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# Digit+, Guide

### **Partners:**

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- EESTI PEOPLE TO PEOPLE, Estonia, partner
- HELLO COMPUTER SRL, Romania, partner
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### **Chapter 1**

### **Description**

First chapter dedicated to VET teachers in inclusive schools will refers to adaptation of digital learning tools to special educational student profiles and needs and about specific digital learning tools for special educational needs.

### **Content**

- -A comparison between methods and organizing measures in each participating country, problems and solutions adopted. A comparison inventory of tools, platforms and digital resources.
- -The use of technology to enhance accessibility, innovative content and quality lessons with adaptations for special educational needs, emphasis on student centered learning and interactivity trough digital means.
- -Creation of specialized discussion groups to engage students in collaborative learning and enhance their motivation.
- -Socio-emotional forums role in students integration and burn out diagnosis.
- -Universal design for learning, the why, what and how of remote inclusive learning.
- -Accessibility in remote education design and develop technology usable for a wide audience, including individuals with disabilities.
- -Built an "on-line voice", teacher's presence and appearance in online, effective communication using internet tools, empathy and emotional connections, support and counselling for disadvantaged
- -Principles and solutions to reduce misunderstandings and marginalization among multicultural, intergenerational groups of diverse learners or groups containing students at risk of marginalization. What teachers can bring in the on-line inclusive school based on digital communication for a better intercultural and intergenerational connection.

### Chapter 2

### **Description**

Second chapter will contain innovative methods and practical examples on how to observe all students needs and problems, to diagnose theirs gaps that been created in the last years education, to choose the most appropriate tools and use them in an adequate form and didactic strategy for eliminating the differences and facilitate equal access of disadvantaged students to VET digital education.

#### **Content**

Evaluation centered on the student, assessment, design tests/surveys/quizzes. Observation tools in online integrative school.

### Chapter 3

Third chapter containing a set of 7 modules from different technical domains, OER created in accordance with the existing VET programs, accessible for all. This modules deliverable in face-to-face or distance learning will be trans-nationally transferable, accessible and integrative. The learning results will be recognized and included in learners professionalization path by ECVET credits. Each of this modules will have 5-10 ECVET points.

# 1.1.A comparison between methods and organizing measures in each participating country, problems and solutions adopted. A comparison inventory of tools, platforms and digital resources.

In addition to the various subjects, all teachers have the duty to instill in students positive values and attitudes towards life and society. Education for values and attitudes is the basis of any national education system, including the EU and candidate countries.

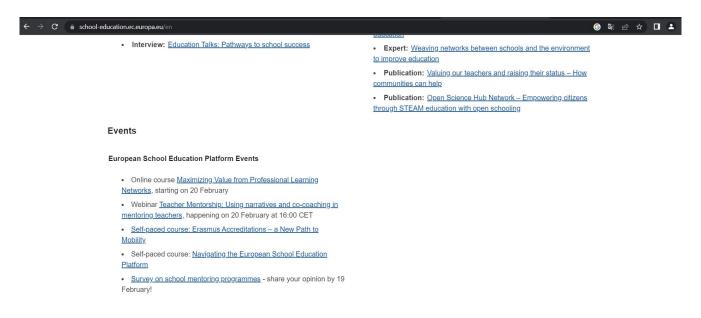
Many European platforms are used in the field of school education, in professional and technical education, in the field of adult education.

We will present some resources that can be used to strengthen education by using new tools to increase resources, training, cooperation and democracy in education.

### 1.1.1. European School Education Platform, the new Home on eTwinning

This first version of the platform offers eTwinners the main services to find partners and develop projects.

Launched in 2005, eTwinning is a community dedicated exclusively to teachers and other teaching staff in the field of initial vocational education and training and education, from pre-school education and care to upper secondary schools in eTwinning countries.



https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en

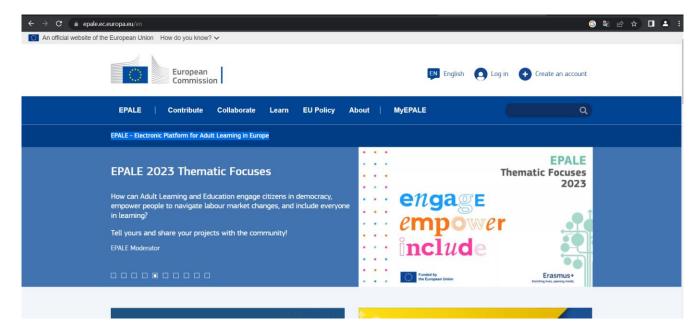
### 1.1.2.EPALE - Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

EPALE is a multilingual community with open participation, dedicated to teachers, trainers, researchers, academics, policy makers and anyone who cares about a professional role in adult learning across Europe.

The EPALE platform is funded by the European Commission, representing a recent development in an ongoing commitment to creating quality adult learning activities in Europe.

At the heart of EPALE is the community. The platform is designed around sharing content related to adult learning, including news, blog posts, resources, events and courses.

Members can connect with their peers involved in adult learning across Europe, using site functionality including online discussion and debate, communities of practice, content rating and commenting on blog posts. Members can interact with colleagues across Europe and by requesting a collaborative space, i.e. a private space within EPALE that allows them to hold discussions, upload documents, share news and highlight relevant events from the specific group's calendar. Members can also find projects and establish professional laws using the partner search function.



https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en

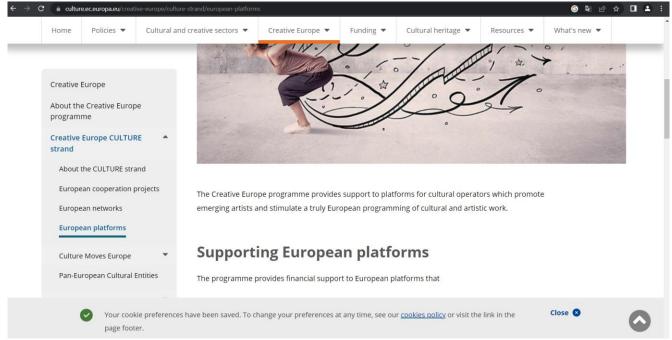
### 1.1.3. The "Creative Europe" program

Creative Europe is the European Commission's programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors.

The "Creative Europe" program provides support to platforms for cultural operators that promote emerging artists and stimulate a truly European programming of cultural and artistic works.

The program provides financial support to European platforms that:

- promotes the mobility and visibility of creators and artists —especially those without international exposure;
- stimulates a genuine European-level programming of cultural and artistic activities, facilitating access to non-national European cultural productions through tours, events, exhibitions, international festivals, etc.;
- it helps create a larger audience and gives visibility to the values and different cultures of Europe.



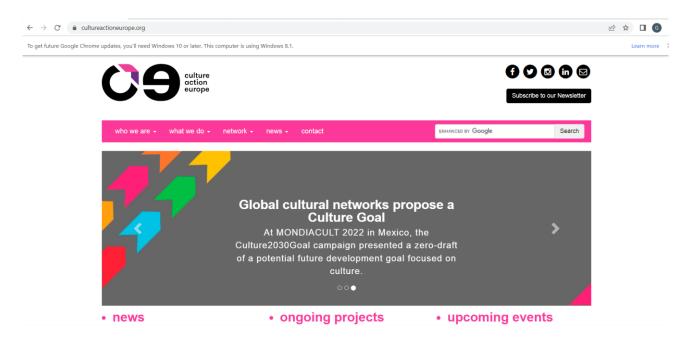
https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/culture-strand/european-platforms

# 1.1.4. Culture Action Europe

European network established in 1992 and today, CAE is the major European network of cultural networks, organizations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers.

CAE believes in the value and values of culture and its contribution to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies.

The mission of the CAE is to advocate the art and culture as a fundamental building block of the common future of Europe.



https://cultureactioneurope.org/

### 1.1.5.ENRYP (European Network of Regional and Local Youth Platforms)

Network of exchanges of best practices in the field of youth, especially on youth participation, active citizenship, EU awareness and social innovation in the countries of the European Union. The network was founded in 2017 by 6 organizations from different countries, within an Erasmus+ Culture Action Europe project



https://www.facebook.com/ENRYP.network/

### 1.1.6.ENYC (European Network of Youth Centres)

The network established by the Council of Europe (CoE) in 2003 and which promotes the cooperation of youth centers in Europe, the values of the CoE and which supports the development of public policies for youth at local, national and European level. The network consists of 19 members from 16 countries.



http://enyc.eu/

# 1.2. The use of technology to enhance accessibility, innovative content and quality lessons with adaptations for special educational needs, emphasis on student centered learning and interactivity trough digital means.

Veniamin Loredana, teacher "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School

### 1.2.1.Literacy and multiliteracies

"Literacy teaching and learning needs to change because the world is changing" Cope and Kalantzis (2000: 41).

At first glance, 'literacy' would seem a term very easy to define and understood by everybody. But at the same time, it has proved to be a complex and dynamic concept, open to endless interpretations and definitions. When it comes to the notion of what being literate or illiterate means there are a lot of factors that should be taken into consideration, the most important being academic research, national context, cultural values and personal experiences. Theories concerning literacy have evolved from those concerning the changes in individuals to those referring to the broader contexts of society and the result is an increased understanding and consideration in the international policy community. If literacy used to be seen as the simple process of acquiring basic cognitive skills, now it is about using these skills in order to contribute to socio-economic progress and developing them as a basis for personal and social change.

### **Defining and conceptualizing literacy**

For most of its history in English, the term 'literate' meant to be 'familiar with literature' or more widely 'well educated, learned'. Only since the late nineteenth century has it begun to refer to the abilities to read and write text, yet preserving its more general meaning of being 'knowledgeable or educated in a particular field or fields'.

Since the mid-twentieth century, academics have consecrated notable attention to defining literacy. Scientists from a wide range of disciplines: sociology, anthropology, philosophy and history, have taken on a disputed controversy over the meaning and definition of the term 'literacy'.

### Literacy as skills

The most popular understanding of literacy is that it is a set of concrete skills - especially the cognitive skills of reading and writing — which do not depend on the circumstances of the acquisition and the experience of the person who acquires them. When learned in early childhood, they provide the foundation for solid reading and writing capabilities. These basic skills make it possible for a person to process information so that language can be understood, written or described orally.

### **Broadening the domain**

Obviously, literacy as a concept has broadened beyond skills used in reading and writing to incorporate terms in other disciplines. Butzow and Butzow (1988) describe an approach to teaching scientific literacy by integrating the subject matter from a variety of disciplines using children's literature. Mitman, et al. (1985) focuses specifically on the topic of scientific literacy and provide teachers with background on the goals of science instruction and practical recommendations for instructional practice. The term media literacy is most often used to refer to TV watching habits. Abelman (1987) investigates the effect of an in-school curriculum designed to encourage children's awareness of and attention to television's pro-social portrayals. Aiex (1989) summarizes research on mass media and offers suggestions for developing media literacy in students. Cultural literacy has entered the database as a consequence of Hirsch's work. Computer literacy is included but appears under the more general term: computer uses in education. Home literacy may become a new term due to the growing number of citations that reflect on parental involvement in literacy acquisition, or literacy in the home. The definition of literacy has expanded well beyond that found in the scope note

of the 1988 ERIC Thesaurus: "literacy is the ability to read and write and to communicate with written or printed symbols." Literacy involves making meaning from a variety of sources and communicating it to a variety of audiences. Graff's position on literacy may be the most constructive for the future: "What is needed is a broader view of reading and writing that integrates and emphasizes the many human abilities in a context of a changing world that requires their development and use."

International organizations - notably the OECD through publications such as Literacy in the Information Age (2000) and Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society (1997) – have given impetus to the use of such terms, eventually giving rise to a new French term, 'littératie' (Fernandez, 2005). The meaning of these concepts tends to be diverse and shifting, ranging from the view of literacy as a set of largely technical skills (the OECD perspective) to the idea that these skills should be applied in critical ways to examine one's surroundings (e.g. the workplace and the media) and push for social change (Hull, 2003). For instance, 'information literacy' broadly refers to the ability to access and use a variety of information sources to solve an information need. Yet, it can also be defined as the development of a complex set of critical skills that allow people to express, explore, question, communicate and understand the flow of ideas among individuals and groups in quickly changing technological environments. In 1975, ten years after the Tehran Congress, the Persepolis Declaration, adopted by the International Literacy Meeting, advocated that literacy is "not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but a contribution to the liberation of man[...] It should open the way to a mastery of techniques and human relations." In 1978, UNESCO's General Conference adopted a definition of functional literacy – still in use today – which states: "A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development." Over the 1980's and 1990's, definitions of literacy broadened to accommodate the challenges of globalization, including the impact of new technology and information media and the emergence of knowledge economies. The World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) placed the challenge of literacy within the broader context of: 'Meeting the basic learning needs of every child, youth and adult.' Literacy is no longer exclusively understood as an individual phenomenon, but is seen also as a contextual and societal one.

Today, the spectrum of literacy includes:

- ❖ Alphabetic literacy, which refers to a person being able to write his or her own name.
- ❖ Functional reading and writing literacy that allows a person to read or write on the most elementary and basic levels of everyday life.
- Social literacy that empowers one to read, write and communicate effectively using the cultural language of a particular community (e.g., social and linguistic norms, unspoken communication customs, etc).
- ❖ Information literacy, which requires people to use critical thinking skills to locate, evaluate and use information in order to become independent learners.
- ❖ Digital information literacy. Included are emerging *literacies* such as computer, network, software, visual, multimedia, audio, tool, and Internet literacy.
- ❖ Illiteracy is a newly coined word meaning having the ability to read but being unwilling to do so "Definitions of literacy now include numeracy, problem-solving skills, and knowledge of social practices, language and culture. They will soon include some level of computer literacy. Literacy is about more than reading and writing it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language and culture." (Dzingai Mutumbuka, September 2004.)

Some scholars have suggested that a more useful concept would be that of *multiple literacies* – that is, ways of 'reading the world' in specific contexts: technological, health, information, media, visual, scientific, and so on (Street, 2003; Lankshear and Knobel, 2003; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000). In short, different everyday contexts present different literacy demands, perceptions of literacy, and types of power relations and hierarchies of knowledge (Barton et al., 1999; Street, 2003).

### **Multiliteracies**

There is nowadays a general acceptance of a textual shift in the students 'environment which is mainly occupied by visual, electronic and digital texts. The terms 'multiliteracies' (Cope

&Kalantzis, 2000; Unsworth, 2001), 'new literacies' (Lankshear, C. &Knobel, M. 2003), 'multimodal texts', 'multimodal discourse' and 'multimodality' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001, 2006) are simple attempts to describe this gear and conceptualize the changed standards concerning learning and literacy in an age of increased digital communication.

New literacies generally refer to new forms of literacy made possible by digital technology developments, although new literacies do not necessarily have to involve use of digital technologies to be recognized as such. The term 'new literacies' itself is relatively new within the field of literacy studies (the first documented mention of it in an academic article title dates to 1993 in a text by David Buckingham). Its definition remains open, with new literacies being conceptualized in different ways by different groups of scholars.

Accompanying the varying conceptualizations of *new literacies*, there are a range of terms used by different researchers when referring to *new literacies*, including 21st century *literacies*, *internet literacies*, *digital literacies*, *new media literacies*, *multiliteracies*, *information literacy*, *ICT literacies*, *and computer literacy*. In the Handbook of New Literacies Research, Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, and Leu (2008) note that all these terms "are used to refer to phenomena we would see as falling broadly under a new literacies umbrella" (pg. 10).

Commonly recognized examples of *new literacies* include such practices as instant messaging, blogging, maintaining a website, participating in online social networking spaces, creating and sharing music videos, podcasting and video-casting, photo-shopping images and photo sharing, emailing, shopping online, digital storytelling, participating in online discussion lists, emailing and using online chat, conducting and collating online searches, reading, writing and commenting on fan fiction, processing and evaluating online information, creating and sharing digital mash-ups, etc. (see: Black, 2008; Coiro, 2003; Gee, 2007; Jenkins, 2006; Kist, 2007; Lankshear&Knobel, 2006; Lessig, 2005; Leu, et al. 2004; Prensky, 2006).

New literacies go beyond print-based literacy, and incorporate blogs, podcasts, gaming, etc. (Lankshear&Knobel, 2007, p. 5). They take on a socio-cultural perspective of *literacies*, which integrates social, cultural, political, economic, and historical practices. "If we see literacy as 'simply reading and writing' - whether in the sense of encoding and decoding print, as a tool, a set of skills, or a technology, or as some kind of psychological process - we cannot make sense of our literacy experience. Different kinds of text require 'somewhat different backgrounds and somewhat different skills' if they are to be read (i.e. read meaningfully)" Lankshear&Knobel, 2007, p. 2). New literacies open a complex door to making meaning in new ways. They allow for increased participation, collaboration, and distribution of information - an avenue for shared knowledge. New literacies allow for individuals to be in-sync without being in the presence of one another.

Donald Leu, a prominent researcher in the field of *new literacies*, has outlined four defining characteristics of *new literacies*, according to a largely psycholinguistic orientation. First, new technologies (such as the internet) and the novel literacy tasks that pertain to these new technologies require new skills and strategies to effectively use them. Second, *new literacies* are a critical component of full participation—civic, economic, and personal—in our increasingly global society. A third component to this approach is *new literacies* are deictic—that is, they change regularly as new technology emerges and older technologies fade away. With this in mind, "what may be important in reading instruction and literacy education is not to teach any single set of *new literacies*, but rather to teach students how to learn continuously *new literacies* that will appear during their lifetime." Finally, *new literacies* are 'multiple, multimodal, and multifaceted,' and as such, multiple points of view will be most beneficial in attempting to comprehensively analyze them.

The notion of 'multiliteracies' emerged as a result of the changes in people's working lives, public lives as citizens, and private lives as community members. Its aim is to take cultural differences into account and regard language and other means of communication as dynamic and constantly transforming in the context of the progressing world. (New London Goup, 1996).

The New London Group first came together in the mid-nineties to consider the state and future of literacy pedagogy. After a meeting in September 1994 the New London Group published an article-long manifesto (New London Group, 1996) and then a book (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000) outlining an agenda for what we called a 'pedagogy of multiliteracies'. Experts, colleagues, friends, all

with a concern for language and education, we had set aside that initial week in 1994 to talk through what was happening in the world of communications and what was happening, or not happening but perhaps should happen, in the teaching of language and literacy in schools. "In the initial article and book, we presented 'A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies' as a programmatic manifesto. The world was changing, the communications environment was changing, and it seemed to us to follow that literacy teaching and learning would to have to change, as well. This was the gist of our argument. "(Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis)

The notion of *multiliteracies* builds upon the progressive perspective of education by deciding upon the design of social futures as giving literate behavior the most convincing meaning. Students should, according to this perspective, be engaged in actively designing their social futures when 'doing literacy'. The *multiliteracies* movement therefore has consequences in terms of text choice, text analysis, and textual synthesis and representation.

All of this work has to be integrated into the design of social futures, which are continually rushing into the fields of knowledge of students and teachers as society progresses, and new social conditions become apparent. Literacy is, according to *multiliteracies*, deeply dependent on social–cultural factors that are always in motion, and often have unknown trajectories, especially given the current dramatic economic fluctuations that are presently starting to determine new models of work and communication.

In all, we live in new times of digitally accessible multimodality for designing texts as part of evolving social purposes and practices. Theorists and researchers have reached a clear consensus: facility with interpreting and designing new *multimodal literacies* will increasingly be required by human beings to communicate, work, and thrive in the digital, global world of the 21st century (Alvermann, 2002; Buckingham, 2003; Cope &Kalantzis, 2000; Gee, 2003; Jewitt& Kress, 2003; Kress, 2003; Lankshear&Knobel, 2003; New London Group, 1996; Street, 1995). These scholars agree, also, that significant changes will be needed in schooling, in teachers, and, especially, in educational beliefs about the status/design of non-print modes as ways of knowing and communicating.

### Multiliteracies and the classroom

Multimodal literacies transcend the alphabetic world that is the focus of classroom literacy instruction. A generation ago, the world of literacy was based on paper. Now, literacy engages people in texts and discourses that traverse space and time on screens in which we can access and mix semiotic resources that include a multiplicity of languages. We do this instantaneously and ubiquitously, using new media in constant evolution.

The school classroom has been subject to unprecedented levels of intervention and change over the last two decades – from the prescription of curriculum to the technologies that are now routinely used, to the design of pedagogy, to changes in teaching personnel. These processes have impacted on the communicational landscape of the classroom, on the relationship between teachers and pupils and on the transmission "reception" and production of curriculum knowledge. English has been strongly affected by complex and uncoordinated processes of change, involving shifts in policy, professional identity, technology and cultural form.

The change can be identified at two significant levels:

Firstly, the digital landscape of the classroom has changed fundamentally over the past decade. A decade ago the use of technology in the English classroom meant a trip to the computer suite usually to word process completed written work (Harrison et al., 2001). Now, a lot of English lessons are taught on Internet-enabled interactive whiteboards (IWBs) supported by scanners and other digital peripherals (Moss et al., 2007). This change marks a shift from "one defining apparatus to another", from print to digital technologies, which is accompanied by an intensification of digital practice and changing communicational forms (Green, 2004, p. 298). Understanding the effect of this shift (both positive and negative) is fundamental for the future design of teaching, learning and curriculum: for instance, how teachers and students use and interpret image, writing and moving image in the classroom or how technological change mediates the curriculum (Andrews, 2004; Smith, 2008).

Secondly, shifts in classroom practice need to be located in a broader cultural and technological frame. Students' communicational resources have changed significantly over the past

decade, bringing music, image and video into their everyday repertoire. Nearly all students now have home access to the Internet and routinely carry a mobile phone with digital camera, video, MP3 player; as Harris and Rampton (2008) point out, in their study of urban classrooms, new media are pervasive. These changes have expanded the multimodal resources available to students, multiplied the reading paths to be navigated, and introduced practices of re-mixing and redesign of communicational forms (Leander & Frank, 2006).

