educational theory as seen in his practice.

Mothers as educators

Mother, in Froebel's education, was not only the person who cared for a child's physical and emotional needs, but who also provided for his intellectual needs. It is she who plays the first games with the child, talks to him and provides the first words, encourages him to take the first steps and guides his observations to differentiate between likes and dislikes.

Because a child's first impressions are also the most lasting ones, care has to be taken that a child's first teaching is sensitive and appropriate. Mother being *the* most important person in a child's life therefore also needs educating. To achieve this, Froebel, in his later life, travelled up and down the country creating Women Organisations where women would talk about their children and compare notes and thus educate each other. Froebel also made sure that the doors in the Kindergarten were always open to welcome mothers (and fathers), so that the parents could watch the Kindergarten Teachers and then would know how to teach their children at home. In Froebel's school parents were welcomed from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Education was a joint enterprise between parents and teachers. There was unity in all things.

It was probably also the concept of Unity which made Froebel realize that all was not well in

schools as long as we had only male teachers. "We will never succeed in our educational endeavours until we also involve the other half of humanity", he used to say. When he put this idea to a teacher's conference, an all male conference of teachers, principals, inspectors, ministers of education, university professors, - the audience interrupted the proceedings with comments and questions. One of the university professors got up and asked Froebel: "Does Herr Froebel mean that eventually we will also have women university professors?" And, the minute book records that the audience once more collapsed with hilarious laughter.

To Froebel the whole issue was self-evident. He always maintained that a good school is like a good home. Just as you needed mother and father and children to create a harmonious home, so you needed male and female adults and the children to create a harmonious school. There was Unity in all things. When the government and the local aristocrats ignored Froebel's suggestions for the creation of a Woman Training College, he founded such a College himself, three years before he died. This was the first Women Training College in Europe, probably in the world.

The Helba Plan

The Helba Plan was Froebel's concept of an all-inclusive educational institute where people would be educated from babyhood to adulthood. Fundamental to the Helba Plan was the idea that pupils had to be educated according to their gifts and abilities. All would start off in the same institution where basic learning was to be achieved through free activity and creative work. There was to be no segregation by either social class, ability or race. Children from Jewish parents were to be admitted in order to overcome racial segregation common in Germany at the time. After attending the first institution, children were then to be educated either in "The German Institute for Art and Crafts" leading to the "University of Self-Education" or in the "German Institute for General Knowledge" (Keilhau) leading to the Universities as generally known.

The Helba plan also included the idea of a "Developmental Institute" for pre-school children, aged 3-7. Froebel was at pains to explain that this was not a school, for children will not be schooled in this institute, but will develop freely, "so that human beings who are not angels yet, have the possibility to have nurtured and protected that which is divine in man."

Froebel outlined in the Helba Plan his belief that the acquisition of knowledge is the unification of the interaction between life and self-activity and understanding. All the education in these institutions should therefore be based on self-activity and self-representation.

The "doing" together with the "thinking" was to be elevated to an educational aid and physical work was to be seen as part of the means for education.

The Helba Plan was Froebel's response to the Duke of Meiningen's request for ideas to re-organise his schools. Jealous advisors at Court made sure that the plan was not brought into operation in spite of the Duke's earlier enthusiasm for Froebel's educational ideas. Froebel was so discouraged by the developing mistrust exhibited by the Court that he broke off all negotiations and left Keilhau for a lecture tour in West-Germany. As it happened, a Swiss nobleman heard one of Froebel's lectures and invited him to open a school in one of his old castles in Switzerland.

Dark forests, grey rocks, green valleys, snow covered mountains surrounded Schloss Wartensee. Such abundance of natural variety was equally matched in human terms where German, French, Italian and English-speaking families would provide the pupils for Froebel's new venture. The school achieved a good reputation within a short time and the citizens of Willensau urged Froebel to transfer his school into the nearby town. No sooner had Froebel done so, the Swiss Government invited Froebel to take charge of the orphanage in Burgdorf as well as organise In-service Courses for practising teachers. Froebel once more felt that his work was gaining ground.

For the first time in his life, one of his institutions included children of pre-school age. The man who had spent his childhood observing plants, butterflies and birds, his adolescence observing deer, wild-boar and pheasants had become an astute observer of children. His diaries are full of minute observations of children's actions and re-actions. And sitting in the orphanage surrounded by these young children, Froebel noticed for the first time in his life how children played with each other, learned from each other, talked to each other in their play, shared ideas and objects, disagreed and settled their arguments, were concentrating in their play, facing problems and solving them. Froebel noticed how life itself became manifest when children demonstrated their inner being through speech, song, dance and their simple representation in play.

Play as Education

Froebel spent the rest of his life trying to solve the problem of how to help children in their play so that the educator may know how to develop a child's inclinations, interests and abilities. Play as a means for education not only solved the problem of how to educate the young child, it also provided the answer to the question of how to achieve development from within. To Froebel education

was always a matter of how to draw out of people rather than what to put into people. These very young children were providing the answer to his questions.

For the next seven years Froebel's thinking is taken up with the importance of play as a means for education. During this period he founded the Kindergarten, created the Gifts, Occupations and the Movement Games and finally, probably, his most important educational achievement, "The Mother Song Book". (1844)

Froebel's lengthy justification for calling his new creation a Kindergarten and not a school was based on the argument that a school is a place and a method by which knowledge is gained from outside. But before man can contemplate knowledge placed before him from outside, he has to have some knowledge, some standpoint of his own. As very small children had not yet developed intellectually, it was a misnomer to talk of Infant 'Schools'. Only the idea of a garden could serve to illustrate symbolically the proper treatment of children at this stage, who ought not to be schooled and taught, but ought to be given the opportunity for the interaction of their inner life with the outside world in a protected and predictable environment.

The creation of such a Kindergarten demanded two essential conditions. It had to have a garden where every child could be responsible for his own plot of land as well as share a second plot of land with other children, and it had to be situated in such a way that it was close enough to the children's homes so that each member of the family could take part at any time in the games, activities and lessons. Cultivating the Schoolgardens not only helped children to acquire elementary knowledge in biology, but also created a situation

where children had to co-operate.

Froebel avoided the teaching of number, of poems, of songs and even the telling of stories unless they were related to the activities of the children. Froebel warned teachers not to tell too many stories because it left children too inactive for too long.

To observe and utilize children's inclinations and tendencies in the service of education was quite clearly also stressed in Froebel's training courses. When one of the trained Kindergarten Teachers was eventually in charge of her own Kindergarten and she found herself wondering what to do with a group of children "who were stamping their feet while sitting at the table and waiting for lunch, she used the natural movements, as we had learned to do and changed them into acceptable behaviour by making up verses (e.g. Stamping feet) which provided a rhythm, a beginning and an end to stamping." Froebel's dictum to use children's inclination for educational purposes included the idea that unacceptable behaviour needed to be changed for the better.

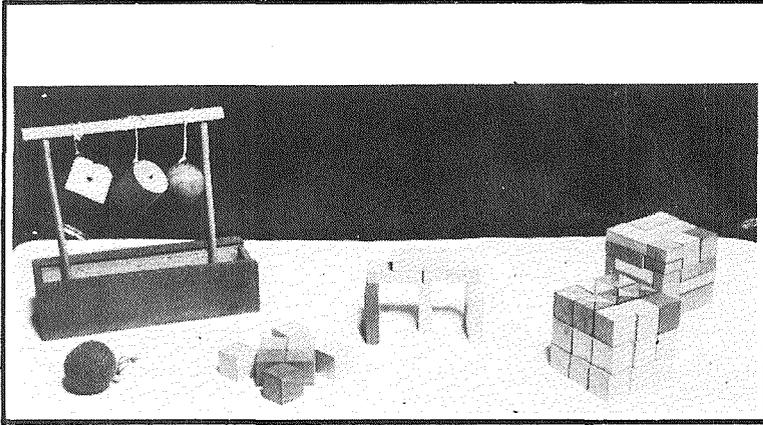
Children were given time to formulate their own problems before adults rushed in to provide an answer to a question the children had not asked.

Problems created for the adult by Froebel's emphasis on self-activity, on children's choice, on more respect for children have to be seen in relation to the effect Kindergarten attendance had on children. Froebel quotes a letter he had received from a "well-known lady" saying:

"it has been noticed how individual children from the kindergarten played so well with younger children,"

Using Froebel's gifts in one of the first English kindergartens





though nobody had told them to do so. There also exists a report by one of Froebel's Kindergarten Teachers saying that one of her children's father had commented that his son had changed considerably for the better since his attendance at the Kindergarten. His son had apparently always had a great inclination to destroy everything so that nothing had been safe from him, whilst of late he rarely did this and preferred to construct, build and invent.

The problem which the first Kindergartens faced were essentially the same as found in our schools today. They were concerned with educational principles relating to the content and methods of teaching. The search for an acceptable solution to the problem of freedom of the individual in relation to the other children in the class, the freedom of choice of the individual in relation to the subject-matter to be taught, and the problem of fostering favourable relationships between children, parents and teachers were all thought about in Froebel's first Kindergarten.

Froebel's Gifts

The basic idea behind Froebel's Gifts is the attempt to make available to the child the means by which the child can demonstrate to himself the Laws of Nature. By analogy, the child will early on in his life be acquainted with God's powers of creation, and will be able to demonstrate in his play with the Gifts his own abilities and gifts and thus partake in the mysterious act of creation. Only when man creates himself will he be drawing closer to his Creator. A godly spark enlivens childish play.

