

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES WHICH
CHARACTERISE THE SUCCESSFUL TEACHER
MALTESE VIEWS AND IMPLICATIONS

NADIA DEMICOLI

A Dissertation Presented to

THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

In part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor in Education (Honours)

at the

University of Malta

May, 1998



University of Malta Library – Electronic Thesis & Dissertations (ETD) Repository

The copyright of this thesis/dissertation belongs to the author. The author's rights in respect of this work are as defined by the Copyright Act (Chapter 415) of the Laws of Malta or as modified by any successive legislation.

Users may access this full-text thesis/dissertation and can make use of the information contained in accordance with the Copyright Act provided that the author must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

NADIA DEMICOLI

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES WHICH CHARACTERISE THE SUCCESSFUL TEACHER : MALTESE VIEWS AND IMPLICATIONS

The attempt to define the competencies of a successful teacher and to use these as a means of informing and evaluating the curriculum of initial teacher training has a substantial history abroad. The main aim of this dissertation was to bring this debate to the local situation by investigating within the Faculty of Education the nature and scope of competencies. The study was conducted between January-March 1998 and it was carried out by distributing 32 questionnaires amongst academic members of the Faculty of Education and by conducting 17 interviews. The questionnaire was designed to extract the Faculty members' disposition towards competencies and a competencies-based initial teacher training. It was also designed to elicit those competencies which the Faculty members rated highest in order of importance for the making of a successful teacher. The interviews were designed to obtain an in-depth picture of what competencies a teacher should develop to teach effectively a particular subject at Primary level. Through the analysis of the data, it was revealed that the majority of the members agreed with a competencies-based initial teacher training but only when competencies were taken to include not only the observable teaching skills but also the professional values, attitudes and knowledge.

B.Ed (Hons.)
May 1998

KEYWORDS : COMPETENCIES, INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL VALUES, TEACHING SKILLS, PRIMARY EDUCATION, COURSE EVALUATION.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped and assisted me to complete this work, in particular :

My tutor, Dr. Joseph Mifsud Ph.D. (QUB), for his patience, guidance, and advice.

All the members of the Faculty of Education, both academic and others, in particular the secretarial staff of the Primary Department, for bearing my presence and for their kind and fruitful collaboration.

I also wish to thank my parents for their patience, understanding and continuous encouragement throughout the writing of this dissertation.

*for my parents -
Doris and Joe*

my first teachers

CONTENTS

Abstract..... ii

Statement of Authenticity..... iii

Acknowledgements..... iv

Dedication..... v

Contents..... vi

Chapter 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Responding to change.....1

1.2 Education.....1

1.2.1 The role of the school.....3

1.2.2 The role of the teacher.....5

1.3 The Concept of Teaching.....6

1.3.1 Subject Matter Knowledge.....9

1.3.2 General Pedagogical Knowledge.....9

1.3.3 Pedagogical Content Knowledge..... 10

1.3.4 Knowledge of Context..... 10

1.4 On Becoming a Teacher - Teacher Education..... 10

1.4.1 Aims in Teacher Education.....12

1.4.2 4 Traditions in Initial Teacher Training.....13

1.5 Move towards competencies.....14

1.5.1 The nature of competencies.....15

1.5.2 Benefits of competencies.....17

1.5.3 Debate about competencies.....19

Chapter 2 - INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING IN MALTA

2.1 Historical Glimpse.....21

2.2 Present Initial Teacher Training.....23

2.3 Changing Times.....24

Chapter 3 - METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aim of present study.....27

3.2	Compilation of Literature Review.....	27
3.3	Method of Research.....	28
3.4	Questionnaire.....	28
3.5	Interviews.....	29

Chapter 4 - ANALYSIS

4.1	Introduction.....	32
4.2	Competencies related to professional characteristics.....	34
	4.2.1 Values.....	34
	4.2.2 Professional development.....	35
	4.2.3 Personal development.....	36
	4.2.4 Communication and relationships.....	37
	4.2.5 Synthesis and application.....	38
4.3	Competencies related to professional knowledge.....	39
	4.3.1 Knowledge and understanding of children and their learning.....	39
	4.3.2 Subject knowledge.....	40
	4.3.3 Knowledge of the curriculum.....	40
	4.3.4 Knowledge of the education system.....	41
	4.3.5 Knowledge of the teacher's role.....	42
4.4	Competencies related to professional skills.....	43
	4.4.1 Subject application.....	43
	4.4.2 Classroom methodology.....	44
	4.4.3 Class management.....	45
	4.4.4 Assessment and recording.....	46
	4.4.5 The wider role.....	46
4.5	Others.....	47
4.6	Competencies related to specific subject matter and pedagogical context knowledge.....	47
	4.6.1 Maths.....	47
	4.6.2 Languages.....	48
	4.6.3 Religion.....	49
	4.6.4 Social Studies.....	50
	4.6.5 Science.....	51
	4.6.6 Arts.....	51
	4.6.7 I.T.....	52
	4.6.8 Media.....	53
	4.6.9 Physical Education.....	53
	4.6.10 Environment.....	53

4.6.11 Philosophy.....	54
------------------------	----

Chapter 5 - CONCLUSIONS

5.1	Suggestions.....	57
	5.1.1 Entry point.....	57
	5.1.2 Structure of the course.....	58
	5.1.3 The teacher education curriculum.....	58
5.2	Limitations of the study.....	59
5.3	Further Suggestions.....	59
	References.....	61
	Appendix 1.....	66
	Appendix 2.....	73
	Appendix 3.....	125

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Responding to Change

“The role of change in the human milieu is faster than ever before and is expected to accelerate even further.” (Mizzi, 1996, pg. 5) The twentieth century has experienced more social transformations than any other period in history. These social transformations have been brought about by a rapid development in technology which managed to trigger off development in every aspect of our life. We are turning to a future that is much less predictable. “Whatever the future holds it must be different from anything we can now imagine...change, not stability will be the one sure force in our society” (Henderson & Perry, 1981, pg. 1). It is impossible to deny this change ; if we do we would be anachronistic and ill-equipped. This does not only apply to individuals but also to institutions and systems.

1.2 Education

If society changes, so must the educational systems but unfortunately, “throughout the world, education systems have been accused of being extremely conservative social institutions that respond very slowly, if at all, to social changes and advances in technology” (Bezzina, 1990, pg. 20). Frank Mallia (1993) managed to summarise this very effectively when he said that if we realise that “education is for tomorrow, a teacher teaching for today and relying on what he prepared yesterday would not be shouldering his responsibility” (pg. 11). This thinking is in line with a UNESCO publication which states that “society, if it is to survive and advance must try to foresee the form it will have to take tomorrow, education, like any other national undertaking cannot fail to prepare for its future” (Thomas, 1968, pg. 17).

This need to respond to change is being felt by local authorities in the subject. Charles Farrugia (1994) feels that “it is time to evaluate the present situation in order to prepare for and meet future demands” (pg. 1). A Consultative Committee on Education was more radical in its approach. Rather than mere ‘evaluation’ it felt the need for ‘reconceptualisation’. Tomorrow’s Schools : Developing Effective Learning Cultures (1995) is a report compiled by the same committee. This report was seen as “a starting point for a possible re-examination and revision of our current policies and practices in the light of the demands made on the individual and on society by a fast changing world” (pg. 1).

In discussing the aims of education one has to keep in mind that “education as such has no aims only persons, parents and teachers etc. have aims, not an abstract idea like education” (Dewey, 1944, pg. 107). As far back as 1929, A. N. Whitehead, clearly states that “scraps of information have nothing to do with it” (pg. 1). Television, computers, radios, books etc., all give easy access to up-to-date information presented in a very attractive form but this does not mean that one becomes an ‘educated’ person just by having access to this information. According to Whitehead, we should aim at producing men who possess both expert knowledge but also culture, where culture is referred to as “activity of thought and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling” (1929, pg. 1) and that “there is only one subject-matter for education and that is life in all its manifestations” (1929, pg. 6-7). This idea has been reflected and reproduced by practically all great thinkers on education from Plato to Dewey and Peters. Therefore, rather than just passing on a set of inert ideas or items of knowledge, teachers who are striving to achieve the ‘aims’ of education should try to give to their pupils the taste and the ability of continuous learning which is considered as the tool needed to equip pupils for an ever-changing future. A well-trained head is seen as better equipped than a well-filled head. Christopher Bezzina feels that “...both the traditionalist and the progressive, both the conservative and the liberal will agree about the aims (in the ultimate sense of aim) of education and yet see quite different means as being the appropriate way to achieve them.” (1994, pg. 28).

1.2.1 The Role of the School

In our era schools are the means to achieve our 'aims' of education and yet how much of what goes on inside the schools is actually education?

Radical educators such as Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer believe that schools try to do too many things which inhibit each other and that by their institutional nature they distort and teach us various undesirable lessons rather than what they intend. Moreover, "professional educators offer scant help in this regard since they themselves often disagree about the role and function of schools...some hold very conflicting views" (Farrugia, 1991, pg. 77). According to Philip G. Altbach (1987), although the ideas of Ivan Illich were so popular, nowadays they have much less influence than they used to and "...where they remain powerful, the stress is on 'humanising' traditional schools" (pg. 16-17) rather than de-schooling society. During an interview made by Charles Mifsud, Professor Peter Mortimore was asked to speak about his vision for education into the 21st Century. Professor Mortimore replied that although it is difficult to perceive what education would be like in the future due to the rapid technological revolution, he believes that :

"...schools as we know them will not disappear. Parents will still wish to have their children looked after ; young people will still wish to mix with their peers, societies will still need to impress upon their members the prevailing norms and values. Schools...are likely to remain the best vehicles for these tasks. It is an exciting thought that we will keep the positive aspects of schooling and draw on advances in technology in order to improve the opportunities for learning and thus greatly enhance the potential that exists within people." (1994, pg. 34)

In the article Improving the quality of schooling : In dire need of alternative perspectives, C. Bezzina believes that the school is "the essential unit of change if we really want to bring about quality improvement" (1990, pg. 20). This point is reinforced in the report Tomorrow's Schools which emphasises the fact that "schools do make a difference" (1995, pg. 24), both at the individual level and at the social level.

The author feels that it is important to reproduce a table which is found in the report Tomorrow’s Schools which lists the school factors of effectiveness, where an effective school is meant to be “one that caters for the well-being of its students and by so doing facilitates the development of the intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural, social and moral life of learners” (1995, pg. 24).

School Factors of Effectiveness

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE	LOCAL SITUATION
Purposeful Leadership	Limited Leadership : - overall control of administrative matters - limited control over curriculum design and development - limited contact with teaching staff - little to no classroom contact - hardly any involvement in classroom management
Vision : a common purpose with strategic planning (clear aims and goals)	Vision : swamped by exam demands
Teacher consistency	
Good classroom management	
Effective teaching and learning (eg. work centred environment, intellectually challenging teaching, limited focus within sessions.)	
Participative decision-making	No collaborative culture
Well-qualified staff	Varied staff members
Professional development policy and in-service training	A new policy has just been introduced
Good communication	Communication : limited
Professional working relationships	Teaching highly individualistic in nature
Interaction	Limited interaction of an <i>ad hoc</i> nature
Joint planning by teachers in staff development programmes	No joint planning
Supportive working environment High academic expectations	High academic expectations

A positive climate : good management of pupil behaviour	
Monitoring of pupil progress (record keeping)	Limited record keeping
Attractive school environment	School environment varies
Adequate school resources	Resources : varies from school to school
Smaller classes	
Parental involvement	Limited parental involvement
External links	

(Taken from the report Tomorrow Schools 1995, pg. 26)

1.2.2 The Role of the Teacher

The above table, which shows the school factors of effectiveness, brings us to a very important point. In order to operate effectively a school depends on a number of variables which are all bound by invisible fabrics of interrelated relationships. ‘Purposeful leadership’, ‘teacher consistency’, ‘intellectually challenging teaching’, ‘well-qualified staff’, ‘good communication’, ‘good management’ etc., all point out that one of the best resources in school and a major variable in determining school effectiveness is the teacher. Good teachers make good schools. This idea is echoed by a number of researchers interested in this field. The teacher is referred to as “the most expensive and important resource in any classroom”, “the most valuable resource” and as “the most effective facilitator of children’s learning” (Fisher, 1991 ; Dean, 1989). Goodlad (1984), as cited in C. Bezzina (1990), crudely puts it that teachers are “pointed at as both the primary cause of the current crisis and at the same time the best hope of its eventual resolution”. According to a UNESCO publication “reformers may build new schools, make changes in the structure and the curricula, recommend or prescribe particular teaching methods or aids ; in the end, everything will depend on the teachers who will be responsible for applying them” (Thomas, 1968, pg. 20). Attempts to diffuse new ideas widely through some central agency can be extremely difficult. Even when an idea is apparently accepted in school, implementation may never occur.

This is also true to our local situation. Charles Farrugia (1994) believes that :

“several factors contribute towards the making of a good school : pupils’ intellect and aptitude, the school’s environment and resources, parental and administrative support are important contributors. However, teacher’s attributes coupled with the head-teacher’s leadership qualities provide the most significant variable” (1994, pg. 14-15)

To Vince Vella good teaching is seen “as the single most important piece to solve the puzzle of achieving excellence in education” (1991, pg. 6). Christopher Bezzina (1991) agrees to this since he believes that “the quality of education offered in schools is...highly dependent on...the professional competence of the educators within the schools” (pg. 5). Therefore the ‘best’ school is not necessarily that which is the most completely equipped with resources, although such fortunate circumstances do help. The most important factor is the quality of the teaching staff.

Although here we are saying that a major variable to bring about school effectiveness is the competency of the teacher, Charles Mizzi believes that “even if individual teachers are able to establish good classroom practice in spite of badly functioning schools, and non-supportive educational authorities, this can last for short periods” (1996, pg. 5). This leads us to the fact that in order to bring about the desired change in our educational system we need good teaching. However, good teaching alone will not stand ; it should be backed by a good structure. Even if the teacher is the main factor in creating a positive learning environment there are also other matters that count. The ‘other matters’ go beyond the scope of this dissertation but one must always keep in mind that improvement in teacher development should complement and run parallel with other improvements.

1.3 The Concept of Teaching

“‘Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!’ said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. ‘Girl number twenty possessed of no

facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals! Some boy's definition of a horse, Bitzer yours... 'Quadruped, graminivorous, forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders; four eye-teeth and twelve incisive, sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth.' Thus (and much more) Bitzer. 'Now girl number twenty,' said Mr. Gradgrind 'You know what a horse is.' (Dickens, C., 1914, pg. 5)

As already noted, it is crucial to respond to change. Our concept of teaching, which determines the role of the teacher, has changed dramatically from the times of Charles Dickens. The dishing out of 'facts' only does not tally with the notion of education and with what we mean by 'teaching'.

According to B. O. Smith (1985) there have been four attempts to define the concept of 'teaching'. The first attempt was to define 'teaching' by referring to the conventional sense, that is, by giving a descriptive definition. A descriptive definition of teaching can be stated as follows : 'teaching is imparting knowledge or skills' (Smith, pg. 5097). Clearly this definition is very limited.

Another definition is that of 'teaching as success' which signifies the idea that learning is implicated in teaching. According to Dewey (1934) as cited in B. O. Smith (1985) "teaching is to learning as selling is to buying". Therefore teaching does not mean that some interaction is taking place but also that the learner is acquiring what is being taught. This seems a plausible definition of the concept of teaching but it is questionable as to what extent teachers' evaluation should be based upon in the achievements of their students. This is so especially when keeping in mind that teachers do not have control over all the variables that effect students' outcomes.

The third defines teaching as an 'intentional activity'. That is, "while teaching may not logically implicate learning it can be anticipated that it will result in learning. A teacher may not succeed, but he or she is expected to try to teach successfully" (Smith, 1985, pg. 5099). This idea is echoed by Hirst and Peters. These two maintain that teaching is an intentional

activity, the intention being simply to bring about learning. By stating that “teaching is...directed toward a certain result : it is a goal-oriented activity” (pg. 20) Israel Scheffler (1960), as cited in Macmillan, C. J. B. & Nelson, J. (1969), is also agreeing with this third definition of teaching as an ‘intentional activity’.

The fourth definition originates from the normative tradition. “The normative concept of teaching requires that the activities of teaching conform to certain ethical conditions” (Smith, 1985, pg. 5099). Hence, teaching is a generic term which designates a family of activities.

According to B.O. Smith a fifth definition of the concept of teaching is also emerging, a scientific definition of teaching which “in all probability will supersede the others” (1985, pg. 5097). In this form of definition ‘teaching’ is not explicitly defined but its meaning is implicated in the sentences where it occurs. This mode of defining brings our thinking closer to the observable and manipulatory level of experience than is possible by the classical form of definition. Therefore the concept of teaching is made up by a number of statements of competencies.

From all this we can conclude that the nature of the teacher’s job is to teach something to the children. That is, teachers stand in a very close relationship to both the children in their care and also to the curriculum. Therefore in teaching, the teacher or the individual must possess some kind of a knowledge base. According to Pamela L. Grossman (1990), “a number of models of teacher knowledge are currently being generated by researchers in this field” (pg. 4-5). Elbaz (1983) as cited in Grossman, includes five categories of knowledge ; knowledge of self, knowledge of the milieu of teaching, knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of curriculum development and knowledge of instruction. Leinhardt and Smith (1985) categorise teacher knowledge into two distinct areas, while researchers at Stanford define seven different categories of teacher knowledge. According to Pamela L. Grossman (1990) there are four general areas of teacher knowledge, that is, subject matter knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of context.

1.3.1 Subject matter knowledge.

Dewey (1933) believes that the teachers' "...own intellectual preparation in subject matter should be abundant to the point of overflow...much wider than the ground laid out in textbooks or in any fixed play for teaching a lesson" (pg. 274). According to Schwab (1964) as cited in Grossman (1990), subject matter knowledge includes knowledge of the content of a subject area which refers to the knowledge of major facts and concepts within a field and the relationships amongst them together with the knowledge of the substantive and syntactic structures of the discipline. The teachers' knowledge of the content to be taught is said to influence what and how they teach (Shulman & Grossman, 1987). When teachers have strong preparation in the content area they are more likely to be confident, plan their lessons in detail and be responsive to pupils whereas lack of content knowledge could lead to limited classroom discourse and limited repertoires of teaching strategies. This idea is acknowledged locally. Christopher Bezzina (1989) feels that "the teachers' expertise, with regard to their content, forms the basis of the teaching-learning situations" (pg. 23).

1.3.2 General Pedagogical Knowledge

Subject matter knowledge alone is not sufficient. Teachers should also possess a sound general pedagogical knowledge. According to Grossman (1990) this includes :

"...a body of general knowledge, beliefs and skills related to teaching ; knowledge and beliefs concerning learning and learners, knowledge of general principles of instruction...knowledge and skills related to classroom management...and knowledge and beliefs about the aims and purposes of education" (pg. 6).

1.3.3 Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Pamela L. Grossman (1990) believes that teachers, apart from using subject matter knowledge and the general pedagogical knowledge, also make use of pedagogical knowledge which is specific to the teaching of a particular subject matter. This pedagogical content knowledge is made up of four central components. The first one includes the knowledge and beliefs about the purposes of teaching a subject at different grade levels. The second includes knowledge of students' understanding, conceptions and misconceptions of particular topics within that subject. The third component includes knowledge of curriculum materials available for teaching that particular subject. The final component includes the knowledge of instructional strategies and representations for teaching particular topics, such as, repertoires of activities, metaphors, anecdotes etc.

1.3.4 Knowledge of Context

Teachers must also "...draw upon their understanding of the particular contexts in which they teach to adapt their more general knowledge to specific school settings and individual students" (Grossman, 1990, pg. 9).

1.4 On Becoming a Teacher - Teacher Education

From where does the prospective teacher acquire this knowledge base? Hilary Constable and Jerry Norton (1986) believe that "initiation into the rights and practices of teaching is a mysterious process" (pg. 123). Usually we believe that teacher education or rather socialisation into the profession is associated with attending a course or a programme which would lead to an Honours Degree or a Post Graduate Certificate in Education. The impact of this formal teacher education programme upon teachers' knowledge and beliefs regarding

teaching has been the subject of a considerable body of research (M. J. Dunkin, R.P. Precians and E. B Nettle, 1994) According to Robin J. Alexander (1986) :

“Professional groups validate their professional claim by reference to ‘expert’ knowledge, supposedly hard-won and rigorously tested but few people are naive enough to believe that in a job as complex as teaching such formal training provides the sole (or even the major) resource for subsequent professional thought and action.” (pg. 83)

Studies suggest that a person’s teaching repertoire originates from a variety of sources. Richard R. Powell (1992) in a study where he tried to investigate ‘other sources’ concludes that the intending teachers’ prior schooling experience as a student is one of the ‘other sources’. “Experiences as students provide prospective teachers with memories of strategies for teaching specific content” (Grossman, 1990, pg. 10), moreover “prospective teachers rely on their memories of themselves as students to help shape their own expectations of students” (Grossman, 1990, pg. 11). This helps to support conservatism of teaching as teachers replicate the strategies they observed or experienced as students. According to Powell (1992) the personal features of the intending teacher, that is, his or her personal needs, his or her belief and value system and also his or her personal learning style are other important sources of influence. Powell (1992) also mentions the life experiences of the individual. Under life experiences he mentioned that prior work experience, non classroom teaching, parenting or the fact that the intending teacher has relatives who are educators could all affect the knowledge base, and the socialisation of the individual. This idea is acknowledged locally. In a report made during a conference on ‘Teacher Training in Malta : Current Trends and Future Prospects’ it is stated that “...socialisation into teaching starts the moment he/she starts the first days at school” (Fenech, 1997, pg. 1). H. H. Tillema (1994) goes a step further. Apart from believing that “teachers...do have elaborated and substantive knowledge structures of their own, rooted in schemata, that have been gradually constructed on the basis of their experiences” (pg. 601) Tillema questions whether it is possible by means of just presenting new information to change already existing knowledge structures and thus to achieve new learning. Tillema (1994) concludes that “the greater the difference between

training content and teacher beliefs the less learning took place” (pg. 613) and hence this suggests that efforts to promote knowledge restructuring should take account of the pre-existing beliefs and ideas.

1.4.1 Aims in Teacher Education

The above arguments could be used to denounce the need for formal teacher education programmes since ‘teaching’ can be acquired through observation and experience. On the other hand, these same arguments could be used to point out that although the “teaching training course is but a brief part of this total cumulative educational experience” (Alexander, 1986, pg. 83) it is a crucial stage. It is so since, at this stage, the intending teachers should be challenged to re-think and critically evaluate and reflect upon their existing knowledge, beliefs, and values, together with acquiring innovative skills and practices which challenge conservative teaching and be more in time with the present needs.

A programme of teacher education seeks to prepare teachers. Therefore, its effectiveness is ultimately judged “by the degree to which it develops the competencies that are needed for the successful functioning of a teacher” (Schueler, 1971, pg. 64). Moreover, the training institution is expected to be “...at the forefront of progress in teaching, transmitting the latest and best in theory and practice” (Schueler, 1971, pg. 69).

Teacher education can be considered in three phases ; pre-service, also known as initial teacher training/education (ITT/E), induction and in-service (De Landsheere, 1985). Teacher education should normally comprise general education, specific subject mastery, strong psychological background and good command of instructional methods and techniques in the broad sense of these terms (De Landsheere, 1985). But in order to be effective a teacher education programme, especially the pre-service training, should not be an end in itself but a means to an end - if there is an ‘end’. Therefore “...as long as content

learning is an objective in itself, it does not influence field behaviour” (De Landsheere, pg. 5005).

The importance of teacher education is recognised by EURYDICE, which is the Education Information network in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries, as being that “...upon which the quality of education hinges” (1995, pg. 7). Locally it is stated that “there can be no change in the culture of teaching unless all teachers are trained - we consider it unprofessional and immoral to have unprepared people in schools, and to accept a situation where these are not” (Wain, 1995, pg. 38).

1.4.2 Four Traditions in Initial Teacher Training

Various researchers have identified different philosophies guiding the development of pre-service teacher education. C. I. Elliott (1993) distinguishes between three different kinds, while Liston and Zeichner (1991) identified four such traditions :

1. The ‘academic tradition’ which emerged from the attempt to establish education as a university discipline. Therefore the main emphasis is on the teaching of foundation disciplines and would dedicate less time to pedagogy and methodology. The teacher is treated more as a scholar and a subject specialist rather than a pedagogue.
2. The ‘social efficiency tradition’ also referred to as the ‘technicist’ view of education. This tradition is based on the scientific study of education with its basis in behaviouristic psychology and uses the economic principle of production and consumption to education. The emphasis is on the acquisition of competencies which need to be mastered for one to become an effective teacher.
3. The ‘developmentalist tradition’, also known as the ‘personal’ or the ‘humanist’ tradition, views the teacher as a reflective practitioner. This tradition of teacher training departs from

the vision of education that places priority on the needs of the learner and his or her development.

4. The 'social reconstructionist' tradition focuses mainly on the teachers' abilities to view social and political implications of actions. Education is seen as a means of promoting a more humane and just society. Therefore, teacher education programmes inspired by this tradition are likely to adopt a political agenda based on the idea of equality and equity where, for example, positive discrimination in favour of the poor and disadvantaged is advocated.

Listen and Zeichner (1991) point out that these 4 traditions are not necessarily mutually exclusive but they can come together to give a holistic view of teacher education.

1.5 Move towards Competency-based Teacher Education

By means of this dissertation the author intends to look more closely at the second model of teacher education at the pre-service stage, described as the 'social efficiency tradition' which is based on competency or performance-based teacher training.

Roger Aspland and Geoff Brown (1993) traced the history of this tradition. They found that interest in what came to be termed 'competencies' began in the vocational training areas. Therefore, initially it was concerned with technical training for employment in commerce and industry but then the competency-based approach took root also in professional training areas and it was no longer limited to the skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

According to J. H. Applegate (1989) performance or competency-based teacher education (P/CBTE) was a major effort to reform teacher education in the early 1970s. De Landsheere (1985) feels that this movement was a reaction against vagueness in teacher education, while W. R. Houston (1985) thinks that there were two forces, particularly in the

American society, which helped to support the development of this movement. The first was the emphasis on accountability and the second force was the need for personalization. Rapid changes in society and technology had led to a de-personalised society and so CBE was developed as a viable response to these two social forces. Applegate (1989) feels that although the competency-based movement had its roots in the early 1970s, nowadays there is a “resurgence of this movement” (pg. 86).

1.5.1 The nature of competencies

The basic concepts of the CBTE, according to W. R. Houston (1985), are simple and straightforward. It is based on and organised around the idea of effective teacher practice. Therefore, CBTE programmes consider what teachers should know and what they should be able to do and base the requirements on such outcomes. These requirements describe what the student-teacher must demonstrate for successful completion of the programme as stated in terms of ‘competencies’. To be competent ordinarily is defined as to be “capable, efficient, adequate, satisfactory” (Caxton Dictionary, 1976). Davies and Ellison (1997) define competence as the ability to do a particular task, while competency concerns the underlying characteristics which allow a person to perform well in a variety of situations.

Specifying competencies is a major factor in the programme design of this kind of teacher education. According to King (1993), Barr in 1929 specified 20 such competencies while in 1957 a Commission on Teacher Education developed an inventory of up to 148 teacher competencies. Cruickshank (1985), as cited in Applegate (1989), described six alternative ways in which competencies were identified :

1. They could be gleaned from research on those teaching abilities that are related to pupil achievement.
2. They could be provided by experienced educators judged to be experts.

3. They could be derived from polls of stakeholders in education.
4. They could be culled from literature.
5. They could be extracted from different teacher roles.
6. They could be the result from task analyses of teaching at different levels and in different curriculum areas.

Houston (1985) categorised competencies into five different classes :

1. Cognitive-based competencies which define the knowledge and the intellectual skills and abilities that are expected of the student teacher, such as, the prospective teacher should be able to list and illustrate five levels of questions.
2. Performance-based competencies by which the learner demonstrates that he can do something rather than simply know something. Therefore it defines skills and overt actions, such as, the prospective teacher should be able to lead a class discussion in which at least 50% of the students participate orally.
3. Consequence-based competencies, in order to demonstrate that a competency is acquired, the person is required to bring about changes in others. So, the criterion of success is not what one knows as in the cognitive-based model or what one can do as in the performance-based model but what one can accomplish.
4. Affective based competencies which define expected attitudes and values. These are more difficult to assess than the first three types, and moreover they are normally embedded in other competency statements.

5. Exploratory competencies which specify activities that promise significant learning. Therefore CBTE programmes offer the learner to work, for example, 30 hours in a community centre so as to provide opportunities for students to learn about teaching.

1.5.2 Benefits of competencies

The basis for CBTE, according to Houston (1985) is “its reliance on objectives specified in advance and known to the learner” (pg. 901). The rationale behind this idea is that “humans are goal oriented and that they are more likely to achieve such goals and objectives when overt actions are taken to achieve them” (Houston, 1985, pg. 901). Apart from this, Stanley Elam (1972) as cited in Houston (1985), suggested that other desirable elements are that instruction can be individualised and personalised, the learning experience of students is guided by regular feedback, the emphasis is on exit rather than on entrance requirements and also that instruction is modularised. Other benefits include the fact that the programme is field centred, that the base for programme decision making is broad and that materials and experiences focus on concepts, skills and knowledge which can be learned in a specific instructional setting. Therefore the attractions of the competency-based model are considerable. Roger Aspland & Geoff Brown (1993) believe that such a model offers clear potential benefits. Many of these echo what Stanley Elan suggested earlier on in 1972. The competency-based model helps to :

1. establish clearly identifiable goals for the training process for both trainers and students.
2. offer a framework for course design to meet the need for practical classroom skills.
3. offer a framework for performance assessment based on clear (and preferably objective) criteria.

4. emphasise the practical skills nature of teaching.
5. demonstrate performance competencies and therefore eliminates the need for a fixed training period or programme. Thus, students can proceed at the pace at which they can demonstrate the necessary classroom competencies.

According to a report made by DENI (Department of Education Northern Ireland) (1993) the competency-based model helps to “provide clearer goals for students” (pg. 2) and moreover “employers may gain greater confidence in what newly qualified teachers can do” (pg. 2). As to the second point, findings of a study made by M. Cameron-Jones and P. O’Hara (1994) support the fact that :

“when comments about students are included in their final reports, those comments are likely to be most helpful to employers if (i) they are not ungenerous in length and (ii) they contain evidence of what the student has done.” (pg. 213)

This shows that employers prefer a model which is based on ‘outcomes’ such as the competency model. It seems that the major benefit of the competencies approach is that it is “found...to be very useful as a focus for communication with students” (Foskett, N., Ratcliffe, M., & Brunner, D., 1986, pg. 45). Students know what is expected of them.

A study compiled by Enos at San Diego State University, as cited in Houston (1985), found that CBTE students had significantly greater knowledge about teaching and learning. In dozens of comparisons, CBTE trained teachers outperformed graduates of the traditional programme, being evaluated more highly by their supervisors and by employing principals on their first job. They had a wider repertoire of teaching and skills and believed that their preparation programme was better than that of other prospective teachers.

1.5.3 Debate about competencies.

There are differences of opinion concerning the nature and scope of competencies. Houston (1985) managed to summarise this debate over competencies and CBTE very effectively when he said that they are “lauded as the most effective process to prepare teachers” and yet “damned as a mechanistic approach” (pg. 890). But Les Tickle (1987) feels that :

“conventional training for routinely performed, competency-tested ‘teaching skills’ which are used to convey narrowly-defined curriculum content have not proved to be sufficient to meet the demands made of teachers...skilled teaching...would also go well beyond essential competence to develop what I will call professional excellence” (pg. 3).

This debate is also felt locally. Charles Mizzi (1996) believes that :

“dimensions of teacher quality should not be seen in term of narrow behavioural competencies but more in terms of dispositions. Teacher quality should be regarded as a holistic concept, that is, as a gestalt of qualities rather than a discrete set of measurable behaviours to be developed independently of each other” (pg. 9).

In view of this debate DENI (Department of Education Northern Ireland) stated that competencies “...should be taken to refer to knowledge, understanding and attitudes as well as to practical skills” (1993, pg. 3).

CHAPTER 2

Initial Teacher Training

in

MALTA

INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING IN MALTA

Although experiences of other countries can be useful in framing issues and raising questions, one should always keep in mind what De Landsheere (1985) said on the nature of teacher education. It is “...strongly dependent on the level of economic development and the social context...it is deeply influenced by the local culture and history” (pg. 5002).

Unfortunately “much of the literature of teacher training is concerned with the evolution of institutions rather than of ideas” (Goodings, R., Byram, M. & McPartland, M., 1982, pg. 4). By means of this chapter, the author intends to focus on the local context, the local history of teacher training, the evolution of both the institutions and the rationale behind these institutions. The present teacher training course and also what is being planned for the future, in view of the changing role of the teacher, will be examined.

2.1 A historical glimpse.

A detailed study about initial teacher training was carried out by Raymond Camilleri (1994). According to Camilleri, education in Malta, from the medieval times up to the middle of the nineteenth century, was characterised by “...lack of educational institutions, small number of qualified teachers...dependence on foreign teachers...lack of teacher training” (pg. 29). Although Canon Pullicino in the 1850’s “elevated the training of teachers to University standards” (Camilleri, 1994, pg. 62), yet in 1880 a report published by Keenan threw light on the inadequacy of the training received by the teachers. The course which was brought into existence by Canon Pullicino “lasted for 3 months and it was based both on theory, which had to be followed at University, and on practice which had to be carried out in the Model school of Valletta” (Borg, R., Camilleri, I., & Formosa, M., 1981, pgs. 1-2) The training of teachers was therefore in the hands of the Department of Education. Teacher training was assumed to consist of the acquisition of a narrow set of skills to help teachers

do an efficient job in the classroom. This training was referred to as “a pale version of the social market model” (Fenech, J., 1997, pg. 4).

In the early 1920's Malta was granted self-government. According to Camilleri the islands were “more urbanised, less agricultural and more open-minded” (1994, pg. 92). Due to these factors there was a “determination to tackle the country's problems from a position of authority and responsibility” (Camilleri, 1994, pg. 92). Towards the end of 1934 Dr. Laferla tried to upgrade standards by establishing a Training College in Malta run by English teacher trainers. 10 years later a sub-committee was appointed by the Board of Education to examine the problem of providing adequate training for elementary school teachers. Two alternative schemes were submitted. Scheme A proposed that the intending teachers should be sent to the United Kingdom for training while Scheme B proposed that Training Colleges should be set up in Malta for a 2-year residential course. The adoption of Scheme B was clearly the best solution in the circumstances.

The training college opened in October 1954. The subjects taught included both academic subjects and professional subjects. Practical teaching formed an essential part of the syllabus. The residential aspect of the course was meant to help the personal formation of the intending teacher. “The emphasis was on prescriptions for practice and the application of recipe knowledge...courses were characterised by a lack of intellectual rigour...placed heavy emphasis on the social and personal side of academic life” (Fenech, 1997, pg. 4).

As early as 1949, Professor J. Aquilina expressed the view that the “final stage in the educational preparation of a teacher should take place at University” (Camilleri, 1994 pg. 142). In fact, “increasingly, over the years the academic impact began to be more marked, reaching its peak when the Faculty of Education was established in the University” (Fenech, 1997, pg. 5)

2.2 The Present Initial Teacher Training.

Presently the Faculty of Education provides a number of services. Apart from seeing to the professional development of serving teachers and conducting research and development programmes to improve the local educational system, it also provides training for intending teachers. One of the objectives of the Faculty of Education is to provide an initial teacher training programme leading to a degree. Apart from this B.Ed (Hons.) programme, there is also a post-graduate studies in Education leading to a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The undergraduate degree course extends over a period of four academic years of full-time studies, while the PGCE lasts for only one academic year.

As for the B.Ed (Hons.) programme, the course is divided into two parts. Part One extends over the first two years. During this time the intending teacher is required to select two Teaching Areas, while in Part Two of the course, the intending teacher continues his or her studies in only one of the Teacher Areas taken in Part One, unless he or she is allowed by the Faculty to retain two Teaching Areas.

The course consists of a minimum of 24 study units in Foundations in Education which are compulsory for all students. These tackle Educational Theory from a philosophical, sociological and psychological point of view. Students have to tackle a minimum of 40 study units in the Teaching Area/s with emphasis on both subject matter and its respective methodology. Apart from these, the intending teacher takes 8 optional, yet elective, credits. These can include credits obtained for extra-curricular activities. A key feature of the course is the Teaching Practice component which comprises a total of 22 weeks teaching in schools under tutorial supervision. The intending teacher has also to submit a dissertation where the student will be required to study a specific problem in depth. The aim is to develop research skills in the prospective teacher.

As it now stands, the intending teacher who opts for the B.Ed (Hons.) course can ‘specialise’ in his or her last two academic years in the teaching of children in their Early and Middle Years (EMY) or in Early Childhood Education (ECE).

As for the PGCE the course stresses pedagogy and methodology. The aim is to link educational theory and practice through the ‘Situations and Themes’ approach (Sultana, 1995).

According to R.G. Sultana (1995), the Faculty draws “its main inspirations from the ‘developmentalists’ and to a lesser extent, the ‘social reconstructionist’ traditions” (pg. 220). The aim is to develop reflective practitioners.

2.3 Changing Times

Currently the Faculty of Education is undergoing some changes. There are plans to devote the four year B.Ed (Hons.) course “...to building up a teacher with competencies...a number of competencies which are ‘just-in-time’ competencies not ‘just-in-case’ competencies” (interview with Dr. J. Mifsud, APPENDIX 3).

At the moment the Teaching Practice committee is reviewing a pilot scheme so as to review the set of competencies on which tutors are presently assessing the prospective teachers. The aim is to develop a ‘new’ set of competencies (interview with Dr. C. Bezzina, APPENDIX 3).

There is also a proposal from the Department of Primary Education that, starting from October 1999, there will be a four year course completely dedicated to Primary Teaching. This Primary specialist course would have a new conceptual framework. The course’s framework will be based on two pillars, ‘Observable Practice’ and ‘Ideas, Values and Beliefs’. The ‘Observable Practice’ would be further divided into ‘content’, ‘context’,

‘pedagogy’ and ‘management’. These four areas would all be geared to answer the questions : ‘What should children learn?’ and ‘How should children learn and teachers teach?’. While ‘Ideas, Values and Beliefs’ will focus more on the ‘children’, ‘society’ and ‘knowledge’ (interview with Dr. J. Mifsud, APPENDIX 3)

Another change was that of the establishment of the ‘Tomorrow’s Teachers Project’, an initiative taken by the Faculty of Education in October 1996. The aim of this project is :

“to discover the strengths and weaknesses of current pre-service teacher education and training programmes, to systematically compare current local practice with that obtained in other countries, to identify trends as well as to develop insights in addressing perceived problems and to make recommendations regarding changes in structures and practices that will help improve...[and to contribute] to the national educational enterprise” (Sultana, 1997).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aim of the study

Farrent, as cited in Goodings R., Byram M., and McPartland M. (1982), asserts that “wholesale transplantation of innovations between different cultures frequently lead to disillusionment as they fail to live up to expectations” (pg. 7). In view of this, this study is aimed at compiling a list of professional competencies which a Maltese teacher needs to develop in order to be a successful teacher in the Primary sector.

“The most often used approach (to specify competencies) is professional perception” (W. R. Houston, 1985, pg. 904). Therefore, an essential part of this study is the questionnaire which was distributed amongst members of the Faculty of Education. The main objective of this research was to elicit those competencies which the Faculty members rated highest.

Since subject matter knowledge is seen as being an important feature of the knowledge base of a competent teacher, interviews were carried out with different members of the staff to elicit those competencies which are specific to particular subjects, obviously, those subjects which are being taught in our Primary Schools.

3.2 Compilation of Literature Review

To compile the literature review the author started off by reading about themes related to the title of this dissertation. What do we exactly mean by the term ‘teaching’? How does one become a teacher? What should you know or be able to do, in order to be an effective teacher? What do we mean by teacher education? These themes, together with other key words which are essential to this dissertation such as ‘competencies’ and ‘initial teacher

training', were researched. The literature reviewed is placed in a general context - that of 'change', so that one can bear in mind that constant revision is essential. The author tried, as far as possible, to include both international literature and also local literature, especially when keeping in mind the nature of this dissertation.

3.3 Method of Research

To collect the data needed, 32 questionnaires were distributed and 17 interviews were conducted.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire (APPENDIX 1) was distributed to 32 members of the Faculty of Education. The Faculty of Education is made up of 6 different Departments. Copies of the questionnaire were handed out to members coming from each Department, but the majority (56.3%) came from the Department of Primary Education. Out of the 32 members, 8 questionnaires were given to part-time members working with the Department of Primary Education. 24 (75%) out of these 32 returned the survey.

The questionnaires were both distributed and gathered in person in order to get a higher response rate. R. M. Wolf (1985) believes that "...a lengthy, time consuming questionnaire may cause a respondent to cease to cooperate after a period of answering questions" (pg. 4168). Maybe this was the reason why 25% did not return the questionnaire. They had to answer 106 questions out of which only 3 were open-ended. It takes approximately 15 minutes to answer all of them.

A list of competencies which was compiled by DENI (Department of Education Northern Ireland) (1993) was used, but the survey is intended to prevent what Farrent fears. By making use of both open and close questions and also of scaled responses, one could extract the respondents' opinion about the nature and scope of competencies. Apart from this, a

shared, local definition of the underlying qualities of an efficient teacher could be elicited. They were also asked to indicate where these competencies should be developed, that is, whether during the Foundations studies course, during the Methodology credits or during the Teaching Practice.

So as not to daunt the respondents with too much reading and thus increase the likelihood of completion of the questionnaire the competencies listed, that is, those compiled by DENI, were rephrased so as to shorten them. For example : “believes in the promotion of equal opportunities, recognising differences occasioned by race, religion, gender, class or disability, but adopting non-discriminatory policies in all these respects” (1993, pg. 5) was shortened in this way : “believes in the promotion of equal opportunities”.

After gathering the questionnaires the data was collected and analysed both manually and by using the EXCEL programme on the computer. This programme transformed the relevant data into graphs (Figures 1-102). This data was also summarised into tables.

3.3.2 Interviews

In order to have an in-depth picture of what kind of competencies a teacher should develop to teach effectively, for example, Maths or Creative Arts in a Primary School, case-study interviews were made. Therefore, 17 interviews were carried out, 11 of which were conducted with members of the Department Of Primary Education, each focusing on a particular subject, both core subjects (Maths, English, Maltese, Religion, Social Studies, Science, Expressive Arts) and cross curricular subjects (Media). While Mr. J. Camilleri and Mr. Norman Borg, respectively, gave an overview of what competencies a teacher should have to teach in an Inclusive Environment and how to use I.T effectively. Dr. J. Mifsud, being the Head of the Department Of Primary Education, on the other hand, gave an overview on what the Primary Department is doing in this respect.

Three other interviews were conducted with members from the Department Of Foundations In Education. Dr. R. G. Sultana, both Dean of the Faculty of Education and Head of Department Of Foundations in Education, spoke about what competencies the Foundation course is trying to develop in the intending teacher. Mr. J. Giordmaina focused on what competencies a teacher should have to develop Philosophy and Thinking Skills effectively in the pupils. Dr. C. Bezzina explained the role of the Teaching Practice.

Dr. P. Pace, Head of the Department Of Maths, Science & Technical Education, focused on the competencies a teacher should have to teach Environment Education in an effective way.

Mr. L. Borg, from the Academy of Physical Education and Sports, gave the author a list of the competencies needed to teach Physical Education.

The author also interviewed a representative of the MUT, its president Mr. J. Bencini, on this topic.

The interviews were carried out in a semi-structured way, where the main questions were planned beforehand (APPENDIX 1). These main questions were given to the interviewees before the actual interview. Each interview was recorded on audiotape with the interviewees' permission. To analyse the data from the interviews extensive transcripts of each interview were carried out (APPENDIX 3) so as to extract the main competencies mentioned and other relevant data. The analysis was also viewed in light of other similar studies and literature regarding the topics discussed.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis

ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

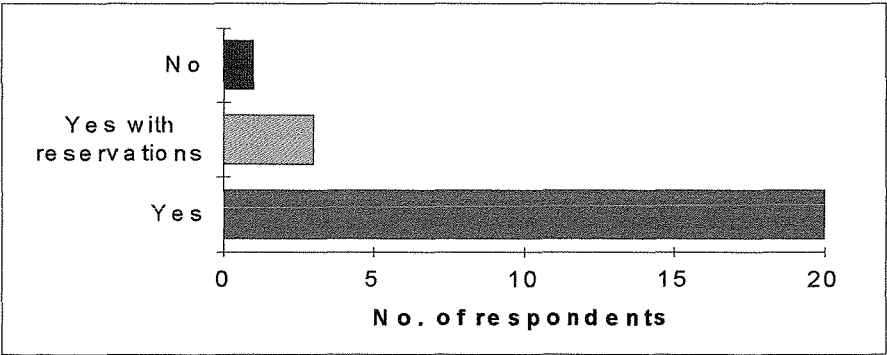
The aim of this chapter is to analyse the data gathered both from the questionnaires and from the interviews so as to come up with a compilation of the professional competencies which a Maltese teacher ought to have in order to be a successful teacher at Primary level. By means of the first part of the questionnaire a local definition of the word ‘competency’ can be extracted together with the Faculty’s disposition towards a competencies-based initial teacher education programme.

Dr. William Garnett (1905), as cited in Goodings R., Byram M. & McPartland M. (1982), although being a firm advocate of teacher training, still feels that there are persons born with a genius for teaching whose originality would be destroyed and whose energy would be cramped by the ordinary course of the training. Therefore, Dr. William Garnett has doubts whether such training is appropriate for all or only for those who lack abundant natural aptitude. The first question was asked to see whether this view is shared with the members of the Faculty of Education.. They were asked to comment on the statement “good teachers are born and not made”. The majority of the respondents (87.5%) believe that “there is an element of both”; only 12.5% of the respondents believe that they are only made. Moreover amongst those who believe that teachers are both born and made there is a distinction between those who believe that “...our role during the B.Ed course is to develop and fine-tune existing competencies” and those who feel that “some natural assets and characteristics make it easier”. On the other hand the argument of those who believe that good teachers are made is that “whilst there are people who seem to have a ‘natural’ disposition...they learn it just as one learns even one’s personality. Therefore you can make a teacher.”

The majority (70.8%) feel that the best definition of competencies should be one which refers to knowledge, understanding and attitudes as well as to practical skills since it

“...captures to a much larger degree the fundamentals of good teaching”, since “...knowledge, understanding, attitudes, should be the factors which inform the way practical skills are implemented”. Some other reasons were that “it encompasses a wider spectrum of competencies : attitudes, qualities, values, culture, perception, and skills” and “while teaching implies a particular way of relating with the learners, that is, behaviour and performance, it is the reflection of a whole baggage of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that may not be easily observed.” 20.8% feel that the best definition of competencies is that which defines them as “a series of behaviours or performances of which the execution at an acceptable level can readily be identified by observation” since “in order to have (A) (behaviour), one has to have (B) (knowledge, understanding, attitudes) by implication”. 8.3% believe that “...competencies in teaching should be a combination of both (A) plus (B), where (B) is refined by (A)”. Therefore, “both are correct, they are not exclusive but inclusive”. The overriding majority (95.8%) (Figure 1) agree with the idea of having a competencies-based initial teacher education since they believe that it could be “more valid and down to earth” and “in the sense that teachers have attainment targets to teach - they know what is expected of them”. Still within this 95.8% some of those who agreed still have “some reservations” since “...you do need the competencies but not simply that”, “...a competencies-only training programme is certainly not enough”, “I.T.E develops these competencies but theoretical knowledge is also essential”. The 4.2% who gave a definite ‘No’ for such a programme argued that Initial Teacher Education “...should not be a means of developing competencies only - which includes mechanicalities”.

Figure 1 - Do you agree with a competencies-based initial teacher education?
This data was obtained from the Survey (Appendix 1)



4.2 Competencies related to professional characteristics.

4.2.1 Professional Values

Table 1 - Professional Values which characterise a successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
likes and cares for children	18	75.0%
is enthusiastic about teaching	17	70.8%
believes in the promotion of equal opportunities	8	33.3%
appreciates the role of parents	6	25.0%

Table 1 shows how the respondents ranked the professional values according to their importance. “Likes and cares for children” was thought to be the most important characteristic while “appreciates the role of parents” was ranked as being least important. One of the respondents wrote that “all categories and sub-categories listed are important and contribute towards the making of a successful teacher [therefore] it’s difficult to decide on what is more important because a number of sub-categories are closely inter-related”. This is very true, yet the aim is to highlight those competencies which should be given most importance since they are rated as crucial to the making of a successful teacher.

According to the respondents these affective-based competencies should be developed and given most attention in all the three main areas of the course as it presently is, that is during the Teaching Practice, during Foundation study units and during Methodology credits. This trend is common to all competencies except for three.

The first two affective-based competencies are seen to develop mostly (60-70%) during the Teaching Practice component of the course. While “believes in the promotion of equal opportunities” and “appreciates the role of parents”, most attention (52-55%) should be given to their development during Foundation courses (Figures 2-5, APPENDIX 2).

Therefore to enhance these competencies in the prospective teacher the respondents believe that one should inform them, for example, about the important role of parents, so that the intending teacher could make informed choices. The future teacher also needs to experience and work in the field. Since these are affective-based competencies they are more difficult to assess yet they normally can be observed in other competency statements.

4.2.2 Professional Development

Table 2 - Professional Developments which characterise a successful teacher

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
engages in self-appraisal and evaluation	16	66.7%
open to change and innovation	13	54.2%
keeps up to date in his/her subject(s)	11	45.8%
works with others in the professional context	9	37.5%

The respondents ranked “engages in self-appraisal and evaluation” as being the most important competency with regards to Professional Development (Table 2). Again, all the competencies mentioned in Table 2 should be developed and catered for in all the main areas of the course.

According to the respondents, the competencies “engages in self-appraisal and evaluation” and “works with others in the professional context” are more likely to develop during the Teaching Practice component (55-57%) (Figures 6-7, APPENDIX 2). “Open to change and innovation” (Figure 9) and “keeps up to date in his/her subjects” (Figure 8) should be catered for mostly during the Methodology courses.

4.2.3 Personal Development

Table 3 - Personal Development which characterises a successful teacher

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
is still learning	15	62.5%
has self-confidence	11	45.8%
has a range of interests	11	45.5%

Some of the respondents do not agree that the competencies mentioned in Table 3 are ‘competencies’ but rather ‘characteristics’. This depends on what kind of definition one gives to the word ‘competency’.

The above table shows how the respondents ranked the competencies listed under the heading ‘Personal Development’. “Is still learning” is seen as the most important. Dr. C. Bezzina believes that “the right disposition has to be that we are always learning... if I have that type of disposition then probably I’m more capable of becoming an effective teacher than purely a good or average type of teacher” (APPENDIX 3). The Foundations Studies are seen as liable to bring about and enhance this competency (Figure 12). As to “self-confidence” the Teaching Practice is seen as the best way to develop this competency (Figure 11).

4.2.4 Communication and Relationships

Table 4 - Communication and Relationships which characterise the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
able to communicate effectively	21	87.5%
able to maintain constructive relationships	8	33.3%
sensitive to other people’s emotions	8	33.3%

The three competencies listed under “communication and relationships” (Table 4) are all seen to develop mostly during the Teaching Practice. The competency “able to communicate effectively” is ranked as being the most important competency from the 101 competencies presented in the questionnaire (Figure 13).

Figure 13 - ABLE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



4.2.5 Synthesis and Application

Table 5 - Synthesis and application which characterise a successful teacher

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
apply them appropriately and effectively	16	66.7%
integrate a wide range of knowledge/skills	15	62.5%

Both “integrating a wide range of knowledge and skills” and “applying them appropriately and effectively” are seen as almost equally important competencies (Table 5). But while the competency of “integrating a wide range of knowledge and skills” is seen to develop mostly (46%) during the Methodology units, “applying them appropriately and effectively” can be mostly developed and assessed (53%) during the Teaching Practice component (Figures 16-17, APPENDIX 3).

4.3 Competencies related to Professional Knowledge.

4.3.1 Knowledge and understanding of children and their learning

Table 6 - Knowledge and understanding of children and their learning which characterise the successful teacher

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
knowledge of the ways in which children learn	14	58.3%
awareness of individual differences	14	58.3%
knowledge of child development	13	54.2%
understanding of importance of motivation	13	54.2%
knowledge of the role of language in learning	12	50.0%
understanding of importance and range of play	10	41.7%
understanding of importance of assessment	9	37.5%
understanding of learning through non-verbal means	8	33.3%
understanding of influences on children’s attainment	7	29.2%
understanding of role of I.T on learning	7	29.2%
knowledge of the principles of good discipline	6	25.0%

Table 6 shows how the respondents rank, according to perceived order of importance, competencies related to knowledge and understanding of children and their learning. These are all cognitive-based competencies. “Knowledge of the ways in which children learn” together with an “awareness of individual differences” are seen as the most important, while “understanding the role of I.T on learning” and “knowledge of the principles of good discipline” are rated as being less important. These cognitive-based competencies are developed mainly during the Foundations area followed by the Methodology.

4.3.2 Subject Knowledge

Table 7 - Subject Knowledge which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
knowledge of relationships	11	45.8%
breadth of knowledge	10	41.7%
depth, beyond immediate demands of school	8	33.3%

“Knowledge of relationships” which refers to the relationships between different subjects and their contribution to areas of study is seen as being more important than having and understanding in “depth, which goes beyond the immediate demands of the school” curriculum of the relevant age-phase, of the knowledge, concepts and skills of his or her specialist subject/s (Table 7). Except for “knowledge of relationships” the other two competencies are seen to develop during Methodology courses while the Teaching Practice is the best way to develop a “knowledge of relationships”.

4.3.3 Knowledge of the curriculum

Table 8 - Knowledge of the curriculum which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
awareness of the skills and processes of subjects	11	45.8%
knowledge and understanding of local curriculum	11	45.8%
in favour of a balanced and broad curriculum	11	45.8%
awareness of ‘hidden’ curriculum	9	37.5%
knowledge of the range of resources	9	37.5%
understanding of different kinds of assessment	9	37.5%

Having an “awareness of the skills and processes of subjects”, “knowledge and understanding of local curriculum” and being “in favour of a balanced and broad curriculum

are all seen as being important competencies which characterise a successful teacher. These competencies are seen to be mainly the domain of Foundation studies and Methodology units.

4.3.4 Knowledge of the education system

Table 9 - Knowledge of the education system which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
awareness of different views on aims of education	10	41.7%
awareness of contemporary debate on education	6	25.0%
understanding of schools within community	5	20.8%
knowledge of relationships of different paths of the system	5	20.8%
knowledge of its organisation and management	5	20.8%
knowledge of local history and context of education	4	16.7%
relationship to other aspects of society	3	12.5%

The competencies related to “knowledge of the education system” are all seen to develop mostly during Foundation units. The highest rated competency is that of having an “awareness of different views on aims of education” while the competency which is perceived as being least important is that of understanding the relationship between the education system and other aspects of society.

4.3.5 Knowledge of the teachers’ role

Table 10 - Knowledge of the teachers’ role which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
awareness of importance of critical reflection	16	66.7%
knowledge of his/her responsibilities	15	62.5%
awareness of his/her role in a professional team	12	50.0%
understanding of how to draw upon sources of help	11	45.8%
awareness of current social problems	8	33.3%

Having an “awareness of the importance of critical reflection” is seen as being the most valued competency in this section. This tallies with the result obtained in the section about Professional Development where “engages in self-appraisal and evaluation” was ranked highest. The competencies listed in Table 10 are seen to develop in all areas of the course.

4.4 Competencies related to Professional Skills

According to the respondents the competencies listed in this section should be given most attention to their development and assessment mostly during the Teaching Practice component.

4.4.1 Subject application

Table 11 - Subject application characteristics of a successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
plans appropriate lessons/materials for pupils	20	83.3%
demonstrates knowledge of effective methodologies	18	75.0%
makes use of appropriate resources	16	66.7%
plans appropriate lessons within programme	16	66.7%
contributes to formulation of aims and objectives	13	54.2%
ensures continuity and progression	12	50.0%
prepares coherent teaching programmes	12	50.0%
shows awareness of potential areas of difficulty	11	45.8%
uses combination of thematic/subject approaches	11	45.8%
justifies selection of material used	9	37.5%
understands how to organise fieldwork	8	33.3%
uses I.T to enhance learning	7	29.2%

The most valued competency is that the intending teacher can “plan appropriate lessons / materials for pupils” (Table 11). This general competency implies that in order to do so the teacher should have the other competencies mentioned in this same section.

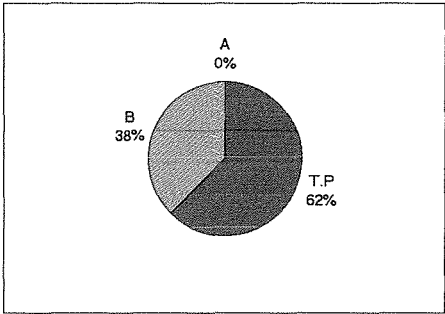
4.4.2 Class methodology

Table 12 - Class methodology which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
questions pupils effectively	20	83.3%
captures and maintains pupils’ attention	20	83.3%
encourages initiatives	18	75.0%
encourages pupils to develop powers of inquiry	18	75.0%
deploys a range of strategies	18	75.0%
plans and employs a range of strategies	18	75.0%
creates problem-solving situations	17	70.8%
can justify method being used	15	62.5%
takes account of pupils’ diversity	14	58.3%
able to recognise and provide for special needs	12	50.0%
contributes to development of communication skills	12	50.0%
takes account of cultural differences	10	41.7%
makes pupils aware of expectations	9	37.5%

As to class methodology, the most valued competencies are that the teacher can “question pupils effectively” therefore that he or she is able to respond and support a discussion, together with the ability to “capture and maintain pupils’ attention”. Although these competencies are seen to be the main domain of the Teaching Practice yet the Methodology and the Foundations areas still need to give their share. The exceptions are in “deploys a range of strategies” (Figure 64), “plans appropriate lessons/material for pupils”(Figure 52 and “makes use of appropriate resources” (Figure 53) where the Foundation studies are not mentioned at all.

Figure 64 - Deploys a range of strategies.



4.4.3 Class management

Table 13 - Class management which characterises the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
maintains pupils’ motivation	20	83.3%
seeks advice where necessary	16	66.7%
teaches in different modes	15	62.5%
establishes good classroom rapport	15	62.5%
manages play/activity-based learning appropriately	13	54.2%
establishes clear rules/expectations	13	54.2%
manages time effectively	13	54.2%
pre-empts inappropriate behaviour/confrontation	12	50.0%
deals with inappropriate behaviour	12	50.0%
able to make smooth transitions	10	41.7%
makes effective use of non-teaching staff	7	29.2%

The results from this section tally with the previous section since “maintains pupils’ motivation” is seen as the most important competency that a teacher ought to have in order to be effective. “Makes effective use of non-teaching staff” is perceived as being least important.

4.4.4 Assessment and Recording

Table 14 - Assessment and Recording which characterise the successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
provides pupils with regular, thorough feedback	16	66.7%
encourages pupils in assessing themselves	16	66.7%
uses outcomes of assessment	12	50.0%
uses different modes of assessment	12	50.0%
assesses and records in a systematic manner	11	45.8%
provides helpful reports to parents	11	45.8%
awareness of pupils’ extra-curricular achievements	9	37.5%
judges performance against norms	7	29.2%
participates in moderation procedures	7	29.2%

As to assessment and recording, being able to “provide pupils with regular thorough feedback” and “encouraging pupils in assessing themselves” are highly valued.

4.4.5 The Wider Role

Table 15 - The Wider Role . Characteristics which mark a successful teacher.