Literacy practices associated with media and technology often challenges customary classroom instruction. Instead of privileging print text (Burroughs and Smagorinsky 2009) and one-mode delivery (Nystrand 1997), these new literacy practices encourage multiple modes of expression (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001), participatory and student-centered learning (Lankshear and Knobel 2006), and critical engagement (Lewis and Ketter 2004). The 'multiple literacies' approach to schooling gives rise to questions of the relevance of dominant models of literacy as it is currently taught in the majority of schools around the world in relation to the communicative and technological requirements of contemporary, digitalized society. Generally speaking, school literacy is criticized where it continues to focus on restrictive print- and language- based notions of literacy (Gee, 2004; Lam, 2006; Leander, 2007; Sefton-Green, 2006). In this context, what is positioned as new literacy practices in the school may be new to school but are often already well established among many young people (Lankshear&Knobel, 2003). Increasingly, the communicational landscapes occupied by young people originate outside of the school. This has entailed changes in family life, the traditional access point for children's texts, enabling new ways for children to be the producers and disseminators of information (Carrington, 2005).

We have moved from "telling the world to showing the world" (Kress, 2003, p. 140). At a recent scholarly meeting, Lotherington (2010) proposed the idea of two-dimensional (2D) *literacies* to metaphorically capture the static, linear, paper-based reading and writing agendas of school language and literacy curricula and assessment. Digitally mediated, multimodal communication is dynamic, adding a third dimension of space, in that the reader can enter the text in new and exciting ways (e.g., as co-writer in collaborative texts, actor in augmented reality contexts, or avatar in virtual games); and it is interactive, adding the fourth dimension of time. Literate engagement in the interactive, multimodal genres created in digital space engages the participant in dynamic, multidimensional communication, (potentially) involving

- social interaction,
- physical coordination,
- visual design,
- \* modal complexity (e.g., multiple language engagement, musical accompaniment and animation),
- dynamic, collaborative text construction, and
- alphabetic literacy.

These new possibilities reshape how we understand, teach, and test languageand literacy in the classroom.

In L2 teaching contexts, whether characterized as second, foreign, or international language education, teachers have been hesitant to acknowledge and engage these new dimensions of literacy. Vald'es (2004) pointed to L2 teachers' tendency to conceptualize language in their teaching as an abstract linguistic system, detached from a broader socially constructed multimodal perspective.

Reducing L2 learning to the flat *literacies* of paper-based resources in the classroom raises questions of authenticity in L2 learning. If teachers are to meaningfully engage L2 learners in communication as it exists in the social world, these brave new dimensions of literacy must be woven into classroom learning. As Kress (2003) writes, "It is no longer possible to think about literacy in isolation from a vast array of social, technological and economic factors. Two distinct yet related factors deserve to be particularly highlighted. These are, on the one hand, the broad move from the now centuries long dominance of writing to the new dominance of the image and, on the other hand, the move from the dominance of the medium of the book to the dominance of the medium of the screen. These two together are producing a revolution in the uses and effects of literacy and of associated means for representing and communicating at every level and in every domain. "(p. 1)

How knowledge is represented, as well as the mode and media chosen, is a crucial aspect of knowledge construction, making the form of representation integral to meaning and learning more generally. That is, the ways in which something is represented shape both what is to be learned, that is, the curriculum content, and how it is to be learned. It follows, then, that to better understand learning and teaching in the multimodal environment of the contemporary classroom, it is essential to explore the ways in which representations in all modes feature in the classroom.

It has become clear to many researchers in the field that new literacies research has important implications the classroom. Kist (2007), for example, observes how *new literacies* can be used in classroom settings—from the use of rap music to anime to digital storytelling, there are already instances of teachers attempting to blend *new literacies* with traditional literacy practices in the classroom. Kist asks: "Can new literacies indeed 'fit' into how we currently 'do' school?" Kist notes that "the new literacies instruction that does exist often comes only out of the fortitude of lonely pioneers of new literacies."

Knobel and Lankshear (2011) argue that if educators and prospective teachers engage in blogging, or participate in 'affinity spaces' devoted to practices like fan fiction, video game-playing, music and video remixing, photo-sharing, and the like, they will better understand how *new literacies* can better be integrated into worthwhile classroom learning.

Leu, Coiro, Castek, Hartman, Henry and Reinking (2008) have begun to explore the use of a modified instructional model of reciprocal teaching that reflects some of the differences between offline and online reading contexts. In an instructional model known as Internet Reciprocal Teaching, each student has his/her own laptop with access to the Internet and students work in small groups to facilitate interactive group work and discussions about strategy use. In addition, Internet Reciprocal Teaching with online informational resources (as opposed to narrative texts) and strategy instruction on both the common and unique processes by which students navigate through multiple and different texts, rather than the reading of one common text. Teachers and students model their choices about which links are most relevant to a group or individual question through think-aloud methods. They discuss how to efficiently locate information within different kinds of websites, how to synthesize ideas across multiple texts and media, how to make judgments about the quality of the information and the author's level of expertise, and how to best represent the answers to their questions. Responsibility for monitoring and effectively using these strategies to solve online information problems is gradually released to the students using an instructional scheme with three phases: Phase 1 includes direct, whole class instruction of basic skills and strategies of Internet use; Phase 2 includes group work and the reciprocal exchange of online reading comprehension strategies by students with their peers; and Phase 3 includes online individual inquiry units, sometimes with collaborative efforts involving other students in other classes, perhaps even in other parts of the world, and periodic strategy sessions with groups. Students "are the first generation to be global publishers to access the raw material of information and to create refined knowledge products for application. They understand the social skills of working with people who they will never meet face to face. They also understand that they need to take more responsibility for managing their own learning. They do not see the boundaries of school as a solid wall. They see school as a global communications center".

### Is literacy important?

Yes, it surely is. Why? Because the world is rapidly changing. The effects of globalization and free trade, better communication and information technologies, and the rise of societies that use knowledge and information to create wealth, have resulted in a growing demand for highly skilled workers. This global competition for skilled, literate workers explains why literacy has become so important. Literacy is about more than just words and meaning. It is important because it affects peoples' lives directly; it impacts their chances of employment, level of income and type of occupation. Research shows that higher literacy skills can lead to better jobs, increased incomes and greater productivity. Literacy skills also affect social status, level of political participation, opportunities for cultural expression, health, the survival of languages, access to social services and opportunities to learn. Having good literacy skills enhances a country's quality of life by reducing poverty, lowering unemployment, lessening the need for public assistance and encouraging better parenting.

There is no dispute that education provides access to material resources in the form of better paid employment; that it affords an enhanced capacity to participate in civic life; that it promises personal growth. Upon education still rests one of the key promises of modern societies. People of the 'right' call this promise 'equity'. They say that the world is inevitably and irreducibly unequal. However, inequality is not unjust insofar as education is one of society's 'opportunities'. It is free and compulsory, and through education you can become anything you like and succeed on your own terms—if you have the will and the 'ability', that is. Education is one of the key sources of social equity. Whether this vision is wishful or utopian, nothing less than equality is an acceptable objective, even if in the short term all that can be achieved in education is to pursue an ongoing struggle to reduce the gap between the haves and the have-nots—hence the compensatory programs, the remedial curriculum for children who have been 'left behind' and the special efforts made in schools in poor neighborhoods. Whether the rhetoric is based on notions of equity or equality, education continues to fail to meet these promises. If it could provide either greater equity or equality, it is doing neither. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing, and even when the poor sometimes become slightly less poor, it is rarely because education has improved. Maybe it is a delusion to think education could ever be an instrument that ameliorates society's most fundamental ills. Nevertheless, education, and literacy teaching in particular, does continue to make such promises.

### 1.2.2. EFL Learners: Needs, Interests, Learning Styles, Multiple Intelligences

In a learner-centered system, the starting point for curriculum development is to conduct needs analysis and have extensive consultations with learners. The collected information can serve as "input into the content, design and implementation of a language program" (Richards, 1984, p.5). This analysis is necessary to understand students' needs for language learning and teaching. The meaning of needs has been illustrated by many scholars, such as Berwick (1989), Brindley (1989), Mountford (1981), and Widdowson (1981) and five models of needs analysis have been developed: a systematic approach (Richterich&Chancerel, 1977), a sociolinguistic model (Munby, 1978), a learning-centered approach (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), learner-centered approaches (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989) and a task-based approach (Long, 2005). Learners' needs are approached before and during a course through more than one data collection methods such as surveys, interviews and attitude scales. However, two concerns are raised: lack of attention of learners' real-world needs and over-reliance on learners' perception of needs (Kaewpet, 2009).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) provided a learning-centered approach which focuses on how learners learn and their needs are approached from two directions: target needs which are defined as "what the learner needs to do in the target situation" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 54) and learning needs which take more factors into account: learners, learning background, age.

On the other hand, the learner-centered approaches analyze the learners' needs from three points of view: perceived vs. felt needs; product vs. process oriented interpretations; and objective vs. subjective needs (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989). According to Berwick (1989), 'perceived needs' are from the perspective of experts, while 'felt needs' are from learners' views. In the product-oriented interpretation, learner needs are considered to be the language that is required in the target situations, while in the process-oriented interpretation, the focus is on how learners respond to their learning situation. Finally, objective needs are derived from various kinds of factual information about learners, their real-life needs, their current language proficiency, and their difficulties (Brindley, 1989), while subjective needs can be derived from information related to affective and cognitive factors such as attitudes, learning wants, and learning expectations.

A Needs Analysis includes not only why learners might need language in the future, but also their present language level and current problems, what they would like to learn, how they want to study it. There are some key tools which can help teachers to gather information: comments, information, answers to questions if they choose the written channel, through speaking with the students individually or in groups, or through observation at work.

Lately, a new learning style has emerged as a result of the progress in technology and out of the teachers' need to enhance students' motivation in any possible way and I am referring here to 'computer-assisted' learning style. The researchers indicated that computer use and access to the internet are more widespread within most students; therefore, the EFL teachers should include instructional materials through computer and internet access into their syllabus, thus catering to those students who need and want this kind of materials. Yüksel and Kavanoz (2011) state that the competences in internet use and computer access in teaching should not be ignored. Believing that Information Technology makes a difference in language learning and teaching, teachers should design lessons taking students' needs and learning styles into consideration. It is clear that because individuals have different sensory preferences or cognitive styles learning is more effective when multiple sensory channels are involved (Kearnsley, 2000). Consequently, it is imperative (Stokes, 2002) that "instructional materials, as well as teaching styles, should be matched with cognitive styles for greatest learner benefits" (p. 12) and so more the case given the cultural shift in the current media-saturated environment.

If we analyze the traditional learning environment, we will see that many instructional events catered only to the cognitive style, which is not satisfactory for today's learner. Consequently, teachers try to present materials in multiple ways so as to facilitate retention of information and satisfactory learning in a continually changing culture. They must address the complex relationship that exists between learning tasks, a learner's cognitive processes and media attributes (Gunawardena, 1992). A solution to this could be computer-aided learning which has the potential to present materials in a variety of forms and to cover style differences. An enhanced multimedia learning environment will embrace all learning styles and fully cater to the *multiliterate* learner. The beauty of this all is that it may be customized by the developer or the user to suit a particular style or combination of styles. Thus the learner can adapt a presentation to his or her needs, by actively deciding about the 'how' and 'what' of his or her work (Schwan, 2002). So we are talking here about a transition from the learner who is given virtually no choice to the one who can be a co-driver in his or her learning.

## 1.2.3. Multimodality Sparkles Creativity

Multimodality is not new. People have always used a range of ways to represent ideas and communicate meaning through speech, writing, image, gesture and movement, music, sound. What is new is the way that messages and meanings are distributed through different media of communication.

Narrowing the idea, digital technology has brought significant changes to writing over the last twenty years or so: newspapers, information leaflets or advertising use words which are now almost always accompanied by photographs, diagrams or drawings, and the print is enhanced by a variety of font sizes and shapes. Screens are much more familiar in shops, workplaces, schools and homes. Mobile phones transmit images and words as well as sound. Many everyday texts are now multimodal, combining words with moving images, sound, color and a range of photographic, drawn or digitally created visuals.

Technology has become an increasingly important component of the writing classes too, raising the issue of how new media are likely to impact academic writing and not only. Those examining these trends in research have reached a clear consensus: facility with interpreting and designing multimodal texts will increasingly be required by human beings to communicate, work, and thrive in the digital, global world of the 21st century (e.g., Alvermann, 2002; Buckingham, 2008; Cope &Kalantzis, 2000; Gee, 2004; Jewitt& Kress, 2003; Kress, 2000, 2003; Lankshear&Knobel, 2003, 2006; New London Group, 1996, 2000; Street, 1995). Moreover, these scholars concur that significant changes will be needed in schooling, in teachers, and especially in educational beliefs about the status/design of non-print modes of meaning as ways of knowing and communicating.

While Knobel and Lankshear (2007) argue that new technology can be used simply to "replicate longstanding literacy practices" (p. 7), others believe that *new literacies* may "mobilize very

different kinds of values and priorities and sensibilities than the literacies we are familiar with, changing the nature of the academic genres we want our students to acquire" (p. 7).

Word processing is seen as the most pervasive influence of computers on composition and made writing less intimidating for novice writers (Bean, 1983), inviting them to take risks in their writing (Feldman, 1984), giving them control over their composing strategies (Gerrard, 1989) and leading them to create more complex sentences and longer papers (Collier, 1983). Furthermore, computers offer teachers different ways to deliver some of their best practices in composition teaching: a pedagogy that gives the students a lot of opportunities to write, rewrite and talk about their writing, fosters collaboration among learners while their work is in progress and puts the student rather than the teacher at the centre.

Recently, thanks to the increased access to new media, students have been able to collaborate virtually, sharing ideas and drafts online, working in groups on various projects without meeting face to face. Online writing can take many forms: students responding to reading, discovering a purpose for writing, finding additional research, responding to drafts, discussing ideas for projects, enabling the learners to become aware of audience. Teachers can also benefit from collaboration software which allows students to access a central document online, at any time, and write the product together or just paste in pieces that they have written separately. Students can use wikis for collectively generating ideas, taking notes, building bibliographies, outlining, drafting and revising.

Texting, blogging, messaging and social networking have experienced a remarkable increase in popularity over a very short time. Two factors are central to new media: digitalization and interactivity. Texting and messaging have attracted a great deal of journalistic attention owing to the frequency with which young people, especially teenagers, engage in these activities and the common use of abbreviations and emoticons. The popularity of texting and its associated technology has led some composition scholars to advocate integrating new media into composition classes while various schools have even shifted the focus of instruction away from the academic essay to new media.

Computer-based writing is often labeled 'digital', 'new media', 'multimedia' writing and the texts are very different from the traditional paper-based ones. They are as likely to be web pages, visual images, wikis, blogs, video files, and audio-files as they are to be words on paper. Often, students' writing combines several media, so a single document may interweave graphics, animation, sound, interactive elements all under the umbrella of the terms 'multimedia writing' and 'new media'. The change lies not only in the form of the final product but also in the view of writing practices. Students discuss, construct, and publish their work online, with one or more co-authors and audiences that go far beyond the classroom.

Including multimodality in the literacy curriculum means learning to decide when to communicate in writing alone and when to use a multimodal form. And the decisions whether to use a combination of modes or a single mode are related to purpose and audience. If a message is to have maximum effect, it is important to choose the best form of communication. This will be influenced by the writer's view of what the reader or audience needs in order to understand the intended meaning.

Many teachers allow or require their students to submit their writing on blogs create websites and incorporate visual and interactive elements into their work and this orientation is likely to continue as those media-oriented genres become more commonplace. Increasingly, teachers are asking students to write documents that combine several different modes of communication instead of the traditional print assignments. The multimodal writing makes meaning by interconnecting words with interactive features such as blogs and wikis, links to other websites, visual elements (graphs, photos, clip art, diagrams), moving media (animation, film, video clips) audio files (music, sound effect, speech) or any combination of these media. The purpose that the teacher should have in mind when demanding such compositions from their students is not to shift focus from writing to anything else (science, art, film, etc) but to extend students' ability to express themselves in interactive visual and auditory media, as well as written ones. Creating a web page that incorporates several media is an excellent way for students to practice researching, selecting, organizing and focusing information. Choosing an appropriate style and content for a particular audience, establishing a consistent view point on a subject, arguing through images and auditory materials as well as words are also activities that fit this approach.

Writing teachers must acknowledge 'multiple semiotic channels' and agree that literacy pedagogies must account for the multiplicity of texts allowed and encouraged by digital technologies (Takeyoshi&Selfe, 2007, p. 2). For them, the multimodal approach is more than moving students away from composing practices that are too similar to those of their parents and grandparents. They align themselves with the New London Group's 1996 'Pedagogy of Multiliteracies' in which literacy is not only technological but cultural, material and political. Teachers need to understand writing as multimodal composing that better prepares the students to communicate successfully within professional and social contexts outside school.

Technology has changed the rules of interpersonal engagement in all contexts, including the classroom, as many students and teachers, at the same time, are not very well prepared for these changes. They are both accustomed in writing classes to primarily alphabetic as opposed to a multi-modal text. Technology has been and impetus for constant change and in the context of new writing pedagogies, this change has impacted not only the spaces in which writing is taught but also the diverse students that are taught.

These are only some of the new technologies that have completely changed the way people write and interpret written messages.

The Internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to link several billion devices worldwide. It is a 'network of networks' that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks of local to global scope, linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless, and optical networking technologies. The Internet carries an extensive range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents—and applications of—the World—Wide—Web—(WWW), the infrastructure to support email and peer-to peer networks for file sharing and telephony.

A website is a set of related web pages typically served from a single web domain. A website is hosted on at least one web server, accessible via a network such as the Internet. All publicly accessible websites collectively constitute the World Wide Web. Web pages, which are the building blocks of websites, are documents, typically written in plain text interspersed with formatting instructions of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). They may incorporate elements from other websites.

Wikis, websites that students can create and edit without having to learn a web-composing program are ideal tools for collaboration. Students can use a wiki not just for brainstorming, but also for the entire writing process—for collectively generating ideas, taking notes, building a bibliography, outlining, drafting, and revising. The wiki itself becomes a text that students discuss and negotiate as they design, write, edit, and publish it. And because a wiki can be accessed from any browser, students can collaborate with others not just in the same class, but with students across campus or at schools anywhere in the world.

Google Docs, Sheets, Slides and Forms are a free, web-based word processor, a spreadsheet program, a presentation program and survey program respectively, all part of a software office suite offered by Google within its Google Drive service. The suite allows users to create and edit documents online while collaborating with other users in real-time.

Electronic mail, most commonly referred to as email or e-mail since 1993, is a method of exchanging digital messages from an author to one or more recipients. Modern email operates across the Internet or other computer networks. Email systems are based on a store-and-forward model. Email serves accept, forward, deliver, and store messages. Neither the users nor their computers are required to be online simultaneously; they need connect only briefly, typically to a mail server, for as long as it takes to send or receive messages.

Chat and other forms of real-time networked communication allow students to share their work with their peers during scheduled class time—over a local area network, which connects computers located in the same building—as well as outside of class—over the Internet. Today, most of our students are familiar with social networking soft ware and take easily to chat or other forms of real-time conversation. Online discussions can be fun, and students tend to stay with them longer than they might with a face-to-face encounter. Talking online also frees students of inhibitions they may

have talking in front of the class, and students are more likely to joke around, play with language, experiment with new ideas, and build a sense of community.

Unlike chat, blogs are asynchronous—that is, the conversation does not need to take place in real time. A blog is a web page where each participant can read and post messages at any time. The posts sit on the web page to be retrieved later. Used during class time, they can function as slightly delayed real-time communication, but many instructors prefer to assign them out of class for slightly more formal writing than chat: students can write responses to articles, create brief arguments, and post links and images to support these arguments. Blogs are a much less structured vehicle for expressing ideas than an essay, and the posts are short—usually a few lines—but they allow students to create entries that are more focused and permanent than comments in a typical chat would be. They provide an unthreatening space for students to publish their writing, try out different writing styles and personae, and get feedback from real audiences.

Like blogs, Twitter is an asynchronous communication medium, but it can work well during class discussion. Twitter is a "micro-blogging" tool that allows users to send and receive messages from a computer or cell phone and view them on a web page. Posts, called "tweets," are very short—limited to 140 characters—and go out to everyone subscribed to the broadcast. After establishing a Twitter account at www.twitter.com, and having the students register as "friends," the instructor can instruct students to send tweets during a face-to-face class discussion, so that the class is simultaneously talking face to face and intermittently sending brief written comments.

Text messaging, or texting, is the act of composing and sending brief, electronic messages between two or more mobile phones, or fixed or portable devices over a phone network. The term originally referred to messages sent using the Short Message Service (SMS). It has grown to include messages containing image, video, and sound content (known as MMS messages). The sender of a text message is known as a tester, while the service itself has different colloquialisms depending on the region. It may simply be referred to as a text in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, an SMS in most of mainland Europe, and an MMS or SMS in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

Descriptive Video (also known as described programming) was developed to give individuals with visual impairments access to visual media such as television programs and films. Described programs, currently available on major television networks and in theaters, contain additional audio tracks that can be activated by using the Secondary Audio Program feature on a television, videocassette recorder, or DVD player. The description is intended to explain a program's highly visual elements (such as an actor's unusual costume or a car chase scene) to an individual with a visual impairment. Classroom research, however, suggests that descriptive programming can enhance comprehension and vocabulary for all students.

Mind map is a diagram used to visually organize information. A mind map is often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank landscape page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those. Mind maps can be drawn by hand, either as "rough notes" during a lecture, meeting or planning session, for example, or as higher quality pictures when more time is available. Mind maps are considered to be a type of spider diagram. A similar concept in the 1970s was "idea sun bursting".

A storyboard is a graphic organizer in the form of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or interactive media sequence.

Microsoft Power Point is a slide show presentation program developed by Microsoft. It was officially launched on May 22, 1990, as a part of the Microsoft Office suite. PowerPoint presentations consist of a number of individual pages or "slides". The "slide" analogy is a reference to the slide projector. A better analogy would be the "foils" (or transparencies/plastic sheets) that are shown with an overhead projector, although they are in decline now. Slides may contain text, graphics, sound, movies, and other objects, which may be arranged freely. The presentation can be printed, displayed live on a computer, or navigated through at the command of the presenter. For larger audiences the computer display is often projected using a video projector. Slides can also form the basis of webcasts.

### 1.2.4. Written Texts: From Traditional to Multimodal

"But now that the rustle of the book's turning page competes with the flicker of the screen's twitching pixel, we must consider the possibility that the book may not be around much longer" (Rosen, 2008, p. 20).