But such freedom to create after the creator demands certain rules, a certain order. The material itself will set limitations to the child's imagination, he cannot do as he pleases. Even when he puts his wooden bricks 'to sleep', it will have to be done in a certain order or he will not be able to close the box.

Play, Froebel says, is the interaction between Law, Freedom and Life.

The Gifts themselves follow certain mathematical laws, romantic mathematical laws rather than scientific mathematical laws, endeavouring to demonstrate the invisible and the inner connections between the inner and the outer, between man and God, between God's creation and the Laws of Life.

These ideas emerge from a brief description and the concepts behind the first two gifts (there are six gifts).

The First Gift

The soft ball on a piece of string.

It is an ideal first gift, so Froebel believes, because it is a familiar object which the child knows from his baby-days; ideal also because the sphere is the most complete, the most perfect, the most unifying form we possess, thus symbolically, the child is brought nearer to that which is ultimate unity - God; and finally it is an ideal first object for the child to be introduced to because it helps to develop the basic concepts of Time, Space and Causality.

Froebel argues that the child's first activities (*self-activities*) are exercises of his limbs, carried out by his hands, fingers, lips, tongue, feet, eyes and facial movements (*mime*). In order to learn to differentiate between self and his surroundings, the child needs an object on which to carry out his experiments. As the child now uses these objects to demonstrate what he knows (the bird flying), the child needs plenty of experiences outside the nursery room in order to collect the images which he will need for his imaginative play. There can be no play without an active life.

Second Gift

The introduction to the second gift says "the interaction between the self and the environment leads to comparisons." A *wooden ball* and a *wooden cube*. A hard ball has certain different characteristics: smoother, glides better, makes a *sound* if rolled over a table-top and a different sound if rolled over a carpet.

- it rolls further and faster.
- it can be spun around its own axis.

The child cannot help but make comparisons. The ball has difficulties in standing on one spot. Has the cube?

- the cube is an object of opposites.
- that is the reason why the ball and the cube belong together.

Games introduced with the second gift are *paired games*. The ball and the cube are used for comparisons.

The Mother-Song Book

Froebel recognized that before the stage of

active manipulation of objects, there is a time when the child experiences the world primarily through his senses and through the manipulation of his own limbs. And because the processes of education begin on the day the child is born, it is imperative that some guidance be given to mothers. Froebel does this in his *Mother Song Book*, published in 1844.

This book contains fifty play-songs which aim at providing exercises for body and limbs to be carried out by mother and the child. At the same time it provides also a symbolic introduction to the abstract values in life, like honesty, beauty, truth. Each play song is printed on one page surrounded by pictures illustrating the song in many different ways. Incorporated into each series of pictures is usually a drawing of a pair of hands, illustrating the kind of hand-and finger-exercises which can be carried out by mother and the child. A more detailed explanation for each song is given at the end of the book. There are two verses on each page, one in large print to be sung to the child and one in smaller print serving as a short explanation for the mother, about the deeper meaning of each song.

Those who throw a casual glance at the book only will not be able to comprehend the pedagogical riches in the book. Froebel himself has no doubt as to the book's significance.

"I have recorded the most important aspects of my educational theory in this book. It is the starting-point for an education based on nature."

Froebel shows us how the child's earliest physical movements will eventually lead to abstract thinking. He argues that the strengthening of the limbs will lead to a more purposeful use of them and this in turn to an awareness of things as they are. Such an awareness of separate objects will lead to the search for their connections. Thus physical activity is the basis for mental activity, for 'outer arrangements of things into groups and classes will lead to inner comparisons and judgements', which develop our powers of comprehension and understanding. Once we have developed our powers of comprehension we no longer are satisfied with perceptual judgements but ask for the reasons why and the origins underlying things and events, which in turn develop our powers of logical thinking, culminating in abstract thinking.

It would be easy to find comparable statements in Piaget's writings for each of Froebel's statements made in this last paragraph. The comparison of the stages of mental development given with those of Piaget: Sensory-Motor, Pre-Operational (Pre-Conceptual, Intuitive, Symbolic, Concrete Operational and Formal Operational) shows such similarities that they may be described as identical.

Further study of Froebel's explanations reveal

that, to him, the education of man involves more than a mere rational application of life. He says that as mind turns objects into images, so images are turned into symbols, and it is the *symbolic* which allows us to grasp the essence of matter as part of a spiritual whole.

Froebel's use of the symbolic in the *Mother-Song Book*, however, is not only providing a concrete example for spiritual matters, but is also used to fulfil a *psychological* function. Froebel believed that a man's inner life is given expression in his actions. These actions, therefore, in themselves were symbolic and contributed to a person's development of his mental structures provided they were recognized as being symbolic of a person's inner life, by that person himself. And thirdly, the symbolic was also used to illustrate *philosophical* concepts like perseverance, fairness, etc., in a way which can produce the beginning of an understanding even in younger children.

Of course, there is much more to the concept of truthfulness, for example, than is being expressed in the song of "The Fish in the Brook". The symbol used (the clear water of the stream) provides us with the surmise of what truthfulness is all about, rather than with factual elaborations, but then Froebel maintained that knowledge was made up of cognisance *and* the surmise.

Froebel argues that whatever man is capable of doing and thinking in later life, must at least be a *surmise* when a child is young. Nothing can grow unless there is at least a germ, a seedcorn from which it can originate, and equally nothing can germinate unless the seed-corn is given its correct nourishment and encouraged to grow. It is for this reason that Froebel in all his educational endeavours puts so much emphasis on the teaching of the meaning of life, even when the child cannot possibly grasp it intellectually. The fostering of *the presentiment*, of the surmise, was paramount in his teaching and the symbolic was the essential medium through which to achieve it. Froebel believed that there could be no understanding, no new learning, no change from a percept to a concept unless the *surmise* of it existed.

When a visitor once asked Froebel what he intended to achieve with his new kind of education, Froebel answered that he hoped that his children, when adults, would be able to live in harmony with their creator, in harmony with their neighbours and in harmony with themselves.

Creativity as an Educational Process

Froebel considered creative activity an important part of the curriculum of the Kindergarten. In such activities children were able to explore the unknown and venture to express a

surmise which logical thinking might reject. Froebel points out that adults, too, must work at the level of the surmise when interpreting the new before it can be fully grasped intellectually. Froebel believed that unless we make use of our ability to probe into the dark, unless we foster the hunch and pay attention to presentiments, human progress would soon be stunted.

Froebel is saying that to explore the impenetrable, we have to pay attention to the surmise. It is the surmise which will push the boundaries of knowledge forward, not pedantic repetition of what is known already.

If, for example, one looks at the story of transport, one can see that the horse served us well for many, many hundreds of years. Developing the cart, inventing the most delicate refinements on the cart and teaching our children all about the cart, would never, never, have led to the invention of the combustion engine, just as the detailed knowledge of the combustion engine did not lead to the invention of the rocket.

But this is precisely what many people want us to do in education today - teach our children about rockets, electronics, computers. Teach them what we know. Their argument is that there is not enough time for children to work on their own, to think and to find out for themselves. Froebel would answer that there is even less time available for children to be burdened with the knowledge of others.

It is no mere coincidence that Dickens

published *Hard Times* soon after studying Froebel's Kindergarten Education. *Hard Times* is an imaginative testimony for true education against the false education of "Coketown," symbol of economic growth and the technocratic mind which informs and supports it.

The eminent ethologist W.H. Thorpe, too, warns us against the pitfalls of this one-sided education which concentrates on the rational only. At the end of his recent Gifford-Lectures he said:

"Scientific advance is essentially unpredictable... Enlightenment will only come with a further development of creative imagination.

Something akin to the creative intuition and perception of the artist and the poets is going to become as necessary to the future of science as are the skills of deductive inference and experimental prowess."

In Froebel's schools the skills of making use of the surmise so as to foster the act of creation were as much catered for as the skills of deductive inference, the mathematical and scientific.

Froebel argued that if it was true that man was made in the image of God, and God is above all The Creator, it follows that man must, above all, be creative. Creative activity therefore becomes subject Number One on Froebel's Time-Table. Just as man is not born with a deductive mind, so he is not born with a creative mind. Creativity like any other human ability has to be fostered, encouraged, developed. The Gifts, the Occupations, the Movements Games, all were designed to encourage creativity.

Some Tentative Suggestions for a Children's Museum*

Mario Buhagiar

The need for a Children's Museum or, at least, for some sort of Museum-School Service has been felt for some time in education circles in Malta. At a time when stress is put on environmental studies and extra-curricula activities the setting up of such a service has become increasingly important. This report contains suggestions for a Children's Museum devoted primarily to Maltese Archaeology, History and Folklore. Museums are usually planned for an adult public and, therefore, often lack appeal to children. The conventional arrangement of show-case after show-case with methodically arranged, carefully labelled exhibits is meaningless to children. These need a special type of museum where show-cases are reduced to a minimum and the display is organized in a way that will stimulate interest and excite imagination. It is a basic principle in education that memory depends on the kind of material to be remembered; the more meaningful the material the more easily it is assimilated.

Different Types of Children's Museums

There are three possible alternatives for a Children's Museum. It can be planned as:

- a. an annexe to an established museum e.g. the National Museum of Archaeology
- b. a school annexe, a few rooms in area schools being reserved for the purpose
- c. an independent, centrally situated building staffed by a team of dedicated and specially trained teachers.

This report favours the third alternative. Our established museums suffer from a chronic lack of exhibition space and can ill afford rooms for a children's display. Nor is it feasible to have a museum annexe in schools. Not only is the

problem of space equally crucial but its implementation would entail duplication of effort and expense. It would be much better if funds, energy and expertise were concentrated on the setting up of one central, well organized and suitably equipped museum.

