

EDITORIAL NOTE

let's be ^{vi}~~covid~~



daniela

Celebrate Diversity

Lately, I discovered a new passion, an enticing world. The more I indulge into it, the more I want to explore and learn. Lately, I met 'painting' and I began looking at the world through a different lens.

I started appreciating the detail of the things around me, the simplicity in every process surrounding me. My world is now a spectrum of colours and no one is like the other.

Each one is different and exclusive making the variety complete and diverse. I look forward for the end of each week, as that means that I wear my artist shoes and let my soul dance on the blank canvas until its bursting with colours. I am still learning. The road is long but it's an ongoing learning experience.

I try to be original but sometimes I inspire myself from works of others or photos I collect. Staring at the end product, I realise that even though I copied a photo, no work is like the other. It could be the different brush strokes, it could be the mood in which it was painted, it could be the still budding experience.

Each piece of art is authentic and unique. It fills the room with enthusiasm and encourages me to paint more. Somehow, I relate this with life, with the people we meet every day. We are all coming from different worlds, carrying our experiences, telling our own stories.

We may have different cultures, values, hobbies, orientation, religion, and beliefs but we are all human beings who tinge this world with different shades of colour.

Let's be Vivid and embrace diversity for real for it is something we all make part of!

"We are all different, which is great because we are all unique. Without diversity, life would be very boring." - Catherine Pulsifer

Seeing Race Through Another's Eyes: Two SLPs Do the Work

As June unfolds itself we hear a lot of diversity and how we all need to embrace it and appreciate it. In this interesting **CLICK** [article](#), The American Speech Language-Hearing Association, ASHA, presents us with an interview between Ms. Desormes and Ms. Miller, two Speech Language Pathologists, coming from two worlds, carrying different race and cultural luggage. Yet, this article gives a great insight on how two different worlds can work hand in hand in one beautiful colourful journey.



Providing Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Services

Acknowledging that culture represents a critical element in health clinical practice is extremely important. Culture variables can impact our assessment, therapy plan and diagnosis in different ways. In this short but straight to the point **CLICK** [article](#), we learn to keep in mind that different cultural backgrounds are becoming something more tangible in our practice. Appreciating them will only help us to continue giving the best service practice possible towards all our clients irrespective of who they are and where they are coming from.

Let's meet...

Lisa Abela



By
JAMIE SAID

Q: When did you graduate and how long have you been involved in ASLP?

A: Graduated in September 2020 and have been involved in ASLP since then!

Q: What is/were your roles in ASLP?

A: I co-founded student speeches along with my SLP-bestie Erica. We create Instagram posts with activity ideas, study tips, clinical tips and anything SLP related. We also answer queries that student SLPs may have. Together, we also take care of the resource section of the ASLP newsletter.

Q: What is ASLP for you or what drew you to ASLP?

A: For me ASLP started off as primarily a way to keep in touch with the SLP profession when bridging the gap between me as a student SLP and a practicing SLP. As time went on it became so much more. It has given me the opportunity to network with other SLPs and raise awareness about the profession I form a part of. Through ASLP I also joined the European Association (ESLA)

Q: What is your area of special interest in SLP?

A: I'm very interested in the role of the SLP in a school setting as I feel this is something that still needs to become more commonplace in Malta.

Q: What do you like most about being a SLP?

A: The best part of being an SLP is when you witness, or learn of, one of your clients using the skills learnt during sessions outside the therapy room and in their day to day settings. This makes me especially proud when it is one of my social skills group clients.

Q: What are your non-SLP skills?

A: I've started knitting during the pandemic and I've become quite good at it! I should have a blanket ready by next winter.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I love cooking different cuisines of countries I've travelled to. My favourite country I've travelled to is India and I love experimenting with different curries (not too spicy though!)



The Role of the Speech Language Pathologist in...

Specialised Transgender Voice Intervention Clinic (STVI) and the Specialised Voice Intervention Clinic (SVI)



By
JAMIE SAID

Let's be Vivid approached **WAYNE SCHEMBRI** a Speech Language Pathologist working in two specialized community clinics to highlight the role of the Speech Language Pathologist in this particular context. Wayne, narrates his journey and how each day is a learning experience.

