

Daffodil Project Newsletter 2010

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Daffodil: Dynamic Assessment of Functioning for development towards inclusive learning – **InClues:** European Network for Inclusive and Cognitive Education

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Editorial

Welcome to read this newsletter, part of the Daffodil project. Daffodil (Dynamic Assessment of Functioning and Oriented at Development and Inclusive Learning) aims at finding tools for assessment suitable for inclusive education. Rather than sorting out children, such assessment should provide information

First Daffodil Summer School in Evora was a topper

-MARIE-JOSÉ SARAGOÇA & MARIA-LUISA GRÁCIO (PT)

From 5th to 11th September 2010, the beautiful UNESCO-heritage city of Évora (Portugal) received 80 participants from Sweden, Romania, Estonia, Lithuania, Greece, Hungary, Finland, Norway, Portugal, British Virgin Islands, Belgium, Slovenia and Croatia, for the first DAFFODIL Summer Course on Innovative Assessment of Functioning Oriented at Development and Inclusive Learning. The participants were teachers, researchers, psychologists, other professionals and parents; many of them benefitting from a Comenius grant because the course was recognized by the Life Long Learning Agency as an In-Service Training Course.

During this intensive week the participants learned to understand how the way assessment is carried out, favours or inhibits inclusion. They became familiarized with a new paradigm of interactive, needs-based assessment looking at pupil's potential rather than fixating on his defects. They were introduced to some of the innovative assessment systems which are dynamic, interactive, contextual and process-oriented. Above all they learned to "think contextually" when doing assessment, i.e. to see a child's functioning in relation to his environment; evaluating also the educational context while evaluating a child. Finally they learned to design assessment plans oriented at maximizing activities and participation in inclusive education.

The themes of the course were streamlined by professionals and national and international researchers, who presented models, tools, practices and work on educational and psychological assessment of children and youth facilitating inclusive learning. In the workshops they introduced contents as: "Assessment in the light of the principles for inclusive education"; "Pameijer's model of functional, contextual, action-oriented, needs-based assessment"; "Feuerstein's approach of Dynamic assessment of learning propensity and modifiability"; "Das-Naglieri's Cognitive Assessment system"; "Facilitating conceptual change in assessment towards inclusive education"; "Children with challenging behaviour"; "Nyborg's concept teaching model to analyze the prerequisites of reading/numeracy skills and writing skills"; "Portfolio assessment of learning competencies and differentiated assessment" and "Functional assessment based on ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health)". During the workshops participants discussed cases and how to improve assessment practice in their country.

The participants evaluated the sessions as very interesting and useful for their work. They valued the methods of presentation very highly. They expressed their need for further training in each of the course's topics.

Apart from moments of work, the Summer Course of Évora was also an opportunity for of interaction between all participants, enhancing personal and professional ties.

Next summer school of Feuerstein Institute in the Netherlands and in Romania. Deadline for Comenius/Grundtvig Grant Applications is 16/1/2011!