A major difficulty would be to make the museum appealing to children of different age groups from primary to upper secondary school level. To restrict its appeal would be to limit its scope and it would, further-more, be impractical to have separate museums for different scholastic levels. It is, therefore, important to plan the museum in a way that children, irrespective of their age, will find it stimulating. A good understanding of child psychology is an important requisite.

The Premises

The museum should ideally be housed in specifically built premises but since this might involve considerable expense it could, perhaps, be more realistically set up in an existing building. Such a building must, however, be carefully selected with a view to location and amenities for a special type of display. It must necessarily be easily accessible for in this way children would be encouraged to visit the museum on their own without having to wait to be taken by parents or on guided tours by schools and clubs. Valletta, Floriana and Beltissebh would be the most likely sites. There are several suitable government buildings in this area. A scheduled building with historical associations should be given preference not only because it would help create the right atmosphere but also because it would thereby be serving a useful purpose compatible with its character (1). The Valletta district is so full of scheduled historical buildings that it has long been a major government headache to find suitable use for even the more important; the state of preservation of some does in fact give rise to concern. If the choice does fall on such a building, its restoration and rehabilitation must be left to expert hands who

*. This paper is part of a longer study, *Blueprint for a Children's Museum*, submitted to the Malta College of Education in February 1976.



while giving due consideration to the requirements of this specific type of museum will also ensure that all works carried out are sympathetic to its historical character.

The Exhibits

The National Museum Department has a considerable reserve collection from which it can afford to loan a few exhibits. The display in a Children's Museum need not, however, include precious originals. Copies, preferably facsimiles, would do just as well and are, in a way, more desirable. Children should, ideally, be allowed to handle them or examine them at close quarters. In a history museum, such as the one discussed in this report, there must be emphasis on scale models: prehistoric monuments, fortifications, galleys of the Knights, old means of transport etc. Where models are not possible, charts should be used instead. Naturalistic dummies in period costumes also fascinate children as proved by the small detachment of dummy soldiers in morion and half armour until recently displayed in the Palace Armoury at Valletta.

Activities and Amenities

This report does not contemplate a static museum. It thinks of it as a living organism capable of growth and expansion and of adapting itself to

new educational requirements; there is nothing so dead as a museum devoted only to display. A programme of cultural and educational activities is therefore envisaged. A well stocked library with proper reading and research facilities, and a lecture hall adequately equipped for slide and film projection are essential prerequisites. Courses leading to the award of a diploma are also a desirable addenda but priority should, perhaps, be given to quizzes and debate forums on all aspects of Maltese history and culture. Among other amenities the museum should, finally, have a good supply of folding chairs, drawing boards and modelling clay to put at the disposal of children, especially younger ones, who are to be encouraged to make drawings and models of the exhibits.

The Staff

The Museum is to be organized and run by the Education Department with the close co-operation of the Museums Department. The personnel chosen to staff it must be carefully selected preferably from among history teachers. Their selection (possibly, though not necessarily, after a call for applications) must be based on experience, dedication to duty and academic qualifications rather than seniority. It is recommended that the chosen candidates undergo a period of training abroad and it is therefore desirable that contacts be previously established with foreign educational

institutions with experience in this specialised field.

For its proper functioning the Museum must have a director and curators to run the various departments. It would be a mistake to place the various departments under the charge of a single curator not only because pressure of work would not permit him to attend to all of them satisfactorily but also because it would be difficult to find one single person sufficiently qualified in the various fields.

Three Departments

The number of departments will depend ultimately on the size of the museum and the nature and availability of exhibition material. Irrespective of such considerations three departments are a *desideratum*:

(a) *Archaeology and Ancient to Early Modern History*

This is a vast department (too vast perhaps) covering a long span of time from about the beginning of the 6th millennium B.C., the presumed date of the first material evidence of human habitation (2) down to 1530 A.D. when the islands were ceded to the Knights of St. John. Its curator will, therefore, be responsible for the pre and proto-historic periods and the Middle Ages (3). Some may question the inclusion of the Middle Ages in this department and suggest that it be set up as a separate unit. This may eventually prove to be advisable especially at a time when much work is being done in the field of medieval Maltese studies, but one must beware of being over ambitious especially in the initial stages of such a new venture. Moreover the dearth of documentary material relating to the period, up to the first half of the 15th century, makes it very much an archaeological subject. The curator in charge of this department must preferably be a trained archaeologist who, ideally, should gather round him a team of reliable young archaeological enthusiasts to help the National Museum Department in its excavations. It may also be possible, in time, to entrust this team with the digging of some minor site. Any such work must, necessarily, be carried out with the close co-operation of the Museum Department which, in such cases, normally retains the right of supervision and intervention. In this way children will be given the opportunity of participating directly in archaeological work. Such a venture has been tried with success in most European countries, particularly England and France, where excavations are rarely planned without student participation. In addition to

excavations a number of other field activities, such as the plotting of archaeological monuments on large scale maps, can also be organized.

(b) *Early Modern to Modern History*

This department is to be concerned with the time of Knights between 1530 and 1798 and that of the French and British dominations.

Though none of the multifold aspects of this important period should be overlooked, emphasis may justifiably be put on the Knights of St John not only because of the richness and ready availability of exhibition material but also because it remains the most culturally splendid period in Maltese history. The variegated story of the Knights, particularly their battles and corsairing adventures, excites the imagination of children and can, therefore, be their best introduction to history.

Field activities, such as surveys of fortification works and wayside churches, are also envisaged for this department. The initiative taken by the Youth Section of *Din L-Art Helwa* in looking after a number of monuments can well be emulated. There are several historical buildings in a sad state of preservation for the upkeep and maintenance of which the department may assume responsibility.

Another important aim of the department should be the training of students in the upper forms of secondary schools in research work. Groups of children can be assigned periodic projects on various aspects of Maltese history, or on specific monuments, which they would submit to the Museum's library.

Art and photographic exhibitions with Malta as their theme are also to be encouraged for they help foster an awareness of the historical heritage of these islands.

There are indeed several fields of rewarding activities into which this department can expand.

(c) *Folklore*

Folklore is the reflection of history and a Folklore Department is, therefore, desirable in a History Museum. The chief objection to it will probably be lack of space. Ideally there should be a separate Folklore Museum but as this is unlikely to happen it may be advisable, in view of the importance of the subject and its general appeal, to sacrifice exhibition space from the two other departments. The display need not be extensive but it should be representative of at least the more important branches of this vast subject. The cycle of life (birth, marriage and funeral customs etc.), the national costume and the more important traditional crafts should, in particular, be well illustrated.

Field activities organized by the department can, if properly planned, produce rewarding results. Students can be sent in small groups to talk to peasants, old folk and traditional craftsmen and record on tape their traditions, proverbs, legends, superstitions, songs and personal reminiscences. This information should then be analysed and edited and put at the disposal of folklore students.

Opening Hours

These are to be the same as those of other government museums. It should naturally, be open on week ends and school holidays when a programme of activities on the lines suggested above is to be organized. During the scholastic year frequent visits to the Museum should be organized by schools. History lessons may, sometimes, be more profitably held on the museum premises. In order to avoid congestion a schedule of visits can be worked out between the Museum and the various schools.

The Display

The exhibition material is to be displayed in logical chronological sequence. This can be arranged by dividing each department into sections and providing a separate room or gallery for each section. If the space available is restricted it may be practical to split up large rooms or halls into cubicles. The size of rooms or cubicles is to depend on the importance of the section and the availability of display material.

The following sections are suggested for the three respective departments:

- a) *Archaeology and Ancient to Early Modern History* (i) Geology and Palaeontology (ii) Neolithic (iii) Copper Age (iv) Bronze Age (v) Phoenician and Punic (vi) Roman and Early Christian (vii) Middle Ages.
- b) *Early Modern to Modern History* (i) The Order of St John - its origins and early history (A.D. 1113-1530) (ii) The settlement of the Order in Malta and the Great Siege (1530-1565) (iii) The Order in Malta (1565 - 1798) (iv) The Hospital of the Knights (v) The Navy of the Knights (vi) The Armoury of the Knights (vii) The French interlude (1798 - 1800) (viii) The arrival of the British and the development of Malta into the most important naval base in the Mediterranean (1800 - 1900) (ix) The struggle for political autonomy (x) World War II
- c) *Folklore* (i) The National Costume (ii) The Cycle of Life: Courtship and Marriage; Infancy and Childhood; Festivities throughout the year; Merry making; Death, Funerals etc. (iii)

Traditional crafts and occupations: Farming; the Cotton Industry; Milling; Roof-beating; Miscellaneous.

Sample Display

For the purpose of this brief report suggestions for the display are limited to the Copper Age section of the Archaeology and Ancient to Early Modern History Department. Suggestions are enumerated and asterisks (*) are used to denote where exhibition material is to be so arranged that children can either handle it or examine it at close range.

