



Editor´s Note

This issue of EFPTA´s Newsletter has two different focuses: the seminar held in Dortmund in November 2006 and interviews with psychology teachers across Europe about their work situation.

First Jari, President of EFPTA, makes a summary of the seminar in Dortmund and the board meeting held there. Then follow various reports of the lectures delivered in the seminar, and finally you will find the job interviews.

I want to thank all those who have contributed to this issue of the Newsletter.

Annette Priskorn, editor, priskorn@hotmail.com

Teaching of Psychology - Science and Practice without Borders between West and East

In the beginning of November we had a very successful seminar in Germany. Dr Udo Kittler had invited psychology teachers from different countries to Dortmund to listen to some very interesting lectures about research at Dortmund University and about psychology and social psychology in Russia.

After having arrived in Dortmund we had a nice dinner with our colleagues. We also talked a little about our board meeting as we had some important decisions to make. But most of all it was very nice to come to the hotel and find out that Udo had done good preparations for us. We had a nice German dinner. As a matter of fact we have the same food in Finland. I felt at home that evening.

Friday

Friday morning we went to the University of Dortmund. There we had presentations by three professors of the university. After that there was a very interesting lecture about prejudice with many examples illustrating how your attitude affects your abilities. Then we had a sightseeing tour at the campus area. After lunch we went to the hotel where we had the board meeting.

Saturday

Saturday we had two interesting lecturers from Russia. The first lecture was about social psychology in Russia and the other one was about teaching of psychology in Russia. It was interesting to hear what kind of psychology they have in Russia and what they study. We learnt that they can do whatever research they like, and funding does not depend on the subjects of their research. It is good to know that Russia has changed in that respect.

In between those two lectures we heard and saw how you can use multimedia when teaching psychology. The presentation was very interesting and brought up new ideas, but we also saw that it takes a lot of time to do that kind of work. Doctor Udo Kittler also told us about didactic analysis and the teaching of psychology at Dortmund University. I got new ideas and new points of view for my work from him.

Board meetings

in our board meeting there were three main issues, which took a lot of time. The Constitution needed some changes. Then we had some different opinions about our Newsletter and how to publish it, and lastly we talked about our future conferences.

We decided that our next conference will be in Reykjavik, Iceland, in April. The participants will arrive in Iceland on Thursday, 19 April 2006 and stay until Sunday night (22 April).

Joe introduced the ATP (Association for the teaching of psychology in the UK) conference to be held in Leicester next summer. He invited people from other countries to attend the conference, his last one as an organizer. Unfortunately the 10th European Congress of Psychology will be held partly at the same time, i.e. 3 to 8 July 2007 in Prague. I hope that I can go to both conferences as a representative for EFPTA.

Carlo Prandini has offered to organize the next conference after Reykjavik in Bologna in Italy in November 2007. The second weekend of November was suggested as an appropriate time.

The Board discussed the nature of the Constitution, and it was concluded that the Constitution must be revised. For example, a quorum must be added to the Constitution, as well as rules on how to revise the Constitution. The Board of EFPTA also needs a quarter who observes and checks that the actions of the Board are legitimate. It must also be clarified who the members of the Board are, who have the right to vote, and should EFPTA also have an Executive. It was agreed that the national organizations will elect and send their representatives to EFPTA's Board according to their respective Constitutions. The principle on voting in EFPTA will be one vote/one country. The Board will elect an Executive out of its members. The Executive functions as an executor of EFPTA.

It was agreed that EFPTA's member organizations will present their ideas for the new Constitution before the next seminar in Iceland, Reykjavik on April 2007. Joe Cocker will lead the project and the ideas for the new Constitution are to be given to him for further processing.

For the time being the Board decided to revise Article 2 in the Constitution in the following manner: "Aims of the Federation:

To share knowledge and experience of psychology teaching.

(NEW): To Promote psychology teaching at pre-university level."

Our seminar in Dortmund was successful. We had a wonderful program and Udo Kittler did an excellent job for us. Our Board made good decisions. It showed us that we can disagree about some issues, but in the end find good solutions. That's something. Our Federation is in good hands.

In Europe 15th of December 2006

Jari Honkala
President
EFPTA

Reports and material from the seminar in Dortmund

["For they do not know what they do"](#)

Automatic Influences on Behavior.