Competency	Frequency	Percentage (n = 24)
relates effectively with parents	14	58.3%
accepts and undertakes pastoral duties of a teacher	12	50.0%
develops effective working relationships with others	11	45.8%
takes responsibility for curriculum leadership	10	41.7%
contributes to cross-curricular aspects	7	29.2%
contributes to activities outside formal curriculum	7	29.2%
liaises with members of other profession	6	25.0%
communicates with representatives of community	5	20.8%

Although in the section Professional Values, the affective-competency of appreciation of the role of parents was ranked as being least important, here ‘relates effectively with parents’ is

selected as being very important. The least valued competency is that of communicating with representatives of the community.

4.5 Others

When asked to jot down specific competencies which are required in our local context for the making of a successful Maltese teacher, one of the respondents argued that “education is/should be universal and certain basic competencies would apply to all teachers everywhere. Cultural differences may distinguish teachers but otherwise their teaching should be similar to what happens in other countries”. On the other hand, Dr. C. Bezzina believes that “we ought to build our own set of competencies and hence bearing in mind the reality that we are currently facing in Malta because...if we are preparing students we are preparing them for our schools...therefore those competencies need to reflect the state of being...” (Appendix 3).

In this section the most frequently mentioned statement is that Maltese teachers should be competent “in both Maltese and English”. Next came the importance of being a resourceful and a creative person who “does not give up in poor environments”. Another set of statements mentioned the importance of being “able to work in a team” and then there were one-off statements such as “being available outside school hours”, having “a rich life experience”, be competent in “teaching a mixed ability class” and be skilful in “conflict resolution” techniques etc.

4.5 Competencies related to specific subject matter and pedagogical context knowledge.

4.5.1 Maths

According to Robert Fisher (1991) “the factors most closely associated with children’s confidence and competence in learning was the confidence and competence of their teachers” (pg. 98-99).

To be competent in teaching Maths effectively at the Primary level the teacher should “have the knowledge of the subject” (interview with Ms. M.T. Farrugia, APPENDIX 3). This entails a thorough understanding of concepts, knowledge and derivation of formulae, knowledge of how to use symbols and notations properly and knowledge about the relationships between different aspects of Mathematics and between Mathematics and other subjects. These are all cognitive-based competencies. Another set of cognitive-based competencies are those related to the knowledge of theory of learning Maths, such as the psychology of learning Maths and philosophies of Mathematics education.

Another set of competencies are related to methodology. An important competency is that of being able to draw “upon a variety of strategies” (Hopkins, C., Gillford, S. & Pepperell, S., 1996, pg. 2). To be “first of all, aware...to be aware is already part of the competency” and then “...to be able to do it in the classroom” (interview with Ms. M.T. Farrugia, APPENDIX 3). Therefore, apart from cognitive-based competencies, the effective teacher should possess performance-based competencies. Another competency which is being acknowledged both internationally and locally is the ability to “talk about the mathematics, listening, reflecting and responding” (Hopkins, C., Gillford, S. & Pepperell, S., 1996, pg. 2). So as to show this competency a teacher should have a positive attitude, “the more positive the attitude is the more confident the teacher is going to be and can pass on the enthusiasm to the children” (interview with Ms. M. T. Farrugia, APPENDIX 3). Therefore a teacher should have a mixture of both cognitive-based competencies, performance-based competencies and affective-based competencies.

4.5.2 Languages

The Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of the English Language (March, 1988), as cited in Mifsud, 1989, recommends that “all intending teachers of Primary school children should undertake a language course in which the larger part of the time allocated to the course (i.e. over 50%) be spent in direct tuition of knowledge about language” (pg. 2).

Although Dr. C. Mifsud would “rather have teachers who are topped up with linguistics rather than have linguists who are topped up with a little bit of pedagogy” (APPENDIX 3), still both Dr. C. Mifsud and Ms. T. Muscat, for English and Maltese respectively feel that the teacher’s competence in the language he/she is going to teach is crucial. A solid knowledge base of the language is a must. The teacher must have a good command of the syntax, semantics, phonology and linguistics.

Apart from this competency, Dr. C. Mifsud believes that to teach English effectively, a teacher should be competent in communicating well and in organising work in the classroom. He/she must develop effective storytelling techniques and be as creative as possible.

As for the teaching of Maltese, a competent teacher is one who is as resourceful as possible, knows how to “tisraq l-idejat...tagħraf tuża materjal barrani biex timmotiva lit-tfal (borrow ideas...knows how to utilise foreign material so as to motivate children)” (interview with Ms. T. Muscat, APPENDIX 3). This is due to the lack of local material but with some creativity and inventiveness on the part of the teacher this problem can be overcome. For the teaching of Maltese, Ms. T. Muscat also stressed that the teacher should be competent in using I.T effectively both to stimulate and create interest during the lessons and also to develop the oracy and literacy skills of the children.

4.5.3 Religion

At the primary level, teaching “should be intended to achieve...good behaviour and character formation in the moral and religious field, in order that children may learn to act according to what is right, to love their fellow man and to revere God” (NMC of 1989, as cited in Ciantar, 1993, pg. 55).

According to Fr. G. Deguara, in order to reach this aim, a teacher should have three main competencies. To teach Religion effectively a teacher should be “versed in the Christian truth and way of life and moral teaching” (APPENDIX 3). Therefore the teacher should be competent in knowing the content well, be familiar with the Bible and its message, know about the teachings of the Church and her witnesses. So the first set of competencies are all ‘cognitive-based competencies’ more than anything else. The second set of competencies are related to the teacher’s knowledge about the children he or she is teaching, so that he or she can relate the message to their experiences. In this area the teacher will make use of both cognitive-based competencies and also of performance-based competencies. The third set of competencies that a teacher should have is related to methodological issues. Competencies which are specific to the teaching of Religion are that the teacher must be competent in using the inductive method and that he/she must be competent in leading the children to a response or an action.

According to Fr. G. Deguara “faith is something which is based on the credibility of others” (APPENDIX 3). Therefore the personal conviction of the teacher, his or her action in class and attitude towards the subject will all influence Religious teaching.

4.5.4 Social Studies

To teach Social Studies effectively in a Primary school, according to Ms. Y. Vella, a teacher should be competent in having the ‘basic knowledge, basic information ...[since] giving correct facts is taken for granted when...teaching Social Studies’ (APPENDIX 3). Apart from this, one has to be very good at skills. When speaking about skills we are referring to those competencies related to pedagogical context knowledge. Ms Y. Vella (APPENDIX 3) believes that “you can teach social studies without the right attitude...it is a bit too ambitious to imagine that we are forming the attitudes of the teacher”.

4.5.5 Science

“Science...provides both knowledge about the world and method - the scientific method - for investigating, checking and finding out more” (Fisher, 1991, pg. 136). According to Ms. S. Gatt (APPENDIX 3) the teacher does not need to possess any expert knowledge about the content of Science to be an effective teacher. Rather than the content, the teacher should be competent in the process of doing Science. Therefore the teacher should be competent in, for example, designing a fair test and in asking specific scientific questions. The teacher “should be aware of methodological issues” (interview with Ms. S. Gatt, APPENDIX 3). Apart from these, the teacher should be competent in management. He or she should be a creative and a resourceful person.

4.5.6 Arts

A competent arts teacher is one who “knows the subject well” (interview with Ms. I. Gatt, APPENDIX 3). This does not mean that the teacher must be good at drawing or acting and dramatising though these may help, but the teacher, if he or she is going to teach art, must know about artists. The teacher should also know about colours, primary and secondary colours, complimentary colours, about perspective, composition and voice techniques. Research in the Junior Project, as cited in Fisher (1991), found that :

“the teachers they saw communicated less with children during art activities than in any other curriculum area. The use of questioning during art sessions was extremely rare. Teachers devoted more time to routine matters of organisation and less on the content of what the children were doing than in any other type of lesson” (pg. 185).

Anna Scher and Charles Verrall (1975) believe that one of the ways in which a child’s development in drama can be hindered is “by the teacher asking too little, children’s work improves fastest when their teachers have high expectations of them” (pg. 10). Therefore a teacher should be competent in asking the right type of questions, in conducting brainstorming activities, in organising activities and plan well, yet at the same time be flexible to meet the needs of the children. The teacher should also be competent in using

different tools and media. He or she should be a very resourceful and creative person with a “good cultural baggage” (interview with Ms. I. Gatt, APPENDIX 3).

4.5.7 I.T

Mr. N. Borg (APPENDIX 3) identified four main competencies that a Primary teacher should have in order to use I.T effectively in a Primary school. The first competency is that the teacher should have both the knowledge about and an awareness of the importance of I.T, especially its impact on children. The second set of competencies is related to being able to use the software and hardware available. The effective use and evaluation of the software available in schools and others are grouped as the third set of competencies, while the fourth is seen as being related to attitudes. The more positive attitude towards I.T the better use of it the teacher will make. The competencies mentioned by Mr. N. Borg are very much in line with the competencies identified by Wild P. & Hodgkinson of Loughborough University (1990). They believe that at the end of the Initial Teacher Training course all their students should as a minimum :

1. Be able to use a word processor for personal and professional use with confidence.
2. Have used packages for the production of teaching resources, presentation of assignments or in classroom based work.
3. Have evaluated a range of software and computer applications of specific relevance to their subject/s on the basis of educational aims and objectives, integration into work schemes, consequences for classroom management and the implications of the use of I.T in changing teaching and learning.
4. Be aware of I.T requirements of the National Curriculum within and across subjects.
5. Have used I.T at some stages of their Teaching Practice in a planned way.

4.5.8 Media

The most outstanding feature emerging from an interview with Ms. T. Muscat (APPENDIX 3) was that in order to teach and use Media effectively in a Primary school the teacher should keep up with the latest material, news items, popular culture etc. This could enable the teacher to use authentic and relevant material in integrating Media Education with the other subjects.

4.5.9 Physical Education

In order to teach Physical Education effectively in a Primary school the teacher needs to have a number of competencies. First of all one should be competent in the subject knowledge. This is essential for the teacher to be able to teach the subject well. The use of proper teaching strategies and evidence of proper planning are two indicators of the above competency. As to class management in Physical Education the teacher should be competent in managing time, resources and behaviour effectively.

4.5.10 Environment Education

According to Dr. P. Pace (APPENDIX 3), the most valued competencies that a teacher ought to have in order to teach Environment Education effectively across the curriculum are that the teacher should be aware of what Environment Education is all about, that is, about interactions, that we are part of an ecosystem where we are in a position to influence and be influenced. This competency is related to the knowledge base of the subject yet other competencies are required. As for the competencies related to professional skills they are the same as for other subjects but with an emphasis on being able to empower individuals and taking an action-oriented stance. As regards the personal characteristics which could bring about the above mentioned competencies, the more altruistic a person is the better chance there is that he or she becomes an effective Environment teacher. Other

competencies mentioned by the “Recommendations for Environmental Education” (Toulouse University Summer School, 11-17 September 1994) are :

1. The ability to plan, to lead and to participate in an interdisciplinary project and in partnership.
2. The ability to integrate the Environmental Education objectives into the various disciplines and to define a common conceptual framework.
3. The ability to identify, appreciate and respond to the needs of the local community.
4. The ability to introduce the European dimension and the global dimension in Environmental Education.

4.5.11 Philosophy

To do philosophy with children and teach thinking skills effectively, Mr. J. Giordamania (APPENDIX 3) believes that the teacher first of all has to know the theory behind these subjects. The methodology adopted during the Philosophy lessons is different. The teacher should be competent in decentering power, where the children’s participation is crucial and where the teacher does not have a fixed agenda. The skills required to bring this about are that he or she possesses good communication skills especially the skill of listening. The ability to decentre from oneself and having an attitude of open-mindedness and respect for the students are essential for doing effective Philosophy lessons with children.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

CONCLUSIONS

The most outstanding feature which emerged from this study is that the majority of the members of the Faculty of Education believe that competencies “cannot be defined simply in terms of ability to apply pre-ordained categories of specialist knowledge to produce correct behavioural responses or ‘performance indicators’” (C. Mifsud, 1997, pg. 7). Instead, a more general interpretation should be adopted where competencies encompass intellectual, cognitive and attitudinal dimensions as well as performance ; in this model neither competencies nor the criteria for achievement are so readily susceptible to sharp and discrete identification” (Aspland, R. & Brown, G., 1993, pg. 12).

Dr. Charles Mifsud stated that “...feelings of preparedness to teach and competence in teaching require more attention in teacher education. Student and beginning teachers’ sense of personal teaching efficacy is an important outcome of their preparation and feelings of competence” (1996, pg. 2). This comment tallies with the results obtained from this study, where the majority of the members of the Faculty agree with a competencies-based initial teacher education where competencies are taken to include the less tangible.

There is a wide range of competencies which an intending teacher needs to master in order to become an effective Primary school teacher. Woodring (1957), as cited in De Landsheere, feels that “the ideal teacher for a self-contained classroom of elementary school children should be possessed of an impossible compilation of virtues...[therefore] few people can play so many roles effectively” (1985, pg. 5005). Yet in a Primary school the class is traditionally the domain of one single class teacher who has to teach all the subjects. “Contrary to old beliefs, high-quality teaching of elements requires advanced knowledge of the subject...that is why future teachers for this age group (8-12) should major in one of the following (a) mother tongue and history (b) mathematics and physics (c) natural sciences and geography (d) art (e) one of the following : foreign language, music, physical education” (De Landsheere, 1985, pg. 5006). This idea is echoed locally

by G. Cassar when he wrote that “class-teachers are necessary for such young children but their competence cannot satisfy all curricular demands. They need help” (1993, pg. 17). This idea was referred to by members of the staff during the interviews.

Moreover, as far back as 1972, it was felt that teacher education should not refer to just the initial teacher training phase. “There is abundant evidence that the system is no longer adequate to its purposes. That inadequacy arises from an over-dependence upon initial training as distinct from continued education and training” (DES, 1972, as cited in Aspland, R. & Brown, G., 1993, pg. 6). Dr C. Bezzina referred to this idea when he said that :

“we cannot say that by the end of the 4 year programme the teacher has mastered all the competencies, hence he is an effective teacher, far from it. The competencies are so wide...that once a teacher may be very effective in certain competencies he or she might still be weak in others and needs to develop those during his or her teaching career” (refer to interview, APPENDIX 3).

5.1 Suggestions

Keeping the above points in mind the following suggestions are recommended.

5.1.1 Entry Point

Almost all of the interviewees complained that the large number of students is a hindrance. An individualised programme is difficult to operate and the teaching methods presently adopted to cater for the large masses of students are not conducive to the development of certain competencies. To minimise this problem a proper screening of the intending student teachers should be carried out at entry point. Although a CBTE programme emphasises ‘exit’ rather than entrance requirements, still the selection of appropriate candidates would be helpful ; the ‘appropriate’ candidates being those who are most likely to develop the competencies required to become an effective teacher. Those who already

possess some competencies or who have the characteristics which the Faculty members consider to be the underlying qualities of a teacher enabling him or her to master the professional competencies should be preferred.

5.1.2 Structure of the course

As to the structure of the course the implementation of the B.Ed Primary, four years dedicated to the education of specialist Primary school teachers, could help since it would provide more time to the development of the competencies deemed as important. Almost all of the interviewees are looking forward to this step because the common cry is “l-ewwel tini iż-żmien u mbagħad naraw x’ser nagħmlu (first give me enough time and then we will see what we can do). That is the first requirement” (Fr. G. Deguara, APPENDIX 1). This could also help in the progression of the course and a more thorough knowledge base could be catered for.

5.1.3 The teacher education curriculum

The fact that many of the competencies were allocated to all the three main components of the course as it presently is suggests that there is a need for a very close liaison among those involved in professional development throughout the training process. From the survey conducted the development of most of the competencies clearly requires much experience and practice in the classroom. Alexander R. believes that “merely being with someone constantly over a long period of time does not necessarily generate a deep understanding of that person” (1986, pg. 21). This is also true in our situation. Therefore, student teachers should be helped to reflect on the development of the competencies. DENI believes that “the appointment of school-based mentors is deemed an appropriate way of supporting the development of teacher competencies” (1993, pg. 6).

Moreover, Bonnici, B. & Navarro, A. (1997), found that "...the EMY programme has deep roots in the theoretical aspects while it offers a lack of practical content which student teachers mostly urge to have" (pg. 125). The Department of Primary should see how to compensate for this lack.

5.2 Limitations of the study

This study would have been more valid if it was based on a larger number of respondents. Moreover a Pilot Study could have helped to refine the questionnaire. This limitation was compensated for by the fact that the author approached the respondents on a one to one basis, therefore any queries or misunderstandings were tackled immediately.

5.3 Further suggestions

1. It would have been interesting to carry out this same study with different stakeholders, such as parents, intending teachers, children, teachers and education officers.
2. A possible future study could be a comparative one between these different stakeholders to come up with the common competencies mentioned.
3. Another study could be that of extracting performance criteria from the competencies mentioned in this study.
4. This study could be useful to evaluate the present teacher education curriculum regarding the Primary area.

REFERENCES

References

- ALEXANDER, R. J. (1986). *Primary Teaching*. GB : Cassell Education.
- ALTBACH, P. G. (1987). Teaching : International Concerns. In Jonas F. Soltis (ed.), *Reforming Teacher Education : The impact of the Holmes Group Report*. New York & London : Teacher College Press.
- APPLEGATE, J. H. (1989). Readiness for Teaching. In Holly, M. L. & McLoughlin, C. (eds.) *Perspectives on Teacher Professional Development*. London : The Falmer Press.
- ASPLAND, R. & Brown, G. (1993). Keeping Teaching Professional. In Bridges, D & Kerry, T. (eds.) *Developing Teachers Professionally : Reflections for Initial and In-Service Trainers*. G.B : Routledge.
- BEZZINA, C. (1994, November 6). The Aims of Education : An ability to make rational judgements. *The Malta Independent*, pp 28-29.
- BEZZINA, C. (1991, February). Idealism in Educational Policy - An introductory critique of Educational Reform in Malta. *The Teacher*, pp. 2-5.
- BEZZINA, C. (1990, November). Improving the quality of schooling : In dire need of alternative perspectives. *The Teacher*, pp. 20-24.
- BEZZINA, C. (1989, June). An Encounter with Education : The teacher and teaching effectiveness. *The Teacher*, pp. 22-24.
- BONNICI, B. & Navarro, A. (1997). *The Primary Component : Initial Teacher Training*. Unpublished B.Ed (Hons.) dissertation, University of Malta.
- BORG, R. A & Camilleri, I. (1981). *The Effectiveness of Teaching Education among Maltese Teachers*. Unpublished B.Ed (Hons.) dissertation, University of Malta.
- BRASIER-CREAGH J. P. & Workman, B. A. (1976). *The Caxton Dictionary*. London : Systems Publications Ltd.
- CAMERON-JONES, M. & O'Hara, P. (1994). What Employers Want To Read About New Teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 20, 203-214.
- CAMILLERI, R. (1994). *Teacher Training and Teacher Education in Malta : A Historical Perspective*. Unpublished M.Ed dissertation, University of Malta.
- CASSAR, G. (1993, April). Specialist Teaching in Maltese Primary Schools. *The Teacher*, pp 16-17.

- CONSTABLE, H. & Norton, J. (1986). Student Teachers and their Professional Encounters. In Reid, I., Constable, H. & Griffiths, R. (eds.) *Teacher Education Reform : Current Research*. London : Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.
- DEAN, J. (1992). *Organising Learning in the Primary School classroom*. London and New York : Routledge.
- DE LANDSHEERE, G. (1985). Teacher Education : Concepts. In Husen, T. & Postlethwaite, T. N. (eds.) *The International Encyclopedia of Education*. GB : Pergamon Press.
- DENI (Department of Education Northern Ireland) (1993). *Review of Initial Teacher Training in Northern Ireland*. Ireland : DENI
- DEWEY, J. (1958). *Democracy and Education : an introduction to the philosophy of Education*. New York : Macmillan Company
- DICKENS, C. (1914) *Hard Times*. UK : London Chapman & Hall Ltd.
- FARRUGIA, C. J. (1994). Revitalising Primary Schools. In C. Farrugia (ed.), *A New Vision for Primary Schools*. Malta : Malta Union of Teachers.
- FARRUGIA, C. J. (1991). Schools and their curricula. In R. G. Sultana (ed.), *Themes in education : A Maltese Reader*. Malta : Mireva Publications.
- FENECH, J., Muscat, T. & Tanti Burlo', E. (1997, June). *Socialisation of student-teachers into the Profession*. Paper presented at the conference 'Teacher Training in Malta : Current Trends and Future Prospects'. Bugibba, Malta.
- FISHER, R. (1991). *Teaching Juniors*. Great Britain : Simon and Schuster Education.
- FOSKETT, N., Ratcliffe, M. & Brunner D. (1986). Communication and Innovation. In Reid, I., Constable, H. & Griffiths, R. (eds.) *Teacher Education Reform : Current Research*. London : Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.
- GOODING, R., Byram, M. & McPartland, M. (eds.) (1982). *Changing Priorities in Teacher Education*. London : Croom Helm Ltd.
- GROSSMAN, P. L. (1990). *The Making of a Teacher : Teacher Knowledge and Teacher Education*. London : Teachers College Press.
- HENDERSON, E. S., & Perry, G. W. (1981). *Change and development in Schools*. U.K : McGraw Hill Book Company.
- HOPKINS, C., Gillford, S. & Pepperell, S. (eds.) (1996). *Mathematics in the Primary School : A sense of Progression*. London : David Fulton Publishers.

HOUSTON, W. R. (1985). Competency-based Teacher Education. In Husen, T. & Postlethwaite, T. N. (eds.) *The International Encyclopedia of Education*. GB : Pergamon Press.

In-service training of teachers in the European Union and EFTA/EEA Countries, EURYDICE, the Education Information Network in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA Countries. (1995)

MALLIA, F. (1993). Meeting Special Needs. *The Teacher*. Winter '93, pp. 10-13.

MIFSUD, C. & Mallia, J. (1997, June). *Teacher Education as a field inquiry*. Paper presented at the conference 'Teacher Training in Malta : Current Trends and Future Prospects'. Bugibba, Malta.

MIFSUD, C. (1996). Preparation and Competence of Intending and Beginning Teachers in Malta. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 22, 283-293.

MIFSUD, C. (1994, November 13). A great career in education - Professor Peter Mortimore. *The Sunday Times*, pp 34-35.

MIFSUD, C. (1989, December) The Teaching of Language Revisited. *The Teacher*, pp. 2-3.

MIZZI, C. (1996). Quality in Education. *The Teacher*. 2/96, pp. 4-8.

POWELL, R. P. (1992). The Influence of Prior Experiences on pedagogical constructs of Traditional and Nontraditional Preservice Teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 8, 225-238.

Recommendations for Environment Education (Toulouse University Summer School) (1994, September) *The Teacher* 3 & 4/95, 5-6.

SCHER, A. & Verrall, C. (1975). *100+ Ideas for Drama*. Oxford : Heinemann Educational Publishers.

SCHUELER, H. (1971). Teachers, Education of : Overview. In Lee C. Deighton (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Education*. USA : The Macmillan Company and the Free Press

SMITH, B. O. (1985) Teaching : Definitions. In Husen, T. & Postlethwaite, T. N. (eds.) *The International Encyclopedia of Education*. GB : Pergamon Press.

SULTANA, R.G. (1997, June) *The Tomorrow's Teachers' Project*. Conference 'Teacher Training in Malta : Current Trends and Future Prospects'. Bugibba, Malta.

SULTANA, R. G. (1995). Developing a Vision for Teacher Education Programmes : A Values-based Approach. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 18, 215-229.

THOMAS, J. (1968). *Teachers, for the schools of Tomorrow*. France : UNESCO

TICKLE, L. (1987). *Learning Teaching, Teaching Teaching : A Study of Partnership In Teacher Education*. London : The Falmer Press.

TILLEMA, H. H. (1994). Training and Professional Expertise Bridging the Gap between new information and pre-existing beliefs of Teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10, 601-615.

VELLA, V. (1991, May). Teacher Appraisal : Making Virtue of Necessity? *The Teacher*, pp. 6-9.

WAIN, K. *et al.* (1995). *Tomorrow's Schools : Developing Effective Learning Cultures*. Malta : Education Division. (mimeo)

WHITEHEAD, A. N. (1929). *The Aims of Education and other Essays*. N.Y : The Free Press.

WILD, P. & Hodginson, K. (1990). *Providing Information Technology competency in primary and secondary initial teacher training*. Proceedings of the Third National Conference in Design and Technology Education and Research, Loughborough University, 144-151.

WOLF, R. M. (1985) Questionnaires. In Husen, T. & Postlethwaite, T. N. (eds.) *The International Encyclopedia of Education*. GB : Pergamon Press.

ZAMMIT CIANTAR, J. (ed.) (1993). *Education in Malta : a handbook*. Malta : Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

‘Good teachers are born and not made’

Comment :

- (A) Competencies are a series of behaviours or performances of which the execution at an acceptable level can readily be identified by observation.
- (B) Competencies should be taken to refer to knowledge, understanding and attitudes as well as to practical skills.

Which is the best definition of ‘competencies?’ A ☐ B ☐

Why?

Do you agree with a competencies-based initial teacher education?

YES ☐ NO ☐

‘YES’ why?

‘NO’ why?

Here is a list of qualities a successful teacher should have according to a Review of Initial Teacher Training in Northern Ireland (1993).

- (1) Tick (✓) in order of importance, number 1 being the most important.
- (2) Tick (✓) to indicate stage at which most attention should be given ;
 - T.P - during Teaching Practice
 - A - during Foundation courses
 - B - during Methodology

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS of a successful teacher :

Professional Values

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
likes and cares for children								
is enthusiastic about teaching								
believes in the promotion of equal opportunities								
appreciates role of parents								

Professional Development

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
engages in self-appraisal and evaluation								
works with others in the professional context								
keeps up to date in his/her subject(s)								
open to change/innovation								

Personal Development

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
has a range of interests								
has self-confidence								
is still learning								

Communication and Relationships

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
is able to communicate effectively								
is able to maintain constructive relationships								
is sensitive to other people's emotions								

Synthesis and Application

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
integrate a wide range of knowledge/skills								
apply them appropriately and effectively								

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE of a successful teacher :**Knowledge and understanding of children and their learning**

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
knowledge of child development								
knowledge of the ways in which children learn								
understanding of influences on children's attainment								
knowledge of the role of language in learning								
understanding of learning through non-verbal means								

Understanding of importance and range of play								
Understanding of role of IT on learning								
Awareness of individual differences								
Understanding of importance of motivation								
Knowledge of the principles of good discipline								
Understanding of importance of assessment								

Subject knowledge

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Depth, beyond immediate demands of school								
Breadth of knowledge								
Knowledge of relationships								

Knowledge of the curriculum

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
In favour of a balanced and broad curriculum								
Awareness of 'hidden curriculum'								
Knowledge and understanding of local curriculum								
Understanding of different kinds of assessment								
Knowledge of the range of resources								
Awareness of the skills and processes of subjects								

Knowledge of the education system

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Awareness of different views on aims of education								
Relationships to other aspects of society								
Knowledge of local history and context of education								
Awareness of contemporary debate on education								
Understanding of schools within community								
Knowledge of relationships of different parts of the system								
Knowledge of its organisation and management								

Knowledge of the teacher's role

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Awareness of importance of critical reflection								
Understanding of how to draw upon sources of help								
Knowledge of his/her responsibilities								
Awareness of his/her role in a professional team								
Awareness of current social problems								

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS of a successful teacher :**Subject application**

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Plans appropriate lessons within programme								
Demonstrates knowledge of effective methodologies								
Plans appropriate lessons/material for pupils								
Makes use of appropriate resources								
Shows awareness of potential areas of difficulty								
Uses combination of thematic/subject approaches								
Uses IT to enhance learning								
Prepares coherent teaching programmes								
Justify selection of material used								
Understands how to organise field work								
Ensures continuity and progression								
Contributes to formulation of aims and objectives								

Classroom methodology

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Can justify method being used								
Questions pupils effectively								
Employs a range of strategies								
Plans and employs a range of strategies								
Captures and maintains pupils' attention								
Takes account of pupils' diversity								
Is able to recognise and provide for special needs								
Takes account of cultural differences								
Encourages pupils to develop powers of inquiry								
Creates problem-solving situations								
Contributes to development of communication skills								
Makes pupils aware of expectations								
Encourages initiatives								

Class management

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Teaches in different modes (whole-class/group/pair..)								
Manages play/activity-based learning appropriately								
Maintains pupils' motivation								
Is able to make smooth transitions								
Establishes good classroom rapport								
Establishes clear rules/expectations								
De-emptys inappropriate behaviour/confrontation								

deals with inappropriate behaviour								
manages time effectively								
make effective use of non-teaching staff								
seeks advice when necessary								

Assessment and recording

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Provides pupils with regular, thorough feedback								
Uses different modes of assessment								
Assesses and records in a systematic manner								
Judges performance against norms								
Encourages pupils in assessing themselves								
Participates in moderation procedures								
Provide helpful reports to parents								
Awareness of pupils' extra-curricular achievements								
Uses outcomes of assessment								

The wider role

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B
Accepts and undertakes pastoral duties of a teacher								
Contributes to cross-curricular aspects								
Consults with members of other profession								
Contribute to activities outside formal curriculum								
Relates effectively with parents								
Develops effective working relationships with others								
Takes responsibility for curriculum leadership								
Communicates with representatives of community								

Write down specific competencies which you think are required in our local context, for the making of a successful Maltese teacher.

	1	2	3	4	5	T.P	A	B

We would welcome any other suggestions about this survey ; please write on the reverse side of this page.

Thanks for your collaboration!
Maria Demicoli

Professional Competencies which characterise the successful teacher : Maltese Views and Implications.

Main questions to be asked during interview :

What competencies should a teacher have to teach _____ effectively in a primary school?
(including knowledge, skills and also attitudes)

Do you think the present initial teacher training (B.Ed course and also PGCE) is catering for the development of such competencies?
In what ways? (During T.P, by means of the assignments, during lectures etc.)

What should be done in your opinion to develop these competencies fully?

Thanks for your co-operation!

Madia Demicoli

APPENDIX 2

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS of a successful teacher :

Professional Values

Figure 2 - LIKES AND CARES FOR CHILDREN
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

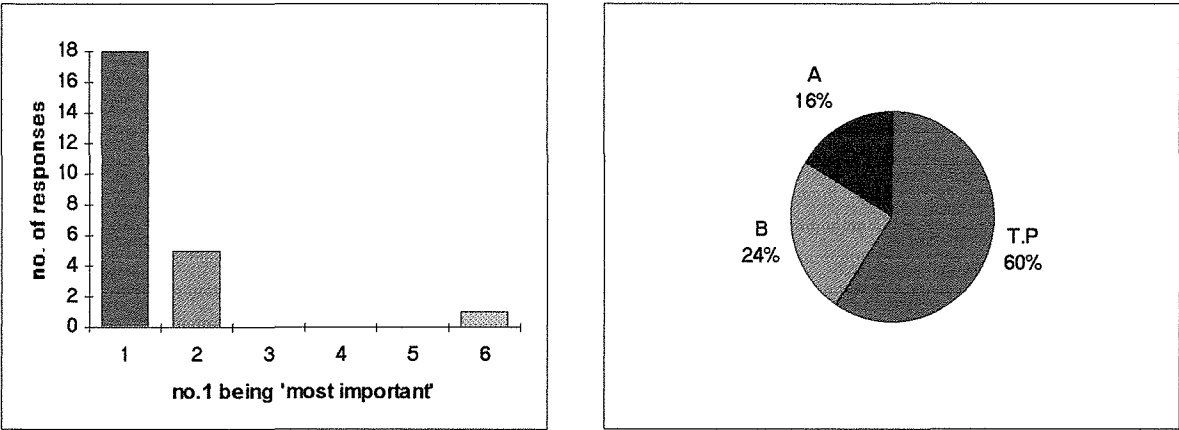


Figure 3 - IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT TEACHING
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

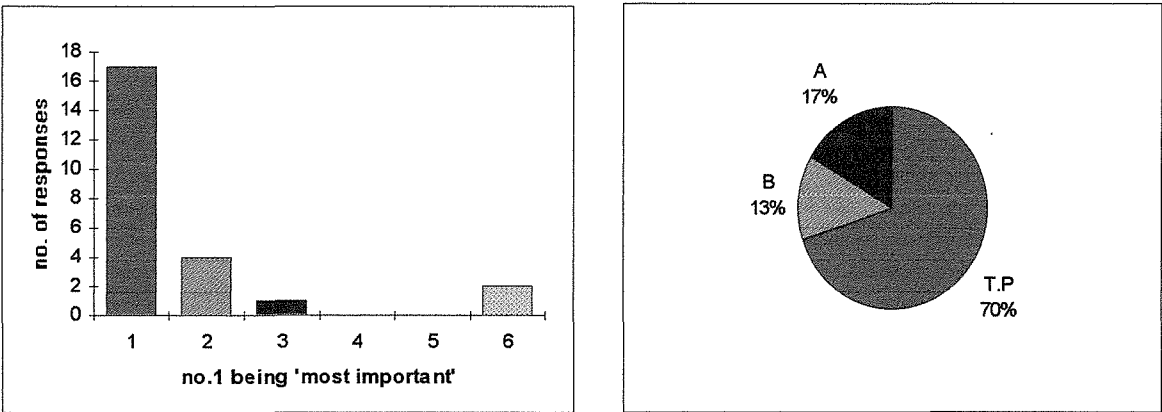


Figure 4 - BELIEVES IN THE PROMOTION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

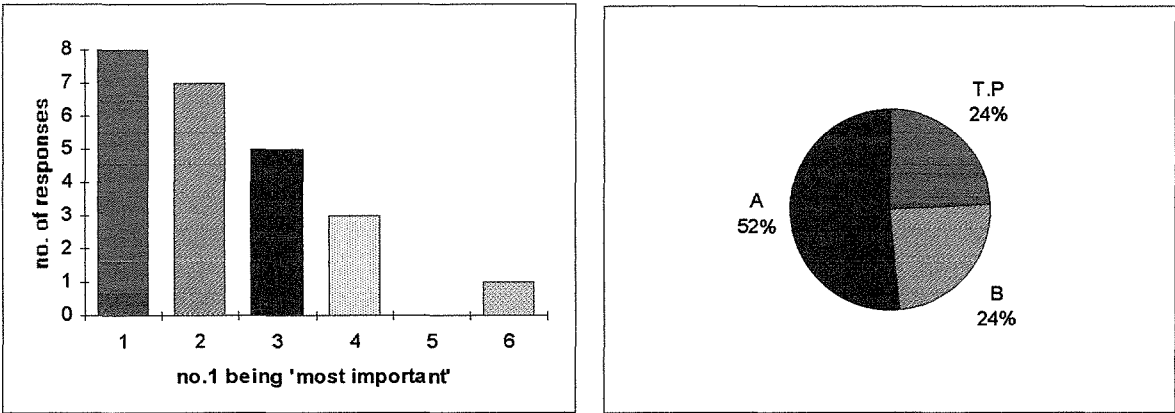
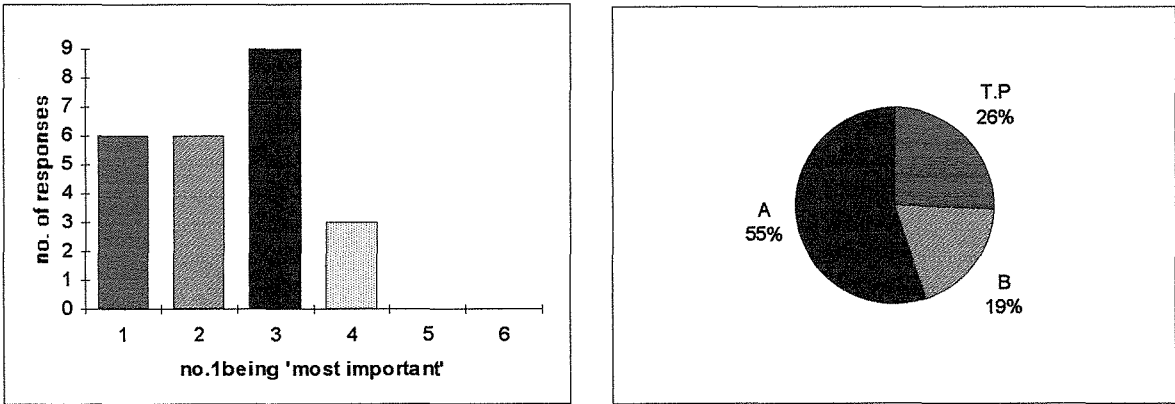


Figure 5 - APPRECIATES ROLE OF PARENTS

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Professional Development

Figure 6 - ENGAGES IN SELF-APPRAISAL AND EVALUATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

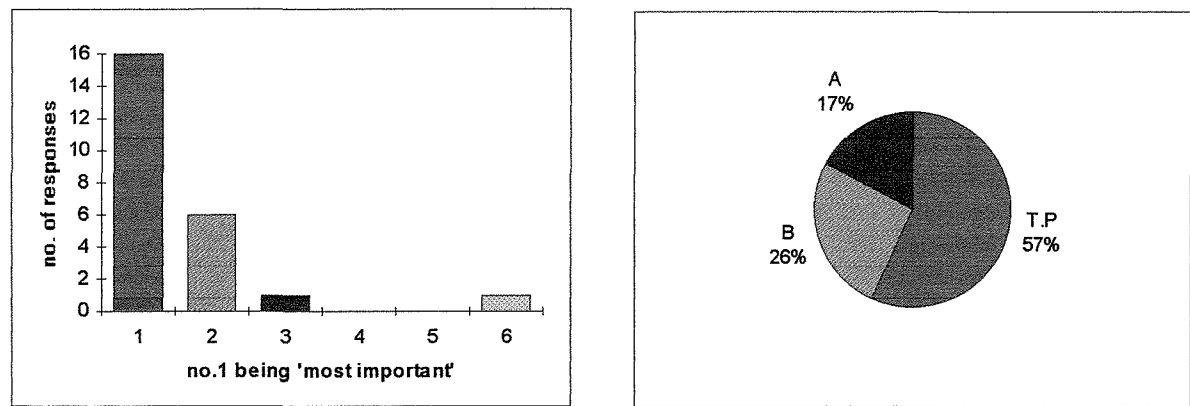


Figure 7 - WORKS WITH OTHERS IN THE PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

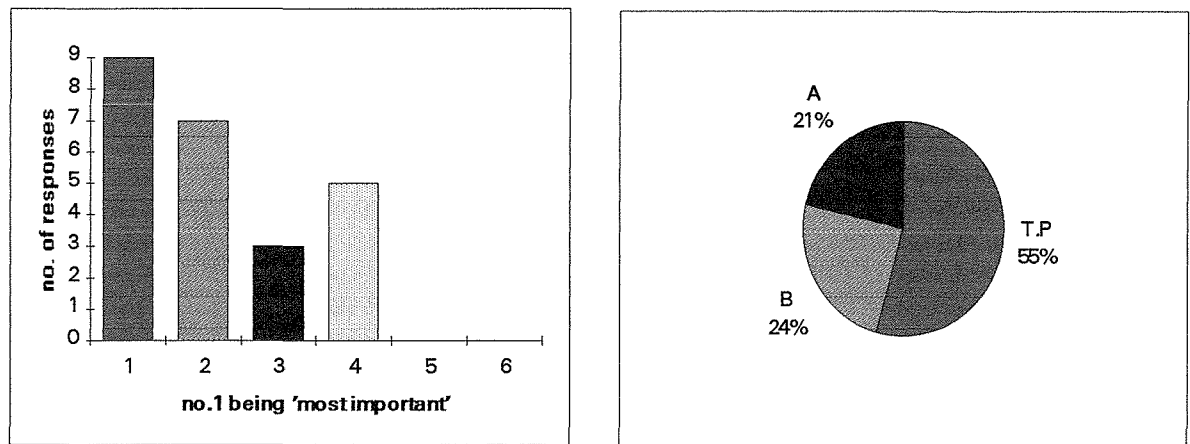


Figure 8 - KEEPS UP TO DATE IN HIS/HER SUBJECT(S)
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

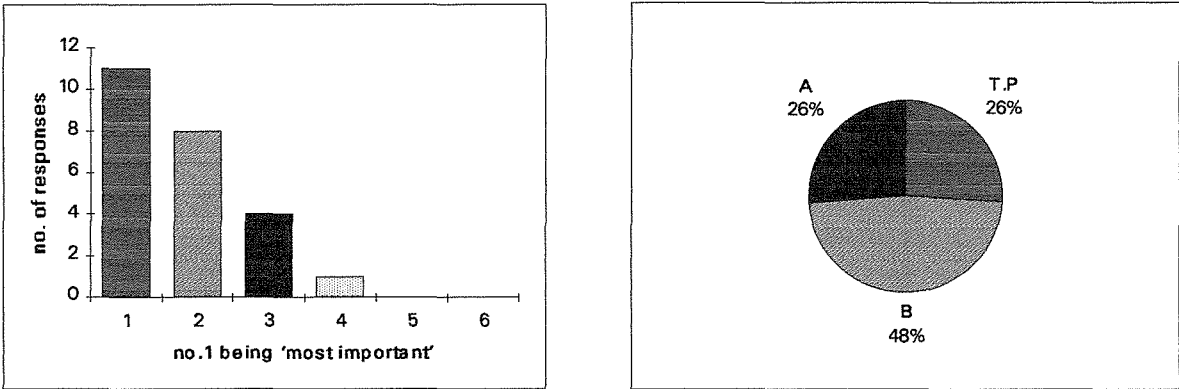
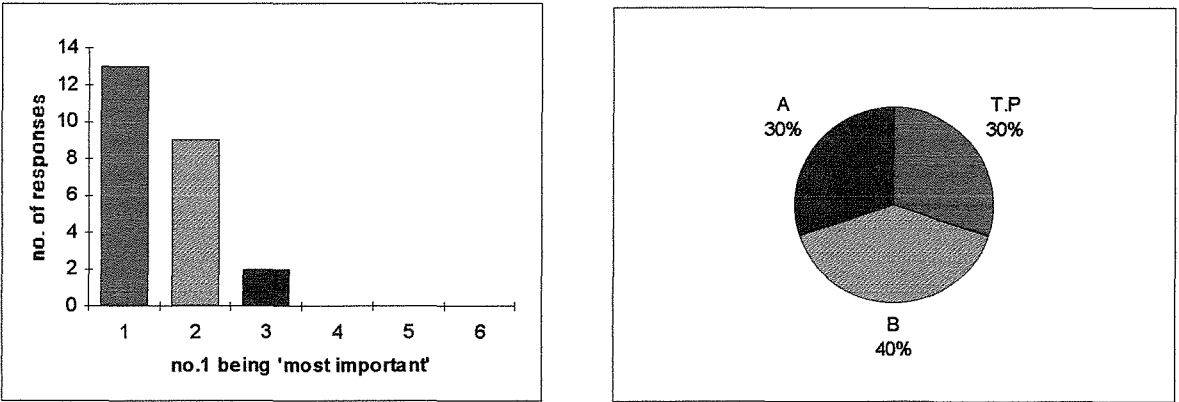


Figure 9 - OPEN TO CHANGE/INNOVATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Personal Development

Figure 10 - HAS A RANGE OF INTERESTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

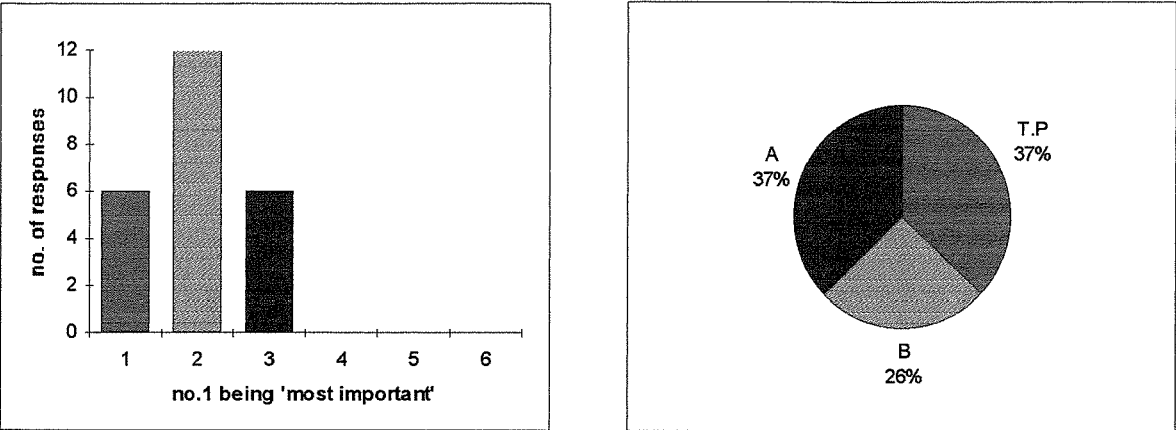


Figure 11 - HAS SELF-CONFIDENCE
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

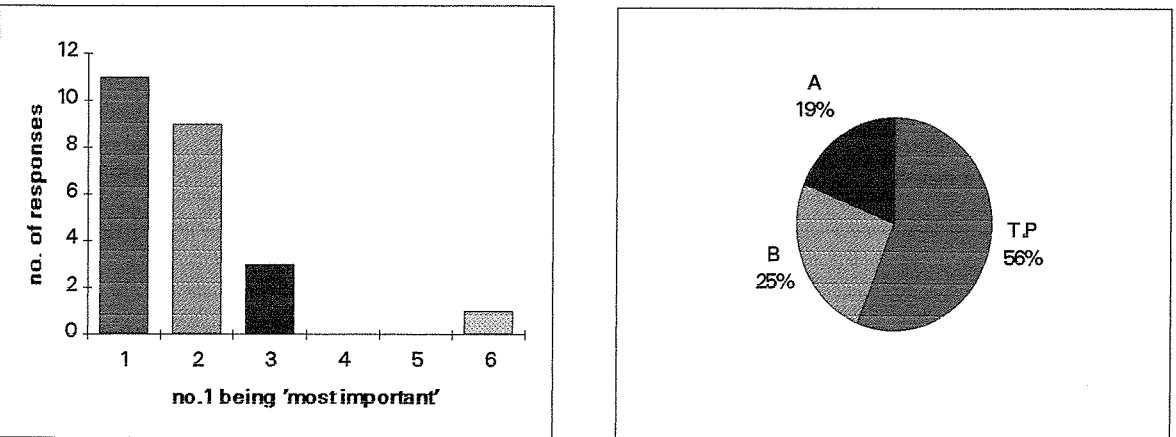
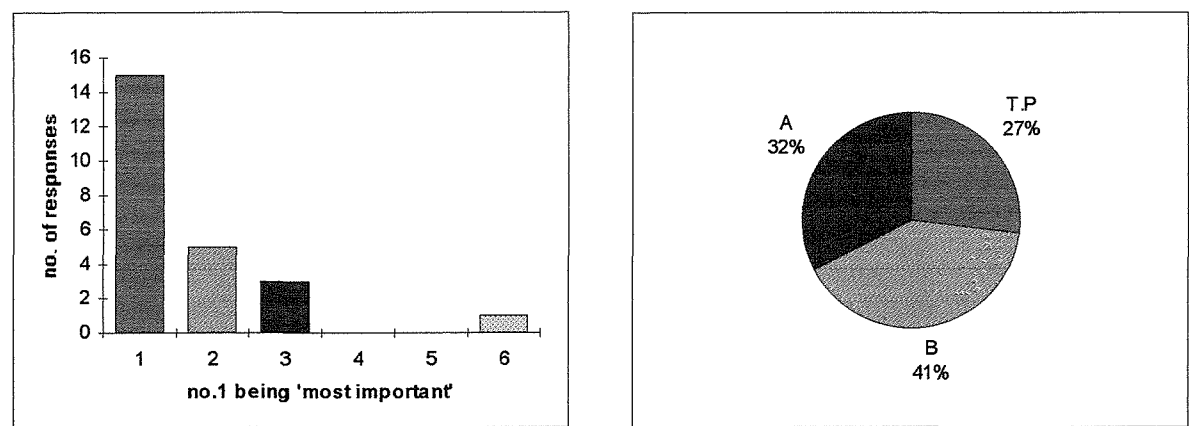


Figure 12 - IS STILL LEARNING
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Communication and Relationships

Figure 13 - ABLE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

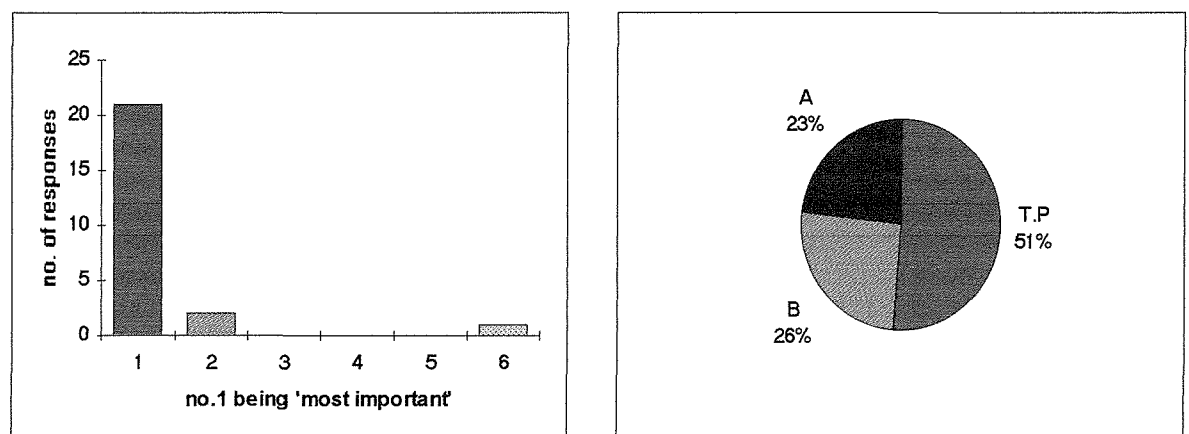


Figure 14 - ABLE TO MAINTAIN CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

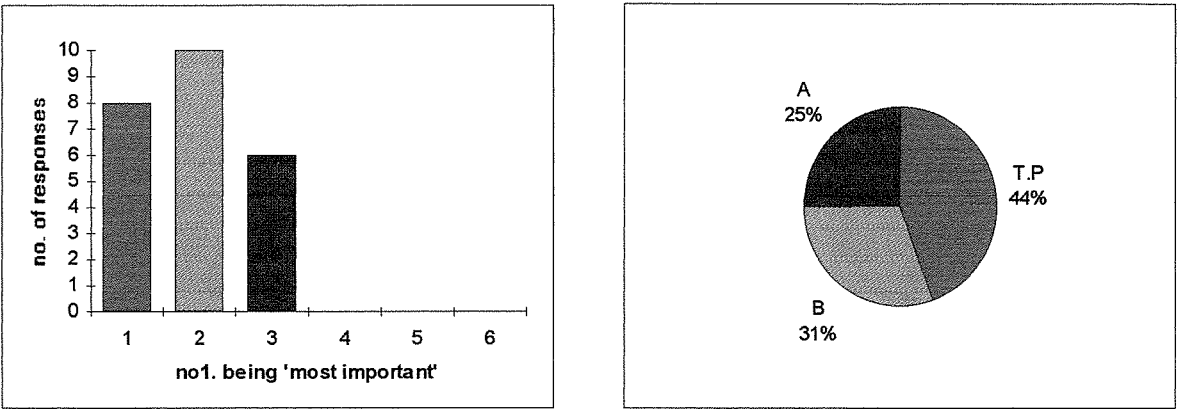
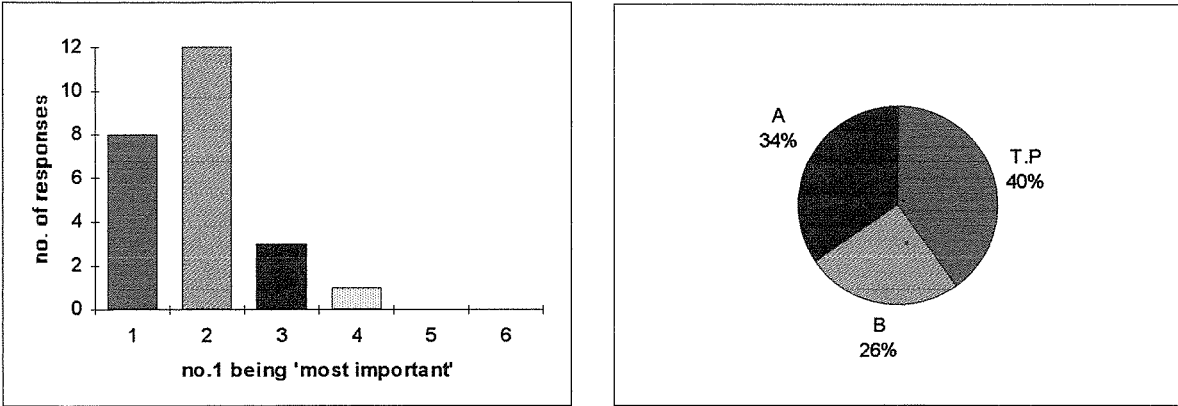


Figure 15 - SENSITIVE TO OTHER PEOPLES' EMOTIONS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Synthesis and Application

Figure 16 - INTEGRATE A WIDE RANGE OF KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

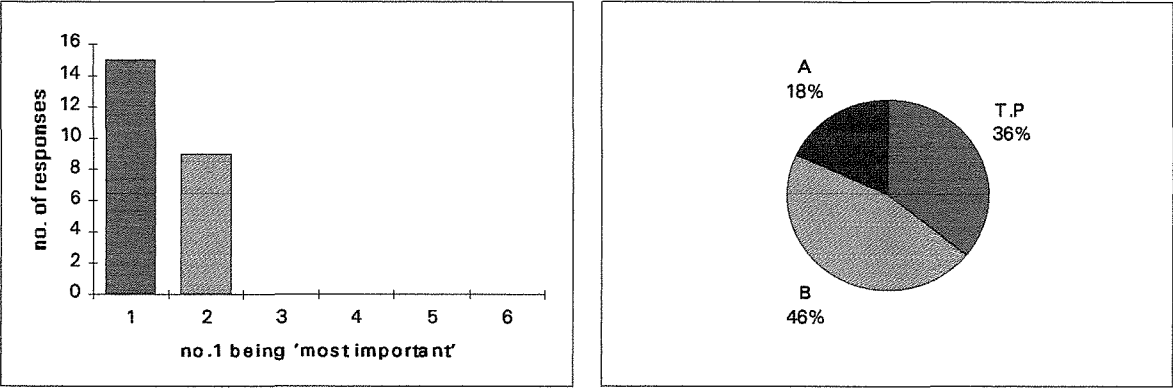
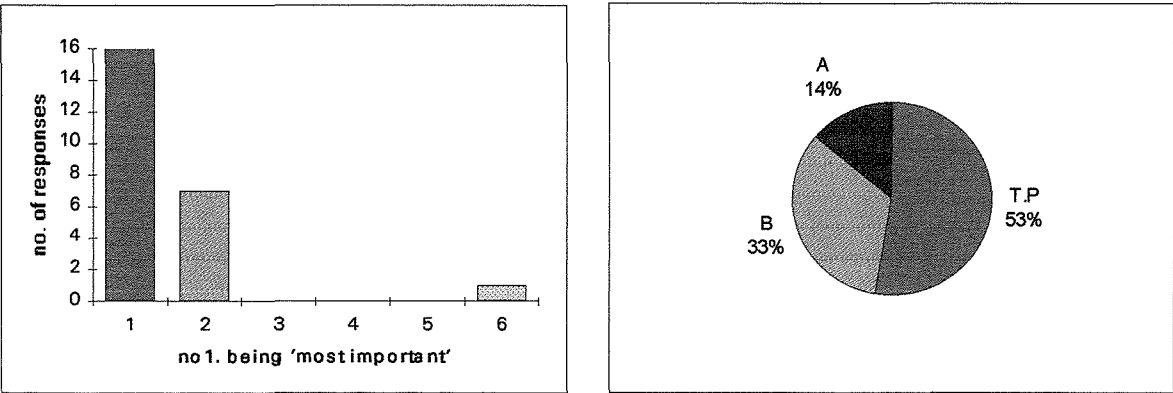


Figure 17 - APPLY THEM APPROPRIATELY AND EFFECTIVELY
The data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE of a successful teacher :

Knowledge and understanding of children and their learning

Figure 18 - KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

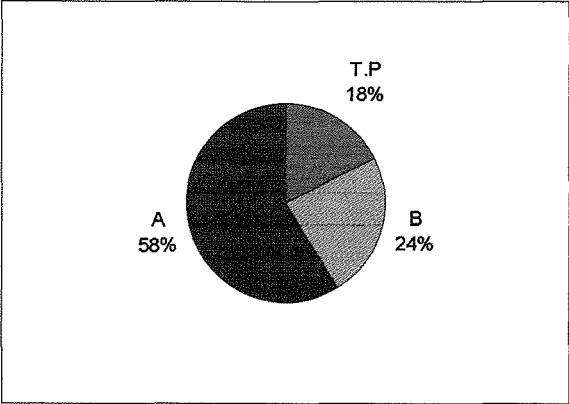
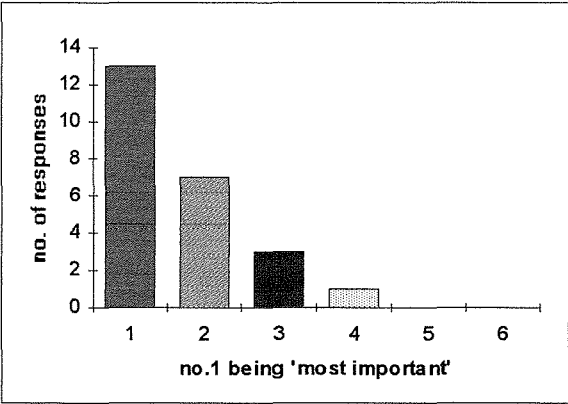


Figure 19 - KNOWLEDGE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH CHILDREN LEARN
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

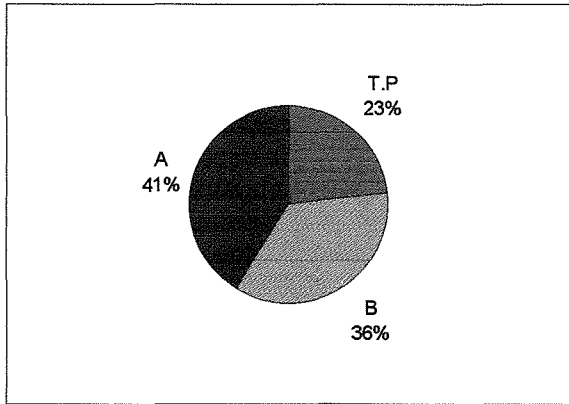
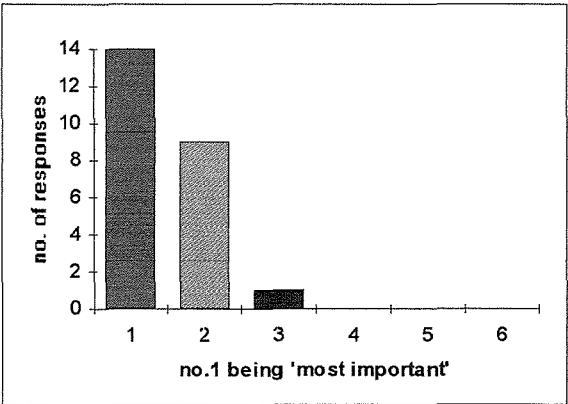