The Copper Age

The Copper Age (c.3750 - c.2200 B.C.) is one of the most splendid periods in Maltese history. Its cultural sophistication is reflected in the startling and unique series of megalithic temples of elaborate plan and construction and in the fine pottery wares considered among the finest produced anywhere before the use of the wheel. The lengthy period is conveniently divided into five pottery phases: Zebbug (Zb) c.3150 - c.2900; Mgarr (Mg) c.2900 - c.2800; Ggantija (Gg) c. 2800 - c. 2450; Saffieni (Saf) c.2450 - c.2400; Tarxien (Tx) c. 2400 - c. 2200 B.C. The climax of this remarkable civilisation was reached in the Tx phase. It then died suddenly and mysteriously leaving hardly any trace on the material culture of Malta during the succeeding centuries. On account of the importance of the period it is recommended that a large hall be reserved for the display. If this is not possible it should be spread out in several adjacent rooms:

- 1 Large scale map of Malta showing the distribution of Copper Age sites.
- 2 Facsimile copies of the more important pottery wares illustrating the development in style from Zb to Tx phase.
- 3 Restored stone model, actual size, of Zb phase stele with rough human face from Ta' Trapna tombs. The whole surface of the stone is to be stained with red ochre (4).
- 4 Chart illustrating the similarity in plan between tomb 5 Xemxija and the lobed temple at Ta' Hagra, Mgarr (Mgarr E)
- 5 Scale models illustrating the development of the temple plan from the lobed to the six-apsed building. The following examples are suggested:
 - a) Mgarr E
 - b) Skorba W
 - c) Ggantija S
 - d) Mnajdra S
 - e) Tarxien C

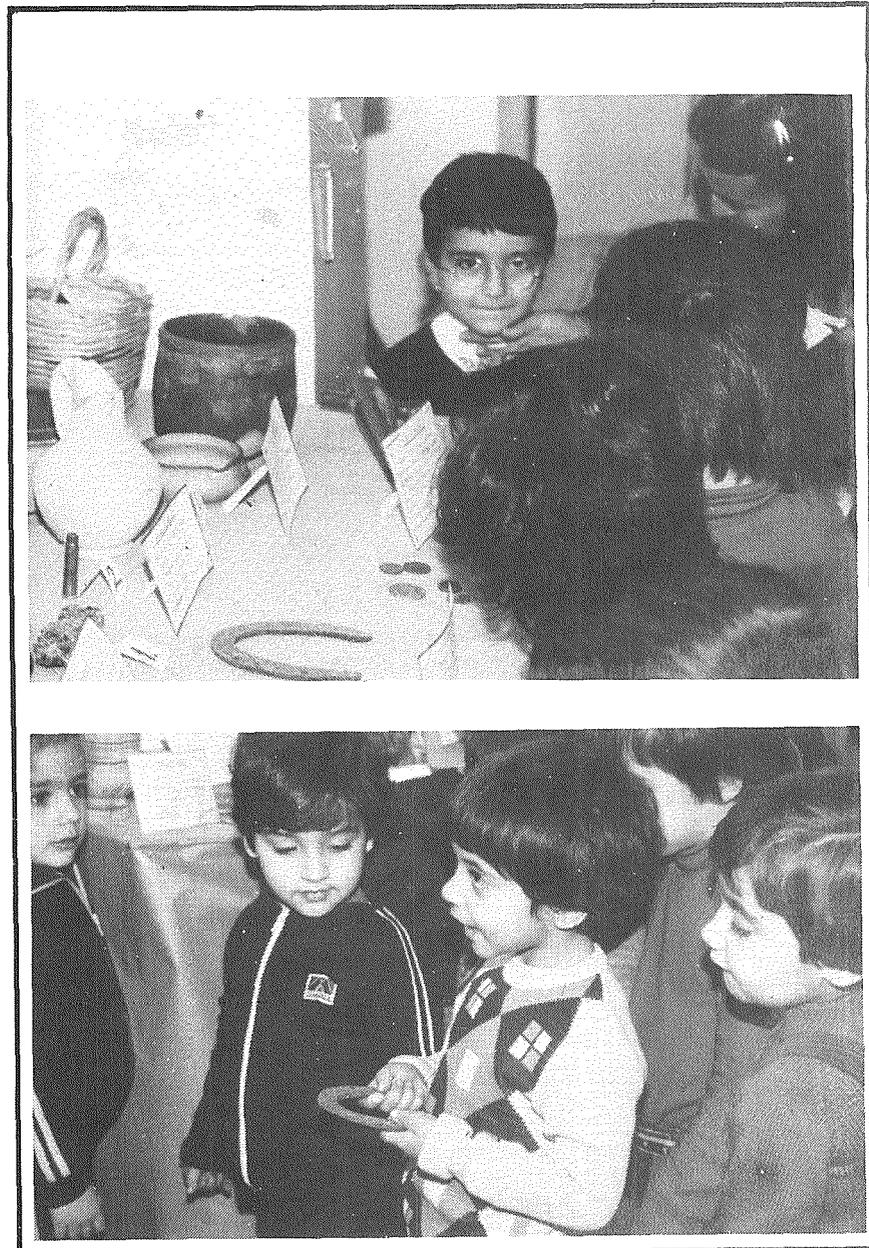
The five models are to be placed in chronological order next to each other on a

table or affixed to a wall.

- 6 Scale models of the temple complexes at Ggantija, Hagar Qim, Mnajdra and Tarxien.
- 7 Three tentative reconstruction models of temple facades based respectively on:
 - a) limestone model from Ta' Hagra, Mgarr
 - b) graffito at Mnajdra
 - c) limestone model from Tarxien.
- 8 Large coloured charts of tentative reconstructions of temple interiors attractively produced to stimulate children's interest. Carlo Ceschi's reconstruction drawings (5) can serve as a model but they must be modified in the light of recent archaeological knowledge.
- 9 Five large coloured charts illustrating:
 - a) quarrying of megalithic slabs
 - b) transport of megaliths to temple site
 - c) raising the orthostats
 - d) raising the lintles and cyclopean masonry above the orthostats
 - e) roofing the temples.
- 10 Tableau of ritual sacrifice in the temples life-size figures of priests and worshippers. The first pair of apses of Tarxien S would (because of the gigantic statue of the Fertility Deity, ornate altar, animal friezes and decorated stone slabs) provide an ideal setting. The sacrificial animal (ram, pig or goat) is to be shown in the act of being slaughtered while a worshipper pours an offering in the libation-holes outside the temple's entrance. The priests' costumes and hair styles are to be based on the three clay figurines from Tarxien C which, presumably, represent priests.
- 11 Copies, preferably facsimile, of sculptural reliefs on stone blocks from temples. They are to include:
 - a) ornate altar with "potted plant" pattern (Hagar Qim)
 - b) mushroom-shaped altar (Hagar Qim)
 - c) ornate altar with spiral volutes and niche (Tarxien S)
 - d) animal friezes (Tarxien S)
 - e) bull and sow relief (Tarxien C)
 - f) fish relief (Bugibba)
 - g) serpent relief (Ggantija).
- 12* Model of a Fertility Deity statue with a detachable head that can be moved by a system of strings (6).
- 13* Copies of stone statues and clay figurines divided into three classes:
 - a) stylised cult images
 - b) naturalistic human figures
 - c) small, crude and deliberately distorted figures.(a) and (b) should, preferably, be facsimile reproductions of the originals; (c) can be of slightly larger scale. All the more important

examples of Copper Age statuary such as the Hypogeum 'Sleeping Lady' and the Hagar Qim 'Venus of Malta' and cult statues are to be included.

- 14* Copies, preferably facsimile, of Copper Age tools and weapons. They are to include:
 - a) flint, obsidian and chert knives and scrapers
 - b) hammers and mallets of hard stone
 - c) digging stick weights.
- 15 Scale model of the Hypogeum
- 16 Mural of a tentative reconstruction of ritual practices in the Hypogeum based on recent archaeological interpretations of the monument. J.D. Evans, *The Prehistoric*



Antiquities of the Maltese Islands, London 1971, should be consulted.

- 17 Plan of the ceiling of the "oracle" chamber at the Hypogeum showing the painted decoration in red ochre based on spiral volute motifs.
- 18 Facsimile reproduction of personal ornaments from the Hypogeum. They are to include:
 - a) axe pendants
 - b) hard stone pendants
 - c) shell pendants.

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- 1 All buildings of historical and artistic interest are scheduled monuments and fall under the Antiquities Protection Ordinance.
 - 2 The dates of the Maltese prehistoric sequence used in this study are those set by radio-carbon using the conventional calculation. These dates are, however, being drastically reassessed as a result of careful comparison with dendrochronology.
 - 3 The Prehistoric chronology is divided into Neolithic (c. 5,000 - c. 3,700 B.C.), Copper Age (c. 3,700 - c. 2,200

B.C.) Bronze Age (c. 2,000 - c. 800 B.C.). Under Proto - Historic are included the Pheonician and Punic periods (c. 800 - 218 B.C.) and those of the Roman and Byzantine dominations (218 B.C. - 870 A.D.) The Middle Ages which may be said to start with the coming of the Arabs in 870 A.D. came to an end in 1530 when the islands were ceded to the Knights of St. John.

- 4 This is the earliest datable piece of Copper Age sculpture in Malta. It consists of a flat slab of globigerina limestone roughly carved to represent a schematised human face. The slab is broken off at the bottom but the beginnings of a shoulder are discernable and it seems probable that it formed part of a statue-menhir or stele. The whole surface of the stone, especially the face, was stained with red ochre.
- 5 Carlo Ceschi, *Architettura dei Templi Megalitici di Malta*, Roma, 1939 and *ibid.*, "Architettura Megalitica di Malta" in *Atti del XV congresso di storia dell'architettura: L'architettura a Malta dalla preistoria all'ottocento*, Roma 1970
- 6 Copper Age cult statues have invariably been found headless but a socket between the shoulders indicates that it was meant to receive a separate head. Small holes bored through the walls of the socket suggest that the head was attached by means of a dowel or by strings that could, presumably, be used to make the head move.

