

Professional development for teachers of Maltese as a Foreign Language in Australia and the University of Malta - Expanding the Horizons in Teaching -



Expanding the Horizons in Teaching, Professional development for teachers of Maltese as a Foreign Language was a first in reciprocal learning organised by the Federation of Maltese Language Schools Australia and the University of Malta, Faculty of Education. This course was financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Malta. It allowed Maltese Language Teachers affiliated to the Federation in Australia to be able to have an insight in the teaching of Maltese as a Foreign Language in Malta. The seven session lectures were advertised to FMLS member schools. Within two days the programme was fully subscribed. This indicated that such a course was aspired by Maltese Language teachers in Australia to assist them in teaching Maltese to second and third generation Maltese. The Federation hopes that future projects by institutions in Malta will give more importance to the Maltese Language as a foreign language for those who do not speak Maltese with a particular emphasis on the Maltese Diaspora.

The scheduled time of the online sessions greatly assisted the Australian eastern seaboard teachers to be able to attend at convenient hours. The topics were varied, well-presented and participated. The course expanded participants' knowledge and possibilities on Methodology and Pedagogy in Maltese Language Teaching as a Foreign Language. The coordinators from the Faculty of Education (University of Malta) were Professor Antoinette Camilleri Grima (ACG) and Dr Jacqueline Żammit (JŻ). Participants in Australia were Pauline Bonanno, Edwidge Borg, Mark Caruana, Alice Cassar, Ivan Cauchi, Anna Cuschieri, Maria de Carlo, Miriam Friggieri, Beatrice Pace, Georgette Pace, Laura Schembri, Lorraine Stafford, Charles Tabone, AnneMarie Thind, John Vassallo. The following topics were covered:

1. The communicative language skills (ACG)
2. Research in the area of MFL pedagogy (JŻ)
3. Learner autonomy and language teaching (ACG)
4. Expanding the learners' vocabulary (JŻ)
5. The CEFR, the FREPA and lesson planning (ACG)
6. Art and music in MFL pedagogy (JŻ)
7. Literature in MFL (ACG)

The topics discussed also included theories by well know authors on Language Learning, references and resource links available freely on the internet. Professor Antoinette Camilleri Grima and Dr Jacqueline Żammit devoted their free time willing to these sessions and if it were not for their eagerness to impart their knowledge, this course would not have been initiated. The Federation appreciated immensely the financial support by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this course to be held.

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The following is some feedback from of the attendees:

Hi Edwidge, I have found the lessons very helpful, professional delivered, and well structured, with many examples of techniques in teaching and the theory behind it.

Most of all, the very fact that Maltese teachers living abroad have been given this opportunity is a historical first and we are all grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mark Caruana - NSW

Bongu Antoinette u Jacqueline

Nixtieq niringrazzjokom tal-mod professjonali u informattiv kif mexxejtu il-kors "Żvilupp Professjonali għall-Għalliema tal-Malti bħala Lingwa Barranija".

Nixtieq niringrazzja wkoll lill-Ministeru tal-Affarijiet Barranin li sponsorja il-kors.

Il-lezzjonijiet huma veru siewja u interessanti. Jien inħoss li tajtuni ħafna pariri li se jgħinuni biex nhegġeġ lill-istudenti adulti jibqgħu impenjati biex jitgħallmu il-lingwa Maltija. Grazzi u saħħa Lorraine Stafford - VIC

The course was engaging, relevant and very informative on strategies and best practices in teaching Maltese language and culture to foreigners. It was delivered by very qualified, dedicated and personable lecturers, experienced in language teaching. I would welcome future such courses being made available.