Figure 20 - UNDERSTANDING OF INFLUENCES ON CHILDREN'S ATTAINMENT

The data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

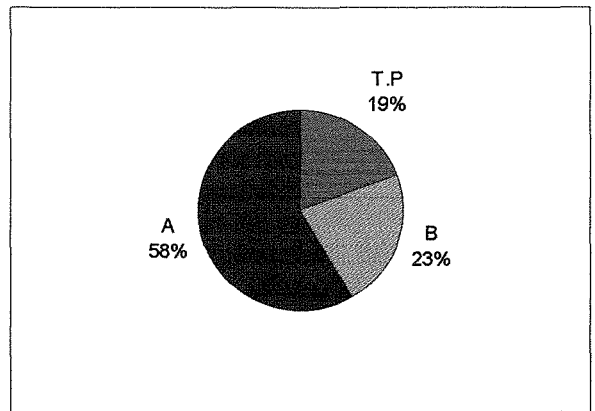
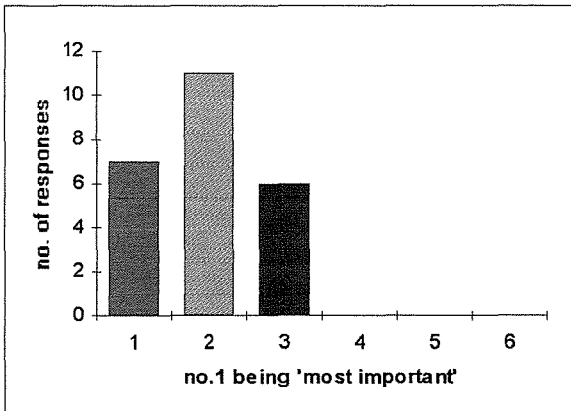


Figure 21 - KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN LEARNING

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

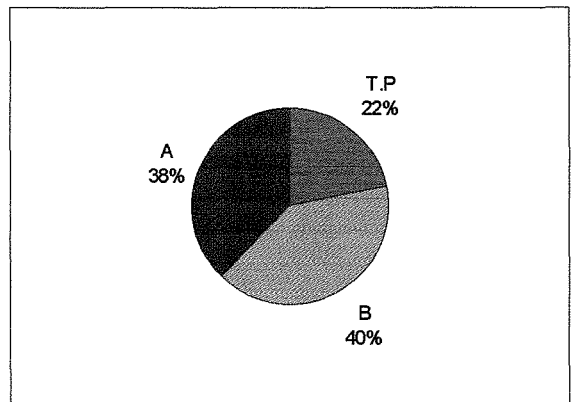
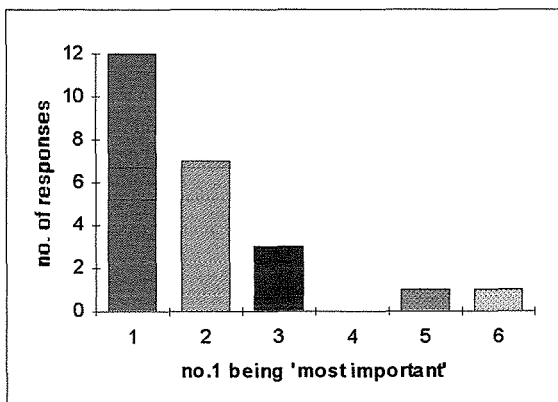


Figure 22 - UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNING THROUGH NON-VERBAL MEANS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

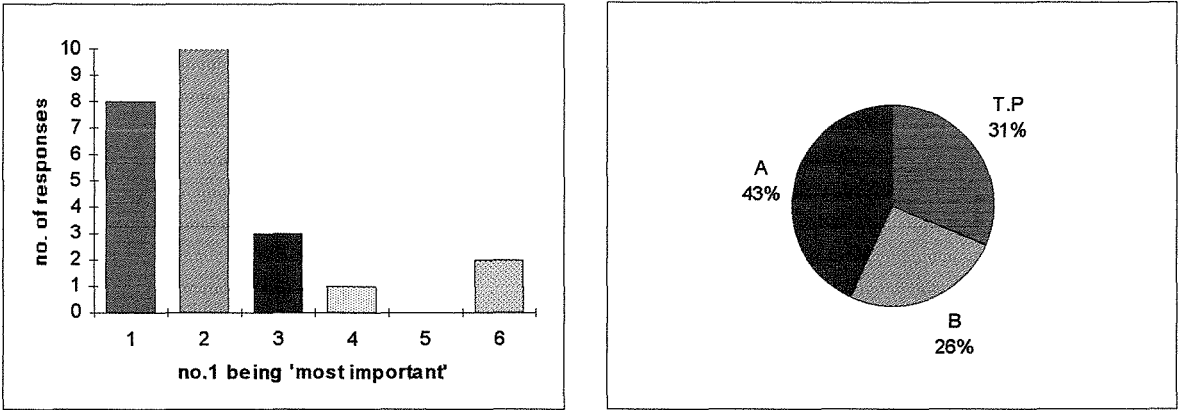


Figure 23 - UNDERSTANDING OF IMPORTANCE AND RANGE OF PLAY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

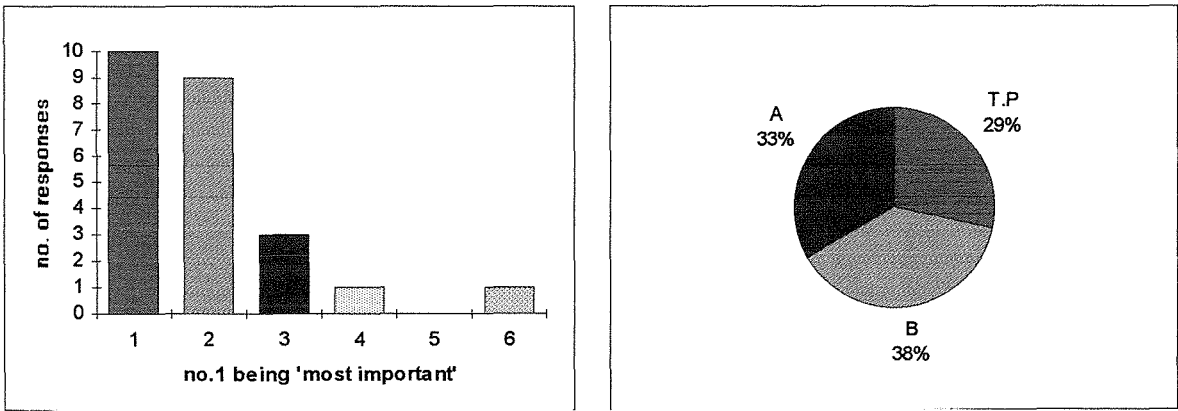


Figure 24 - UNDERSTANDING OF ROLE OF I.T. ON LEARNING
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

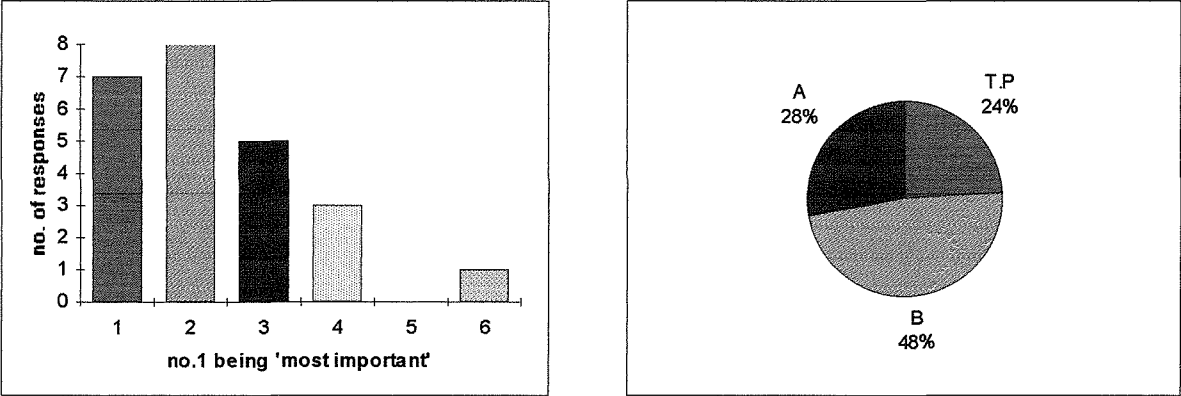


Figure 25 - AWARENESS OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

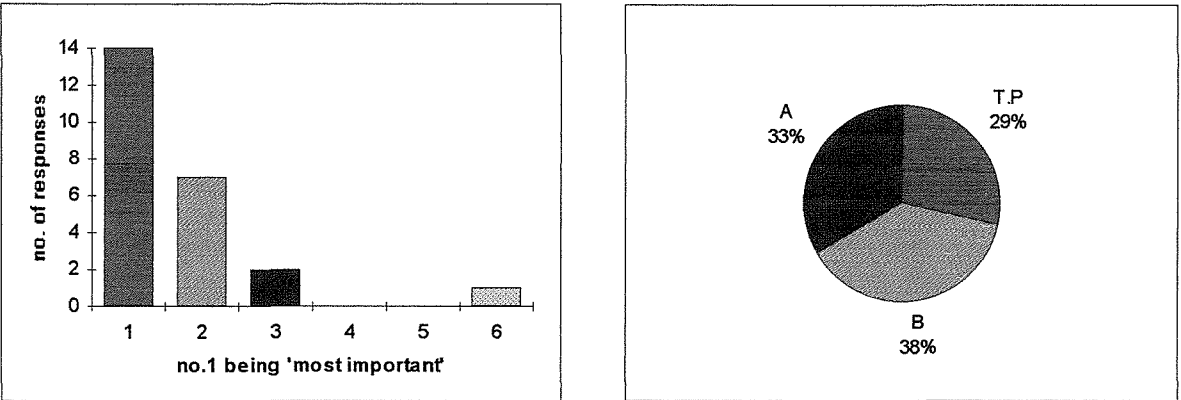


Figure 26 - UNDERSTANDING OF IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

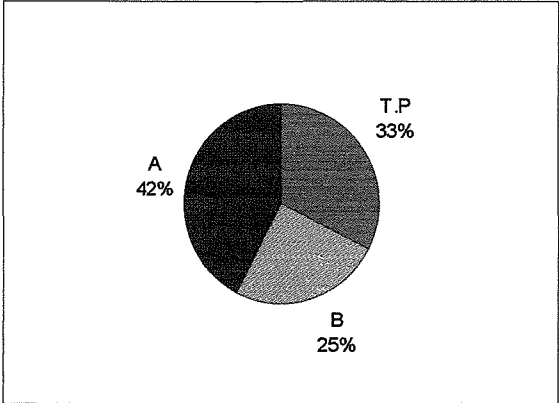
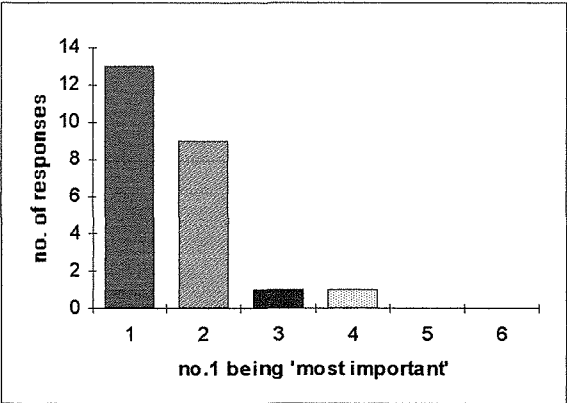


Figure 27 - KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DISCIPLINE
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

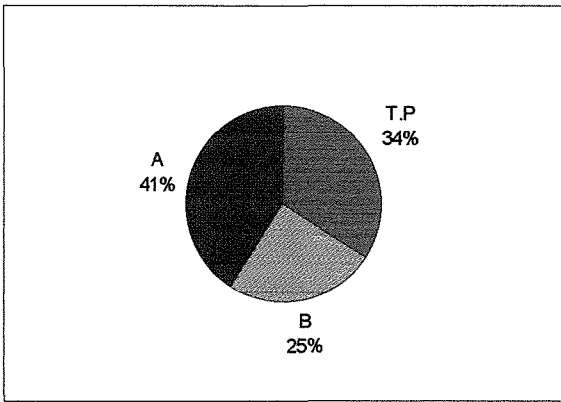
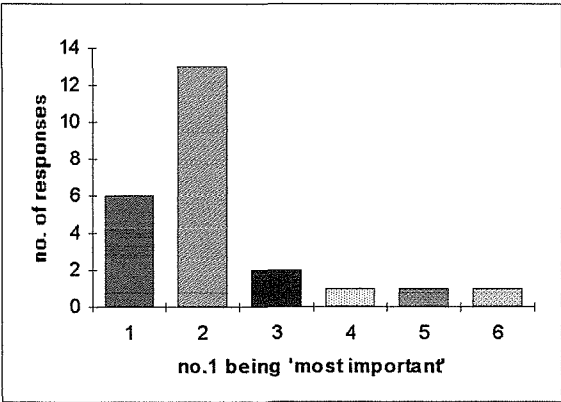
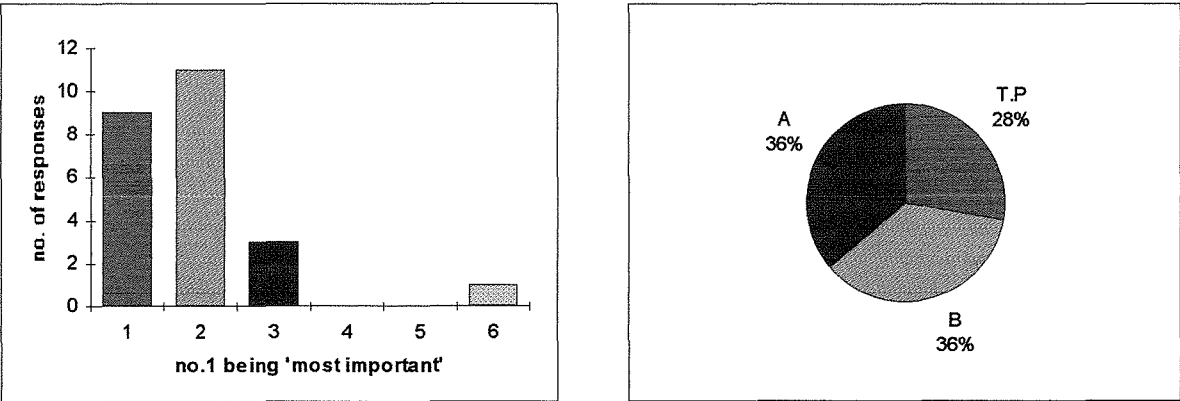


Figure 28 - UNDERSTANDING OF IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Subject Knowledge

Figure 29 - DEPTH, BEYOND IMMEDIATE DEMANDS OF SCHOOL
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

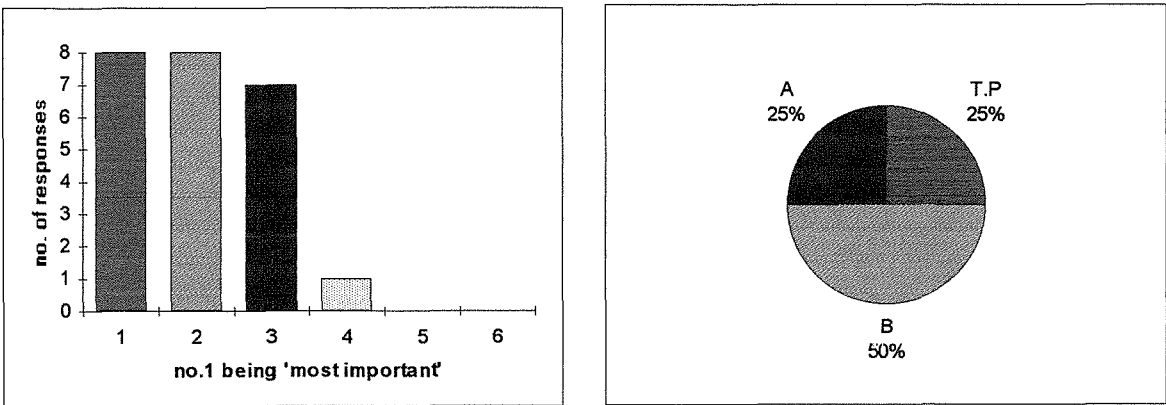


Figure 30 - BREATH OF KNOWLEDGE
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

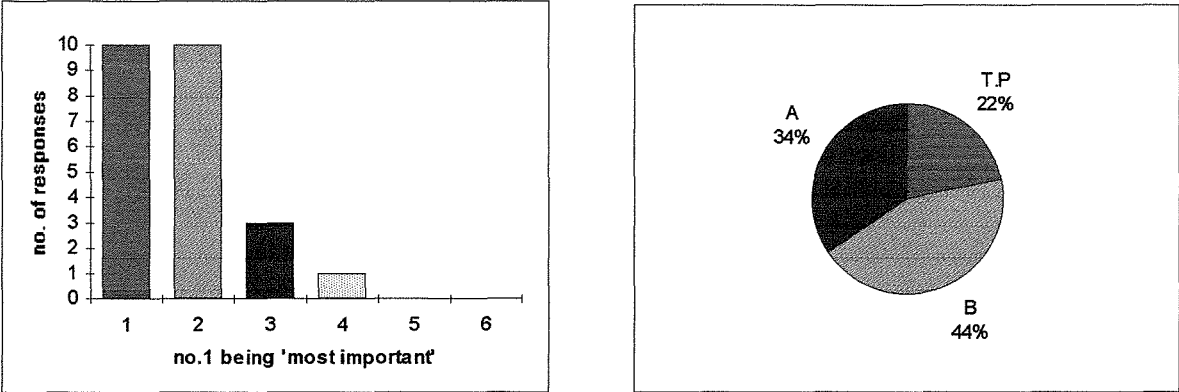
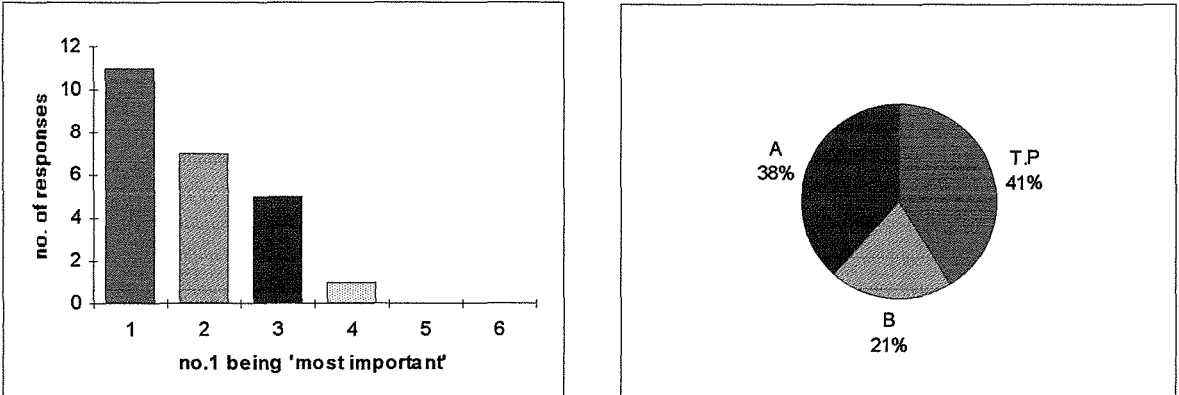


Figure 31 - KNOWLEDGE OF RELATIONSHIPS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Knowledge of the Curriculum

Figure 32 - IN FAVOUR OF A BALANCED AND BROAD CURRICULUM
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

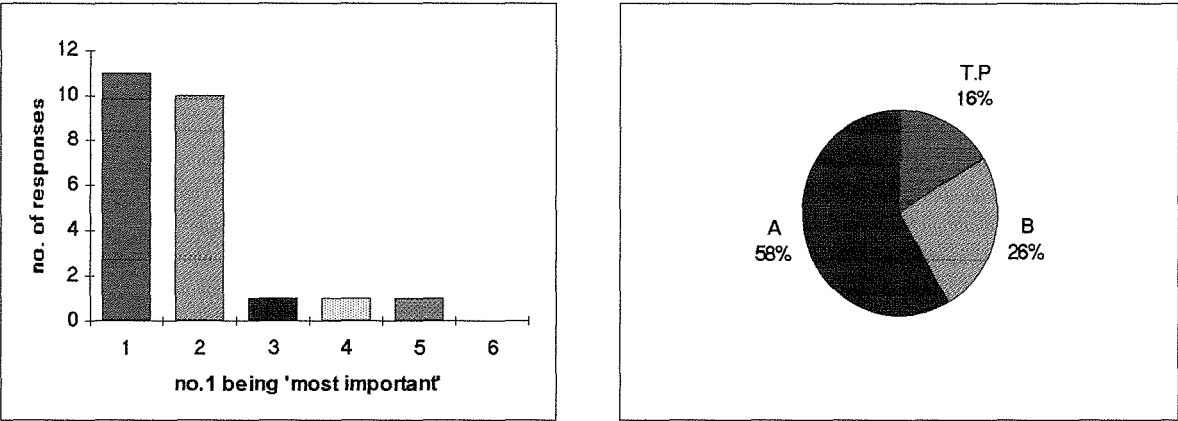


Figure 33 - AWARENESS OF 'HIDDEN CURRICULUM'
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

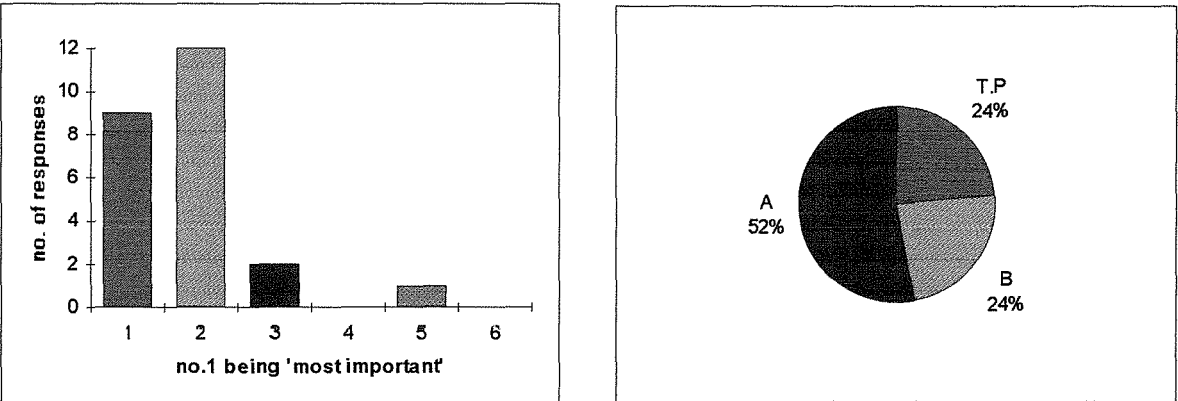


Figure 34 - KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL CURRICULUM
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

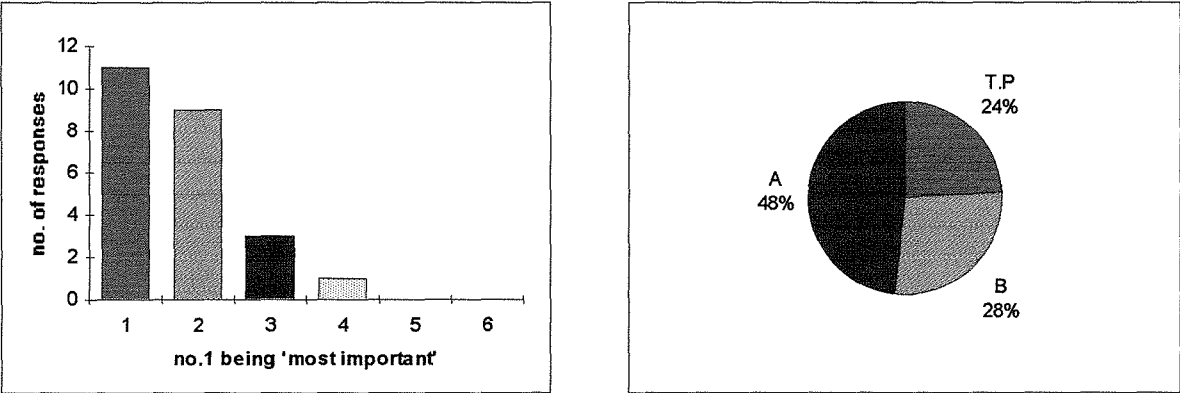


Figure 35 - UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF ASSESSMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

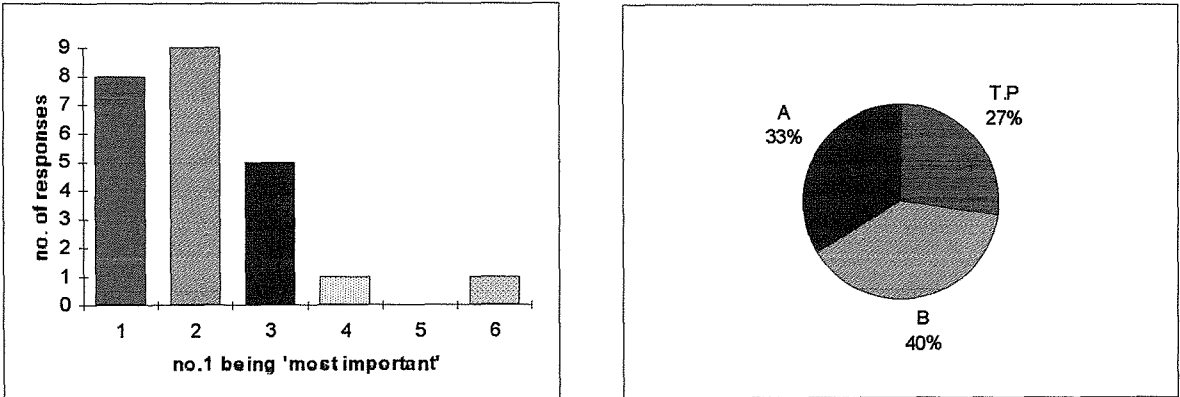


Figure 36 - KNOWLEDGE OF THE RANGE OF RESOURCES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

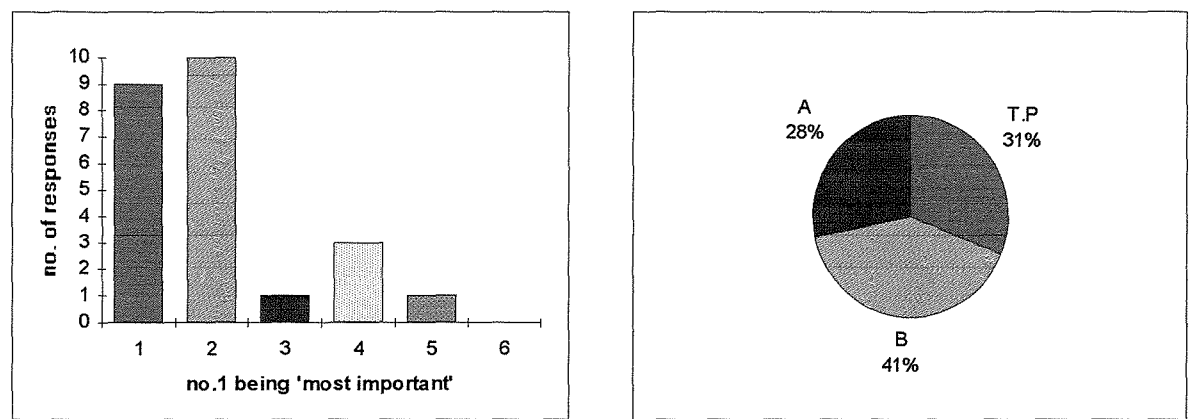
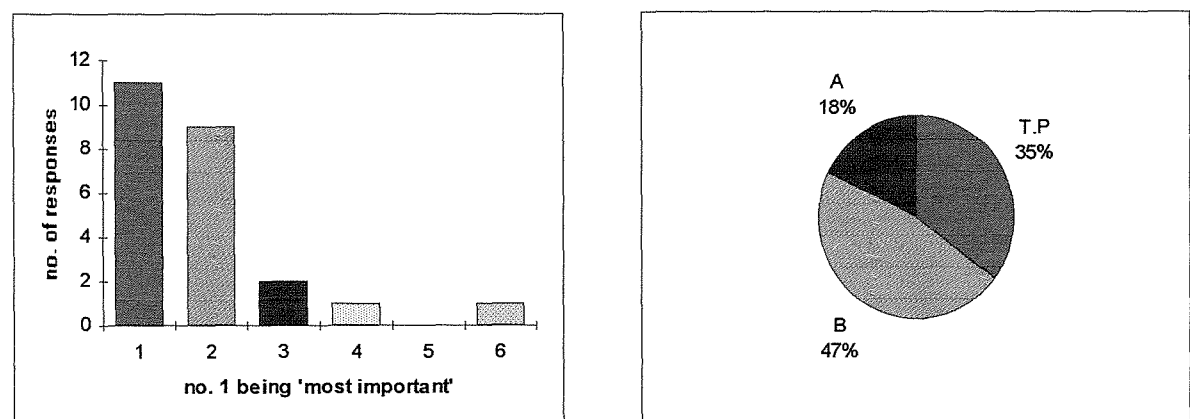


Figure 37 - AWARENESS OF THE SKILLS AND PROCESSES OF SUBJECTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Knowledge of the education system

Figure 38 - AWARENESS OF DIFFERENT VIEW ON AIMS OF EDUCATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

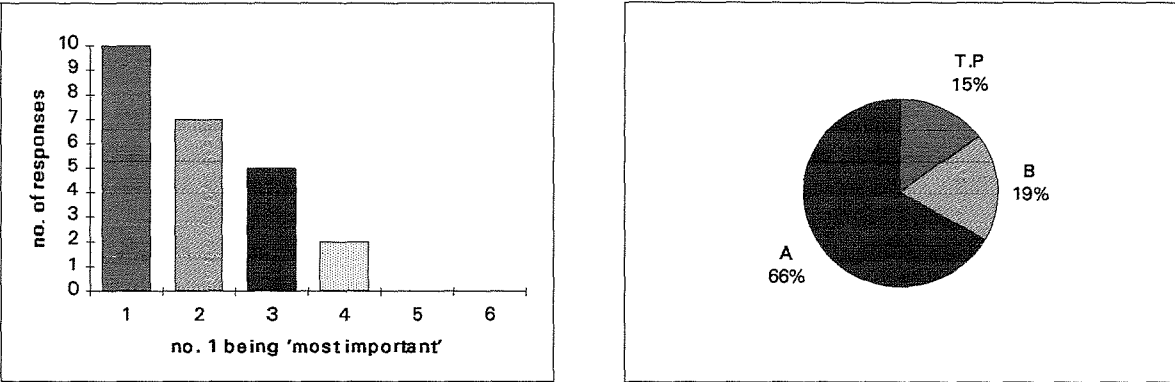


Figure 39 - RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER ASPECTS OF SOCIETY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

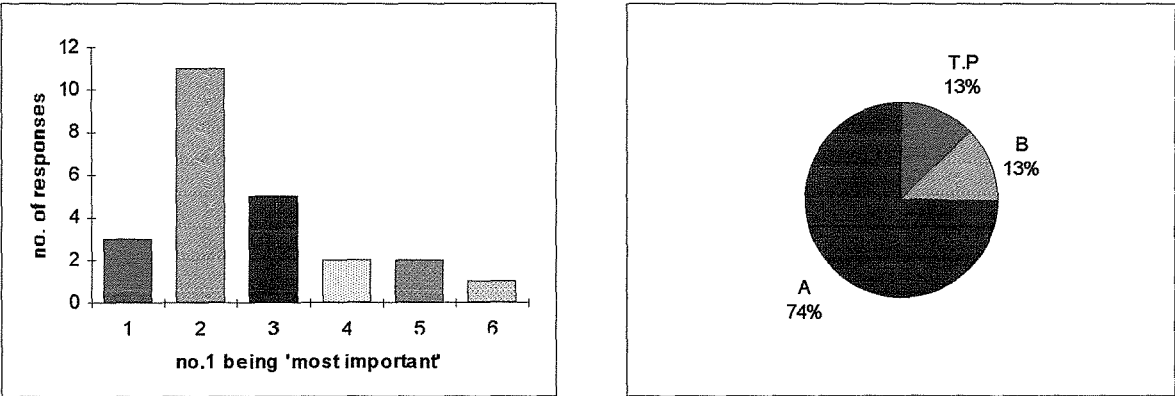


Figure 40 - KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF EDUCATION

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

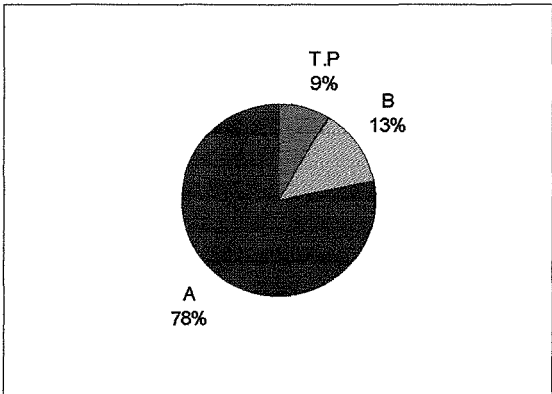
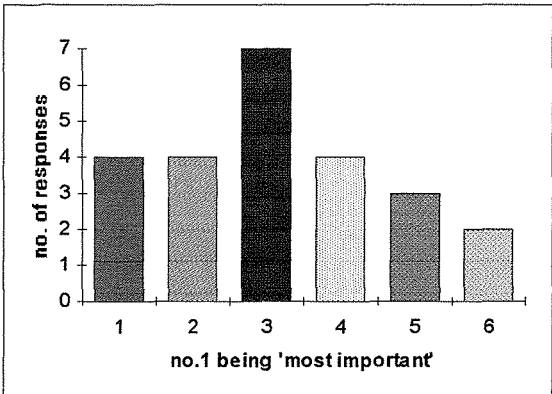


Figure 41 - AWARENESS OF CONTEMPORARY DEBATE ON EDUCATION

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

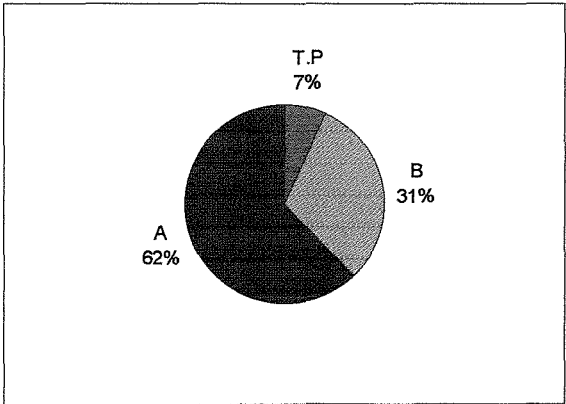
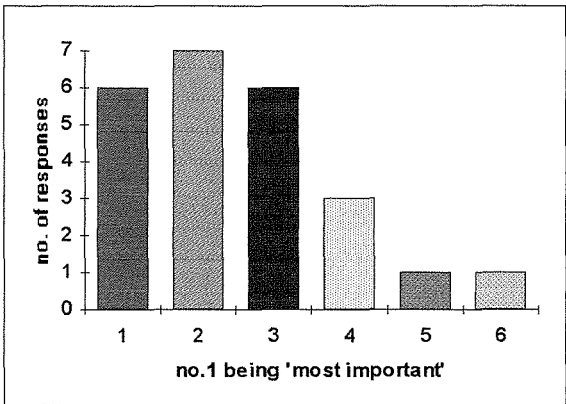


Figure 42 - UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOLS WITHIN COMMUNITY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

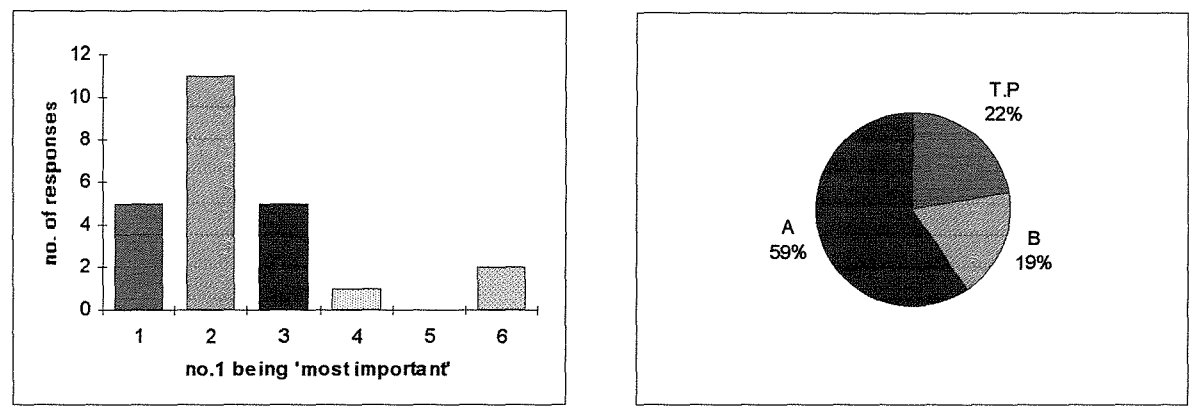


Figure 43 - KNOWLEDGE OF RELATIONSHIPS OF DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SYSTEM
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

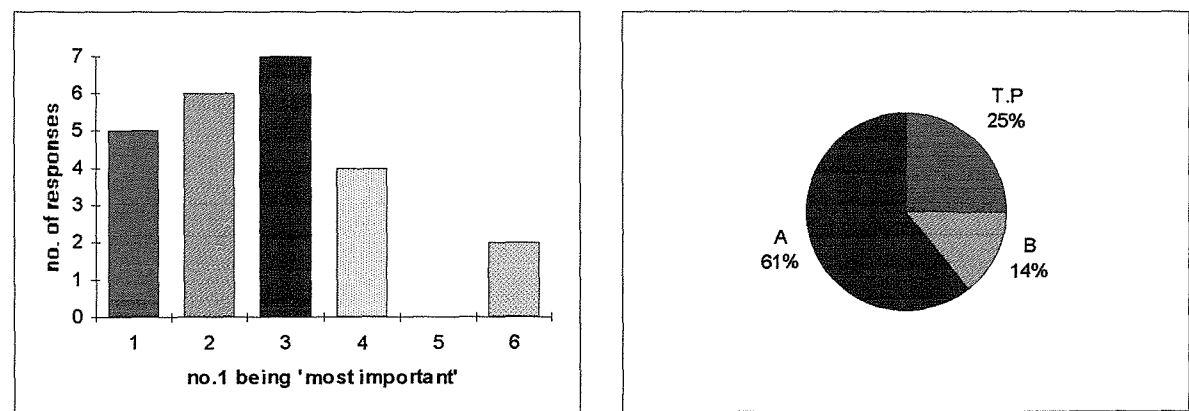
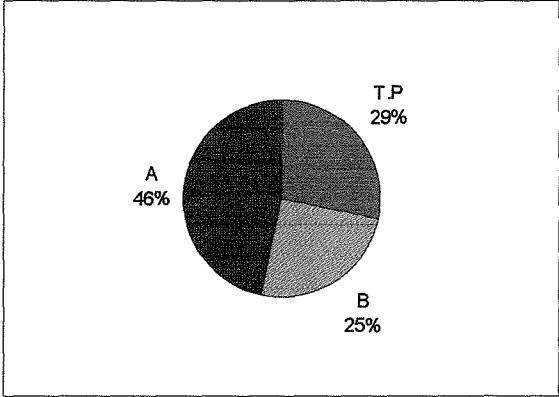
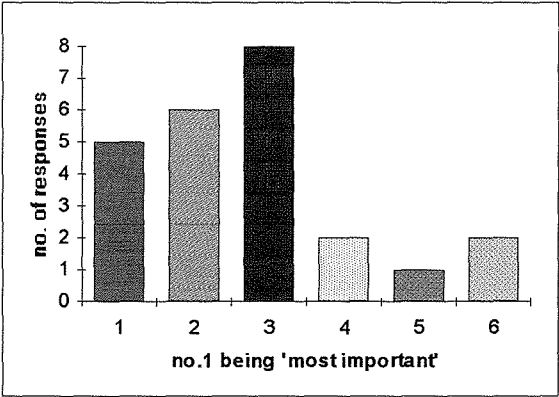


Figure 44 - KNOWLEDGE OF ITS ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Knowledge of the teacher's role

Figure 45 - AWARENESS OF IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL REFLECTION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

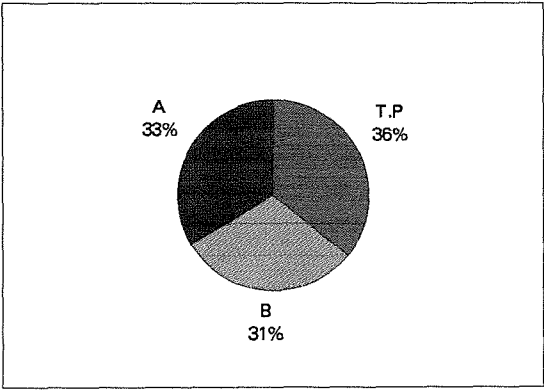
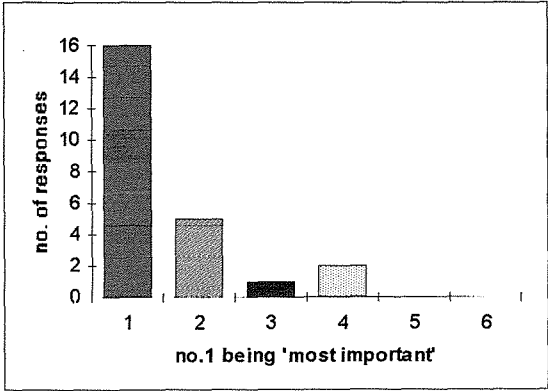


Figure 46 - UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO DRAW UPON SOURCES OF HELP
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

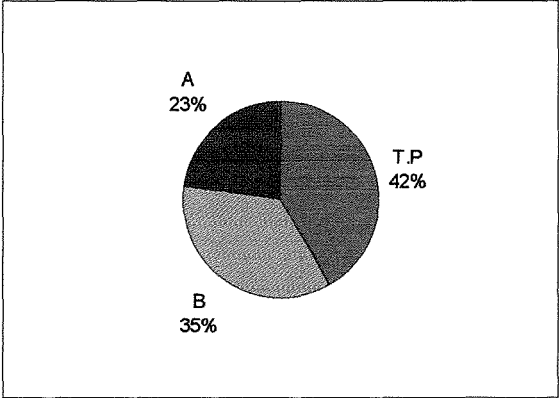
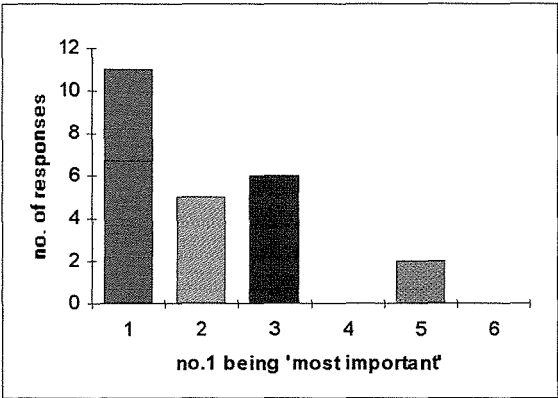


Figure 47 - KNOWLEDGE OF HIS/HER RESPONSIBILITIES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

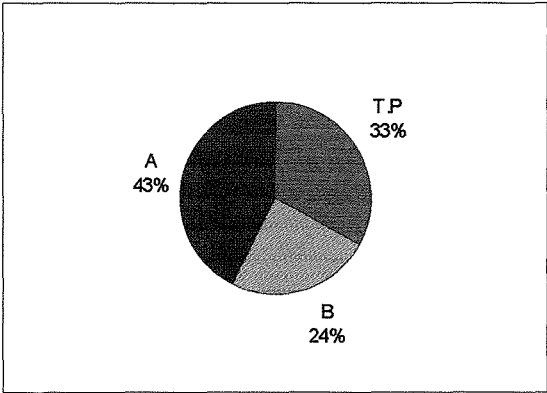
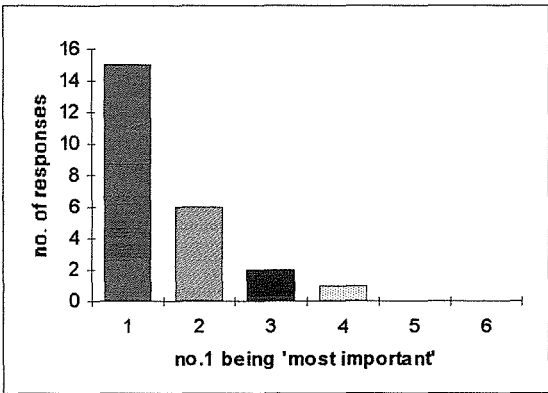


Figure 48 - AWARENESS OF HIS/HER ROLE IN A PROFESSIONAL TEAM
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

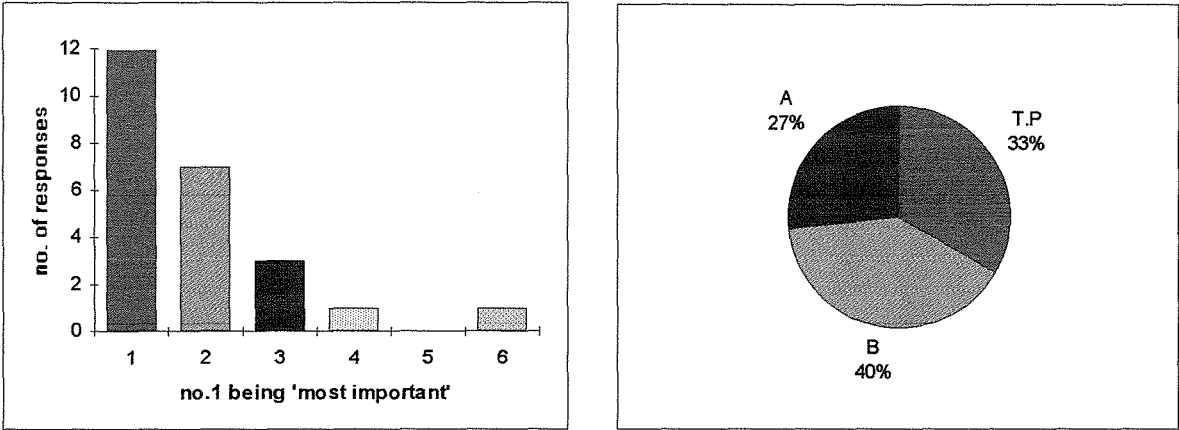
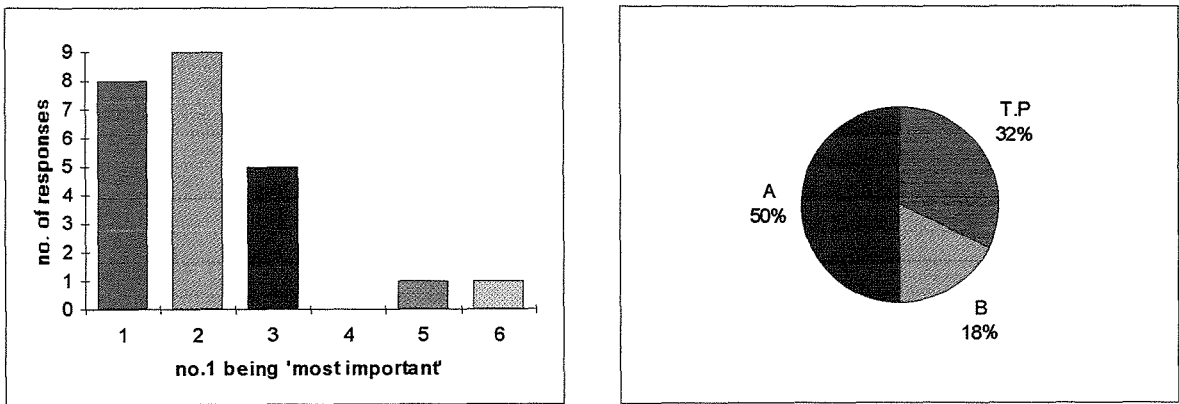


Figure 49 - AWARENESS OF CURRENT SOCIAL PROBLEMS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



PROFESSIONAL SKILLS of a successful teacher :

Subject application

Figure 50 - PLANS APPROPRIATE LESSONS WITHIN PROGRAMME
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

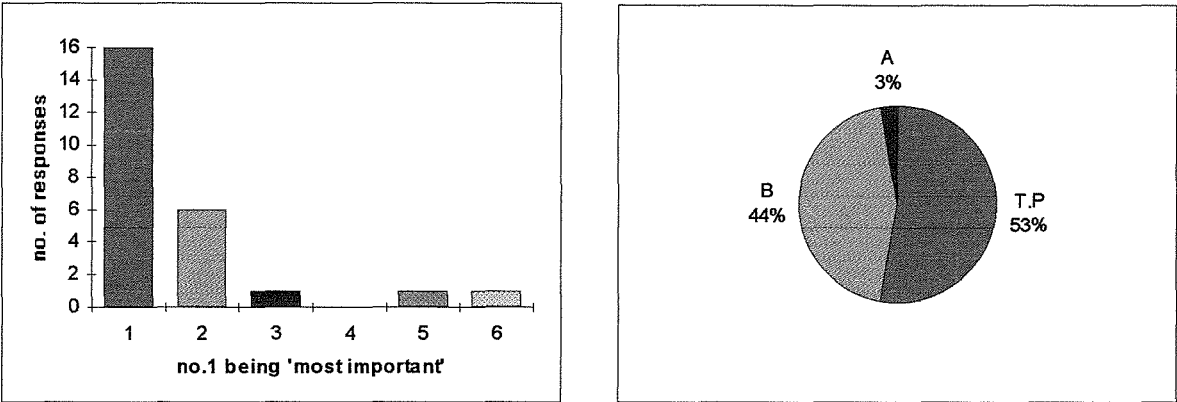


Figure 51 - DEMONSTRATES KNOWLEDGE OF EFFECTIVE METHODOLOGIES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

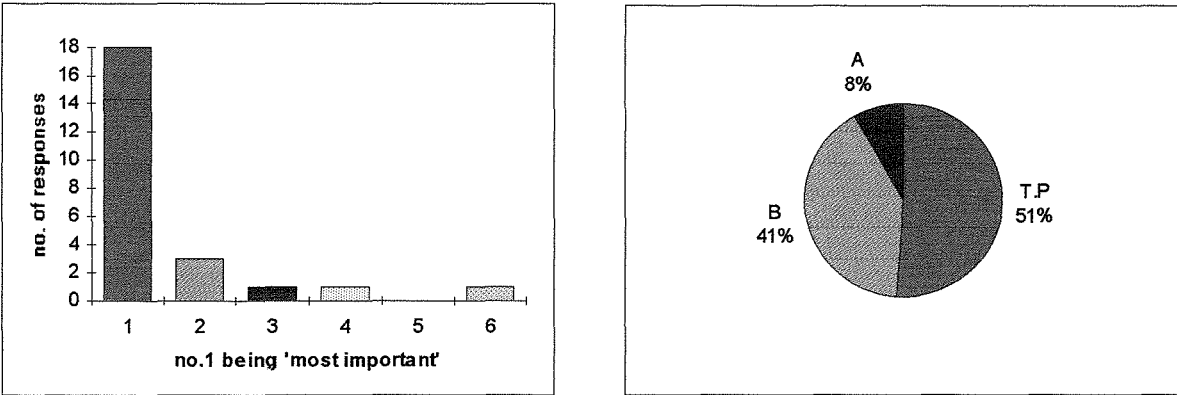


Figure 52 - PLANS APPROPRIATE LESSONS/MATERIAL FOR PUPILS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

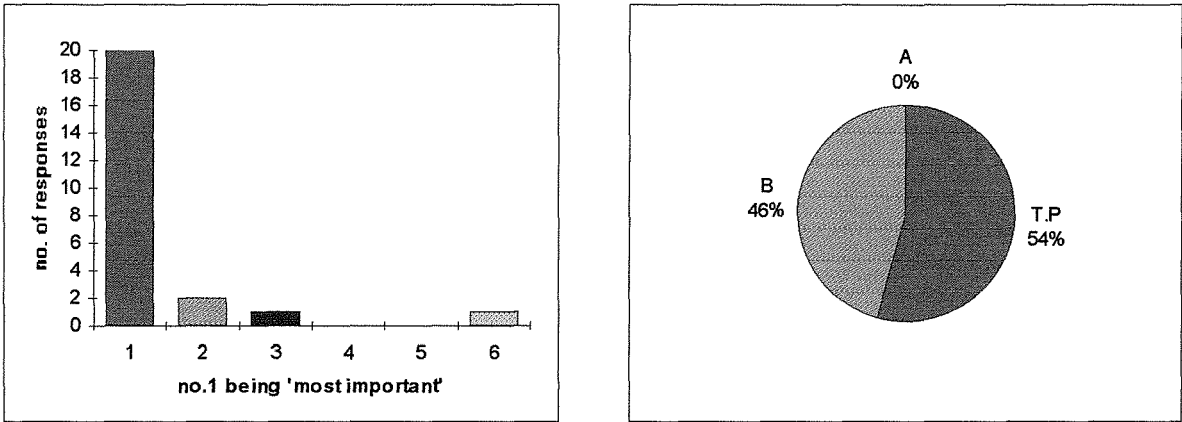


Figure 53 - MAKES USE OF APPROPRIATE RESOURCES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

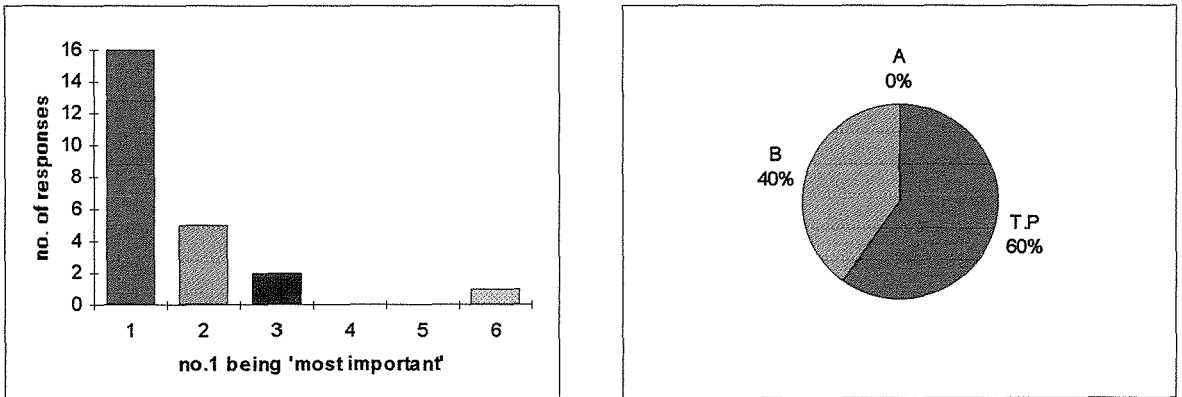


Figure 54 - SHOWS AWARENESS OF POTENTIAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

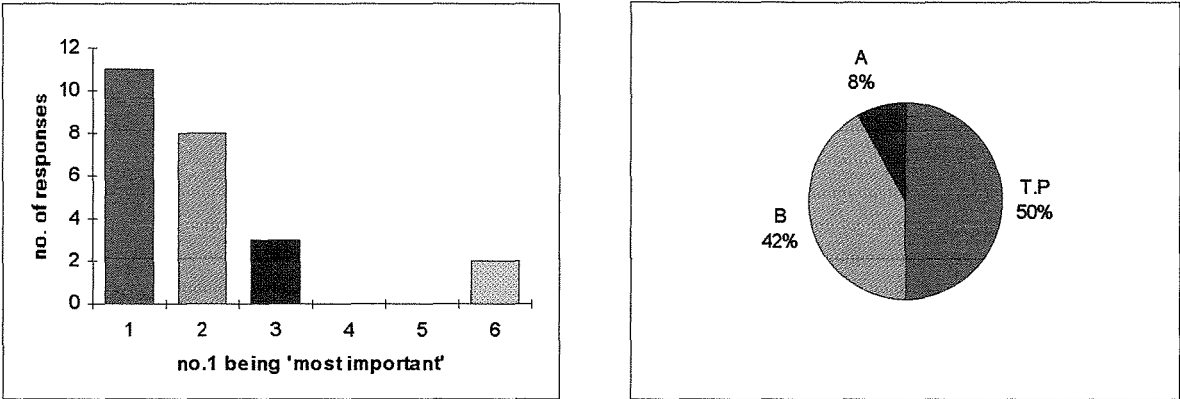


Figure 55 - USES COMBINATION OF THEMATIC/SUBJECT APPROACHES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

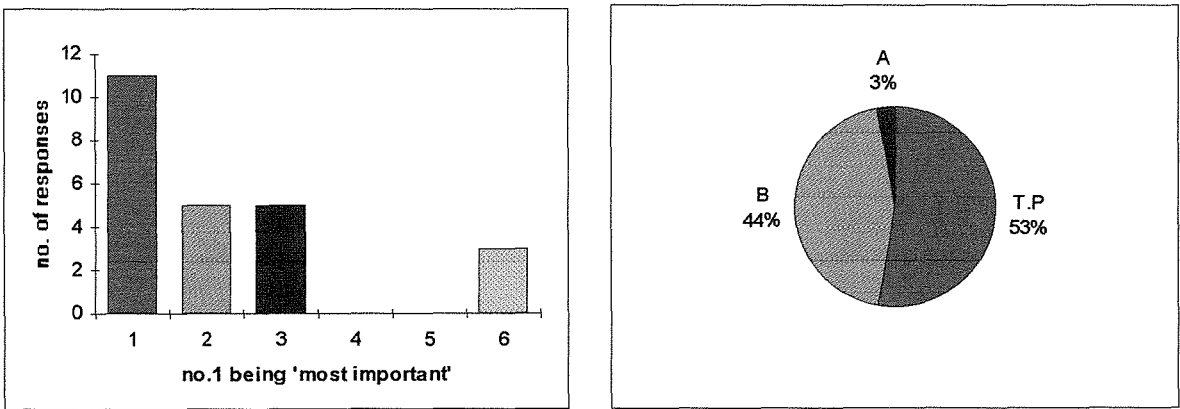


Figure 56 - USES I.T. TO ENHANCE LEARNING
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

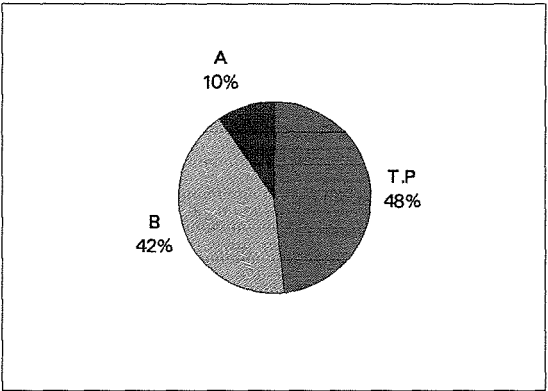
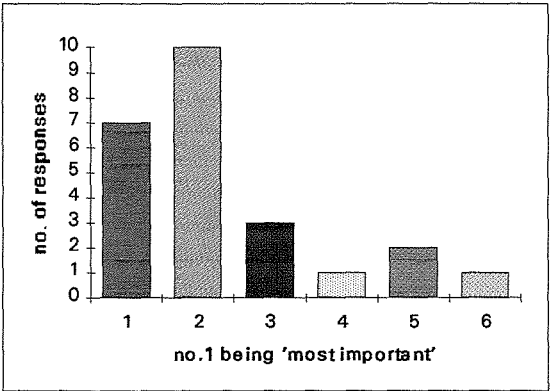


Figure 57 - PREPARES COHERENT TEACHING PROGRAMMES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

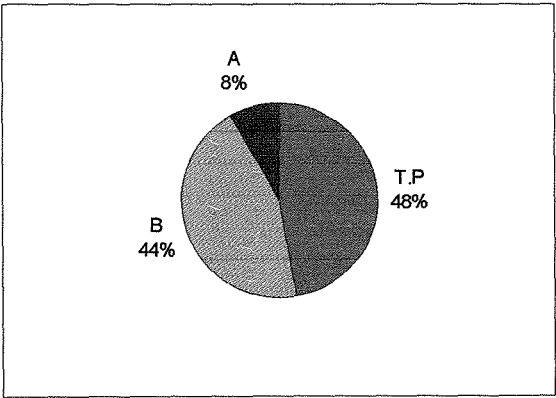
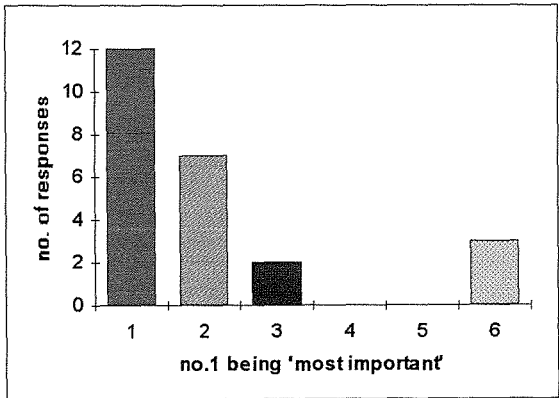