A detailed list of exhibits under the other Departments is incorporated in the author's original dissertation, a copy of which is with the Faculty of Education.

Meeting Teachers' needs: Evaluation of in-service courses run by the Faculty of Education

George Bonnici

Since the beginning of 1982 the Faculty of Education has fostered a growth in commitment to in-service education courses for teachers (INSET). The programme of INSET activities is being accelerated throughout the year (1983). This growth has raised a series of questions about the evaluation of INSET.

Evaluation usually stems from two major concerns. First there is the concern of accountability. Are the courses offering value for the money spent to provide human and material resources for INSET? Secondly there is the concern for the quality of courses. Is the quality of the in-service programme meeting the participants' needs?

Ideally, sponsors, course providers, co-ordinators and all those concerned with in-service work would like substantial information about the effects of a particular INSET programme or teacher performance. In practice it is not easy to provide such information about the outcome of in-service courses. For example Henderson¹ states that he found little evidence to support self-support changes in teacher behaviour following an in-service course in reading improvement. One assumes that it is technically impossible to obtain reliable data about the effectiveness of a course if some form of teaching competence measurement approach is not adopted. Borick² in 1978 outlined scientific long-term evaluation models based upon a definition of competence which is based on a validated and confirmed relationship between a teaching behaviour, after a course, and on pupils' learning outcomes. These models have been adopted in Europe for some time. However it was found that they involved use of sophisticated evaluation designs which demanded time-consuming efforts by a team of investigators. Even so Bolam³ argues that experience in Europe indicated that such evaluation is not feasible because change in a teacher's competence does not necessarily depend on a particular course programme and because information on

programme improvement is both easier to obtain by other methods such as formative evaluation through discussions and questionnaires which are simpler and more highly valued.

The Faculty of Education has adopted a procedure to conduct judgement about the impact of courses. Evaluations were made either during the course or immediately at the end of it or in some cases, a few weeks after its end. In each case a questionnaire prepared by the course tutor asked participants to report about the course. The questionnaire was dictated by context of the particular course, the dependence upon available resources, the duration and timing, the other commitments of the course participants and of the course providers and, of course, by the objectives of the course. The policy shaping this evaluation was also dictated by the importance of information obtained during a course (formative process evaluation) which indicated the ways in which a programme was implemented and provided data on which to take decisions about course improvement even while the course is in progress. It was also essential to obtain summative product information about the effectiveness and outcomes of a programme and to take decisions about whether or not to continue with such INSET activity in future. The reports have been analysed independently by the co-ordinators who were aware that the reliability of the data must not be taken for granted. Questions were asked on the courses' division, balance, modes of activities, supplementary reading material, duration and timing and on whether the course met the expectations of the participants. The individual course tutors then collected the data from the questionnaires and prepared a report about their course. The reports were then independently analysed by the writer. The rest of this article is based on the analysis of the reports prepared by the tutors of English, History, Maltese, P.E., French and Italian courses.

Division and Balance

The general opinion on the 'division' was that

they were appropriate, while opinion on 'balance' of the course varied. Only 30% of the participants on the English course suggested that more than half of the course should be devoted to methodology, while as many as 96% of those on the Maltese course voiced the same opinion. All the P.E. course participants suggested more "emphasis on practical work". Half of the participants on the History course said that methodology had been "too much". The majority of the rest of the participants on the other courses (French, Italian...) reported that the 'balance' was appropriate.

Modes of INSET activities

Asked to comment on the modes of the INSET activities, 81% of the teachers on the English course suggested a balance of lectures and seminars, 19% suggested "a whole course based on seminars". Nearly all the participants on all the other courses showed no predominant preference for either lecture, seminar or discussion-based courses. All agreed that a mixture of these modes was appropriate. History teachers suggested that more fieldwork should be included. Of particular note is the participants reaction to the Video Micro teaching sessions. Those on the Italian course all enthused over the video-recording of lessons for self-appraisal and/or group discussion. They expressed the desire to have more such sessions in future courses. 69% of the French course participants found it "very useful" but the rest of the group described it as somewhat "threatening. It only exaggerates the teacher's weaknesses". Others, especially those on the Maltese course, suggested "more use of the language laboratory and more use on video sessions".

Supplementary literature

Where supplementary literature such as handouts, reference sheets, and others was supplied it was considered as "just right" (Eng. 75%); 'useful/very useful' History 100%); "too extensive for such a short course", (Eng. 19%); "too limited" (Eng. 6%) and some suggested that reading reference and supplementary literature"... should have been forwarded weeks in advance" (Eng. 11%).

Duration and Timing

Comments on the duration of the course varied tremendously. For the English course, 37% found the arrangement suitable, 25% "unsuitable", while 12% "found the duration suitable but the extension over a period of 11 weeks unsuitable". The History group reports that 78% stated "just right"; 22% "too long"; 44% must be shorter and concentrated on a shorter period". One suggested "The course should be held on ten consecutive days for cohesion and unity", another... "three times a week for the sake of continuity" and yet another "... one

full-day week during the holiday". The participants, on all the other courses (i.e. Italian, French and P.E.) all opined that the duration was appropriate. The Italian group's general opinion was that the spread was good but more than one weekly session is required.

Questions on the timing of the course provided a general opinion that courses run in the early months of the scholastic year would be more beneficial. P.E. course participants, in particular, pointed out that they preferred the course to be at the start of the year to avoid P.E. functions at school which take place at the end of the scholastic year. The majority of all the participants on all the courses stated that their five-day duties were concentrated over a four day time-table. This compressed full-teaching load together with the commitments of the refresher courses on one day proved tiring and very demanding. However all agreed that the launching of the INSET programme was a good thing which should be fostered and fully developed to meet the needs of teachers and schools.

Other comments

Responses for general recommendations and further suggestions provided valuable information. One of the teachers on the English course suggested "more methodology in the teaching of phonetics". Teachers on the History course were the most collaborative in providing personal remarks "We could do with more time for work at the Resource Centre", "We need a reference list of the latest articles, books, etc on Maltese History"; "Only those truly qualified in History should teach History"; and, on recruitment for in-service courses, one participant stated "Only those truly interested in in-service courses should attend...". The latter remark is in accordance with the opinion of most course tutors and lecturers. The case was more evident in the Maltese course. The majority of the course participants have been teaching Maltese for more than ten years (some for 25 years) - Analysis of the report indicated that the participants believed that their teaching experience makes INSET courses redundant. 90% of these participants reported that they benefitted more from the linguistics than any other area because this subject was new to them. However in each of all the other courses a high percentage reported that they benefitted from the course - "It was a good experience", or more emphatically "It met needs and expectations".

General conclusions

The co-ordinators of the in-service course and all the lecturers involved are earnestly concerned in evaluating INSET activities. The material provided in the reports is important data for further

discussions, analysis and decision-making. It is not easy to analyse collectively because the perspectives of participants on the same course vary and obviously will be different from those of the course tutors. The comments of the latter on the behaviour and attitude of the teachers on in-service training, presented a two-sided view which coincides with the view presented in the reports made in 1971 by Rosen⁴ and by Stibbs and Munt⁵. The first view is that teachers on an in-service course (especially those on workshop sessions).

'... behaved in much the same way as certain types of children in the classroom. Some felt threatened, avoided becoming involved, and thus remained with what they knew. Some began a task, found they could not do it, and perturbed by the apparent expertise of others and were defeated by a perfectionist attitude. Only a proportion took stock of the materials and resources provided, made up their minds what they wanted to do, and became absorbed in a task.'

The second view is more positive in nature. Most tutors observe that under careful guidance and given clear working guidelines, the majority of the teachers become absorbed in work in Language/Science laboratory, micro-teaching, productions and evaluation of educational material, discussions, seminar work, field work and all other forms of practical work. Their attitude becomes professional and outstandingly effective and successful. The writer, like the majority of the tutors, subscribes to this view. Most teachers want to have a clear understanding of their professional aims and it is also evident that they enjoy satisfaction in their work.

In concluding, it is encouraging to note that the majority of the participants said that they benefitted from the experience because it provided an opportunity to meet and work with other people from other schools, who share the same problems and have the same interests. They were able to discuss matters without fear of criticism. The experience helped them to understand their work.

The reports submitted provided immediate feedback but most important it provided the teachers on these INSET activities with the opportunity to participate in evaluation decisions⁶. The exercise promoted a fruitful dialogue between the in-service courses policy makers, the programme designers, the evaluators and the teachers. The contribution of the latter is of course the most important factor of the whole exercise, because as Henerson⁷ states:

'Evaluation cannot be learned from a book: the evaluator's skills, as any skills, are

(continued on bottom of p.30)

in-service courses

After the successful completion of inservice courses for teachers of English, History, French, Maltese, Italian and Physical Education in the Secondary Schools as well as a short course for Primary School teachers in Private Schools, the Faculty of Education widened the scope of its programme of inservice training by offering courses in the teaching of Infant classes, the teaching of Physics and an initial course in Pedagogy for Trade School Instructors. These courses were organized in close collaboration with the Department of Education and Education Officers were closely involved in the planning of both the Infants and Physics courses.

For these courses, the Infants teachers and the Trade School Instructors were released for one whole day a week from their respective schools. In the case of the Physics course, sessions were held on one afternoon a week. However, all three courses, as other similar courses, were of sixty hours duration. On successful completion of the course participants were awarded a certificate of attendance.