Anna Cuschieri – NSW

Helow Edwidge, Grazzi ħafna. Your work to get us all started with this valuable training is very much appreciated. I am very grateful for this opportunity to learn from two professionals from the University of Malta. Both Antoinette and Jacqueline have delivered very interesting and informative sessions which included both theoretical and practical information, clearly communicating the theme of 'expanding the horizons in teaching'. I hope to enrol in similar courses in the near future to continue teaching the Maltese language in a professional manner worldwide. Thank you. Tisljiet, Pauline Bonanno - VIC

I have thoroughly enjoyed all PowerPoint Presentations Presented by Prof. Antoinette Camilleri Grima and Prof. Jacqueline Żammit. These presentations have given me a good insight into teaching Maltese as a Foreign Language to my students. My weekly lesson plans are much easier to set up; as I am now much more equipped with new teaching ideas and resources. I would like to thank Prof. Antoinette Camilleri Grima and Prof. Jacqueline Żammit for giving their time to make this possible. I greatly appreciate all the knowledge that I have gained. It has been a fantastic experience! Grazzi Ħafna Georgette Pace - VIC

Dear Antoinette and Jacqueline

I would really like to thank you for the opportunity to take your course, helping me to update my skills in teaching Maltese here in Australia. The course has been of great benefit and obviously a lot of work went into preparing the content. And you also considered to present the lectures at a good time for us here in Australia. I would like to thank you both and your efforts are greatly appreciated! Obviously, you love doing what you're doing and your enthusiasm for Maltese has inspired all of us to do our utmost to keep the language going here in Australia as well. John Vassallo - ACT

Ninstab grata għall-oppportunita' biex inkompli nizvilluppa il-ħiliet u t-tagħlim tiegħi bħala għalliema tal-Malti ġewwa l-Awstralja. L-oppportunitajiet biex inkomplu nitgħallmu fuq il-lingwa u kif l-aħjar ngħaddu t-tagħrif lill-istudenti tagħna huma ta' bżonn kbir għalina. Il-lezzjonijiet kienu ta' kwalita' għolja, b'ħafna informazzjoni utli għalina l-għalliema. Nispera li jkollna aktar opportunitajiet bħal dawn biex inkomplu nsaħħu t-tagħlim tal-Malti bħala lingwa barranija fil-komunita' kbira ta' Maltin Awstraljani ġewwa l-Awstralja.

Annemarie Thind – NSW

I would like to pass on my feedback re the Friday night course that we are currently attending via Zoom with the University of Malta. I think the course is very informative and beneficial. It is providing a platform that is enabling our teachers to learn and share ideas. I really appreciate this initiative and hope that the University of Malta will consider doing similar courses in the future for the teachers in our Maltese Language Schools.

Miriam Friggieri -NSW

*To Antoinette Camilleri Grima and Jacqueline Zammit,
Thanks for the hard work you put into the course on line. I also want to thank you so much for your kindness and your great assistance to all of us teaching the Maltese Language in Australia.
I would like also to thank the University of Malta for giving us the opportunity to sit for this knowledgeable course. Laura Schembri – VIC*

Just to let you know that I am greatly enjoying the lectures from the University of Malta, regarding the teaching of Maltese as a foreign Language. These lectures are very informative, and very useful in aiding us to teach our language in a more professional way. I would like to say 'prosit' to Professor Antoinett Camilleri Grima and Dr Jacqueline Zammit for their profound knowledge, which, gratefully, they are passing this on to us. I must admit that this is totally different to when I was learning Maltese in my youth at the LYCEUM. Thank you Edwidge for your effort to keep us in the know with such opportunities when available. Charles Tabone – VIC

*Dan kien kors qasir imma intensiv li fih persuni esperti fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni tal-Malti taw informazzjoni utli dwar ir-riċerka u rakkomandazzjonijiet fuq l-aħjar prattici għat-tagħlim tal-Malti bħala t-tieni lingwa. Il-format kien wieħed onlajn u stil ta' preżentazzjoni u diskussjoni miftuħa, fejn l-esperjenza tal-partecipanti kollha kienet ukoll mixtarra fil-kuntest tas-sugġetti ppreżentati. Jien sibt il-kors bħala utli ferm u naħseb li jkun ta' benefiċċju jekk ikun parti minn proġett fejn l-għalliema partecipanti kull tant żmien jiffriskaw l-approċċ u t-tagħrif tagħhom bl-iżviluppi fil-qasam. Tislijiet.
Ivan Cauchi - NSW*