Books have long offered an experience to readers in which they physically embrace the weight and texture of the paper as they mentally connect with the author. Research supports exposure to books within the home setting as such exposure is the key to preparing children to be proficient readers (Rosen, 2008, p. 29).

The textual habitat, the textual environment which affects us and which we affect, has experienced remarkable changes in the twentieth century and will continue to do so in the twenty-first century, as the students we teach grow to adulthood. Although there is no doubt that multimedia and electronic information sources are quickly taking up the communication of much information previously presented solely in traditional text formats, rather than being displaced by computer text, conventional *literacies* are maintaining a complementary role as well as being both co-opted and adapted in the evolution of our textual habitat (Goodwyn 1998; Rassool 1999; Lankshear et al. 2000; Leu and Kinzer 2000).

We live in a world in which the validity of interpretation of communication depends crucially on an understanding of when and where the writer was when the text was created. The key word here seems to be 'time'. A lot of scholars have tried to observe how certain forms of written communication have changed in time. For example, Allen Bell (1991) observes the changing structure of one of the oldest forms of the 'new media', the news journalism. In this case, the news stories abandoned a chronological narrative structure in the late nineteenth century, as a distinct genre of news reporting emerged which satisfied the new requirements of readers-who no longer had the leisure or patience to reach the end of a long story in order to discover the outcome—and the requirements of a more complex institutional production process, where sub-editing means news stories must be designed so that they can be shortened without losing key information.

Sharon Goodman (2007) discusses the increasingly visual nature of English texts. At the height of the eighteenth century the perfect serious text was a tombstone of elegant typography. Pictures, even simple engravings and line drawings, were a signifier of popular and lower class taste. This sense of the vulgarity of visual communication carried over into social anxieties in the twentieth century, first for comics and then for television. In the late twentieth century, developments in technology have brought about a reversal of fortune for visual communication. The increasing availability of tools for creating visual texts - and the means to disseminate them globally—have engendered a change in the status of the visual. Sharon Goodman discusses the return of the visual semiotic to English texts in the postmodern age, and the ways in which words, typography and pictures are woven together to form multimodal texts.

And finally, Simeon Yates (2011) talks about the Internet which has spawned so many new genres—from asynchronous communications by e-mail to on-line interactions (Internet Relay Chat) between people scattered across the world who have never met, and who present themselves through imaginary identities—that it demands closer linguistic scrutiny.

If we go back in time we will see that every new invention, every shift in the mode of communication brought about debates and concern. Plato argued that writing would destroy the faculties of memory. The novel was predicted to cause moral decay in 17th century Europe. Photography would replace portraiture. Film would cause the demise of photography. Television would kill the radio star, and so on. Though these fears may seem unwarranted today, in most cases they indicate the natural turbulence that accompanies technological shifts in any age. Taking all these controversies into consideration and observing the surrounding reality, one may even say that print literacy is in trouble. But it does not have to be like that. This new type of communication does not necessarily eliminate common via print or alphabetic literacy, but challenge us to restructure literacy in

a world that is shifting from the dominance of print to that of the screen. Because 'each old medium' is 'forced to coexist' with the new media, it seems relevant to consider how traditional writing exists or can coexist alongside of multimodal texts, and how students compare and value these composing processes.

While many of the fundamentals of established, language-based literacy pedagogy will remain necessary, they are by no means sufficient for the development of the kinds of literacy practices that already characterize the continuously evolving information age of the new millennium. Indubitably, current dramatic advances in technology-mediated educational settings have created a new pedagogical perspective in all subjects, and more specifically foreign language teaching program, and as a consequence, the world of literacy is also in the midst of dramatic changes (Coiro, 2003; Cope &Kalantzis, 2009; Leu et al., 2008).

These changes are illustrative of profound shifts in the semiotic landscape of education and beyond. Teachers and designers of learning resources have always drawn on a range of different 'modes', writing and image foremost among them, yet a combination of social change and new technologies have given rise to the possibilities for an increase in the use of more modes than these, in new 'ensembles' of modes, and with differently distributed functions. For instance, diagrams, photographs, and drawings are now widely available through (online) picture banks and the cost of including them in textbooks is significantly lower than before. Furthermore, (young) people produce texts, on paper or on the screen, inside and outside school, using image, layout and typography as much as writing (Burn, 2009; Mavers, 2011; Yandell, 2013; Domingo et al. forthcoming).

We know that many young children have already functionally and critically engaged with electronic and conventional format texts in ways which they do not encounter in their classrooms when they begin school (Green and Bigum, 1993; Mackey, 1994; Smith et al., 1996). The students today, are very accustomed to the technology which allows them to surf the Internet, to send a text message or photo to anyone, to play digital games while listening to music and to create their own texts. A lot of studies have shown that children of all ages are more likely to access digital rather than print-based texts outside school. The personal laptops, the smart phones and the Internet are so at hand that the learners turned from passive consumers to active producers of digital texts. Today, they can compose in ways that were unimaginable only two decades ago. On the other hand, traditional composition focuses solely on alphabetic literacy and the process of writing linear, print-based texts in a standardized format.

In the realm of literacy education, there is much discussion of the textual shift, and thus 'paradigm shift' (Bearne, 2003) that has occurred for today's students whose environment is filled with visual and pictorial texts, where the world of communication for children is entirely different from what schools offer and prepare them for (Kress, 2003; Gee, 2003). These kinds of texts, which are used to conceptualize the textual shift and changed learning paradigm, are referred to as multimodal texts. Such texts involve much more than the traditional process of writing print-based texts. In fact, the traditional ideas of texts are blurred. Many texts have become hybrid and involve a lot of modalities and processes. For example, a blog may include written text, images, graphics, video and sound. The increasing popularity of the social networkings such as Youtube, Facebook, Myspace only proves that people are eager to be part of communication and produce their own texts for that purpose. They design, produce and author their own work.

Computer technology facilitates not only effortless use of wide typographic variation in terms of font, color, size etc., but also the use of dynamic text which can 'appear', 'fly' across the screen, 'rotate', 'flash on and off' etc. The verbal forms of the computer screen also have a strong inter-textual function (alluding to or echoing other texts) when they appear in other contexts such as signs on shop fronts identifying businesses. The graphology of written language needs to be read multimodally. In so doing the ways in which these multimodal features of written language make different kinds of meanings need to be understood because they are fundamental to a text's positioning of the reading with respect to how it might be interpreted.

The computer offers a dazzling array of digital forms/texts—electronically processed images and video, hypertext, Web pages, spreadsheets, game interfaces, simulations, interactive stories, multiform narratives, Facebook, music videos, blogs, video blogs (v-logs), zines, and other print-

mixed assemblages. These forms have extended not just the material basis for literacy, but also its social processes and cultural contexts. Over a decade ago, emails revolutionized communication, taking over from letter writing, particularly for adults in the work place. In their turn, emails have been replaced by communication through social networking sites, communication which incorporates a merging and synchronizing of text, images, graphics, photos, video, sound and music. The digital affordances and dynamics of the wired world have influenced how all of us work, think, and live; daily life most often includes use of e-mail, instant messaging, voicemail, and Internet Web pages with images, voices, music mixed with print. The "new landscape of communication" (Kress, 2000, p. 183) is marked by the emergence of domains besides language at the center of everyday communication particularly multimodalities such as images, music, and bodily movements—which, unlike print language, are created and need to be 'read' with nonlinear logic. Although much of Internet communication is text-based, the texts which circulate do not display the characteristics of traditional print genres. They often show the spontaneity of spoken rather than written language. Many new forms of texts have arisen and explore the potential of electronic mail to construct more fluid and dynamic texts and reflect the new relationships between the participants in Internet communication. All these new computer-based media have one common aspect and this is their reliance upon the 'electronic text'. It encodes a communication form such as a picture, speech or a document into an electronic form which is then transmitted and decoded by the audience, in ways not possible before. Electronic communication can thus be said to threaten the fixity of print in two ways: firstly, electronic texts can easily change form and secondly, electronic communication appears to be more like speech than written product. As print-mixed texts are now widely constituted through more than one mode or means of representation, the literacy practices needed for functioning in the world have been and still are rapidly transforming (Leu, 2002). At the end of the 20th century, print is no longer so clearly the main medium of power, and its role in defining communication and power is changing. The new types of texts, the electronic texts, are mainly characterized by a lack of fixity, unlike the print-based ones which continue to be pretty rigid. Nowadays, people face an amalgam of progress and tradition, a fusion of old and new technologies and the learners need to understand how to blend the old with the new for their own benefit.

There are gains and losses. Lost are certain forms of written complexity, stability, canonicity and vertical power structures. Also, multimedia texts are time consuming and often students must learn new technology skills when they are asked to compose them. Gained are 'horizontal', more open, participatory relations in the production of knowledge, blurring former distinctions within and across production and consumption, writing and reading, and teaching and learning. One cannot claim that the gains and losses identified above are 'positive' or 'negative'. What is clear is that both gains and losses need to be attended to and understood by all those who wish to understand contemporary text making, regardless of one's evaluative framework.

# 1.3. Creation of specialized discussion groups to engage students in collaborative learning and enhance their motivation

### **Discussion groups**

Claudia Văideanu, SC HELLO COMPUTER SRL

Discussion groups have become an integral part of our lives. They are used on a daily basis and are necessary in our work because we can be informed in real time without too much effort.

Discussion group is a group of people, who share a similar interest, who get together either formally or informally to discuss a topic. For example, discussion groups can be held for face-to-face meetings, but also when group members are at a distance from each other.

Communication is essential in the training process by proposing activities, providing content and evaluation. All this is achieved through the communication process. Communication in the context of the educational process depends very much on the skill of the person who runs these groups, on the way he/she manages to involve everyone, on the creation of a favorable environment, open to dialogue.

General characteristics of focus groups:

- communication has an interactive character due to the communication environment
- communication takes place both vertically, between organizer and group members, and horizontally, only between group members;
- communication is easy to achieve depending on the face-to-face contact of group users;
- doing things together (exchanging opinions, establishing things between group members, etc.)
- creating links between group members including creating a sense of belonging
- various accessible platforms can be use.



### Discussion groups in face-to-face meetings

In the case of face-to-face meetings, discussion groups can be considered to be the realization of lessons in which students and teachers dictate topics related to the theme of the lesson. Lessons can also incorporate topics that pupils can do in groups The teacher and the pupil become partners and each has a double status: of sender and receiver. The teacher and the pupil become partners and each has a double status: of sender

and receiver. This reality must be understood and assumed by both partners because communication can be both a source of growth and a source of the impact of the instructional process.

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Discussion groups can also take place in the framework of projects, extracurricular activities involving teachers, pupils, parents, representatives of various institutions.

It can be proposed that the groups produce a final product, for example, a project in which everyone has to carry out work tasks and make a contribution. In this way, the pupils have to discuss and collaborate with each other to carry out the work tasks. If the final product is to be realised over a longer period of time, online discussion groups can also be used.

### Discussion groups on online platforms

The online discussion group was developed by USENET in the early 1980s.



During the pandemic, we all had to use the Internet as our main means of communication. It can be said that the skills of using modern means of communication have been greatly improved because the situation required it.

The main components of a newsgroup are: categories, posts and comments. Depending on the type and specificity of the platform, they may have different names, involve different types of content or different communication dynamics.

Categories are useful for structuring content so that it can be found easily. They also allow thematic delimitation of content.

Posts refer to the type of content posted to the newsgroup: text, image, link or a combination.

Comments are the most important type of content on discussion groups and are the communication component. Group functionality can allow comments to be posted to the post or to another comment.

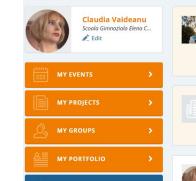
A discussion group should have a code of etiquette with rules of behavior, and clear rules about what content is posted. Moderators are the users who must ensure that the rules are followed.

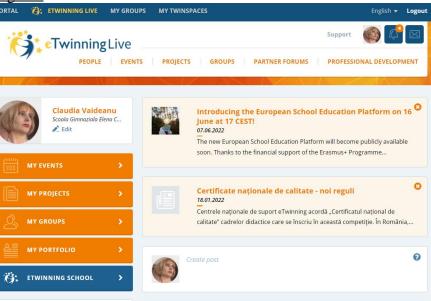
### DISCUSSION GROUPS ON ETWINNING

eTwinning groups are private platforms for discussion and collaboration on a specific topic. The aim of these groups is to help users exchange practice, discuss teaching-learning methodologies and seek support for professional development activities, and to find partners for future projects.

The personal page of the portal is called eTwinning Live and changed its name in September

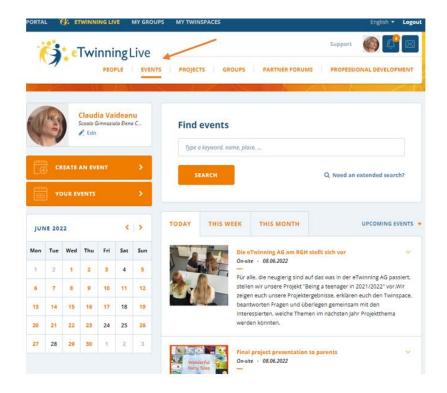
2015. The link is <a href="https://live.etwinning.net/">https://live.etwinning.net/</a>.



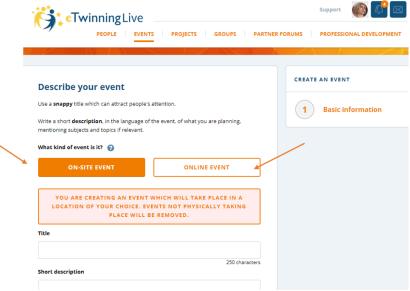




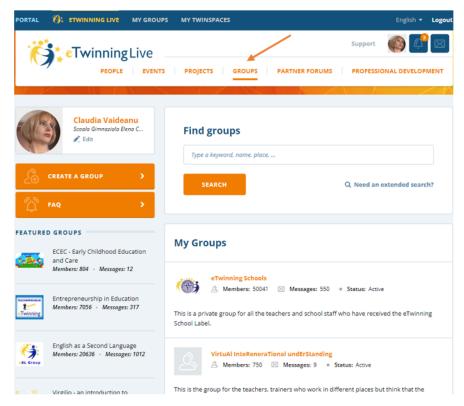
On the Events page there is a list of events organized by members of the community eTwinning community. All events are listed in the calendar, but some of them may be limited to certain audience segments. To participate in an event, select "participate in event". When the event takes place, you can access the videoconference session directly from the event.



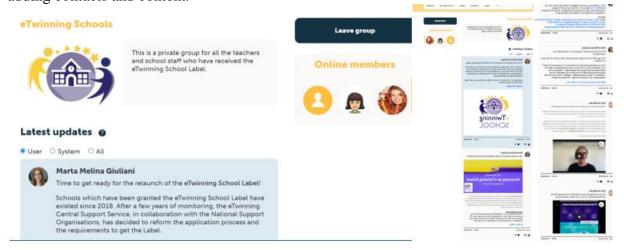
An event can be created where settings can be made regarding date and time, users who can participate. An event can also be public, limited to a specific country etc. This can be used to create discussion groups on a specific topic. The date and time of the online event is based on availability of seats in the conference room. The time chosen is Central European Time (CET).



You can also use the Groups page to create discussion groups, You can create a new group or join an existing group



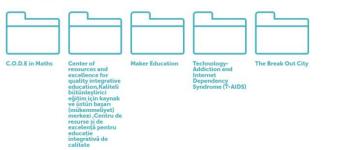
If you want to create a group, check if there is another similar group on the platform. Fill in the form and send it for approval. In a few days you will receive a reply. Once the group is approved and created, manage the group by adding contacts and content. If a group is created, it should be checked whether there is another similar group on the platform. Fill in the form and send it for approval. In a few days you will receive a reply. Once the group is approved and created, manage the group by adding contacts and content.

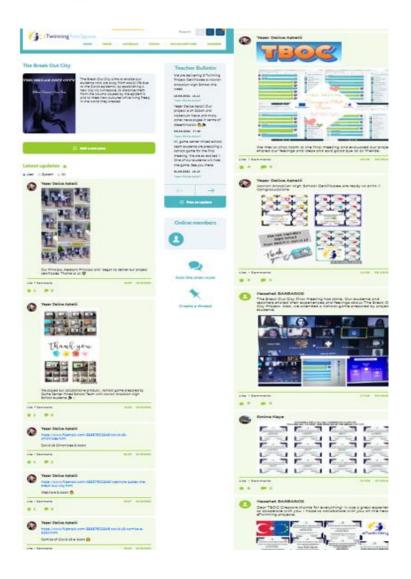


The virtual space of an eTwinning project can also be used for discussions (<a href="https://twinspace.etwinning.net/">https://twinspace.etwinning.net/</a>). The forum can also be used. Forums are only visible to members of the Virtual Space. Administrators may create as manyforums. Teacher members and student administrators can create threads, and student members can only add posts to a thread.



### **Active Twinspaces**





### DISCUSSION GROUPS ON WHASAPP

WhatsApp is considered the most popular messaging app. This type of discussion group has developed very much in recent years and is currently the most used discussion group. It is easy to use and can be accessed from your phone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.



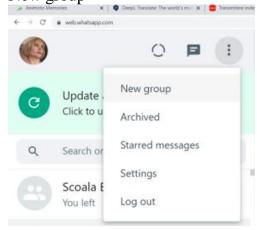
Creating a Whatsapp discussion group

You can create a WhatsApp group with up to 256 participants.

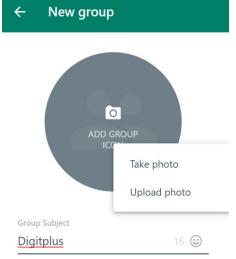
Create a group

Go to the Chats tab in WhatsApp.

Select Menu (three dots) => New group



Search for or select contacts to add to the group. Then, tap Next. Enter a group subject. This will be the name of the group that all participants will see.



The subject limit is 25 characters.

You can add a group icon by tapping the Camera icon. You can choose Take Photo, Choose Photo, or Search Web to add an image. Once set, the icon will appear next to the group in the Chats tab.

A new option can be chosen for more security in discussions. Messages can disappear after the set timeout.



# Get Started With Disappearing Messages

For more privacy and storage, all new messages will disappear for everyone in this chat after the selected duration.

This setting does not affect your existing chats or any messages already saved to your device. Remember, people may find other ways to save messages.

You can choose the time after which messages disappear> 24 hours, 7 days, 90 days. Disappearing messages

○ 24 hours		
7 days		
○ 90 days		
○ Off		
	CANCEL	ОК

All new messages in this chat will disappear after the selected duration.

Tap Create when you're finished.

To choose other settings for the newsgroup select Group settings.

Edit group into		Send messages		
Choose who can change this group's su disappearing messages setting.	ubject, icon, description and	All participants		
All participants		Only admins		
O Only admins				
	CANCEL CONFIRM		CANCEL	CONFIRM

### Invite into groups via links

If you're a group admin, you can invite people to join a group by sharing a link with them. The admin can Reset link at any time to make the previous invite link invalid and create a new link.

Open the WhatsApp group chat, then tap the group subject.

Alternatively, swipe the group to the left in the Chats tab. Then, tap More > Group Info.

Tap Invite to Group via Link.

Choose Share Link, Copy Link, or QR Code.

To reset the link, tap Reset Link > Reset Link.

Make a group video call

Make a group video call from a group chat

Open the WhatsApp group chat you want to video call

If your group chat has 33 or more participants, tap Group call

If your group chat has 32 or fewer participants, tap Video call and confirm your decision. The first seven people who answer can join the call, and only group members can participate.

Find the contacts you want to add to the call, then tap Video call

WhatsApp Desktop currently does not allow group calls. Virtual audio and video devices are not supporte.

Make a group video call from the CALLS tab

Open WhatsApp, then tap the CALLS tab.

Tap New call > New group call.

Find the contacts you want to add to the call, then tap Video call

Make a group video call from an individual chat

Open the WhatsApp chat with one of the contacts you want to video call.

Tap Video call





> Add participant.

Find another contact you want to add to the call, then tap ADD.

Tap Add participant if you want to add more contacts.

Join a group video call

Join an incoming group video call

You'll receive a notification when someone invites you to join a group video call.

If you can't join, tap Ignore. To open the call info screen, tap Join.

From the call menu, you can preview the call participants and other invitees.

Tap Join to join the call.

1. While on the call, tap Open

Tap Add participant to add more contacts to the call.

Tap RING to send a notification to people who've already been invited.

Join a missed group video call

Open WhatsApp, then tap the CALLS tab.

If the call was started from a group chat, you can join by opening that chat and tapping Join.

If the call is ongoing, tap the call you'd like to join. This will open the call info screen.

From the call menu, tap Join.

During a group video call, you have the option to turn your video off by

tapping Video off

You can't remove a contact during a group video call. The contact would need to hang up their phone to disconnect from the call.

While it's possible to be in a group video call with someone you've blocked, you can't add a contact that you've blocked to the call or a contact that has blocked you.

In present, chatting in WhatsApp groups is very popular because you can chat with several people at once in real time. Anyone with a phone connected to the internet uses WhatsApp and is certainly already in at least one group. In order to be able to effectively use group chats on WhatsApp it is quite important to know the new options introduced by WhatsApp.

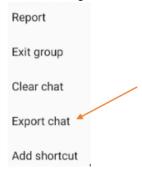
# Font formatting

Texts can be edited by bold, italic, strikethrough. For bold, the text in WhatsApp should be written (\*bold\*), and for italics, you should place your text in the following way: (\_italics\_). If you want your text to be strikethrough, all you have to do is write it in the following way: (~strikethrough~).



Export group discussions

Text messages, including media (images) can be exported from the chat group by selecting from the Menu (three dots) the more option and then Export chat.



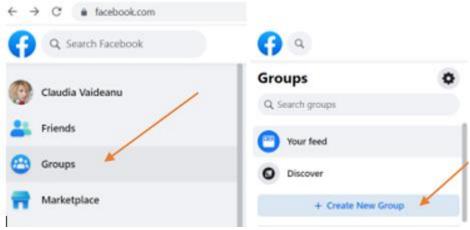
### DISCUSSION GROUPS ON FACEBOOK

Facebook allows discussion groups between members. A few years ago, these groups were widely used. Today most people use WhatsApp. Facebook messenger can also be used.