In my lecture I focus on recent developments in Social Psychology showing automatic influences on behaviour. Experimental evidence supporting the assumption that various parameters of behaviour can be automatically influenced is presented. These findings can be parsimoniously explained by an associative network model of human memory. Possible implications for aggressive behaviour, the activation of stereotypes about one's own group and self-regulation are discussed.

Professor Dr. R. Neumann

Link to Professor Neumann's PowerPoint presentation "[For they do not know what they do"](#)"

What about didactics?

Brief summary of the lecture held by Dr. Udo Kittler/Dortmund University written by Margret Peters, Germany

As Dortmund offers the unique possibility of a special course of studies for students who want to become teachers of psychology (in combination with another subject ? Bachelor and Master Degree) the question of how psychology should be taught is of course of vital interest. This leads us to didactics as a scientific discipline:

In Germany every secondary school teacher has to study at least two subjects with a university degree in order to be allowed to teach those subjects. The courses at university include general didactics, i.e. the theory and practice of teaching and learning, which of course comprises a lot of psychological topics (*'didaktike techné'*(gr.) ? the art of teaching, referring to the adequate choice of topics, aims, teaching methods etc.)

In addition to this students are taught the special didactics of each subject, 'Fachdidaktik' in German, a term, which cannot be properly translated into English. In psychology for example the students/ later teachers should learn something about general principles, special chances and aims of teaching psychology, choice of adequate topics, methods, teaching material etc.

This is a special challenge as you cannot talk about theories, principles and research of psychology as a science and at the same time neglect those theories and principles in the way you teach them. Thus "what" psychology teachers teach should be closely related to "how" they teach it. Knowing about the importance of personal experience the psychology teacher should be able to let 'personal experience' play an important role in his lessons, e.g. by making experiments, finding meaningful examples, making good use of one's knowledge about communication etc., thus helping pupils to develop the key qualifications important in modern society. In the process of teaching psychology the seven "E's" should be generated: expectation, effort, exploration, explanation, excitement, exchange, expansion. In this context Udo Kittler talked about the 'encouragement and enlightenment of pupils via scientifically based knowledge'.

As 'didactic reduction' means that in psychology - as in all other school subjects - scientific topics should be adapted to the special group of pupils that is addressed we must take their age, intellectual and emotional development, their experience and typical way of thinking into account (? past, present and (imagined) future).

This approach helps us not only to make psychological topics teachable but also to choose the right topics. The current situation of young people all over Europe is similar: They have to master essential developmental tasks, they are looking for a deeper understanding of their own selves, they want to understand social dynamics, especially as they are confronted with negative developments as prejudice, aggression, conflict and war. They want to find answers to the basic questions of human existence, the question of good and evil, of right and wrong, of what the true nature of happiness is etc. Most psychological topics meet those interests right away: developmental tasks and life span development, evolutionary psychology, theories of "self" development, of the unconscious, of intercultural identities, of communication, phenomena like aggression, fear and group dynamics to name just a few.

Aiming at a positive 'cultural coexistence' (CC) psychology teachers should try to develop their own key qualifications on the basis of their knowledge of psychology, the "7 C's": curiosity, creativity, competence, compassion, cooperation, communication, completion.

Udo Kittler summed this up by describing a general ideal: Psychology as a school subject is based on the ideas of human rights. By teaching psychology we are given a chance to develop independent personalities, strong enough to say "no" to violence and aggression, to say "yes" to more self-control and enlightenment, to say "yes" to others, including foreign and strange people, to say "yes" to cultural differences under the roof of humanity.

The meeting of psychology teachers from the East and the West of Europe during the EFPTA conference can be considered as a right step to further these aims.

Social psychology in Russia

Based on notes made during Professor Vera Labunskaya's lecture in EFPTA's seminar in Dortmund, on Saturday the 4th November, 2006. By Marja Honkaheimo, Finland

Social psychology in Russia has long historical traditions; it existed already prior to totalitarianism. One of the special features of Russian social psychology is that it has roots both in Marxist and Western (mostly American) traditions. There can be found at least some contradiction between the two traditions.