-JO LEBEER, Belgium

In July 2011 the International Summer Institute on Activating and Evaluating Learning Potential will be organised by the International Feuerstein Institute jointly with Daffodil partner University of Antwerp (BE) and the ROC Landstede School in Zwolle (NL), and subsequently with Daffodil partner Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (RO). Every year, already for the 32nd time, this Summer School attracts teachers, psychologists and professionals of the rehabilitation and adult education sector from all over the world. Starting in Israel during the first 20 years, since 2001 it is taking place in a European country. It is still headed by Prof. Reuven Feuerstein, a Romanian-born psychologist living in Israel, who became famous after this groundbreaking work with deprived refugee children after World War II. Later he founded the International Centre for Learning Potential. Feuerstein maintains that the prerequisites of learning can be enduringly improved in every individual, whatever the severity, duration or cause of retardation, through a specific way of interaction which he calls "mediated learning" and a systematic education of basic cognitive functions. Teachers, parents and other educators together build a child's learning capacity. Feuerstein's approach has been scientifically evidence based and applied in projects all over the world. During an intensive 2 weeks' lasting Summer School, participants study Feuerstein's theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability and Mediated Learning Experience, and its applied systems: the "Instrumental Enrichment Programme (FIE)" (which is an educational intervention programme), the "Learning Propensity Assessment Device - LPAD" (which is a way to reveal hidden learning potential) or the construction of an Active Modifying Environment (which is a system-oriented approach to shape the educational environment so that people realize their maximal potential. There are common lectures and parallel workshops, tailored to different needs and ages. Also parents and children with specific learning needs attend. Particularly the LPAD course is highly relevant for the Daffodil objectives (to maximize the opportunities of inclusive education), as it is one of the most comprehensive and thorough systems to reveal an individual's hidden, or still unused capacity to learn. One of the reasons for existence of the Daffodil project was precisely the widespread static ways of testing low-performing kids and adults, often leading to exclusion from good inclusive learning opportunities. The LPAD has been suggested as one of the core methodologies in the Daffodil projects, because it gives different outlook on a child's learning potential and maps the needs of the child as well as the ways of a teacher how to realize these educational needs. Psychologists and teachers learn to tune in to the child's potential and learn to adopt a more positive perspective.

In 2011, the Summer Institute will take place in a "Western European" location as well as an "Eastern European" location, each lasting 2 weeks. In the Netherlands, the Summer Institute is patronized by the Regional Education Centre Landstede in the beautiful historic town of Zwolle, in North-East



Participants at Evora Daffodil Summer School stroll through the UNESCO world heritage city



The 68 participants at the Daffodil Summer School at the University of Evora, september 2010



Changing to a musical modality: a theater play group of youngsters with and without disability inviting the Daffodil participants to a dance on the podium at Evora University



Feuerstein Institute July 2011 in Dutch historic town of Zwolle

about how we can contribute to facilitate children's learning. Teachers tell us they need to know what to do. Justification of assessment depends among other things on its contribution to such an end.

In this newsletter you can read about a successful summer school in Evora last September. A number of workshops fit together as the pieces of a puzzle, highlighting the field of assessment in an inclusive education from different angles. The Portuguese Daffodil partner did an excellent work organising the summer school, offering a taste of the local culture in marvellous surroundings. In this way busy working days were combined with sparkling moments of sharing culture and friendship.

You can also read about how assessment practice can be characterised in a "Black book". Findings in the project, about assessment practice in European countries tell us that though the Daffodil project comes to an end in few months, the Daffodil work needs to be continued. Observation in classroom and kindergarten is mentioned as something rarely taking place. That will be surprising for professionals in some European countries. E.g. in Norway this is considered a part of any professional assessment – necessary to complete to be able to evaluate a child's needs within the classroom in which he or she belongs.

The Daffodil project is visible both in and outside partner countries. Read about how - in conferences and workshops. One main result from the Daffodil work is the Daffodil guidelines, which will soon be available in a preliminary version. It has been applied, and found valuable for inclusion.

The examples of good practice are not only with regard to assessment. The attitudes present in a

of the Netherlands. Landstede mostly cares for educational drop-outs. In Romania, the Summer institute will take place at the Babes-Bolyai University in the nice, liberty-art, Transylvanian town of Cluj-Napoca, which is the host of the first complete master-level in dynamic assessment methods of school psychology. The Summer Institute Courses have been eligible for Comenius or Grundtvig grants. Applicants for such a grant have to hurry, as the deadline for application to their respective National Agencies is 14th of January 2011. Further information can be found on <http://www.sclm.ua.ac.be/1stAnnouncement%20ICELP%20Summer%20Institute%202011.htm>