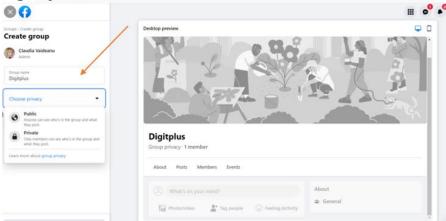


To create a group:

Click <sup>+</sup> in the top right of Facebook and select Group.



Enter your group name.



Select the privacy option. If you selected private, select whether to make your group visible or hidden.

Add people to your group.

Click Create.

Once you create your group, you personalize it by <u>uploading a cover photo</u> and adding a description.

How do I create an event for a Facebook group?

To create an event for a group you're in:

From your Feed, click Groups in the left menu and select your group. If you don't see Groups, click See more.

Below your group's cover photo, click More, then click Events.

Click Create Event in the top right.

Fill in the details for your event.

If you want to invite all members of your group, select Invite all members of [group name]. For private groups, you can only invite your friends in the group.

Click Create Event.

If you don't see this option available in your group, it could be because the group admins don't allow this kind of post in your group. If you're an admin of a general group, learn how to manage this feature in your group.

Discussion groups are very useful in keeping in touch with members by: informing, setting things up, working together, sharing resources.

In most cases, discussion groups become the main method of communication and for this reason should not

### 1.4. Socio-emotional forums role in students integration and burn out diagnosis

Eesti People To People, Estonia

In the pandemic time, many students were struggling with loneliness and disruption to their routines. It was challenge to stay alone at home, to work online hours and hours and to live without social and cultural contacts with classmates and friends. The mental health problems and emotional management became very important for students, parents and teachers.

In response for COVID, teachers, parents, NGO workers have organized different opportunities to communicate online, hear from and talk with psychologists and other experts about the social emotional wellbeing of students.

Professional shared their thoughts on how schools can support the social and emotional health of students. They answered pressing questions about what can be done at home to best support of students in their emotional health.

Now, after pandemic, more than ever, is important to demonstrate empathy and resilience, build relationships across distance, and call upon collective resolve to strengthen schools and communities.

### **Burnout diagnosis**

Psychologists wrote that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated feelings of isolation, stress, loss, and problem of burnout is visible in many schools.

For decades, researchers have sought out ways to measure burnout. While some methods have gained popularity in research (the Maslach Burnout Inventory), all burnout measures face criticism. Many scientists argue that burnout cannot be easily diagnosed. Unfortunately, the lack of clarity makes it more difficult for burned-out workers to find solutions.

The Leichtman Burnout Scale seeks to provide a clear understanding of the burnout process specifically for educators. While each individual case of burnout has different causes, variance in symptoms, and varying thresholds, there are noticeable trends. These trends can help teachers see how burned out are students and also they themselves and what they should do immediately to overcome that stage of burnout. This scale has identified four levels.

### LEVEL 1: PASSIONATE BUT OVERWHELMED

The following are some indicators:

Low feelings of self-efficacy (I'm not good enough)

Negative coping strategies (addictions, unhealthy habits)

Limited pursuit of passions or hobbies outside of work

### LEVEL 2: OVERWHELMED AND BECOMING CYNICAL

While the first level is infused with passion and a variety of positive feelings, level two of burnout may be first time person actually feels exhaustion. The indicators are as follows:

High levels of stress

Quick to become irritated (at school and home)

Bringing work/tasks home and not completing it

Feeling like there is never time for friends or family

Guilt from not doing enough

A strong mentor can help to manage responsibilities and reduce feelings of stress and cynicism.

### LEVEL 3: CYNICAL AND APPROACHING EXHAUSTION

Continuing from level two, the third level of burnout reaches at most cynical point. Person may feel like it is impossible to be a good. Indicators may look like these:

Isolation (in and out of school and home)

Feelings of paranoia (school policy, program, etc. make day harder)

A constant feeling that school goals and personal goals will not be met

Two strategies can create a positive, meaningful impact. Role reduction and mental health support from outside are both effective ways to mitigate the damage of the third level of burnout.

### LEVEL 4: COMPLETE EXHAUSTION AND BREAKDOWN

Level four is pure survival mode, leading to decide to leave the classroom (or transfer to another school). The following are signs of level four:

Feelings of exhaustion every day (including holidays and summer)

Lack of optimism for career and personal life

Unusually frequent physical symptoms (colds/flus, stress-related illnesses, hospitalizations)

At this stage, prioritizing and purpose seeking are two incredibly useful strategies. It is never too early to work against burnout applying these strategies to protect wellness and mental health.

That frustration and finding constructive ways to deal with emotions and interact with one another in respectful ways are just a few of the guiding principles behind social emotional learning, or SEL.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) offers a powerful means to support one another during these challenging times as our communities work to address the impact of the pandemic on students' learning and development.

### **Social-emotional learning**

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success.

People with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially. From effective problem-solving to self-discipline, from impulse control to emotion management and more, SEL provides a foundation for positive, long-term effects on students, adults, and communities.

Social-emotional learning helps improve students' academic performance, curtail bullying, reduce dropout rates, and build character. Well-implemented SEL programs positively affect students' success in school. Studies show that social-emotional skills help improve academics, reduce negative social behaviors like and create positive classroom climates. Social-emotional skills also help successfully manage everyday life. They help students focus, make good decisions, and become supportive members of their community well beyond school.

SEL helps build a foundation that supports students' success both personally and academically. When kids are equipped with social-emotional skills, they're better able to learn and contribute to a positive school climate.

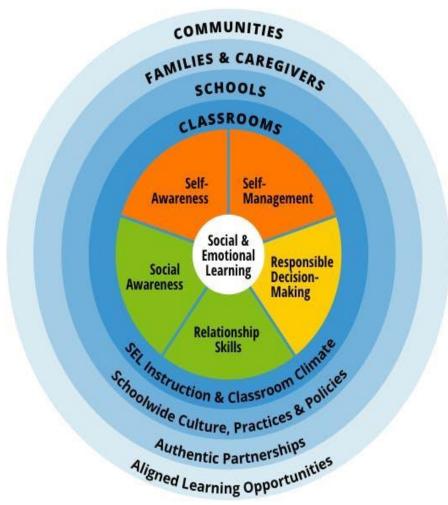
### **SEL** history

SEL began in the 1960s at the Yale School of Medicine in its Child Study Center. There, Professor James Comer started the Comer School Development Program where he focused on the education systems of low-income African-American communities, particularly the elementary schools in New Haven, Connecticut due to their poor academic report cards. The Comer Development School implemented programs into this school that focused on the social and emotional needs of the students. Soon after, New Haven public schools became the charter for SEL due to their proximity to Yale University.

In 2019, the concept of Transformative Social and Emotional Learning (Transformative SEL, TSEL or T-SEL) was developed. Transformative SEL aims to guide students to critically examine root causes of inequity, and to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community, and societal well-being. In 2020, CASEL added information about Transformative SEL to its website, proclaiming it as their updated definition of SEL.

SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.



*Source:* https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/

SEL is aimed at redistributing power to more fully engage young people and adults in working toward just and equitable schools and communities. It emphasizes the development of identity, agency, belonging, curiosity, and collaborative problem-solving within the CASEL framework.

Hosted by CASEL, the 2022 SEL Exchange Virtual Summit will be held on October 13, 2022 from 1:00-5:00 pm ET. Every year, about 2,500 people from around the world join forum for learning and collaboration. The annual Social and Emotional Learning Exchange Virtual Summit brings education champions together to learn and share insights that advance evidence, practices, and policies in support of all young people. The relationships between families, communities, schools, and statehouses have been on full display these past few years – and the time is ripe for new types of coalitions that strengthen our social and emotional connections.

2022 year's virtual summit, <u>Weaving a New Tapestry: Schools, Families and Communities Together</u>, aims to build deeper, multi-directional partnerships that benefit all students and adults. Join us to connect the common threads and spark innovations with social and emotional learning. SEL is helpful to both children and adults, increasing self-awareness, academic achievement, and positive behaviors both in and out of the classroom. It is possible to follow summit on Twitter (@2022SELExchange)

### **The Five Social Emotional Learning Competencies**

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), an organisation devoted to students and educators to help achieve positive outcomes for students, SEL involves five core competencies that can be applied in both the classroom, at home, and in students' communities.

These five core competencies are:

 ${f Self-awareness}$  - To recognize your emotions and how they impact your behavior; acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses to better gain confidence in your abilities.

**Self-management** – To take control and ownership of your thoughts, emotions, and actions in various situations, as well as setting and working toward goals.

**Social awareness** – The ability to put yourself in the shoes of another person who may be from a different background or culture from the one you grew up with. To act with empathy and in an ethical manner within your home, school, and community.

**Relationship skills** – The ability to build and maintain healthy relationships with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. This competency focuses on listening to and being able to communicate with others, peacefully resolving conflict, and knowing when to ask for or offer help.

**Making responsible decisions** – Choosing how to act or respond to a situation based on learned behaviors such as ethics, safety, weighing consequences and the well-being of others, as well as yourself.



These three examples of how educators are taking up this challenge, and in doing so, promoting five core SEL competencies.

- Centering students' lived experiences and identities in SEL instruction. This includes adapting an evidence-based SEL curriculum selected by the district to ensure that students' identities, communities, values, and concerns are represented, but also that students are able to learn from, about, and with others who may not share their backgrounds.
- Using SEL discussions to validate student experiences of oppression. This includes opening space to acknowledge trauma experienced at the community level, infusing broader social injustice issues into bread-and-butter SEL topics, and recognizing youth as emerging social change agents.
- Creating space for youth to use their voice for social justice. This includes recognizing youth as emerging social change agents and sharing models of active community members that students could relate to.



*Source:* https://www2.kis.ac.th/event/social-emotional-learning-forum

The center of the picture above shows five core social and emotional competencies. Surrounding them are key environments where students live and grow. By working together to build school-family-community connections, schools establish holistic SEL practices that develop self-awareness and self-management skills to help students achieve school and life success.

### **Transformative SEL**

SEL matters now, more than ever. The stressors caused by the pandemic and remote learning (e.g., loss of routines, social isolation, economic hardships) have dramatically increased the need for effective Social and Emotional Learning programs.

Transformative SEL is a form of SEL aimed at interrupting the reproduction of inequitable educational environments by addressing issues of identity, agency, belonging, and related issues such as power, privilege, prejudice, discrimination, social justice, empowerment, and self-determination.

Core features of Transformative SEL include:

- Authentic partnering among students and adults with a deep focus on sharing power and decision-making between young people, educators, families, and communities.
- Academic content that integrates issues of race, class and culture.
- Instruction that honors and makes connections to students' lived experiences and identities, and scaffolds learning to build an understanding of others' lived experiences.
- Enhancing and foregrounding social and emotional competencies needed for civic engagement and social change, such as reflecting on personal and social identities, examining prejudices and biases, interrogating social norms, disrupting and resisting inequities, and co-constructing equitable and just solutions.
- Prioritizing students' individual and collective agency to take action for more just schools and communities.
- Focus on creating belonging and engagement for all individuals.

### The SEL Roadmap

The SEL Roadmap is designed to support school leaders and leadership teams in planning for the transition back to schools after COVID pandemic time, in whatever form that takes. While Roadmap was written, first of all, for American schools but can be applied in other countries as well.

There are four SEL Critical Practices, each with 3-5 activities. Within each activity, users are guided through Essential Questions, Actions to Prepare & Implement, and Tools to Support the Actions. There is Guidance to Sustain the Work. Critical Practices include:

- Take time to cultivate and deepen relationships, build partnerships, and plan for SEL.
- Design opportunities where adults can connect, heal, and build their capacity to support students.
- Create safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments that promote all students' social and emotional development.
- Use data as an opportunity to share power, deepen relationships, and continuously improve support for students, families, and staff.

## City Year

City Year is other program created as response to COVID-19. City Year' focus on integrated academic and social-emotional skill development which is now widely understood to be a critical component of students' successful recovery from interrupted schooling and disruption caused by the pandemic. More than "nice to have", these integrated services are essential to students' recovery from the challenges laid bare by this pandemic.

City Year is important in building relationships with students and helping them develop as sense of belonging and connection to the school community, which will be critical to support their engagement and attendance next school year.

Here is the link to this program with chapter: Watch – Hear – Read:

https://www.cityyear.org/impact/?utm\_source=google\_grants&utm\_medium=paidsearch&utm\_campaign=&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIqfuRjNC8-AIVkLt3Ch1--ARsEAAYASAAEgIvi\_D\_BwE

### **Social forums**

Social forums were created during pandemic time and some of them exist online and organize zoom meetings, webinars and other online activities from time to time for students, teachers and parents, so they are not feeling lonely with their problems and challenges. Here are few links to such forums:

https://www2.kis.ac.th/event/social-emotional-learning-forum

https://hello.naeyc.org/communities/community-

home/digestviewer/viewthread?MessageKey=fda96e01-1c51-4e45-a238-

c57bb208b837&CommunityKey=f51f9fd4-47c9-4bfd-aca7-23e9f31b601e&tab=digestviewer

https://sel4ma.org/hidden/forum/

https://dcn-cde.ca.gov/professionaldev/events/sel.aspx

https://accutrain.com/conferences/social-emotional-learning-forum/

https://www.hartfordschools.org/dont-miss-the-dangers-of-the-mind-social-emotional-community-forum/

 $\underline{https://www.facebook.com/events/d41d8cd9/a-special-social-emotional-forum/434546544481421/http://ensec-conference.eu/}$ 

Very important is to use online materials with social emotional guide, such as

https://www.sharingwisdoms.org/emotional-intelligence-guides/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIqfuRjNC8-

AIVkLt3Ch1--ARsEAAYAyAAEgKlf D BwE

 $\underline{https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/}$ 

https://www.cfchildren.org/what-is-social-emotional-learning/schools/

https://casel.org/roadmap-to-reopen-schools/

 $\underline{https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/how-does-sel-support-your-priorities/covid-19-and-remote-learning/}$ 

https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/how-does-sel-support-educational-equity-and-

excellence/transformative-sel/

https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-burned-out-are-you-scale-teachers

https://casel.org/sel-rising-up-together/

https://www.edutopia.org/video/5-keys-successful-social-and-emotional-learning

https://www.nu.edu/resources/social-emotional-learning-sel-why-it-matters-for-educators/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-XNp3h3h4A

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikehX9o1JbI

https://www.edutopia.org/video/5-keys-successful-social-and-emotional-learning

#### Remote inclusive teaching and learning

Gabriela-Brânduşa Horlescu, teacher Veniamin Loredana, teacher "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School

#### 1. Remote learning in context

As the learning and education experience has changed drastically during 2020, both teachers and students had to face up on distance teaching and learning activities. Based on students' needs, different remote learning solutions can be used such as: digital learning management systems; collaboration platforms that support live-video communication or tools to create digital learning content. In their unexpected remote instruction journey, teachers can find a wide range of tools to meet their goals, but these should be seen as flexible means to meet the needs of all the students in their class.

Remote teaching and learning and digital tools have turned out to be an important source for effective learning, providing students with new engaging methods, that foster and develop competencies such as autonomy, critical thinking as well as collaboration among teachers and students, even outside the classroom. Distance education has been used successfully before, with a wide range of students of different ages and abilities, but the sudden need to use technology and remote instruction for all, in order to replace face-to-face classroom interaction is challenging. Certainly, many teachers and students were unprepared for this ad-hoc need to use distance learning. Teachers' knowledge and abilities to use remote instruction solutions can vary greatly, and so are student's readiness and their at-home technical capacity to access the information sent by their teachers.

#### 2.Inclusive education

According to inclusive educations policies, teachers are expected to support learning and achievement for all the students, regardless of the differences between them. Temporarily closed educational institutions are impacting the majority of the students but especially those with special educational needs. Students with SEN may be further impacted by school closures as many of them encounter barriers in learning and participation (Booth&Ainscow, 2002) even in a traditional classroom setting. Teachers need to adapt to the transition from face-to-face teaching experience to remote instruction. But, in this sudden change, teachers may face additional challenges related to the use of technology and device connectivity (Coy et al., 2014)and also to finding the best strategies for curriculum design in the online environment. Taking into consideration these challenges, to what extent are teachers willing and able to differentiate and address all the students in the virtual classroom, including those with special educational needs?

But distance learning and digital tools don't just belong to emergency teaching situations. College classrooms are increasingly diverse places. Instructors need to consider not only the obvious diversity in their classroom such as gender and ethnicity, but also aspects such as students' prior knowledge or preferred ways of learning. Inclusive teaching refers to using teaching methods to address the needs of all students in your classroom and ensure that all students are able to participate equitably in your class. Inclusive teaching requires preparation before entering the classroom and consistent efforts in the classrooms to create an environment that will be beneficial for all.

From the perspective of inclusive education, teachers are assuming new roles and responsibilities as they are expected to meet the needs of all students in their classroom. Those

teachers, committed to the principles of inclusion, will embrace the challenges of remote instruction, and will try to design the curriculum having in mind all their students, regardless of their abilities, and use all the advantages that the remote learning environment has to offer.

Beyond the technology barrier, teachers must make a meaningful choice to meet the needs of all students, including of those with SEN. Two possible approaches are presented by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011): (1) the additional needs approach (that focuses only on the student who has SEN and the demand of additional support) and (2) the inclusive pedagogical approach (that focuses on all the students of the classroom). The individualized approach to inclusion in which teachers find strategies for most of the students and, in addition, find an alternative solution for those with SEN may work for a short period of time, but in the long run can lead to marginalization and exclusion. The inclusive pedagogical approach, which implies the creation of an environment with learning opportunities for everyone is an optimal solution. For teachers, redesigning the curriculum for the virtual classroom requires a proactive approach. The online environment is flexible enough to allow learning opportunities for all. In line with his inclusive pedagogical approach (Florian &Black-Hawkins, 2011) are the guidelines of the Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2018) that provide a useful framework for discussion.

#### 3. The Universal Design for Learning

Having all these in mind, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to teaching and learning that gives all students equal opportunity to succeed. The goal of UDL is to use a variety of teaching methods to remove any barriers to learning. UDL is still a fairly new concept. It is a way of improving teacher practice through flexibility. The framework and guidelines for UDL (CAST, 2018;Meyer et al., 2014;Rose et al., 2014) guide the critical elements of teaching and learning and address a wide range of individual differences. UDL is not just for students with disabilities, it is for all the students (Hitchcock et al., 2002; Meyer et al., 2014),because a flexible curriculum will support all learners while still individualizing learning. At a first glance, it's about building in flexibility that can be adjusted for every person's strengths and needs. That's why UDL benefits all learners. But going deeper into the definition and meaning of the concept, The Universal Design for Learning is a framework for teaching. This framework is meant to give both educators and curriculum designers guidelines with which they can be sure that their students receives everything they need to thrive in the classroom.

UDL provides learners with options that allow them to regulate their own learning. They encourage the teacher to use their teaching, activities, and media to sustain their students' motivation and effort. Because of these faucets, when properly used, UDL interests and engages each student.

UDL guidelines are (CAST, 2018):(1) Providing multiple means of engagement;(2) Providing multiple means of representation;(3)Providing multiple means of action and expression. There is extensive research that supports UDL principles and practices (Rose et al., 2014). UDL principles and guidelines can be used to redesign an existing online course (Rogers-Shaw et al., 2018; Tobin, 2014) and, why not, an existing curriculum that is made available online in an emergency remote learning situation. Creation of instructional materials based on UDL principles is possible for any grade level (Rose et al., 2014). Students' participation is made using clear goals and a variety of tools (Hitchcock et al., 2002). UDL focus on providing options is essential in the context of inclusive education. Both in synchronous or asynchronous online activities it is recommended (Burgstahler, 2002; Coy et al., 2014, Meyer et al., 2014; Tobin, 2014) to use multiple media so that information is accessible to all students and learner-friendly (use of voice along with written or graphic representations, slides with text or images doubled by voice explanations, practical demonstrations and discussions, digital text, symbols, graphics, with audio recordings, video with subtitles, notes sent in advance, work sheets that can be enlarged or printed, etc.). Students' progress is centered on curricular goals and not on overcoming the curricular barriers (Hitchcock et al., 2002) with challenging goals and allowable scaffolds.

## 4. The Basic Principles of UDL

To accomplish the goals mentioned above, UDL offers various avenues of representation (the "what" of learning), action and expression (the "how"), and engagement (the "why").

## Representation (WHAT)

This principle has to do with representing the material so that it can be accessed by learners of all types and stripes.

In no area of education do we see a greater impact of technology than in the field of distance learning. Offering instruction at a distance is not new. Correspondence courses using printed material have brought together instructors and students separated by great distances for hundreds of years. Televised courses have been broadcast since the early days of television. Some interactive televised courses now bring instructors at one location together with students in several specially equipped classrooms. Online courses, once delivered using only e-mail, are now dominated by web-based instruction. Today, multiple modes of delivery blur the lines between different types of distance learning. For example, the content of a course may be delivered using printed materials and television; course discussion may occur using e-mail; a weekend retreat may bring participants together face-to-face, and resources may be provided on the World Wide Web. These options make learning available to anyone, anywhere at any time.

Nevertheless, some people find themselves on the wrong side of the "digital divide" between the technology "haves" and "have-nots." Computer-based information, communication, services and instruction are less available to those who are poor, live in rural areas, are members of minority racial/ethnic groups, and/or have disabilities (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1999; Kaye, 2000). Without access to new technologies, their options for taking courses, teaching courses and pursuing careers are limited. But simple access to technology is not enough. Within the group of "haves," people with disabilities face a "second digital divide." This line separates people who can make full use of the technological tools, services and information to which they have access, from those who cannot. Too often, people with disabilities who are on the right side of the first digital divide, still find themselves on the wrong side of this second digital divide (Waddell, 1999). The rapid development of assistive technology makes it possible for individuals with a wide range of disabilities to gain access to computers, networking and telecommunications technologies and multi-media products (Closing the Gap, 2001).

## Mobility Impairments

For some people, mobility impairments affect their ability to move their hands. To access a computer and the Internet, they use alternative keyboards and mice, speech control and other input devices to operate navigational tools and access Internet-based course materials. Some students and instructors with mobility impairments do not have the fine motor skills required to select small buttons on the screen. And, if their input method is slow, they cannot effectively participate in real-time "chat" communications. Some students and instructors require wheelchair-accessible locations to attend on-site meetings required in some distance learning courses.