Historical events have left their mark on Russian social psychology. The stagnation of the whole society during the beginning of the 1990's can be seen as stagnation in the development of social psychology as well. It can be said that the fall of the Soviet Union was also a beginning of rethinking in social psychology.

During the period of 1991-2000 social psychology has become more popular in Russia. Soviet businessmen, financial clerks and politicians now show more interest in this field of study than ever before. Social psychology is also changing. The varying conditions of the society also demand new theoretical and practical approaches in the field of social psychology. There has been a rapid development of Applied Social Psychology in education, health care and military services. There is, however, a gap between the possibilities of theories and the needs of applied social psychology in contemporary Russia. Also new practical recommendations are needed. It can be said that the field of social psychology in Russia is now in the process of constructing a new system of scientific knowledge.

One of the topics of research is the unstableness of Russian society. It is interesting to study how it affects social psychological phenomena such as social stereotypes, changes in shared values and the images people have about women. It is also important to understand how people react to change. There is variation between "people of yesterday" - "people of today" and "people of the future" so at least three categories of different reactions can be found. However, every person is included in a variety of different life-spans. Social psychology aims at studying the growth, distribution and realization of new world images.

Some results of the change of society can already be seen. There exists a clear impoverishment in social relationships, and it can be said that people have become less open. Signs of cognitive-emotional dissonance can also be seen. Contemporary social psychology in Russia does comparative-cultural analysis of different phenomena. One of the aims is to understand the negative phenomena caused by the change of society.

Teaching of Psychology in Russia: the Psychological Profile of Lyceum No.1, Rostov-on-Don.

Paper presented at the EFPTA Seminar, Saturday 4 November 2006, Dortmund. Report made by Morag Williamson, Scotland.

Presenter: Dr. Ludmila Dikaya, Associate Professor of the Psychology Faculty at Rostov State University. Her role includes leadership of the Psychology Department of 'Classical Lyceum', dealing with psychology education and

services in secondary education, in association with both the University and the Rostov regional Department of Education.

Although nearly 20 years have elapsed since the end of the communist USSR, many of us in the 'West' would admit that our knowledge of life in present-day Russia (and other ex-Soviet states) is limited. So, for a number of EFPTA delegates, including myself, it was a pleasant surprise to discover that Psychology has been taught (off and on!) in Russian schools since the early 19th century. Dr. Dikaya started by explaining that for nearly 200 years Psychology education in Russian schools has had a chequered history, having been introduced, banned, and re-introduced several times over, by various political regimes. Since 1988, however, Psychology has become "permanently" established in the school curriculum.

Although there is no standard curriculum for all Russian high schools, and indeed Psychology is not taught in all schools, Psychology is a popular subject option. Whether or not it forms part of a particular school's curriculum, and what the Psychology courses comprise, will depend on the decision of the school.

After providing this overview of Psychology teaching in Russian schools, Dr. Dikaya focused more specifically on psychology classes in one high school, 'Lyceum No.1' in Rostov-on-Don.

As is the case in a number of European countries, the teaching of Psychology in this Rostov school is divided between two approaches: firstly, delivery of Psychology as an academic subject, ie a body of discipline-specific knowledge and skills; secondly, as a medium for teaching an understanding of self, promoting positive attitudes to physical and mental health, and personal growth -this approach draws mainly upon developmental, social and health psychology. Whilst the latter approach is adopted with younger students, the former is applied at upper secondary level, where students may take an examination in order to gain entry to a Psychology degree course at Rostov State University. As an academic subject, the emphasis of the content is on personality, self-concept, health and social psychology; there is a strong applied flavour, in relation to both personal and social development as well as career / employment processes. Areas such as cognitive psychology, behaviourism, evolutionary psychology and research methods feature less prominently, possibly because these are addressed in depth on the university courses. Overall, however, in relation to the aims and content of high school psychology in other countries in Europe, the similarities are more striking than the differences.

A highlight of Dr. Dikaya's presentation was a series of video clips of students engaging enthusiastically in classroom activities, including role-plays, discussion etc. Two activities of particular interest were: the expression of emotional effects of various stimuli (such as music, or TV cartoons) by means of drawing, and the use of a conflict scene from Pushkin's as a basis for analysis of personality, social interaction and relationships. Regardless of language differences, the multi-national audience of teachers watching these clips will have been struck by the familiarity of such classroom scenes, and especially the students themselves – they might have been psychology students anywhere in the world. Nothing was "lost in translation!"