Daffodil "blackbook" Report Assessment Re-assessed published

-JO LEBEER, Belgium

Assessment takes an important part in the life of a child who does not have a "typical development". On many occasions a child is evaluated and important decisions are made, based on assessment results: assessment may have financial implications (e.g. increased family allowance for children with disability; personal assistance budget, access to health-insurance reimbursed speech and physiotherapy). Assessment results may determine what kind of educational opportunities a child may get or not and where the child will be educated: a special or a regular school, the level of special education needs programme; access to different types of schooling; access to university, job opportunities often depend on assessment results. And sometimes therapeutic opportunities are dependent on assessment. To determine in what way functional and learning assessment systems may hinder or facilitate inclusive education, we conducted a multi-modality research in 7 Daffodil partner countries: BE, SE, HU, PT, RO, NO & BVI. We evaluated the actual status of the assessment procedures and the satisfaction level of specialists, teachers and parents, with online and hard copy questionnaires, telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews and mixed as well as specific focus group discussions. Results showed that static standardized psychometric tests of intellectual, behavioural and language functioning (95%) were mainly used, with the WISC-III being the most frequent test applied. Only less than 5% of 166 professionals in our sample, used formative assessment and contextual observation to reveal learning or developmental potential in a process-oriented way. Experts were generally not satisfied with current assessment practice. Reported weaknesses included lack of time, of human resources, of materials, of cooperation and of follow-up. Assessment practice was mainly used with a classifying purpose to orient the child towards a special needs programme, or a special school or institutional setting, depending on whether a country has inclusive education practice (Scandinavia) or not. Parents were satisfied with (static) functional assessment when its purpose was obtaining disability benefits (financial, special education resources, recognition), but were unhappy with the negative outlook of reports. The main complaint of teachers and parents was about the poverty of recommendations on how to work with the child. Our conclusion is that the current practice of standardized psychometric testing seems to contribute to barriers of learning if it is used in a deterministic or predictive way. In this regard dynamic and functional assessment methods seem promising in addressing the issues of learning and development in a different way, contributing to understanding of the child's needs in learning and development. However, interpretation and communication of assessment results in a way that emphasises a more adequate and challenging educational intervention for the child seems to be central. A [full report](#) is available on the Daffodil website. In the spring of 2011 an article will be published in School Psychology International.

Daffodil project presentations around Europe

-BY PETRI PARTANEN (SE), MJ SARAGOÇA (PT) , JO LEBEER (BE) AND GUNVOR SØNNESYN (NO)

Ghent- Belgium

The Daffodil ideas have On September 16th 2010, more than 600 psychologists and educators gathered in Ghent for a one-day conference on the subject of "Action-oriented and Needs-based Approach", organised by the VCLB Ghent (the Pupils' Support Centre) and the Dutch-Belgian Working Party on Action-oriented and Needs-based Approach, headed by Hugo Vandeviere. Principles and results of pilot projects of this approach were presented. The objective of this approach is to offer an elaborated, system-oriented, transactional approach to pupils with specific learning needs, with the aim to construct a concrete and evidence-based alternative to the so ubiquitously applied "classifying" diagnostic procedures, based on psychometrics, criticized in the Daffodil "blackbook" report "Assessment Re-assessed". Jo Lebeer headed a workshop on the Daffodil approach.

Lausanne, Switzerland

On 16th and 17th September 2010 the Symposium: Handicap et Classifications - Concepts, applications pratiques et professionnelles, was organized by GIFFOCH - Groupe International Francophone pour la Formation aux Classifications du Handicap. This meeting focused on the two international classifications related with disability: ICF - International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO) and PPH - Processus de Production du Handicap (from Patrick Fougeyrollas and their collaborators). Apart from plenary sessions with speeches by various researchers, for example: Catherine Barral (France), Patrick Fougeyrollas (Canada) or Eric Plaisance (France), there were also several workshops dedicated to the ICF and the PPH in such areas as: rights, education, social assessment, policy and legislation. This symposium was also an opportunity for DAFFODIL's dissemination through the communication: International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health in the Portuguese Educational System - Attitudes of special education teachers towards ICF, a work by Adelinda Candeias, Maria José Saragoça and Ana Gato. It was also an occasion to distribute DAFFODIL leaflets. With speeches by representatives of several countries (France, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, Canada, Belgium), the Symposium: Handicap et Classifications - Concepts, applications pratiques et professionnelles, was an excellent time to share views and experiences, very well organized by a team led by Vivian Guerdan, Jean-Louis Korpès and Philippe Nendaz. On the website of GIFFOCH we can find all the information about the Symposium, including presentations from various experts. A site which requires a visit: http://giffoch.org/230/Symposium_2010.html