Figure 58 - JUSTIFIES SELECTION OF MATERIAL USED
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

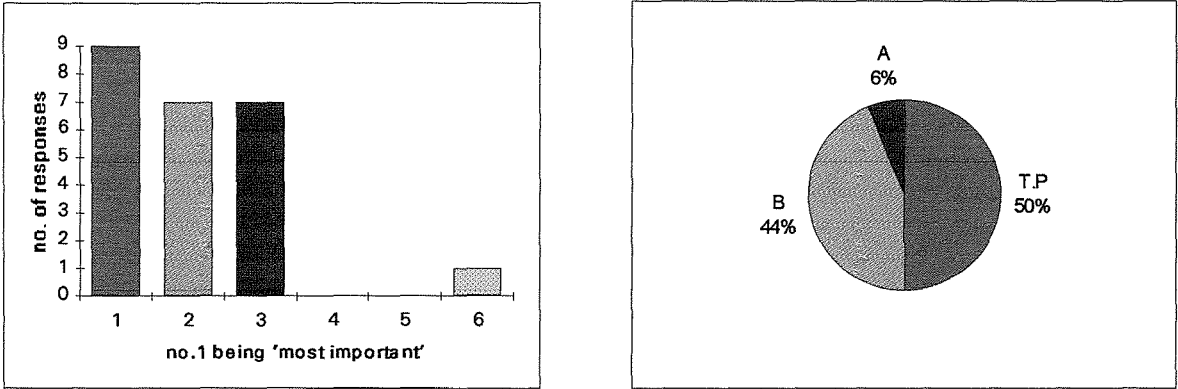


Figure 59 - UNDERSTANDS HOW TO ORGANIZE FIELD WORK
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

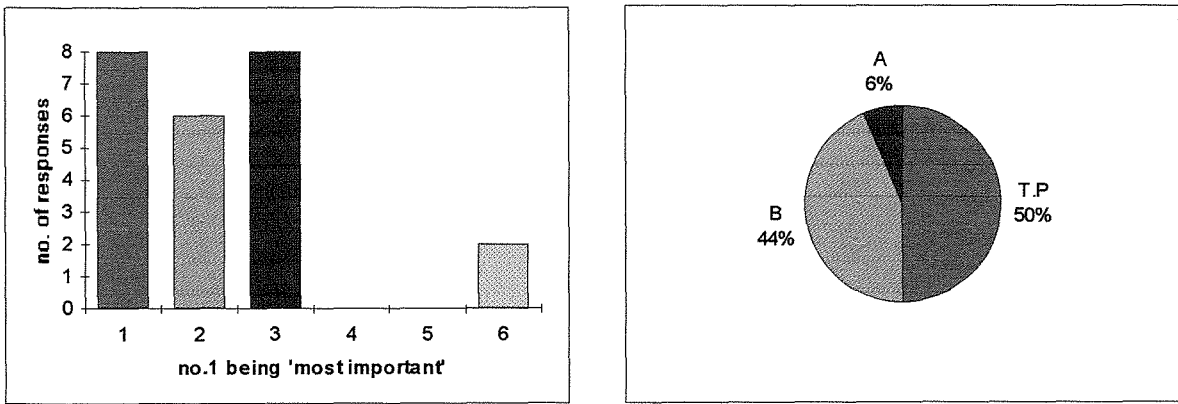


Figure 60 - ENSURES CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

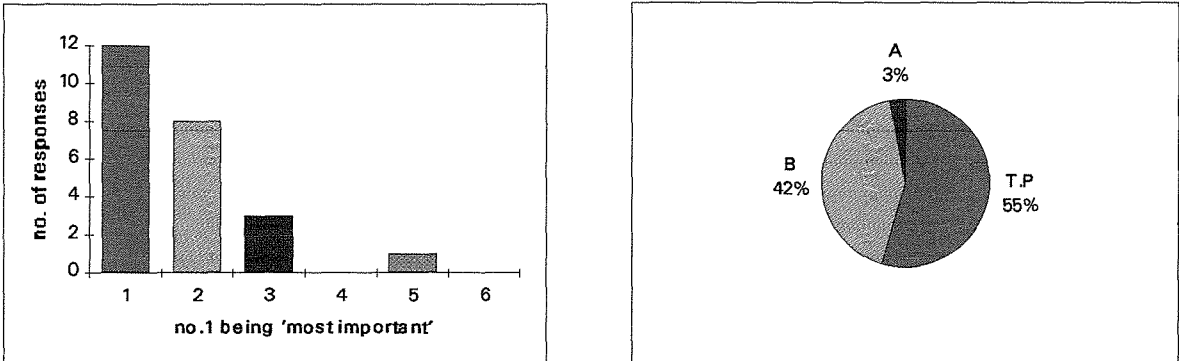
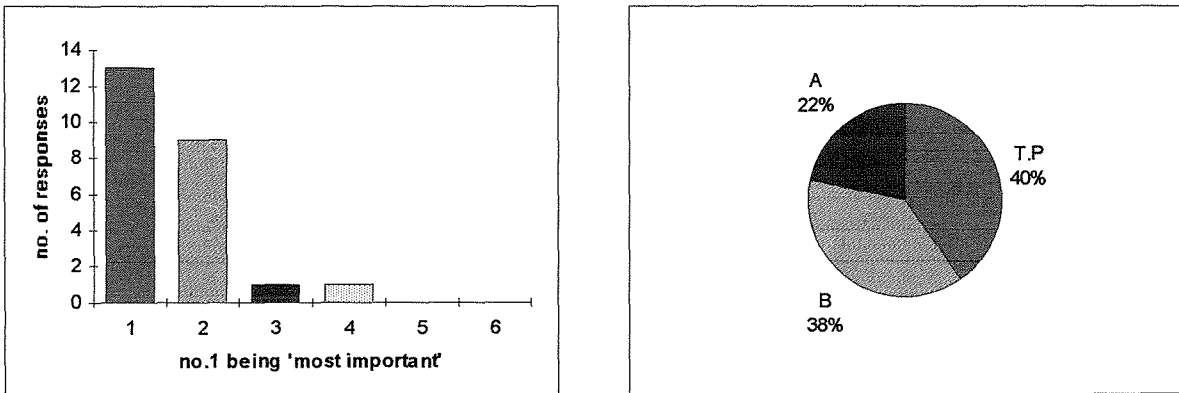


Figure 61 - CONTRIBUTES TO FORMULATION OF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Classroom methodology

Figure 62 - CAN JUSTIFY METHOD BEING USED
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

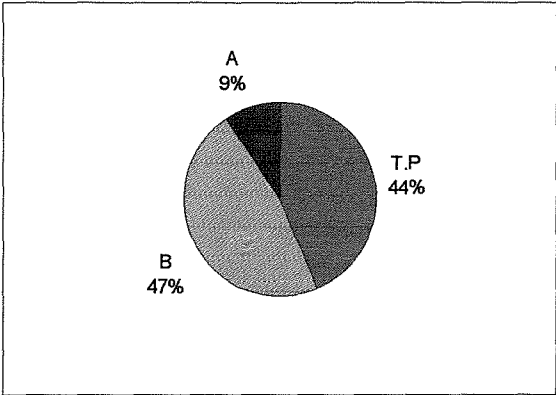
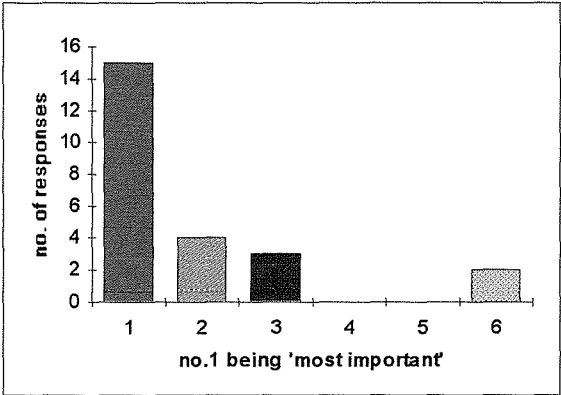


Figure 63 - QUESTIONS PUPILS EFFECTIVELY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

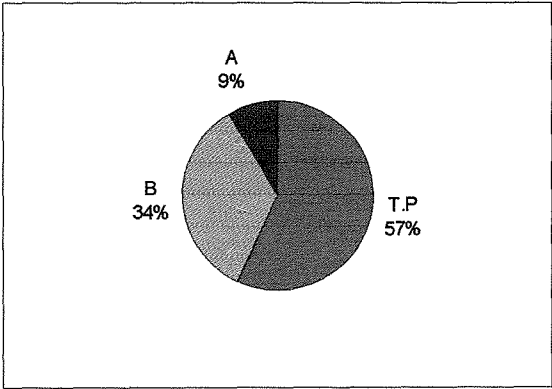


Figure 64 - DEPLOYS A RANGE OF STRATEGIES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

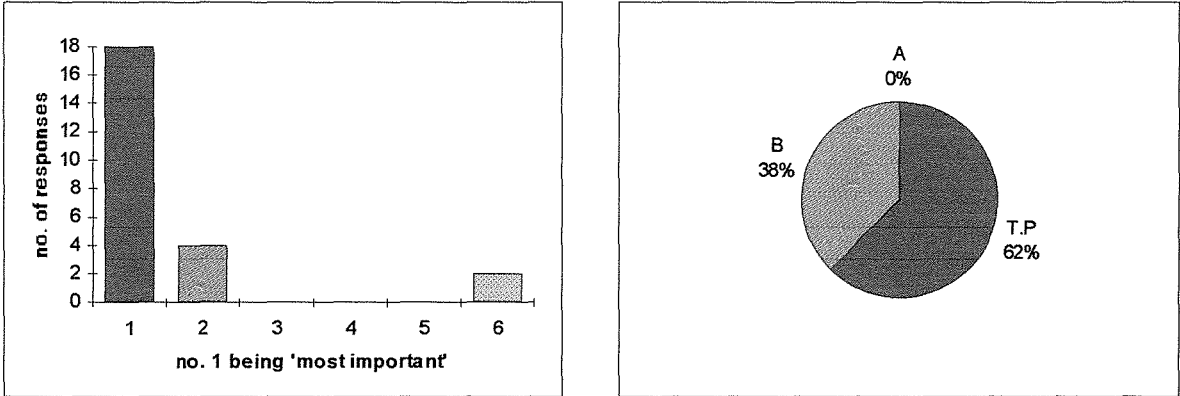


Figure 65 - PLANS AND EMPLOYS A RANGE OF STRATEGIES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

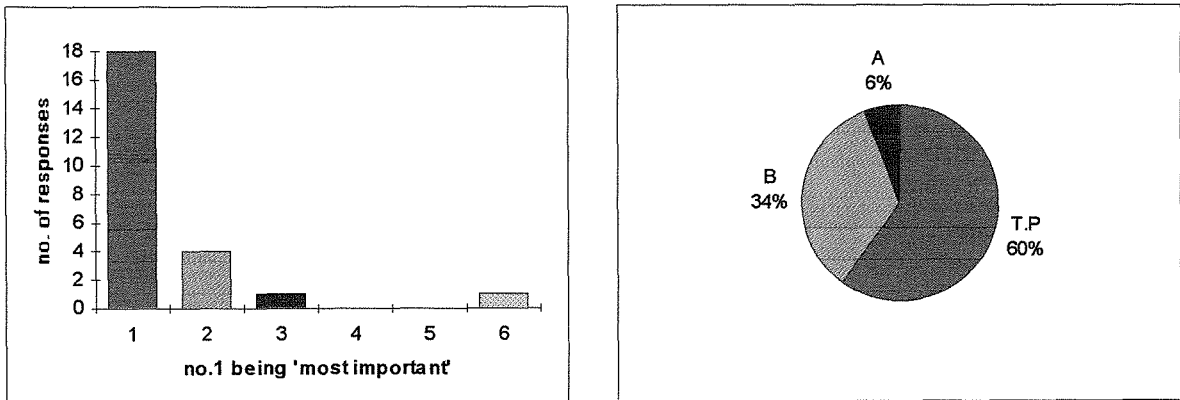


Figure 66 - CAPTURES AND MAINTAINS PUPILS' ATTENTION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

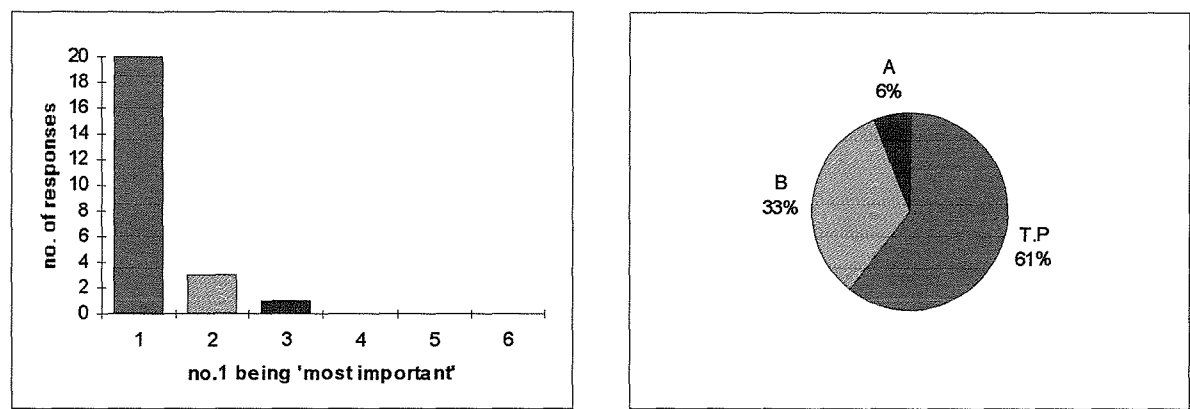


Figure 67 - TAKES ACCOUNT OF PUPILS' DIVERSITY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

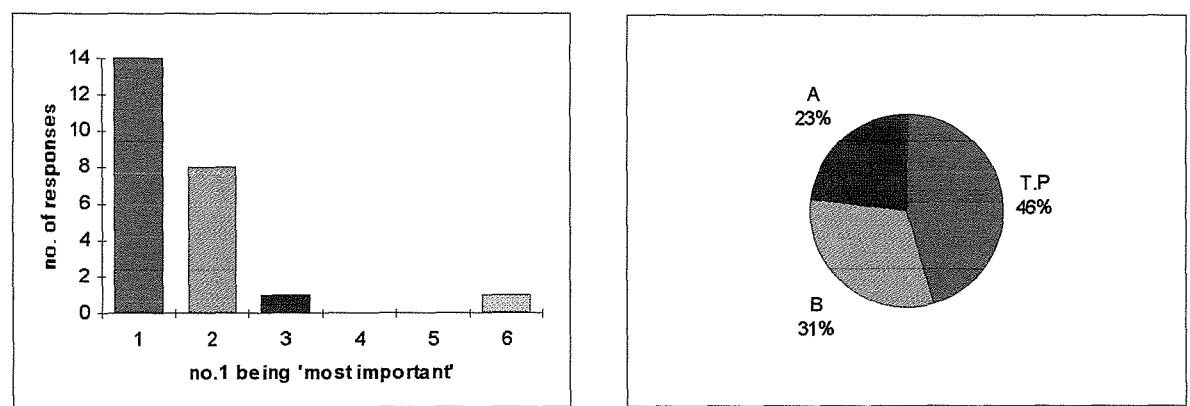


Figure 68 - ABLE TO RECOGNIZE AND PROVIDE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

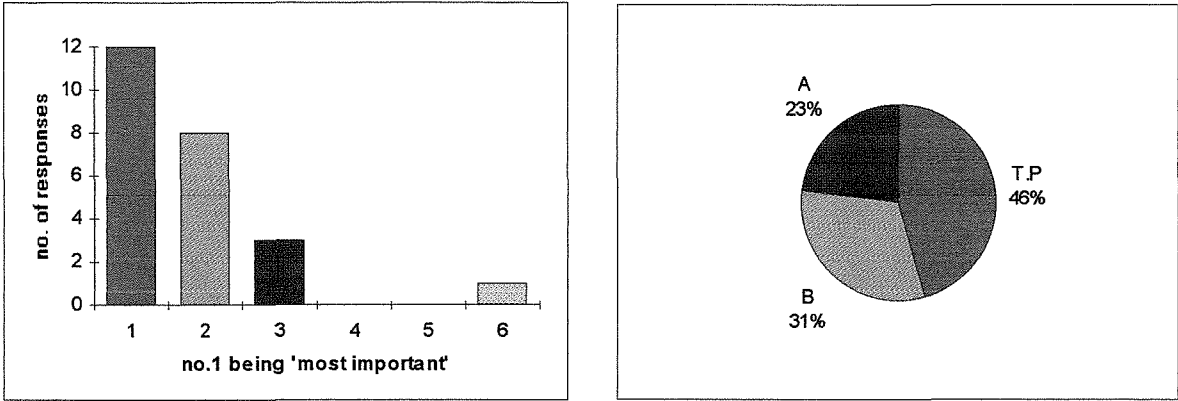


Figure 69 - TAKES ACCOUNT OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

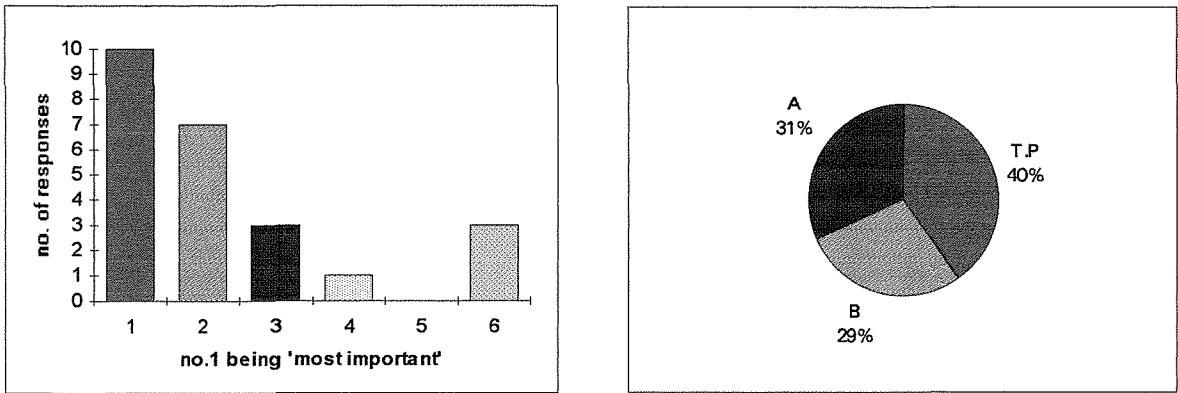


Figure 70 - ENCOURAGES PUPILS TO DEVELOP POWERS OF INQUIRY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

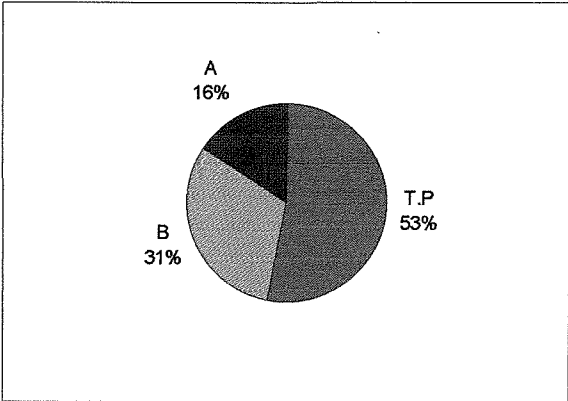
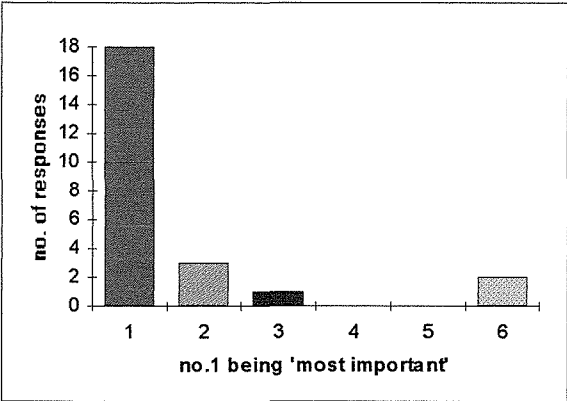


Figure 71 - CREATES PROBLEM-SOLVING SITUATIONS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

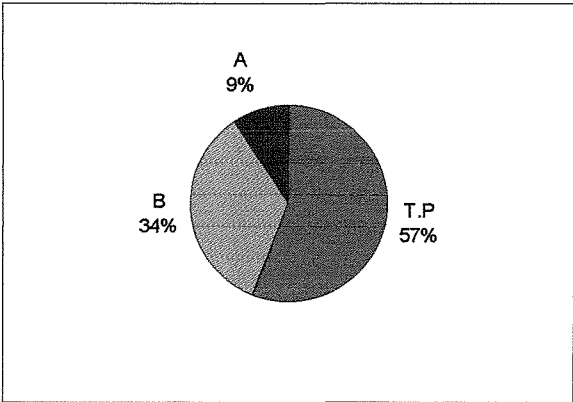
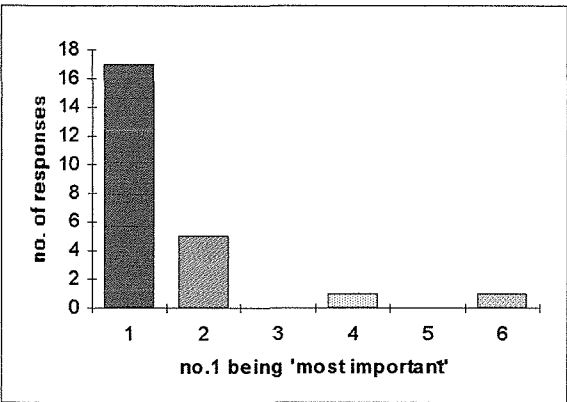


Figure 72 - CONTRIBUTES TO DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

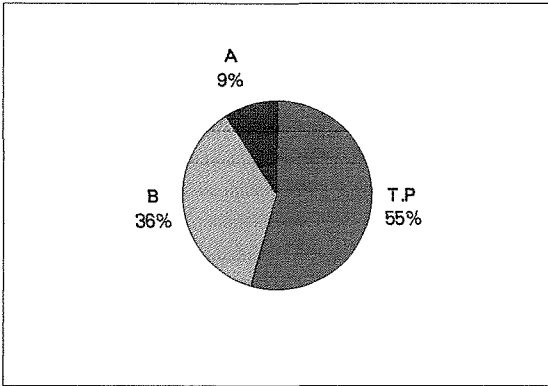
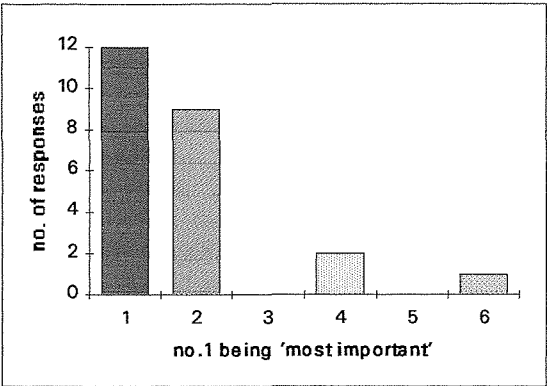


Figure 73 - MAKES PUPILS AWARE OF EXPECTATIONS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

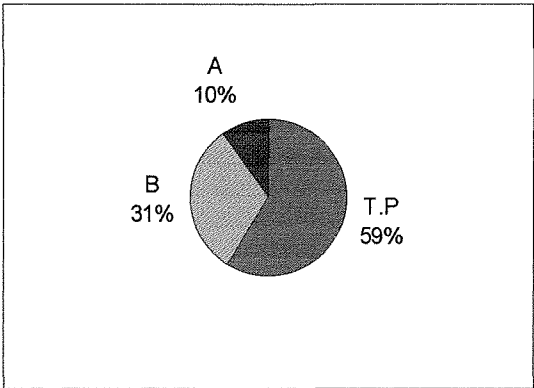
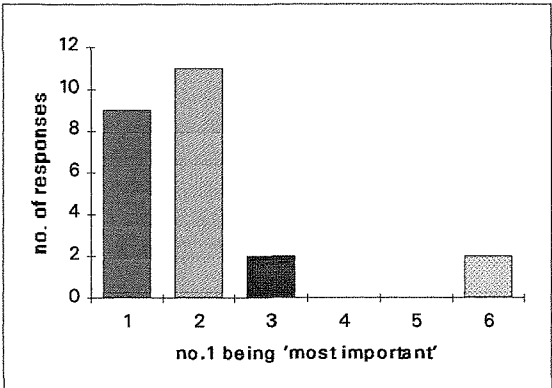
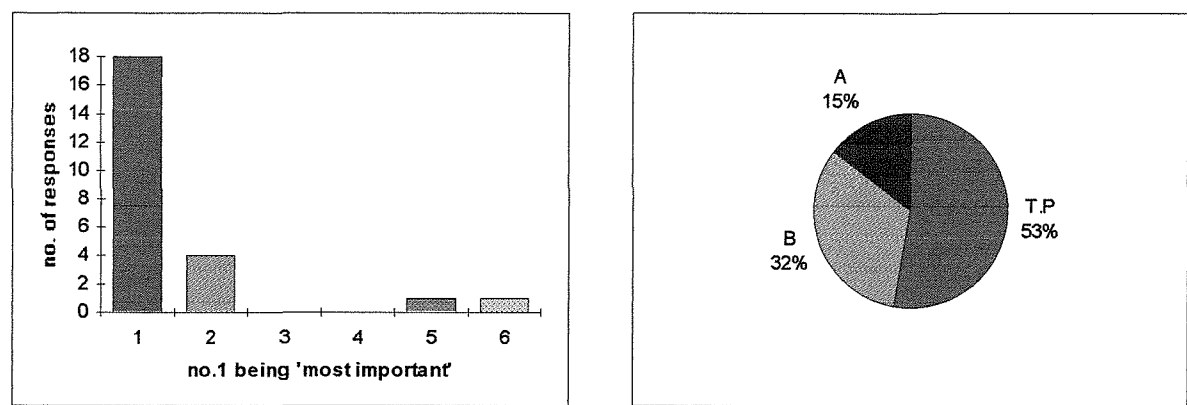


Figure 74 - ENCOURAGES INITIATIVES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Class management

Figure 75 - TEACHES IN DIFFERENT MODES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

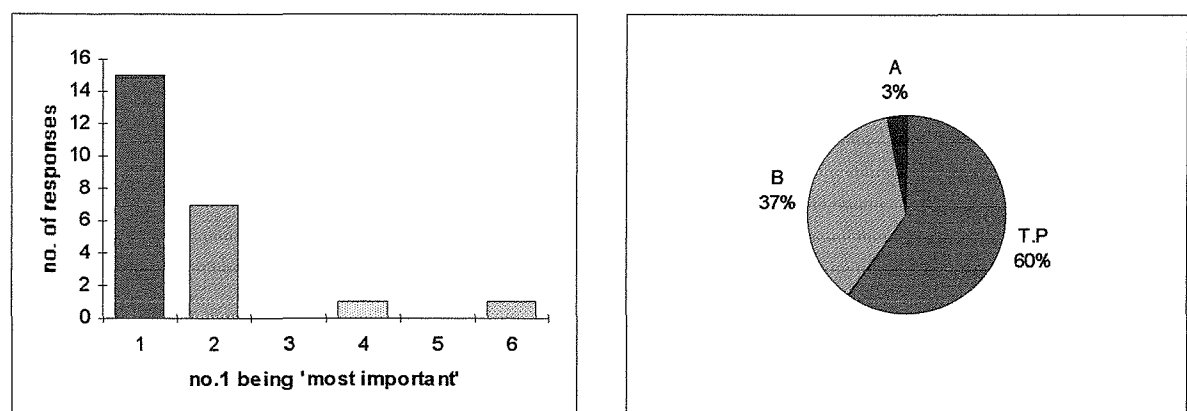


Figure 76 - MANAGES PLAY/ACTIVITY-BASED LEARNING APPROPRIATELY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

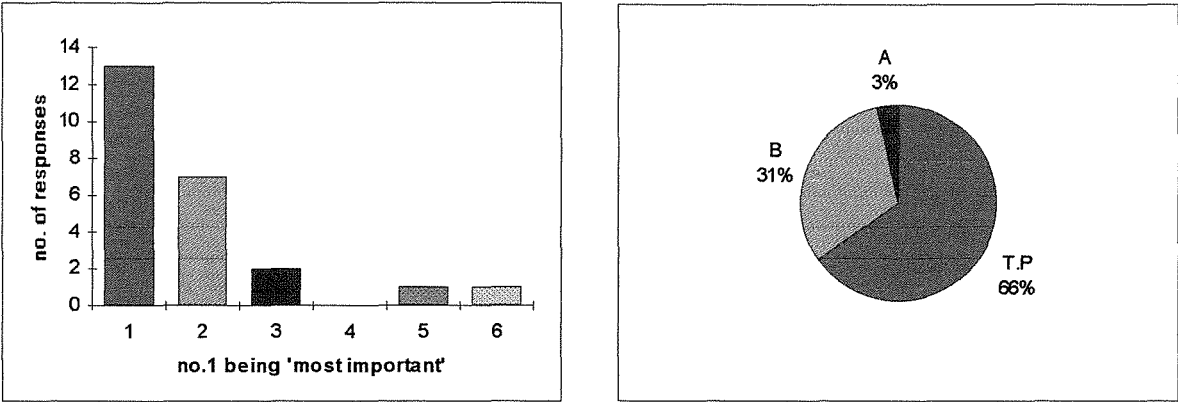


Figure 77 - MAINTAINS PUPILS' MOTIVATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

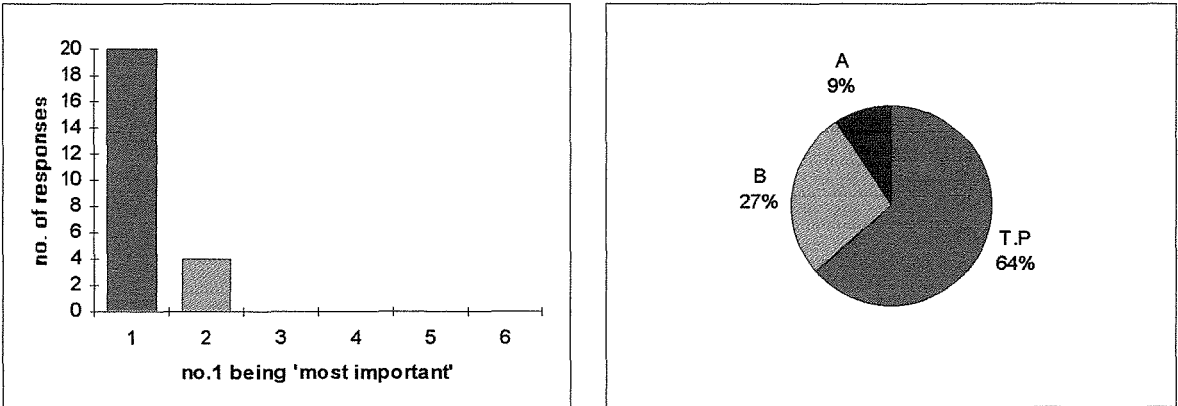


Figure 78 - ABLE TO MAKE SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

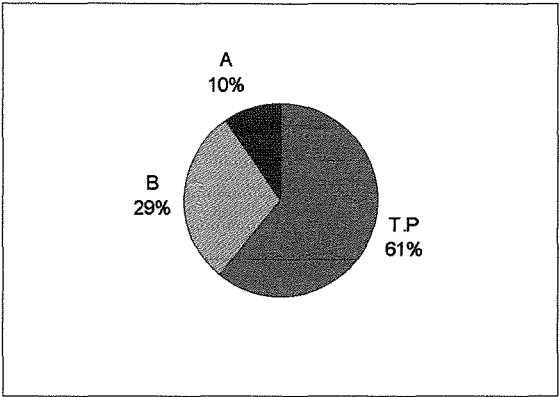
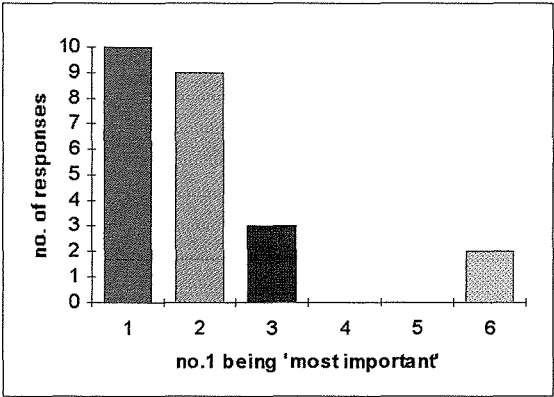


Figure 79 - ESTABLISHES GOOD CLASSROOM RAPPORT

This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

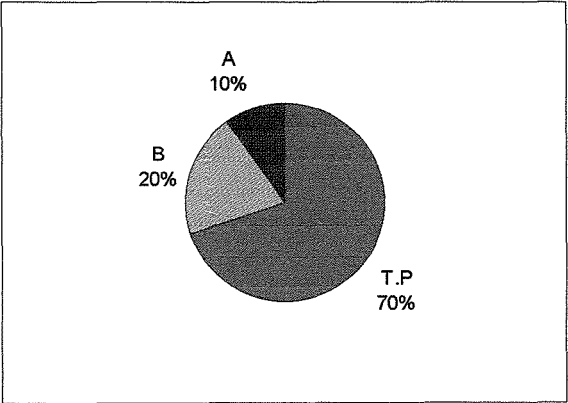
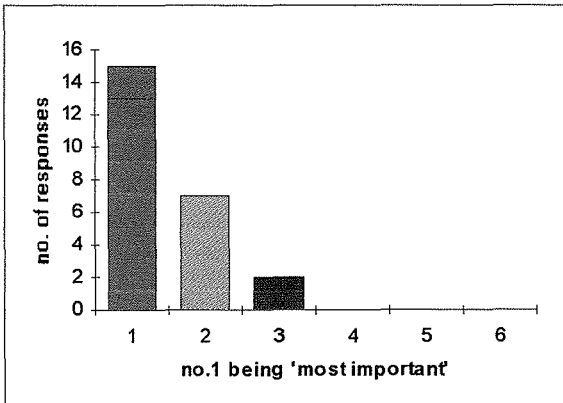


Figure 80 - ESTABLISHES CLEAR RULES/EXPECTATIONS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

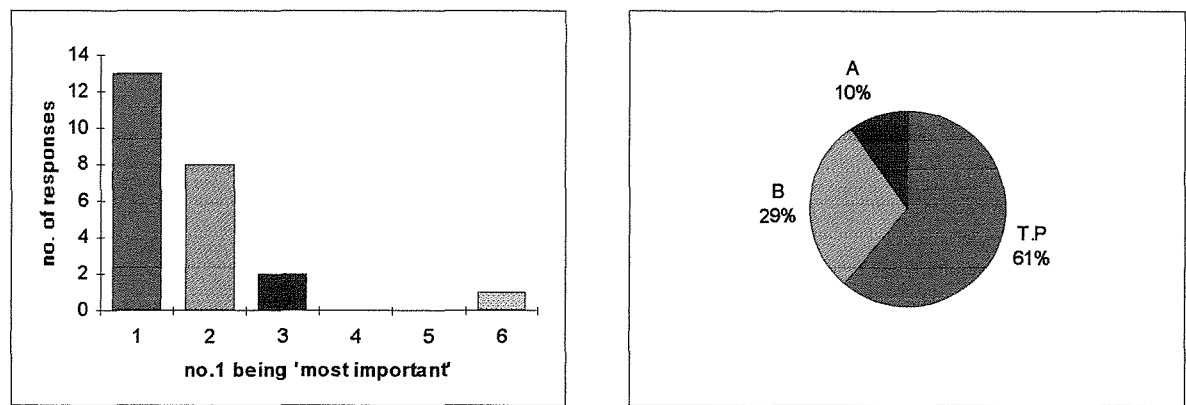


Figure 81 - PRE-EMPTS INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR / CONFRONTATION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

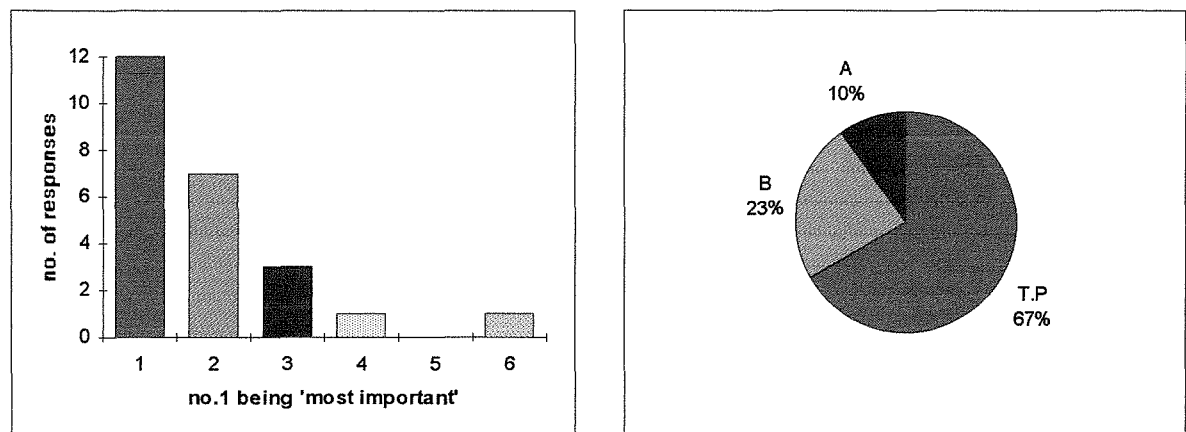


Figure 82 - DEALS WITH INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

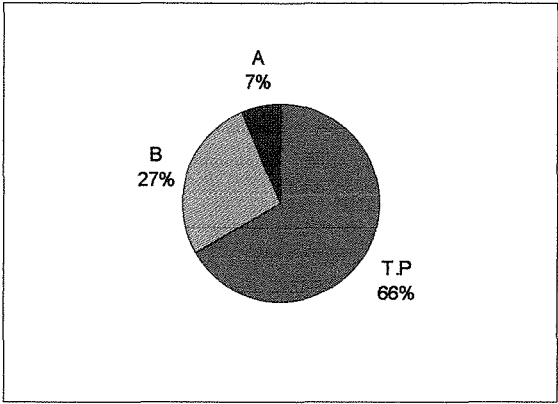
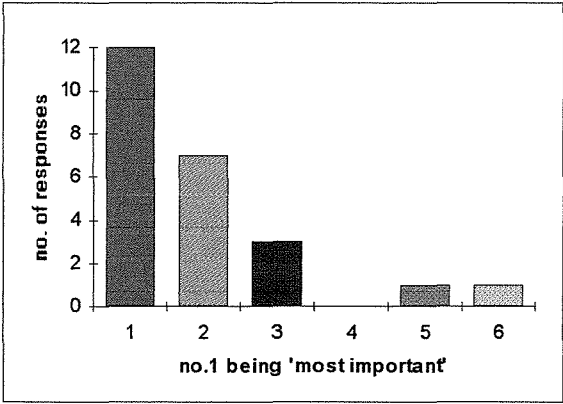


Figure 83 - MANAGES TIME EFFECTIVELY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

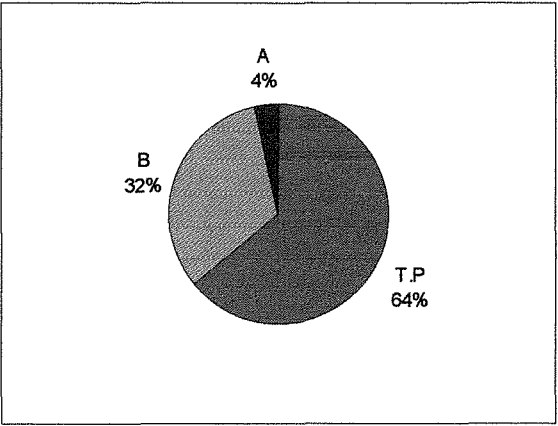
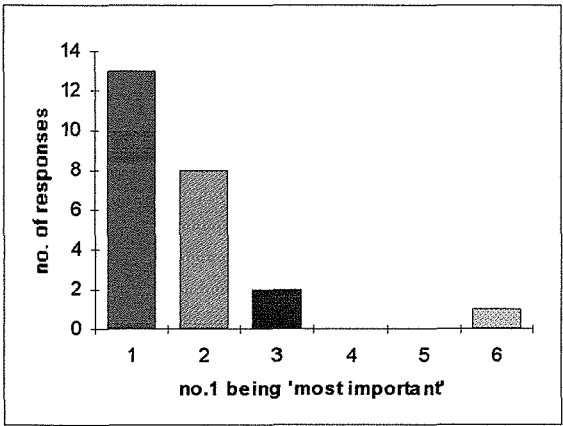


Figure 84 - MAKES EFFECTIVE USE OF NON-TEACHING STAFF
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

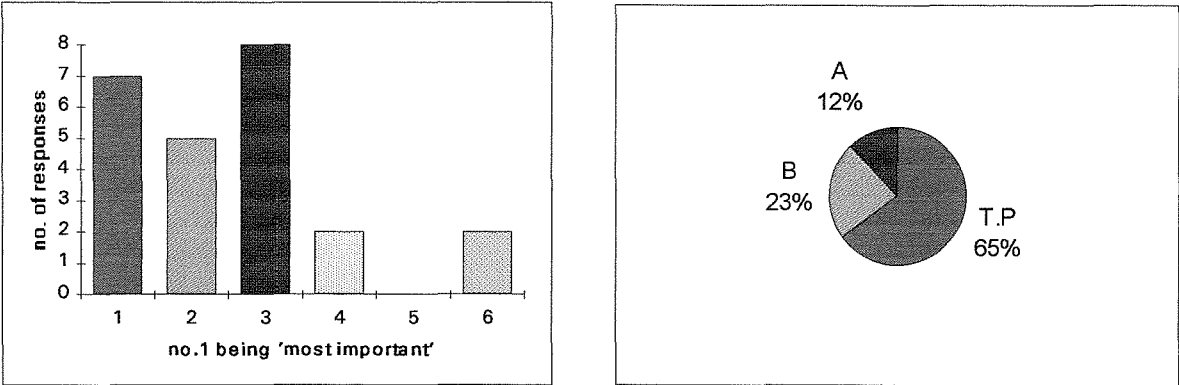
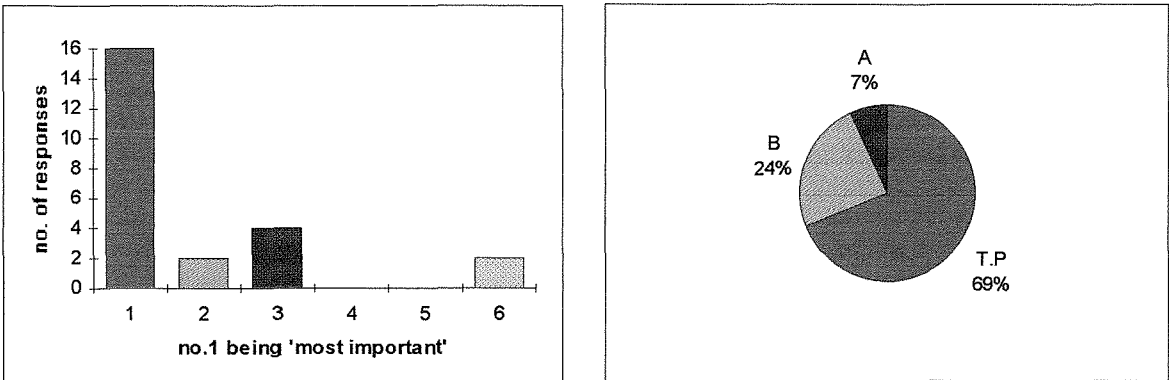


Figure 85 - SEEKS ADVICE WHEN NECESSARY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



Assessment and recording

Figure 86 - PROVIDES PUPILS WITH REGULAR, THOROUGH FEEDBACK
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

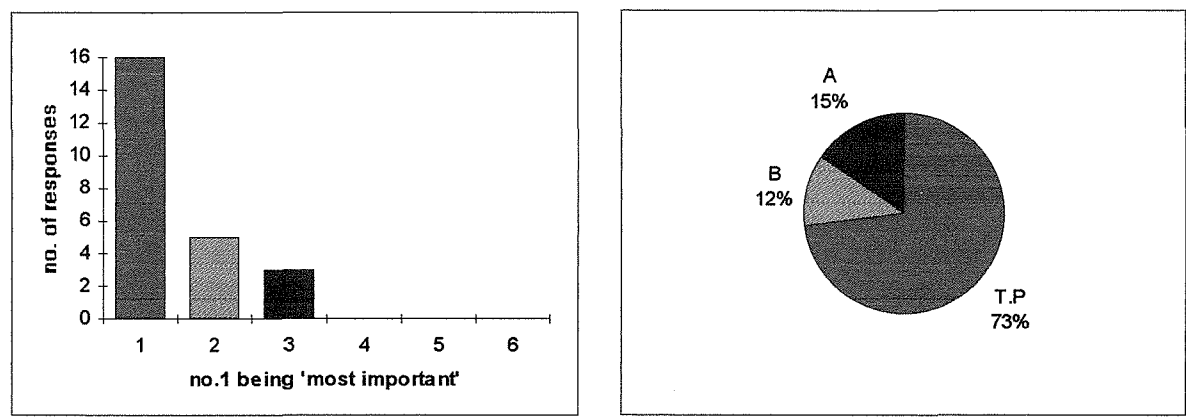


Figure 87 - USES DIFFERENT MODES OF ASSESSMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

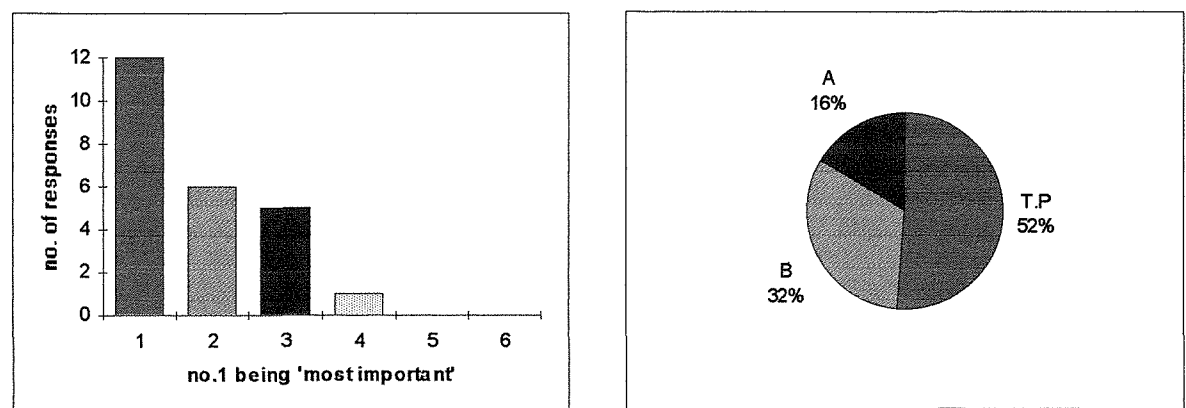


Figure 88 - ASSESSES AND RECORDS IN A SYSTEMATIC MANNER
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

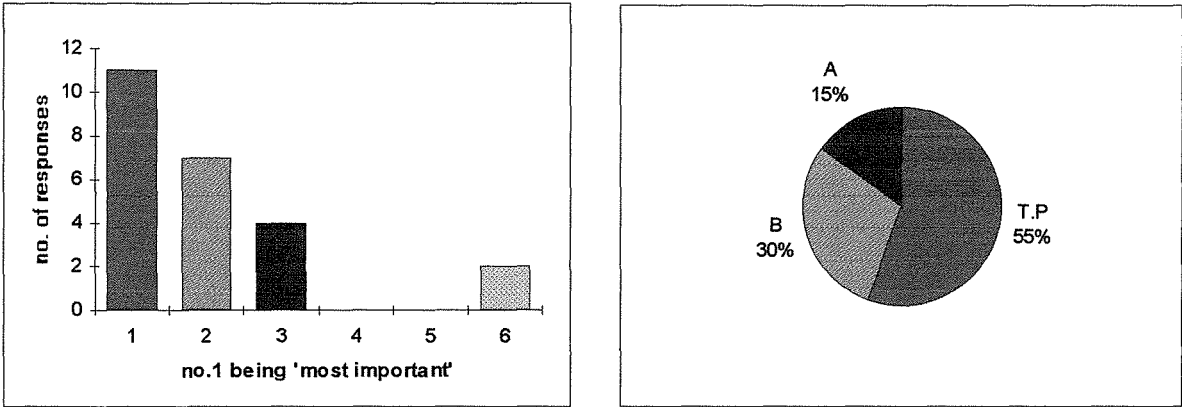


Figure 89 - JUDGES PERFORMANCE AGAINST NORMS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

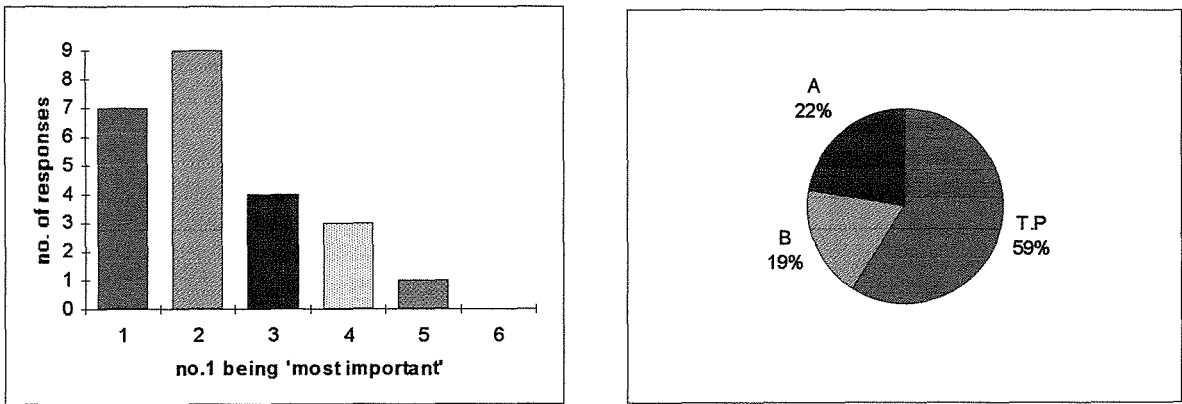


Figure 90 - ENCOURAGES PUPILS IN ASSESSING THEMSELVES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

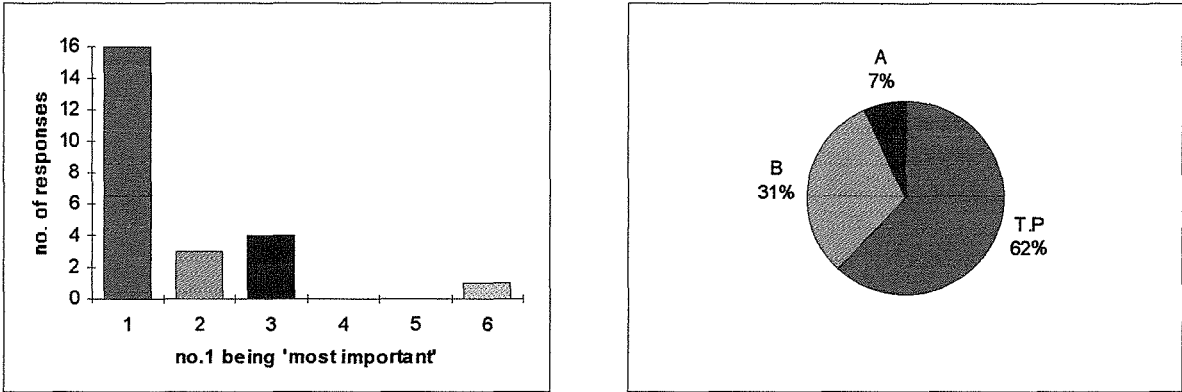


Figure 91 - PARTICIPATES IN MODERATION PROCEDURES
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

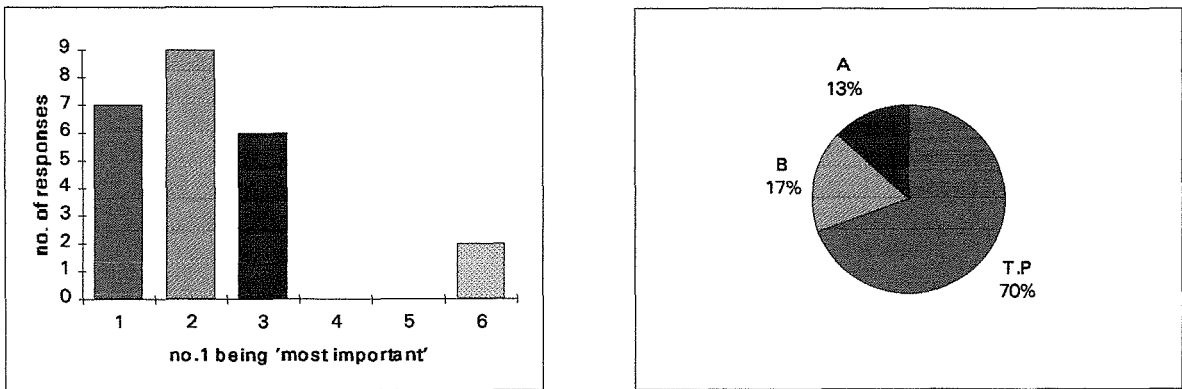


Figure 92 - PROVIDES HELPFUL REPORTS TO PARENTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

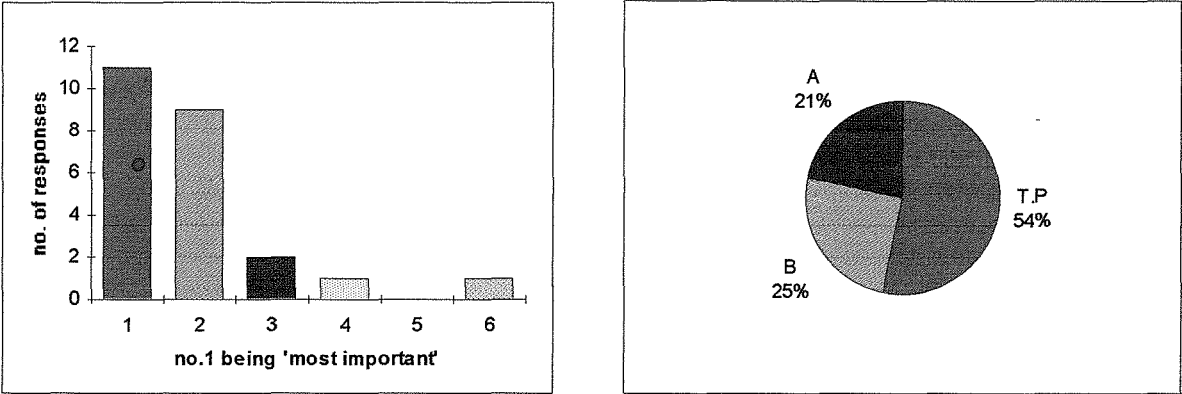


Figure 93 - AWARENESS OF PUPILS' EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACHIEVEMENTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

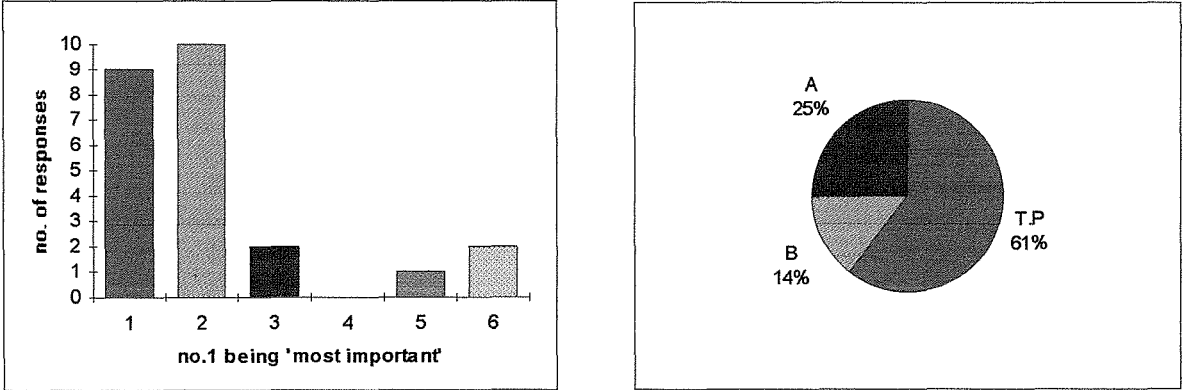
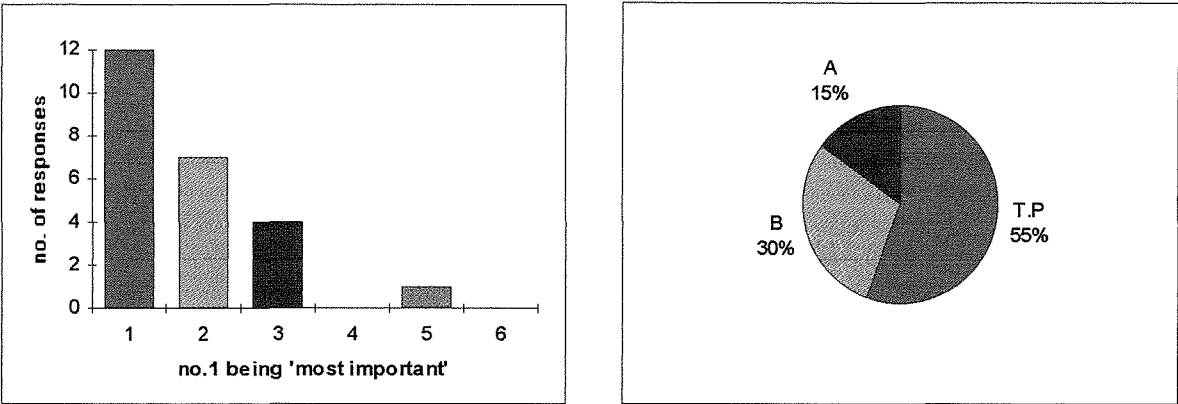


Figure 94 - USES OUTCOMES OF ASSESSMENT
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



The Wider Role

Figure 95 - ACCEPTS AND UNDERTAKES PASTORAL DUTIES OF A TEACHER
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

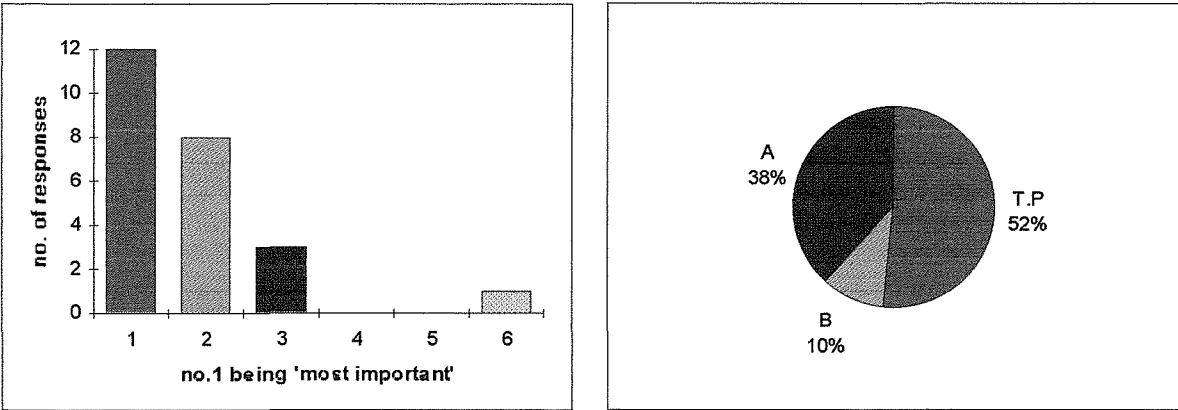


Figure 96 - CONTRIBUTES TO CROSS-CURRICULAR ASPECTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