#### Visual Impairments

Individuals who are blind often use computers equipped with screen reader software and speech synthesizers. With a synthesized voice, this system reads whatever text appears on the computer screen. They may use a browser that only reads text presented on the World Wide Web or they may use a multimedia browser with the graphics-loading feature turned off. This type of system cannot interpret graphics. For example, a speech synthesizer may simply say "image map" at the place where an image map would be displayed to someone using the full features of a multimedia Web browser. Text alternatives to graphic images need to be provided at a web site for blind students and instructors to make sense of the content. Printed materials, videotapes, televised presentations and other visual materials also create access challenges for some students enrolled in distance learning courses; tactile materials, audio presentations and electronic text may be required.

Students who are not blind but have limited vision may use special software to enlarge screen images. They view only a small portion of a standard screen page at a time. Consequently, web pages that are cluttered and page layouts that are not consistent from page to page can make navigating web sites and understanding content difficult. Printed materials in standard font sizes may also be inaccessible to students with visual impairments. People who are colorblind encounter barriers erected by coursework that requires that they be able to distinguish one color from another to navigate the site or understand the web content.

## Learning Disabilities

Some specific learning disabilities impact the ability to read, write and/or process information. Some students with learning disabilities that affect their ability to read use audiotaped books. For some, speech output and/or screen enlargement systems similar to those used by people with visual impairments help them read text on a computer screen. People with some learning disabilities have difficulty understanding web sites when the information is cluttered and the screen layout changes from one page to the next.

### Hearing Impairments

Most Internet resources do not require the ability to hear and are, therefore, accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. However, when web sites include audio output without providing text captioning or transcription, individuals with hearing impairments cannot access the content. The audio content of videotapes that are not captioned is also inaccessible to individuals who are deaf. Deaf students may also be unable to participate in audio conferencing—where several individuals communicate using the telephone at the same time—or videoconferencing sessions unless sign language interpreters or other accommodations are provided.

#### Speech Impairments

E-mail and other modes of communication that do not require the ability to speak are fully accessible to students with speech impairments. However, they may not be able to effectively participate in audio conferences that are part of a distance learning course.

Simple design decisions can be made to assure that a course is accessible to students and instructors with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. This is made possible by the UDL. People with a wide variety of characteristics can use the products developed when designers apply universal design principles. These characteristics include height, age, race, ethnicity, gender, native language and level of ability to hear, see, move and speak. When the wide range of characteristics of potential students and instructors is considered, distance learning course designers create learning environments where all qualified individuals can fully participate, just as architects design buildings that can be used by everyone, including those who walk with crutches, push baby strollers and use wheel chairs. It is unlikely that a distance learning course will be accessible to students and instructors with a broad range of abilities and disabilities unless the universal design of its media and technological tools is considered as the course is being developed.

## Action and Expression (HOW)

It allows students to demonstrate what they've learned in their own way. There are several different ways you can implement technology to provide various methods for action and expression in the remote classroom. Assessments can be just as easily varied here as they can be in the traditional classroom.

Learners differ in the way that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know. Every individual will approach learning tasks differently. For example, those with movement impairments (e.g. cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities, and those who have language barriers will need different options to express and communicate their knowledge. In reality, there is not one means of action and expression that will be optimal for all learners. Providing options for action and expression such as varied response methods is essential. It should also be recognized that action and expression require a great deal of strategy, practice, and organization, and this is another area in which learners can differ.

The strategic network that handles action and expression, is located in the frontal lobe region, known for its role in planning, organizing and self-monitoring. We use this network to plan, carry out and track both our physical actions and mental processes. We recognize what to attend to, create a plan of action and then figure out HOW we will share or communicate what we have learned. This principle asks us to explore different ways to expand our repertoire of activities, media and materials for students, to help them express what they know and have learned. By providing many different paths and alternatives we distinguish knowledge and understanding from the means of production.

Some argue today's students are more easily bored, distracted and reluctant to persist when mastery is challenging. Reasons may involve learners' impaired or underdeveloped executive functions. UDL challenges us to provide the scaffolding needed to support executive functions, and to teach strategies to support and improve them. While students have choice of action and expression, it is the teacher who considers, frames, and builds in the opportunities of choice that will retain the integrity of the learning goal. In addition, this principle asks ALL teachers, not just special education teachers, to understand the various means needed to support each student's access and independent navigation of learning and expression, regardless of their ability or disability.

This is a lot to consider, but with creative and diversified curriculum planning, teachers can offer a wide range of opportunities for action and expression.

- Encourage use of technologies to ensure students accurately express their understanding
- Incorporate a variety of assessment formats
- Establish framework for planning through detailed descriptions of assignments
- Provide alternatives in the requirements for rate, timing, speed, and range of motor action required to interact with instructional materials, physical manipulatives and technologies
- Provide prompts and scaffolds to estimate effort, resources, and difficulty
- Provide students the opportunity to choose which type of assignment they would like to complete, for example, you may choose one of the following evaluation methods: a poster presentation, research report or creating a video
- Post goals, objectives, and schedules in an obvious place
- Prompt learners to identify the type of feedback or advice that they are seeking
- Use discussion boards or blogs to allow students who need more time to reflect on a topic to participate in the discussion
- Compose in multiple media such as text, speech, drawing, illustration, comics, storyboards, design, film, music, visual art, sculpture, or video

The action and expression principle contains three guidelines:

- 1. Provide options for physical action
- 2. Provide options for expression and communication
- 3. Provide options for executive functions.

Physical Action

Providing options for physical actions includes varying the methods for response and navigation and optimizing access to tools and assistive technologies. This gives the student the opportunity to physically participate in the current task with the options you provide regardless of any disability or preferences. Providing a computer for a student to respond by typing instead of writing by hand is a common example of this guideline but it could also allow for additional time on tasks to allow for the differences in student abilities.

Expression and Communication

Providing options for expression and communication gives the students the ability to get up and go to a different station or use a different tool to create a response to a prompt or answer a question with video instead of text or a graphic instead of a worksheet. This is where the student use of multimedia is not only encouraged but expected. When creating a lesson based on a standard think about all of the ways the student could show you they have met that standards.

#### Executive Function

Providing options for executive function is a lynchpin in the process of developing an expert learner. CAST states that "these capabilities allow humans to overcome impulsive, short-term reactions to their environment and instead to set long-term goals, plan effective strategies for reaching those goals, monitor their progress, and modify strategies as needed. In short, they allow learners to take advantage of their environment". This is where you will help your students set appropriate goals, make plans and strategies and monitor their progress.

Student learning grows when they have opportunities to choose pathways and learn about themselves. What they learn today will be a foundation for what they learn tomorrow. What they learn will help them build their confidence in what they believe they can do too, in their self-efficacy. So, we need to give them practice and support in the building of their executive function, in trying things out, in failing and trying again. We need to give them opportunities to try and do things with different tools. To not just get "good at school" but "good at life" by doing things differently so that they will be ready with "21st Century Skills" when they leave school.

### Engagement(WHY)

The principle of "engagement" is just that—finding a way to engage each individual student. Teachers must find a way to pique each child's interest. If you don't have a student's interest, you cannot hold that interest so that you can teach them.

Students are queens of why. "Why do we need to do this homework?" "Why can't we just sit in class?" As a teacher, it can be an exhausting exercise to answer all of these "whys" kindly and patiently and not just yell out "because I said so!" In the classroom, getting students to embrace the why can be very challenging because of student variability. Students have different strengths, limitations, interests, cultures, and backgrounds. They have varying social skills and some are better at self-regulating and coping than others. "Learn it because you have to" doesn't pass muster with a single kiddo. It certainly won't work with 10, 20, or 30 students in your class.

That is why it is critical for us to provide multiple means of engagement. Let's start by unpacking the UDL principle for Engagement. The principle is broken up into three distinct guidelines which are further divided into checkpoints. Each checkpoint serves as a reminder for considerations we must take when working with groups of learners who have varying strengths and weaknesses.

The three guidelines in the engagement principle are:

- Provide options for recruiting interest
- Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence
- Provide options for self-regulation

What researchers call "self-regulation" is the ability to set motivating goals; to sustain effort toward meeting those goals; and to monitor the balance between internal resources and external demands, seeking help or adjusting one's own expectations and strategies as needed.

Traditionally, we often equate engagement to interest, but at a glance, you can see it goes so much further than that.

Know the Goal, Engage the Student

The engagement principle means that the students ALWAYS know the goal(s) of the lesson and what the standard(s) is that you are reaching for in the lesson. By being clear about our goals, we help to recruit interest and help students sustain effort and persistence when things get challenging. Below are some examples and guiding questions to drive engagement based on:

- ➤ How the Assignment is delivered. Can the students read about it, watch something about it, do something about it, or with it? Or, will listening to the teacher do the trick?
- ➤ The Perspective of the Topic. Can the students find out about what the topic means to different people or different times? Can they find out about what it means to a certain occupation or how they will be able to solve some past or future problem? Can they ask a lot of questions?
- ➤ The Different Methods of Working. Can students work alone, in a small group or with you? Can they go home and ask their family members? Can they have a choice to just go do research on it at the library or online? Can it be a discovery project?

Social Emotional Factors. Before students can start learning in any option, it is important to create engagement given varying social emotional factors. Some students like spontaneity, some don't. There will be some students who come into a given situation with the feeling that they are "no good at this" or they feel that they are "not as smart as the other kids", aka the "stereotype threat". So ensuring that you have options for students to self-regulate is critical.

Engagement extends beyond recruiting interest and providing choice. We also have to ensure that students can commit to the learning process and continue to put in effort and persistence. "With UDL, our aim is to enable all learners to become expert. In the all-important affective domain, expertise involves developing interest, purpose, motivation, and, most importantly, strong self-regulation as a learner." (Meyer, Rose, and Gordon, Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice).

Keep Students Actively Engaged

It is critically important to design learning contexts that offer flexibility in the domain of engagement so that each student can find a way into the learning experience, remain persistent in the face of challenge or failure, and continue to build self-knowledge. We know that what sparks learners' interest and keeps them engaged differs radically from person to person. Some individuals are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty; others may be put off or even threatened by spontaneity, preferring predictable routine and structure. A particular subject or activity inspires passionate interest in some people and bores others to tears. Their histories as learners also exert strong influences on learners' optimism and confidence about engaging with new ideas and disciplines.

Engagement is in the interaction and collaboration with the learners. Through the principles of UDL, educators can provide multiple pathways for learners to interact in ways that are relevant, authentic, and meaningful. Learners can be invited to share and learn from each other and offer their knowledge and experiences to enhance the teaching and learning process. You can be just as much a learner as your students – which is more enjoyable. We should be models of an unfinished work of art, always needing to be reshaped, molded, painted, and polished.

All this may take time, but it builds an expectation of community and active engagement. You will see a decrease in nodding sleepy heads, unauthorized class clowning, and students mysteriously exiting stage left. Engaging your students leaves them wanting to do some self-directed exploring and discovery to share or show off. Let's get these kids to hunger for more!

In conclusion, education needs this kind of innovation—emphasizing flexibility and individuality—to re-make the way teaching and learning happens. We believe universal design for learning (UDL) is that transformative innovation. The three principles of UDL can help us meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities inherent in the great variability of students, offering paths for those currently unprivileged and developing the talents of all. First and foremost we need to be clear about what we want to achieve. What is the goal of education in today's world? We have argued that the goal of education goes beyond the mastery of knowledge and skills to the mastery of learning itself. Education should help novice learners develop into individuals who are expert at learning—individuals who know how to learn, who have already learned a great deal, and who are eager to learn more. To reach this goal for all learners, there is not one fixed route. British educator Sir Ken Robinson, who writes and lectures frequently on arts and creativity in education, eloquently expresses the aspiration to help all learners meet high standards by whatever route is most effective for them as individuals: "Education," he says, "doesn't need to be reformed—it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions."

UDL can help us reshape teaching and learning by guiding design of an entirely new system with flexibility at its core. New media have shattered the old model of basic skills. The idea that mastery of print and text-only related skills (decoding, comprehending, and writing text) defines the full extent of literacy has lost credibility. The digital environment, with its connectivity, multimedia, just-in-time communications, distributed authoring, wisdom of the crowd, and many other qualities, has opened the door to a broad palette of communication skills and options, most critically perhaps, the opportunity for learners to act on materials—to understand them by changing them and making them their own.

## **5.Inclusive Learning-Erasmus Program Priority**

The Erasmus program promotes, through its actions, equal opportunities and access, inclusion, diversity and equity. An **inclusion and diversity strategy** is designed to facilitate access to funding for a wider range of organizations in order to improve accessibility for a larger number of participants with fewer opportunities.

The Erasmus program places a strong emphasis on social inclusion, on the green and digital transition, but also on promoting the participation of young people in democratic life.

Among the specific objectives of the program we can mention:

-promoting the mobility of individuals and groups of people for learning purposes, as well as inclusion, excellence, creativity and innovation at the level of institutions in the fields of education and training; -promoting mobility for non-formal and informal learning purposes.

Through the Erasmus projects implemented within our school, we want to ensure a quality education for all students, to permanently improve the instructive-educational process, to adapt the diversity of educational needs to the particularities of learning and development of our students.

Logo		Reference number	Position	Period	Site
Vocational Web Leap	Vocational-Web- Leap: An Open Source E- Learning Platform For Training Vocational Students, Apprentices And Graduates On Web Design And Development	2019-1-TR01- KA202-076828	Partner	01.10.2019- 31.08.2022	https://www.facebook.com/vocwebleap
Future Language is Robotic Coding 2159-1700-1420-077555	Future Language is Robotic Coding	2019-1-TR01- KA201-077586	Partner	1.10.2018- 30.09.2021	https://www.facebook. com/groups/22918486 74476667
TAIDS	Technology- Addiction and Internet Dependency Syndrome	2019-1-TR01- KA229- 076936_5	Partner	15.12.2019- 13.12.2022	https://www.facebook.com/taidsEUproject
MAKER	Maker Education	2019-1-RO01- KA229- 063086_1	Coordina tor	1.09.2019- 31.08.2022	https://makereducatio n6.weebly.com/

CO. E IN MATER	Creative Opinions Differentiate Education In Maths	2018-1-TR01- KA229- 059796_3	Partner	1.09.2018- 31.08.2020	https://codeinmaths.w eebly.com/
European Commission	School Education - accreditation	2021-1-RO01- KA121-SCH- 000003507	Coordina tor	1.09.2021- 31.12.2027	https://educatiescolara .weebly.com/
European Commission	School Education – VET accreditation	2021-1-RO01- KA120-VET- 000046245	Coordina tor	1.02.2022- 31.12.2027	
	Uluslararası Robotik Kodlama Festivali	2019-2-TR01- KA105-078424	Co- beneficia ry	01/12/2019- 28/02/2022	
Digit	Digitalization for in groups integrative training – international network for support, connection, innovation and know-how share in digital vocational education	2021-1-RO01- KA220-VET- 000032924	Partner	01-12-2021- 01-12-2023	https://www.facebook. com/Digit- 107006178526678/

## 6."Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School, an Inclusive School

The inclusive school is an educational unit that provides education for all students. It is also the most effective way to combat discriminatory attitudes.

The education system goes through many changes every year, the inclusion as a process is itself a change. The permanent improvement of the school institution aims to exploit the existing teaching resources, to support the participation in the educational process of all the students in a community.

An inclusive school is a democratic school in which:

- -there are relations of collaboration and mutual support between all participants in the educational process;
- -each student is provided with access to knowledge, training of skills and abilities and information;
  - -individualized learning is ensured;
- -special emphasis is placed on collaboration with the family and on the development of the local community;
- -the flexibility of the lessons is organized and structured, a differentiated curriculum is approached, personalized educational/individual plans are elaborated;
  - -is concerned with training and ensuring the success of all students;
- -is concerned with the continuous training of teachers. Teachers participate in continuous training courses which contain modern training modules and programs for inclusive education at all levels and with all aspects of this education, planned, organized and conducted by specialists in the field:
  - -inclusive communities are created and developed.

Many schools, including our high school, have adapted their educational process to distance learning because of the Corona virus. Schools have been taking different approaches: synchronous elearning or fully asynchronous learning through documents and worksheets designed to improve home learning. Whatever the approach, distance learning can be a challenge as both teachers and students need time and practice to get used to it.

During the pandemic, we experienced the Google Classroom educational platform. The platform is built by Google together with teachers to help them teach lessons more easily, to facilitate communication and collaboration with students both during and outside classes.

#### **Good Practices in Inclusive Education**

#### 6.1. European Researchers' Night 2021

The event was aimed to show the general audience what it means to be a researcher and how interesting research work can be, an action that promotes science and researchers among the general audience.

European Researchers' Night makes science accessible to all people through scientific activities which combine education with entertainment: organizing exhibitions, experiments in which the audience is actively involved, conferences, games, competitions and much more.

Held between September 24-25, 2021, the event offered the students of our school to be trained and they participated with a wide range of works and applications in the field of STEAM.

1. Plastic Waste Recycling Student: Leonte Teodor

Teacher coordinator: Dragomir Eleonora

https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/254146023194021/

2. Recycling of Metal Scrap by Plasma Cutting

Students: Sava Robert and Stroia Gabriel Teacher coordinator: Dragomir Eleonora

https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/585686955806745/

3.Lego Mindstorm EV3 –Dancing Robot

Students: Cucu Tiberiu and Asofiei Antoan-Adrian

Teacher coordinators: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa, Stanciu Carmen Simona and Salaru Constanta https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/603694070652370/

4. Lego Mindstorm EV3 - Robot Following a Line

Students: CucuTiberiu and Asofiei Antoan-Adrian

Teacher coordinators: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa, Stanciu Carmen Simona and Salaru Constanta https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/547516956334595/

5. Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School Seen from the Drone

Students: Albată George and Stoica Dragos-Leonard

Teacher coordinators: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa, Stanciu Carmen Simona and Salaru Constanta https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/2720619751574511/

6.Lego Mindstorm EV3 –Ball Throwing Robot

Students: CucuTiberiu and Asofiei Antoan-Adrian

Teacher coordinators: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa, Stanciu Carmen Simona and Salaru Constanta https://www.facebook.com/NoapteaCercetatorilorEuropeni/videos/1200293063809632/

#### 6.2. Neamt County Center of Excellence – Electronics and Robotics Group

The special results obtained in the field of electronics and robotics, the active involvement of specialized teachers in extracurricular activities facilitated the development of training courses for students in this field during the school year 2021-2022.

## SCHOOL CURRICULUM School year 2021-2022

**Subject: Electronics and Robotics** 

Classes: 9-12

Place of classes: "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School

Lessons: online format, Google Classroom Platform

Town: Piatra Neamt

Number of classes per week: 3

Team of teachers:

1.Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa

2.Salaru Constanta

3. Stanciu Carmen Simona

#### **General and Specific Competences:**

1. Electronics and Robotics

## 2.Programming - onlinecourse

https://studio.code.org/s/course4

#### 6.3. School and Extracurricular Competitions

6.3.1. National Contest MADE FOR EUROPE, 2022 Edition - County Stage -

**PROJECT TITLE**: Maker Education

**PROJECT CODE**: 2019-1-RO01-KA229-063086 **PROGRAM** (Erasmus +, eTwinning etc.): Erasmus+

PROJECT PERIOD: 1.09.2019-31.08.2022

NAME OF THE PRODUCT ENTERED IN THE COMPETITION:

Maker Education - educational resource kit

- -Project Website:https://makereducation6.weebly.com/
- -Maker Education Magazine, certified ISSN 2668-7852 ISSN-1 2668-7852
- -Robot programming with LEGO MINDSTORMS EV3

NAME OF STUDENT PRESENTING THE PRODUCT: Tomescu Vlad Costin

CLASSS: 10th C

NAME OF TEACHER ACCOMPANYING THE STUDENT: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT:

The website of the project together with the magazine presents the implemented activities, the achievements of the students coordinated by the teachers between 1.09.2019-31.08.2021.

Magazine no.1, period: October 2019-January 2020
 <a href="https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker\_education\_magazine\_no\_1.pdf">https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker\_education\_magazine\_no\_1.pdf</a>

- Magazine no.2, period: February-April 2020
   <a href="https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker\_education\_magazine\_no\_2.pdf">https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker\_education\_magazine\_no\_2.pdf</a>
- Magazine no.3, period: May-July 2020 <a href="https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker-education-magazine\_3.pdf">https://makereducation6.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/5/7/125705654/maker-education-magazine\_3.pdf</a>

PROJECT TITLE: Creative Opinions Differentiate Education In Maths

**PROJECT CODE**: 2018-1-TR01-KA229-059796

PROGRAM (Erasmus +, eTwinning etc.): Erasmus+

**PROJECT PERIOD**: 1.09.2018-31.08.2021

NAME OF THE PRODUCT ENTERED IN THE COMPETITION:

Creative Opinions Differentiate Education In Maths - educational resource kit

**-Project Website:** https://codeinmaths.weebly.com/

-Creative Opinions Differentiate Education In Maths Magazine, certifiedISSN 2668-4276, ISSN-L 2668-4276

- -Mathematics, Architectureand Robotics demonstration models made with Arduino
- -Origami exhibition

NAME OF STUDENT PRESENTING THE PRODUCT: Trifan Dacian-Stefan

CLASS: 10th C

NAME OF TEACHER ACCOMPANYING THE STUDENT: Horlescu Gabriela-Brandusa

#### SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT:

The website of the project together with the magazine presents the implemented activities, the achievements of the students coordinated by the teachers between 1.09.2019-31.08.2021.

• Magazine no. 3, period: September 2019-February 2020 https://codeinmaths.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/2/1/122112933/codeinmath\_no\_3.pdf

PROJECT TITLE: The Break Out City

**PROJECT CODE**: It is not the case for etwinning projects **PROGRAM (Erasmus +, eTwinning etc.): eTwinning** 

**PROJECT PERIOD**: 1.09.2018-31.08.2021

NAME OF THE PRODUCT ENTERED IN THE COMPETITION:

Centre educative on-line educational kit.