Amsterdam, NL

From 2-4 December the Disability Studies Network organised an international conference at the Free University of Amsterdam on the subject of Disability and Diversity in Quality of Life. In one of the workshops, with the title "To be or not to be", Jo Lebeer presented the results of the Daffodil project: the way children are assessed and being looked at, has a big influence on their identity building, e.g.: what does it mean to be constantly identified as "mentally retarded", "autistic" "child with Down syndrome"? Individuals are reduced to their label, and hence their identity coincides with their pathology. The purpose of Daffodil is to reverse this pathological glance, by a "salutogenic" glance, i.e. to look at the strengths and potential of a person. Highlight of this conference was the "key-note speech" delivered by Sam Galesloot (picture), a young man from the NL, blind-deaf-mute, wheel-chair bound and dependent on artificial ventilation, but with a bright intelligence and will to live. He communicates by fingerspelling on his cheek, has a girl-friend (who read his speech) and scores his quality of life as 9/10. A movie made by



Assessment in the old style; drawing by Anton Marin



Daffodil Project presented at the Conference in Lausanne on International Disability Classification presided by J.P. Fougeyrollas (right)



Sam Galesloot, at the Disability Studies Conference in Amsterdam, rating his quality of life highly, despite impairments in mobility, breathing, speech, vision and hearing

society play an important role for inclusive education. Every context, which is supposed to be a part of children's education, should be prepared to welcome every child, regardless of needs. In the end, attitudes contained in legislation maybe are the most powerful device for inclusion. In the meantime, before more European countries implement such legislation, there is a need for development in a diverse field, in which education is a part. The field of assessment belongs within this picture. Read, and be informed. Maybe a next step is to get in contact with one or more of the Daffodil partners. You find them on the website www.daffodilproject.org and they will be happy to share experiences.

-GUNVOR
SÖNNESYN



Swedish-Portuguese fraternity at Daffodil Summer Course in Evora



Reuven Feuerstein at the ceremony of the doctorate honoris causa of the Babes-Bolyai University. On the right, vice-rector István Szamosközi



Music is a universal language: Portuguese traditional songs presented to the Daffodil Summer Course participants at the Town Hall of Evora

famous Dutch TV presenter Ria Bremer followed him during 18 years .

Leuven, Belgium

On November 26th a symposium was organised by the Open Therapeuticum Leuven together with the University of Antwerp, the University College of The Hague and the Provincial Council of Brabant on the topic of Young adults with Acquired Traumatic Brain Injury and the Transition School to Work. The role of assessment was discussed by Jo Lebeer, presenting the Daffodil approach. People with ATBI are often excluded from work and education because they have functional problems of so-called "neuropsychological executive function disorders", meaning personality changes, memory and planning dysfunction, dyspraxia and learning difficulties. When tested in the classic way, they drop out the system. Dynamic methods may present an alternative to reveal their potential.

Sweden

In Sweden the Daffodil project has raised interest in a number of municipalities among principals, policymakers and multiprofessional student health services during 2010. The Guidelines produced by the project are considered as an inspiration when local policies regarding assessment and children in special needs are revised.

Norway

In Norway ca 320 professionals have been trained in the Cognitive Assessment System during 2009-2010, in workshops with around 20 participants. In each of these workshops the role of assessment is discussed, and ethic perspectives on assessment are highlighted. This is approved by the participants, who in their reports focus to guide teachers regarding intervention due to the child's strengths and needs.

Daffodil Guidelines tested and finalised

One of the main work packages of Daffodil consisted in constructing a set of guidelines for assessment professionals, a kind of "guide of conduct", to make a shift in current practices, in order to make assessment more compatible with inclusive education. Based on the general guidelines of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Assessment in Inclusive Settings, the Daffodil partners made 15 guidelines involving principles of contextual, dynamic, potential-oriented, action- and needs-based assessment. These guidelines are currently being tested by the so-called "Delphi-method", which is a spiral way of refining and feedback by experts and end-users (teachers and parents) in different countries. All 68 participants of the Evora summer School in September 2010 gave their comments. In Belgium, the Working party on Action- and Needs-based assessment also contributed, as did the group of psychologists and teachers of the Jamtland County in Mid-Sweden. The [Guidelines](#) will be published online in a preliminary version, and tested in the working field throughout the partner countries.