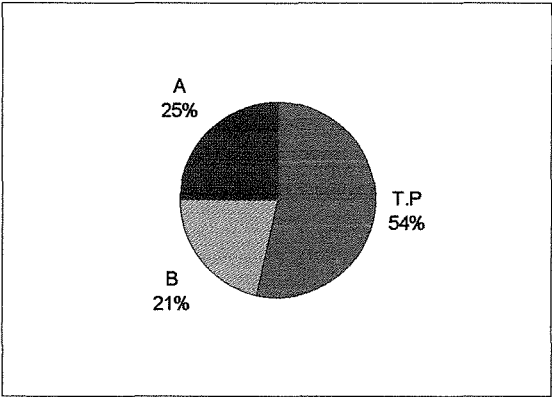
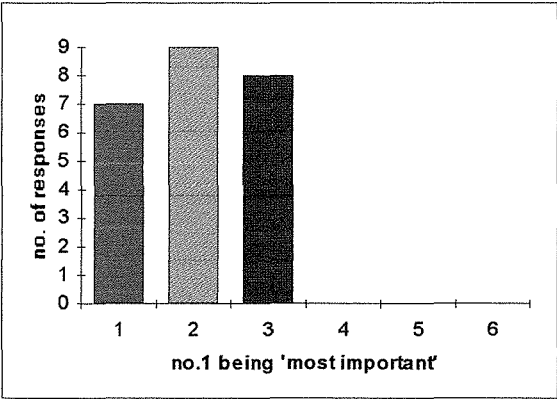


Figure 97 - LIAISES WITH MEMBERS OF OTHER PROFESSION
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

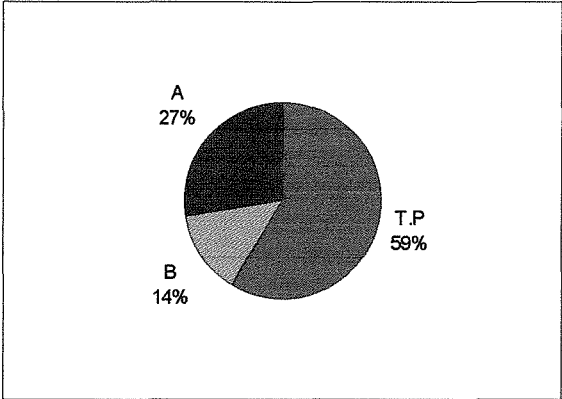
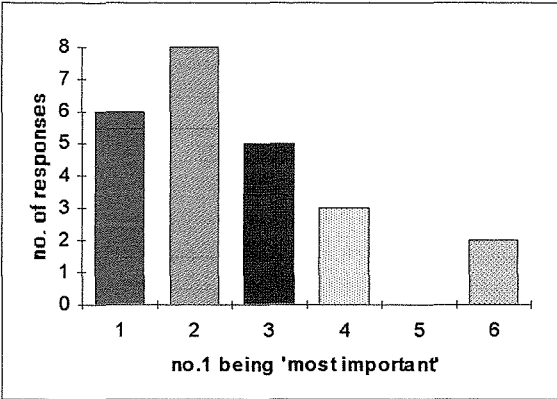


Figure 98 - CONTRIBUTES TO ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE FORMAL CURRICULUM
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

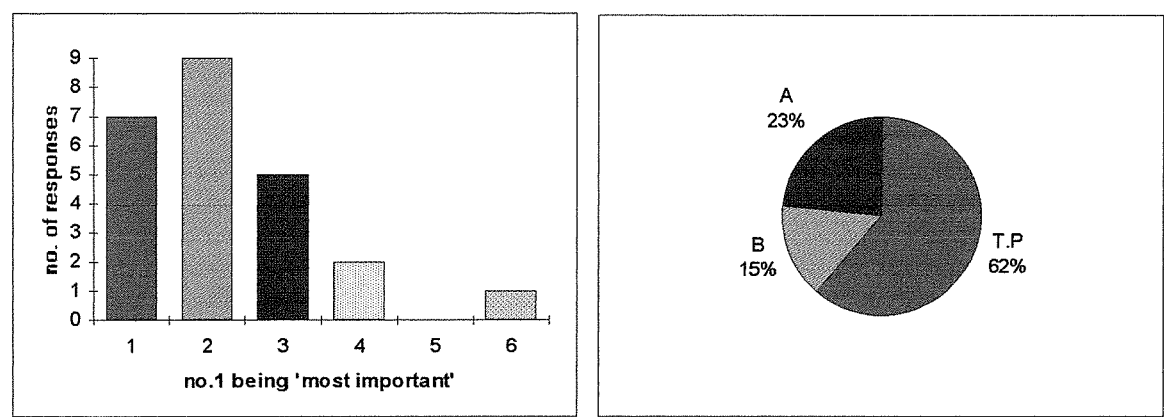


Figure 99 - RELATES EFFECTIVELY WITH PARENTS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

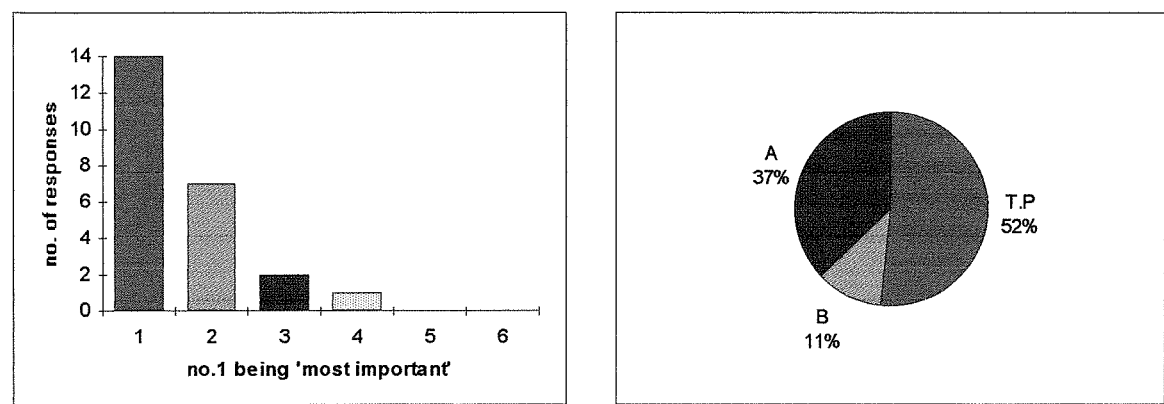


Figure 100 - DEVELOPES EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

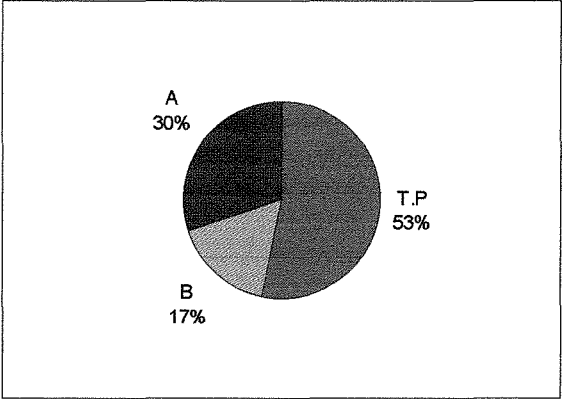
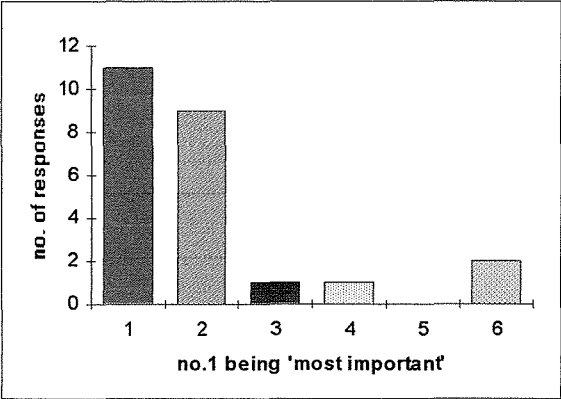


Figure 101 - TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)

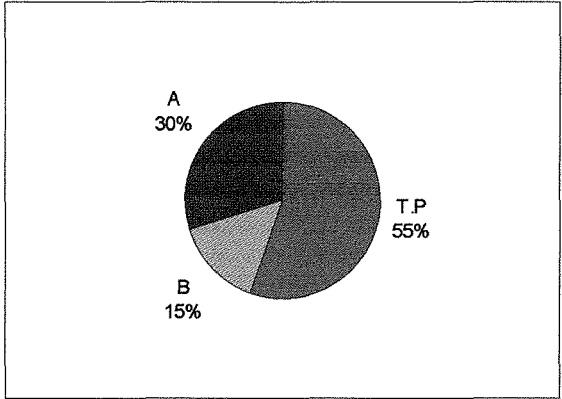
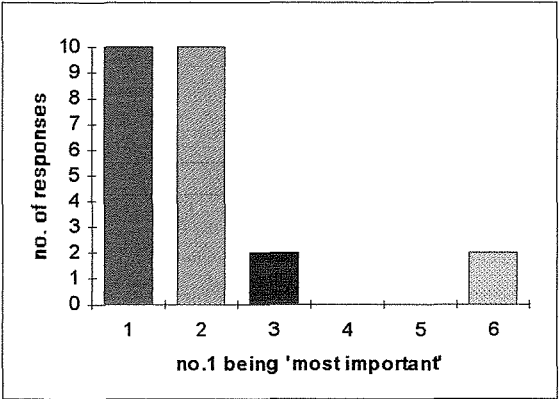
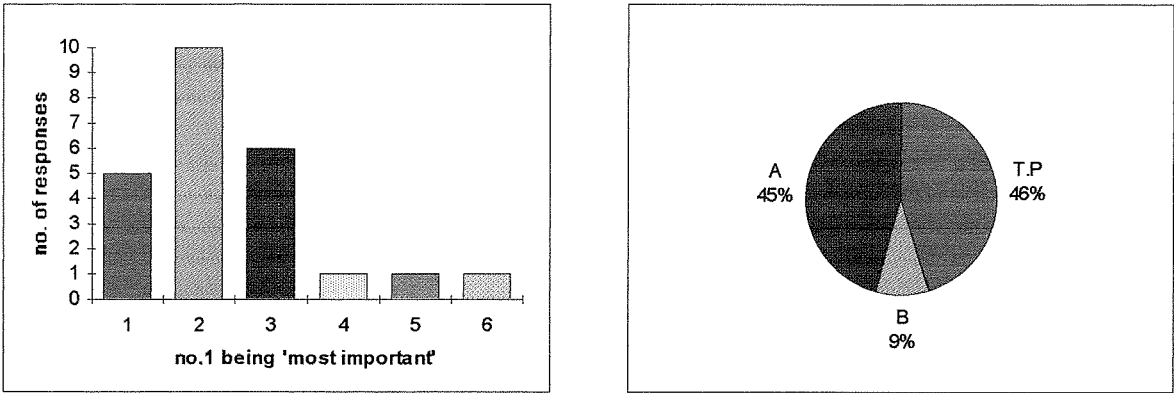


Figure 102 - COMMUNICATES WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF
COMMUNITY
This data was obtained from the survey (Appendix 1)



APPENDIX 3

Interview with Dr. R. G. Sultana (Foundations in Education)

Q : Xi rwol ghandhom il-Units tal-Foundations fil-kors tal-B.Ed?

A : Il-Foundations xogholhom hu li jieħdu l-kuntest tat-teaching u jghinukhom tirriflettu bħala għalliema futuri fuq il-kuntest, partikularment is-Soċjoloġija. Is-Soċjoloġija thares lejn issues li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' poter fl-edukazzjoni ma' issues bħal ma huma equity in terms of gender, class, place, location. Il-Filosofija thares imbagħad ukoll lejn issues bħal dawn imma tagħmel aktar mistoqsijiet in ġenerali, 'x'inhu tajjeb?', 'x'inhuma l-kunċetti ewlenin fil-prattika ta' l-edukazzjoni'. Waqt li l-Psikoloġija, iktar milli thares lejn il-kuntest soċjali jew filosofiku, thares lejn l-individwu li qiegħed jiżviluppa, cognitive development, il-kunċett ta' l-intelliġenza. Dawn it-tliet areas tal-Foundations huma kruċjali għaliex għalkemm ma jgħallmukx tgħallim, f'ċertu sens they are not skills jew technique oriented. Meta inti tagħmel dan il-kors ma ssirx teacher aħjar fis-sens li taf tgħallim iżjed, mhux neċessarjament, pero' jghinuk tirrifletti ħafna aktar fuq il-kuntest tat-tagħlim.

Q : Fil-fatt dak li kont ser insaqsik...x'kompetenzi qed jiżviluppaw dawn il-credits tal-Foundations?

A : Issa l-Foundations qed jiżviluppaw kompetenzi li huma kruċjali - għax mingħajrhom ma naħsibx li tista' ssir claim li teacher huwa professjonali. Il-kompetenzi huma ta' għarfien iktar fil-fond ta' x'inhu teaching, ta' x'inhuma l-aspetti etiċi, per eżempju, l-aspetti professjonali, li għandhom x'jaqsmu mal-karriera professjonali ta' l-għalliem. Jiġifieri jiżviluppaw kompetenzi bħal ma huma riflessjoni aktar. Irrid ngħid illi l-professjoni ta' l-għalliema llum hija 'a reflective practitioner' jiġifieri persuna li kapaċi tirrejalizza li dak li qed tagħmel m'għandux biss valur teknokratiku, tekniku, li inti ghint lil Joseph jew lil Mary jitgħallmu din is-somma imma kapaċi tifhem għalfejn ċertu nies ma jitgħallmux. Allura tiġbed mill-Psikoloġija, mis-Soċjoloġija, mill-Filosofija biex tifhem għalfejn ma tgħallmux jew għalfejn hemm patterns ta' gruppi ta' min imur aħjar u ta' min għar fl-iskejjel, għaliex persuna tassenti ruħha mill-iskola. Min m'għandux background tal-Foundations faċli jaqa' fl-iżball li jwajjhal fil-vittima - inti tfalli għax m'intix motivat. Is-soċjoloġija kapaċi ddawar il-problema fuq rasha u tgħidlek dak qed ifalli għax li qiegħed ittiegħ inti u li ttiegħ l-iskola ma tantx jaqbel mal-kultura tiegħu, mal-bżonnijiet tiegħu psikoloġiċi, soċjali. Allura l-Foundations huma kruċjali għax mingħajrhom faċli tagħmel żbalji maġġuri fl-interpretazzjoni ta' x'inhu edukazzjoni.

Q : F'dan is-survey li qed nagħmel, staqsejt x'hemm bżonn biex teacher tkun effettiva. Aktar enfażizzaw l-skills ta' classroom management...u inti qed tgħid li dan il-background fil-Foundations huwa essenzjali...

A : Id-dikotomija hija wahda falza, fis-sens li ħafna studenti, peress li huma fi stadju...

P : Mhux għal studenti biss qed ngħid...jiena l-aktar mal-lecturers...

A : Pero' l-mistoqsija fiha nnifisha hija wahda stramba. Ha ngħidlek għaliex. Nagħmlu mod tgħidli x'inhu l-aktar mod effettiv biex iżżom tifel kwiet. Jiena nara li ma' ċertu tfal l-aktar mod effettiv hu li taqbad ir-riga u tgħidilhom 'jekk titniffsu ser taqalghuha'. Il-Filosofija, il-Psikoloġija, is-Soċjoloġija tgħidlek, jista' jkun effettiv in the short run, imma għandek issues ta' etika number one, issues li ma' ċertu tfal dik hija l-aħgar mod kif tista' iżżommhom.

You cannot separate technique or strategies or skills from values.

P : Speċi, l-valuri jiddeterminaw it-teknika li tuża.

A : Eżattament u l-valuri li jkollok u l-gharfien tal-kuntest edukattiv mhux biss jgħinuk tagħżel imma ċertu skills ma tużahomx. Per eżempju, brainwashing. Brainwashing hija effettiva mmens. Hafna teachers jużawha, imma jekk inti ma jkollokx għarfien soċjoloġiku u filosofiku ta' l-effetti tal-brainwashing...dik tista' tkun teacher effettiva hafna. It-tfal tiegħek jgħaddu mill-eżamijiet kollha pero' xorta jien jekk ikolli nevalwak l-anqas biss inhallik tgħaddi mill-kors. Jien ngħid li biex issir teacher tajjeb irid ikollok skills effettivi għax fl-aħħar mill-aħħar xogħolok hu li tgħallim imma huma perikolużi mmens dawk l-iskills jekk ma jkunx hemm qafas u kuntest ta' etika, ta' dawn li ngħidulhom Foundations in Knowledge li jagħmluk propju teacher professjonali.

Mhux either or, that question is not even to be considered, they are necessarily complimentary.

Jekk inti tkun tajba fis-Sočjoloġija, taf tinterpreta l-edukazzjoni, taf tagħmel riċerka, imma mbagħad meta tidhol fil-klassi ma tafx tgħallim, xorta ma ngħaddikx mil-kors. Jiġifieri t-tnejn huma 'sine qua non', one cannot be without the other biex tkun teacher. Fil-fatt hawn korsijiet li ma ssirx teacher. Tiegħu l-BA in Educational Studies, per eżempju, tkun taf hafna fuq l-edukazzjoni imma ma jkollokx warrant biex tipprattika. Imma t-tnejn huma kruċjali biex issir teacher.

Bażikament, jiena naħseb li l-kompetenzi l-aktar importanti huma l-abilita' li tirrifletti u li thares lejn dik li ngħidilha means-ends rationality, jiġifieri li kapaċi tevalwa fejn trid tasal a bażi ta' riflessjoni fuq il-valuri, fuq għarfien ta' x'inhi edukazzjoni. Normalment il-Foundations jgħinuk, ituk l-iskills ta' riċerka u llum ngħidu li hija forma oħra ta' riflessjoni. Riċerka m'hi xejn aktar hlief riċerka aktar sistematika. Imma aħna nippruvaw li fil-kors tagħna, kif jiġri tista' tgħid fid-dinja żviluppata kollha, lit-teacher nagħtuhom il-messaġġ illi jridu jkun researchers within their classrooms. Għalhekk nenfażizzaw hafna il-kunċett ta' action research, riċerka aktar limitata għall-kuntest li fih qiegħed taħdem imma li inti tidentifika problema attwali. Per eżempju, għandek xi tfal li mhux qed jitgħallmu jew għandek xi tfal li qed jassentu ruħhom, li inti tidentifika problema u inti tagħmel riċerka li twasslek biex inti tiegħu azzjoni fuq dik ir-riċerka li għamilt u dak jerga' jwasslek biex tagħmel riċerka fuq kif tiegħu l-azzjoni. A never ending cycle of reflection and action. Allura dawn l-iskills qed nippruvaw ngħadduhom ukoll lill-istudenti tagħna.

Kompetenza oħra naħseb jien...partikularment il-Psikoloġija...kompetenza ta' knowledge ta' kif it-tfal jiżviluppaw. Jista' jkun tkun brava hafna fil-Matematika, imma jekk inti m'għandekx il-kompetenza li tagħraf li ċerti kunċetti huma itqal minn kunċetti oħrajn u li hemm mumenti fl-iżvilupp tal-bniedem li hawn kunċetti aktar faċli li jitgħallimhom, tagħmel żbalji bħal tipprova tgħallim tfal ta' 4 snin jaqraw. Tista' twassalhom biex jaqraw ta' 4 snin imma tkun hlejt hafna hin u enerġija u forsi anki tellifthom mill-gost li jaqraw kieku stennejt li they are reading- ready, li normalment hija 6 - 7 years old. Tista' tagħmel hafna pre-reading imma l-Psikoloġija ttik il-kompetenza mhux propja ta' kif għandek tgħallim il-qari, imma biex tagħraf meta t-tfal huma lesti biex jaqraw. Ittik ċertu kompetenzi li kapaċi tgħarbel lit-tfal u tara fejn waslu u tara x'kapaċi jitgħallmu. Is-Sočjoloġija ttik kompetenza li tara li hemm patterns fis-soċjeta'...il-bniet, is-subien...Tfal ġejjin mill-klassi soċjali tal-haddiema manwali...Mela inti tibda tinduna li hemm ċertu patterns ta' gruppi kbar. Din

tista' tghinek hafna meta tigi biex tghallem. Ittik il-kompetenza li tifhem il-gruppi u tifhem ukoll per eżempju li gruppi soċjali partikulari għandhom learning styles partikulari. Din nafuha minn hafna riċerka li tfal tal-klassi tal-ħaddiema hafna drabi jippreferu jibdwu minn affarijiet prattiċi u jmorru għall-astratt, waqt li t-tfal tal-klassi tan-nofs huma mdorrijin aktar iħaddmu l-lingwa, allura tibdielhom mill-astratt u tmur għall-konkret. Din hija mportanti għal meta tghallem għax ittik kompetenza li tifhem liema metodoloġija u liema teaching style tuża. Il-Psikoloġija tiffoka fuq l-individwi, waqt li s-Soċjoloġija hija fuq il-gruppi. Il-Psikoloġija tħobb tiffoka fuq individual learning styles, per eżempju, u aktar ma tesponi ruhek għaliha aktar tista' tkun effettiva allura fil-klassi. Dan il-background of knowledge will help you apply specific skills.

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.ED kif inhu mqassam bħalissa qiegħed jgħin biex jiżviluppa dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : Le...Le mhux imqassam tajjeb biżżejjed. Bħalissa qed niddiskutu jekk nistgħux flok Foundations ikunu korsijiet separati fil-Metodoloġija. Jkollok xi hadd jgħallmek kif taqra inti, imma mbagħad għandek xi hadd fil-Foundations li jgħidlek fuq il-klassi soċjali, fuq id-differenza bejn bniet u subien...qed nippretendu li intom tisimghu lectures fuq Metodoloġija u taqqduhom flimkien.

Qed insibu li din ma tantx tigi allura l-aħjar huwa li kieku possibbli dak il-persuna li hija in charge tal-Metodoloġija, li qed tghallmek kif taqra, tistieden il-Psikoloġista, tistieden is-Soċjoloġista' u l-Filosfu jagħmel il-lectures huwa u nagħtu r-responses tagħna u ngħidu minn-naħa tas-Soċjoloġija sibna hekk u hekk. U jkun hemm aktar interdisciplinary teaching of students halli aħna ngħinukom iġġibu l-istrands flimkien aktar milli intom li probabbilment diffiċli għax qed tisimghu kunċetti godda biex iġġibuhom flimkien. Jiena naħseb li nagħmlu hafna xogħol li huwa tajjeb. Per eżempju, compared ma' l-10 snin minn meta dħalt ngħallem fil-Fakulta', jien u oħrajn ħriġna kotba li minflok jikkellmu fuq Soċjoloġija ta' l-Edukazzjoni fl-Ingilterra, jikkellmu fuq Soċjoloġija ta' l-Edukazzjoni f'Malta. Allura meta studenti qed jaqraw, per eżempju, l-aħħar ktieb li ħriġna li hu Inside/Outside Schools hu mimli mhux biss teorija, imma teorija li tiffoka fuq rejaltajiet ġo skejje l-Maltin. Streaming ġo Malta, kif taħdem Skola Privata...Naqbd u ma' issues li l-istudenti aktar jistgħu jidentifikaw ruħhom magħhom. Dak huwa biċċa xogħol li we are really proud of li għamilniha...u naħseb li l-istudenti ma japprezzawx għax ktieb minn ieħor ma jagħmilx differenza...Imma l-fatt li noħorġu dokumentazzjoni lokali jfisser li intom għandkom aktar ċans tirriflettu b'mod ġenwin fuq issues lokali. Naħseb dak huwa pass li għamilna 'l quddiem, pero' mbagħad hemm problemi bil-gruppi kbar li we still have to learn how to deal with such groups. Thalli dak l-effett li jibqa' fuq livell impersonali hafna. Ma jkunx hemm daqshekk effett fuqkom.

Q : Hemm xi haġa oħra li tixtieq iżżid fuq dan il-qasam?

A : L-istudenti hafna drabi jgħidulek 'din fhimtha - imma so what?' X'ser nagħmel biha din l-informazzjoni? Jiġifieri hemm distakk għalihom bejn teorija u Prattika. Hafna drabi fil-Foundations meta nisma' n-nies jikkellmu fuqhom u l-istudenti jagħmlu l-evalwazzjoni jsibuha li fil-Foundations we are very well prepared. Il-Foundations team huwa forsi l-aktar team li jippubblika f'rivisti internazzjonali, allura hemm preparazzjoni ntellektwali b'saħħitha hafna tant li...

P : Tidher mill-kwalita' tal-lectures.

A : Tidher mill-kwalita' tal-lectures, tidher mill-fatt li nipublikaw barra, tidher mill-fatt li mhux konsulenti mal-gvern lokali biss imma anki ma' gvernijiet internazzjonali. Jigifieri ghandna profil internazzjonali. For a small island it is quite an achievement. Pero' minkejja li l-istudenti jhossu li hemm din il-preparazzjoni ntelletwali kultant jikkritikaw...u ahna dejjem irridu naraw ghalfejn hemm dik il-kritika li hafna drabi tkun gustifikata. Nahseb li bejn dak li nghidu u dak li huma jsibu fil-klassi kultant ma jarawhx l-istess.

Ghamilna seminar fil-Foundations team fejn wahda mid-decizjonijiet li hadna hija mhux biss li nohorgu dan it-tip ta' kotba bhal ma hrigna bhal Inside/Outside Schools imma li nizviluppaw strategiji biex it-tejorija tkun tirrifletti hafna aktar ma' x'jigri fil-klassi permezz ta', fost affarijiet ohra, case studies. Jigifieri naqbd u metodologija ta' taghlim, pedagogija li tghin lill-istudent jaghmel il-link bejn x'jigri fil-klassi u the wider theory framework. U wahda mill-modi hi li taqbad case studies. Per eżempju, x'taghmel studenta li tipprova tkun demokratika wara li semghet hafna fuq democracy u l-edukazzjoni imma t-fal jaharbu biha mbaghad...allura inti tohloq dan il-case study. Tippiżentah lill-istudenti u tghidilhom ha niddiskutu x'issues hawn hawnhekk. Ha naraw x'jigri u naraw it-tejorija kif tista' tghinha tirrizolvi dan il-każ.

Case study is one way. Mod ieħor hu dilemma based teaching. Ghandek dilemmas fl-edukazzjoni u hemm il-Foundations tista' tghinek hafna. Dilemma tfigher li ghandek challenge quddiemek li taghmel x'taghmel ser tiflef. Dilemma jigifieri ma tafx kif iggib ruhek quddiem dik id-dilemma. Fil-Foundations jghinuk tirrifletti fuqha biex tiehu decizjoni li hi professjonalment gusta u tajba.

Ohra li nixtiequ nizviluppaw izjed, diga naghmluha imma nistghu naghmluha forsi b'mod aktar impenjattiv hi li l-assignment taghkom ikun djarju, li zzommu djarju riflettiv fejn inti qiegħed tirrifletti - reflexive diary. Fil-Foundations, taqta' l-Psikologija, ma tantx nemmn u fit-testijiet. Ahna aktar project work pero' biex taghmlu trid il-hin u biex tikkoregħieh trid hafna izjed. Journal keeping jew diary keeping is a very effective way of helping students become reflective practitioners which is ultimately the aim of the Foundations Department.

Ghandna naċċertaw ruhna li ċertu riflessjoni personali fuq il-hidma ta' teacher hija kumplessa hafna. M'hemmx ricetti. Biex ikun hemm ricetti m'hemmx bzonn Foundations. Ma nemmnux fir-ricetti. Nemmn u li tant hu kumplikat, li tant is-sitwazzjoni li fiha tghallem hija kumplessa li sfortunatament, jew fortunatament, m'hemmx ricetti. Ghandna bzonn ta' teacher li kontinwament jirrifletti fuq il-prattika tieghu. Biex tirrifletti jrid ikollok ċertu tools. Staqsejtni x'kompetenzi fir-reflective practise imma jekk inti taqsamha f'aktar dettal, reflective practise requires the ability to use critical tools of thinking. Per eżempju jien ngħallem 'Critical Theory in Education', Joe Giordmaina jghallem fuq 'Critical and Creative Thinking', Kenneth Wain fuq...Shabi fis-Socjologija jieħdu diversi tools u kuncetti li jghinu lill-persuna ssir aktar kritika u riflessiva.

Ovvjament, ninsisti fuqha, li mingħajr dawk it-tip ta' skills ma nahsibx li haddieħor jevithom. Ma nahsibx li ahna biss qed ngħallmuhom, allahares. Nahseb li l-metodologisti fil-fakulta' wkoll jgħallmuhom dawn it-tools pero' ahna ngħallmuhom b'mod aktar sistematiku u b'mod li jhalli effett fuq l-istudent, li meta jiggradwa jkun kapaċi jsir reflective practitioner fil-klassi u fl-iskola.

Eżempju, l-Politika ta' l-Edukazzjoni, min jgħallmielkom jekk mhux il-Foundations? Jigifieri l-politika mhux biss tal-klassi, imma l-politika ta' l-iskola as a whole u l-politika nazzjonali u jerġa' fil-korsijiet ta' l-aħħar sena fiha l-politika internazzjonali. Li tkun kapaċi tara s-sinjali

taż-żminijiet. Il-fatt illi Margaret Thatcher fis-snin li ghamlet fil-gvern konservattiv dahlu kuncetti bħal league tables u mbagħad nibdew nisimghu li hawn min qed jittellem hawn Malta. Jew il-voucher system, li jkollok nies li hafna drabi ssibhom fil-Foundations, li dawn il-kuncetti jkunu semgħu bihom, qraw x'għara u ma ġarax fil-pajjiżi fejn ġew ipprattikati biex meta jiġi l-gvern jew xi pressure group, jew partit politiku li jipproponihom, aħna nkunu kapaċi nitkellmu fuq l-effett pożittiv jew negattiv tagħhom fl-Edukazzjoni. Nixtiequ hafna li t-teachers kollha jkunu kapaċi jagħmlu dik l-analiżi u mhux biss il-bravi ta' l-Universita'. Dawk għandhom role x'jilagħbu ovvjament, imma aħna nemmnu li b'degree, mhux b'diploma, intom toħorġu bħala intellettuali mill-Universita' wara 4 snin. Aħna nippretendu minkom li b'dak li tiehdu mill-Foundations u korsijiet oħra tkunu kapaċi tanalizzaw sistemi ta' edukazzjoni u l-effett politiku ta' ċertu deċiżjonijiet u kif ser jaffettwaw gruppi differenti, mbagħad tiehdu deċiżjoni skond il-valuri tagħkom. Imma jkun inaċċettabbli li teacher jibqa' ħalqu magħluq ġo klassi għax ; 'għaliya mhux fil-klassi ngħallim!'. Dak għaliya mhux worth it-title ta' professional educator. Nifhem kultant għalfejn teacher jinheba ġo klassi u jgħid 'hawn għandi x'naqsam', pero' ma tistax għax jekk qed isehh dibattitu fuq il-kurriculum, xi haġa li ser toqtoq fil-klassi, jekk inti ma titkellimx u ser tghid isma għaliex ir-Reliġjon irridu ngħallimuh bilfors fil-Primarja? Jekk jien mhux persważ għaliex qed tobligani ngħallim ir-Reliġjon? Jew is-Sesswalita' ma tidher imkien fil-kurrikulum tal-Primarja. Imma inti temmen li mbagħad it-tfal għandhom il-kurjożitajiet u thoss li you should deal with this. Allura ma titkellimx. Inti x'tagħmel? Jew inkella inti thoss li l-eżamijiet, l-isteamming ikissru t-tfal. Tghid jien mhux ser niffoka fuq it-tfal tal-klassi tiegħi. Ma tistax għax jekk hemm l-isteamming fl-iskola tiegħek ser jaffettwa l-klassi tiegħek, ser jaffettwa l-mod kif tghallim, ser jaffettwa f'liema klassi tiġi placed. Aħna nippruvaw nuru l-kuntest soċjali tal-politika ta' l-edukazzjoni. Hemm neċessita' enormi u responsabilita' morali kbira li t-teachers ikunu ppreparati u naħseb li fil-Foundations ngħaddu dawn il-messaġġi, ngħaddu dawn il-kompetenzi ta' l-analiżi.

Q : Kulhadd semmieli l-problema kbira tan-numru kbir ta' l-istudenti. Qed isir xi haġa minn-naha tal-Fakulta' ta' l-Edukazzjoni biex taraw kif tistgħu tittekljaw din il-problema?

A : Aħna ppruvajna din is-sena ndaħħlu l-kuncett ta' numerus clausus jiġifieri niddikjaraw minn qabel kemm jistgħu jidhlu studenti, kif jagħmlu t-tobba. Jiġifieri din mhiex xi haġa li aħna biss inkunu qed nagħmluha, barra diversi korsijiet li mhumix ta' degree level. Għal raġuni ovvja din mhix aċċettabbli għall-ebda partit. Ma hemmx biżżejjed klassijiet b'teachers tajbin biex tagħmlu l-observation tagħkom. Qed nispiċċaw f'sitwazzjoni fejn jien u shabi ngħidu haġa fuq l-edukazzjoni mbagħad ngħidulkom morru osservaw fil-klassi u ssibu li pjuttost kontra. Aħna qed ngħidu li jidhlu studenti fil-kors tagħna jew abbażi ta' ratio students to lecturers per eżempju 1:12 jew 1:15. Hija ratio ta' hafna pajjiżi fl-Ewropa, waqt li tagħna hi 1:28, anka iżjed. Imma mhux hekk biss għax jgħidu nżidulkom il-lecturers u tiġu ratio tajjeb. L-anqas dik ma hi soluzzjoni. Is-soluzzjoni hija kemm hawn klassijiet li nistgħu nużawhom bħala training laboratory, abbażi ta' kemm nistgħu niehdu studenti? Dik li qed nargumentaw aħna imma s'issa għadna ma wasalniex. Issa, qabel, f'sitwazzjoni fejn kien hemm teacher shortage konna qedin f'pożizzjoni naqra dgħajfa għax ma tistax tagħmel dawn il-claims jekk il-pajjiż għandu bżonn hafna għalliema, imma jekk issa hemm aktar milli hemm bżonn għaliex tonfoq dawk il-flus kollha tittrenja għalliema li m'intix ser tuża? Jiena tajt messaġġ li jiena għandi bżonn tant għalliema ta' dawn is-suġġetti u tibbaża l-entry fil-kors fuq x'hemm bżonn. Pero' dik hija deċiżjoni politika mhux deċiżjoni ta' l-Universita'. Jiġifieri...din hija deċiżjoni li hija diffiċli wkoll. L-ebda Gvern m'hu ser jiehu gost jehodha. Pero' aħna qed ngħidu li jekk f'Malta rridu training courses ta' livell b'xi mod ma nistgħux nibqgħu...Din is-sena applikaw 420 u 200 PGCE, 600 b'kollox. Kif ser

tgħallimhom? Dahlu fil-fatt 220 B.ED u 150 PGCE u anki dawk hafna. Qed ngħidu wkoll li l-aħjar teachers suppost ikunu l-B.Eds meta l-PGCE jew ma noffruhx jew jitwal.

Interview with Dr. J. Mifsud (Primary Department)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach effectively in a primary school?

A : Il-kompetenzi jkunu varji w daqxajn differenti wkoll. Inti staqsejtni fi skola primarja Maltija...Hawn hafna skejjel primarji differenti Malta...Hawn skejjel primarji li huma ta' l-istat u hawn l-iskejjel primarji bħaċ-Church schools u skejjel primarji ta' l-Independent schools. Kull skola għandha grupp ta' teacher li mhux bilfors kollha jgħallmu l-istess. Għandna teachers li bħala tip ta' training tagħhom personali kien differenti wkoll; min daħal 'college-trained', min B.Ed, min PGCE. Issa bejn B.Ed's u PGCE, hafna drabi l-B.Ed's, barra li kienu jiehdu units fil-primarja, kienu jiehdu units ukoll fis-sekondarja. Kważi, kważi, jekk tgħoddhom dawn il-units jiġu aktar jew daqs daww il-units tal-primarja. Jiġifieri, bħalissa, effettivament tara daww li huma college-trained jew li ta' l-anqas ilhom trained 30 sena. Barra daww hemm hafna nies li m'għandhomx training speċifiku biex isiru teachers tal-primarja. Is-sena l-oħra u din is-sena ser ikunu l-ewwel snin li ser ikollna teachers li jispeċjalizzaw sentejn biex isiru teachers fil-primary schools.

Hemm hsibijiet li l-quddiem fin-1999, l-4 snin tal-B.Ed ikunu devoted to building up a teacher with competencies.

Q : Meta semmejt li Malta hawn skejjel differenti qieghed tirreferi li kull skola għandha bżonn teachers b'kompetenzi differenti wkoll?

A : Le, jiena qed ngħid li kull skola għandha l-viżjoni tagħha ta' x'inh primary education. Fl-iskejjel ta' l-istat din il-viżjoni is a shared vision għax hija sfortunatament viżjoni antikwata. Għaliex? Għax, x'jiġifieri wiehded imur fi skola primarja u jsib l-istess tagħlim, l-istess kotba? Fl-istess perjodu ta' snin jiġu mgħallma l-istess haġa. Anki t-time table l-istess. Fit-8:30 Religion, fid-9:00 Maths...whole class teaching, dan it-tip t' affarijiet. Mhux kulhadd imma hafna minnhom. Hemm skejjel privati li għandhom viżjoni differenti. Mhux bilfors huma Church schools, aktar l-independent schools, fejn it-tagħlim huwa aktar gradwali, t-tfal, they discover learning. Hemm anqas whole-class teaching u hemm aktar groupwork u individual attention. Hemm dan it-tip t'affarijiet u m'hemmx streaming...

Il-kompetenzi li wiehded irid iħares jiena naqsamhom fi tnejn. Daww li ngħidulhom...aħna bħalissa t-teachers tagħna għandhom 'just-in-case' competencies, fil-waqt li l-kompetenzi li hemm bżonn fi skola primarja huma 'just-in-time' competencies. Issa din hija l-akbar dikotomija ta' x'inhuma kompetenzi li għandna bżonn, mhux kumbinazzjoni, imma għax ser ikollna bżonnhom żgur, għax jorbtu mal-ħajja ta' l-individwu fi skola sekondarja, post sekondarja, terzjarja eċċ, eċċ.

Għalhekk huwa mportanti li aħna jkollna kompetenzi anke fit-teachers, mhux biss fit-tfal imma aktar fit-teachers. Numru ta' kompetenzi li huma 'just-in-time' competencies not 'just-in-case' competencies.

Tgħidli inti biex jgħalliem effettiv fi skola x'għandu bżonn ikollu teacher? Irid ikun...he 'captures what the child is learning now and what the child will be learning in the future'. Issa jekk inti ssaqsini bħal issa, 'do teachers have this kind of competency?', jien ngħidlek - Le! Mid-diskussjonijiet li kellna ma' l-MUT aħna, anki l-MUT stess, minħabba li t-teachers tal-primarja huma l-ħin kollu on, il-ħin kollu fil-klassi, m'għandhomx ċans jiżviluppaw other

competencies, allura baqgħu jgħallmu bl-istess mod. You develop 'just-in-time' skills billi jkollok aktar minn teacher waħda, jiena nemmen, li jgħallmu fl-iskola primarja ħalli hekk it-tfal jibdew jaraw l-affarijiet b'mod aktar speċjalizzat u b'mod aktar infurmat. Ma jistax ikun li bniedem jgħalliem kollox...

P : Ghax ma jistax ikollok il-kompetenzi kollha ta' kull suġġett!

A : Dik il-problema kollha. Fiż-żmien tal-lum ma jistax ikollok il-kompetenzi kollha. Allura trid tagħmel training t'apposta, per eżempju, fil-lingwi w ħaddiehor jgħallimlek science, maths eċċ, eċċ. That would lift the load from the primary teacher as well.

Q : Allura l-Fakulta' ta' l-Edukazzjoni liema kompetenzi tara li huma essenzjali fil-mainstream teacher?

A : Bħal issa għadna kif għamilna conceptual framework ġdid li ser ikun jibni, għax biex inħarsu lejn dak li hemm bħal issa sfortunatament hija 'fill in the gap' ta' sentejn fejn għamilna ħafna units imma qed niżviluppaw units differenti. Per eżempju, waħda mill-affarijiet li għamilna mill-ewwel kienet, il-units tal-First Aid, il-units ta' Education and the Law, il-units ta' Child Abuse. Dawn huma kollha units li qatt ma kellna u ridna nagħmluhom u saru parti integrali mill-kors għax nemmnu li teacher fil-primarja għandu jkollu dawn il-kompetenzi barra li jkollu kompetenzi ta' classroom management, classroom organization, teaching science, teaching social studies eċċ, eċċ. Hemm affarijiet oħra li huma mportanti. Hemm enfazi wkoll fuq interpersonal skills u enfazi oħra bħal dawn. Issa fl-area tal-'Foundations in Education' ukoll kien hemm żviluppi għax ma baqghux jgħallmu sociology, philosophy, hekk fl-arja, imma marbutin ħafna mal-prattika.

Issa, fil-course structure il-ġdid nisperaw li ser ikollna rationale differenti. Dan ser iħares lejn dak li jiena ngħidli 'Observable Practice' u dawk li ngħidulhom 'Ideas, Values and Beliefs', li huma differenti. Fl-'Observable Practice' għandna erba' pilastri, content, context, pedagogy u management. U dawn jirrispondu għal żewġ mistoqsijiet prinċiparjament. Content, 'what should children learn?', u fil-context, pedagogy u management għandek, 'how should children learn and teachers teach?' L-ewwel waħda, content, 'what should children learn?' It-tieni waħda context, physical, interpersonal environment eċċ., pedagogy, teaching methods, pupil organization, evaluation of teaching hija, 'how should children learn and teachers teach?' Those are the two basic questions. Dawk l-erba' pilastri. Hemm ukoll il-qasma fuq 'Ideas, Values and Beliefs' u din inħarsu lejn tlieta. Meta ngħidu 'l-Foundations subject' għandhom iħarsu lejn dawn it-tlett punti, 'Ideas, Values and Beliefs'. Inħarsu lejn it-tfal, lejn society at large u lejn knowledge. U jirrispondu, marbutin ma' mistoqsija waħda, 'why should children be educated in this way?' u 'what is an educated person?'. Naħseb li l-kompetenzi li rridu nħarsu lejhom huma dawn iż-żewġ pilastri. 'What should children learn?' 'How should children learn and teachers teach?' 'Why should children be educated in this way?' u 'What is an educated person?'.

Issa l-'Ideas, Values and Beliefs', marbutin ma' tlett affarijiet importanti. 'Children', qed inħarsu lejn developmental needs etc., 'society', In-needs tas-soċjeta', n-needs of the individual u 'knowledge' hija children's ways of knowing, culturally evolved ways of knowing.

Dan qiegħed intik jiena rationale, conceptual framework ta' x'għandu jsir meta wieħed iħares x'qedin nagħmlu. Bħalissa, sfortunatament, il-B.Ed course huwa mibni fuq B.Ed

generalist course. Il-B.Ed specialist course allura aktar minn filled in the gaps, imma m'għamilniex xi haġa li hija tagħna. Dan iħares lejn xi haġa li hija tagħna.

Q : Allura għat-tieni mistoqsija, ma taħsibx li l-B.Ed course u l-PGCE course qedin jiżviluppaw dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : Le, jiena nemmen li qedin jikkkejterjaw għall-kompetenzi, kif għidtlek fil-bidu, li huma tal-'just-in-case' mhux 'just-in-time', allura, dan huwa programm li jħares lejn 'just-in-time'.

Q : U kif ser tagħmel biex dan il-programm jiġi implimentat?

A : Hemm proposta tagħna tad-'Department of Primary' li fid-1999...Ahna xtaqna nimxu issa imma ilna nistennew il-fakulta'. F'October 1999 ikun hemm B.Ed (Hons.) dak li qed ngħidulu 'Primary Range'. Iħares lejn Early Childhood Education u lejn Junior Education. Bhala primary curriculum subject specialists qed iħarsu lejn Creative Arts, lejn I.T, English, Humanities, Maths, Religious Education, Science and the Environment, Early Childhood Education etc., etc. Dawn x'jagħmlu? Jagħmlu fl-ewwel sena a generalist year fil-Primary imma mbagħad iħarsu lejn dawk l-affarijiet li għidtlek qabel, dawk l-areas li mis-second year il-quddiem tispeċjalizza f'area jew Early Childhood jew Junior Years. Id-degree tkun komposta minn 24 modules taken over 4 years.

Q : X'differenza hemm bejn modules u credits?

A : Modules huma grupp ta' credits biex l-assesement ma jiġix ħafna assessments il-ħin kollu, imma inti tagħmel assessment ta' module, qed tifhem, mhux ta'...

U għandek 8 modules fil-'Foundations in Education', 8 modules f'dawk li qed ngħidilhom jiena 'Professional Studies' u 'School Experience', 8 modules fil-Primary Curriculum subject area. Dawk huma 24 modules...

Tkun a professional qualification u ttik a range of professional competencies necessary for effective teaching. Għaliex? Għax ħafna mix-xogħol ser ikun school based, based on a 'hands on', 'on the job' fil-fatt qed ngħidilhom jien. L-ideja hi li ma' l-erba' snin B.Ed kors ikun hemm sena ta' warajha li ngħidulha probationary year, fejn fiha norbtu magħha l-ideja li 'education and practice' tiegħek plus ix-xogħol li inti tagħmel, fis-sens li aħna qed nippruvaw indaħħlu l-ideja ta' portofolios. Allura kull teacher ser ikollu l-portofolio tiegħu ta' x'għamel. Dan jista' jiġi jintuża fis-sena li ngħidulha tal-'confirmation', fejn jiġi jarak biex itik il-paga, eċċ., marbut magħha.

What should be done in your opinion?...Nibdew il-B.Ed Primary minnufih!

Interview with Dr. C. Bezzina (Teaching Practice)

Q : What role does the Teaching Practice have in the B.Ed and P.G.C.E course?

A : At the moment I do believe that both the B.Ed programme and the P.G.C.E programme are reviewing the teacher education component and hence the role of Teaching Practice.

P : It is still evolving?

A : It is definitely evolving, yes, but we're also looking with a keen eye on practices abroad to see how Teaching Practice abroad has evolved and we are also bearing in mind our own current Teaching Practice component which is being piloted and I can say something about that later on. We are also trying to get to know what students themselves feel about Teaching Practice because their own input, their own feedback is very important for us. So we are in a state where we are reviewing the important role that it has because we do feel that a fundamental point or a fundamental aspect of the B.Ed course or any teaching course relies heavily on what we offer our students and hence how we can make them better teachers, for the students will be eventually teaching in schools. So, definitely Teaching Practice plays a fundamental, an essential role in any B.Ed course.

Q : What competencies should a teacher develop during this Teaching Practice?

A : Now we are starting to talk about competencies which is an interesting area. There is a lot which is being written about competencies and the value of competencies. I do believe they play an important role. It is important to see where the students, as student teachers, as prospective teachers have those competencies or where they can develop those competencies over a span of years. I do feel that competencies are important mainly because they help us identify certain values, characteristics, certain skills which we feel a teacher ought to have. For example, if we look at your questionnaire you identified a variety of competencies such as those involving professional values, personal development, communication, knowledge base, hence the professional knowledge base, professional skills and hence all of this is very important. In fact, if you look at the literature you find some countries putting forward about 20 competencies, some other countries putting forward over a 100 or a 150. They are all of equal worth. I believe that they are all important and it is, in fact, important to our Faculty to be aware of how other countries view competencies. At the same time I do believe that we ought to build our own set of competencies and hence bearing in mind the reality that we are currently facing in Malta because again if we are preparing students we are preparing them for our schools, for the schools of today and of the future and therefore those competencies need to reflect that state of being, so to speak, and hence competencies are also putting forward a new culture.

We are saying that teachers ought to have these competencies and express them in particular ways, express them not purely as a knowledge base but because I do believe that the University through its 4 year programme has to provide enough knowledge base where the student is exposed to those competencies but also given the opportunity to put them into practice. Hence, through the application of those competencies in the schools themselves, you are applying theory into practice and I feel that is where you bring forward the theory-practice divide. Broken theory and practice become one because at University it is the ideal place where certain ideals, certain knowledge is shared and that knowledge is applied in practice. We are moving in that direction.

We are also considering and contemplating where the Teaching Practice component in itself is reviewed so that students who might be learning certain competencies through their Foundation or

Methodology courses, so to speak, are put to test straight away in the schools. So if I am talking about discipline I can go to the Psychology department and learn what discipline it entails from the psychological perspective and then I can go into a school and try to apply what I've learnt in the Psychology course. For example, in practice I can link the Foundations course with the Methodology course and I do believe we need to blend them. For example, if I am learning through one discipline, say, if I learn through Psychology how to appreciate and how to identify problems of discipline and how to handle them, then I can create a scenario, a case-study where, through a particular subject, let us take English, let us take Maths, I learn to appreciate how to handle difficulties of discipline in a particular lesson and from the methodology point of view try to appreciate how to handle discipline in the class, and moving into the class through Teaching Practice to handle such situations because I do believe that this is where the competencies become more concrete, more relevant to the student teacher. They are put to the test not only at the academic level but at the practical level and B.Ed courses try to bring that to the fore - theory and practice become one.

Q : And can I ask you what these main competencies are?

A : I think that the main competencies are highlighted in your own questionnaire and they mainly touch various aspects of learning at the University. We are looking to a knowledge base which provides students with not only pedagogy but also the necessary disciplines which help the student teachers and hence the prospective teachers have the required knowledge which are important for the teacher to have. They become more important as soon as that student teacher starts to apply them. There are also a number of areas, I would not like to call them competencies, that the student brings. That is, a student who enters the Faculty at the tender age of 18 still brings a lot of experience but now we are moving into a profession where the experiences are limitless. We cannot really put into concrete terms experiences the prospective teacher would face but we can identify what we feel the teacher ought to have and those are the professional competencies which the student will develop over a span of years and can be able to master once he graduates and even during the actual 4 years of the course. We can see that that person has mastered these competencies and also at the same time identify competencies which student teachers, even on graduation, might need to work on. I feel that is very important because we cannot say that by the end of the 4 year programme the teacher has mastered all the competencies hence he is an effective teacher, far from it. The competencies are so wide, as you said, so comprehensive, that once a teacher may be very effective in certain competencies, he or she might still be weak in others and needs to develop those during his or her teaching career. But there are other areas which we cannot measure because the competency has to be measured even though there is an element of subjectivity. There they can be, I can view them. I can see a student putting them to the test. However, there are certain traits, certain attitudes, certain dispositions which the student teacher brings with him to the Faculty as a student and those are very difficult for a student to learn. Those are the attitudes that a student has..

P : Or to unlearn as well...

A : Yes, exactly, that's a good point. Whatever age you are, the right disposition has to be that we are always learning. I do believe in that saying. Socrates said, 'I am constantly learning from my surrounding', and Michaelangelo said, 'I am still a learner' and I do believe that we are constantly learning. We, as a principle, need to adopt that teachers and prospective teachers, as educators, need to say that I am constantly learning which means that at times I need to unlearn existing modes of practice. I might have to question the way I've been doing things and I have to question my own values and so on and so forth. If I have that type of disposition then probably I'm more capable of becoming an effective teacher than purely a good or average type of teacher because again like all other professions there are good teachers like good doctors, but then you might end up facing a

mediocre teacher in a class and that would be a great pity for the learners there. At the same time you might find a teacher who sees himself or herself as a learner and hence who is constantly reviewing what he or she has done on a daily basis, collaborating with others and hence allowing himself or herself to learn from the experiences. That sort of person has the right attitude, has the right disposition to be considered as a more effective teacher than others. But I do feel that in this respect competencies suffer because I cannot measure that in strict terms. For example, what I find difficult here [in the questionnaire] in assessing the value of a competency, whether it has to be given a one or a two. It's not easy. There can be a level of importance between 1 and 5 but the distinction between 1 and 2 is not that clear and competencies can suffer from that respect, you know, of measurements. What becomes more important is that, when we are analysing a teacher or a prospective teacher, this person has the right attitude, has the right disposition which goes beyond measurement.

Q : Do you think the way Teaching Practice is presently organised helps the student teacher to develop these competencies?

A : Again, this is a highly subjective question to answer, I think there are better people to answer that at this stage because the Faculty itself, through its various departments, is reviewing the whole structure of our B.Ed programme. More of that in a later interview...

The various departments are doing a lot of work. The heads are meeting their own staff regularly in order to identify those areas they feel that our students should be exposed to during the 4 year programme. This means that at the same time the Teaching Practice component has also to work hand in hand with these departments so that if there are competencies that need to be learnt we need to identify when they should be exposed, what courses should offer them, should they be purely Foundations people who should be offering them, should the Methodology people in their respective departments or should it be both? In my opinion the knowledge base should be shared in certain areas. Foundation courses should be done and also Methodology courses and at the same time be put to the test during the Teaching Practice component. So there again, probably in the years to come, we are going to find that Teaching Practice component might even be reviewed mainly because the Faculty is reviewing its whole B.Ed programme.

Q : What could be done in your opinion to develop these competencies fully?

A : I mean, to develop competencies, first and foremost there need to be an agreement on what competencies we want to start assessing and because, again, competencies can be observed and can be developed as you yourself said. We unlearn and learn and review a competency. So if I'm not happy with one area, one particular area, I can definitely work so that by my 4th year I myself have improved on a competency which has been assessed at an unsatisfactory or satisfactory level. If I am convinced that I can do better, then I will do my best to improve that competency. So, again, there need to be an agreement on competencies and also a clear agreement on who is going to develop these competencies, you know, as a student. So, definitely, the programme in itself, the practice in itself will allow us to identify those competencies and put them constantly to the test. Definitely, a considerable effort by all of us within the faculty will help us to achieve the competencies the Faculty deems average students should get.

Q : Is there something else you would like to add?

A : At this stage, it is very difficult to see what else can be said about the Faculty and the Teaching Practice committee itself is doing a lot of work in order to review the pilot scheme that we are undergoing at the moment. The Faculty has introduced a guide book for Teaching Practice and has

also created a report book where all our tutors are assessing students on a set of competencies. Those are currently being reviewed and hopefully by the next academic year we have the so called new competencies being put into practice. Again the very word implies that if we put them to the test we are going to be reviewed. We are involving as many people as possible to clearly know what type of teacher we want for the future. Once we gain that feedback...I myself am getting feedback from the Faculty members in order to see how they currently view Teaching Practice...In fact, your research together with our research can help us get a better picture of the kind of teachers we want for the future because even that, that means that we are preparing teachers for a future, but what future? If we feel that these are the competencies that they need to get, these competencies will reflect the future teacher, the teacher we will have in our schools and hence you know, as implications to the type of education they would be passing on. So, definitely, we are in a very important stage for the Faculty and hopefully your kind of research can help us improve current practice. You know, there is a lot of work to be done.

P : Good luck!

Interview with Ms. M.T. Farrugia (Maths)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Maths effectively in a primary school?

A : First of all, obviously, there are the general competencies that all teachers need. I am not going to go into detail, things like class control, understanding children, things which are general.

P : Which are relevant not only to Maths...

A : To all subjects. I mean if you are going to be a good teacher you need to have certain basic skills. Now, if we are talking about competencies for Maths, this is obviously my own opinion, first of all, one thing I believe very strongly in is that the teacher needs to have the knowledge of the subject. Now my subject, Maths is a rather tricky subject. Sometimes we find that our B.Ed students would have learnt it by rote at school. They have passed their 'O' level but they don't know what they are doing, everything is procedures and formulae. It is not an easy subject and sometimes, when there is something they don't understand, one of the problems I find is that teachers do not realise that they don't really understand because once they know the formula and they can get through the exam...

P : They think they know what Maths is all about.

A : Exactly, but deep down they wouldn't and it is one of those subjects, so I believe that they really need to know the subject well to teach it well. Now when I say have 'knowledge' of the subject, what I mean is, first of all understanding concepts. So, I am going to give an example, 'Area' - I wouldn't want a teacher to think that area is 'Length x Breadth'. That is not what area is. Area is surface, the size of a surface. So that is, for instance, the concept of area. Another bit of knowledge for instance, another example is the derivation of formulae. So, if the teacher is going to use formulae, I would expect her to be competent in the sense that she knows where the formula came from and she can derive it for herself and therefore she can then pass it on to the children in its full meaning. Another competency, as regards knowledge of the subject is, for instance, how to use symbols and notation. An example is that in Maths when we draw a line we label it capital 'A' at the beginning, capital 'B' at the end. That is a standard convention and I would expect teachers to know these conventions to be able to pass them on. For instance, sometimes, I find students who draw a line and they put a capital 'A' in the middle. That is not standard notation for Maths. The notation is, for instance, capital 'A', capital 'B'. Another area of knowledge of the subject is relationship between areas. This is obviously not an easy competency to pick up. For instance, how fractions and decimals are related. There are different areas in Maths which are very closely related. For example we can teach measurement through decimals. There is a very close relationship between fractions and decimals, also between percentages and fractions, blockgraphs and number patterns and so on. That is another competency which I think is involved in knowing the subject. So these are all part of knowing the subject.

These things are important for three reasons. First of all to pass on the subject in a meaningful way. I think that if the teacher doesn't understand the subject she cannot pass it on with understanding, because she is going to pass it on parrot like as she herself is understanding it. Secondly, I believe it is important to know the subject, because when they are teaching they can play down the importance of formulae and rote learning, and thirdly, to be able to see beyond the text book and to work independently on it. A teacher who doesn't know the subject very well is automatically going to be guided by the text book. Now if there are gaps in the text book the teacher is not going to realise, so the teacher's own knowledge has to be quite good to see through the text book and to read between the lines and know what work needs to be supplemented. Now, that is the first main competency regarding the knowledge of the subject. Another competency regards methodology.

P : The 'skills'.

A : The skills of passing it on. First of all, I think teachers should be able to appreciate that a lesson can be organised in many different ways. In Maths there is a tendency to organise the lessons in the same way. Teacher gives the example, children work the exercise. But Maths lessons can actually be much more creative, much more varied and I consider that to be a competency. Being, first of all, aware that you can do practical work, you can prepare certain materials, you can organise groupwork, investigations, discussions. I mean to be aware is already part of the competency. Obviously the competency really is to be able to do it in the classroom..

Another competency which is being recognised today worldwide as being a very important thing in Mathematics learning is the ability to talk to and to listen to children as they work. That is something which is being given a lot of importance where learning is based on dialogue, that the teacher has the competency, the ability, first of all to recognise this, to know it and then, obviously, to do it in the classroom.

Now, that is methodology, obviously, apart from the general methodology competencies that any teacher would have. Another competency is regarding theory. I also believe quite strongly in this, that our teachers need to have a theoretical background. For instance, psychology of learning Maths, philosophies of Mathematics education, gender issues, so these are broader issues. I call them theoretical issues which go beyond actually teaching the subject. For instance, the role of language in Mathematics teaching. There are technical works and there are what we call Mathematical English, Ordinary English and how language is used through discussion. I consider these to be theoretical issues and I think students should have the theoretical background as well.

P : As to attitudes?