NAME OF STUDENT PRESENTING THE PRODUCT: Grădinaru Nicoleta Daniela

CLASS: 12th E

NAME OF TEACHER ACCOMPANYING THE STUDENT: Dragomir Eleonora

#### SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PRODUCT:

The students worked in international teams, in educational centers of interest, namely the Center for Visual Arts, the Center for Music, the Center for Games and Contests, the Center for Sports, the Center for Journalism and News, the Center for Science Enthusiasts and they made chronicles, exhibitions, concerts, articles and many other elements of online educational communication using a wide range of digital tools such as Story jumper, Emaze, Padlet, Kahoot, Chronicle etc. All this was collected in an educational kit available on the eTwinning platform from which we will present the most representative elements.

Our students made lasting friendships with their peers in Turkey, Bulgaria and Italy and they still continue to collaborate on the KA1 mobility projects we are implementing this year.

#### 6.3.2.International Competition "International English Language Week 2022"

Outstanding results were obtained by our students at the international competition "International English Language Week 2022", an online edition this year, organized by the "Zespot Szkotim. Piotra Wysockiego Technikum Nr. 11 im." High School in Warsaw, Poland. Of the 5 sections of the event and in which our students were coordinated and enrolled by the teachers Secară Ana Irina and Brandusa-Gabriela Horlescu, awards were obtained for 3 of them, as follows: Visual Arts Section, 1stPrize (Bordeeanu Karla, 10thA), 2nd Prize (Motfolea Elena Lavinia, 10thB) and 3rdPrize (Andrei Alina Vasilica Ioana, 10thB); English Poetry Book Section, 2ndPrize (Negroae Xenia, 10thA), and for the Multimedia Presentations Section, 3rdPrize (Necula Emanuela, 10thA).

It was a very rigorous competition, given the significant number of competitors, but the students prepared themselves with the utmost seriousness, followed their teachers' recommendations, continued encouragement and the results were in line with the joint effort.



6.4. Remedial Education to Improve Students' Practical Skills Through Creative Recycling Activities and Trans-disciplinarity: Arts-Technologies-ERSIP

#### **AIM**

The aim of the project is to help disadvantaged students, children with SEN, children in childcare centers, children integrated in mainstream education with gaps in education, at risk of school failure to develop their practical skills, technical knowledge and emotional by participating in creative activities such as: creative workshops, sensory plastic development workshop or experiential learning.

#### **Objectives:**

- -Developing the practical skills and imagination of the participating students through activities of combining visual arts and technologies in a creative-innovative way
  - -Developing the skills of participating students for teamwork

- -Developing the ability of participating students to recognize and manage their own emotions by encouraging them to express their emotions
- -Developing the capacity of participating students to be competitive and creative by participating in games, competitions, art education activities and creative recycling.

## **Project coordinators:**

- Eleonora Dragomir, teacher of technical subjects at "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School, Piatra Neamt, president of the Asociația pentru Știință, Cultură, Ecologie, Tineret și Integrare Socială-ASCETIS (Association for Science, Culture, Ecology, Youth and Social Integration);
- Horlescu Gabriela-Brânduşa, teacher of technical subjects at "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School, Piatra Neamt, president of Asociația SPRIJIN+ (Association SUPPORT+);
- Gheorghe Cuciureanu, PH professor of visual arts at "Victor Brauner" Arts High School, Piatra Neamt, president of Asociația AAA Centrul Regional de Educatie Estetică (Association AAA Regional Center for Aesthetic Education).

Within the project, the Guide of good practices for the introduction in the curriculum of the practical training activities of creative recycling and education through visual arts was written.

https://sites.google.com/view/asociatia-sprijin/proiecte-educa%C8%9Bionale

<u>25.06.2021</u> Activity of remedial practice, after the school classes with the purpose of improving the professional skills of the students from the Special Vocational School in Ştefan cel Mare village, Neamt county (<a href="https://www.csei-stefancelmare.ro/">https://www.csei-stefancelmare.ro/</a>)

Teacher coordinators: Dragomir Eleonora, Horlescu Gabriela-Brânduşa, Şalaru Constanţa Students developed their emotional competence through:

- creative recycling activities which combine science, technology, arts and mathematics, involving the direct and creative action of the student.
- plastic education activities which apply the innovative didactic method, the "Little Prince" method.
- Step 1: The "Little Prince" method that activates students' creativity through color awareness.
- Step 2: Students find new use for some recycled objects, in our case egg cartons. Students are free and all their ideas are appreciated brainstorming.

Students performed operations of cutting, painting, assembling on unconventional materials in a creative way.

Newly created products were analyzed and useful items were selected. In this way, students developed their professional skills but also the skills in the field of emotional competence, teamwork, support of their own ideas, perseverance, assertive communication, competitive spirit, ability to adapt to new work situations.

#### Photo Gallery with Students' Works











<u>26.06.2021</u>, Remedial activity performed with the students in the 5th-6th classes from "IonCreanga" Childcare Complex Piatra Neamt in order to improve students' practical skills in accordance with the school subject Technological Education and Practical Applications.

Teacher coordinators: Dragomir Eleonora, Ursache Iuliana, Horlescu Gabriela-Brândușa, Șalaru Constanța

The students applied the technique of making icons on glass in order to creatively recycle plastic films. The activity led to the growth of the creative capacities and the availabilities for invention and innovation. Students also learnt to behave responsibly towards the environment and save available resources.

The students understood the techniques used in the printing workshops and manual painting and developed their skills to create products to be proud of.

At the beginning and the end of the activity, the students tidied up the classroom, organized their work tools correctly and improved their health and work safety skills.

Students also improved their emotional skills of self-confidence, teamwork, organization, communication, and leadership.



3 July 2021, Project activity ERSIP

Teacher coordinators: Dragomir Eleonora and Ciocârlan Augustina

The activity took place at "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School, the students participated in this activity to improve their practical skills. There were 5 students from grades 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>from the Mechanics profile. They received raw materials such as recyclable packaging, namely cans, plastic stoppers, plastic bottles, protective equipment and working tools: hand drills, grinders, welding machines, plasma cutters, hammers soldering iron, telescopic cutter.

The activity had a first stage of brainstorming type in which the students were invited to find solutions for the reuse of repurposing waste. All the ideas were accepted, they proposed that the solutions of making name inscriptions, assembling the plugs by wire connecting elements, cold drilling of plastic and metal, drilling and thermal cutting of both plastic and metal, creating ornaments, holders, strategy-type games with the help of corks and last but not least, a special emphasis was placed on the creation of construction materials for interior finishes.

Together with teachers Eleonora Dragomir and Augustina Ciocârlan the best ideas were selected and students proceeded to their practical activities. The students worked hard and were proud of their achievements. They appreciated the activity as being efficient and did not regret coming to school in their free time.



## **Bibliography**

https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=894047

https://www.thetechedvocate.org/applying-universal-design-for-learning-in-remote-classrooms/

http://www2.leeward.hawaii.edu/emc/UDL

https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/connections/inclusive-teaching

https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/connections/inclusive-teaching

https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/

## 1.6.Accessibility in remote education design and develop technology usable for a wide audience, including individuals with disabilities

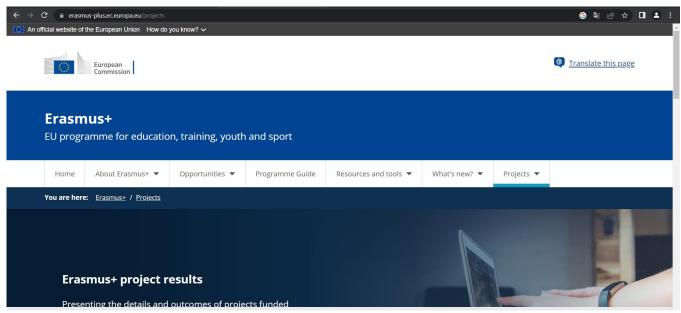
Gabriela-Brândușa Horlescu, teacher "Gheorghe Cartianu" Technical High School

#### 1. The Erasmus+ platform for the dissemination and exploitation of the results

Information about the Erasmus projects, the results obtained from the implementation of the projects can be obtained by accessing the Erasmus+ Platform for the dissemination and exploitation of the results.

Erasmus+ 2021-2027 is more inclusive, more digital and greener. The platform has training and development opportunities for all ages and more options for organizations.

The platform can be used to search for Erasmus+ projects in various fields, to explore projects with exceptional results and stories, to find sources of inspiration for your own projects.



https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects

#### 2. Open Educational Resources

Open Educational Resources (OER) are the tools used in the process of learning, teaching, assessment that are available in an accessible format and under an open license, acces free of charge.

The term "open" represents the elimination of technical and legal restrictions on their use.

Types of Open Educational Resources:

- books, manuals, guides, school aids
- course materials;
- lesson plans, worksheets, assessment tests, quizzes, assessments, simulations, homework;
- presentations, audio and video resources;
- educational games;
- audio and video resources;
- educational websites;
- other resources.

In Neamt County, teachers publish free open educational resources on the website of the Neamt County School Inspectorate.

Here you can find many didactic resources in the fields of:

- early childhood education
- primary education
- special education
- vocational and technical education
- Romanian Language and Literature
- modern languages
- math
- physics
- chemistry
- biology
- geography
- social and human sciences
- informatics
- music education and plastic education
- physical education and sport
- religion

In professional and technical education, resources can be accessed from the following fields:

- public alimentation and tourism
- trade
- constructions
- economical
- technological education
- electronics, automation
- aesthetics and care of the human body
- manufacture of wooden products
- food industry
- textile and leather industry
- mechanics
- Computer-Aided Design
- environment protection
- transportation



https://sites.google.com/isj.nt.edu.ro/red

RED can be adjusted according to the students' level of study, their preferences, but also other criteria, which help to achieve the desired educational goals and results.

Also, through their free access, they help to stimulate creativity and innovation, contributing to accessible and quality education.

## 3. Educational platform Didactic.ro

A platform for communication and best practices, a tool that supports educational activities, but also a facilitator for the continuous professional development of teachers in Romanian education.

The platform is in continuous development, with many educational resources, grouped by category: preschool education, primary education, secondary education, high school education, vocational and technical education, preschool education, *Intuitext* manual, online lessons, training material, school diplomas, puzzles, online projects, preparation for the baccalaureate exam, personalized calendars.



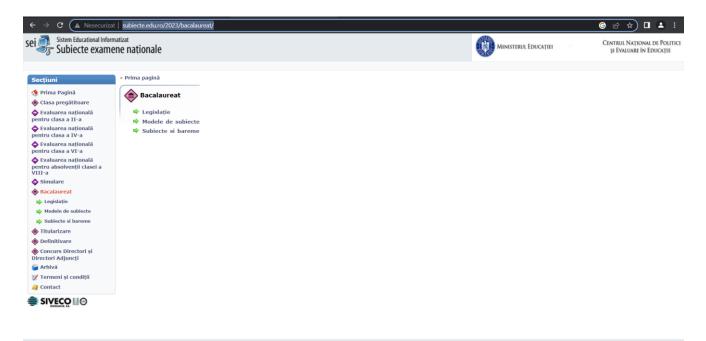
https://www.alaactic.ro/

#### 4. Computerized Educational System

The Computerized Educational System (SEI) is a complex program initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2001 to support the teaching-learning process in pre-university education with cutting-edge technologies.

Students, teachers can access sections with assessment resources for:

- -Preparatory class
- -National assessment for the 2nd grade
- -The national assessment for the 4th grade
- -National assessment for the 6th grade
- -National assessment for 8th grade graduates
- Baccalaureate exam



http://subiecte.edu.ro/2023/bacalaureat/

## 5. Teaching with Europeana

On this site, you will be able to find a selection of learning scenarios created by teachers from all over Europe and beyond to use Europeana's cultural heritage materials in their classrooms.

#### **Level of Education:**

- -Early childhood & Primary Education
- -Lower secondary
- -Upper secondary
- -VET and adult education

## **Topic:**

- -Art
- -History
- -Language subjects
- -Music
- -Philosophy
- -STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics)
- -Environment
- -Diversity and Inclusion

Language: Croatian, English, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish

## Type of implementation:

- -Face-to-face
- -Blended
- -Online

## **Key competences promoted:**

- -Literacy
- -STEM skills
- -Digital literacy
- -Physical and emotional well-being
- -Citizenship
- -Entrepreneurship
- -Cultural awareness and expression

## **Methodology and trends:**

- -Flipped classroom
- -Project-based learning
- -Cooperative learning
- -Gamification
- -Problem-based learning
- -Inquiry-based learning
- -CLIL
- -Game Based Learning

## **Type of education:**

- -Formal
- -Non-formal
- -Informal

## Type of Activity/Task:

- -Quiz
- -Role game
- -Group dynamics
- -Brainstorming
- -Mind map
- -Oral presentation
- -External visit



https://teachwitheuropeana.eun.org/learning-scenarios/

## 6. Online courses: MOOCs

The page contains a selection of the best e-learning platforms with free online courses offered by prestigious universities or educational institutions. Most courses are in English and cover areas such as communication, psychology, arts, mathematics and science, engineering, economics, management – for personal and professional development.

Each platform requires the creation of an account to enroll in the courses offered. As a rule, online courses that have tutorial support are available for enrollment two to three times a year and last on average 4-5 weeks. Sometimes a fee is required for the final certificate. Online courses without tutorial support allow immediate enrollment and self-paced learning.



(https://cursuri-online.ro/moocs-massive-open-online-courses)

Online courses are courses offered electronically via the Internet. A system planned and organized by an institution that provides its students with electronic materials in a sequential and logical order is called an eLearning system.

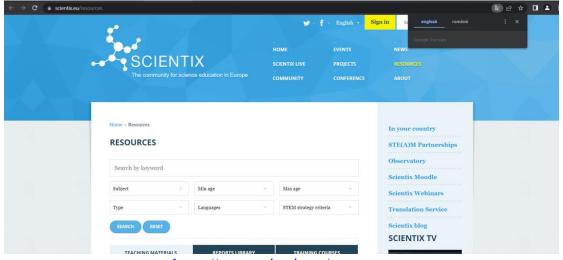
The eLearning system offers the possibility of organizing online courses, which can be assimilated by students in their own way, without being constrained by attendance and synchronicity.

Online courses are an alternative form of traditional education, using the latest technologies and techniques. This type of education is suitable for those who do not have time to attend face-to-face classes or self-taught.

The platform supports personal and professional development by offering suggestions of training paths appropriate to the expectations, knowledge, interests and needs of the learners.

#### 7. Scientix OER

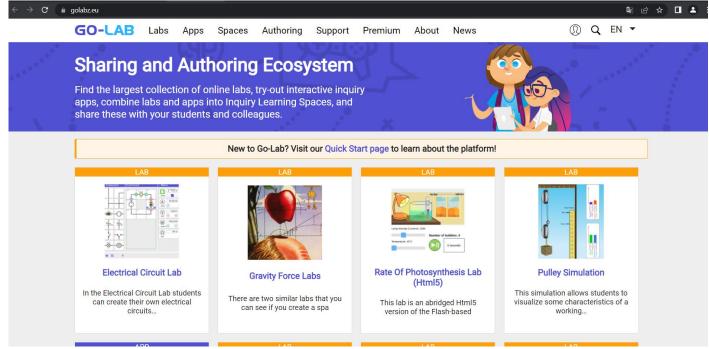
Didactic scenarios organized by subjects, age, didactic approach, language. Aims in the main discipline of STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. It is carried out within the Scientix program (EUN).



https://www.scientix.eu/resources

#### 8.Go-Lab

An online learning platform for the discipline STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.. It offers participants the opportunity to learn through investigation, in a structured manner, within virtual learning environments, laboratories, tools developed by software- (e.g. hypothesis generation and design of experiments tools).



https://www.golabz.eu/

## 9.PHET

Interactive simulations for math, physics, chemistry, biology, earth science. They are free, public (do not require authentication from the students). They are scientifically validated by a team at the University of Colorado. The student can be given the direct link to a specific resource. Or the respective resource can be integrated into a page on an e-learning platform (embed – i-frame).



https://phet.colorado.edu/

#### 10. Cisco Networking Academy

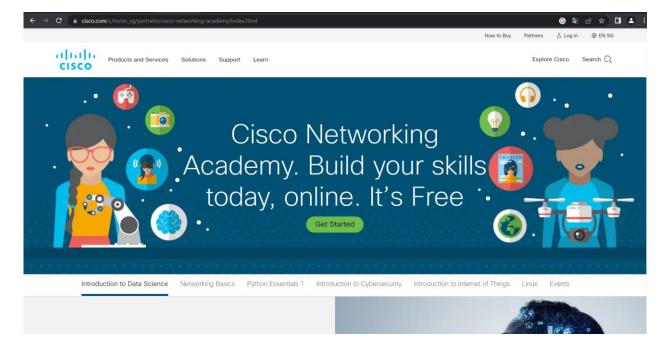
For Cisco, education has always been a priority, and in this period we can ensure continuity at the educational level by capitalizing on the technology and online resources we have at this moment.

With Cisco Networking Academy, an online platform that allows people to learn from anywhere, you can continue your training at your own pace.

Cisco's no-instructor online courses are offered for free on NetAcad.com and are aimed at anyone looking to pursue a career in IT, as well as those who just want to brush up on general IT concepts.

Free courses for teachers, students, trainers:

Introduction to Data Science	Quintillion bytes of data are created EVERY day! Explore how data is transforming the world and opening up exciting new jobs.
<b>Networking Basics</b>	Start learning the basics of computer networking and discover how networks operate.
Python Essentials 1	Learn Python, a versatile, object-orienated programming language used by startups and tech giants. No prior knowledge of programming is required.
Introduction to Cybersecurity	Explore the exciting field of cybersecurity and why cybersecurity is a future-proof career
Introduction to Internet of Things	Billions of devices connect to the network every day. Learn how IoT is digitally transforming the world and opening up exciting new jobs.
Linux Essentials	Learn the basic of Linux, the world's most popular operating systems, and expand your career opportunities in IT.



https://www.cisco.com/c/m/en\_sg/partners/cisco-networking-academy/index.html

#### **10.ICDL**

The ICDL Foundation is a global social enterprise dedicated to raising the standards of digital competence in the workforce, education and society. ICDL certification is now available in more than 100 countries, with the foundation having more than 20,000 test centers, providing more than 70 million ICDL certification tests to more than 16 million people worldwide.

#### **ICDL** Workforce modules

Designed to build the critical digital skills of the modern workplace, **ICDL Workforce** is a tiered programme that will help employees with effective use of technology.

The modules in **ICDL Workforce** are:

#### **Essential Skills**

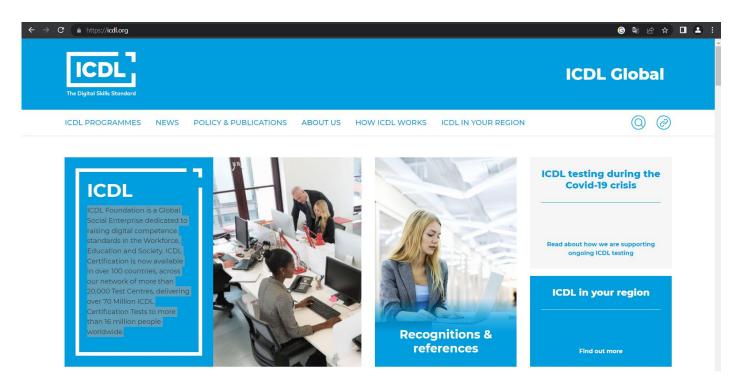
- -Application Essentials
- -Computer and Online Essentials
- -Computer Essentials
- -Online Essentials

#### **Office Applications**

- -Documents
- -Spreadsheets
- -Presentation

#### **Good Practice**

- -IT Security
- -Online Collaboration
- -Data Protection



https://icdl.org/

# 1.7.Built an "on-line voice", teacher's presence and appearance in online, effective communication using internet tools, empathy and emotional connections, support and counseling for disadvantaged

## 1.7.1.Built an "on-line voice", teacher's presence and appearance in online, effective communication using internet tools

Stowarzyszenie "VESUVIO", Poland

Today's teachers have many reasons for entering the online learning environment. Effective online communication is a powerful skill for building the relationships between teachers and students. Teachers have to be visible and presence in online teaching environment.

For quick and successful interactions students and teachers need to understand what the messenger is saying and create reaction. That's why many teachers have adopted online tools as an easy means of talking to students/ learners and staying connected at any suitable time. Online communication can be verbal, written, or be any other visualized interaction between teachers and students that happens on the Internet.

There are many tools for online communication that can be used for the professional educational environment for the interactions teachers/ learners:

Chat rooms - online spaces for written and verbal interaction where teacher/learner communicate in groups.

Emails- technology that allows teachers to compose and send messages and files to students/learners.

Forums - websites for chatting on specific topics, where students and teachers can exchange the experiences, opinions etc...

Online forms - a form of communication between student/ teachers for requesting specific information.

Comments on websites and forums related the specific topic that teacher presents.

Social networks - social media where teachers/students can interact verbally and non-verbally in the form of a photo or a video.

VoIP or Voice over IP- a way to make voice phone calls using the Internet.

To build effective online communication, teachers should select the right type of tool.

E-mails are very often used, it's a simple and efficient device for communication. Can be used for lengthy messages. Email was originally designed in the format of software that allows for viewing larger volumes of content. That's why it is very easy to use for managing correspondence between teachers/ learners. E-mails can be used for conveying task details and conversations, as you can attach .doc files and links, structure your message, or send a copy to your students/ other teachers. Sending e-mails can be planned at a specific time, which is a very useful feature for time management. You can use it, for example, if you run many lessons frequently or work with lots of documents.

Chat in the context of using by teacher/ student is communication between one-on-one or with a group of students/ learners by sending short messages online. It's a simple and fast type of communication. It's instant, which is the most valuable feature of chats. It is comfortable to communicate and get responses in real time. Easy to carry a conversation. The media of chats allows to use informal language and short sentences to deliver information quickly. Students will not be constantly online, and it can influence the effectiveness of online communication. But it is not a disadvantage of the media but a choice of the users to be offline.

There are many online tools for productive communication. Skype, WhatsApp and Hangouts are mostly used for sharing files and writing messages. Being able to communicate effectively with your students using video communication tools is essential for modern education. Video communications can strengthen the connection between teachers, students, and parents to foster supportive learning environments.

