



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

L-Università ta' Malta

Professor Emeritus Anthony Mollica recently gave a lecture, organised by the Department of Arts and Languages of the Faculty of Education in collaboration with the Società Dante Alighieri, entitled 'Insegnare/imparare l'italiano? È un gioco ... di parole!'. This lecture was attended by University students of Italian, as well as by teachers in State, Church and Independent schools.

Mollica is Professor Emeritus of Education at Brock University, Canada where he taught language teaching methodology courses in French, Italian and Spanish from 1984 until 2003. His most recent book, 'Ludolinguistica e Glottodidattica' is the first of its kind to introduce applied recreational linguistics as an approach to second language learning.

During his lecture Mollica presented examples of problem-solving activities and word games which can motivate learners who have different levels of language competence. Based on the principle that language cannot be learned solely through formal practice, one of the main objectives of 'ludolinguistica' (language learning through games) is to encourage students to develop their vocabulary and to understand Italian culture better through humour and play. Mollica presented a number of acronyms, acrostics, anagrams and tongue twisters which were all adapted in order to teach Italian in class. During the lecture the audience was continuously involved in these language activities since Mollica firmly believes, as clearly shown in his publications, that by making Italian fun to learn it can become easy and profitable for learners. He emphasised how technological progress and social networking skills, together with intercultural and multilingual competence, all point to the fact that these are exciting and also deeply transforming times for teachers of foreign languages. During the course of his presentation he made reference to a plethora of specialized journals and books dealing with language learning based on games. Prof. Mollica also showed how recreational linguistics is also useful to reinforce grammar, lexicon and communicative skills. According to Mollica the key words in teaching are motivation and stimulation because, as he stated during this lecture quoting George Bernard Shaw, 'We don't stop playing because we're old, we become old because we stop playing.'



left to right: Professor Sandro Caruana, Professor Emeritus Anthony Mollica and Dr Mario Pace