Participants at EFPTA events frequently express their surprise, and pleasure, to discover that the experience of teaching and learning psychology is very similar across different countries, and that Psychology really is a universal language. This perception was once again confirmed by Dr. Dikaya's talk, which gave us a truly unique insight into psychology teaching in Russian high schools.

Interviews with Psychology teachers across Europe.

Interview responses from Annette, Denmark, January 2007.

1: Describe your place of work

I work in an upper secondary school about 40 km. south of Copenhagen. There are about 750 students, between 16-19, and 90 teachers. Many students travel to school by train and bus from small towns and villages about 20-30 km away.

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

I teach English at A level and Psychology at C level. I used to teach PE, but after having taken Psychology as an additional subject, I decided to let younger PE teachers take over.

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

In the fall semester I taught 16 hours per week, but in the spring I will only have 13 hours a week. In Denmark a new reform was implemented last school year, which has meant many changes, among others new subjects and interdisciplinary projects. The work burden is more uneven now as you may have a very busy week when involved in project work, but then you also have fewer hours when your class is working on a project in other disciplines.

Teachers who have papers to correct, have fewer weekly lessons than teachers with no written work. There are papers to correct in English, but not in Psychology.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

The school is about 40 years old, and the class rooms were meant to hold only 24 students. Today, however, there are 28 students in a class, so we are more cramped now.

The rooms are quite light as there are windows along one side of the room, but we have no air condition, and when a room is exposed to the sun, it can become unpleasantly warm.

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment)

We are fairly well equipped with books, and most of the books the students take home, but we do have a few class sets. If we need dictionaries or other handbooks, we have to get them from our so-called book store. The school's library is well equipped.

In most class rooms there is an ordinary projector, and many class rooms now have a computer and data projector. We also have a number of mobile computers and data projectors and about twenty laptops, which have to be booked in advance. There are two computer rooms, which have to be booked in advance, and then there are a number of study centres equipped with computers, which the students can use at any time. The teachers have about 15-20 stationary computers to share between them, but at Christmas we all received a laptop each, which is ours as long as we work at the school.

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

Teachers' salaries compare reasonably well with other professions in the public sector but are definitely lower than professions in the private sector.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

I have been thinking about that question a lot and come to the conclusion that I would not choose teaching. Since I was young, so many new educations have arisen, and I think I would try something quite different. But we all know that this question is hypothetical.

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

7 or 8. I like teaching, but the implementation of our new reform is extremely time consuming and stressful. It is both challenging and frustrating. Too many teachers go down with stress.

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

It varies a lot. I think the students are more committed in Psychology (which is an elective subject) than in English, and the Seniors tend to be more committed than the Juniors, but there are many variations. Topics which are relevant to themselves certainly increase their motivation.

Interview responses from Dorothy, England, January 2007.**1: Describe your place of work**

I work in a sixth form college in a rural area of the North East. It was once a boys' Grammar School. There are 1600 students and most are 16-18. Many travel to college by bus from towns up to 20 miles away.

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

? I teach Psychology at A level, and Statistics at AS. I originally taught Biology, then Physical Education and Health and Social Care (all A level)

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

? I teach 16 hours, plus 3 hours as a tutor. The norm is 22 teaching hours, plus 3 hours as a tutor. I am a department manager so I have 6 hours for meetings and administration.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

? Large enough to sit 20-22 comfortably, tables tend to be arranged in a square U-shape rather than in blocks. Students all face the front.

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment)

? We are very well equipped with books. All students have at least one text book to take home and we have class sets of several texts. We have a resource centre with a large selection of books, magazines, videos and DVDs. There are five computer rooms attached, some can be booked for classes in advance, some a "drop in" for students. I teach my classes in a computer room one lesson every two weeks.

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

? This is very hard to say. Equating status is difficult but the general view seems to be that teachers are not well paid for the job they do.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

? ABSOLUTELY!

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

? Just before exams and with reports to write etc.: 3. When one of my students does something good: 10!!

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

? The second year students are far less committed than the first years. We have an initiative this year, to move from "Good" to "Outstanding" and this has led to a lot of changes and greater expectation of students. Perhaps you get what you expect!