Hangouts and Skype also support video calls. Audio calls on the Internet are also a convenient way of communicating for teachers. It is also an inexpensive method of real-time interaction that will help you add a personal touch to your interaction. Video calls allow you to see and hear students/learners in real time. Teachers using audio/video calls can see the other teachers/students/learner, and it is comfortable way to see them while discussing the work and tasks or do the presentations. Teachers can better convey thoughts when talking in real time to deliver ideas that come to mind during the conversation.

Most tools are free and easy to set up. Even students who struggle with technology can install them and use them freely. It is also the small disadvantage if a person has a poor Internet connection. This might make calls frustrating and uncomfortable and the student might need additional hardware for audio and video calls, such as headphones and microphones.

There are other digital tools for audio and video calls for example Zoom. After the COVID-19 outbreak, it has become the number-one app used by teams of collaborators. Zoom allows to give students real-time advice and guidance. This platform can be used for one-on-one sessions or group collaboration projects. The teacher's role as a "moderator" extends to proper management of "breakout" rooms. The teacher can move in-between virtual sessions of the main Zoom meeting. It's important to check in regularly to help students stay on track and make sure that one student does not dominate conversation. The benefit of breakout rooms in an educational setting is that students get more time to speak, listen, and collaborate with others. Skype is the other software for audio and video calls and is valued for its free options.

Social media refers to an interactive Web-2.0-based application whose main purpose is creating communities by sharing ideas, visuals, texts, etc. Today, social media is one of the most convenient ways of communication, both in private and professional lives. Teachers can share images and videos on social media. Social media can help teachers achieve a bigger social experience without leaving classrooms.

Tools for it: Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Instagram. Social media as a means of collaboration and communication has been used intensively for the last ten years at schools and educational institutions, by students/ learners/ teachers. Facebook and its Facebook Messenger, along with Twitter, have converted social media into the premier space for sharing thoughts and chats.

Instagram added a feature to leave instant messages and send voice messages as well, which is very convenient. Instagram is now the most popular network globally.

#### **Effective Online Communication in educational field**

Rules and techniques that help teachers build efficient communication and avoid mistakes while interacting online.

Digital Etiquette:

- -Applying the same standards as for the public space, being polite and friendly as always.
- -Running the conversation to have students feel safe and welcome.
- -Acknowledging cultural differences is very useful so as not to accidentally offend or hurt feelings.
- -Being inclusive and open-minded is also a characteristic in online communication. Acceptance and impartiality are signs of a professional teacher with well-developed soft skills.
- -Avoiding empty talk during online chats. It's distracting and a waste of time.

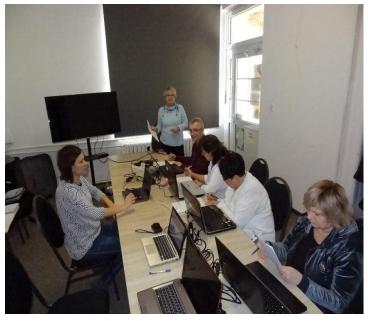
Using Clear and Concise Language.

For effective communication, improving grammar, sentence structure, and overall writing skills are very important.

Using the right tone of voice when it's appropriate is highly recommended. There is a difference between speaking to students in a non-formal chat atmosphere and speaking with them during a formal lesson.

Long messages can be structured correctly for a better understanding. It's critical to learner that you compose the information in a way that is comfortable to read.

Photos- the example of good practice in Stowarzyszenie VESUVIO using online tools by teachers and learners.











# 1.7.2. Building an 'on-line voice and teacher presence' by using digital tools and offering emotional connections, support and counseling for disadvantaged students

Kocaeli Kulturel Gelisim Ve Dayanisma Dernegi, Turkey

#### Introduction

Inclusive education aims to remove all barriers to education by focusing on ensuring students' full and effective participation, making contents accessible to all and to all students' achievement of their goals. It also involves making changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, strategies and approaches according to the individual needs of students.

Providing inclusive education to school-age students no matter whatever modality is being used, is the responsibility of all teachers .

## 1. Build an 'online voice and presence' by connecting with disadvantaged students emotionally and providing support& counseling

There are several relationships such as teacher-student, student-student, student-content, within the class environment. The relationship "student-teacher" is the most important of them all whether learning occurs in a physical classroom or online. This relationship needs to be enhanced in online education to overcome the perception of distance. According to research carried out since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, students assessed teacher presence not only through his/her appearance and voice in an online course but also through all other types of interaction between them and their teacher, for example; the tech tools the teacher uses, means of communication such as emails, tasks, the way the course itself is structured and organized and the most important of them all, whether they were able to connect with their teachers emotionally and whether they received adequate support and counseling from them.

Building &nurturing emotional connections with all students but especially the disadvantaged, and offering support & counseling whenever they need is central to preventing failure and drop-outs. In addition to acquiring more inclusive digital teaching methodologies, teachers should be prepared to support their disadvantaged students emotionally and find solutions to common challenges such as:

- o overcoming distance and disengagement,
- o learners from low-income families with no access to the Internet, TV, or connected digital devices, students with disabilities,
- o students whose primary language is not the language of instruction in schools,
- o girls having a disadvantaged status in homes due to harmful gender norms with less opportunities for accessing and using the limited number of technological devices, and less learning time due to disproportionately more home care duties.<sup>1</sup>
- Lack of parental support due to lack of knowledge and/or reluctance to use IT tools

#### 1.1. Before the course: Must-have measures

Here are some tips prior to designing your course:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> When schools shut: gendered impacts of COVID-19 school closures, UNESCO, 2021 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379270

Focus on individual students rather than content whenplanning teaching activities

Offer more flexibility in the wayyou present lessons/engage students in learning/ assess their performance Promote equity and inclusion by implementing measures to ensure that all students have inclusive access to distance learning materials

Base the duration of the remote learning units on students' selfregulation and cognitive abilities

In today's fast-flowing population movements, schools may have a variety of students who come from different ethnic or/and racial groups with different learning styles and strengths. Before they start teaching online, teachers are strongly recommended to familiarize themselves with the Universal Design of Distance Learning (UDL), which will help them with open curriculum design and teaching platforms to accommodate diverse learning needs so that they can maximize student success.

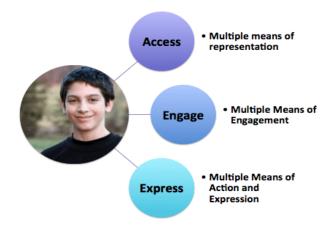
What is Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

Each student is a unique individual with differences in cognitive and affective development, motivation, intelligence, aspiration, needs, interests and potential. In addition to the innate characteristics, differences in social and economic background, language, gender, physical characteristics and learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic-hands-on) exist. It is important for teachers to recognize these variables in their students to achieve an effective and productive learning-teaching process. They need to build alternatives into their instructional design from the start, not as added-on techniques.

Universal Design of Learning (UDL) is a teaching framework which offers the use of a variety of teaching methods to remove any barriers to learning, particularly those experienced by students with disabilities, and gives all students an opportunity to succeed. While the 'one-size-fits-all' approach is generally adopted in traditional education, the goal of UDL is a) to provide students with more options to learn and complete assignments which helps to increase their motivation and interest and b) to increase accessibility for all in online & offline learning.

How do we apply the three guiding principles of UDL in a remote classroom?

The three principles of UDL were established for the universal design of learning and teaching resources and environment to maximize learning for all students. Each principle offers a set of comprehensive guidelines explaining how to use resources and tools to improve learning. These principles can be used by educators to make their presentation of instruction more flexible, thus, more accessible and appealing, increase student engagement in the classroom and develop inclusive assessments.



Principle 1: Engagement

Students are engaged in relevant learning opportunities with options to personalise goals and maximise their potential. Reflect on the following before you plan your course:

- How can I engage and motivate every student especially the disadvantaged to learn in a remote classroom?
  - Do I know how my students learn the best? Have I asked them?
  - How can I use the interests of students to ensure their engagement?
  - Do the learning materials provide opportunities to reflect student strengths?
  - Do I know what resources and support can the student access in the home environment?

Read some tips on how to engage all students further in the unit!

Principle 2: Representation:

Content and information are presented in different ways so that they can be accessed by all learners, including the disadvantaged. Offer each lesson in audio, text, and video to let students choose what best works for them. You can also design a video with captions. You can also shift from large group teaching to smaller group instruction in order to hold group discussions, debates and other learning activities.



For example, you can create different types of lessons for your students using Pedagogue<sup>2</sup> which is a social media network where educators can learn and grow and share advice, strategies and tools.

Principle 3: Action and Expression

You can use technology to differentiate the ways students can show what they have learnt; There are multiple means of action and expression at your disposal.

During the course: Establish online "teacher presence": Be there!

Teacher presence is more than using an 'engaging 'voice. In simple terms, this means 'being' there in your class. Many students feel as if they are engaging with a computer rather than their classmates and teachers when they cannot see or engage with them. This makes them feel disconnected and isolated. Let your students see the 'real' you behind the screen. If they know you, they are more likely to trust you and feel comfortable to contact you whenever they have questions or need support in academic or emotional issues that makethem feel isolated.



There are several specific strategies and technologies at your disposal to use for establishing andenhancing your online presence.



Get familiar with the Learning Management Software (LMS) and other tech tools you will use in order to understand their features and limitations. Remember that state-of-the art tools may be fine to use, however, if they are beyond the capabilities and knowledge of your students, they simply will not

work.

## a) Minimize the perception of distance in online classroom

As the physical distance increases between teacher and students in remote learning, so can the psychological and emotional gap. This is especially true for disadvantaged students. Teachers need to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://pedagogue.app/start-here/

take deliberate steps to overcome the perception of the relational distance in online courses.

#### b) Personalize your course

☐ At the beginning of a course, create a short video to introduce yourself and to welcome all
students into your course. This will enable them to see you and come to know you as a real person and
creates the perception that you are right there with them in the online lesson. Add captions/script to
your video for accessibility.

☐ Bring your personality into your remote classroom by letting your students know about your personal and professional interests so that they can connect with you emotionally and feel more motivated to learn. You can also display a profile picture of yourself on your LMS account and ask your students to share some of their own.

☐ Establish a routine for your virtual classroom to support especially disadvantaged students to manage stress and anxiety rather than making them deal with frequently changing learning modes and tools.

## c) Communicate regularly to detect emotional issues and disengagement

☐ Communicate with all students — especially the disadvantaged—more regularly and informally to reduce the isolating effects of online classroom. Making yourself available to students for one-to-one communication via emails, chats and/or tools like Messenger, WhatsApp, direct communication via discussion boards and feedback, etc will help you show that you are personally interested and invested in each of them.



Online discussion forums, if the teacher also takes part in regularly, provide a convenient place to engage disadvantaged students and encourage them to form successful collaborations with their peers.

Respond quickly when students contact you to ask questions, ask for help&support and so on. You can use various digital channels such as video conferences and other means of communication to let students reach you and vice versa. Making sure that disadvantaged students know they are able to talk to you on an individual basis puts them at ease and boosts morale. It also improves your teacher presence during remote teaching.

Collect frequent student feedback to assess whether you are doing well and the course is on the right track and what needs modifying and what is fine with students. It will also make students think that their opinions matter and it is not only the teacher deciding what to learn and how. This builds up their confidence and enthusiasm for the course. Take a look at some questions below to elicit feedback from your students during the course:



On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident do you feel using the distance learning technology (such as computer, video calls, learning tools) in the virtual classroom?

What challenges, if any, have you had in remote learning? For example, have you experienced any technical issues about connecting to the Internet? Have you experienced any emotionalstress and why?

What strategies would be effective for keeping you engaged with your classmates and teacher during remote learning?

## How satisfied are you with:

- a) the organization of the lessons and the clarity of content and assignments?
- b) the amount of time you spend speaking with your teacher and your classmates online?
- c) the amount of help you get from your teacher?

What can teachers or other adults at school do to better support you and your learning?

Any other comments?

#### d) Create an encouraging, engaging and inclusive learning environment

You must create an engaging learning environment to let all students be actively engaged and give and receive feedback in the online course instead of just absorbing information.

Read the following measures to ensure student engagement.

#### 1.3. Facilitate online course for all

- Planning and preparing your online course helps students sense your teacher presence in the design of your online materials. Therefore, reflect on the tips mentioned in 2.1. before designing your course.
- Providing directions makes students, especially those with less confidence and a fear of failure, feel more comfortable about following the course effectively. Provide them with an overview of the mediums /methods you will use so that they will know in advance the applications and channels you will use and they will come prepared which is a time-saver. Inform them also about the pre-requisites to a lesson. Writing your instructions down will also prevent any confusion in disadvantaged students with cognitive disabilities and linguistic barriers. Be clear in your content and course organization.

- Make sure that your students understand your instructions and/or pre-requisites to a lesson/a follow-up assignment, etc. well by reminding them often, via reminders or follow-up emails in case they lose track.
- Notes on resources for further reading and learning will be helpful to facilitate student engagement and learning.
- Studying the new EdTech materials and using them may also help in your presentation.
- Provide content relevant to students' cultural background.
- Prior to exams, let students know which parts of the course the exam questions will be derived from.



You can begin each week by over viewing the module and the outcomes for the week and what your expectations are. It also helps to let students know what makes the course content relevant and how. This way, what they are learning will make sense to them which, in turn, will create a positive attitude about learning.

- Providing consistent feedback to show your commitment to their performance and ultimate success. For example; let students know what they have done well rather than simply giving grades. If they submit assignments and get them back without any comments from you, they may think that you do not care. They need to know that their performance is reviewed adequately, otherwise they may disengage.
- Staying connected, participating in classroom discussions to encourage disadvantaged students to keep contributing, participate in discussions and get input from everyone. This does not necessarily mean you dominate the discussion, rather, you show that you are present and interested in students' views, pay special attention to disadvantaged students who can be overwhelmed by discussions and keepsilent.
- Reaching out to students and families to connect with disadvantaged students and their families individually. This shows that you care. Let your students and families contact you when they need, for example, when a student appears to be disengaged from your course. You can also make a schedule to reach out to disadvantaged students on a personal basis regularly, share an email address with them and their families or use applications such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, etc. to stay connected. Holding regular office hours is another means of contact if students need one-on-one communication. Check in with them regularly and ask if they are able to access all of the materials and participate in the course. Ask them what is working well for them, and what isn't.
- It is crucial to establish good communication through school website, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, etc. with the families of disadvantaged students and to offer support and maintain regular contact with them.

Keep a positive attitude in your virtual classroom and observe!

- Engage and encourage students during the course by using a conversational tone. Humor, examples, storytelling are some of the ways you can also use to ensure student engagement.
- Encourage students to talk about how they are feeling and what emotions they are experiencing, for example, via check-ins in morning sessions. Do not, however, force them to share if they do not want to.
- Support and encourage students who, sometimes, may feel unhappy and angry, which is rather normal, however, watch out for the telltale signs of depression such as bad mood &l ack of energy lasting for a long time and failure in schoolwork and relationships with peers. Guide them toward the help they need.



Be aware of your own needs in stressful times! You need to look after your own mental and physical health to be able to better support yourself and your students.



Set ground rules to prevent discrimination and stigmatization

It is critical that you make your expectations clear regarding classroom behavior and student-teacher, student-student relationships and establish some ground rules. Students must know that you will be monitoring the quality and quantity of their feedback, also be aware of the online classroom etiquette when they interact with teacher and their peers. This is important to make sure that no one will be bullied and/or discriminated against.



#### Mix different modes of communication

Lack of physical proximity makes understanding non-verbal cues harder for students and teachers alike. It is very important that you use mixed communication techniques in your lessons, for example; composing text messages to relay your instructions clearly to students and/or using videos to help your students feel more connected and letting your students see and hear you. This will increase their engagement and improve their learning and prevents them from getting distracted.

However, keep also in mind that one negative side of video conferencing has emerged: Zoom fatigue! So if you find out that some students are reluctant about your video conference, find out if something is the matter without being persistent!



## 2.After the course: Reflect on your online course to evaluate your teaching experience

Ask yourself the following questions which, by the way, are not exhaustive:



Ask students for their feedback, remove or add questions

- ⇒What was the speed of the course, too slow, too fast, or just right?
  - ⇒What is one thing that you enjoyed the most? And the least?
- ⇒What did you expect to find in the course (and you did not)?
  - ⇒How would you rate the quality of visuals (images, videos)?
- ⇒How would you rate the course in terms of structure (logical, easy to follow, confusing)?
  - ⇒How would you describe the clarity of the assignments and quizzes in terms of question variety and covered topics?
    - ⇒Did you skip any parts of the course? Why?

Did you need any support and did you receive it from your teacher?

3. Building a "classroom community" for connecting with disadvantaged students emotionally

One of the most important factors of distance education is the relationship you develop with your students. Building these relationships impacts the level of success as students become more engaged in school. Another significant benefit is that it may help reduce student anxiety, raise their self-confidence and support them to deal with their disadvantage.

See below for some tips for teachers to build an online classroom community and connect with students emotionally.



### Ensure the psychological safety of your students

- they feel free to ask questions, express viewpoints and collaborate without being afraid of punishment& ridicule, encourage and ask for their opinions

make it clear from the start that everyone is entitled to their views and deserve respect -set the tone for classroom activities and do not tolerate discrimination in any form

Improve your listening skills

-actively listen to your students' words and behavior and payattention to their

body language.

Make your communication "personal"

-use names

-let students share personal stories and anectodes

#### **Empathize**

-respect each and every student and try to understandtheir perspectives

### Serve as a role model

You may reflect your own emotions on students, makesure you are aware of your own emotions and attitudes

### Encourage community spirit

set some time aside in lessonsfor sharing views&thoughts to create a sense of togetherness

## 4. Connecting with migrant students

Education is a key element for refugee and migrant children & youth's social inclusion into host communities. It imparts a sense of safety and stability to refugee children and youth, who have been forcibly displaced and severely traumatized by political conflicts in their countries. It aids them to retain a normal life and provides an opportunity to foster social cohesion by creating a sense of inclusiveness. Schools, whether they provide online or offline education, play a very important role in the settlement process for refugees by establishing connections between the host community, migrant students and their families.

Remote education poses significant challenges for refugee and migrant students and their families. While many migrant students have access to a computer or the Internet, they may still fall behind their education due to lack of linguistic and digital literacy skills, lack of direct assistance from a teacher, lack of parental support and interaction with peers. The disadvantages faced by these students may also vary e.g. from not understanding the host country's school curriculum sufficiently and from not speakingthe language of the host country.

Teachers with migrant students need to get beyond the language barriers, by offering support and

counselling to make these students feel a part of their online or face-to-face classroom community.

### Key points

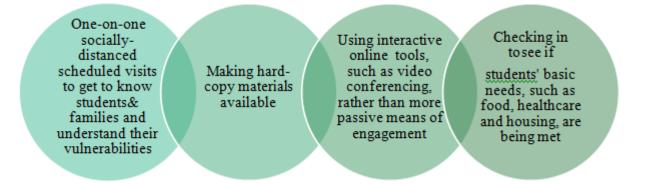
- It is crucial to seek parental support whenever possible, so that they, too, can be engaged in their child's learning.
  - Parent liaisons parents who speak the same language as the newcomers- can be used to bridge the language barriers that exist between teachers and parents who can also be contacted via emails if they are comfortable with them.
  - o Basic communication can be conducted via Google Translate or other translation apps.
  - o Face-to-face meetings are invaluable to get to know students' families and learn about their history and needs. This can be done by asking an interpreter − someone who has come to the host country earlier and can speak the host country's language e.g. another parent or a teacher who can speak the migrant student's language, etc.- to help.
- Another challenge faced by teachers with non-native students in remote education is to discourage students from stopping participating in remote classes.

Online classrooms lack the draw of physical friendships and socializing students from all ages enjoy. In addition, migrant students may drop out due to several causes, for example, when they are frustrated and discouraged after struggling to understand online lessons and failing, they choose to quit; some students drop out because of economic reasons: they need to work to earn money for their families, girls may quit due to early marriage.

Teachers should make efforts to contact these students about why they do not show any more by using social media, WhatsApp, texting, etc., it is possible some of them may be persuaded to continue their education.

Last but not the least, teachers with migrant students should incorporate diversity into their curriculum and familiarize their students with immigration and diversity issues, and how communities can benefit from it. The Internet is rife with resources at teachers' disposal to help foster inclusion in classroom.

Distance learning tips for teachers with migrant students



### 5.QUIZ: Choose the correct answer

- 1. Which of the following is <u>not</u> considered to be a ''disadvantage'' for students?
- a) Lack of family support due to lack of IT skills and distrust in the internet
- b) Inadequate access to digital modes of learning
- c) Cognitive disabilities such as autism
- d) Making use of networking activities at school
- 2. Which of the following would <u>not</u> be a good practice for teachers in remote education?
- a) Avoiding "one-size-fits-all" approach when designing a course
- b) Experiencing technical difficulties with online teaching tools
- c) Planning the course intentionally and explicitly for equity, especially for disadvantaged learners
- d) Maintaining a 'presence' throughout the course by establishing the 'rules'
- 3. Which is an example of bad practice for a teacher in virtual classroom?
  - a) She establishes open lines of communication with parents to help keep their children on track.
  - b) She puts time aside for reflecting on what worked and what did not.
  - c) She aims to deliver the full school curriculum for six hours a day via remote learning.
  - d) She chooses a platform & tools familiar both to herself and students.
- 4. What can teachers do to support migrant students in remote learning?
  - a) Use supporting tech tools b) Include diversity topics in their curricula
  - c) Keep contact with students' families d) All of the above.
- 5. These are good strategies to build "classroom community" with the exception of:

- a) Students have a voice
- b) Interaction in the virtual class is encouraged via discussion boards, group projects, group and one-to-one chat functions and peer review groups.
  - c) Teacher fails in establishing individual relationships with students
  - d) Teacher establishes the rules & expectations and is himself fair, firm and consistent.

1.8.Principles and solutions to reduce misunderstandings and marginalization among multicultural, intergenerational groups of diverse learners or groups containing students at risk of marginalization. What teachers can bring in the on-line inclusive school based on digital communication for a better intercultural and intergenerational connection.