A : Now, attitudes. Unfortunately we find a lot of teachers, as soon as they see Maths education, they block up a little because they don't see themselves as very confident. Now as an attitude, obviously, as in all other subjects, the more positive the attitude is the more confident the teacher is going to be and can pass on the enthusiasm to the children. If the teacher is really up tight during the Maths lesson or really 'by the book' and 'don't ask me any questions' because they don't feel confident, automatically the children will pick up a rather negative approach to the subject. So that is as regards attitudes...It does not mean if you have a negative attitude you are not going to make a good teacher because sometimes when you are afraid you make an extra effort to improve your teaching. But I suppose that if in class you are feeling insecure and you don't let children ask questions, that is one of the biggest problems. When you are not confident you don't allow children to ask you questions which goes against what everybody is preaching nowadays. There has to be a sense of dialogue in the Maths classroom.

Q : Do you think the present initial teacher training course both the B.Ed course and the PGCE is catering for the development of such competencies? In what ways?

A : Now, let's start with the B.Ed. Well in the B.Ed course I am trying to include all these aspects. As yet there is no year group who have done the whole numeracy course with me. I think as a full timer, I have been a full timer since...I'm not sure about your group (1994-1998)...

P : We've always done it with...

A : me...Then you must be the only group, when I was a part-timer. But as such I am changing the course. I am changing the course to cover all these things that I've talked about. Before you, in your

group (1994-1998) since we were part-timers at that time, it wasn't that easy, obviously, to put the course together and it was constantly changing. Even the number of units - in your time, perhaps I was not emphasising so much the theoretical aspects but now, let us talk about how I am hoping to do it as from now onwards. But again, the students who are Primary specialist had started with other lecturers before. So let us say that the 4-year course is still evolving. In the B.Ed I do try to cover all the aspects. In the PGCE it is very, very limited. All I have, all I am given is 4 hours. What I do is a little bit of methodology. I do no theory with the PGCE and I don't do very much of the subject and the content. I try to encourage them to find ways of teaching themselves the subject but in 4 hours what I do is I touch on methodology and I give examples of the content so I try to give some examples when I teach them a little bit of this and that, but obviously, it is very, very limited. I can talk more about the B.Ed because, obviously, they get many more hours, so I can develop these ideas that I have much more in the B.Ed. In the PGCE it is almost useless trying because the time is so limited.

Now, how do I try to develop these competencies? First of all during lectures. For instance, the theoretical issues are inevitably lectures. Methodology are lectures with students' discussion. As time goes by I am trying to include more and more students' discussions. For example, I give them something to do in a group and work in groups so they might either discuss the methodology or I might be touching on a content area. I can do a bit of both there. Obviously, it is a bit difficult to do theoretical issues like that because the students don't have the background. I need to pass them on to a certain extent. For instance, one of the theoretical issues I am trying to cover nowadays is the idea of constructivism, which is the predominant philosophy of Maths at the moment. It's very popular worldwide. Now, how do I approach this idea of constructivism? First of all I give them a lecture because they don't know anything about constructivism. I might give them a reading and that is something I will talk about soon, the text book. I try to give them the background and then recently I set them a task where they have to work in twos and then we listen carefully to their interpretations. Now, constructivism gives a lot of importance to the idea that in the classroom you listen to what children are saying and the way they are interpreting what you are teaching them. So to try to illustrate this to the students, we do a practical session. I give them something to work on and then we get to listen to each other and we recognise how different their interpretations are, of the very same question. So I try to get them to appreciate what constructivism is about. What we are doing here in the lecture room, they can do in the classroom. So I try to illustrate the theoretical point in that sense. That is something I've started doing recently. So, that is theory. They can either talk about theory or read it from a reading, but then I try to illustrate it. Obviously, I cannot do it with all theoretical issues but where I can I am beginning to try to do it and as I am saying I am still evolving it. So this is the first group that I've done it with.

As regards methodology I either give them ideas myself or as I set a task I tell them, 'try and think up an activity'. For instance, I like them to work in twos or threes rather than on their own because it gives them an opportunity to talk and you know it keeps them on their toes listening to each other. This year (1997-1998) I've started using a textbook. Actually I've set two textbooks to the specialists. One was based on methodology, so in that way I give the students more methodology because it is in the book. I set the chapter and I tell them to read it before the next lecture. For example, they read a chapter on shapes which gives them ideas on what they can do in the classroom. So one of the books is classroom based text. But the other one is more theoretical where it addresses these sort of issues, the role of language, philosophies of learning, psychology of learning maths, gender issues, these sort of things. So that I can cover more because it saves me lecture time, I give them the chapter to read and they come with some of the theoretical background ready. I am trying to cover theory in that way and since this is the first year that I am trying to give so much importance to theory this is the first year that they've had a textbook. As regards the knowledge of the subject I try to do it during the lectures. I give them ideas and explain things myself, for instance, how formulae are derived and that sort of thing. But also this year the textbook is helping me because if they do their work and read what

they are supposed to be reading they get to understand the subject more. I am hoping that by using the textbooks I will be able to do more with them because it saves me lecture time. For instance, with this particular group I am managing to plan a lot of students' interaction and discussion because they are doing a lot of the reading before they come, hopefully!

Q : You first mentioned, in the first question that the students' preconceived ideas about Maths help to determine their attitudes and their skills...

A : I am hoping that, through the courses in an indirect way, if somehow I get them to understand the subject better, get them to read about it, to see it in a broader sense, for instance gender issues, they tend to enjoy that, by getting them to see the subject, to understand it better and to see it in a broader way, I'm hoping to get them to enjoy the subject more. I hope that their attitudes would develop through the whole unit. I hope that as we go along their attitudes will change. Now, as such, I have no way of gauging whether it is actually changing or not but I always felt that one of the reasons students don't really like the subject is that they don't really understand it. I hope, that perhaps later on I should try and find a way to gauge whether it's working or not. By appreciating and understanding the subject a bit more they feel better about it and go to the classroom better prepared. That is what I hope. So on attitude, I imagine something that will change over...

P : A period of time.

A : Over a period of time.

Q : By means of a lecture?

A : No, I cannot hope to say, 'right, I am going to talk about attitude. Today we are going to try to develop attitude.' I don't think it can work that way. I think it can only develop over a period of time... Maybe, in time, I can try to gauge the attitude as it goes along. So, I've talked about the textbook, the lecture time...

P : The discussions.

A : I'm trying to do a lot of those especially with the Primary specialists and eventually if the specialists get more time the more I can do. I think that is very important because with first year students, we see all two hundred at one go. I try mostly with first year students. I don't do much theory. What I do is mainly content and methodology. But, obviously, we are losing a lot of these students because they opt for Secondary and I hope that eventually we give more time to the Primary specialists and also we can continue to evolve it according to the time we have. There are other means...First of all, by assignments. In my case I always give different assignments, always. I've never given the same subject twice. The reasons are twofold. First of all, I come up with new ideas and I say, 'well, that might be interesting - let me try it.' Another reason is perhaps a practical reason. I am afraid of students passing on assignments to each other. If I set exactly the same assignments there might be sharing of assignments across the years, those who are in third year passing on to friends in the second year. So, obviously, there is always something I am focusing on but I cannot generalise and say, 'in assignments, I try to focus on such and such' because I'm always focusing on different things. Now to give an example. In the first year I tend to focus on methodology. I give them lesson plans, things like that. Now, this year, the third year, the focus was on methodology. It was something completely different. I'm giving them two assignments. The first one is to re-write a chapter in a book. Now, that involves sequencing and seeing in between the lines of the text book. There my focus is content, how much do they know about the subject to be able to analyse

that chapter and say, 'look, to teach it we need to include these things.' In the second assignment, I am probably going to focus on gender issues, so I will be tackling a theoretical issue. I mean, obviously, the methodology does come in to the sequencing of the chapter. When you are designing the chapter you are automatically thinking of how you are going to do it in the classroom. So, there is a bit of an overlap there. Obviously I try not to give the subject on its own. The fact that I based it on a text book, implies methodology. Now the one on gender issues, for instance is something theoretical. My favourite assignment, I gave to your group (1994-1998) was...

P : ...the one on area.

A : ...no, the interview. That was my favourite. I gave them a 20 minute interview with a child and they had to analyse the child's ideas of that 20 minutes. It wasn't much but it was enough. There were quite a few students who appreciated this exercise although obviously it was something new for them. And it's my favourite because they actually had to put into practice the theoretical issue that was based on the idea of constructivism. It's a philosophy of learning Maths where I'm preaching to the students that they need to understand what children are understanding and I got them to do it as part of the assignment. So the assignment was based on a theoretical issue but theory applied in practice, not theory in the sense of a theoretical essay. They take the theory and they apply it. They actually do it in the classroom and a lot of them did appreciate that there is a lot to learn when you talk one to one to a child. I didn't set it again for the reasons I mentioned before. Students can communicate across the years but definitely I will be giving it again because I liked it. Obviously for me it was quite cumbersome to correct but I felt that it was...You know, when we say putting theory into practice I really felt that it was an assignment that managed to do it, to bridge that gap. Students often say theory is one thing and practice is another. Through that assignment they really put the two together and I'm hoping to set it again. Obviously if I give an assignment I'm focusing on one of these competencies, but I don't always focus on the same competency and with the third year specialists, I try to give them different ones. For instance, on their first year, they would have done methodology, the lesson plan and when they come to me, I try to focus on other things.

About teaching practice I feel that, unfortunately, here I have the least control. Ideally we use the teaching practice more to develop competencies. When I go to watch a student give a Maths lesson, obviously it is the best place to develop competencies because you are really correcting what you're actually seeing and students would talk about something that they've actually done instead of a hypothetical lesson. Lesson plans tend to be a bit hypothetical. But I don't always watch a Maths lesson. I might watch an English lesson or a Social Studies, so when I watch a Maths lesson it's a perfect situation. It's ideal to develop competencies but it depends a bit on luck. It depends on what I happen...

P : On the time-table.

A : And I don't really like always watching Maths lessons because since I'm a lecturer in Primary Methodology I cannot afford to focus only on my subject. So it doesn't pay me even professionally. I like to go and watch somebody doing English, Social Studies, because that helps me as well to develop professionally, to see the teacher doing other things and when I have queries I ask my colleagues about Social Studies, about English. As a primary lecturer I cannot really afford only to watch a Maths lesson. I could look at the time-tables. I could make it a point always to watch a Maths lesson but...

P : and it's not fair for the student.

A : Exactly...Sometimes students prefer to do something else in front of me. Anyway, to conclude on this, when it's a Maths lesson it's a perfect situation to develop competency but it's not always possible.

There is an option as well on giving assignments during teaching practice. I don't do it very much I must admit. We do it with PGCE. We ask them to give a lesson and then they evaluate it. I am not very confident about this. I have my doubts because what happens is that I would not be there to watch them so I sometimes wonder if at the end of the day the lesson plan is changed after the lesson, the evaluation isn't really honest...I've had a case last year of a student who got an 'A' in her assignment with me. It was excellent on paper. When I chatted with her after she got the 'A' she told me that in practice it did not work that well.

P : But the evaluation didn't show that?

A : It did, but I think had I actually watched it, I probably wouldn't have been as happy as having read it on paper. So sometimes, I am not sure about how reliable it is. Perhaps I have not experimented a lot with it. I think on teaching practice I tend to leave students to their own devices. I prefer to have teaching practice as teaching practice and then the assignments as something else. Another reason is sometimes students feel that they have a lot to do on teaching practice and it overwhelms them to have assignments as part of teaching practice, so, you know, there is more than one reason.

Q : You've mentioned what should be done to develop these competencies fully - is there anything else you would like to say about the subject?

A : I am doing what I can, let us put it this way, and if we need to do more probably what I'm doing is I'm self-evaluating. The course is still evolving. I feel I'm still developing it. So, obviously, when I evaluate what I did in other courses if I change it, obviously, it means that I prefer to do something else. If I have more time with the students the competencies would be developed better if eventually we get a situation where students choose their Primary option from year one. We will have more time and the students will be more motivated for the Primary sector.

Interview with Dr. C. Mifsud (English)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach English effectively in a Primary school?

A : I think, talking about teaching English at Primary level, teaching English to young learners in Malta, one has to bear in mind that we have a bilingual situation, that we have Maltese as the mother tongue and English as a second or foreign language. So we have to bear in mind that there is a distinction too in our schools between children who come from English dominant backgrounds and children who come from English non-dominant backgrounds. So that is important, because I think...One thing you mentioned there is attitude and I think that is very important, the kind of attitudes that our intending teachers have when it comes to teaching English at Primary level.

First of all, in terms of their own feelings about their own competence...

P : In the language itself.

A : That is right...In expressing themselves in English and how confident they feel about expressing themselves in English. So I feel that is one of the actual competencies that we should work on. We, as a Faculty, are already operating a mechanism by means of which we hope we're giving our students, especially first and second year students, opportunities to brush up their English. This we do through what we're calling remedial English and these are classes which are conducted by staff from the Institute of Linguistics. They have 2 courses. One, I understand, deals with expressing oneself in English, especially dealing with presenting material to a class in English and the other one is more specifically concerned with English for academic purposes, dealing specifically with literacy skills, reading and writing skills at University level, of course, when it comes to writing up an essay or an assignment. So our students are, one would like to believe, getting help with that, all be it quite limited. Hopefully that should in turn help them to gain more confidence when it comes to standing in front of a classroom and actually teaching English directly and, or, using English across the curriculum even in other subjects...

P : In Science.

A : That is right. Most other subjects are actually conveyed in English especially in the later Primary years. You have a situation in some private schools, both private, independent and church schools, where the medium of instruction is English but even in state schools, even through the early literacy programme we are promoting the use of English throughout the curriculum and some schools, for example, have started the 'English' day and they're bringing in more books, readers in English.

So definitely in terms of attitudes, I think it is very important for the intending teacher to feel self-confident. We, on the course, definitely within the Teaching English to Young Learners Component, try to promote that as much as possible and this we do through mainly having task-based and activity-based situations where our students are given opportunities to present in English, all be it quite brief, since one of the problems we face is that we have large numbers. I think that's a consideration.

In terms of a knowledge base, yes, I feel that our students as intending teachers, language teachers, be it Maltese or English should have a solid knowledge base of the language, in our case both Maltese and English. So when it comes to syntax, when it comes to semantics, when it comes to phonology, I think they should have a good grounding, a very good base in linguistics, both pure and applied linguistics. So that is very important. One would like to think that people who come on the P.G.C.E.,

since they've been through a first degree, say in English or Maltese, but we are talking specifically about English here, should have obtained that grounding, that base mainly from their first degree. But it is not always the case.

P : As for the B.Ed's?

A : As for the B.Ed's it's intended to be very much built into the course throughout the duration of the course, throughout the 4 years.

P : So they are teaching content as well?

A : Who is teaching content?

P : Those who are giving units on Teaching English...

A : The students should be actually covering the same or most of the knowledge base as the B.A honours English students are actually covering, although with limitations, since they have to put in much more in terms of methodology and in terms of Foundations in Education, for example, philosophy, psychology and sociology. But I would like to think that they are actually...One needs to explain the situation with the course format, that the first 2 years are common for all students be they Primary or Secondary track students.

So those people who actually go on to pursue their Primary track in their 3rd year actually switch to Primary. Those who want to continue with the Secondary track will continue with Secondary in their 3rd year and then 4th year. I am not happy...but you want to talk specifically about English Primary...

P : Yes.

A : That is right...One needs to bear in mind and I think I can say this because this is official now, that there are plans to have completely a B.Ed (Hons.) Primary as opposed to B.Ed (Hons.) Secondary, so that will give increased opportunities.

P : More time.

A : That is right, for in this case English language teaching component to young learners to be fleshed out better and to be more fully developed. So I think the main constraint right now is that we have a limited number of units but even more because of the large number of students that we have in each year group. We find that we either have to conduct mass meetings with 280 students, first years for example, or we split them up in groups. But these are not even small groups...large groups of 60. That again logistically to manage, is quite awkward, quite cumbersome. A problem we had this year was very much concerning the Mid-Week project which is a very good thing, but normally our students when we go through our Teaching English to Young Learners course would have been asked to actually field test the skills that have been demonstrated to them during the session when they go to schools on Wednesday. How it turned up this year because only half of the students went on school experience in the first semester, the other half went in the other semester, because we did not have enough advanced notice of this so we couldn't rearrange the time-table. We weren't in a position to field test the skills which were being imparted to them during the sessions when they went out to the schools.

Q : When you are talking about skills...What are these skills?

A : O.K...Like I said you need to think in terms of language skills both oracy, listening and speaking skills and literacy skills, the reading and writing skills. So one would hope that our students have a strong basis of these skills. But then of course, one needs to think in terms of English language teaching methodology skills. I mean we talk very much of communicative skills in terms of communicative language teaching and there is a range of skills that one can think of in terms of presenting material. For example, organising work in the classroom, be that individual work, be that pair work or group work and then allowing opportunities for reporting back. But again having the capacity to use the students themselves as resources and to elicit from the students and to ensure that the situation in the classroom, the atmosphere in the classroom is one which allows for opportunities on the part of the children to express themselves. I think that is a very important skill especially at Primary level. O.K you have all the other skills in terms of storytelling techniques, in terms of being a somewhat of a good actor in the classroom, engaging their interest, being creative...I think this links back to what I was saying earlier on in terms of our own students' confidence when it comes to using English that we tend to underestimate our pupils' ability in the Primary classrooms to use English. I've been in situations myself where I've been told that these students don't, cannot use English at all, don't know how even to start thinking about how to use English. But then I could see that if one creates the right atmosphere you can bring out a lot. Even the student teachers who didn't really have much faith eventually came to appreciate that this is achievable, this can be done.

P : It depends a lot on the methodology you use...

A : That is right. You talk about competencies...You are asking me about competencies, skills for the teaching of English to young learners. I mean, this doesn't stand alone, that is why as a B.Ed course especially and to some extent the P.G.C.E, but even more the B.Ed course, there is a lot of emphasis on child Psychology, Sociology of Education. What is the social world of the Primary school child like? I think that is very important, especially the psychology to understand what kind of levels of development, what kinds of stages of development a child goes through - in particular a child in the Maltese context, in the Maltese situation.

My main message is that I'd rather have teachers who are topped up with linguistics rather than have linguists who are topped up with a little bit of pedagogy. I think you are on safer ground, thinking in terms of teachers, people who are actually working in the classrooms, who come from the classrooms who need to upgrade their skills. I think it is much more difficult to make linguists become good Primary school teachers. I think the point of departure should be the classroom, the school situation, not just expertise in the English language. I think that is very important but not simply that.

Q : What should be done in your opinion to develop such competencies fully?

A : Some years ago, I had told the previous rector that rather than more lecture rooms we need more demonstration areas, more workshop areas because I feel, O.K. maybe in some other subjects you can give lectures to 250-300 students, but especially when you are trying to impart skills it's important that you have smaller groups and that you are doing things rather than just having student teachers taking down notes. Preferably we should do more of this in the classroom situation. One should be realistic about the kind of space we have available on Campus here, so I cannot see to what extent it could be possible to have demonstration areas, simulated classroom areas. So I think this should definitely strengthen the partnership between schools and the Faculty.

It is very important that the Faculty not just deals with the large numbers, not just takes remedial action to actually overcome the problems of large numbers of students but I think there should be a

pedagogical basis for this. There are pedagogical reasons why it is important for our professional development training that we strengthen the partnership with schools, to have more of the actual teacher education component shifted on to the schools. This would involve the Faculty with an opportunity to act as an agent of change even in schools because indirectly by working, collaborating closely with teachers, with heads, assistant heads, other members of staff from the schools in the process of teacher education would allow us the opportunity to exert influence on the schools, especially in terms of methodology. I just want to mention that even the Faculty, with its journal *Education 2000*, we are trying to help teachers in schools, as part of their ongoing professional development, to develop these competencies that we are talking about by presenting to them brief accessible articles about various recent developments in education especially dealing with methodology. That's about it.

Interview with Ms. T. Muscat (Maltese)

Q : X'kompetenzi ghandu jkollu għalliem biex jgħalliem il-Malti b'mod effettiv fi skola primarja?

A : Inhoss, bħala lecturer li qed inhejji lill-istudenti, li l-ewwel haġa jridu jkunu ppreparati fis-sugġett. Fis-sugġett għandi nifhem li kemm jista' jkun ikunu anki updated mal-pedagoġija, kemm mat-tagħlim li qed jiġri barra, ahna fil-kas ta' Malta, u fil-kas tiegħi fit-tagħlim tal-Malti nhoss li mingħajr ma rridu, rridu nirreferu ftit għall-lingwa Ingliża. Wara kollox l-Ingliż huwa mgħalliem fil-primarja u ovvjament ir-riċerka hija hafna aktar estensiva. Mela għalkemm ma nistgħux nagħmlu doppjaġġ - l-istess - imma xi ftit jew wisq inhoss li l-għalliema studenti li qedin jithejjew pjuttost iridu jixorbu mir-riċerka li ssir barra. Għalhekk inhoss li apparti li jkunu kompetenti fil-lingwa Maltija jiġifieri fl-ortografija per eżempju, jkolli ngħid li anki waqt Teaching Practice nosserva żbalji bażiċi. Mela jridu jkunu kompetenti fil-lingwa, fl-espressjoni, fl-idjoma tal-lingwa miktuba u mitkellma. Imma nhoss ukoll li għandhom jagħmlu wkoll din ir-riċerka jew inkella jzommu lilhom infushom 'up to date' ma' kif tiġi mgħallma l-lingwa. Qed nitkellem fuq il-kampijiet ta' oracy u literacy. Inhoss ukoll, xi haġa marbuta ma' l-għarfien, l-I.T. L-I.T kull ma jmur qed issir lingwa ġdida. Barra li hija lingwa teknologika hija wkoll medium ta' kif tgħalliem jew twassal l-informazzjoni lill-istudent u nhoss li forsi f'dan il-kamp qedin ftit lura. Allura nemmen li l-istudenti għandhom ikunu mħarrġa jew għall-inqas jieħdu nteress u jinvolvu ruħhom kif jistgħu jintegraw C.D's, per eżempju, ta' sugġetti oħra għat-tgħallim tal-Malti.

P : F'liema sens?

A : Fis-sens li jkolli ngħid hawn fenomenu li jinhass li l-għalliema qed iżommu lura mil-I.T fis-sens ġenerali. Jkolli ngħid li l-istudenti jzommu lura wisq aktar, anki waqt Teaching Practice. Allura, din is-sena ppruvajt esperiment billi assignment tal-Malti nintegrah mhux ma' CD rom li nhadment lokali iżda ma' CD roms ta' materjal ieħor li qiegħed parti mis-sillabu...

P : Ma nafx ta, biex inkun aktar ċara, xi CD bħal Kid Pix?

A : Għax ahna l-Malti jibqa' dejjem limitat fis-sens ta' prodotti. Għandna problemi kbar fuq il-kotba, fuq is-CD's.

P : Qatt ma hsibt li l-Kid Pix tista' tużaha għall-Malti wkoll

!

A : Iva. Jkolli nenfażizza din il-haġa, jiġifieri li t-teacher Malti li qed ihejji ruħu biex jgħalliem fil-Primarja, bħala lingwa mportanti...wahda miż-żewġ lingwi għandek il-Malti u l-Ingliż - f'hafna każijiet il-Malti huwa 'the language of instruction'. Issa nhoss jiena li fin-'knowledge' meta teacher qed jithejja biex jgħalliem il-Malti jrid jagħraf, u din nistgħu norbtuha anki ma' skills biex isir aktar 'a resourceful person', jisfrutta l-Malti, jisfrutta materjal li qiegħed f'idejna, li qiegħed madwarna fl-iskola, fil-klassi pprovduta mid-dipartiment. Jekk niġu f'dan qed insemmu l-I.T. għax nafu li huwa fenomenu riċenti u ser naqilbu s-seklu...Wasal iż-żmien li nkunu dhalna ftit fid-dinja elettronika. Inhoss illi hemm rabta mas-sugġett u fl-istess hin anki ma' skill. L-istudent għalliem fl-ahhar jaf jisfrutta r-riżorsi li għandu biex hu jgħalliem il-Malti b'mod interessanti irid fost l-iskills il-kbar u mportanti...Xi haġa li nara anki fit-Teaching Practice, thejjiha l-istudent għandu. Tarah il-file ikollu Schemes Of Work interessanti, il-lesson plans hemm ikunu, imma xi haġa li

nsibu nieqsa hafna hija l-originalita. Ghal xi raguni jiena nemmen li wahda mill-iskills importanti ta' kif tghallem, u jiena nerga' nsemmi l-Malti u speċjalment bil-limitazzjonijiet tal-kotba u r-rizorsi li ghandna, trid tkun oriġinali, trid tagħraf tuża materjal barrani biex timmotiva lit-tfal. Trid tkun bniedem oriġinali, jkollok hafna idejat. Din nemmen fiha hafna u fuq kollox nemmen ukoll li tistraq l-idejat biex aħna, partikolarment tal-Malti, nimmotivaw lill-istudenti għax hafna drabi jinholqu problemi ta' dixxiplina fil-klassi propju għax m'humiex motivati t-tfal. Ikollu ngħid b'dispijaċir meta jsir il-mument għall-lezzjoni tal-qari, l-istudenti jgħidli hafna l-interess. L-għalliema trid tagħraf tohloq materjal interessanti biex bil-motivazzjoni u bis-saħħa ta' hekk tohloq id-dixxiplina. Issa nemmen li din hija 'skill' importanti wkoll. L-għalliema jrid ikollha d-dixxiplina għaliex once li ttitlef il-kontroll inti prattikament tliet. Tliet il-konċentrazzjoni, titlef xi haġa, li nixtieq insemmi wkoll bħala skill importanti, t-time management, l-allokazzjoni ta' hin mhux biss kemm il-lezzjoni ser iddum imma li inti l-lezzjoni tiegħek ser ikollha firxa, xi haġa wkoll li timmotiva, li tilhaq l-għanijiet tas-suġġett.

Tkellimt fuq knowledge tas-suġġett, fuq oracy u literacy. Jiena nemmen illi din il-kompartimentalizzazzjoni, 'illum nagħmel lezzjoni esklussiva tal-qari', jiena ma tantx toghgobni personalment. Nippreferi, mingħajr ma nkunu over ambitious biex ngħidu hekk, jekk inkella ma nagħtux kas ta' l-istudenti l-lezzjoni, dejjem fuq il-Malti qed nitkellem, li l-lezzjoni jkollha firxa kemm jista' jkun tmiss it-taħdit u smigh, il-qari u l-kitba. Fl-aħħar mill-aħħar għandek l-'attitudes', l-attitudni ta' l-għalliema. Nemmen li l-ewwel u qabel kollox l-għalliema għandu jkollha komunikazzjoni ċara ma' l-istudenti. Bniedma li titkellem ċar. Litteralment id-diskors irid ikun ċar, il-vuċi rpużata. Kemm jista' jkun telimina l-għajjat għax l-għajjat fl-aħħar mill-aħħar ma jwassalx għal dixxiplina serja. Li tikkomunika, anke tkun self-confident, jiġifieri li jkollha preżenza fil-klassi. Dik nemmen biha hafna u li fuq kollox tagħti l-attenzjoni...Jiena nemmen hafna li l-għalliema ma tridx sempliċement tagħti kas il-hin. Għandi din il-lezzjoni quddiem, fil-kas tiegħi tal-Malti, għall-prodott fl-aħħar mill-aħħar irridhom jiktbu komponiment, jew irridhom jagħmlu dan it-taħriġ. Jiena nemmen li hemm proċess. Il-proċess trid tilhqu permezz tad-djalogu u l-komunikazzjoni. Nemmen ukoll li fil-klassi għandek 25 tifel u tifla, kollha mħallta u jekk huwa possibbli, naf li diffiċli tinqasam l-attenzjoni ma' kulhadd, imma nħoss li l-mentalita' trid tidhol fil-klassi li inti għandek bżonnijiet imħallta u għaliha trid taħdem. L-ippjanar, xi haġa li hija mportanti wkoll għaliex il-lista' ma tispicċa qatt, hux vera?

L-ippjanar marbut ma' l-iskills u mportanti tkun anki updated mal-curriculum. Naf li anki bħal issa qed issir reviżjoni, jiġifieri li l-għalliem jagħti ċertu mportanza għal dak li qed jiġri fl-arena lokali. It-tnejnija hija mportanti u nenfażizza li l-għalliema għandha tkun sensitiva hafna għall-bżonnijiet ta' l-istudenti u forsi hawnhekk hija x-xewqa tiegħi li nara aktar groupwork fil-klassijiet Maltin. Nara aktar il-groupwork effettiv imma...Mhux sempliċement qsamthom għal fuq mejda. Kieku possibli anki team teaching. Forsi fis-sitwazzjoni lokali għadna f'it il-bogħod minnha, imma nemmen li...

P : Nahseb li għax għad għandna dik l-attitudni, dik il-mentalita' li dik il-klassi tiegħi...tiegħi biss u ara min jersaq lejha.

A : Daqshekk hu...Kultant ha ngħiduha kif inhi, fiżikament ma tippermettix il-klassi. Imma jiena nahseb li, bi f'it kollaborazzjoni anki mal-kapijiet ta' l-iskola, jistgħu jsiru esperimenti żgħar fejn isir tahlit ta' xogħol. Hafna drabi, l-għalliema, per eżempju ta' l-istess sena, jaqsmu l-istrutturi ta' x'ser jagħmlu. Tkun haġa sabieha jekk, per eżempju, jsir development writing. L-istudenti ta' għalliema tpartathom ma' studenti ta' għalliema oħra biex tibda b'esperimenti żgħar. Imma l-groupwork, kif għidt qabel, narah effettiv.

Fl-aħħar u nagħlaq biha, nemmen ukoll li 'teaching style' m'hemmx wieħed uniku, pjuttost hemm hafna aktar. Fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar inti tiddakkar minn probabbli l-għalliema mudelli li kienu jgħallmuk, forsi nies li jgħidulek, 'din teacher tajba'...Min għadu jibda xi ftit jew wisq jimita. Imma fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar jiena nemmen fil-personalita' u nemmen li għalliem jitwieled pero' jrid thejjija professjonali qabel ma jmur fil-klassi. It-talent hemm qiegħed, bħal kantant...Jew ikollok vuċi tajba jew ma jkollokx vuċi tajba. Pero' hija professjoni li trid titkisser fiha. Nemmen li fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar il-personalita' ta' l-individwu tagħmlek it-teacher uniku li probabbli jibqgħu jiftakruk l-istudenti hajjithom kollha...Ma jinsewk qatt!

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed u dak tal-P.G.C.E kif inhu mqassam issa qed jghin biex jiġu żviluppanti dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : Sewwa. Kwazi, kwazi, jekk ma jimpurtax, norbotielek mat-tielet waħda għax indirettament marbutin flimkien. Mixjin l-hemmhekk. Fil-każ tal-metodoloġija nippruvaw u hadna l-inizzjattiva fejn lill-first years (1997-2001), hadna 'tutorials', peress li l-grupp huwa kbir u dik hija problema li tillimitak. Imma din is-sena għamilna esperiment u jkolli ngħid naħseb li, in the long run, innexxa. L-aħħar 4 lectures flok tajthom jiena ingenerali lill-grupp ta' 'l fuq minn 200 qassamnihom fi gruppi żgħar u ġew jghinuni assistent lecturers. B'hekk tkun tista' aktar tikkomunika. Allura jkolli ngħid li l-kompetenzi hawnhekk iffukajna aktar fuqhom. Per eżempju naf li anki marbut ma' l-assignment hdimna aktar fuq kreattività. Għalhekk daħal aktar knowledge kif nabbinaw l-attainment targets tal-curriculum għall-assignment. Ikolli ngħid li fil-B.Ed qed isir sforz tajjeb pero' t-Teaching Practice huwa żmien ftit twil. Tkun tixtieq tikkomunika aktar magħhom lill-istudenti biex ċertu kompetenzi tarhom, minn dawk li tajt l-eżempji tagħhom fl-ewwel mistoqsija. Hemm ċertu restrizzjonijiet. Forsi wasal iż-żmien li nies involuti direttament fil-metodoloġija, jinholoq xi tip ta' unit, jekk jista' nsejjahlu unit, u bħal ma għandna l-school experience mal-first years ikun in conjunction ma' dawn l-istudenti għax li jiġri huwa dan. Inti tagħmlu l-appuntament ma' l-istudenti tiegħek. Ovvjament dawn għandhom sas-sagħtejn u nofs imbagħad sakemm jiġu, ma jkunux jistgħu, imbagħad iridu jippreparaw. Mhux possibli. Trid il-ħsieb fuqha din imma hux il-ħsieb li meta jkollhom dak in-nofs ta' nhar off biex jippreparaw, ikun qisu tutorial group abbinat ma' lecturer...Per eżempju ma' 8 studenti jew l-10 studenti li nara jiena u dak in-nofs ta' nhar off li jkollhom huma jkollna hin allokat 'hands on' biex ikollna hin fejn nippreparaw handouts, jithejjew l-ischemes of work...Anki bejniethom stess jithejjew workshops żgħar. Din hija ideja primittiva imma nemmen li l-konsultazzjoni trid issir waqt it-Teaching Practice. Qabel it-Teaching Practice, fil-'units' li jkollok, l-għan aħħari hu meta l-istudent ikun fil-klassi. Għax iż-żwieġ hu bejn it-tejorija u l-prattika. Għaldaqstant il-konsultazzjoni, kif kont qed ngħid, f'din l-ideja primittiva trid issir propju waqt it-teaching practice biex id-diffikultajiet joħorġu rejalistiċi. Inveċi ta' din, xi haġa li ppruvajt nagħmel anka jiena b'inizzjattiva, pero mhiex faċli li l-units, speċjalment fil-każ tiegħi fejn tidhol l-metodoloġija, jkun hemm ammont ta' siegħat fejn issir il-prattika u l-istudenti jmorru fil-klassijiet...Issa, jiena ppruvajtha u nista' nitkellem mill-esperjenza. Hemm diffikultajiet kbar. Għandek id-distanzi sakemm l-istudenti jaslu. Il-problema hi li hawn hafna studenti u li dawn jieħdu hinijiet twal...Bħal meta jagħmlu t-Teaching Practice. Allura, meta ssemmi kap ta' skola, 'nista' nibgħat studenti jagħmlu observation...jew jagħmlu lezzjoni?' Jieħdu qatgħa. Ma jkunux jistgħu. Hemm restrizzjonijiet kbar, pero', jiena nemmen li fil-każ tal-metodoloġija nixtieq nara, u jien għamiltha b'inizzjattiva personali, li l-units tal-metodoloġija jkunu 'hands-on'. Jiġifieri dak li tippjana, dak li tiddiskuti, dak li tagħmel fuq il-karti trid tarah isir fil-klassi qisek għandek laboratorju u jkolli ngħid is-sistema kif inhi mhix daqshekk komda. Ikolli ngħid ukoll bil-ħsieb li forsi anki l-

kors jiġi aktar speċjalizzat sa minn l-ewwel sena jekk hux Primarja jew Sekondarja. Dik tgħin hafna għaliex ċertu studenti s-sejha hi hemm, ġo fihom, u l-interess ma jkunx qawwi...Kif għidna fil-bidu, wahda mill-attitudes ta' l-għalliema għandu jkun l-interess...Jekk ma jkollux l-interess, ma nahsibx li tiġi attwata.

Rigward il-P.G.C.E le...Jkolli ngħid li hemm problemi kbar fih mill-esperjenza tiegħi bħala għalliema tal-metodoloġija. Bħala studenti, kull ma rajthom erba' lezzjonijiet...F'erba' lezzjonijiet metodoloġija ma tistax...Hemm bżonn jiġi ristrutturati. Għalkemm iż-żmien huwa ntensiv hafna ma jistax ikun tikkremmja...Dawn huma affarijiet li jieħdu ż-żmien u jkollok suġġett bħall-Malti, fil-każ tiegħi, fejn l-istudenti jkunu qatgħu fit-tul mit-tgħalim tal-Malti, mis-suġġett li probabbli jkunu għamluh għal-'O' level u anki mill-livell tal-Primarja. Tinsieħ li l-P.G.C.E's m'għandhomx l-esperjenza ta' l-school experience, fejn inti għandek ċertu tematika li qed tibni fuq, per eżempju, effective teaching, classroom management, discipline, motivation, language assessment. Dawn, imsieken, isibu ruħhom qedin jgħumu u għalkemm qed intuhom toghma, b'xi mod il-kors irid jiġi ristrutturat sewwa. Kif għidlek f'erba' lezzjonijiet...

P : Ma tilhaq tagħmel xejn.

A : Ma tilhaq tagħmel xejn. Għaldaqstant, ser norbot it-tielet mistoqsija magħha. Verament qedin nesperimentaw u xi kultant toħroġ daqxejn dik il-kundanna li aħna qisna gunea-pigs...Nemmen li trid tevolvi għax dak li jkun tajjeb għal ċertu żmien ma jibqax tajjeb, jew taf li tista' tagħmlu aħjar...Per eżempju xi haġa li kellna ntrodotta ġdida din is-sena kienet il-Mid-Week project u jkolli ngħid li tkun sabieħa għax anki l-Web meta aħna ngħallmuhom bit-'topic teaching'. Hawnhekk forsi eventwalment jagħmlu sens suġġetti bħal Art and Craft, Drama, Music, Movement, Physical Education. Hemm aktar dik ir-rabta. Allura nħoss li affarijiet importanti ġodda qatt m'għandna nibzghu minnhom. Qatt ma tista' tkun ċerta li din is-sistema hija t-tajba. Trid tibqa' tesperimenta u nemmen li dik is-self initiative u l-fatt li inti tkun miftuġha għall-esperimentazzjoni, iva, għaliex le? Il-kelma hija eżatta. U anke evolviment...Trid tagħmilha nkella once li tistaġna tiffossilizza t-tagħlim. L-Education huwa suġġett dinamiku hafna mhux biss fis-suġġetti bħal Media Education, I.T, Environmental Education. Huma suġġetti li jitwieldu bi bżonnijiet...Jiena, per eżempju, t-teżi tiegħi għamiltha fuq 'Travel Education'. Għadna l-anqas noħolmuha fil-kurrikulum Malti...Forsi maż-żmien...

P : Għad ikun hemm lok għaliha...

A : Għad ikun hemm bżonn għaliha għax illum il-bniedem isiefer hafna u t-tfal tagħna qed ikunu esposti għall-kulturi anki permezz tat-television apparti s-subject matter, biex ngħidu hekk, li jġibha l-evolviment taż-żmien. Għandek ukoll il-pedagoġija, l-kotba ġodda, l-mod ta' tagħlim, il-video, it-television, ic-CD Roms. Jiġifieri l-mużika...Huwa stat ta' evolviment...It is in a state of flux. Jibqgħu dawn il-kompetenzi klassiċi li bniedem mingħajrhom ma huwiex postu fil-klassi imma b'xi mod jew ieħor qedin fit-triq ta' evolviment.

Interview with Fr. G. Deguara (Religion)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Religion or Moral Education effectively in a Primary school?

A : Stenna ftit, ha naghmluha ċara...

P : Hemm differenza bejn Religion u Moral Education.

A : Għalkemm huma very closely tied up together, ma jfissirx li huma l-istess. One could give a type of Moral Education even without believing in a Supreme being. Jiġifieri, there are people, humanists, who give a humanistic morality without referring to God. You could have moral teaching without the teaching of Religion. Pero' minn-naħa l-oħra, you cannot have the teaching of Religion without a related morality. Għaliex? Għax ma tistax timmagina li jkollok a supreme being, a God who intervenes in human life, in human history and then you wouldn't live up to that view. Jekk wiehed għandu a Religious Education ser ikollu wkoll a Moral Education corresponding to that vision. Pero' mhux bilfors. Jista' jkollok Moral education without referring to Religion.

P : Aħna niffukaw fuq ir-Religion l-aktar peress...

A : Niffukaw fuq it-tnejn. Għax għal min jemmen ma teżistix fil-prattika distinzjoni bejn reliġjożita' u moralita'. They are so knit together. Bħal meta tghid 'Int għax thobb lil ommok?' Biex thobb l-ommok irid ikollok vision ta' ommok. Lil ommok, b'xi mod tirrispettha, ma tajjariex jew ikollok bżonn xi haġa...pero' probabbilment, kieku kienet mara oħra, fejn hemm bżonn, tghinha wkoll. Imma l-fatt li hija ommok mhux ser toqgħod tghid, 'din ser ngħinha bħala ommi, imma mhux bħala mara ordinarja.' Ma tagħmilliex din id-distinzjoni. Għandek vision waħda.

Mela, biex ikollna competency, evidenti, l-ewwel haġa wiehed irid ikun kompetenti fil-'message', fil-'content'. Jekk trid nistgħu naqsmuhom fi tlieta kbar. Irid ikun kompetenti fil-content, jiġifieri, f'dak li ser jagħti. Irid ikun kompetenti f'min ser jirċievi, jiġifieri jrid ikollu psychology tat-tfal fil-kas tagħna. Ma nafx x'ser insejthom dawn, 'subject', imma mhux subject li tghallim.

P : Tiftakar, kont tghidilna 'faithfulness to Man', 'faithfulness to God'...

A : 'Faithfulness to Man' f'dan il-kas. Imbagħad għandek metodoloġija li tghaqqadhom flimkien. Issa, if you want to have a competent teacher of Religion, evidently, he must be versed in the Christian truth and way of life and moral teaching. Ma jistax ikollok teacher of Religion jekk ma jkunx jaf is-suġġett. Allura mportanti li jkollna teachers illi m'hemmx għalfejn ikunu xi teġoloġi kbar għax dan wara kollox fi Primary School qedin. Irid ikollhom a certain level ta' Religious knowledge in the content, ta' l-inqas jikkonvinċu lilhom infushom bħala kbar għax inkella jkun diffiċli li jikkellmu fuq haġa li l-anqas ikunu konvinti minnha. This practically means having certain familiarity and study of the Bible and it is by being Christians, we believe that Christ is to be found fully in the Catholic Church, in this Christian community. The Bible, God's word is as interpreted in His Church which we believe is the Catholic Church. Therefore one has to know God's words, be familiar with the Bible especially the New Testament as interpreted in His Church. This interpretation in the Church is what we technically call the Magisterium. 'Magister' huwa għallim,

'magisterium' is the teaching office of the Church. In practice this means the Bishops together with the Pope. Irid ikollok a good knowledge tal-messaġġ, tal-kelma t'Alla, li jiġi primarjament mill-Bibja, pero' as interpreted by the magisterium and as witnessed in the lives of Christians. Il-Christian message mhux xi haġa tejoretika, jew xi haġa ta' dutrina, imma kif fil-fatt insara li jgħixuh, xi frott taw. Jiġifieri, l-witness tal-Christians hija wkoll importanti biex wiehed ikun jista' jifhem eżatt x'inhu l-messaġġ nisrani u ma jibqax fl-ajru. Jiġifieri, meta tara l-San Gwann Bosco, per eżempju, tgħid imma allura tiddedika ruhek għaž-żgħažagh? Jekk tara l-Mother Tereza tgħid allura...jekk tara nies oħrajn li huma persuni ta' talb, tgħid 'imma x'sabu hawn?' Hemmhekk, the Spirit brings forth its fruit in concrete, in the lives of Christians. The lives of Christians, the history of the Church, in so far as it goes, Christian witnesses are also sources to get to know really what the Christian message is. Jiġifieri, dak biex ngħidu hekk hu l-messaġġ fih innifsu. What is particular to Religion now is that this message has to be seen as relevant to the lives of those who are accepting this teaching. If I am to present God, God has to be meaningful to you. Irridu naraw kif il-messaġġ ser ikun relevanti. Mela dak kien il-'content'. Issa, to fit it better...the subject, the one who is going to receive it, jiġifieri t-tfal f'dan il-każ. One has to know the message and one has to know the children whom he is teaching. Why? Because he has to relate the message to their experiences. Għalhekk Importanti hafna mhux biss kif qedin fis-suġġetti l-oħra...you cannot teach Latin to John if you do not know not only Latin, but also John. Għaliex? Għax trid tkun taf il-language tiegħu, trid tkun taf the way he thinks, il-proċess tal-memory etc., the way he learns etc. Hawnhekk għandna xi haġa aktar minn hekk. Mhux biss trid tikkomunika xi haġa, imma dik ix-xi haġa trid tgħaqqadha ma' l-experiences ta' min qed jisma' b'mod li that message seems to be relevant to them and they get to know li din il-haġa tiswielhom, hija mportanti għalihom. Għalhekk a good teacher mhux biss irid ikun jaf x'jgħid Gesu, irid ikun jaf xi jhossu t-tfal. In this area, what is particular to Religion, now only il-mental operations tal-memory etc., imma what I call existential experiences, that is, x'inhuma dawn l-experiences li huma marbutin ma' l-eżistenza tagħhom, ma' their way of life.

Il-content, għidna x'inhu. Is-subject hu dak li ser jirċievi. Irridu nkunu nafu l-esperjenzi tagħhom. Imbagħad irid ikollna metodoloġija tajba. X'jiġifieri? Probabbli din hija komuni mas-suġġetti l-oħra, imma l-akter haġa mportanti għalina hi li nitilqu fuq the inductive method. We use the inductive method. Fil-prattika din tfigħer normally in a lesson we begin from the children's experiences. Why? Because we are teaching a subject, a vision about something which very often is invisible. God is invisible. Jesus is invisible. Grace is invisible. So you cannot teach something which is invisible if not through something which is visible. Therefore it is from the visible to the invisible, from the particular to the general. Allura, f'dan il-każ, given that quite a good section of the Christian message is about elements that are unseen, we have to part from the child's experiences. Normally, fil-method ikollok din il-vision, jiġifieri, normalment wiehed jitlaq mill-experience imbagħad jew jgħin biex jifhem il-concept jew aktar importanti minn hekk jgħin biex dak li ser jgħid jara relevanti għal dak li diġa inti qed tagħraf. Per eżempju, jiena kultant inhossni mdejjaq... għaliex? Għax ma naffirx, irrid inpatti...Titlaq minn hemm biex imbagħad tgħid isma' Gesu jgħid li min jaħfer ikollu l-paċi tiegħu. Hija xi haġa li inti diġa b'xi mod għandek ideja tagħha. Normalment wiehed jitlaq minn ċertu experiences u hija metodoloġija wkoll li trid thares lejn a response. It must lead, or it tries to lead our children to action. Mhux bħal Mathematics per eżempju, tgħallimtha jew ma tgħallimtiex - jew xi haġa li gawdejtaha wahdek imma issa din trid tgħinek biex tidbel haġtek, trid tgħixha.

Issa tgħixha on two levels. L-ewwel level li jidher immedjat, jiġifieri mill-ewwel. You have to propose some concrete action. Do this, do not do that, go and visit your grandpa,

tiġġiliedx aktar jew aħfirlu jew agħti milli jkollok. It is an action pero' mbagħad more than that we have to see that these actions will sum up in a way...

P : Lead to an attitude.

A : Lead to an attitude. If you don't have an attitude you cannot really speak about having an Education. L-Education mhiex marbuta ma' action here imma ma' attitude, ma' personality in a way. Meta tghid personality qed tghid xi haġa li hija stabbli, għandek personalita' ta', mhux għamilt xi haġa imma bnejtha fik. Jiġifieri l-metodu biex ngħid hekk irid ikollu bħala objective din il-haġa, jrid jibni l-attitudes teacher tajjeb...It boils down to this. Ma nistgħux nikkuntentaw kif forsi jiġri minhabba l-eżamijiet li dawn kapaċi ntuhom question u dawn jirrisponduha perfett. B'xi mod qed nittradixxu r-Religious Education.

Bħala attitude tat-teacher importanti ħafna naħseb aktar minn suġġetti oħra. Tghidli mela kollox importanti tiegħek? Ir-raġunament huwa dan. Jekk jiena ser ngħallim il-Maths jew is-Science I can see it, 2 and 2 make 4. Once I understand it, nista' nagħmel kontra, 2 and 2 make 5, inti tibqa tarha 2 and 2 make 4. You see it, it is proved. It does not depend on me because here we are speaking about certainties. In a Religious faith, faith is something which is based on the credibility of others, speċjalment meta nkunu żgħar. Inti ċerti affarijiet emminthom għax qaluhomlok ommok u missierek. Jiġifieri, inti raġt li dawn huma denji ta' kredibilita' għax iħobbuk, għax ħadu ħsiebek eċċ, eċċ, allura dak li jgħidulek huma taċċettah avolja ma tippruvahx. Issa when speaking about values li ħafna drabi ma tistax tippruvhom għax it-tfal għad m'għandhomx dik il-kapaċita' mentali li jistgħu jiġġudikaw for themselves, aktar minn hekk anki l-content itself mhuwiex verifiable bħal m'hu verifiable is-Science, jew il-Maths jew il-Grammer. Allura ħafna drabi jkun jiddependi mill-konvinzjoni ta' min jgħallim. Jiġifieri inti twassal ħafna drabi veritajiet u attitudnijiet daqs kemm min jagħtihom ikun konvint minn dak li qed jgħid.

P : Fis-sens li t-tfal jiggejjaw jekk intix awtentika...

A : Mela ma jiggejjawx u probabbli jiggejjaw ħafna aktar milli naħsbu. Issa ma' dak irid jiġi li inti dak li tghid tista' tghidu b'mod biered, just biex tkun għidha, sempliciment, you are distributing knowledge. Għalik biha u mingħajrha xorta, ma tagħmilx importanza u jiena nista' nitkellem fuq xi haġa which I believe is really important. It-tfal jindunaw meta haġa hija mportanti. Jekk jien niġi naqa' u nqum mit-tennis u nibda nitkellem fuq it-tennis it-tfal jindunaw. Imma jekk it-tennis huwa ħajti biex ngħid hekk, tant jiena nitkellem b'entuzjażmu li t-tfal jgħidu, 'this is something very important'. It-transpires through the attitude. Għalhekk importanti ħafna l-conviction tal-persuna, f'dan il-kas tat-teacher. Imbagħad dak li hu l-eżempju mhux biss the way he teaches but the way he behaves. Li għidt s'issa jinfluwenza l-entuzjażmu li bih wiehed jgħallim pero' imbagħad anki l-mod ta' kif wiehed igib ruħu. Qed nitkellem fuq Primary hawnhekk. Jekk f'suġġetti oħra dan jieh għalih, jaqbad jgħajjat għal xejn, jew jaħtaf lil xi hadd jew ikun unjust kif imbagħad ser...

P : Ikun qed jaġixxi kontra l-messaġġ tiegħu...

A : Qed jitkellem kontra l-messaġġ tiegħu. Għalhekk huwa mportanti għax fil-Maths u f'suġġetti oħra mhux ser jikkuntraddixxuk, imma r- Religion huwa suġġett li għandu x'jaqsam ma' vision of life u ma' style of life. This is something which influences all types of behaviour. Anki meta wiehed ikun qed jagħmel il-P.E. Anki meta qed jgħallim l-Ingliż. Jiġifieri l-persuna tat-teacher f'dan il-każ hija mportanti għax hi teacher throughout the whole curriculum, the whole lesson, the whole day. Imbagħad għandi xi haġa oħra

nteressanti...Għidna certain values u certain relationships cannot be taught but in a way caught, jiġifieri, you see them. Per eżempju, din hija xi haġa aktar fuq il-parents milli fuq it-teachers. Billi teacher fil-Primary School is seen and perceived to be by the pupils as an extension of parents...Normally the influence of the parents would be continued in the teacher. Allura, f'dan il-każ, per eżempju, jekk qedin fil-first years, jew Year 1, 2 jew 3, where a genuine vision of God is presented, you perceive God through the attitudes of your parents. If your parents do love you and accept you unconditionally pero' f'istess hin they do keep a certain kind of discipline, ma jhallukx tagħmel li trid, ma jfissdukx... they keep that balance. Allura għandek probabbilta li jkollok a good vision of God, a genuine vision of God allura qed nitkellmu fuq relationship. The idea they form of God hafna drabi is formed through the relationships they develop with their parents and in this case also in a way with their teacher. Jekk qed nitkellmu fuq prayer, fuq values, hafna drabi more than being taught logically especially with children li m'għandekx hafna logika imma għandek hafna affection, hafna imitation, they want to live up to...They want to please the teacher, in a way, għax it-teacher hija idealized f'din l-eta'. So their example is of the greatest importance especially for moral teaching.

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed u tal-PGCE qed jghin biex jiżviluppa dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : Jekk ser nitkellmu fuq il-Primary...definitely no!

Q : Għaliex imma?

A : Għaliex? Could you do all this just in one credit?

P : Speċjalment meta qedin ngħidu li l-attitudes huma mportanti.

A : Qed ngħidu vision of God, vision of life, vision of yourself - the whole range of attitudes. How could you possibly do that? I think it is sufficient with the B.Ed (Hons.) who are specializing in Secondary...Dawk għandhom a minimum of 10 credits in methodology and another 20 credits in content. Issa dawk li qedin għal-Primary il-content hu zero! Jiġifieri mhux qed ngħid li ma jafu xejn, imma ma naghmlulhom xejn dawn. Jiġifieri, semplicement minn dak li seta' kellhom għal-'O' level, izda on a University level m'għandna xejn content u l-ftit li naghmlu, l-ftit method, ftit vision ta' kif inhu mqassam is-syllabu u l-prinċipji ġenerali li fuqu huwa mibni. Ma nafx kif taraha...Imma hawnhekk qed nitkellmu fuq tant affarijiet wesghin, kbar, għax dan mhux semplicement għandek minn hawn sa hawn. Qabel kienu mas-second year ma tgħażilx Primary...issa x'għamlu? Qabel konna naghmlu żewġ credits għal-kulhadd pero' ma kienx hemm li wara s-second year trid tagħzel il-Primary. Issa credit wieħed għal kulhadd u dawk li għażlu...

P : Reġa' kellhom credit wieħed...

A : Imma credit wieħed jibqa'! Oriġinarjament kien hemm tnejn.

Q : X'għandu jsir biex niżviluppaw dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : X'tahseb?...More time and more people.

Q : More people to teach?

A : U żgur! It is not impossible to get trained people li jieħdu din il-massa kbira għax hawn ħafna studenti. The more you develop lectures, the more you need people. Jekk jista' jkun in small groups fis-sens jekk għandek 240 taqsamhom f'30, diġa qed tgħid 8 lectures.

Q : Given li jkollok dawn is-small groups...

A : Small groups of 30! They are not small!

Q : Kieku jkollok ħin biżżejjed biex tiżviluppa l-unit kif tixtieq inti, kieku x'tagħmel biex tiżvilupphom dawn il-kompetenzi li hemm bżonn?

A : We develop those themes and we try to do some practical exercises with the students themselves. Ma qed nagħmlu xejn. Fiż-żewġ credits ma' daww li qed jagħmlu l-B.Ed, daww li huma activities, jiġifieri, the use of recordings, the use of role play, mime and drama in Religious Education, the use of posters, storytelling, dan iċ-ċertu tip ta' lesson plans, kif tibniha biċċa, biċċa...evaluation...ma nagħmlu xejn minn dan ma' tal-Primary. Ma jistax ikun, m'hemmx żmien biex tagħmlu. Fuq il-practical jew didactic support ma nagħmlu prattikament xejn, content prattikament xejn anqas. Li nagħmlu huwa f'tit general principles fuq il-method. Jiġifieri, preferably we provide the time and the people to do this. Mhux m'għandniex suġġetti x'nagħmlu jiġifieri. This is the set up.

Jekk m'għandekx iż-żmien xi trid tagħmel? L-ewwel tini ż-żmien u mbagħad naraw x'ser nagħmlu. That is the first requirement.

Dak li hu content m'għandhom prattikament xejn.

P : Li għamilna f'tit fuq l-Ewkaristija.

A : Imma l'anqas dik hemmhekk. Nipprova nagħmel xi haġa but with an eye on the method rather than...jiġifieri where to put the emphasis. Pero' inti jrid iġkollok vision aktar kbira on the Eucharist minn dik li ser tagħti lit-tfal. We could have expanded it much more from the content point of view.

Interview with Ms. Y. Vella (Social Studies)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Social Studies effectively in a Primary school? (knowledge/ skills and attitudes)

A : You definitely need skills and of course you need basic knowledge, basic information - giving correct facts is taken for granted when you are teaching Social Studies, but then the teacher has to go beyond that and be very good at skills. Well I suppose, you can teach Social Studies without the right attitude, but it helps to have the right attitude.

Q : Do you think the present initial teacher training course, both the B.Ed course and the PGCE, is catering for the development of such competencies? In what ways?

A : Of course...I am the one who is doing it...Obviously I think it is catering quite well. In what ways?...Lectures are focusing very much on the skills where Social Studies are concerned so hopefully they will let the whole objectives to develop such competencies. As regards knowledge, it is taken for granted that we do not give a knowledge base, as regards Social Studies, or nearly so, but we focus on skills of reference and of course future teachers will be asked to use those skills to find the knowledge. As to attitudes, I think, it is a bit too ambitious to imagine that we are forming the attitudes of the teacher. Hopefully they will make informed choices. As to their values, I have no intention of building other people's attitudes, but by giving information about the best ways to teach they can make informed choices and build their own attitudes.

Q : What should be done in your opinion to develop these competencies fully?

A : Maybe we can go back on two, where lecturing is concerned and where the assignment is concerned. Of course, things can always get better but I don't think they are too bad. The objectives are very clearly linked to one. During Teaching Practice it is difficult to follow what a student is doing because I do not get to see always the same students, the ones who did the unit and so on. So I do not know what they are doing, and of course, you can get a tutor who has different ideas and so on, which does make a difference. Although recently I've been tying assignments to Teaching Practice. That is what we've done with the second years, ie. year group 1996-2000. It worked quite well in fact.

They learn by paying attention during the lectures!

Q : Regarding the first question, are there any particular competencies which need to be developed due to our local situation here in Malta?

A : You must be very resourceful, as resources are not available. So you have to be the one who doesn't give up, you have to be very persistent. We have just done a CD Rom. There is no CD Rom, so you have to make one, fullstop! It is as simple as that. It sounds terrible and of course many people will tend to give up, but if you do that, you might as well not do anything.

Q : Do you think there is a need for a 'special' teacher to teach Social Studies? Do you think the teachers are competent enough to teach the subject effectively?

A : What teachers are you talking about?

P : Primary school teachers.

A : I have no doubt that Primary school teachers, with good coaching, I am sure they will be able to cope. As far as knowledge is concerned it is very basic. Skills...we do focus a lot on skills. Of course, it will be helpful if you have a specialized teacher in humanities who doesn't give the lessons herself but who helps to co-ordinate what is going on...but on their own they can still cope.

Interview with Ms. Suzan Gatt (Science)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Science effectively in a Primary School?

A : Ghandek l-iskills. Meta titkellem fuq skills qed titkellem fuq sense of observation. Meta tghallem Primary importanti li mhux biss x'content ser nagħmel imma x'activity irrid, mhux il-proċess tas-Science biss iżda magħha jidhlu ovvjament l-attitudes. Wieħed irid ikollu bażi ta' Science iżda l-aktar haġa mportanti hi li jkun kapaċi jfittex fil-kontenut li hemm fil-Primarja. Mhux neċessarjament għax taf il-kontenut tkun taf tghallem imma jekk you are doing a science question, you are going to look around at ways of asking that question, fis-sens, per eżempju, ma tistax tgħid, 'din hekk ser tiġi'. Tista' tiġi hekk, imma biex tkun aktar speċifiika trid tara which is the best design of, for example, wings for an aeroplane. Tista' tbiddel biex issib l-aħjar so that the question posed can be answered. Jiena ma nistax ngħid...ċertu questions it is very difficult to design an investigation. When scientists ask for an investigation, they ask very specific questions. if you cannot do a fair test it is useless.

Moreover through Science, which is an enjoyable subject, tista' tghallem hafna affarijiet oħra indirettament. Through a Science lesson hemm min jghallem l-Ingliż, il-Maths...Jekk inti ser tagħmel il-measurements tal-heights tat-tfal tista' tipplottja graph. Dak huwa Maths imma Science ukoll.