Course for Teachers of Infant Classes

Each session of this course was divided into three activities. Participants were first given a lecture by a member of the faculty staff on topics such as: Child Development with Special Reference to the First Period of Growth; Introducing a Second Language; Music, Movement and the Developing Child. The second activity consisted of a lecture by Mr Hans Paul Joachim Liebschner from the Froebel Institute, London, on activities in the Infant School. Topics such as: Children in the Home Corner, Activities with Bricks and Puzzles, the Water Tray and Sand Tray, and Painting and Drawing were discussed.

The afternoon activity then consisted of a seminar led by the Education Officer for infant teaching and staff from the Faculty of Education.

Course for Physics Teachers

The primary aim of this course was the widening of the teachers own understanding of Physics topics relevant to the Secondary School syllabuses. However, the participants were also invited to consider and discuss professional issues of relevance to the teaching of Physics.

The Physics areas emphasised during the course were: Wave Theory, Electricity and Magnetism, and Atomic Physics. Several methods of instruction were used including lectures, demonstration, seminars and discussion but individual practical work in the laboratory predominated. The following professional issues and their implications for science teaching were discussed during the course: the Nature of Science, the Psychological Development of Children, the Language Aspect of Learning Science, and the Role of Assessment and Education in Science.

Course in Pedagogy for Trade School Instructors

The main aim of this course was to introduce instructors to theoretical background and, specially, the practical requirements of modern methods of teaching. It consisted of lectures on Educational Psychology and SocioCultural Aspects in Education but the primary emphasis was on Instructional Design, Microteaching and Educational Technology. In these latter areas, the participants engaged in seminars and discussions as well as in teaching experiences and the production of a range of resources for teaching their own trade.

Frank Ventura

Quelle est la place accordée à la didactique du F.L.E. au sein de la Faculté d'Éducation?

Lawrence Seychell

Abstract:

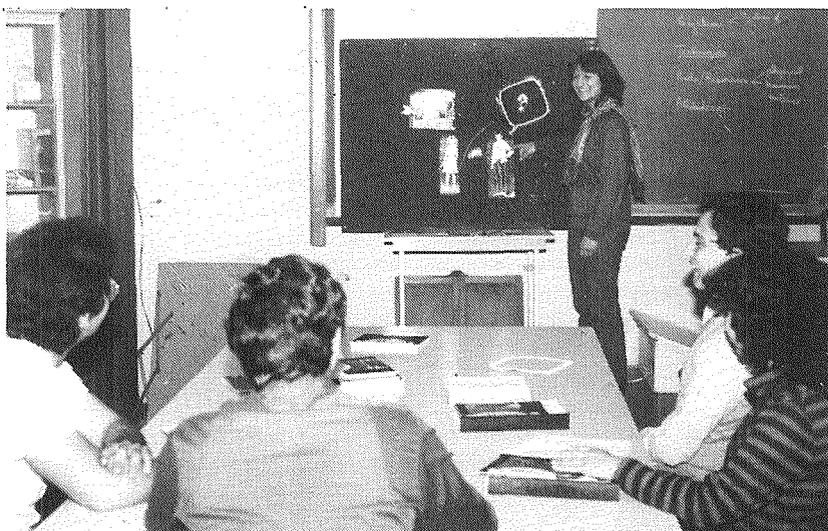
In this short article dealing with present situation of the teaching of French as a foreign language in the Faculty of Education, one may note the following points:

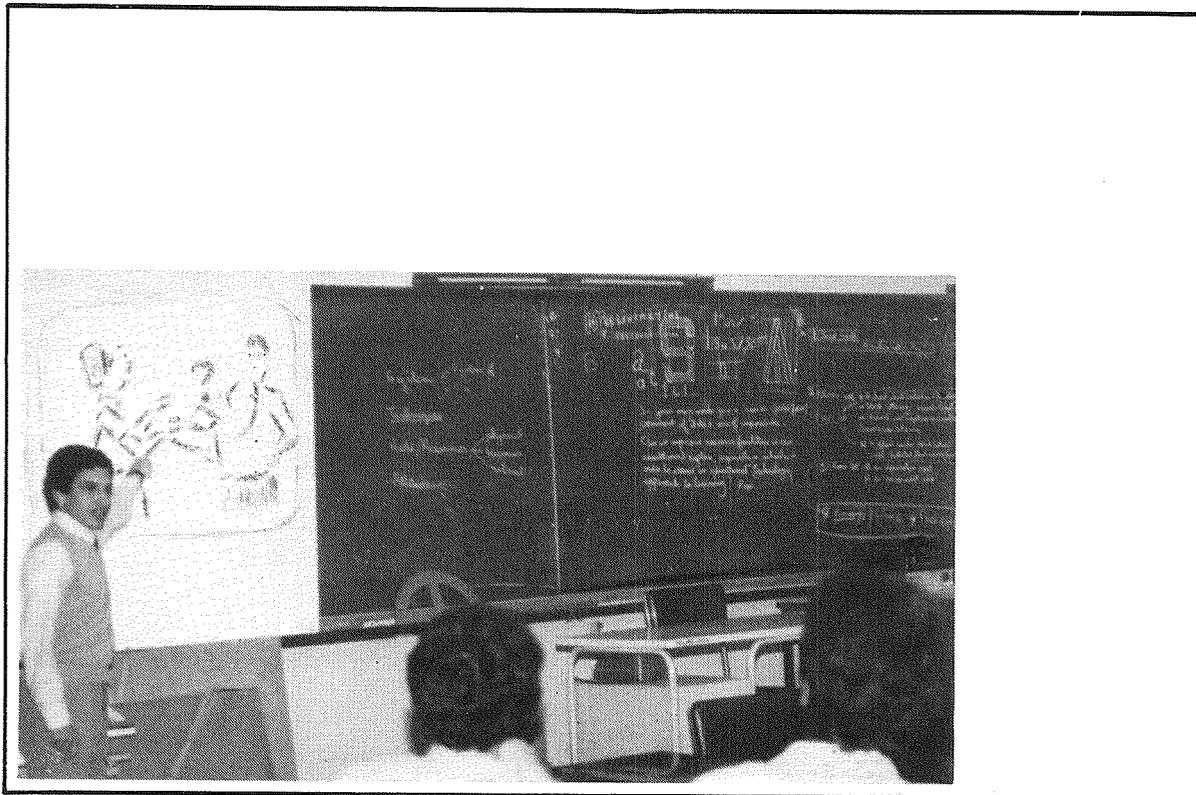
- a) Taking into account the fact that French occupies the 4th or 5th place of importance in the sphere of language teaching in Malta, the author feels that language methodology should be given priority over Methodology in Literature and Culture.
- b) Since the Capelle Method (*La France en Direct* by J & G Capelle) is wholly based on utterance Linguistics we do our best to give our students sufficient training in that particular area without ignoring the pragmatic approach "Linguistique de l'énonciation". The latter gives our students the opportunity of keeping in touch with modern trends in language teaching.
- c) Our students undergo a period of practical instruction during which they observe teachers in Secondary State Schools using the Capelle method with adolescents. The students themselves take over for short periods. In both cases the students are continuously supervised.
- d) It is regrettable that there is no University examination which tests the language skills imparted to our Secondary school pupils through this method of teaching French. The author hopes that with the help of advisers from French Universities, a suitable examination will be devised in the near future.
- e) Finally, the author would like to invite all those interested in French Language and Culture to visit the University with a view to consulting the students' own work in French Methodology.

En principe toute discipline à la Faculté d'Éducation, qu'elle soit scientifique ou non, doit réserver une place primordiale à la didactique dans le cursus universitaire, si elle veut être en conformité avec la

notion d'Éducation. Dans une Faculté comme la nôtre il ne suffit pas de dispenser un enseignement centré uniquement sur des théories de la substance. On doit prévoir une large place à l'art ou à la science d'enseignement.

En français il s'agit d'une méthodologie de la langue, tout en laissant de côté, hélas, toute méthodologie relevant d'un enseignement littéraire ou culturel. Cela s'explique facilement: vu la place qu'occupe le français à Malte (4^e langue voire la 5^e) nos besoins immédiats sont uniquement linguistiques. La formation méthodologique des futurs enseignants démarre en 2^e année universitaire, la première année étant une période de consolidation de la langue: laboratoire de langues, débats en classe. . . . Le travail en didactique du F.L.E. se fait uniquement sur la méthode audio-visuelle *La France en Direct* (Niveaux 1 et 2) de J.et G.Capelle. Cette méthode est en vigueur à Malte dans les établissements secondaires d'État depuis 1971. Les théories structuraliste et générativiste étant à la base de cette méthode, nous avons pensé à donner une formation adéquate en linguistique de l'énoncé à nos futurs enseignants. Cependant rien





ne nous empêche de porter aux connaissances de nos étudiants d'autres théories scientifiques comme celles élaborées en linguistique de l'énonciation, ce qui nous permet de défricher le terrain aux méthodes pragmatiques ou de communication.

On aborde les problèmes linguistiques, pédagogiques et techniques des Niveaux 1 et 2 au cours de séances théoriques. Des démonstrations de classes (en simulation d'ailleurs) s'alternent avec les cours théoriques en vue de minimiser le niveau d'abstraction. Les intéressés sont appelés parfois à manipuler les moyens audio-visuels mis à notre disposition: magnétophone, bandes magnétiques, projecteur (film fixe), tableau de feutre plus les figurines. L'expérience pédagogique dans un milieu scolaire maltais constitue une étape cruciale pour les étudiants, surtout quand il s'agit de présenter un dossier entier ou une partie de dossier à une classe d'enseignés. Pour ce qui est de l'observation de classes on tâche, dans la mesure du possible, de mettre les stagiaires en contact avec des professeurs en poste qui suivent la méthode de très près. Pendant cette phase d'observation les étudiants sont guidés par une liste quasi exhaustive de principes directeurs sur le triangle professeur-méthode-enseigné. Les stagiaires ne sont pas abandonnés à leur sort tout au long de ce contact pédagogique. Nous sommes toujours prêts à leur offrir notre concours.