Examples of Good Practice: Nino and Jonathan are included in a regular primary school

One of the objectives of Daffodil was to launch pilots in the various partner countries to set up alternative functional assessment practices which favour inclusive education. One of the good practices was found in Belgium and the Netherlands, with the examples of two 7 year old children with Down syndrome, who successfully made their transition from a separate to an inclusive elementary school. Although the Netherlands has an official policy of inclusive education, with financial incentives to parents and regular schools, in practice there is a lot of resistance from regular as well as special schools to change their practice. In Belgium, unlike other Daffodil partners in Scandinavia and Portugal, inclusive education for children with an intellectual impairment meets even more resistance and is very rare. Often parents, as in the case of these two children, have to take tremendous efforts to take the child out the special school and make their way to a regular school. This process needs a proximal intensive accompaniment and many diplomatic moves: doing talks about the why and how of inclusion with the staff of the new regular school; assessing the child in a different way, a dynamic, functional assessment looking at potential rather than psychometrics; looking for and involving support staff; involving parents; overcoming the resistance by good-willing professionals preferring special education. Both families eventually found the primary school in their neighbourhood ready to welcome the children. Until now those children had to travel long distances by bus or car to the special school.

Examples like these, among others, show the real qualitative impact of Daffodil endeavours. Let's hope their example will be inspirational for more to come.

Examples of Good Practice: The "All Aboard!" project at Vasa Museum in Sweden

The "All Aboard!" project at the Vasa Museum in Stockholm, Sweden, is an example of how learning environments can be designed for inclusion. With core concepts like multifunctionality and children with different functionalities (instead of children with disabilities) and from the starting point of a philosophy of accessibility, the pedagogical staff at the Museum welcomes all children to explore, participate and learn at the Museum. The aim of the project is "that every child or young person, regardless of their specific functionality should be able to benefit from, enjoy and actively take part in the educational activities on equal terms and with due dignity." In the project The Vasa Museum terms itself as a salutogenic museum, inspired by the theories and thoughts of Aaron Antonovsky and Lev Vygotskij.

Petri Partanen at Skolutvecklarerna Sverige, Daffodil partner, has been an inclusive educational consultant supporting the Museum during the project which was presented at a conference at the Vasa Museum on November 29th. The conference was also covered by the Swedish Television. Read more about the "All Aboard!" project at <http://allaombord.se/index.php/english>

Examples of Good Practice: The "Variant" projects conducted by the Czech Organisation People in Need (PIN)

Since the origin in 1986, PIN has increased its number of projects in Czech Republic as well as in countries meeting disasters of several kinds. Among their highlighted projects in CR are those with regard to social exclusion. In 2010 the impact has been on work with Roma children in kindergarten and primary school (<http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/index2en.php?id=423>). To prevent failure and exclusion, PIN in one of their VARIANTY projects establish clubs for preschool children, in which activities aim at learning in cognitive, cultural and social domains. <http://www.varianty.cz/index.php?id=3&item=39>. This is their way to defeat an assessment practice equal to which is described in the "Daffodil Blackbook". In this project several methodologies are mediated to teachers and pre-school teachers; among them CTM (Concept teaching



Children in Norway working in a Concept Teaching Model session



A reading lesson according to Sue Buckley's method



Alla ombord! – Det salutogena museet. Photo: Karolina Kristensson, The Vasa Museum, Stockholm, Sweden. Reproduced with permission

Model). Gunvor Sønnesyn from Pedverket Kompetanse (Norway) was invited to lead a workshop on CTM in Prague in November. The primary objective of the workshop was not assessment, but intervention. How can we facilitate learning for children at risk? For some of the participants the road from workshop to practice proved to be short, and the response was clear: It works for the children. The intention is that it shall work also with regard to children's benefit from schooling, and prevent exclusion.