Looking at competencies, a teacher should be aware of methodological issues. I can name it, it is called constructivism. Pero' mill-esperjenza tiegħi li qed nara, hafna nies fis-Science, l-ewwel jgħidu l-affarijiet u mbagħad jagħmlu l-esperiment. Importanti li t-fal iġġiegħlhom jaħsbu fuq dak li qedin jagħmlu. Jekk tgħidilhom hemm probabbilta' kbira li hafna minnhom jorqdu. L-anqas biss tkun processed, allura to get them thinking, importanti li ttiehom activity jew experiments li mhux bilfors experiments in the actual scientific way - tista' ttiehom erba' stampi inti, but you're getting them thinking. L-affarijiet thallihom jaslu għalihom huma. It-teacher ir-role tiegħu huwa b'mod differenti. It-teacher jikkreja ċerta ċirkostanza biex it-fal jitgħallmu fiha, and the teacher's role is that he or she helps the children construct their own knowledge. Inti taħseb li t-teacher hija l-main feature tal-klassi...Il-main focus of attention hija l-activity.

Biex teacher tkun kompetenti ovvjament irid ikollok management, creating and designing things in a way li t-fal jgħinhom jaħdmu fuqha. Bħala Science importanti li jkollok skills in Methodology pero' it does not exclude management because to teach Science irid ikollok hafna krejattività kif iġġib apparatus u tkun resourceful hafna.

Q : Do you think the present Initial Teacher Training course both the B.Ed course and the PGCE is catering for the development of such competencies? In what ways?.

Ha nibda minn ta' wara. Il-PGCE, m'hinix kuntenta. Kull ma nagħmel erba' siegħat and all I can do is introduce the issues. I insist that Science is part of the National Minimum Curriculum. First I have to convince them that they have to teach Science! Then I talk about the process content. Nagħmel enfażi hafna fuq il-proċess. Related to content, nagħtihom activity to get them thinking about misconceptions of problems li minn hemm immur fuq il-methodology. Fil-fatt inkun messejt biċċa content indirettament permezz ta' l-

exercise fuq il-misconceptions. Inkun għamilt l-iskills u l-attitudes f'daqqa u how to design lessons.

Il-B.Ed narahom definitely fis-2nd year. Din is-sena ma dhalix daqstant deep imma tajthom ċans fejn they do presentation tal-content, introduċejthom mal-misconceptions...Mal-4th years din is-sena għamilt credit wiehed biss, where we saw the difference in pedagogies, issues ta' lingwi u tajthom ċans jippruvaw investigation by means of an assignment. Fit-teaching practice, jiena part of an assignment, avolja mhux support ikun assignment, tajthom jagħmlu scheme of work of lesson plans. Inħoss li rrid nimponi s-Science lessons allura nħoss li almenu ara kemm kien hemm tfal li ħadu ftit lezzjonijiet tas-Science. I am sure they all enjoy it jiġifieri. Pero' mas-2nd years tajthom il-possibiltà'...Il-4th years tajthom to try out something special, a problem solving, during Teaching Practice. Waqt li mas-2nd years, imbagħad ergajt b'għatthom lura fil-klassi li kellhom waqt it-teaching practice and they videoed a Science lesson. Hadmu fi groups. Kellhom ċans jiddiskutuhom qabel. Issa se narahom. Ma xi gruppi waqt it-tutorials iddiskutejnihom wara, waqt li ma' oħrajn għax ma kellniex ċans narawhom kollha I will see the video and I will give my comments. Nibqa' nitkellem fil-prattika naħseb iżjed jifhmuni.

Q : What should be done in your opinion to develop these competencies fully?

A : Ideally, kieku kelli l-flus kollha tad-dinja, jkolli laboratorju jew imqar parti minn kamra. Ma rridx laboratorju għax inkella jekk ma jkollokx iġibuha skuża 'm'għandniex laboratorju fil-Primary'. Imma all we need is a number of desks, imwejjed normali u nurik kif tista' tagħmel. Apparat, nista' ngħib affarijiet ta' kuljum - post fejn nista' nagħti xi practical work lill-istudenti. Nistieq inqas studenti mhux għax ma rridx inkun popolari imma għax għandi problemi ta' management. Jekk jien għandi 40 u rrid nagħmel practical irrid naqsamhom fi tnejn aħseb u ara 240. Per eżempju jekk irrid nohodkom fieldwork ma nixtax in one single day. Hemm kwistjoni ta' management. Idejalment sabiħ ukoll li rather li jmorru Teaching Practice 6 weeks, xorta jkunu tied fi skola jew anki iżjed minn skola waħda biex inti forsi mhux dejjem tiehu l-istess tip ta' esperjenza għax avolja within a school you can have Year 1, Year 6. But in different schools you may have different problems, different resources...Allura naħseb jiena għall-istudent teacher importanti li jkollu esperjenza ta' affarijiet differenti. Jkun jista' jmur u jipprova ċertu affarijiet. I mean jipprova - mhux it-tfal il-guinea pigs, but what I believe is li meta tisma' fuq xi haġa u tgħid ma teżistix din, than you try it out and you see how much it works. It will be much more efficient. It will also help the attitude. The student says, 'so what we speak about is true'.

I think we are still disjointed between theory and practice, peress li jew tmorru practice biss jew qedin hawnhekk theory biss. Jien jekk ser intik xi haġa għandi sitt ġimghat ma narak xejn. Kieku intom ikollkom ċans li once a week tmorru x'imkien, per eżempju, ngħidilkom mela qabel il-ġimgha d-dieħla tmorru hemm, ippruvaw għamlu hekk and then we come back and discuss sort of 'x'kienet il-problema?', 'X'hadem?', 'X'ma ħadimx?'. Ha mmur nara wiehed minnhom and I can talk about my own experience. What is happening is that since we are located in different places we are making a distinction between the two. Qisna aħna qed nitkellmu fuq haġa u l-iskola qed jiġri xi haġa oħra, meta fil-verità we are talking about one and the same thing. Imma peress li huma jew 6 weeks 'l hawn jew 4 xhur 'l hemm speċi we are separated.

Meta jkollna xi haġa tal-Creative Arts, I can use it. All I need is a room really, għax imbagħad nimliha mbarazz. Nibda nittallab għall-affarijiet, naf kif jiena. I mean il-bottijiet

tal-plastik tista' taqtagħhom u tagħmilhom beakers and they will serve both biex it-teacher jagħmlu l-experiments and to show them that you do not need to use any special apparatus.

Interview with Ms. I. Gatt (Arts & Crafts and Drama)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Arts & Crafts and Drama effectively in a Primary school? (knowledge, skills and attitudes)

A : I will talk to you about Art as distinct from Drama but I see them very much linked together and I do link them in my courses. In fact because I believe that they make sense linked but also because of the lack of time we have here, you know, the way things stand at the moment, I give a course in creative arts to the first year students and that is a whole group of approximately 240 and only one course. So the course has to be Drama and Art. So what I do is I try and link them together because I think Drama is the Art 'par excellence', because it can link with it all the other arts. In drama production you can have music, you can have dance, you can have movement, you can have art, you can have craft and you can have design and technology as well because you are building props, sets...So I see them very much as linked and here we do move towards the interactive approach and because we do that, it makes sense, I think, to insert art and drama in all the other subjects.

Now in both subjects, art and drama, I think you should know the subject well. Now, what is the subject? That is the problem, like with Mathematics or with English, O.K., there is the subject and there are certain skills but the main thing that a Drama teacher should have is what all the other teachers should have, like for example, very good communication skills. But in Drama it comes out even more. A teacher should be able to articulate well, to pronounce well in whatever language she is working. To have good communication skills which are non-verbal as well, like physical skills and then there is communication skills in Art which are also very visual. Now it is important to integrate Art and Craft and Drama in all the other subjects as well as to make whole projects. I think a teacher should, in Drama, be very organized and plan very well but then she should be very flexible in her planning because otherwise, instead of opening up the children to new experiences, she will be channelling them too much and closing them in and I think in the Art subjects there is a lot of space for lateral thinking, for creative thinking maybe more than in the other subjects. I mean it should be also with the languages...you shouldn't expect one solution from things. Maybe in Mathematics, it is the only way where you should have just one solution. But in these subjects you shouldn't just have one solution. On the contrary what a Drama teacher should have and what an Art teacher should have is a lot of imagination to be able to see whatever the children tell her, whatever they feed her. She shouldn't say, 'that is not the thing you should do!' On the contrary. Even if the child makes a mistake, out of that mistake, she makes the child create something. In fact in my lectures I refer a lot to the creative error. You know, where there is a mistake you should not say, 'no, that is not the way you were meant to do it!' If a child is drawing something, when he uses the wrong colour, for example, you shouldn't say, 'no...a cat is not blue!' especially with very young children.

Q : When a child draws something bizarre sort of, a green face when he was supposed to draw a pink face...

A : Well, we normally draw a face as pink, but are faces really pink?

O.K. I was coming to this later on in fact. I think that the Drama teacher and the Art teacher have to have a very good background in psychology or at least be sensitive enough to realise that what the children are coming up with may hide fundamental problems which the children might have...but they might not!

Q : Is that the 'subject' behind Drama?

A : I think psychology should be a...every teacher should have a very good background of psychology but in Art and Drama it comes out even more. This is very important because you are working on the child as a whole. You are not working on a subject. You are working on the child, his personality, on his way of thinking...and when the children are expressing themselves certain problems might come out ; through their improvisations if you are doing drama, through their art work when you are doing art. Once I asked these children to draw themselves, very young children, year 2's and this boy came up with a picture of a child with eyes, a nose, but no mouth and then his hair was very curly like he just had an electric shock when his hair was spaghetti straight...now why did he draw the child without any mouth? Maybe you can ask the child, 'why did you draw a green face?' He may come up with a whole interpretation, you know, and he is using his imagination but he could come up with certain things which are problems within himself. For example, this boy is very silent and that is why he probably saw himself as someone without a mouth, without the faculty of speech. Why was his hair like that? Obviously, then there are certain things which you might...Oh, yes! A psychologist would be able to interpret it so if you think that there is a problem which comes out in his expression, visual expressions, in his improvisations, what you do is...you refer him to somebody who is specialized. You have to be with your eyes open all the time.

On the other hand, the children drawing using different colours...why not? Ask them, 'why did you do that?' if you don't think it is any psychological problem. If you look at the works of Chagall, for example, he is always drawing very colourfully, the wrong colours, in a way, because he lives in a fantastic world where people fly, you know. I think the subject would be, yes if you are teaching Art, you should know artists, you should know modern artists. You should then be able to use them in class with your children. Introduce your children to them. I find, for example, besides the traditional artists, most of the work that is done in schools most of the time is the same old thing, you know, where the children are not really getting any knowledge about art as such. I do not know... 'Colour this in', where there is no scope for the imagination where the picture is already given, stereotype pictures. I find my students when I ask them 'draw just anything', for example, last year I was doing an example in Batik...first I explained how Batik works, then I said, 'draw a design and you know...preferably not figurative, but which you could use for a Batik exercise', and most of them come up with Micky Mouse, with Andrew the Bear, very kitch designs which shows that our students who are 18 to 22 are already very closed in. They have not been exposed to any other artists of the time like in one of my credits which I am giving to the third years (1995-1999). I do give a very brief introduction to certain artists and then show them how to use them with children. There are schools where this works, you know. I was with a relative some time ago and she goes to this specific school, a private school where there is very valid work happening and she goes 'look, look at that work. It looks like Van Gogh's drawings.' She recognized the technique. Now she was only 9 but if you talk about it children pick up things and then you can make exercises on those. 'Let's try and do something a la Van Gogh' - it does not have to be a room, but yes, it could be a room, not necessary copying. I mean skills that children acquire through art are very indirect in a way. Observation, memory, not necessary copying but yes, that could be a skill which they learn as well through art. I fall back to saying that with these subjects you are working on the person as a whole. You are helping the child communicate effectively not just in a verbal way but also in a physical as well as a visual way. There is a body language which you talk about when you are doing Drama but also when you are doing Art. If you are drawing a man who is doing something you have to observe the way a body moves, to fight for example, the posture of people.

A very important thing in Art is the tactile factor. The fact that they are dealing with different materials and messing about is very important for children. Now teachers have to be very organized to do Art. In fact, a lot of teachers don't have any Art lesson because they are afraid of a mess and they

say, 'oh, we don't have the proper room.' The classroom is like a home. It should be lived in. If there is a bit of paint, it doesn't really matter, but yes it does matter if it is totally disorganized, if there is paint all over the place, books are being ruined because of the mess, because glue is stuck on all over the place, if they are getting their clothes too dirty. So you have to be prepared for it. During collage there are techniques which a teacher should know about. For example, if you are working in groups because there is a lot of space for group work and you put the tables together as you are doing collage, half the table would be for the messy stuff and half the table is where we are working. So on half the table there is a magazine which we use to paste things on because when you are pasting you get glue all over whatever is underneath...

These are little techniques which need a lot of planning when you are doing Art.

Now there is this idea of using I.T for everything and I'm a bit scared of computers. I come from a generation where I only started using computers when I was 23, 24, so I wasn't brought up with computer. I am very sceptical about children being on their own in front of a computer spending hours and hours, creating things on a computer. I think there is a space for I.T in Art yes but I don't think it should take the place of the messing about. The fact that children use their hands to manipulate different materials like clay for example, like papier mache...but yes you can do certain things on computer like, for example, copy certain techniques such as in Kid Pix. It does have space for the imagination, but some of the things don't. Like 'Colour me', for example which I don't like. Where you have a sentence and you have to imagine and then draw - you can use that idea even without the computer. This is one of the examples that creativity begets creativity. You can use music to inspire art work, you can use music to inspire movement, you can use art work to inspire movement and you can use art work to inspire writing....These things really work together if you are doing an art lesson and you're getting children to describe an art work. Let us take for example, 'Starry night' by Van Gogh, and you are getting the children to describe what they see. Is that an art lesson or is that an English lesson? You see? So it makes so much sense to mix them together.

Now we have the Mid-week project, which is very good for that. You set an afternoon in a week which we can devote entirely to Art and Drama but does that mean that we eliminate Art and Drama during the rest of the week? It doesn't make sense you know. Some teachers have a dilemma. Do I have enough time? Yes, they do take more time but then they are more effective. It is an experiential way of learning. A lot of people do not treat creativity as an intelligence, but it is intelligence. Maybe it is very different from the logical kind of intelligence but it is a kind of intelligence and in art for example you have the visual intelligence. You can train the brain into the spatial intelligence. The kinaesthetic in Drama, in P.E as well as the spatial intelligence and a lot of teachers are afraid of these because they feel they are not equipped.

P : They are not competent themselves.

A : But does an Art teacher need to know how to draw? Not necessarily. Does a Drama teacher have to be a very good actress? If she is it's better, but not necessarily. However I believe all teachers in a way are actors. And the better actor you are, the better animator you are, the better teacher you definitely make.

An important skill that a teacher should have has to deal with brain storming, how to use brainstorming. With brainstorming you can lead the children into new areas, into new ways of thinking. Brainstorming is a very good technique for creative thinking.

Then there are skills in manipulating the tools - which the children have to learn. But the teacher has to try them out, has to have a certain skill - yes, the teacher should start off by doing things she/he is more confident in, example, with media such as paints and then the tools such as fingers, brushes, the scissors...the children need to learn to manipulate them. Some children need to do that, but some teachers need to also know not just how to use the scissors but how to help the children use the scissors because most of the time when there is cutting to be done they end up doing it for them. Sometimes you go into a classroom and you see lovely things but the teacher had done the cutting, and you can tell and children at 9 are still not confident in using a pair of scissors. A master of mine, in l'Albero Azzurro, which is a programme for little children from 3 to 7, says that you should trust children even with a hammer, the right size of hammer, not a very heavy one but they should learn to manipulate a hammer. Well if you are doing Design and Technology, for example, they are there to learn the skill not just the possibilities of what could be done by the teacher. Obviously you try and use different media as much as possible, different kinds of paints, sawdust with flour to make different effects, crayons...and then you should go into the 3-dimensional art as well where you can use wire, recycled materials like bottles, boxes to make sculptures, papier mache', dough, cloth material as well and different tools.

I think a teacher even more in Drama and in Art should have a very good cultural baggage. She should be very well read in everything as much as possible because that is the only way in which she can see the possibilities with which the children can come up with...sometimes children have more knowledge than the teacher because they have a lot of knowledge available to them on television, on computers. I don't see the work of the teachers as giving information and knowledge but doing things with the information, firing up the children's imagination to connect things together. For example a proper school teacher should be in the kids' culture. She should see all the children's programmes and films, be 'in' the kids' culture so she can understand children better.

It also helps to have the knowledge to work on. There are schools where the children do not read at all but they watch a lot of television so you have to use that world of communication to bring them to reading, to bring them to express themselves. A lot of children watch television but they do not know how to read television if you know what I mean. If you are talking about advertising children might just believe that, yes, these do perform magic. The toys do these things like human beings. But they are not. Once they get the toys they realise that. But they have to read the hyper language of television. So if a teacher knows communication media language she will be able to communicate with the children better. I am using 'she' because we are in a bit of a hurry, and because most of the teachers in primary schools, unfortunately, or fortunately are females.

Even different cultures, to be able to use them, their arts like Indian, African culture and art and you can have whole projects linking history with art, with them drama, dance, the movements that these indigenous people do for example.

In Art there are certain basic skills which the teacher should have, not skills, knowledge. For example, how to be able to talk about rhythms in arts, to be able to talk about composition, textures, contrasts, colour. I have students and they are 18-19, you know, who do not know what the primary colours are, what the secondary colours are, what complimentary colours are. These are basic. I have learnt them and I remember them from school. If they are going to be teaching they have to definitely know these things, colour, tone, even perspective. Even primary school children should know about perspective. So a teacher should know how to teach perspective, depth for example. In Art, the use of colour, 'what does colour convey to you?'. 'What do symbols convey to you?'. They tend to generate feelings and then the teacher herself should know how to describe the feelings that artworks generate, that the children's art work generates and ask a lot of questions...I think questioning is a technique

which teachers should be really brilliant at to help the children express what they feel inside. Through art we help children express themselves verbally as well as in writing.

To switch to Drama now. As I said Drama is very multifaceted. You can integrate all the other subjects into it. It helps the art of imagination. The teacher should be very skilled at being very resourceful...in bringing stuff from home and making children bring stuff from home that could be potential props as well as making props. A broomstick can become a horse, you know, in improvisation. In most of our schools Drama is just the Christmas production, the Easter production. I try to train my students that that is not the idea of Drama. They are not the be all. It is very important to have dramatic play in the classroom, from the kindergarten up the way to 11. Even later on when you are working towards a production you try as much as possible to take the process into consideration and not to be a dictator. A teacher should not be a dictator-director in the classroom. You should not say, 'no, don't say it like this - say it like this...' Help the children come up with it themselves. Don't ask them to copy you but often to observe. Yes, observe from life. I mean the biggest lesson you can get for Drama is going on a bus to Valletta and observing the people on the bus...the drama teacher is out to observe what she can get. Pictures of people, make them your own, 'yes, I can be the burglar, I can be the poor person, I can be the person who is stealing because she is a claptomaniac', for example. Why? Go deep when you have an improvisation within the class. Ask the children to enter into a character, walk, talk like that character, think like that character. Then after you have seen them act like that character ask them, 'what is your name?', 'how old are you?' Go deep into it. And this all helps English, Maltese, as well as the person.

Very important skills for the teacher to have is voice techniques, you know, how to get the children to do them. Breathing correctly to use their voice correctly. If a teacher doesn't know what she is doing in a drama class she can ruin children's vocal chords, for example, she can ruin her own chords!

Very important to know how group dynamics work, to help cohesion within the groups. Drama and Art are just made for that, different functions of dramatic play. A lot of teachers do not realise what can come up in improvisations, in imitating adults, in role reversal. It is very important for children to become the adults, to become the one in control.

P : To empathise sort of?

A : To be able to empathise, but it is also very good to release tension, frustration. I mean if you go back to the Greek's theatre, they used it as a means of cleansing themselves. Politicians used Greek plays...there is a lot of making fun of the Gods or the politicians because people need that, otherwise they get all boiled up and either go crazy or there is a war. By going to the theatre to watch a comedy which makes fun of the people in parliament you cleanse yourself, it's called Catharsis.

As I said before, children release certain unacceptable impulses sometimes and the improvisations can make a child use rude words, pull out his tongue and in a way there it is acceptable because you are in a certain make believe world and they know it. It is within a certain make believe world. They will express pressing needs and certain things may come up. You can get to know your children so well...obviously you must not abuse that. For example I have had workshops with adults who were university students, when suddenly problems come up that their fathers used to beat them. Problems crop up during improvisations - like incest problems, for example, and if you have the slightest doubt, if you are a teacher, you should refer them to specialized people. These things normally do not come up in Maths, do not come up in English...they come up in Drama because you are working on a human being. Working on relationships in improvisations especially, reflects relationships and

experiences. You are building relationships and experiences. After a drama lesson you feel that the class is different...they know each other much better.

Q : Do you think the present initial teacher training course is catering for the development of such competencies?

A : As much as possible - Yes but time is far too short to do things in depth. Maybe with the restructuring of the course there will be more time to spend on Creative subjects.

Interview with Mr. Norman Borg (I.T)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach and use I.T effectively in a Primary school?

A : L-ewwel haġa, teaching I.T in the Primary...Nippreferi ma tghidx tghallem l-I.T imma tuża l-I.T biex titghallem suġġetti oħrajn, jiġifieri, ahna m'ahniex nużaw l-I.T...

P : Bħala resource?

A : Eżatt, m'ahniex nintroduċu l-I.T bħala 'subject in itself', imma bħala għodda li tghinna biex inkunu nistgħu nittrażmettu aħjar is-suġġetti l-oħrajn, l-aspetti kollha li hemm fil-kurikulum. Fil-fatt, ahna nishqu kemm jista' jkun fuq 'I.T across the curriculum'. Dik l-ewwel haġa li nixtieq niċċara.

X'tip ta' kompetenzi hemm bżonn li teacher ikollu? L-ewwel haġa naturalment, awareness ta' l-I.T u ta' l-impatt li l-kompjuters jagħmlu fuq it-tfal, fuq id-dinja ingenerali. Għax qed isir, aktar ma jgħaddi ż-żmien, aktar importanti tista' tghid fl-aspetti kollha tal-hajja. Jiġifieri, din hija haġa li t-tfal jekk mhux ser isibuha fil-klassi, imma malli joħorġu mill-klassi fl-ambjent aktar wiesgħa tas-soċjeta' ser isibuh l-I.T, l-użu tal-komputer. Mela, l-klassi trid b'xi mod jew ieħor tippreparhom għal dan. Jiġifieri, waħda mill-affarijiet, waħda mill-kompetenzi li t-teacher irid ikollu, naturalment, li jkun konxju ta' l-impatt li qed iħalli l-I.T fuq is-soċjeta'. Once li jassimilha dik il-haġa mbagħad ikun jista' jkun kapaċi jittrażmettiha anki lit-tfal.

P : Irid ikollu attitudni...

A : Eżatt, irid ikollu attitudni pożittiva lejn l-I.T u l-użu tiegħu. Ma jridx jibża' mill-apparat, ha ngħidu hekk. Din hija xi haġa li għadna nsibuha anki bħalissa fl-istudenti li jkollna fil-lectures. Hija haġa li tifimha...M'ahniex qed nippretendu li issa, sar popolari kemm sar popolari l-komputer, kulhadd ser ikun kunfidenti fih. Għad irid jiġi dak iż-żmien meta tghid kulhadd huwa kunfidenti fl-użu ta' l-I.T bħal meta tkun qed tuża 'everyday object' ieħor. Ahna nifhmu li bħal issa għad hemm min jista' jkun...speċjalment f' teachers. Jiġifieri billi qed ngħidu li b'xi mod jew ieħor l-environment tal-klassi jrid jirrifletti l-environment ta' barra u fl-environment ta' barra qed ikun hemm l-użu ta' l-I.T, mela jrid jidhol fil-klassi wkoll. Jiġifieri irid ikun hemm positive attitudes minn-naħa tat-teachers lejn l-I.T ingeneral, li jkun aware tal-basic knowledge ta' kif juża l-komputer, dik li hemm min isejhilha 'computer literacy'. Li inti tkun imdorri li tuża l-komputer bħal ma tuża affarijiet oħra komuni, dik ukoll. Mela ahna rridu naċċertaw irwiehna li sakemm nistgħu l-kors tal-B.Ed hawnhekk, l-istudenti dik irid ikollhom, b'xi mod jew ieħor. Forsi li, per eżempju, jkun mixhutin lejn dak it-tip t'affarijiet pero' rridu nishqu wkoll fuq min m'huwiex daqshekk kompetenti f'mod tekniku. Ha ngħidu hekk, ngħinuh biex jirrealizza l-valur tagħha, ta' dak il-bżonn li hemm biex jittrażmettiha lit-tfal u anki fl-istess hin għalihom stess bħala teachers.

P : Mela qed tghid 'computer literacy', f'liema tip ta' software u hardware...

A : Bażikament l-użu ta' l-'operating system' in itself, jiġifieri, per eżempju, ahna l-aktar li għandna popolari hi l-Windows '95. almenu jkun jafu jużaw dik sewwa...kif tillowdja u tissevja file. Issa mbagħad għandek il-programmi bażiċi li jkollok bżonn biex tikkomunika...Għandek il-word processor, spreadsheets u databases ukoll, għalkemm m'humix daqshekk importanti. Il-word processor biex tkun tista' tiffirma ittra, tkun tista'

taghmel essay. Qieghed jiswa wkoll għall-istudenti fix-xogħol tagħhom li jkunu qed jagħmlu hawnhekk stess u għall-istudju huwa mportanti hafna. Sakemm tidrah ser iddum xi ffit biex ikollok in-'knowhow' ta' kif tużah sew, pero' once li tużah issibu utli hafna, bzonnjuż...Kważi, kważi tispicča li tghid, 'ma nafx kif ser ngħaddi minghajru'.

Ikun qieghed jghinek ukoll biex tissistematizza ruhek ukoll. Il-mod tax-xogħol ta' kif qed tagħmlu trid bilfors tagħmlu b'ċertu ħsieb, anki biex tisseyvja l-affarijiet, kif tpogġihom fil-hardisk. Trid torganizza ruhek...Jghinek biex iżommok up to date. Anki meta tiġi biex toħroġ 'end product', dejjem ser joħroġ hafna aktar pulit, hafna aktar preżentabbli milli kieku qieghed tagħmlu mod ieħor. Dik hija mportanti. Jiġifieri waħda mill-affarijiet li nkunu qed nippretendu bħala kompetenzi għat-teacher eventwalment hija dik li aktar il-quddiem it-teachers kollha b'xi mod jew ieħor ser ikollhom kompetenzi fl-użu tal-kompjuter. Nista' ngħid anki minn teachers li huma kbar fl-eta'...jiġifieri l-kompjuter mhux xi haġa li sabuha fil-hajja tagħhom hekk u sempliċiment hađuha at their stride. Sabuh f'daqqa waħda, ġie mpost fuqhom...Pero' saru konfidenti hafna fih u hađuha bħala challenge. Irrejalizzaw il-potenzjal li hemm u mxew bih u qed joħroġu prodott interessanti hafna, sabiħ hafna fil-klassijiet kif nistgħu naraw.

Jghinek ukoll biex torganizza ruhek anki biex ma taħsieb in a linear way, sibtha mportanti hafna. Jiena rajtha li din hija haġa li għandu jidra jużaha t-teacher biex imbagħad ikun kapaċi jittrażmettiha anki lit-tfal. Ahna meta ngħidu, per eżempju, ser nitkellem fuq komponiment...tradizzjonalment ser titgħallem li għandek introduction, body u conclusion u għandek speċi l- bidu u għandek it-tmiem u ser tibda mill-bidu u trid tibqa' tasal għall-aħħar. Mhux neċessarjament, minhabba l-hafna features li għandu l-kompjuter, taħseb daqshekk linearly. Tista' taqbez ha ngħidu hekk. Tista' tibda mill-body, per eżempju, jew mill-conclusion u mbagħad tmur għal-introduction wara. Kieku tiġi biex tiktibha din fuq pitazz jew biċċa karta, trid tibda mill-bidu u tibqa' sejra sat-tmiem. Meta int għandek word processor tista' taqleb it-text...

P : Cut and paste...

A : Cut and paste...minn kollox. Il-linearity marret kompletament mar-riħ.

P : Jiġifieri, l-importanza tiġi aktar fil-ħsieb?

A : Eżatt. L-istruttura tiġi kważi, kważi waħda. Wara mbagħad int ikkonċentra aktar fuq l-idejat li għandek u tara li tiżvilupphom sew. Imbagħad, kif ser tiżvilupphom fil-karta ser jaħsibek il-word processor għaliha. Xorta hemm ammont ta' ħsieb minn-naħa tiegħek naturalment.

P : Tiġi haġa sekondarja.

A : Iva. Fl-istess ħin xorta qed joħroġlok professional output. Inti once li lestejt ix-xogħol ser toħroġu...Qabel dan ix-xogħol kont tagħmlu fuq rough paper, mhux qed ngħid li ma klenx lslr. Imbagħad trid tara li l-final version trid tibda mill-bidu u tispicča, that is it...Jekk wara ċertu żmien qed terġa' tarah u tghid nista' ndaħħal xi haġa...

P : Trid terġa' tibda mill-bidu.

A : Imma fuq il-kompjuter mhux hekk...Qed jagħtik ċertu faċilita' u nistgħu ngħinu lit-tfal ahna fiha din meta nkunu qedin fil-mod kreattiv tagħhom. Mhux neċessarjament iridu

jibdew mill-bidu jew in-nofs imma jistghu jeditjaw, jirrangaw. Fl-istess hin qedin ngħallmuhom lit-tfal jiċċekkjaw lilhom infushom. Mhux jiġifieri xi haġa saret mal-ewwel u la saret darba daqshekk, that is the final version u spiċċa. Ser ikun qed jgħinek ukoll fil-mod kritiku ta' kif thares lejn ix-xogħol tiegħek stess. Bil-kompjuter li għandu l-faċilita' li tista' thassar u tirrangja fuq dak li tkun għamilt hija hafna aktar faċli. Anki meta għandek 'just a drawing' ser tghid lit-tfal meta jpingu 'Tafasx bil-lapes ghax jekk thassar ser ikun ikrah.' Dawn l-affarijiet bil-mod il-mod once li tibda tuża l-kompjuter ser jispiċċaw. M'iniex qiegħed ngħid li l-practical, meta qed tuża jdek biex tpingi xi haġa fuq biċċa karta ser jispiċċa. Dak jibqa' wkoll, imma f'ċerti każi mhux ser ikun daqshekk importanti li jkun hemm dik il-linearity - li bilfors inti tibda mod u tispiċċa mod ieħor...Qed itina ftit aktar flexibility anki fil-mod ta' kif aħna qedin norganizzaw, naħsbu u nikkritikaw xogħol tagħna stess.

P : Allura, l-kompetenza tat-teacher għandha tkun li ġġiegħel lit-tfal jindunaw b'dawn l-affarijiet?

A : Eżatt, trid tkun fih. L-ewwel haġa jrid ikun kapaċi japprezza...dik trid tiġi biż-żmien...bil-prattika b'kemm hu jkun qiegħed juża l-kompjuter. Fil-fatt, ghax hemm ċertu affarijiet, ċertu potenzjal tal-kompjuter li ser titgħallmu mhux billi taqra fuqu jew taqra l-manuals imma ...

P : Bil-prattika.

A : Trid taħdem int fuqu u trid tiehu ż-żmien. Forsi ftit diffiċli fis-sens li mhux dejjem issib dak il-hin, mhux dejjem ser taffordja li jkollok hafna hin fuqu...'tilgħab' fuqu...Pero' dak it-tip ta' logħob huwa mportanti u jrid isir. Fil-fatt biex inti tidhol fl-atmosfera tiegħu, ha ngħidu hekk, u tagħmlu xi haġa tiegħek, xi haġa personali tiegħek, once li teacher ikollu dik fih...mhux ser isibha diffiċli biex ikun jista' jitttrażmettiha lit-tfal.

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed kif inhu mqassam bħal issa u dak tal-P.G.C.E qed jgħin biex jiżviluppa dawn il-kompetenzi li semmejna?

A : Rigward l-I.T iva. Bħal issa naħseb li qedin ftit limitati fit-Teaching Practice...fis-sens li meta l-istudenti jmorru għat-Teaching Practice mhux kulhadd qed jinzerta għand klassi li hemm kompjuter. Din haġa li biż-żmien ser tispiċċa. Pero' biex inkun preċiż bħal issa t-Teaching Practice qed jikkejterja għal ftit minn dawn l-istudenti, dawk il-ftit li jinzertaw Year 1 jew Year 2. Bhalissa qedin nikkompensaw mod ieħor. Qedin nibagħtu fil-units li qed nagħmlu, li għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' l-I.T, lill-istudenti josservaw fil-Year 1 u fil-Year 2's jekk forsi ma kellhomx hands on experience fi klassi ghax qedin jużaw il-kompjuter f'dik il-klassi. Mhux bilfors jużaw dik l-esperjenza diretta, imma almenu qed josservaw teachers li qed jużaw l-I.T. Jekk aħna nibagħtuhom biex jagħmlu evalwazzjoni tas-software, inqabbduhom ukoll biex dan is-software jippruvawh mat-tfal li qedin jużawh. Jiġifieri, qedin nippruvaw kemm jista' jkun nikkompensaw għaliha hekk...mod ieħor tat-Teaching Practice.

Bħala lectures u bħala assignments naħseb li kif qedin, qedin nilhqu l-ghan tagħna li nagħmluhom computer aware lit-teachers. Issa barra minn hekk qedin nishqu wkoll, bil-fors la qedin nitkellmu fuq education, f'dan il-każ fuq il-kapaċita' ta' l-istudent, tat-teacher futur li jkun jista' janalizza software u jara l-pedagogical value tiegħu, l-educational value tiegħu. Li jfittex fih dak li ser jgħinu jagħmel ix-xogħol tiegħu bħala edukatur. Dik ukoll qedin nishqu fuqha hafna. Qedin nagħmlu l-units lill-Fist years 'I.T in the Primary'. Il-kunċett ġenerali qiegħed...għalfejn qed nintroduċu l-I.T fil-Primarja, u qed nagħmlu wkoll f'dan il-unit introduction għas-software kollu li hemm fil-klassi.

P : Plus, ta' min isemmi wkoll li barra l-I.T qed tagħmlu wkoll 'computer literacy li...

A : Eżatt, dak għall-beginners, jiġifieri dak hu aktar ġenerali...Hemmhekk mhux qed nidhlu fil-pedagoġija as such, qedin nitkellmu biss fuq l-ideja li konna qed insemmu l-ewwel fil-bidu, l-ideja ta' l-użu tal-kompjuter inġenerali biex ikollok dik il-kompetenza bażika biex tużah, li tkun taf tħaddem il-kompjuter. Imbagħad fl-'I.T in the Primary' ha nidhlu aktar fid-dettall. Insemmu l-kunċett ta' l-I.T, għalfejn daħal fil-iskola u eventwalment ser nagħtu unit ġdid lil 4th years (1994-1998) 'I.T across the Curriculum', fejn hemmhekk ser nenfażizzaw aktar fuq il-metodoloġija u fuq kif ser nużaw dak is-software li hemm fl-iskejjel across the whole curriculum. Mhux sempliċiment għal-Maths biss, jew għal-English biss imma skond kif tkun tista' tużah. B'xi mod jew ieħor issib attivitajiet biex tkun tista' tużah f'affarijiet bħal Social Studies u Religion ukoll...għaliex le? Speċjalment dak is-software 'content free', fejn mhux marbut ma' l-Ingliz biss.

P : Bħal xi 'Storybook Weaver'.

A : Eżatt, stejjer per eżempju. L-istorja tista' tagħmilha inti fuqu...tikkaverjalek any topic!

P : Bħal Kid Pix.

A : Il-Kid Pix per eżempju fejn għandek id-drawings...It's a blank page, ha ngħidu hekk, fejn inti tista' tagħmel li trid biha. U dik tista' tqabbad lit-tfal jagħmluha. Tista' tippjana inti ċertu activities għat-tfal. Tippjana ċertu activities f'liema sugġett tista' timplimentah. Din ser nenfażizzawha dalwaqt għax il-unit għadu ma bediex. Imma ser nibdewh din is-sena stess (1998) 'I.T across the Curriculum', li wara kollox hu mportanti hafna, biex nenfażizza l-punt li bdejna bih fil-bidu nett li I.T mhux subject in itself.

P : Imma resource...

A : Eżatt...irid ikun hemm metodoloġija biex tista' tghini nagħraf li dan is-software ser ikun useful għalija għat-tali u tali topic li hemm fil-kurikulum.

Q : Tahseb li jista' jsir xi haġa aktar biex jiżviluppaw dawn il-kompetenzi ahjar?

A : Issa meta qed tghid aktar qed tghid għall-Fakulta - x'jista' jsir fil-Fakulta? Iva, ha ngħidu hekk. Hemm ċertu affarijiet li għadna limitati fihom...għadu l-bidu bħala żvilupp ta' l-I.T. L-I.T in itself ġiet introdotta s-sena l-oħra fl-iskejjel u anki hawnhekk ċerti affarijiet irridu niżviluppawhom. Hawn affarijiet u qedin nahdmu tajjeb bihom...pero' dejjem nistghu nimpruvjaw. Hemm bżonn li nimpruvjaw, anke fil-premises...Jiena kieku, per eżempju kont insibha welcoming hafna kieku mqar ikun hawn lab ieħor barra minn dawn li diġa hemm għax xi kultant issib li qed ikollna hafna xogħol intensiv u l-hin kollu qed ikunu full up il-labs. Ġieli ssib li ma tkunx tista' tlaħhaq. Anki għall-istudenti stess hafna drabi ahna stess inkunu qed nagħtuhom li jiċċekkjaw ċertu software. Ikunu jridu jiġu fil-lab, imma l-lab ma jkunx free għax ikun hemm il-lessons. Jiġifieri, hija ftit kontradittorja fiha nnifisha. Hemm il-limiti u ma nistghux nagħmlu mod ieħor. Pero', l-intenzjoni qedha li nkunu nistghu nespandu f'dak is-sens. Dik fejn għandu x'jaqsam il-premises.

Fejn għandu x'jaqsam l-hardware ukoll nistghu nirrangaw u nabgrejdwaw dak li hemm. Hemm ċerti affarijiet li jistghu jiġu upgraded u anki nżidu apparat, mhux nabgredjaw biss. Hemm ukoll, eżempju, haġa sempliċi hafna li nimmagina li għandha ssir. Ahna qedin

nippruvaw nirriflettu l-kondizzjoni tal-klassi meta nkunu qed nitkellmu fuq l-'I.T in the Primary classroom'. Qed nirreferu għall-klassi għax għandna nitkellmu hawn fuq is-software li għandhom fil-klassijiet. Jiġifieri aħna ser nuruhom lill-istudenti hawnhekk, jekk ma jkollhomx ċans imorru jarawh fil-klassi, ser ikollhom iċ-ċans jarawh hawnhekk sewwa. Pero', mbagħad meta niġu għal-printing għadna f'it lacking fil-colour printing...

P : Imma anki fl-iskejjel...

A : Le, fl-iskejjel hemm. Fil-Year 1 veru għax il-colour printer tagħhom veru limitat u ma tohroġx print out sabiha hawn imma l-Year 2 għandhom l-ink jets issa. Jiġifieri bil-mod qedin dejjem jirrangaw kif għandu jkun.

Allura inti qed tghid it-tali prodott, it-tali software għandu t-tali potenzjal biex, jien naf, anki charts, handouts u hekk...Pero' ser isibuha daqsxejn frustranti l-istudenti li din il-ħaġa, għalkemm hija possibbli, ma jistgħux jarawha ssir...Printers għandna naturalment. Jiġifieri għandna Lazer printer. Għandna apparat tajjeb. Pero' colour printer mhux daqshekk. Qedin f'it limitati...imqar ikollok wiehed tghid biex ikun qed iservi bħala demonstration. Dan mhux ser toqgħod tużah il-ħin kollu imma tkun qed turi bih anki l-output. Tkun qed tagħti ċans lill-istudenti jaraw veru x'inhum l-potenzjal. Id-demonstration tkun qed tagħmilha hawn stess.

Software wkoll...il-parti l-kbira tas-software li hemm fl-iskejjel qiegħed hawn ukoll. Jiġifieri rrangajna mad-dipartiment biex ikun jista' jagħtina s-software. Irridu nishqu aktar fuq software lil hinn minn dak li hemm fil-klassijiet. Waħda mill-idejiet li aħna qed nippruvaw nittrażmettu lill-istudenti, li eventwalment huma jkunu kapaċi jagħmlu evalwazzjoni tas-software għalihom u jiddeċiedu huma x'jagħżlu u x'ma jagħżlux. Mhux sempliċiment joqogħdu biss fuq it-tip ta' software li jkun qed jibagħtilhom id-dipartiment. Aħna ninkoraġġuhom biex once ikunu parti mill-istaff ta' xi skola, dawn jistgħu jzidu ma' dak is-software li tana d-dipartiment, iġibu aktar. Allura jrid ikun hemm dik il-kompetenza kif għidna fil-bidu li jkunu kapaċi jevalwaw u jaraw il-pedagogical value tas-software u fl-istess ħin ifittxu lil hinn. Allura, waħda mill-affarijiet li eventwalment nixtiequ li nagħmlu hu li nintroduċu software ieħor li huwa modern, li hu riċenti. Jiġifieri nippruvaw nagħtu ideja ta' diversita' mhux sempliċiment dak is-software li hemm fl-iskejjel biss. Jista' jkun li hemm software ieħor li dak li jkun jista' jitrażmettiegħ aħjar, jew bil-maqlub. Affarijiet bħal dawn. Ser nippruvaw indaħħlu wkoll l-ideja li eventwalment it-teacher irid ikun kapaċi jagħmel customized software hu...mhux ikun full programmer. Illum jeżistu hawn 'authoring packages' li jkunu speċi ta' programmi li jgħinuk tagħmel ċertu affarijiet, tibni ċertu affarijiet inti...l-programming jahseb hu għalih. M'hemmx għalfejn tkun taf hawn codes inti. Aħna nemmnu li hawn drabi t-teacher ser ikun jaf eżatt...

P : Il-bżonnijiet tal-klassi.

A : Il-bżonnijiet tal-klassi partikulari u jkun jista' hu jagħmel ċertu affarijiet u jkun jista' jgħid, 'jiena għalfejn ma nistax inkun kapaċi nagħmel displays sempliċi' ta' xi ħaġa biex tghinu fil-lezzjoni...Dawn l-affarijiet bażikament diġa qed isiru b'xi mod jew ieħor minn teachers stess anki li ma għidnilhomx aħna bihom imma li jirrejalizzaw huma. Tgħallmu bil-potenzjal li hemm fil-Kid Pix per eżempju. It is very limited imma diġa hemm xi ħaġa, anki l-Power Point stess. Naf teachers li jużawh fuq il-Lap tops tagħhom għar-remedial education. Jużaw il-Power Point u joħorġu lezzjonijiet permezz tiegħu. Jiġifieri dan qed isir...li qed ngħid jiena, nippruvaw immorru one step further. Nużaw programmi li huma dedikati għalhekk. Mhux il-Kid Pix li kumbinazzjoni qed jgħinna nagħmlu din il-ħaġa, l-

anqas il-Power Point għax il-Power Point għandu l-limiti wkoll, imma jkollok authoring packages għal t'apposta. 'Hyper Studio' per eżempju, li jgħin lit-teacher ikun aktar krejattiv u fl-istess hin it-teacher ikun qed jagħmel activity li tkun immirata direttament għal dawk it-tfal li jkollu, għall-bżonnijiet tagħhom. Dik ser tkun kompetenza oħra. Pero' jekk nibdew mill-bidu, aħna nibdew indarruha lill-istudenti hawnhekk. Once li jkunu harġu bħala teachers imbagħad ċertu background ikunu diġa' jafuh. Ser ikun hemm oħrajn li jithajjru u jippruvaw imorru beyond that ukoll. Hemm potenzjal u jidhirli li għandu jkun parti mid-dover tagħna. Aħna għandna nuru li dak il-potenzjal jeżisti, lill-istudenti nuruhom x'hemm available mbagħad l-istudenti jkunu jistgħu jkomplu huma...

P : Hemm xi haġa oħra li tixtieq iżżid?

A : Le, on the whole dak li għandi xi ngħid. Nahseb li ma jidhirlix li hemm affarijiet oħra.

Interview with Ms. Tania Muscat (Media Education)

Q : X'kompetenzi ghandu jkollu għalliem biex jgħalliem il-Media b'mod effettiv?

A : Tal-Media, l-kompetenzi qedin hemmhekk. Inhoss żgur li Media Educator ma jridx ikun biss bniedem li jikkonsma l-Media. Jiġifieri ahna bhala bnedmin qedin f'dinja globali li ckienet hafna. Tista' tgħid nikkunsmaw hafna l-prodotti tal-Media, ir-radju, t-televiżjoni qabel kollox, iċ-ċinema, l-mużika eċċ. Mhux hekk biss, il-Media Educator huwa bniedem li jrawwem il-ħsieb kritiku. Il-lista hija twila hafna.

Q : Pero' ahna meta ngħidu 'Media Educator' qed nirreferu għall-mainstream teacher mhux persuna speċjali hux?

A : Iva, dan il-punt nixtieq niċċarah. Il-Media Educator hija t-teacher tal-mainstream, it-teacher li tkun mit-8:30 sas-2:30 mat-tfal. Trid tkun hi li tkun il-Media Educator. Issa jiena mill-esperjenza tiegħi għal dawn l-aħħar 10 snin kont involuta fid-dissemination tal-Media Education fl-iskejjel tal-gvern u ahna l-pożizzjoni li hadna bhala 'school of thought' anki ma' riċerkaturi u professuri barranin, insemmi lil Anne Master minn Nottingham University, dejjem rajniha bhala li tkun it-teacher tal-klassi u anki rajna li ma jkunx suġġett fih innifsu, imma across the curriculum. Inti trid tagħraf tisfrutta kull sitwazzjoni kif tippresta ruħha. Mela bħal ma qisna għamilna t-Thematic Approach, l-istudenti jafu x'jiġifieri, li taqbad suġġett wiesgħa u tipprowa tibni madwaru. L-istess il-Media Education. Trid inti tiegħu l-opportunita' biex fl-aħħar mill-aħħar trawwem bniedem aktar kritiku u aktar awtonomu. Issa biex ngħidu hekk anke l-istudenti tal-B.Ed, dan il-proċess, fis-Socjoloġija u fil-Filosofija qedin jiġu mgħallma kif bniedem irawwem ħsieb kritiku li jkolli ngħid fuq din bhala faċilita' hija li l-għalliem għandu text u flok din id-darba qiegħed f'kitba kif ahna mdorrijin jew text elettroniku, din id-darba, u nerga' naċċenna għat-televiżjoni, għandek text ta' stampa u ta' kliem pero' stampi li jgħaddu malajr, tranzitorji hafna, stampi li jidhlu f'ħajjita u hawnhekk tbiddel in-natura hafna tat-text għax fil-waqt li t-tfal għandhom textbook li kapaċi jorbothom biss waqt is-sieġat ta' l-iskola, it-televiżjoni t-tfal qedin jesperjenzawh f'kuntest informali hafna, waqt li qedin id-dar, rilassati, jilagħbu mal-ġenituri tagħhom eċċ, eċċ. Għaldaqstant jiena nemmen li l-bottom line, il-Media Educator huwa bniedem li jrid irawwem fit-tfal ħsieb kritiku...irawwimhom minn ċkunithom jistaqsu, mhux biss jixorbu qishom sponża u fuq kollox jiddefendu ruħhom għax kif nafu tajjeb dawn l-affarijiet li semmejna, radju, televiżjoni, ċinema, muzika, huma culture industries u fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar huma market, huma suq.

U fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar ukoll tidhol il-komunika. Ma nemminx li l-għan aħhari tal-Media Educator hu li jitgħallmu jipproduċu. Dawn mhux sejin producers. Għada pitgħada jekk iridu jispeċjalizzaw f'karriera wiesgħa tax-xandir, jagħrfu jagħmluha f'oqsma u f'opportunitajiet meta jiġu aktar tard. Imma fuq livell ta' Primarja, fejn jiena nvoluta, trid tibni dawk is-sisien li inti wkoll tgħalliem il-komunika għax wara kollox it-televiżjoni u r-radju qed jinvolvu s-smiġħ, il-ħars u d-diskors. Mela żgur trid titgħalliem tesprimi ruħek. Fil-każ ta' Malta għadna limitati hafna kif tkun bniedem espressiv, ta' l-opinjoni tiegħek. In-nies Maltin jafu jaħsbu, imma forsi ma kellhomx esperjenza twila. Il-pluraliżmu daħal dan l-aħħar u xi kultant inkunu passjonali wisq jiġifieri nitkellmu b'ċertu passjoni parrokkjali. Ma nittollerawx opinjoni ta' l-oħrajn u anki xi kultant m'ahniex verballi biżżejjed 'qisna...', 'hemm, hemm...', 'għax hekk hux...' M'għandniex dik il-verballita'.

Fit-tfal trid tibda trabbi din is-self confidence, li ma jibzghux jittkellmu, li meta jittkellmu, jittkellmu fuq hsieb. Mela l-punt hu li jrawwmu l-hsieb kritiku, waqt li jkunni ċari fil-hsieb, jafu jikkomunikaw u jiddefendu ruħhom. Il-bias, per eżempju, kemm hi qawwija fil-Media? Trid tkun taf ixxommha, taf tinterpretaha, per eżempju taf tanalizzaha. Dawn huma skills sofistikati ħafna, imma jekk tibdihom minn eta' żgħira, bniedem kull ma jmur jibni fuqhom.

Q : Issa biex it-teacher tibni dawn l-iskills u trawwem fit-tfal dan il-hsieb kritiku, x'għandhom ikunu l-kompetenzi tat-teacher?

A : Il-kompetenza tat-teacher hija dik li b'mod naturali ddaħħal dawn l-issues kbar li jolqtu 'l Media. Issues kbar bħal stereotyping, il-konsumeriżmu, gender bias, l-institutions. Dawn li huma issues kbar, li huma part and parcel tal-Media bħal ma fis-Socjoloġija għandek l-ideja tal-komunita', l-ideja tad-diversifikazzjoni tal-klassi, l-ideja ta' gender. Hemm ċerti issues importanti ħafna, fundamentali ħafna fil-kurrikulum tal-Media Education li jiena nħoss li l-għalliema trid tibda ftit ftit tikxef dawn is-saffi sabiex it-tfal, meta anki sempliciment qedin jaraw reklam, jindunaw li fiha hemm konsumeriżmu, hemm gender bias. Allura ftit ftit qed tqajjem din l-awareness pero' trid titgħalliem tagħmlu b'mod naturali. Għaliex fid-dinja...Dan bħal meta tgħalliem il-grammatika, ma tridx tgħidilhom 'isma, min jista' jgħidli x'inhu verb?' Le, b'mod indirett għamel attivita' biex huma jagħmluha...Huma jridu jintebħu li meta tagħżel ċertu kliem li jagħmlu azzjoni dawk qed nikklassifikawhom bħala verbi, sewwa? Issa l-istess bħal fil-każ tal-Media Education. Mhux ser tgħidilhom, 'isma tfal, fit-tali reklam il-mara qed tiġi sfruttata', biex nagħmlu xi haġa vera ovvja. Le. It-tfal b'din il-kritika u l-analiżi li trawwem fihom jindunaw li reklam għandu messaġġ. L-aktar, naħseb 'golden rule' hija li r-radju u l-aktar it-televiżjoni huwa construction mahluq mill-bniedem mhux bħax-xita jew bħax-xemx, huma naturali. Li programm huwa constructed. Mela la ġie magħmul, il-bniedem kellu intenzjoni bħalma fi ktieb wara kolloxx l-awtur għandu messaġġ.

P : Allura t-teacher l-ewwel haġa għandha tagħraf x'inhuma dawn il-messaġġi hi stess.

A : Appuntu. Fl-aħħar mill-aħħar huwa l-messaġġ. Imma l-messaġġi huma wiesgħa u varjati. Jiena semmejtlek xi eżempji għax inkella, kważi kważi ser nidhlu fil-kurrikulum tal-Media li ma nħossx li huwa lok hawnhekk. Jiena nħoss li l-kompetenza ta' l-għalliema hija li trawwem fit-tfal dan il-hsieb kritiku, dak is-sens ta' komunikazzjoni biex it-tfal bl-esperjenzi li għandhom anki mid-dar u b'li qedin jgħixu, għax illum it-tfal kważi qedin jittlifu t-ftulija tagħhom minn eta' kmieni, jsiru jafu jivverbalizzaw l-esperjenza tagħhom u jiddefendu ruħhom.

Dawk l-issues fundamentali trid iddaħħalhom b'mod naturali, illaċċjati, għax tinsieħ għamilna referenza għal-'cross-curricular'. Trid issib opportunita' tajba. Anki trid tagħraf li tagħmlu b'ċertu hsieb l-għalliema u fil-hin opportun biex tillaċċja mas-suġġetti l-oħra tal-kurrikulum bħal fil-Matematika, fl-Ingliż, fil-Malti, fl-Istudju Soċjali, fir-Reliġjon eċċ.

Fuq kolloxx, peress li t-televiżjoni jew il-Media, il-mużika, jistgħu wkoll iservu bħala medium għall-pedagoġija, ma nemminx li għandhom ikunu biss riżorsl. Importanti l-ġigifieri li tużahom fil-klassi għax tridhom. Jiena l-ewwel għamiltlek referenza għat-text, jiġifieri flok għandek ktieb għandek reklam, għandek silta mill-aħbarijiet. Għax, per eżempju, stazzjon ġabha l-ewwel post, l-ewwel item. Stazzjon ieħor dik l-istess haġa għamilha ir-raba' post. Per eżempju, analiżi f'gazzetta, editorjal, tikkompara headlines eċċ. Tridu dan il-materjal għax bih trid taħdem. Huma t-tools li bihom l-għalliema trid taħdem. Huma riżorsi bħal ma huma l-flashcards. Daqs li kieku huma CD Roms, language games eċċ. Imma ma tridx tieqaf bil-

ħsieb li huma riżorsi. They are not resources. Il-Media ser nużawha bħala prodott u proċess fl-istess ħin, bħala text fil-klassi. Imma, per eżempju għandek ir-Reliġjon. Għandek il-Papa ddeċieda li jżur il-Brażil għall-argument. Inti taf li fil-headlines ser tkun imsemmija, fl-aħbarijiet ser tkun imsemmija. Mela uża l-materjal awtentiku u lit-tfal ipprova oħloq magħhom din is-sensatizzazzjoni. Per eżempju, speċjalment jekk hemm xi protesti, jieħdu l-opportunita' ċertu sezzjonijiet mis-soċjeta' għax jafu li għandhom l-attenzjoni tad-dinja kollha fuq il-miġja tal-Papa f'dak il-pajjiż u jagħmlu protesti jew jagħmlu atti terroristiċi. Mela qed intik illustrazzjoni ta' kif tista' tuża l-materjal awtentiku bħala għodda. Mela għandek siltiet minn gazzetta, għandek clip mill-aħbarijiet li qed tużahom bħala għodda...illaċċajtha mal-lezzjoni tar-Reliġjon...Per eżempju għandek ir-ragħaj tal-Knisja, minn Gesu' tghaddi għall-Papa fi żmienna. Mbagħad ser tiehu l-mument opportun biex mat-tfal tagħmel din ir-rejalizzazzjoni biex it-tfal jistaqsu għala f'Malta ma kellniex protesti meta gie l-Papa. Għax is-soċjeta' Maltija hija pjuttost omoġenika. Huwa pajjiż li pjuttost m'għandux reliġjonijiet imħallta. Allura minn hawnhekk tista' tiehu l-ispunt għaliex f'dawn il-pajjiżi ġara hekk, għax hemm reliġjonijiet differenti, għax reliġjonijiet jiġġieldu bejniethom. Mela hemm il-firda, nuqqas ta' tolleranza. Mela dawn in-nies mhux qed jittolleraw...Il-poplu Malti għandu tolleranza, nittolleraw ahna nies b'idejat jew b'xewqat differenti.

Jiġifieri hawnhekk għamiltlek dimostrazzjoni żgħira ta' kif fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar trid tuża bħala għodda dan l-autentic material tal-Media. Imma l-bottom line huwa li inti tagħmel lill-istudenti bnedmin aktar awtonomi jkolli ngħid ukoll fi sfond aktar wiesgħa. Dan huwa suġġett ġdid bħalma per eżempju għandna wkoll l-I.T. Mhux riċenti daqs l-I.T għax ili nvoluta fih dawn l-aħħar 10 snin. Biss il-Media tevolvi ħafna u s-suġġetti jinbiddu mill-ewwel. Is-suġġetti tista' tghid minn fil-ghodu sa fil-għaxija jinbidlu. Ħafna affarijiet għalhekk trid tkun up to date ħafna, trid issegwi. Xi kultant waħda mir-reżistenza li għandhom t-teachers għall-Media Education hija li ma jikkonsmawx Televiżjoni daqs it-tfal u jhossuhom inferjuri maġenbhom. Għalhekk l-għalliema trid iżżomm ruħha up to date u trid tkun opportunist. Jekk per eżempju jkun hemm miġja tal-Papa trid tabbinha mill-ewwel għax is-suġġett imutlek. Biss jibqgħu kif għidna peress li hemm il-ġeneri. Dan bħal-kotba. Inti għandek kotba li huma awtobijografija, dawk li huma narrativa, ta' avvenutra. Il-Media għandha wkoll il-ġeneri tagħha u dawn il-ġeneri għandhom l-issues u l-principles klassiċi. Jekk inti għandek gender bias tista' ssibha f'film, tista' ssibha f'reklam. Dawk jibqgħu dejjem. Qishom il-kmandamenti. Hija l-libsa li tinbidel fl-aħħar minn l-aħħar.

Rigward it-tieni u t-tielet mistoqsija, fuq it-training. Fil-każ tal-B.Ed u fil-każ tal-PGCE din is-sena saret l-ewwel esperimentazzjoni. Ipprovajna nagħtu option ta' unit lill-istudenti tal-B.Ed. Rigward Media Education jiena nvoluta fiha u kien hemm rispons pożittiv, forsi mhux qiegħed at the right time minhabba l-persjoni tax-xogħol li għandhom l-istudenti. Minn-naħa tar-rejazzjoni huma ħassew li hemm il-bżonn ta' Media Education.

Kif għidna meta tkellimna fuq is-suġġett tal-Malti qedin f'evolvement. Għad jiġi żmien fejn tkun integrata aktar fil-kors tal-B.Ed. Jien nista' ngħid meta niġi biex ngħallim il-Malti lill-istudenti dejjem nipprova nikkombinalhom mument fejn jistgħu jintegraw il-Media Education għax wara kollox l-oracy, l-espressjoni u l-komunikazzjoni huma fundamentali. Diġa' rreferejt għaliha bħala l-erba' fakultajiet tal-lingwa. Il-Media hija bbażata fuq id-diskors plus l-istampa u minn-naħa l-oħra kif kont qed ngħidlek biex ahna lit-tfal dejjem ngħidu nibdewlhom mill-esperjenzi li jafu huma. It-televiżjoni tant hu familjari, tant huwa ħaġa integrali fil-ħajja ta' l-istudenti li faċilment tintegrah. Per eżempju fit-tagħlim tal-Malti u ta' l-Ingliz billi ddaħħal video clip, billi ddaħħal kanzunetta. Issa sta għall-għalliema kif dak il-ħsieb kritiku kapaci tibbażah fuq kitba ta' komponiment jew fuq developmental writing. Din hija l-pożizzjoni tiegħi bħala Media Education. Fil-każ ta' Media Education on its own,

lill-istudenti bdejna unit ġdid, qed nesperimentaw. Fil-każ tal-Malti nintegrawh kif ghidtlek l-ewwel, forsi l-istudenti bit-tips li jieħdu minn għandi jkunu avventurużi li jintegrawha fis-sugġetti l-oħra tal-kurrikulum. Il-PGCE's jiddispjaċini ngħid li ma kellix l-oportunita' s'issa.