Interview responses from Marja, Finland, January 2007

1: Describe your place of work

I work in an upper secondary school (students aged 16-18), of 350 students. Our school building is partly relative modern and we have good electronical teaching equipment.

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

Psychology and Religious Education. (Lots of teachers of psychology work as student councellors also but unofunately this is not the case with me.)

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

In average a teacher would have approximately 21-25 teaching hours /week.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

Excellent! Modern, beautiful, spacious with up to date electronical equipment (computer etc.)

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment)

Excellent: computer, access to literature, the equipment is brand new.

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

Poor, I am sorry to say. Starting salary in Helsinki are would be approximately 2250 €/month. When you have worked for about 20 years your salary will rise to approximately 3000 -3500€/month.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

Yes, I am happy to say. I enjoy the contact with students. I feel privileged to work as a psychology (and RE) teacher; the subjects are interesting and varied.

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

8

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

Good. Psychology is one of the most popular subjects in Finland. Even below average students work hard and make good results in national exams.

Interview responses from Wolfgang, Germany, January 2007.

1: Describe your place of work

I work at a vocational college in Moers in the western part of Germany. Most of our students take courses in Health and Care, domestic science and related subjects. There are about 1200-1300 mostly female students aged between 17-40 at my college and the level of qualification they study for varies from very low to full A-level. I work at two different locations of our college, so regularly I have to travel from one location to another

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

English/Psychology

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

My regular work load is 25 lessons of 45' each per week. I only teach lessons of 90' length sometimes even longer i.e. 135'.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

Most of the rooms are equipped with very basic teaching accessories like blackboard and OH Projector. The walls are occasionally more or less covered with posters produced by the students in various subjects.

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment)

In general things have improved in the last few years. If you want to work with PCs or surf the internet, you must book the respective room in advance. The same goes for films/videos. Sometimes our students work with a mobile laptop unit. The books I work with in psychology are kept in a special room, where the students have to get them if we need them. Fairly often my students are advised to visit my psychology homepage (www.psychomaterial.de.tf) to do certain tasks that come up in the lessons. IT has gradually become more prominent in my college over the past few years. We still do not present state of the art in this field but we are slowly catching up.

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

I suppose this is very difficult to answer, but I guess teachers in Germany - even though there are huge differences especially at a vocational college - are paid fairly well.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

There is nothing else I could do half as well. Well, except for singing maybe, so the answer is yes.

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

We have a lot of mourning Myrtles in the trade but I feel fairly fine: 9

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

Most students like the subject as such, but there are certain limitations on the side of the students e.g. intellectual ability, learning handicaps, social problems which keep them from showing really outstanding achievements.

Interview responses from Kristjan, Iceland, January 2007

1: Describe your place of work.

I work at Kvennaskólinn í Reykjavík, literally "the Reykjavík College of women". It is one of Iceland's oldest schools, starting in 1874 and still going strong! Actually the school has changed a lot during this long period, for example, it was originally the first school of its kind for women in Iceland. Today it is both for boys and girls, the girls taking up about 70%.

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

Originally I was hired to teach psychology, but slowly that has been changing. I was early asked to take on counselling, first a minor job, but now occupying 50% of my time. Today I leave the regular psychology teaching in the able hands of Lilja Osk Ulfarsdóttir, but only teach elective courses. Lilja teaches what we call PSY 103 (introduction to psychology) and PSY 203 (developmental psychology), and we both teach PSY 303 (abnormal psychology) and so on. I experimented with teaching an elective course for 2nd year students, called "psychology and the cinema", which has turned out to be the most popular elective course for the last 5 years. I divide the time between two themes: 1. teaching typical psychological matters (like various mental disorders, multiple personality, anxiety, memory, personality problems, the problem of violence, drugs, etc.) through films (like One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Memento, Pulp Fiction, Primal Fear, Three Faces of Eve, A Clockwork Orange, Taxi Driver, A Rebel Without a Cause, etc.). 2. teach the psychological measures used that determine various types of movies (horror: The Exorcist, comedy: The Party, romance: Pretty Woman or The Notebook, psycho-thriller: Fatal Attraction, etc.).