In another of their projects; the objective is to analyse a frequent used test (Son-R), considered to be language- and culture neutral. The background for this is experiences with test items for classification processes, favouring children speaking the majority language, leaving Roma children with a lower score, and a larger rate of them diagnosed as mild mentally retarded. These children are educated in special schools with a limited curriculum. Intentions of easy change from special schools to mainstream and vice versa seems to be theoretical, as children within the context of a limited curriculum do not meet proceeding criteria in mainstream schools

Daffodil project elected “example of good practice of dissemination” by DIVA project

The [DIVA project](#), started on December 1st 2009 counts on international educational organisations, universities and research centres, to work together on Good Practices for Dissemination and Valorisation of Educational Projects. The main aim is to carry out European studies about successful educational projects, to evaluate them based on especially defined criteria and finally to elaborate a best-practice catalogue and recommendations. The Daffodil project was elected with 20 others to figure in the best-practice catalogue, because of its web-site quality, the practice of summer schools with a wide audience and organising local public meetings each time a partner meeting was organised.

Concept Teaching Model Summer School in Norway August 28th-September 2dn 2011. Possible to apply for Grundtvig/ Comenius grant.

More information and application form is available in the Comenius - Grundtvig Training Database with the reference number NO-2011-045-001.

Successful inclusive education relates to a “how” – for which it is necessary to answer with a number of regards. How to create an environment in which every child can participate and act? - How to organise education for children with a diversity of needs within the context of a school for all? - How to apply methods providing children with cognitive tools for thinking, learning and participation? In this workshop we present some answers to these questions. Recognising the complexity of the field and the amount of relevant approaches, we present one, which has proved to be helpful for children's learning and thinking. Norway has an inclusive school system, and information about this, as well as school visits will be a part of the schedule.

Training in Nyborg's Concept Teaching Model (CTM) will be included, together with a presentation of learning theories “from Nyborg to Luria”.

Contact post@pedverket.no if you have questions.

Afterword

-GUNVOR SØNNESYN (NO)

To learn mathematic is a human right, claimed Ann-Louise Ljungblad in a Norwegian conference this autumn. Her concern was related to the situation in “Träningskolan” in Sweden, where children are excluded from learning mathematic. Of course, the intention is the best; not to expose children to tasks they are unable to complete. Still, they are excluded from the possibility to gain knowledge within this field.

Working for inclusion, it is easy to recognise equal possibilities for learning in any domain to be a human right. This makes it a commitment and a challenge for school authorities as well as for teachers and preschool teachers to provide frames in which we facilitate learning for every child. In Norway we like to think that we have come to a successful end regarding inclusion. Still, what we experience is a continuous need for improvement, to defeat attitudes resisting inclusion, both in the field of education and in other fields of society.

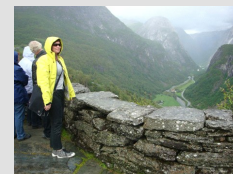
The Czech organisation People in Need (PIN) demonstrates the power in viewing learning as a human right in their projects, in which they work for equal possibilities for Roma children. The focus is two-fold: To change assessment practices and to support children's learning. In CR Roma children are left with low assessment scores and easily diagnosed as mild mentally retarded. These children are educated in special schools with a limited curriculum, and a lot of doors regarding education will be closed for them.

People in Need also deserve credits for their open-minded way of analysing tools for assessment. It is easy to divide tests in two groups and talk about standardised and not standardises tests. It is much more complicated to evaluate the quality of a test, and the ethical considerations included in its application.

Conclusion: Assessment for inclusion is relevant – there is still work to be done in this field in every European country. There is a common need for assessment tools, providing for the information required to be able to adapt tuition and special education for children regardless of what the needs might be, within the frames of a school for all. Assessment systems meeting such criteria are assessment for inclusion.



Diva project logo



Concept Teaching in the Norwegian mountains promises spectacular views, but not good weather.