Interview with Dr. Paul Pace (Environment Education)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach Environment Education effectively in a Primary school?

A : Bażikament...ha niċċara ftit x'nifhem biha Environment Education. Qabel xejn x'nifhem b'ambjent? Meta ssemmi l-kelma ambjent għal hafna nies tfisser sempliciment għasafar, siġar, fjuri, indafa...Haġa li għandha x'taqsam man-natural environment. Pero', għaliya l-baži ta' Environment Education ifisser dak kollu li hawn madwarna, jfisser dak li hu naturali, dak li hu mibni u anki dak li huwa soċjali. Jista' ma jkollokx struttura partikulari bħal meta ngħidu 'Universita' imma qedin ngħidu 'students' union' fejn għandek grupp ta' nies qedin jiltaqgħu flimkien. Jew il-parroċċa, per eżempju, jew l-għaqda ta' l-'Għażżiena Dilettanti' per eżempju! Dak it-tip, għaqda li hija aktar mibnija fuq interactions milli strutturi fiżiċi.

P : Istituzzjonijiet.

A : Istituzzjonijiet...Bażikament, għaliya l-ambjent ifisser dak. Dan jispjega għaliex għal hafna żmien Environment Education kienu jharsu lejha bħala 'Nature Study' jew 'Ekoloġija'. Imma fil-fatt Environment Education hija hafna aktar wiesgħa minn hekk, li per eżempju jiena nidhol fil-kultura ta' nazzjon, jew nidhol fuq social issue bħal m'hi poverty, tqassim tajjeb tal-ġid tad-dinja, użu bl-addoċċ ta' riżorsi, responsabbiltà' lejn generazzjonijiet futuri eċċ. Dawn kollha jaqgħu taħt il-kappa ta' Environment Education li allura awtomatikament dan ma jistax ikun suġġett imma hu xi haġa li hija a 'cross-curricular theme,' tibqa' diehla per eżempju...

P : Tiehu mill-Geography, tiehu mis-Social Studies...

A : Eżatt, dik l-ideja, li tiehu minn suġġetti oħrajn. Bħal ma aħna ma nagħmlux suġġett kontra r-razzieżmu...kontra r-razzieżmu għandu jkun throughout is-suġġetti kollha tagħna. Hija xi haġa li tant hi mportanti li tkun infiltrata, part and parcel mal-kurrikulum.

Q : Qisha l-baži?

A : Ma ngħidx il-baži, imma tema rikorrenti fil-kurrikulum bħal ma hija 'gender issues'. Issa, having said this, meta tiġi għan-knowledge base, hafna nies jibqgħulek lura għax jgħidu l-ambjent speċi Bijoloġija, Xjenza. M'għandiex x'taqsam. Tant hu hekk li moviment li qam bażikament wara r-Rio Summit, ta' Rio de Janeiro fl-1992, kien li għandek hafna informazzjoni li tinsab fl-indiġini speċi, fin-natives. In-natives tagħna jiġu l-bdiewa. Mhux qed ngħid hekk b'mod dispreġġattiv...l-ideja li dawn kienu nies li jgħixu mill-art, jużaw l-art u fl-istess hin...

P : Jgħixu f'aktar armonija ma' l-art.

A : Eżatt, jgħixu f'armonija mhux biss man-natura, imma ma' dak kollu li hemm madwarhom. Jiġifieri dan, il-prodott tiegħu xorta kien ser ibiegħu, xorta kien jibni d-djar tiegħu. Jiġifieri meta qed ngħid jieh u hsieb l-ambjent mhux qed ngħid awtomatikament immorru fi żmien il-ħaġar u ngħixu f'-għar. L-iżvilupp irridu nagħtu kasu wkoll, irridu noholqu bilanċ fil-fatt. Dak huwa t-tir kollu bejn żvilupp li jkollu quality of life tajba...

P : Żvilupp sustenibbli...

A : Eżatt, dik li jkollok quality of life tajba u jkollok quality of the environment tajjeb, dak li ngħidulu żvilupp sustenibbli, li għal hekk żmien kien u jgħidu li ma jaqblux, jew tiżviluppa jew inkella tagħmel hekkara lill-ambjent. Imma llum b'naqra sforz tista' ssir il-biċċa xogħol. Hija neċessita' li ssir hekk. Allura, meta qed ngħid knowledge base, jiena nahebb li l-aktar bażi mportanti hi li inti jkollok ideja li la inti parti mill-ambjent tiegħek qiegħed f'sistema ta' interactions. Inti għandek dmirijiet u drittijiet. Inti bħala persuna, bħala organizzazzjoni fl-ambjent qed tirelata ma' daww l-affarijiet ta' madwarek u qed tinfluwenza 'l haddieħor u tiġi influwenzat minn haddieħor. Jiena qiegħed f'dan l-uffiċċju, qiegħed influwenzat mis-surroundings tiegħi. Imma fl-istess ħin qed ninfluwenzom bl-imbarazz li nħalli jiġri l'hemm u l'hawn per eżempju. Bażikament dak hu l-aktar hekk mportanti bħala basic knowledge, li inti jkollok dan il-kunċett, il-feeling fik li inti qiegħed f'parti minn ekosistema. Jekk inżomm l-uffiċċju tiegħi mandra mhux jiena biss qed inbati imma ta' madwari wkoll. Jekk qed inżommu sura ta' nies qed ngħin lil haddieħor. L-eżempju huwa forsi daqqejn limitat imma trid tarah f'kuntest li jiena, speċi, jekk ser nimporta prodott nara l-impatt tiegħu fuq daww ta' madwari x'inhu.

Q : Jiġifieri, inti qed tgħid li biex teacher tkun teacher ta' l-Environment Education tajba, trid tkun aware ta' dawn ir-relationshps?

A : Preċiż, u allura any form of knowledge li jgħin dawn l-interrelationships jinbnew, għalija huwa bażikament tajjeb. Jekk tgħidli tista' torbothom ma' suġġett? L-aktar suġġett li jiġi as close as can be huwa l-Geography, followed by Biology. Għalkemm il-Bijoloġija tintefalek wisq fuq dak li huwa naturali biss, pero' l-Geography jaqqadlek...

P : Human Geography.

A : Eżatt, idahħallek ir-rwol tal-bniedem. Mhux qed ngħid li għandu jkun Geography li jekk jiena nħares lejn toroq per eżempju jinteressani x'tip ta' transport kien hemm tul iż-żminijiet, jekk meta kellna l-karrettuni kien hemm bżonn toroq mod u issa bil-karozzi għandna bżonn toroq mod ieħor. Għaliex it-toroq? Għaliex din it-triq prinċipali u l-oħra side street? Għaliex f'ċerti areas ma tantx hemm toroq u f'areas oħra hemm toroq aktar passaġġi? L-impatt ambjentali x'inhu? Land use u dħaħen eċċ. Jiġifieri dak l-approach holistiku, aktar milli Biology, Science li hu fragmentat.

Rigward skills, jiena nahebb li din hija xi hekk li mhiex ta' Environment Education biss. Ftakar li Environment Education hija Education. Jekk inneħhi l-kelma 'environment' nista' ndaħħal il-kelma 'technology education', 'sex education', 'media education'. Kollha ser ikollhom dik il-parti education li hija komuni u bażikament prinċipju bażiku hu li l-proċess ikun learner centered.

Q : Jiġifieri l-kompetenzi fl-area ta' l-iskills huma l-istess bħal ta' suġġetti oħra?

A : Hekk minnha iva. Fis-sens li waħda mill-aktar affarijiet importanti hija li tgħallim lill-learner jitgħallim kif jitgħallim, learning how to learn. F'dinja fejn illum ma tistax iżżomm track trid bilfors...you empower the individual. Qed nuża l-kelma empower għal raġuni waħda sempliċi li ser ngħidha aktar tard. You empower the individual b'tali mod li jkun jista' jaqbad u jgħid, 'jien irrid inkun naf fuq il-kwistjoni tal-bini...Tajjeb, inti tajni d-dettalji, imma fejn nista' nsib aktar informazzjoni? Hemmhekk. Fuq liema nformazzjoni nista' noqgħod? Liema hija reliable? Liema m'hiex? X'inhuma l-iskills li rrid nitgħallim biex

ingib din l-informazzjoni? Inqalleb fid-database, nintervista lin-nies u allura l-iskills jiġu ndirizzati għax il-kelma empowerment użajtha bi skop għax environment education hija dik li ngħidulha an action-oriented programme. Il-programm ta' Environment Education ma jistax ikun sempliciment għallimtek u daqshekk, imma qed titgħallem bi skop.

P : Biex tagħmel xi haġa.

A : Biex tagħmel xi haġa. Allura l-iskills jindirizzaw lejn xi haġa li hija Prattika. Issa niġi għall-attitudes u values li qabel kienu jaħsbu jekk jiena ninfurmak fuq l-affarijiet inti l-iskills li għandek bżonn u l-informazzjoni li għandek bżonn awtomatikament ser tgħid, 'ara aħjar nagħmel xi haġa fuq l-ambjent'. Din ma taħdimx. Jiena nista' nkun naf li l-plastik jagħmel ħafna ħsara, jiġġenera ħafna pollution, jagħmel ħsara fl-annimali li jibilgħu l-plastik, whatever, u niġi naqa' u nqum. Għandi l-iskills li nagħmel riċerka, nagħmel incineration, sewage treatment, imma niġi naqa' u nqum. Ma jimpurtanix. So what? Allura l-baži ta' Environment Education huwa dak li l empower you biex tiegħu ċertu deċiżjonijiet, kemm fuq livell li ntik knowledge base tajjeb, aktar milli ngħinek tiksbu. It-tieni ngħinek tiżviluppa ċertu skills li mbagħad inti tidra tagħmel questions personali. Isma jiena veru qed ngħix hekk? Jiena kif qed ngħix? Imbagħad jiena jekk irrid niehu azzjoni u nbiddel l-approach, il-behaviour tiegħi għall-ħajja, nista' nagħmilha. Dik hija l-action li trid tkun kemm fuq livell individwali, l-life style tiegħi, u tista' tkun ukoll aktar wiesgħa, l-familja tiegħi, l-klassi tiegħi, l-iskola tiegħi, l-villaġġ tiegħi u eventwalment id-dinja. Dik hi l-approach ta' Environment Education. Tidher utopika, nammetti jiġifieri. J'Alla qedin hemmhekk pero' huwa proċess li jrid iż-żmien b'mod speċjali meta tqis li l-approach kien pjuttost bil-kontra. Jiena ngħibek aware mill-ħsarat u mid-diżastri ambjentali li hawn. 'Isma', 10 snin oħra r-razza umana ser tinqered u tant ser ikun hawn shana li ser idubu l-icebergs u tegħreq nofs id-dinja'. Imma inti f'sitwazzjoni bħal din ser tgħid 'x'nista' nagħmel? Ma nista' nagħmel xejn'. Inħalliha kif inhi. Imma għalhekk enfażizzajt il-kelma empowerment. Jiena għidt mhux biss biex tgħid x'dimensjoni ta' problema imma x'kontribuzzjoni għandi jiena. Nista' nirrangħa? Yes, u l-ideja hi li fejn qabel id-deċiżjonijiet kienu jittieħdu fuq policy level issa għandek mill-grassroot level li qedin jiġu empowered biex id-deċiżjonijiet johduhom huma. Eżempju klassiku hu Scotland. Wara r-Rio Summit, nazzjonijiet differenti bdew jagħmlu dik li jgħidulha Local Agenda 21. Agenda 21 hija ġabra ta' riżoluzzjonijiet li ttieħdu f'Rio biex l-ambjent isir aktar aħjar u jgħaqqdu ambjent ma' żvilupp. Bażikament kull nazzjon, anki Malta, qed tipprova tagħmel strateġija. Malta għandna l-istrateġija nazzjonali fuq Edukazzjoni Ambjentali. Scotland bdew proċess ta' konsultazzjoni u l-emfaži huwa li nurik is-sitwazzjoni kif inhi, jew aħjar ngħinek aktar milli nurik. Ngħinek tara s-sitwazzjoni. Inti tiddeċiedi x'għandek tagħmel, imbagħad jien bażikament għax jien policy maker noqgħod attent biex ma noħloqlokx xkiel biex int tkun tista' tagħmel dik l-azzjoni. Fi Scotland beda dan il-proċess u ma setax iżommu l-Gvern. Meta ġie d-dokument il-gvern beda jilgħab is-soltu tattika tal-politiċi. Beda jtawwal l-affarijiet, iħalli hemmhekk, imbagħad meta jkollhom ċans jistudjawha sew! Pero' x'għara, minħabba li n-nies at the grassroot level kienu kkonsultati? Ma stennewx lill-gvern jiehu l-azzjoni. Qabdu u biddlu huma l-affarijiet b'tali mod li l-gvern ma setax hlief japprova d-dokument. Dak, in a nutshell, x'għara hemmhekk u l-iskop aħħari ta' Environment Education huwa li inti tkun responsabbli ta' l-ambjent tiegħek. Biex tkun responsabbli trid tkun infurmat u trid tkun empowered biex tagħmel dawn l-affarijiet għaliex il-baži ta' environment education hija l-informazzjoni ta' valuri u attitudes aktar milli ntik l-informazzjoni.

Q : Allura x'attitudes għandha jkollha t-teacher?

A : Qisek għidli mhux biex tgħallim, għax biex tgħallim il-Biology nista' naqbad il-ktieb u bla, bla, bla...wassaltulek. Imma jiena nħobb nuża l-kelma biex 'ingennen' in-nies fis-suġġett. Tmur naqra lil hemm minn sempliċiment tipprepara għall-eżami. Jiena ngħid hekk, biex jiena nikkonvertik għall-Kristjaneżmu rrid inkun Kristjan jien l-ewwel. Nista' nkun Buddist, jew ateju. Jekk hemm bżonn ngħidlek il-fatti, ngħidlek il-Kristjani jemmu f'din u din. Jekk jien irrid nikkonvincik noqgħod attent għal dak li hu l-hidden curriculum li speċi jiena qed inparla hafna fuq l-użu ta' riżorsi u mbagħad naħli karti bl-addoċċ. Il-karozza tiegħi ddaħħan qisha ċ-ċumnija tal-Marsa, jew tarani nikkaċċja. Inti tgħid isma' dana fejn hu? Nista' ngħid hafna affarijiet u ma jservu għal xejn.

Bazikament l-aktar attitude u value mportanti għal teacher li ser tkun involuta fl-education hu li hi stess tkun għamlet value clarification exercise li tara l-ambjent where it features fil-prijoritajiet tal-valuri tagħha. L-aktar valur li nħoss li huwa mportanti huwa l-altruwiżmu, li jien mhux l-aqwa li jien allright u daqshekk imma li jiena jimpurtani minnek, jimpurtanti wkoll minn dawk li jridu jiġu warajja li l-anqas naf biss min huma. Jiena mhux ġejt hawn f'din id-dinja bit-tir li niehu gost jien u daqshekk. Għall-familja tiegħi nagħmel firm kbira ta' hotels, jibnu kif ġie ġie, l-aqwa li l-familja tiegħi moħħhom mistrieħ, imma qed nirvina lil haddieħor. Dik li qed nifhem biha b'altruwiżmu. Fil-fatt hija bbażata fuq il-kunċett kollu ta' sustainable development, li jiena ngħix illum with a good quality of life. Issa oqgħod attenta għax quality of life u standard of living huma żewġ affarijiet differenti. Jista' jkolluk very high quality of life pero', b'dak li nagħmel jien nippermetti nies oħra li għadhom l-anqas biss twieldu li jkollhom l-istess jew higher quality of life. Għalija l-aħjar haġa hija l-altruwiżmu.

Value for life, any form of life. Jekk inti b'dak li qed tagħmel qed teqred speċi preżenti li hija endemika li għandu pajjizek biss, dak mhux parti mill-heritage nazzjonali tiegħek? M'għandix dritt din tgħix? Mhux ikolluk tagħzel bejn...Għax imbagħad jidhol valur aktar profond. Fi kwistjoni fejn ser nagħzel bejn haġja ta' bniedem u l-haġja ta' hanex u nagħzel tal-hanex...Mhux hekk qed ngħid jien. Qed ngħid li bi ftit kura nista' nkompli niehu hsieb tal-bniedem u fl-istess hin niżgura li dan il-hanex ma jinferidx. Wara kolloxx bl-istess argument ngħid għaliex, jekk jiena ma napprezzax dan il-wirt, ma naqbadx u ntajjar dak il-gozz ġebel? Haġar Qim hemm hafna ġebel antik, iffurmat tempju, dak mhux qed jintuża u nagħmel 5 star hotel, hemm veduta bħal dik! Int tista' tagħmel bidla li għalija hija bażika li d-deċiżjonijiet tiegħek, bil-life style tiegħek...x'irrid ngħid biha? Hafna jgħidu x'nista nagħmel, per eżempju, jekk ma nisparalux jien dak l-għasfur jisparalu haddieħor...Jista' ma jisparalux haddieħor ukoll. Jekk nisparalu jien żgur m'għandux ċans. Dik il-mentalita' li l-qatra tiegħi tgħodd. Li inti, yes, tinfluenza n-nies ta' madwarek. Din bħall-qatra. Il-mewġa tagħha ser tibqa' tinfirex għalkemm qatra waħda kienet. Naf li qed inkun ottimist iż-żejjed pero' jiena dak it-tip ta' bniedem. Jekk ma jkollukx ċertu tama fid-dinja tispiċċa. Jekk jiena qed niġġieled meta l-kawża diġa' mitlufa, għalfejn qed niġġieled? Ha niġġieled għal xejn allura. Imma Environment Education timplika li hemm futur aħjar avolja għamilna hafna hsara. Nistgħu nirriversjaw is-sitwazzjoni. Nistgħu niġu f'sitwazzjoni fejn niġu haġa waħda ma' l-ambjent.

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed kif inhu mqassam bħalissa qedin jiżviluppaw dawn il-kompetenzi fit-teachers?

A : Ha nagħmlu hekk u naħseb li nidhol fit-tielet parti ta' kif issir. Fil-Fakulta' ta' l-Edukazzjoni bħal kull settur ieħor li hawn, għandna tendenza li naħdmu b'mod fragmentat. F'sitwazzjoni bħal dik diffiċli hafna toħloq viżjoni holistika. Issa jekk innutajt Environment Education hija bbażata fuq xi haġa holistika. Issa nitkellmu fuq dawk il-limitazzjonijiet. Per eżempju bħalissa għandna s-sitwazzjoni tal-Units jew aktar tard ser ikollna modules.

Module magħmul minn diversi units. Per eżempju, jien għandi unit Teaching Biology 1, Teaching Biology 2, Teaching Biology 3. Jagħmel aktar sens jekk ikun module ta' 3 credits li jissemma Teaching Biology milli hafna biċċiet. Issa jiena nara lok li jkun hemm Environmental Education Programme. Dan bażikament, in a nutshell, jintroduci l-istudenti mal-prinċipji ta' Environment Education biex ifarrak l-ideja li Environment Education m'hiex Nature Studies, m'hiex ekoloġija u juri wkoll kif żviluppa l-kunċett. Imbagħad li jagħmilhom aware minn problemi ambjentali, issues ambjentali lokali u forsi anka li huma wesghin. Jekk ahna għandna problema dwar water shortage, mhux Malta biss tinstab din. F'dawn il-proċessi tidhol fuq value clarification exercise li jiena at a certain point I have to think about my life style. Mhux sempliciment nitgħallim biss imma issa jien irrid nara kif ser nirrelata. Meta qed ngħid responsabilita' lejn l-ambjent xi tfisser li ngħix b'mod sostenibbli? Fil-hajja tiegħi personali x'tinvolvi? Lest li nagħmel il-qabza jew le?

Imbagħad kif nista' nwettqu fil-klassi u prattikament ikolli l-proġett li nista' nwettqu fil-klassi tiegħi? M'hemmx sugġett partikulari 'Environment Education'. Bażikament nara jekk il-main tiegħi hu l-Malti, kif nista' nutilizza lezzjonijiet tal-Malti biex inwassal u nkabbar dawk il-valuri ambjentali fit-tfal?

Din sar xi haġa tipo tagħha fin-1994. Kien beda unit li kien qed isir ma' dawk li issa huma 4th years (1994-1998). Dak il-unit kien l-ewwel attentat fil-Fakulta' biex tintroduci Environment Education. If you want my honest opinion fuqu kien hemm hafna problemi. Mhux kuntent bih kif kien imma dik tista' tkun parti minni għax jien ma nafx biex jien kuntent. Ċertu units inbiddilhom. Nahseb jiena ma kienx hemm biżżejjed...Ma kienx hemm iċ-ċans li tidhol fuq livell ta' value clarification. Kien hemm parti essenzzjali minnu fuq livell ta' knowledge imma dak kien l-ewwel attentat. Imbagħad sar hafna ċaqlieg fil-Fakulta' li dak speċi waqa'. Naf li kienet qed tagħmel xi haġa Ms S. Gatt, pero', kif Environment Education jiffittja fis-Science li idejalment suppost qed jagħmilha kulhadd, kif tal-Malti qed tagħmel kif Environment Education tista' taħdem. Tal-History l-istess. Imma mbagħad din is-sena fettlilna nagħmlu l-istess b'unit wieħed mal-PGCE u din id-darba eżiġejna li jkun numru żgħir, 20 xorta waħda, imma numru li tista' fih taħseb naqra fuq value clarification. Kien esperiment li nahseb li rnexxa għalkemm ovvjament għad fadalli nara r-risposti ta' l-istudenti. Imma tibda tara ċertu studenti jibqgħu jiġru warajk u jagħmlulek ċertu mistoqsijiet speċi li m'għandhom xejn x'jaqsmu ma' l-assignment - speċifikament għax huma veru nteressati. Per eżempju waħda mill-affarijiet li ntroduċejna kienet li hawn kotba fuq consumer budgets li juruk dawk id-ditti li huma ambjentalment preferiti. Meta jiġu jitlobu homlok dawn l-affarijiet, tirrealizza li, jew qed jagħmlu dan biex jinhabbu, li ma nahsibx, jew tgħid ilqatt il-musmar fuq rasu. Nahseb dan il-unit kien aktar suċċess. Issa pjanijiet għal quddiem. Bażikament ahna għandna l-hsieb li dan il-unit isir module li jikkaverja 4 units. Ikun aktar estensiv. Forsi li għadna ma ddeċidejniex jekk humiex mifruxin fuq 4 snin jew inkella jkun kors l-ewwel sena jew whatever. Jien nahseb li aktar jagħmel sens jekk ikun mifrux għaliex tista' tibni fuqu. Pero', għad trid tiġi diskussa din. Dawn huma affarijiet li ppruvajna nagħmlu iżda ma nkunx jien biss involut fiha l-biċċa xogħol. L-aktar element importanti dan fih huwa l-element ta' prattika. Irid ikun ibbażat mhux fuq holm u knowledge biss imma billi titgħallom affarijiet bħal meta nagħmlu 'internet search' u naraw prodotti li huma bojkottjati. L-importanti li jkunu fuq livell prattiku.

Per eżempju fil-PGCE għandi student li jkteb hafna fil-gazzetti u xtaq li juża dan il-medium biex jikkomunika bih. L-ideja hi li qed jiehu xi haġa li hi aktar informative milli formal. Pero' l-importanti li tkompli titmexxa l-krucjata.

Interview with Mr. J. Giordmaina (Philosophy / Thinking Skills)

Q : X'kompetenzi ghandu jkollu għalliem/għalliema biex tgħalliem il-Philosophy fi Skola Primarja?

A : Importanti li jkollhom an idea of how knowledge is created, in the sense that, the idea of Philosophy is that you develop good reasoning skills. If you believe that knowledge is something which is there, it is fixed, and the idea of the teacher is just to transmit that knowledge to those who do not have that knowledge, it doesn't really make sense. Waħda mill-competencies li teacher irid ikollu, li qed jagħmel dan it-tip ta' xogħol, hu li hu appuntu dan li jħares lejn knowledge bħala xi ħaġa created in a community, in a classroom. So I think that is important.

Another competency is open-mindedness, that he is open to other people's points of views, you know, that sort of thing. Imbagħad ovvjament competencies oħrajn, I mean, the ability to decentre from himself or herself, the ability to listen to others more than a normal teacher and to respect students as thinking beings. Dak it-tip t'affarijiet nahseb hux hekk, għax inti għidtli including knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Knowledge. Obviously, he has to know the theory behind Philosophy for Children and Thinking Skills, what we are trying to do there. Irid ikollu communication skills bla dubju fejn jidhlu skills, communication skills, listening skills, that sort of thing. U attitudes, as I was saying open mindedness, the idea that truth is not something which is fixed, which is absolute but it is something which develops. That is basically it.

Q : It-tip ta' methodology, biex tgħalliem?

A : Iva, il-methodology hija differenti. Il-methodology hija aktar decentralling of power ta' l-għalliem. L-ideja hi li t-tfal jisimgħu aktar lil xulxin u jikkomunikaw aktar ma' xulxin allura, per eżempju, the physical aspect tal-klassi wkoll irid jinbidel. Tipprova tagħmilhom ċirku, li t-teacher ikun wieħed minn dan iċ-ċirku, li kemm jista' jkun tinkuraġġixxi lit-tfal jikkellmu bejniethom u anqas ma tkun inti fin-nofs aktar aħjar...

P : Speċi tal-PSE...

A : Iva, il-metodoloġija hija simili ħafna. Jiġifieri d-differenza hi li fil-metodoloġija tal-PSE l-aġenda, xi jridu jiddiskutu, tkun diġa' ddeterminata minn quddiem, mill-għalliem, mill-kurrikulum, fil-waqt li f'dan il-każ x'ser jiġi diskuss jiġi determinat mill-istudenti. Allura, again, għandek il-possibiltà li tkun taf x'jinteressa t-tfal, x'inhu ta' concern għalihom. Differenti milli tiġi bl-aġenda lesta u whether you like it or not...

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed u dak tal-PGCE kif inhu mqassam bħalissa qiegħed jgħin biex jiżviluppa dawn il-kompetenzi?

A : Bħala training qed nahdmu fuq livelli differenti. Fil-B.Ed għandna dawk li qed jieħdu Primary bħala area of specialisation. It is a compulsory subject and they have to do a unit in their fourth year. I am not happy that they have to do it in their fourth year għax il-fourth year huwa l-aħgar żmien, imma qed jagħmluh. Tajjeb illi they have some experience. Dawn ser ikollhom ċans jesperimentawha bil-metodoloġija li wżajna biex żviluppajna dak il-unit fis-sens illi bdejna bi ftiit tejorija mbagħad morna għall-classroom observations fi skejje

partikulari fejn qed isir dan it-tip ta' xogħol. Allura kellhom ċans practising teachers jimmmodellawha kif taħdem. Wara dan ser ikollhom ċans jippruvaw jagħmluha huma. Għalhekk, hemmhekk qed tiżviluppa l-iskills u l-competencies li għandhom. Imbagħad ser ikollhom ċans jiltaqgħu bejniethom u mal-class teacher tagħhom fejn jiddiskutu l-layout u l-esperjenza tagħhom. Jaraw, at the end of the day, whether it is fruitful or not. That is basically the idea ta' kif qed jinħadem. Differenti milli taqbad u tagħmel straight lectures. F'dan il-każ ma jahdimx. That is B.Ed Primary.

Issa B.Ed Secondary hemm erba' units fuq Critical and Creative Thinking illi parti minnhom jidhol Philosophy for Children. Imma basically it is obviously 4 credits, għandek hafna aktar possibiltà ta' kontenut. Hemmhekk nifthu hafna, nifthu fuq tejerija, very important for Education, fejn għandek tejerija mhux fuq one type of intelligence but for 7 or 8 types at least. U li dawk kollha, they need different skills and pedagogy biex tiżviluppahom. Tkellimna hafna fuq Creativity wkoll, kif tiżviluppa Creative Thinking. At that level the B.Ed course naħseb li qed naħdmu.

Imbagħad hemm il-Foundation Courses fejn, indirectly, nagħmlu dan it-tip t'affarijet ukoll. We are trying to develop Critical Thinking, for example mill-unit 'Reading a Text' li hi differenti minn 'Reading the Text'. That is very important u għamilna unit ieħor li jismu 'Conversations in Education', li section minnu jittratta fuq dialogue which is again how to use Dialogue and Conversation in Education. So I think that is important.

Issa PGCE għandhom l-istess unit bħal tal-Primary. It's an optional credit fil-każ tagħhom. Ma johduhx kollha imma jinħadem l-istess. L-ewwel il-parti tejoretika mbagħad jagħmlu sessions huma bejniethom biex jieħdu ftit prattika. Mbagħad jagħmlu observations wara fil-klassi wkoll. Interessanti wkoll li fis-sajf norganizzaw Summer School fejn hafna drabi nużaw teachers tal-B.Ed stess. Din hija Summer School kollha fuq Creative Thinking u niżviluppaw dawn it-tip ta' competencies fit-teachers li jkunu qed jittrenjaw hemmhekk u what we are trying to do is li dak li qed nitkellmu fuqu matul is-sena qed nippruvawh fis-Sajf għax aħna ma nitkellmux fuq affarijet li m'humiex prattikabbli...Hadd ma jista' jiġi u jgħidilna, 'din impossibli' jew 'din tejerija biss!'. Ejja u taraha taħdem fis-Sajf. Anki issa ħadna l-possibiltà li qedin nittrenjaw it-teachers li jkunu ser jahdmu fis-Summer School tal-Gvern. Allura qed intuhom ftit ideja ta' x'jistgħu jagħmlu.

Unit ieħor fl-area ta' Philosophy u Thinking Skills jingħata lill-casual teachers li bħalissa qed jagħmlu kors...Għandna input ukoll mid-diploma tal-facilitators...ma dawk li qed jahdmu bħala facilitators mat-tfal ta' l-inclusion. Qed nagħmlulhom kors fuq Developing Thinking Skills.

Imbagħad għandek in-service training tat-teachers li qed jagħmlu I.T in Education. Qed intuhom 6 to 8 hours fuq Critical and Creative Thinking using Multimedia. Speċjalment l-aktar li nuffukaw fuq Creative Thinking hemmhekk. Again, it is part of thinking obviously.

Issa, l-gvern qed jorganizza kors għal-casual teacher, instructors, jew x'jgħidulhom daż-żmien, u dawn ukoll ġew ittrenjati fil-Critical Thinking. Kellhom unit wieħed, ftit lectures fuqu. Imbagħad fis-Sajf il-gvern jorganizza in-service courses u dawk nagħtu 2 f'July u f'September, jiġifieri l-ispektrum huwa wiesgħa, is-servising huwa wiesgħa ta' din l-ideja.

Imbagħad għamilna unit ieħor ma' teachers li qed jagħmlu kors li jsejnhulu 'Certificate in Learning Support Teaching', u dawk ukoll għandhom unit in Thinking Skills and Creative Thinking.

Tista' tghid li l-courses li jmissu mal-Fakulta' tagħna b'xi mod qed nimputtjaw fihom Critical and Creative Thinking. Fil-B.Ed għandna compulsory għal-Primary, għandna mhux compulsory imma it's 4 units għas-Secondary u għandna wkoll tal-PGCE optional, imma mbagħad trid tqis li fil-Foundations thinking skills qed intuhom importanza kbira. L-aktar li nippruvaw niżviluppaw il-creative u critical skills ta' l-istudenti tagħna hawnhekk aktar milli minn kif jgħallmuhom. X'jista' jsir aktar? Ovvjament wieħed irid jahdem fuq livelli differenti.

P : Niffukaw l-aktar fuq il-B.Ed Primary.

A : Fuq il-B.Ed Primary jiena nixtieq li xi tip ta' Critical and Creative Thinking Skills fuq żewġ livelli kemm kif tiżviluppa critical and creative thinking skills ta' l-istudenti tal-B.ED u anki mbagħad kif jittrażmettu dawn l-iskills lit-tfal waqt li qedin jgħallmu kemm through specific programmes, bħal Philosophy for Children, DeBono Thinking Programme u...

P : During other lessons...

A : During the teaching of Maltese, the teaching of...through the subjects. I think that it should be compulsory as it is so basic. I mean hawn min isejjaħlu the 4th R, you know. The 3 R's huma reading, writing and arithmetic u the 4th R would be reasoning. I would say that reasoning is the basic to reading, to writing, to arithmetic. So I think it is so important that it should be part of the compulsory area. Issa x'ser thalli barra x'ser tagħmel, you know that can create problems.

Imma again fuq competencies ingenerali naħseb illi l-Fakulta' tagħna trid tersaq hafna aktar lejn l-iskejjel fejn intukhom hafna aktar modelling aħna ta' kif għandu jsir l-oġġett. Jiġifieri, you know, we do not just talk about it but you go, you see things and you do things for yourself. We assess you on what you are doing. Obviously, the problem is numbers. Biex organizzajna dak il-unit li semmejna l-ewwel, it is so difficult biex...anki l-invasion ta' l-iskejjel, 4 - 5 adults in a classroom plus the teacher, the tutor, plus the kids, li taf taħdimlek bil-maqlub. Pero' hija waħda mill-affarijiet li tista' ssir u hija prattikabbli hafna li ssir.

P : Li hareġ hafna minn dawn l-interviews kienet li...Kont qed nitkellem ma' lecturer oħra fuq l-Art u qaltli li hemm areas fl-art li jghinu l-Creative Thinking...

A : Din hija nteressanti. Fil-fatt aħna qedin naħdmu tlieta minn-nies flimkien, jiena, Isabelle u Sandra Dingli. L-ideja hi li din mhiex boundary tiegħi jew boundary ta' Isabelle jew ta' xi hadd...we try to work as a whole team. It is important this idea of teamwork...Il-fakulta' tagħna għadha qed tiġi żviluppata. It's still fragmented, anka li nagħmlu Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology. Qedin nippruvaw inresquhom lejn xulxin which is a competence li teacher li qed jipprova jagħmel dawn l-affarijiet irid ikollu.

Interview with Mr. Joe Camilleri (Inclusive Education)

Q : What competencies should a teacher have to teach effectively in an Inclusive Environment in a Primary School?

A : Where do we begin? Nahseb li teacher żgur li jrid ikollha ċertu aptitude within her li taħdem mat-tfal. Trid tkun taf is-suġġett jew is-suġġetti tagħha sewwa pero' l-iżjed li nenfażizza fuqu huwa l-attitude, li jekk it-teacher ikollha l-attitude pożittiv li taċċetta d-diversita' diġa' għandek l-ewwel pass. It-tieni waħda trid tkun tosserva tajjeb ħafna u trid tosserva b'intelligenza. Irid ikollha good communication skills u trid tkun kapaċi tipprova tikkomunika b'modi differenti u anka li tuża lingwaġġ differenti biex tipprova tiftiehem aħjar. Nahseb ukoll illi teacher trid tkun lesta li tkun krejattiva fid-definizzjoni ta' x'jiġifieri tkun teacher in 'an inclusive classroom' fis-sens illi teacher in the inclusive classroom ma tista' qatt tkun sempliċiment għalliema ta' suġġett. Trid tkun hemmhekk ħafna drabi kif kienu jgħidu fl-antik 'in loco parentis', minflok il-ġenituri, fil-post tal-ġenituri u l-approach tiegħek lejn l-istudent irid ikun dak ta' ġenitur enlightened, jiġifieri ġenitur b'ċertu edukazzjoni u anka ċertu sensittività'. Nahseb dak hu l-aħjar approach li jista' jkollok. Ovvjament, teacher trid tkun tajba mhux biss fis-suġġett imma anki fil-pedagoġija. Irid ikun hemm ċerta kompetenza. Kull fejn it-teacher thoss nuqqas fiha nnifisha ħafna drabi flok tammetti dak in-nuqqas, dak in-nuqqas tipprogettah fuq it-tfal u n-nuqqasijiet tat-tfal ħafna drabi jkunu n-nuqqasijiet tat-teacher. Jien li sibt li jgħin ħafna hu li jkollok sense of humour tajba fis-sens illi f'sitwazzjoni li tista' tkun diffikultuża tipprevediha u tipprova taġixxi magħha b'mod krejattiv u you diffuse the situation. Is-sitwazzjoni flok tkabbarha mill-ewwel tipprova ċċekkinha. Jiġifieri jrid ikollok conflict resolution skills tajbin.

Q : Tahseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed u dak tal-PGCE qed jgħin biex jiżviluppa dawn il-kompetenzi li semmejna?

A : Ara jien ma nistax nippretendi li nitkellem b'knowledge profund tas-sillabu tagħkom għax m'għandix ċans noqgħod niffollowja bir-reqqa, allavolja jinteressani ħafna. Pero', milli ltqajt ma' l-istudenti li ilhom jagħmlu l-kors ta' l-Oqsma ta' Diżabilita' dan l-aħħar tlett snin, nahseb illi le ma jippreparax lill-istudenti tajjeb fejn it-tfal huma fi klassi inklussiva. Nahseb li l-approach għadu l-ewwel jitgħallmu jgħallmu dawk it-tfal li huma jsejthulhom normali mbagħad jgħallmu lil dawk li jsejthulhom mhux normali.

Għax għalihom it-tgħalim tat-tfal li għandhom diżabilita' jew bżonnijiet differenti dejjem ġie meqjus bħala specialisation. Qatt ma ġie meqjus bħala part and parcel mit-training tiegħek. Allura l-ewwel haġa li jgħidulek it-teachers hija, 'aħna mhux ittrenjati'. Sa ċertu punt bir-raġun, pero', aħna nafu wkoll li t-training illi tircievi mill-Universita' huwa biss in-knowledge, l-iskills u l-attitudes li ha jkollok bżonn biex tiżviluppa kontinwament fil-karriera tiegħek. Voldieri min jaħseb li ha johroġ minn hemmhekk m'għandu bżonn xejn għal tletin sena ovvjament qed jagħmel żball kbir. Ma nahsibx li l-preparament huwa daqshekk iġġerjat lejn sistema li hija aktar inklussiva. Huwa ggerjat lejn sistema elitista, is-sistema ta' l-isteamming, sistema ta' eżamijiet, sistema li taċċetta l-inugwaljanza. Dawk it-tfal li huma bravi, dawk it-tfal li huma żwiemel, li jifilhu, l-aktar li nitfgħu riżorsi fihom.

Q : U x'tahseb li għandu jsir biex ma jkunx hekk?

A : Nahseb li l-ewwel nett it-tgħalim u t-taħriġ, it-trawwim tat-teachers żgħażaġh għandu jkun mill-punto di vista ta' inclusion mill-ewwel ġurnata. It-tieni nett nahseb li għandha

tiddaħħal sistema ta' screening kontinwu waqt il-kors fejn l-istudenti jiġu mgħiegħla jsaqsu lilhom infushom, 'jiena maqtugħ għal din il-karriera ta' teacher? Veru din il-karriera li rrid jien jew irrid nidhol għaliha għax hemm l-elementi ta' paga, elementi ta' ħinijiet li huma desirable?' Nahseb ukoll illi t-teachers iż-żgħażaġh li għandhom bżonn jagħmlu hu li jkollhom aktar knowledge dwar id-diversita' fil-klassi. M'għandhomx biżżejjed knowledge. Hafna minnhom iqisu li tfal b'diżabilità' huma responsabbilita' ta' haddieħor, mhux ir-responsabbilita' tagħhom jew iħobbu jibnu myth tal-professional, li jgħidlek li inti trid tkun a professional in the field. Menti fil-fatt hafna mill-ġenituri li għandhom tfal b'diżabilità' m'humieq professionals u xorta jikkowpjaw tajjeb. Hafna nies li għandhom diżabilità' m'humieq professionals u jikkowpjaw tajjeb.

Pero' nahseb li mill-bidu nett l-istudent għandu jiġi mdorri li hu qiegħed hemm għal kulhadd mhux għal dawk il-ftit li kwazi kwazi m'għandhomx bżonnu. Haġa waħda li hi mportanti hi li jekk ser isir taħriġ dwar diżabilità' għandu jsir bil-partecipazzjoni attiva ta' nies b'diżabilità'. Jekk il-lectures ser ikunu mogħtija mill-professionals għall-professionals m'huma ser ikollhom valur ta' xejn għaliex huma ser jgħallmuk it-tejorija, il-pedagoġija li jkollok bżonn, pero, mhux ser isir il-kuntatt mar-rejalta'. Il-verita' hija li d-diżabilità' hija realta' li trid tgħixha allura iżjed ma jkollhom kuntatti ma' nies b'diżabilità' iżjed aħjar. Mela għalhekk aħna nqisu li l-kors li qed nagħmlu dwar l-Oqsma ta' Diżabilità' għandu jkun one, ċentrali, parti mill-core curriculum u two, għandu jkun compulsory għal kulhadd, mhux tagħzlu, mhux optional.

Interview with Mr. J. Bencini (MUT president)

Q : X'kompetenzi ghandha jkollha teacher biex tghallem b'mod effettiv fil-Primarja?

A : Sewwa...x'kompetenzi...Inti staqsejtni fi Skola Primarja. Naturalment, bhalissa ghaddejnin taħdidiet jew aħjar hemm qisu ideja li l-Universita' tixtieq taqşam il-kors. Diġa' ssemmiet fil-pubbliku din. Ahna, l-Union, irridu naraw din x'konsegwenzi jista' jkollha rigward il-ftehim li wiehed jagħmel mal-Gvern. Irridu noqogħdu attenti dwar din il-ħaġa, dwar kif tolqot il-lat trejdjunjonistiku tagħha għax għandna konsegwenzi. Pero' nahseb li smajt li l-Universita' trid li jkollha kors għall-Primarja u kors għas-Sekondarja. Ir-raġuni li l-Universita' qed tghid hekk hi għax qed taħseb li sfortunatament, kif inhu l-kors illum, il-kompetenzi, l-kwalitajiet ta' l-istudenti mhux qedin ikunu biżżejjed biex jgħallmu fis-settur Primarju. Għaliex? Għax hemm differenza kbira bejn inti tghallem fis-settur Primarju u s-settur Sekondarju, speċjalment jekk inti fis-settur Primarju jkollok il-lower classes, il-Year 1 u l-Year 2. Allura li tghallem il-Year 1 u l-Year 2 fi Skola Primarja u tghallem Form 4 u Form 5 fis-Sekondarja hemm baħar jaqşam. Għalhekk, ahna ngħidu li fis-settur Primarju s-sitwazzjoni hija waħda aktar delikata. Jiġifieri wiehed irid iħares l-aspett pedagogiku, hafna aktar b'importanza milli kieku qiegħed fis-settur Sekondarju.

P : Jiġifieri l-emfażi mhux fuq is-suġġett?

A : Jiena hekk ngħid. Aktar kif tghallem is-suġġett milli kompetenza fis-suġġett. M'hux qed ngħid li m'għandekx tkun kompetenti fis-suġġett imma let us face it, biex tghallem fil-Primarja m'għandekx għalfejn tkun kompetenti fis-suġġett li inti tidhol fih b'mod verament fid-dettal. Biex inti tghallem il-Matematika u l-Ingliš fil-Primarja għandek bżonn ċertu livell ta' edukazzjoni...Ahna xorta ngħidu li l-għalliema għandu jkollu l-aktar livell għoli. Naraw ċertu pajjiżi fl-Ewropa li ma jirrikjedux daqstant biex teacher tmur tghallem fi Skola Primarja. Ahna l-MUT ngħidu 'le', it-teacher fil-Primarja għandu jkollu l-istess grad għoli daqs teacher fis-Sekondarja. Pero' mbagħad inti qed tghallem tfal li aktar mill-kompetenza fis-suġġett trid kompetenza fil-pedagogija. Dik hi l-ideja tiegħi ingenerali.

P : U bħala l-atitudni ta' l-għalliema tal-Primarja? Inti semmejt kompetenza kemm fis-suġġett kif ukoll kif għandek tghallem is-suġġett. Dawn huma ngħidilhom jien, knowledge u skills...

A : Eh, sewwa...Jiena rajt hawnhekk sensiela ta' demands. What does the profession demand from the Primary School teacher? Liema huma l-atitudnijiet tiegħek? X'għandha tkun l-atitudni tiegħek lejn it-tfal? Jiena ngħid li dawn huma mportanti hafna, speċjalment fis-settur Primarju :

- a warm caring personality ; imbagħad ngħidlek il-quddiem iżjed x'għidu t-tfal fuq it-teacher. Dik importanti hafna.
- an ability to relate and communicate freely with children ; importantissima.
- maturity, professionalism, ability to assume responsibility and integrity ; dawn kollha mportanti.
- adaptability ; trid taddatta ruħek għax ser issib kull tip ta' tifel quddiemek.

- initiative and good humour ; ħafna drabi sfortunatament ikollna min initiative forsi jkollu imma good humour kultant ma jeżistix mat-tfal. Naħsbu li qedin f'xi reġiment tas-soldati.
- creativity ; mhux ta' b'xejn li llum anki l-Gvern irrejalizza din u dahħal il-Mid-Week project.
- imagination ; mhux it-tfal dahħalthom fil-klassi u poġġejthom bil-qieghda fid-disgħa neqsin kwart u qajjimthom fit-tlieta neqsin kwart, kemm jagħmlu ftit break u fullstop. Imma aħna ngħidu trid immaġinazzjoni biex inti l-ħajja tagħhom fil-klassi tagħmililhom a second home, tohloq affarijiet fil-klassi li dawn tagħmilhom interessanti li t-tfal jieħdu pjaċir jiġu l-iskola mhux imorru l-iskola bin-nervi.
- diverse interest ; din tmur magħhom.
- common sense ; ħafna drabi tara li m'hemmx common sense. Ma jeżistix.
- patience ; ma jittalniex jekk jista' jkun.
- reliability.
- readiness to understand and meet the needs of the children in your care.
- an appreciation of cultural values and interests and new ideas
- a sound education.
- a high standard of personal grooming and presentation. It-tfal kollox jinnutaw. Tinsieħ illi aħna ġġudikati kuljum minn tletin ruħ bil-qieghda quddiemna li ser jgħaddu ġudizzju. Anki tifel ta' tmien snin jagħmel ġudizzju.
- energy, enthusiasm and stamina ; intom suppost li jkollkhom għax għadkom żgħar, enthusiasm, allahares għandek dik nieqsa għax tfalli bħala teacher, jekk m'intix entużjasta li tgħallem, u stamina, you have to keep it up, ma taqtax qalbek.
- commitment to expand the learning and development of children under your care.

Dawn huma, jekk inti tiġbor kollox, dak li jagħmel teacher. Jekk għandek waħda jew iktar minn dawn neqsin żgur illi t-teacher ser ikollha xi ħaġa nieqsa.

P : Jiena nemmen li daww kollha mportanti, pero', għas-sitwazzjoni lokali għal hawn Malta, hemm xi waħda li tgħid ara din hemm bżonn l-aktar?

A : Iva, jiena ngħid illi s-sitwazzjoni tat-tfal fl-iskejjel tagħna, speċjalment fis-Settur Primarju, għalkemm għandha l-problemi u d-diffikultajiet tagħha bħal kull skola fid-dinja, bħal kull tifel u tifla fid-dinja, hawn Malta s-sitwazzjoni għadha waħda pożittiva. Jiena nsiefer u mmur barra u nitkellem ma' għalliema barra mill-pajjiż fejn il-problemi ta' bullying anki fuq teachers ukoll anki mit-tfal fis-Settur Primarju qed tiżdied kuljum. Hawn Malta għalkemm għandna problemi f'xi skejjel u qed jiżdiedu wkoll speċjalment fis-Settur Sekondarju u anki fil-Primarju għandna xi problemi 'l hemm u 'l hawn. Ir-rispett għadu hemm. Pero' li nara li hemm bżonn, personalment li kultant nara nieqes hawnhekk hija l-

attenzjoni kemm kemm personali. Irridu nifhmu li kull tifel għandu karattru, kull tifel ġej minn environment, illi kull tifel jista' jkollu l-problemi tiegħu minhabba l-problemi fil-familja u għalhekk importanti li teacher tkun taf it-tfal sew, trid tkun taf anki l-familja jekk jista' jkun. Trid tkun taf it-tifel minn liema ambjent ġej u li nagħdru ftit lit-tfal u ninzlu ftit fil-livell tat-tfal għax xi kultant ma nagħmluhiex bis-serjeta'. Dik nara wahda mill-aktar affarijiet importanti.

Q : Issa, diġa' semmejtieli qabel, taħseb li l-kors tal-B.Ed kif inhu bħalissa u kemm dak tal-PGCE qiegħed jgħin biex jiġu żviluppatti dawn il-kompetenzi li hemm bżonn?

A : Ara...X'tgħid l-MUT nista' ngħidlek jiena. L-MUT fil-fatt il-PGCE tarah bħala xi haġa t'emergenza. Dan aħna konna ħarisna lejha bħala xi haġa t'emergenza. Kien hawn żmien fil-pajjiż meta għalliema ma kienx hawn biżżejjed u kien hawn kriżi kbira. Kellna żmien meta kellna 'l fuq minn 500 teacher li m'humiekk ikkwalifikati u qiegħdin fl-iskejjel. Din lill-MUT kienet tinkwetaha, għax aħna rridu teacher professjonista. Tabib hu tabib u avukat hu avukat. M'hemmx avukat casual u tabib casual u aħna ma rridux teachers casual, u ma rridux teachers mhux kwalifikati mill-Universita'. Kienu jidhlu ħafna u ħafna nies mhux kwalifikati. Allura l-Gvern kellu bilfors jagħmel hekk u l-MUT kellha tagħlaq għajn wahda u tgħid lill-Gvern għalissa nagħmlu hekk għax is-sitwazzjoni hekk tirrikjedi. Ma tistax thalli klassi vojta mingħajr għalliem. Allura nholoq il-PGCE għax il-Gvern waqa' fuq il-gradwati l-oħra li kienu jistudjaw xi suġġett partikulari. Biex dawn tal-BA setgħu jkomplu kellhom jagħmlu sena ta' pedagogija li tissejjah Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Dik ma ngħidx li kienet necessary evil għax inkella nkun kattiv imma kellha ssir għax ma kienx hemm triq oħra. Illum bħala MUT ngħidu li jekk nistgħu ngħaddu bla PGCE. Aħna favur illi l-uniku mezz kif wieħed isir teacher għandha tkun il-B.Ed (Hons.). Dik għalina għandha tkun l-uniku triq u m'għandux ikun hemm PGCE. Issa jekk hemm numru ta' studenti li żdiedu u jidher li l-Universita' s-sena d-dieħla ser johorġu 300, allura jiena nħoss li n-numru ser ikun biżżejjed. Anzi l-MUT qed tkun inkwetata għax jista' jkun ma jiġix impjegat kulhadd. Allaħares. Aktar u aktar ma narawx forsi l-lok għal-PGCE. Qabel kellu l-lok tiegħu, ir-raġuni tiegħu. Illum inharsu lejha b'mod differenti.

Q : U rigward il B.Ed?

A : Rigward il-B.Ed sar ħafna titjib fih. L-unika akkuża li ssir mil-PGCE's, jew l-uniku akkuża li nisma' jien li l-professuri li jgħallmu l-PGCE's jgħidu kontra...Ma nixtieqx ninstema' kontra, ħa jikkritikaw b'mod kostruttiv, hija li sfortunatament jista' jagħti l-każ illi akkademikament il-B.Ed's m'humiekk daqshekk ippreparati. Jiġifieri għandhom forsi pedagogija soda, għandhom forsi...

Q : Fil-każ tas-Sekondarja qed tgħid?

A : Fil-każ tal-Primarja l-aktar qed ngħid u anki fil-każ tas-Sekondarja...Anki, per eżempju, jiena ltqajt ma' każ li jgħidlek teacher ta' l-Ingliš tal-PGCE għal dak li huwa Ingliš academically speaking huwa aktar ippreparat minn teacher fis-Sekondarja li hi B.Ed.

Jiena din ma nistax naċċettaha u anki jekk hija hekk għandha tinstab ir-raġuni għaliex hawn din il-kritika. Pero' kif diġa għidtlek fil-bidu ta' l-interview tagħna qed isir titjib. Ser issir tibdila enormi kif ser ikun imqassam il-kors u għandi nemmen li teacher wara 4 snin l-Universita' bil-B.Ed ma jistax ikun illi akkademikament ma johorġx ippreparat.

Q : Fl-opinjoni tiegħek x'għandu jsir biex jiżviluppaw dawn il-kompetenzi li semmejna fil-bidu b'mod effettiv?

A : Naturalment ahna nagħtu mportanza kbira l-lat pedagoġiku u għat-training fl-iskejjel. Jien għaliya huwa t-training fl-iskejjel, li jkunu fuq il-post tax-xogħol u jaraw għalliem fi klassi u jsegwuh u jagħmlu anki żmien jgħallmu fi klassi huwa ta' mportanza kbira. Li nara hu li hafna drabi dak li inti tkun tghallimt fi skola mhux neċessarjament ser issegwieh. Inti fit-Teaching Practice mort fil-Primarja Year 2 u mbagħad meta hriġt minn hemm bagħtek tghallim l-Ingliż Form 4. Mela allura dak illi inti rajt b'għajnejk mhux neċessarjament ser jgħinek fl-ewwel snin tiegħek. Ahna ngħidu li għandu jkollok varjazzjoni ta' Teaching Practice jekk jista' jkun. Inti mhux biss tmur fil-Primarja imma tmur fit-tnejn. Jekk jista' jkun tvarja s-snin. U ahna ngħidu wkoll u l-Universita' tidher li ser taħdem fuq dawn il-linji li jkun hemm mentoring fl-iskejjel. Ahna nixtiequ li noħolqu post, xejn xejn anki t-teachers jieħdu gost biha għax ikun post ġdid, illi jkun hemm dawk li ngħidulhom mentors fl-iskola li jkunu teachers ta' ċertu eta' illi jkollhom it-time table tagħhom reduced pero' jieħdu hsieb l-għalliema l-ġodda. Meta teacher tmur fi skola ġdida, B.Ed u dahlet fl-iskola, ser tibda l-ewwel darba, hafna drabi hemmhekk issib id-diffikultajiet. Bilfors dan bħal kwalunkwe xogħol ġdid, u jekk inti għandek a mentor fl-iskola, teacher ta' esperjenza li jieħu hsiebek ukoll, mhux jiġifieri ser jiġi jgħidlek x'għandek tagħmel għax suppost li taf, fis-sens li jiggwidak. Ahna naraw li jekk inti t-Teaching Practice jikber u jkollok setturi fejn tista' tmur u meta verament tibda x-xogħol ikollok l-għajnuna mill-mentor speċjalment fil-probation period...Meta teacher tidhol mal-gvern għandha żmien, probation period u l-gvern jista' jgħid, 'thank you very much, your services are no longer required' u mhux obligat itik raġuni. Ahna ngħidu li matul dik is-sena tal-probation it-teacher zghazugħ għandu bżonn l-għajnuna tal-mentor.

Fil-units il-ġodda li l-Universita' beħsieba tintroduċi, jekk u meta tbiddel il-mod kif ser tagħmel il-B.Ed, jekk ikunx hemm B.Ed Primary u B.Ed Secondary ma nafx. Probabbilment li minn dik it-triq ser ngħaddu.

Jekk it-teachers ser jiġu ppreparati għall-Primarja jew għas-Sekondarja, allura hemmhekk is-sistema ser tinbidel. X'kien jiġri fl-imghoddi? Kien jiġri li jkun hemm wiehed li tghallim l-Ingliż u xtaq imur is-Sekondarja, jew insemmilek il-Malti u t-Taljan, l-aktar żewġ suġġetti li hemm hafna. Allura dan imur jagħmel l-interview tat-Taljan u jimtlew il-postijiet tat-Taljan. Imbagħad dan jispiċċa jibagħtu għalih il-Primarja. Imur kontra qalbu, imur mhux ippreparat biżżejjed, bil-konsegwenza li ser ibati hu u jbatu t-tfal. Din trid tispicċa. Barra minn hekk, sfortunatament, u nista' ngħidlek għax jien għandi ftit ta' l-esperjenza hawn, ftit huma dawk li jridu jmorru fis-Settur Primarju. U din hija tragedja. Ahna ngħidu li l-aħjar teachers għandhom ikunu fis-Settur Primarju għax hemmhekk hemm il-baži. It-tfal minn hemm ser ittellagħhom. Jekk fis-Settur Primarju ser ikollok partita teachers casuals qed infallu fis-sistema edukattiva tagħna. Ahna għandna nħajru lill-istudenti ta' l-Universita' biex imorru fil-Primarja. Biss veru li l-kundizzjonijiet tax-xogħol fil-Primarja huma aktar iebsa minn tas-Sekondarja u hawn tidhol l-MUT. Fil-fatt l-MUT dan il-mument bdiet tinsisti mal-Gvern biex il-kundizzjonijiet fil-Primarja jittrawgaw. Ahna rridu li fis-Settur Primarju jkun hemm teachers li jgħallmu suġġetti partikolari bħal Social Studies, forsi Religion, forsi Art, P.E, Music. Dawn għandhom ikunu teachers li jgħallmu dak is-suġġett partikolari fil-Primarja biex shabhom l-oħra li jgħallmu s-suġġetti l-oħrajn kollha...

P : Jiltaqgħu flimkien biex jippjanaw...

A : Ikollhom ħin biex jiltaqgħu flimkien biex jippjanaw ix-xogħol, school development u għaliex le? Għaliex m'għandhomx ikollhom aktar ħin ta' mistrieħ u din tibda tinkuraġġixxi żgur aktar għalliema biex imorru fis-Settur Primarju. Ahna ninsistu hafna fuqha din għax

xbajt ngħidha, xbajt ngħidha lill-Ministru, xbajt ngħidha lid-Direttur. Fil-konferenza ġenerali li ġejja ser nagħmel enfazi fuqha. Issa sta għall-Gvern. Il-ballun qiegħed f'idejha biex din jimplimentaha. Qabel ma kienx jimplimentaha għax kien jgħid, 'm'għandniex biex naħdmu', imma ssa għandu biex jaħdem. Issa l-verita' ħadet żvolta oħra.

U nistgħu forsi nħaddmu din is-sistema biex forsi nħajju aktar nies imorru fis-Settur Primarju.

Q : Tixtieq iżżid xi haġa oħra?

A : Li nixtieq inżid hu dan. Għandi ktieb hawnhekk. Hafna drabi...Inti kemm ilek hawn staqsejtni x'naħseb jien u x'jaħsbu t-teachers u l-prodott tagħna mhux it-tfal? Hawnhekk għandi ktieb li jgħid 'what makes a good teacher - but children speak their minds'. It-tifel kif iħares lejn it-teacher? Għalieh min hu t-teacher tajjeb, u tistagħgeb, dan huwa ktieb maħruġ mill-UNESCO. Għandek tfal mid-dinja kollha li qed jirrispondu għal din il-questionnaire. Għandek introduction hawnhekk, 'there is only one pedagogy - the pedagogy of love'. Imbagħad għandek hawnhekk bil-lingwi kollha x'jgħidu t-tfal. Per eżempju, jgħidu, 'you need to be kind, trusting and friendly to me', 'you must listen and understand us all', 'never lose your temper or ignore us', 'I like a smile and a kind word', 'it is very pleasant when you sing, play with us and treat us equally and understand the feelings, aspirations and modes of each one of us'. Kultant aħna naqalghu l-flus minn fuq dar it-tfal. Daqxejn iebsa din is-sentenza. Tabib jaqla' l-flus tiegħu minn fuq dar il-pazjent, aħna l-prodott tagħna huwa t-tfal...Ejja nisimgħuh it-tifel.

P : Il-kunċett ta' market ukoll...

A : Il-kunċett ta' market. Meta fabrika tagħmel il-marketing tagħha...Aħna nagħmlu l-marketing tagħna. A good teacher should treat all children like his own children. He should answer all questions even if they are stupid. Mhux tgħidlu, 'din x'domanda stupida għamilt?'

P : L-aġar għax għat-teacher tkun stupida, imma għat-tifel ma tkunx.

A : Għalhekk għandna x'nitgħallmu minn dak li jgħidu t-tfal.