On constate avec amertume qu'il n'existe pas

à ce jour un examen de fin de cours qui soit l'aboutissement de la méthode en vigueur. Cette situation dramatique nous a amenés à créer une unité de valeur qui est censé colmater les lacunes subsistant entre la formation audio-visuelle et l'examen. On est conscient du fait que nos futurs enseignants ainsi que les professeurs exerçant leurs fonctions dans les établissements secondaires d'État éprouvent des difficultés certaines en essayant de franchir cette étape transitoire. Il en est de même pour les enseignants qui doivent assimiler deux méthodes opposées au cours du 1^{er} cycle du secondaire. Néanmoins, des solutions existent mais il faudra attendre que soient faits des pourparlers avec les autorités françaises avant que l'avatar n'ait lieu.

En fin de compte c'est une réflexion scientifique sur les produits des enseignés qui vient couronner ce travail en didactique du F.L.E. Les étudiants conscients des théories de la G.G.T. font une analyse psycho-pédagogique des entorses faites à la langue française. Les étudiants ne manquent pas d'inclure dans leurs travaux des thérapies pour pallier à ces infractions.

En conclusion nous aimerions que tous ceux qui contribuent à la diffusion de la langue et de la culture françaises à Malte viennent de temps en temps chez nous consulter les travaux en didactique de nos étudiants et participer, s'ils le souhaitent, aux ateliers de travail organisés au sein de la Faculté d'Éducation.

Issues and Events

International Student Exchange Programme

In recent months the University of Malta has been in touch with the International Student Exchange Programme (ISEP), a co-ordinating body based at Georgetown University, Washington D.C., which handles student exchanges between a large number of American Universities and Universities throughout the World. Negotiations have now been finalized so that the first exchanges can be effected later this year.

Two students from the Faculty of Education have been selected after a call for applications in January. The students are Terry Pace and



Margaret Cassar. In the United States these students will be attached to an American University and given teaching practice assignments. The duration of this exchange will be from September 1983 to February 1984.

To complement this, the Faculty of Education will be receiving two American students for the same period.

The exchange system is on a totally reciprocal basis. It implies that when Maltese students go on this programme to an American Institution, they will be exempted from all tuition fees and receive full board and lodging plus certain other facilities which American students are entitled to. The American students

coming to Malta are entitled to the same benefits.

The Ministry of Education is materially supporting this programme by hosting the guest students and by granting paid leave to selected students.

It is hoped that the exchange programme will be an ongoing one so that all students will have the opportunity of applying in the course of their studies.

Domenic Fenech

Visit by Ms P.M. Curtis

Ms P.M. Curtis, Senior Lecturer at Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham, United Kingdom, visited the Faculty of Education recently and gave lectures in Textiles, Fabrics and Creative Designs to students of Home Economics in the B.Ed. (Hons.) Course and in the Needlecraft Diploma Course.

Ms Curtis was an External Examiner for the B.Ed. degree in the Universities of Leeds and in Sheffield. For many years she has been on the Cambridge Board of Examiners for the G.C.E. at the 'O' and 'A' Levels for Home Economics subjects.

Her visit which was sponsored by EEC funds was made possible with the initiative of the Faculty of Education and the cooperation of Prof O'Neil, A/Director at Trent Polytechnic and of Prof W. Middlebrook, the Head of Department of Education Studies at that College.

Short Seminar on 'Pneumatics'

The Faculty of Education contributed towards the organisation of a short seminar which was offered by FESTO (Switzerland) pneumatic specialist, Mr. G. Strauss. The seminar was held on 29th March at the Science Lecture Theatre of the University of

Malta.

Participants included personnel from industries, lecturers and students from the B.Sc. course, instructors in Trade Schools and teachers in Technical Institutes. Also attending were Mr. R. Borg, Assistant Director of Education (Technical) and Mr. M.F. Fearn, Education Officer (Technical)

The programme included lectures, discussion and a multi-media presentation (slides, video and overhead projector transparencies) on the subject of Pneumatics. The seminar was organised in collaboration with Mr. L.D. Zammit, Head of the Fellenberg Training Centre for Industrial Electronics, Corradino, Paola.

One Day Seminar on Educational Broadcasting

The Faculty of Education sponsored the Educational Broadcasting Unit (T.X.E.) for a one day seminar on: 'The role of Educational Broadcasting in Education'. The seminar was held on 1st March 1983 at the Assembly Hall of the University of Malta.

Participants included teachers, heads of schools, education officers, lecturers and student-teachers, and officers involved in educational broadcasting. Also attending were Mr. L.A. Farrugia, Director of Education and the assistant Directors of Education Mr. R. Borg and Miss. H. Borg Bonnici.

The programme was opened by the Minister of Education Dr. Philip Muscat, who stressed the importance of evaluating educational broadcasting in order to promote further developments to meet school needs.

Prof. C.J. Farrugia, Head of the Faculty of Education, commented on the need to consider the utilisation of the 'newer' media for school educational programmes.

Mr. M. Azzopardi, head of the School Broadcasting Unit, emphasised that the objective of the seminar was to specify the role of Educational Broadcasting for the future.

The participants were grouped in fifteen workshops. They discussed the various aspects which included broadcasts for Primary and Secondary Schools, corresponding publications and educational broadcasting for general viewing. Each group leader submitted a report which recommended measures to be implemented to effect further developments. Of particular note are the recommendations vis-a-vis: formats and content of the literary publications, medium of transmission and content of programmes which include the introduction of a new series for secondary schools.

The organising committee was formed from representatives from the following institutions: Faculty of Education (Mr. G. Bonnici), Ministry of Education (Mr. J. Borg), Education Department (Mr. C. Xerri). The committee wishes to thank all the participants for the valuable contribution towards this field of education.

George Bonnici

Staff Seminars On Pedagogy

This semester a series of fortnightly seminars on various aspects of pedagogy for members of staff was organized in the Faculty. The overriding purpose was to provide an opportunity for tutors to exchange views and identify and agree effective pedagogical approaches which could be adopted in the Primary School classroom.

Each seminar was led by a member of staff who addressed a specific curriculum issue, followed by a general discussion. The seminars held so far focused on the preparation of a scheme-of-work, English Reading at Primary School Level, the Social Studies scheme-of-work and teaching Maltese Language to Primary School children. They were led by Mr. Joe Fenech, Mr. Joe Pirota, Mr. Michael Sant and Miss Mary Rose Gatt respectively.

The Prospectus

The new issue of the Prospectus of the Faculty of Education was published early this year. It contains information about the structure of the Faculty, the academic staff, the Bachelor of Education and other courses and the educational resources available in the Faculty.



There is also an appendix giving details of the units offered in the B.Ed. Programme

The Prospectus is meant to meet a variety of needs. Prospective students will find information about entry requirements and course structure. Information about the units offered in the various areas of study, the course work plan and procedures of assessment are

valuable to students in the Faculty. Teachers serving in schools may be interested in the Inservice and Diploma courses the Faculty offers. There is also information especially addressed to foreign students who are interested in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language.

Joe Fenech

Appreciation: Dr. F. Chetcuti

Dr. Joe Debono
(Asst. Director of Education)

Although everyone knew that he had left the Public Service for reasons of health, the sudden death of Dr. Francis Chetcuti, ex-Director of Education, shocked and benumbed all those who had seen him regain his exuberant verve for work and all-out endeavour to see things done quickly and well.

I was privileged enough to work close to him for a number of years and in a variety of roles, and in all our dealings, I invariably found him a sincere and reliable friend as well as a wise and understanding mentor. I especially admired his incredible acumen when tackling difficult and complex problems.

In his bubbling, bustling zest for an elusive ideal, he was occasionally impatient with lethargic mediocrity, but deep down he sincerely respected all those who worked with him - high and low - and there are many today, I know, who if only out of gratitude, are in duty bound to offer a fervent prayer for a gentleman who in a critical moment of dire need and distress, offered his protective help and benign, fatherly advice.

His demise has deprived Maltese education of a talented and dedicated leader who, during a critical period of great changes in local, time-honoured 'mores' and traditional practices, sacrificed his health in an all-out endeavour to give our Island an educational system that, while serving our newly-oriented national aspirations, did not transgress accepted pedagogic norms.

One of his major contributions was in the field of Teacher-Training, where he left his mark not only on the local scene as lecturer and protagonist in the re-organization of Teacher-Training but also on foreign soil - setting up Teacher-Training Colleges and lecturing, during his U.N.E.S.C.O. appointment.

May the good God grant him the eternal rest that he so richly deserved.

Meeting Teachers' needs...