My other special course is to study the psychology of violence through variously famous cases of real life. The students study single serial killers (Ted Bundy, Son of Sam, Andrei Chikatilo...) then go on to pairs (Bonnie and Clyde, The Hillside Stranglers, Kray brothers...) and finally they study criminal cults (solar temple, Jonestown

massacre, Charles Manson and The Family...). This latter study is sensitive material and the students are 19 years old.

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

I teach 14 hours a week in total.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

They are in an old building (from 1909 actually!) but the classrooms are technically well equipped.

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment)

Each classroom has its own computer, all classrooms have regular teaching equipment, wireless internet connections and each room has a projector (to view DVD material). Most rooms also have a TV and a video. Furthermore I have specially equipped classroom for my special courses (see the description of movie material above).

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

Teachers in Iceland are doing relatively well, at least compared to 5 years ago. Actually we were forced to strike a few years back, and my belief is that this was crucial for our survival. Similar professions are nursing and various kinds of natural science professions, like biochemists, geologists, biologists and the like.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

No, actually I would prefer a professional soccer career, but there is the question of talent. Seriously, I still believe that one has to choose a career based on interests only, so actually I don't feel that I have any choice in the matter.

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

9.

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

More than 95% of our students go to university, but my feeling is that I am teaching two different species. One is committed and interested, asks questions and reads the material with interest. They take up more than half of the students. Then there is the other kind, who may later (hopefully) become interested in education, but are still lacking it. They are busy being interested in something else, whether it be entertainment, sports or computers, and they show obvious signs of boredom.

Interview responses, from Morag, Scotland, January 2007.

1: Describe your place of work

A college of further education, in Livingston, Scotland (about 20 miles west of Edinburgh). Students range from 14-year-olds to adults (including older adults), on a variety of courses: full-time and part-time, academic and vocational, basic introductory level to Higher National level (equivalent to 2nd year of a university degree). Though employed by the college, most of my work is in schools-college partnership, therefore I teach psychology to 15-18-year-olds at a state high school nearby. My college employment is part-time, and I also teach part-time at Napier University, Edinburgh (to students aged 18+), as well as doing examining work for the SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority, the national exam board in Scotland).

2: What subject(s) do you teach?

For the college, I teach psychology (SQA Higher, Highers being the required qualification for university entry). At Napier, I teach psychological research methods, practical research skills and quantitative data analysis, as well as effective learning and study skills.

3: How many hours per week do you spend teaching?

Approximately 12 hours on average, however full-time teachers and lecturers normally teach 20-24 hours per week.

4: How would you describe the rooms in which you teach?

Classrooms are, increasingly, adequately equipped, with computer and data projector, as well as traditional equipment. In general, the physical classroom environment has steadily improved over recent years, in all the institutions where I teach.

5: What are the facilities like? (IT, books, equipment).

IT facilities for students are very good; budgets for books and equipment tend to be variable.

6: How does your level of pay compare with that of other professions of similar status?

For full-time school teachers and college lecturers, I believe salaries currently compare reasonably well with other professions in the public sector (though they have always been considerably lower than professions in the private sector). However, work conditions, in terms of workload, stress, career structure etc are probably worse than ever in colleges; school teachers fare better than colleges in these respects.

7: If you had your career over again would you choose teaching?

Not at first; I would work at something more lucrative for a while (preferably involving travel, and some form of creativity) then study/train as a teacher. Some kind of broader prior experience like this tends to enhance teaching performance, and therefore benefits students. In any case, teaching is probably a more intensive form of work than most other jobs, so a 30-40 year career in teaching is quite wearing - hence the popularity of early retirement amongst teachers!

8: On a scale of 1-10 (1 low) rate your level of satisfaction with your job.

8. Teaching activity itself is almost always rewarding; the dissatisfaction I have experienced has usually been due to other factors such as employment conditions, organisational upheaval etc.

9: Describe the level of commitment of the majority of your students.

Always very varied! Over time (ie many years!), I think it has generally become harder to gain and maintain students' commitment, probably due to a whole range of reasons, relating to changes in social norms and values, education policies, information and communications technology, media, parenting practices, even diet..... the list goes on! Increasingly, I attempt to help students improve their commitment and self-regulation of their learning by encouraging them to reflect: on their own goals in education and in life, on their values, on their sources of motivation, on their self-concept as a learner.