Wayne graduated as a speech and language pathologist in 2016, from the University of Malta.

He has a special interest in voice disorders and transgender voice therapy. Wayne is currently working within the Ministry of Health and is currently responsible of running two specialized voice clinics.



Specialised Transgender Voice Intervention Clinic (STVI) and the Specialised Voice Intervention Clinic (SVI)

In 2019, he attended a transgender voice therapy training course in Antwerp, Belgium, following which he went on to form part of the Gender-Well Being Clinic, where he provides the service of voice therapy to transgender individuals. Over the past few years Wayne has also attended a number of courses, workshops and conferences related to voice with the latest being in 2020, where he attended an intensive workshop in Hamburg, Germany on 'Laryngeal Manipulation', which is a specialized voice technique used with voice clients and transgender individuals.

If you told me, back when I graduated, that in a few years' time, I would be directly involved in the field of voice, I would have looked at you in a sarcastic manner, as if to say 'Who? Me?!'. Back when I was a student, voice was never an area of special interest to me, one of the reasons being that its medical aspect used to make me nervous and uncomfortable, moreover when considering the little to no practice we got on the subject in university. Fast forward to three years later, when I was asked whether I was interested to attend a training course on transgender voice therapy in Antwerp, Belgium. I was hesitant at first, but then decided that I was ready for the challenge and accepted, and now I could not be more appreciative of this opportunity I was given to further my knowledge and skills in the diverse area which is voice.

Since then, my caseload has shifted from purely paediatric, to one consisting mainly of voice clients. Currently, I am involved in two voice clinics, which are - The Specialised Transgender Voice Intervention (STVI) clinic and the Specialised Voice Intervention (SVI) clinic. Within both clinics, I form part of a multi-disciplinary team made up of various professionals including ENTs, psychologists, psychiatrists, endocrinologists, nurses and social workers.

The STVI clinic forms part of the Gender Well-being Clinic which strives to ensure competent and specialised assessment and support throughout the gender affirming transition and beyond. My role within this clinic is to formulate an intervention

programme targeted towards changing aspects of the transgender individual's voice, so as to minimize gender dysphoria by conforming their gender expression and gender identity.

Since the therapy programme involves voice exercises which they must do repeatedly, we need to first ensure that the vocal cords are healthy and functioning properly. Unfortunately, today an individual who is transitioning can easily search on ways how to change their voice and may do so in such a way that they end up misusing or abusing their vocal cords, creating damage to their vocal cords. Therefore, it is essential that before therapy they visit the ENT to rule out any voice issues. Should the ENT find a voice issue, we have to first work on eliminating the voice problem, before even attempting to start working on the transition of their voice. The therapy focuses on working on different aspects of voice in a gradual and safe way, so as not to damage the voice.

“The voice is the second face.” – Gerard Bauer

The way we speak, our pitch, our intonation, our volume, our words – they all present a particular image of who we are to the world – our voice represents us. Bauer's words accurately and concisely explain why voice therapy is not only important but an essential part of the transition process of a transgender individual.

Imagine being mis-labelled everyday over the phone because the person on the other end cannot see you, but only hear you. Unfortunately, that is what transgender individuals who are still transitioning experience and go through in their daily life. The fact that I get to help with that, and as a result positively affect their life, is in itself one of the most rewarding aspects of working with transgender clients. Above this, the appreciation and thankfulness each transgender client shows, once they realize that with my help and dedication from their end, they can get a 'new' voice that better reflects them as a male or female, makes it even more rewarding.

RESOURCES FOR SLPs, PARENTS and KIDS



By
LISA ABELA and
ERICA BONELLO



Student Speechies



#studentspeechies.mt

It's important for us Speech and Language Pathologists to promote diversity during our sessions. We can do this by using flashcards and books that have representation of different races, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, genders, disabilities, lifestyles and family structures.

CLICK 

Click **here** for a list of 50 diverse books for use in Speech and Language Therapy together with treatment target suggestions (curated by Sierrah Harris).



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.” – Maya Angelou