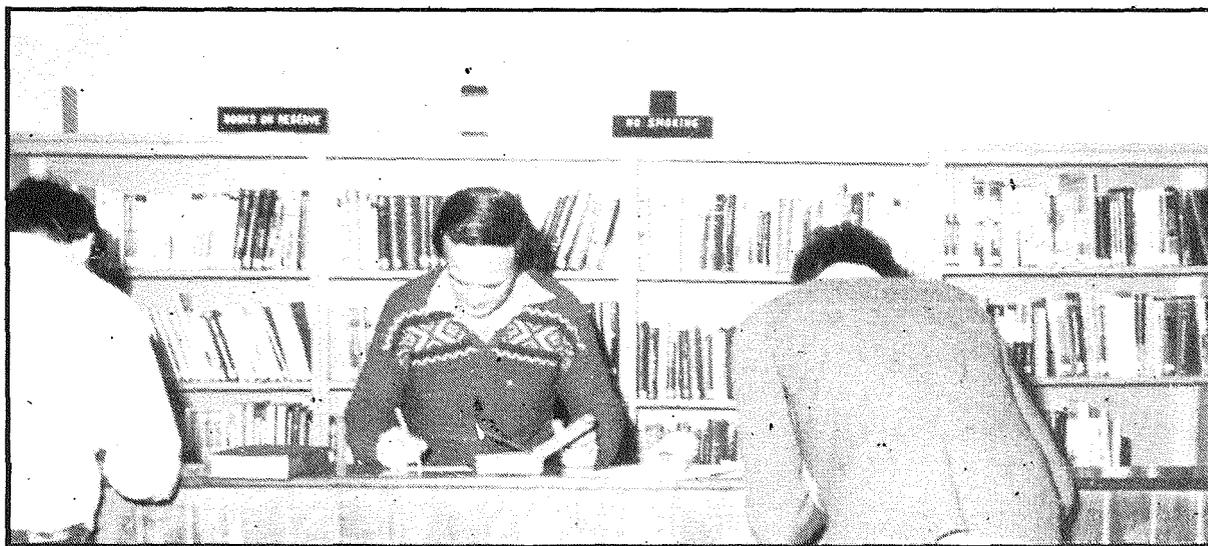
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mastered by practice... Evaluation is not, however, a task which need be or should be the province of a special cadre of practitioners: it is an activity in which all those engaged in in-service training - administrators, teacher-trainers of various kinds and teachers - can and should take part.

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At a Glance



B.Ed. Dissertations

The Faculty of Education considers research in education as an important corner-stone of the B.Ed.(Hons) course. Students are required to submit a dissertation appropriately supervised to satisfy their final assessment requirements. This provides both an important discipline for the student and a service to the teaching profession as research gives a true picture of problems and achievements and can enlighten educational decisions.

Abstracts of these dissertations are published from time to time in a special booklet available in the Faculty for consultation. The second volume which contains 92 abstracts of dissertations submitted in 1981 has just been issued. It is comprehensively indexed, giving the reader the chance to make quick cross-reference to the material covered. The areas of research cover Educational Theory and Pedagogy and Main Subject Specialization.

The titles of dissertations presented by the B.Ed.(Hons) students in 1982 we are publishing below indicate some of these research areas.

DISSERTATION TOPICS: 1978-82 B.Ed.(Hons) Students

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1. Abdilla, J.,
Buhagiar, J., | <i>A Field Study Scheme at Villa Psaijon</i> | 8. Buttigieg, M.A., | <i>Giuseppe Vella (1827-1912): His Life and Musical Works with special reference to Missa de Requiem</i> |
| 2. Agius, C.V., | <i>Deborah - The First 1000 Days</i> | 9. Cachia, P., | <i>Aspects of the Language of Maltese 5-Year Olds</i> |
| 3. Aquilina, P., | <i>Letteratura u Kitba oħra bil-Malti għat-Tfal f'xi Ġurnali Maltin sas-sena 1946</i> | 10. Camenzuli, M., | <i>The Education of the Person in the Secondary School Curriculum</i> |
| 4. Attard, J., | <i>Supplementary Reading: A Survey</i> | 11. Camilleri, J., | <i>Conservation of Number Among Maltese Children</i> |
| 5. Bezzina, C., | <i>Teaching English Poetry in Forms I and II: Method and Approaches</i> | 12. Berry, P.,
Camilleri, L., | <i>Influence on Mathematical Attainment</i> |
| 6. Brincat, M., | <i>Teaching Aspects from the Mediterranean: A Thematic Approach</i> | 13. Camilleri, M.A., | <i>A Study of the Development of the School Library in Government Schools</i> |
| 7. Attard, R.,
Bugeja, B., | <i>A Survey on Handedness, Nailbiting, Motor Skills, Copying Ability and Height of Maltese Children aged 4 and 5 years</i> | 14. Camilleri, M.,
15. Camilleri, V., | <i>Children's Humour
Surveys u Intervisti dwar il-Letteratura Maltija għat-Tfal</i> |

16. Camilleri Galea, C., *Primary School Geography in Nineteenth Century Malta*
17. Cefai, C., *Aspects of the Social Life and Education in Żebbuġ, Gozo in the Twentieth Century*
18. Bonanno, P., Cini, F., *Production and Evaluation of Teaching Aids in Biology*
19. D'Amato, A., *I Libri di Testo d'Italiano Nelle Scuole Medie Maltesi*
20. Farrugia, A.M., *A Normative Study of Six and Seven Year Old Maltese Children*
21. Farrugia, N.P., *Uno Studio Scientifico Sulle Devianze Ortografiche in un Dettato d'Italiano*
22. Galea, F., *A Study of the Distribution of Piagetian Developmental Stages in Maltese Female Pupils*
23. Gambin, E., *Il-Futbol f'Malta*
24. Gerardi, F., *Guidelines in Physical Education for Maltese Teachers*
25. Gilson, E., *The Form I Geography Curriculum: Basic Concepts and Skills*
26. Grima, L., *Une Étude de la Chanson Française en tant que Moyen Pédagogique pour l'Enseignement de la langue et de la Civilisation*
27. Livorj, V., *Religion and its place in Education with particular reference to Malta*
28. Mangion, D., *L'Apprentissage de la Langue Française à travers la Culture Maltaise*
29. Martinelli, V., *Problems Encountered by the Maltese Learner of English in Operating the English Prepositional System*
30. Mifsud, R., *Un' Analisi degli Errori Morfologici Commessi in Italiano da 250 Discenti Maltesi*
31. Mifsud, J., *It-Tagħlim tal-Malti lit-Tfal Batuti fl-Ewwel Tliet Klassijiet ta' l-Iskejjel Primarji*
32. Mifsud, J., Vella, M., *Teaching English to Slow Learners in Year Four*
33. Schembri, C., *The Development of the Worker-Student Scheme in Malta*
34. Schembri, D., *Influenze Reciproche fra Letteratura e Opera Lirica nel Romanticismo*
35. Scicluna-Calleja, A., *Coping with Change: A Challenge to the Maltese Educational System*
36. Seychell, C., *Adolescent Sensitivity Towards Moral Values*
37. Spiteri, G., *Il-Letteratura Maltija għat-Tfal fix-Xandir*
38. Zammit, J., Zammit Lupi, B., *Education as a Process of Liberation*
39. Zammit Satariano, M., *A Study of a Home Economics Test*
40. Borg, N.C., Pace, M., *A Study of the Leisure Time of a Sample of Maltese Secondary School Pupils*

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE BONNICI is lecturer in Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. He holds a Diploma in Special Education (London). As lecturer in charge of the Resource Centre, he is involved in the promotion of 'new' educational media and techniques. At present, he is engaged in research work into the aspects of educational innovation and change in relation to the development of in-service education and training of teachers in Malta.

MARIO BUHAGIAR holds a B.A. (Hons) and M. Phil. in History of Art from the University of London. He is the author of several studies on Maltese art and archaeology. Between 1967 and 1971 he was seconded to the National Museum Department to assist in the compilation of the Protective Inventory of Monuments and Sites. He teaches history in a government secondary school.

JOSEPH FENECH lectures in Socio-Cultural Aspects of Education and General Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. His research interests lie in the fields of Pedagogy and Curriculum Development.

JOACHIM LIEBSCHNER is a former lecturer in child development at the Froebel Institute of Education, Roehampton. Since his retirement he has been doing free-lance lecturing in various universities and institutes of education. At the moment he is a guest-lecturer in Human Development in the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. He has done research on Friedrich Froebel, the nineteenth century German educator.

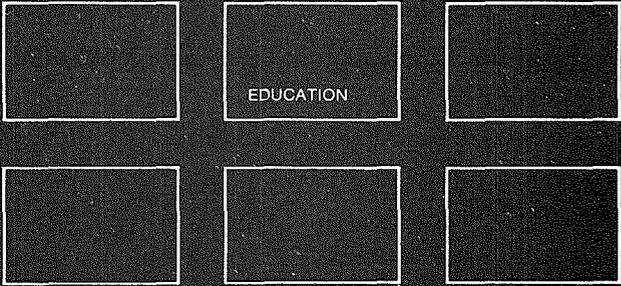
MICHAEL A. SANT is senior lecturer in History and Social Studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. He has wide teaching experience at all levels and has participated in various courses and seminars abroad. He is currently engaged in the production and publication of teaching material in Maltese History.

LAWRENCE SEYCHELL spent seven years at the Sorbonne University (Paris). After studying French Literature for 3 years he was awarded the D.E.U.G. and the Licence ès L. He spent another 4 years studying French linguistics and methodology after which he obtained the M.ès. Ling., the D.E.A. and the D.ès. Ling. He is lecturer and coordinator of French at the University of Malta. His main interests lie in developing the methodology area. In conjunction with the Sorbonne University he is conducting research work in the field of examinations.

FRANK VENTURA has studied science at the University of Malta and science education at the University of Reading, U.K. He has taught at various levels in government schools since 1960 and lectured in science pedagogy in the Department of Educational Studies since 1977. Currently he is conducting an evaluation of the science course offered in the lower forms of the secondary school.



The University of Malta



Faculty of Education Prospectus

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