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Prioritizing inclusion is more important than ever. The global pandemic has intensified the need to promote more resilient and resilient societies. Reanalyzing the future of education at a time of heightened inequality and social fragility strengthens the call in favor of an inclusive education.

Inclusion in education refers to ensuring that every student feels appreciated and respected and has a strong sense of belonging. The term emphasizes that all students have fair access to and participate in learning experiences and can prove that they are able to reach their full potential, both socially and academically. However, we live in a world where many obstacles stand in the way of this goal; children and young people are still excluded as a result of discrimination, prejudices about their needs specific and insulation. No matter what differentiates us, the principles of inclusion are essentially the same.

Therefore, the way in which education systems are designed is essential. Countries can choose which factors to consider when deciding whether or not their education system should be inclusive. Inclusive education is essential for their well-being and is represented by a fundamental belief in equal access and universal participation in learning activities for all children and young people, so that they can reach their full potential, both socially and academically. Today, many international jurisdictions consider the development of inclusive education to be an indicator of excellence.

Student-centered education requires that the right to quality education be extended to all children and young people. A key premise in this regard is the creation of a progressive culture based on inclusive practices in schools and services that responds flexibly to the changing needs of children and young people. The benefits of doing so extend far beyond education itself. Economic, social and cultural well-being will be enhanced when the needs of all children and young people are recognized and addressed. There is now credible evidence to suggest a link between inclusive education and well-being, higher academic standards, an economically active community and a fair and balanced society based on mutual respect and the appreciation of diversity.

In 2007, UNESCO published the Guidelines for Intercultural Education (UNESCO 2007), a practical resource for educators, learners, policy makers and community members, which views intercultural education as "a response to the challenge to provide quality education for all". It promotes three main principles of intercultural education.

- 1. Intercultural education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all.
- 2. Intercultural education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society.
- 3. Intercultural education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations.

The new millennium brought with it a wider focus on intercultural dialogue. The Platform for Intercultural Europe in "The Rainbow Paper – Intercultural Dialogue: from practice to policy and back" (Platform for Intercultural Europe 2008), defined intercultural dialogue as: "a series of specific encounters, anchored in real space and time between individuals and/or groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, with the aim of exploring, testing and increasing understanding, awareness, empathy, and respect. The ultimate purpose of Intercultural

Dialogue is to create a cooperative and willing environment for overcoming political and social tensions."

The Council of Europe and the European Commission started the Intercultural Cities Programme to promote strategies and policies to help cities work with diversity as a positive factor. Intercultural cities are cities that have a diverse population including people with different nationalities and origins, and with different languages or religions/beliefs. Most citizens regard diversity as a resource not a problem and accept that all cultures change as they encounter each other in the public arena. The city officials publicly advocate respect for diversity and a pluralistic city identity.

More recently, the concept of intercultural competence has become prevalent. Intercultural competence is the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientation to the world ... Groups do not interact – individuals interact ...

The focus on intercultural relations, both at international level and at local level, is growing, but it is still far from being mainstream. Both research and practice call for more opportunities for intercultural dialogue, for including intercultural learning as a transversal approach in all areas of education and for developing young people's intercultural competence as a response to diverse and interconnected societies.

## INTERCULTURAL LEARNING AND CURRENT REALITIES

Intercultural learning as a concept, and even more as a practice or process, is not isolated. It is linked to our realities, to societal changes, politics, economic development, justice, human rights, education, ecology, health and biology, globalization and so on. In fact, intercultural learning can intersect with all areas in which human beings interact.

**a)** The online world - The online world has created more opportunities for intercultural learning, but also more opportunities for using offensive language in an anonymous way. While people from different parts of the world can connect instantly, can learn from each other and stand up for common causes, the online world also brings the risk of hate speech and of facilitating the spread of stereotypes and prejudices. Social media companies are developing ways to automatically identify and block hateful posts and to allow users to report them. However, the impact of these moves is very limited, as they do not address the core problems.

Intercultural education, on the other hand, is a useful tool for changing attitudes, breaking stereotypes, providing counter-narratives and online training for combating hate speech, and promoting intercultural dialogue. For example, the No Hate Speech Movement provides educators and trainers with tools to reduce the levels of acceptance of hate speech and intolerance at local and international level.

**b)** People fleeing war and persecution - Most European countries are directly or indirectly affected by human movements caused by war and persecution as transition countries or as final destinations.

These movements raised important social and political questions. How are European citizens prepared to welcome refugees and migrants? How are newcomers accompanied in long-term processes of inclusion? How are European institutions responding to these arrivals? What role does youth work play in welcoming and accompanying refugees and migrants? How can young refugees' rights and access to services be secured? And what is planned beyond first emergency interventions?

These questions invite a reconsideration of aspects related to identity and culture, to borders, to values such as solidarity, security, diversity and inclusion. Intercultural learning in this context is definitely relevant. Creating spaces for dialogue, learning from each other, promoting diversity, respect and a common culture of peace, while moving away from assimilative policies, are adequate responses in this situation and can lead to long-term solutions for "living together".

All over Europe, many motivated volunteers have shown great enthusiasm to help in welcoming and accompanying refugees. This did not always happen without various intercultural

challenges related to the image of "the refugee" or "the migrant". In public discourse, refugees are often pictured as poor, uneducated people searching for a better economic situation and thus representing a rather homogenous group. Recent arrivals proved this image to be wrong, as many refugees, came from highly educated, higher socio-economic backgrounds. Here again, intercultural learning plays an important role in deconstructing images in order to construct more cooperative models of volunteering, further away from the classical charitable models and closer to ideas of participatory inclusion.

**c)** The rise of populism - several European societies are faced with the reappearance of extremist political parties, conservative and xenophobic leaders or parties are present in the political landscape. These movements not only challenge democratic values, but also offer a simplified, "black and white" view on the world, emphasizing differences between people, and polarizing cultures, religions and social structures by defining them as either "bad" or "good".

For intercultural learning trainers and facilitators, it is essential not to fall into this same simplistic trap, and to keep considering the world as a complex, diverse place. More than ever, trainers and facilitators need to question how to integrate young people from such movements or with such conservative ideas into their youth work. Polarizing young people by defining them as "good" or "bad" will not contribute to the development of intercultural learning values. On the contrary, it will reinforce the beliefs of those who are already convinced, and it will isolate and marginalized young people with such ideas even more.

It is important to involve these young people directly targeted by or influenced by populist movements in intercultural learning activities within a clear human rights-based framework.

**d)** Globalization - Globalization is considered as a way of both promoting economic growth, social progress and intercultural relations, and of enhancing economic inequalities and increasing polarization.

Economic power is unequally distributed. Young people who live in poverty, who do not have access to education and information and who are not involved in decision-making processes cannot benefit from the opportunities offered by globalization and risk being further marginalized. At the same time, racism, discrimination and intolerance can spread more easily with the help of new technologies. These are some of the implications of globalization that educational processes related to intercultural learning need to take into account.

On the other hand, globalization has helped people from various parts of the world stand together for common goals. In the past decade, new forms of learning and influencing the world have emerged. Social networks have contributed to organizing protests in a quicker and more efficient way, thus also initiating a form of citizen responsibility when reacting to accessible news.

Intercultural learning considers a permanently changing world, where cultures, intercultural and interpersonal relationships need to be continuously redefined. Intercultural learning facilitates understanding of, and encourages curiosity about, what happens at local level as well as in the rest of the world. It also motivates people to stand in solidarity with those who are treated unfairly in any part of the world and to take action for social justice.

**e)** Human rights and democratic citizenship - While human rights and democratic citizenship are not new realities, the links between intercultural education, human rights education and education for democratic citizenship become more relevant in present-day societies. Promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms is possible only when diversity is accepted, respected and understood, when minorities and disadvantaged groups are empowered and their access to rights is not provided in a condescending way. At the same time, democratic societies can develop only when participation is possible for everyone, taking into account their cultural or socio-economic background, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ability. It is not enough to affirm that people should have equal rights or that democratic participation is open to all. Concrete measures need to be taken to facilitate their participation and access to rights, to redress historical injustices, to combat

discrimination and promote diversity. This does not mean treating people the same, rather offering different treatment to ensure equal opportunities.

## **EDUCATIONAL APPROACH**

Educational approach guides learners, through its specific principles and methodologies, to develop a set of competences to live together in diverse societies and become agents of social change. Intercultural learning is a very practical type of learning, strongly embedded in everyday realities. It implies an intentional process of reflection with the aim of stimulating action for social transformation.

In order to avoid superficial learning processes, some key aspects can support facilitators in creating meaningful intercultural learning processes that lead to social change.

In order to develop meaningful intercultural processes, the learning processes first and foremost must not enforce stereotypes, prejudices or cultural hierarchy, and must not preserve social injustices, nor reconstruct these aspects in the training environment.

For example, it was believed for a long time that contact between people from different cultures would reduce stereotypes and prejudices. Studies have shown that if certain conditions are not met, not only are attitudes towards others not improved, but there is a high risk of enforcing stereotypes and prejudices. In order to successfully challenge and break stereotypes, certain conditions must be met when people with diverse cultural backgrounds interact and all these conditions can be met in educational settings and youth work:

- 1. Equal status within a situation Ensuring that the distribution of power between people in a particular situation is equal and does not reflect the hierarchical distribution of power that might be present in wider society. In other words, the education or youth work setting should not be a way for the dominant group to impose on or "teach" the non-dominant group.
- 2. Common goals (active goal-oriented effort) The interaction should be focused on reaching on overarching objective.
  - 3. Intergroup co-operation An interdependent effort without intergroup competition.
- 4. The presence of social norms supporting intergroup contact Norms that are preferably defined by the group and that everyone is aware of and in agreement with.

Not being aware of the complex perspectives on intercultural contact can do more damage than good. Good intentions need to be backed up by intercultural competences and a deep understanding of intercultural learning principles.

Another example is related to "intercultural evenings", an activity commonly undertaken in international youth training events, in which participants make a brief presentation about their country and bring traditional food, drinks and music. When we present a culture in a few minutes, the potential to develop or strengthen stereotypes in the minds of the audience is very high. Participants might enjoy the food, music and dance, but this is as far as they get in the interaction. Moreover, this may even emphasize a certain hierarchy between cultures in the minds of the audience, since there is no time to give enough background for the aspects presented or to make references to the diversity within the country. This kind of interaction can be fun, but using it to achieve the objectives of intercultural learning can be problematic. This is not to say that the fun in intercultural learning must disappear, but the approaches and methods need to be carefully selected to ensure that the expected learning outcomes are not too ambitious for the proposed activities.

In the process of learning, learners reshape their world view based on new knowledge, skills and attitudes they acquire. Their perception of reality changes based on new learning, but reality also changes, new variables come into play, complex situations need to be faced.

Challenging values, norms and assumptions, which intercultural learning often does, activates strong emotions. Participants are willing to fully engage in these processes only if there is confidence among the group members, mutual respect and honesty. Therefore, creating an environment of

confidence and respect is a prerequisite for participants to feel comfortable in sharing different viewpoints, perceptions and feelings, and to arrive at acceptance and understanding.

The most common approach in non-formal education and especially in intercultural learning, human rights education, education for democratic citizenship and related fields is the experiential learning cycle developed by David A. Kolb (1984), building upon earlier work by Dewey, Levin and Piaget. This cyclical model of learning starts from the idea that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience and consists of four stages that form a sequence:

- concrete experience
- reflective observation
- abstract conceptualisation
- active experimentation

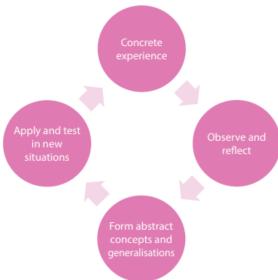


Figure 1: Stages of experiential learning

Experiential learning is based on the assumption that learning needs to start from the relationship of the participant to the topic, from the concrete experience of the person. Through a process of sharing observations and reflections the participants achieve ownership of what is learned. Learning from experience is increased when people deliberately reflect on it. For this reason, the debriefing process is crucial in experiential learning. Generalization and development of abstract concepts that can apply in real-world situations lead to the transfer of learning. When knowledge, skills and attitudes are transferred to new situations, they are reinforced and form the basis of a new learning cycle. Experiential learning favors the implementation of the key aspects presented above, as well as the development of core competences in intercultural learning

# COMPETENCES DEVELOPED THROUGH INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Intercultural learning leads to the development of a set of attitudes, knowledge and skills that help young people to understand themselves and others, and to understand diversity and the sociopolitical context, in order to be able to act for social transformation.

**1. Respect for oneself and others.** Respect for oneself and others is rooted in the respect for human dignity and a genuine belief in equality and freedom among human beings. It starts with trying to understand oneself and others, acknowledging that people have different identities and accepting the complex realities in which people live.

- **2.** A sense of social justice and social responsibility. Social responsibility starts with the capacity to comprehend human rights as a concept of social justice and leads to the willingness to stand up when human rights are violated. This attitude is built upon the following:
  - a sense of human dignity, of self-worth and of others' worth, irrespective of social, cultural, linguistic or religious differences;
  - a sense of responsibility for one's own actions, a commitment to personal development and social change;
  - a sense of justice, the desire to work towards the ideals of freedom, equality and respect for diversity
- **3. Openness and curiosity towards diversity.** Curiosity is what moves us towards others, while fear triggers us to run away from others. Genuine curiosity and openness mean suspending assumptions and value judgments, dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty and exploring unknown "territories" with an open mind. Openness implies the willingness to move beyond one's comfort zone and pursue knowledge in spite of anxious feelings.
- **4. Tolerance of ambiguity** Tolerance of ambiguity refers to people's attitude towards unclear situations and incompatible perspectives. People with a high tolerance of ambiguity see value in opposing statements, without having to agree with either, and find multiple senses and potentialities in intercultural encounters. They avoid assumptions and seek to understand things rather than to make value judgments right away. They do not seek information that supports their own beliefs, but information that helps them understand others and view their perspective on the situation as being equally valid. People with a low tolerance of ambiguity have a strong need for clarity and order, they want to avoid uncertainties. They want to avoid arguing for two opposing views at the same time.
- **5.** Knowledge of culture, politics and history Knowledge of culture refers to the understanding of how culture shapes people's world views and behaviors, and also of the wider context in which culture operates, taking into account social and political aspects. It implies a certain level of knowledge regarding the beliefs, values and practices specific to various cultures, as well as an understanding of the internal diversity of cultural groups.
- **6. Knowledge of human rights** Human rights are the fundamental standards that allow people to live in dignity. They are universal and inalienable, which means that they apply to everyone, without exception, and they cannot be taken away. They provide a framework for people to be free and equal. Knowledge and critical understanding of human rights principles and international legal instruments empower people to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.
- **7. Knowledge of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination** Understanding how stereotypes and prejudices are formed, how they function and how to break them is a prerequisite for reaching a deeper understanding of oneself and others, and of the dynamics of intercultural relations. Relying on stereotypes distorts the perception of others and favors emotional arguments that confirm existing preconceptions. The intercultural perspective requires recognizing that reality is plural, complex, dynamic and changing. One's own background and beliefs act as cultural lenses through which one can see the world. To understand the plurality of society means becoming aware of the limitations of one's own perspective, of these lenses, in interaction with others. Moreover, knowledge about the functioning of stereotypes can also help overcome the internalized stereotypes about oneself as a member of a group.
- **8.** Knowledge of cultural differences in communication Language serves as a tool for communication, but also as a "system of representation" for perception and thinking (Bennett 1998) and for social relationships. Both verbal and non-verbal language can have different meanings in different cultures. Misinterpretations or misunderstandings in communication can hinder intercultural relations and lead to intercultural conflicts. Being aware of differences in communication and interaction processes and respecting some basic rules is important to ensure successful intercultural communication (Olafsdottir 2011):

- Do not make automatic interpretations, assumptions and judgments.
- Think "outside of the box".
- Be prepared to explain what seems to be obvious for you.
- Listen to yourself and what you are saying.
- Listen and ask questions.
- Use your capacities to think critically.
- Question value judgments.
- Focus on solutions, not problems.
- **9. Empathy** Empathy is the ability to step outside one's own frame of reference and adopt another person's frame of reference. It implies understanding the thoughts and feelings of other people, imagining their needs and expectations and experiencing similar emotions, leading to a respectful understanding of what other people are experiencing. Empathy does not come easy. It needs to be practised continuously in order to overcome the challenges of complex situations and it certainly requires avoiding clear-cut categories and preconceived ideas. Practicing empathy starts with motivation and leads to acting in the spirit of solidarity.
- **10. Solidarity** Solidarity is described by Peter Lauritzen as "the practical, social and political side to empathy" and includes the capacity to interact and work with others, undertaking social and political action, challenging and transgressing existing power structures (Council of Europe 2008a: 270). It implies concern and care for other people's well-being, especially for disadvantaged groups.
- **11. Critical thinking -** Critical thinking is the capacity to formulate questions, to analyse perspectives and practices using explicit criteria. It means switching from passive listening to actively engaging with the information received. It is an ability that helps people distinguish opinions from facts and be on guard when it comes to, for example, the media and populist messages from politicians, who often take information out of context, exaggerate it or spin it in a way that suits their interests.
- **12. Active listening** Active listening is the ability to concentrate fully not only on what is being said but also on non-verbal aspects such as body language, tone, facial expressions, etc. It involves being fully present, not interrupting, not assuming to already know what is being said, asking careful questions and identifying inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal messages. In an intercultural perspective, active listening is an important way of learning about various cultural beliefs and behaviours, ways of communication and subtleties of meaning.
- **13. Dealing constructively with conflicts** Dealing constructively with conflicts is the ability to map conflicts in order to identify the real needs that lie behind what is being said and to find a common solution that satisfies the needs of all parties involved. It implies the willingness to see others as equals and to find solutions that benefit everyone to be proactive, rather than reactive. In an intercultural perspective, this means taking a conscious step away from the "us versus them" dichotomy. It requires knowledge about cultural specificities, behaviors and communication styles and an understanding that individual citizens are not to blame for the actions of their government. But most of all it requires openness towards intercultural dialogue.

# TEACHERS' ROLE IN INTERCULTURAL LEARNING PROCESSES

In non-formal education, learning processes are facilitated while considering that the primary learning responsibility lies with the group of participants and that they are influenced by the learning context and physical setting. However, trainers and facilitators bring their personal qualities, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, their own interests and cultural backgrounds into the learning process.

Intercultural learning situations involve a process of understanding, of deconstructing and reconstructing our identity. For this reason, they can be emotionally challenging for both participants

and facilitators. They require a high level of flexibility and an ability to deal with complex emotions, in particular group dynamics.

This process requires an ability to know one's own limits, deal with one's own insecurities and trust one's own abilities to challenge participants without risking their emotional safety and to offer support without risking the integrity of the educational experience. It also requires an ability to interact in an open way with opinions and viewpoints that strongly differ from the one's own, while remaining within the framework of human rights.

Therefore, the set-up of a safe learning space for intercultural learning is an important aspect in facilitating the learning process. However, this does not mean avoiding hot topics, conflicts and political aspects. A safe learning space means creating a climate where it is possible to ask for everyone's ideas, a learning environment that is inclusive and participatory, promoting relations among equals and authentic whole-person conversations, in which thoughts and feelings can be expressed without fear of being judged.

The competence to integrate participants' socio-political contexts into an educational programme are the ability to:

- understand the relevance of the socio-political context for the educational activity;
- understand the socio-political contexts of the learners;
- choose ways and methods to integrate the socio-political context into the educational programme.

Learning content and activities need to be adapted to the specific context. Teachers need to find the balance between giving participants the opportunity to express their opinions and challenging their stereotypes and prejudices in a safe environment. This implies awareness of one's own biases and a willingness to discuss them in the team during the preparation phase.

Trainers must be ready to deal with possible expressions of discrimination among the group of participants in a constructive way. In the choice of methods and content, it is important to take into account the fact that some participants might have experienced discrimination in real life and some activities might activate painful memories and unexpected reactions.

Another important role in intercultural learning is played by the evaluation process. Evaluation offers the space to reflect on the complexity of the educational process and the relationship between different elements. The purpose of evaluation is to check how far the objectives set before the activity are met at different stages of the activity, and how these objectives respond to the needs of the participants. At the same time, evaluation can offer a sense of the personal development participants go through and how they feel in relation to the activities and outcomes reached. There are some specific intercultural aspects to be evaluated in relation to the learning process and content:

- the degree to which the environment and methods stimulated participation, critical thinking and multiperspectivity;
- the degree to which objectives related to intercultural learning have been met;
- the degree to which participants feel able and motivated to continue development, act as multipliers, create partnerships and common activities;
- the link between intercultural learning and other topics in the programme;
- the link between the intercultural contents in the programme and the daily life contexts of participants;
- the activities tackling stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and global interconnectedness;
- the activities related to identity and power relations;
- the way of dealing with conflict;
- the interaction with the local environment, when relevant.

# DESIGNING AND RUNNING RELEVANT SESSIONS FOR DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS

Intercultural learning and intercultural theory are very practical. Discussing realities that are too far away or that are hard to imagine or understand will not contribute to the development of participants' intercultural competence. Understanding the context participants live in, their background and their learning needs helps facilitators prepare adequate content and use methods to which the participants will respond.

An analysis of participants' context can be made by reflecting on the following aspects:

- What is the target group? Who are the participants?
- What is their background (cultural, socio-economic, gender, etc.)?
- How is their identity perceived in the society they live in?
- What are the main issues that emerge in their context? Who are the disadvantaged groups? What are the power relations in society between the different groups to which participants belong?
- How are these issues reflected in the wider context (institutional, legislative, power relations in society, access to equal treatment)?
- What are the competences that young people need to develop in order to be able to address the issues from an intercultural perspective and act for the respect of human rights for all?
- To what extent will learners be confronted with issues of inequality and injustice that do not concern them directly?

The answers to these questions can serve as the main reference points for formulating the objectives of the intercultural learning processes.

### A. Content

The choice of content and methods should respond to the specific contexts and adaptations should be made as much as possible. There is specific learning content to be addressed in intercultural learning processes. Depending on the duration of the process and the learning objectives, a different focus can be given to each topic. Of course, the topics are not isolated, they are interlinked and several aspects can be tackled in one activity. The main topics addressed in intercultural learning are:

- identity;
- culture;
- social and political context;
- differences in perspectives;
- stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination;
- intercultural communication and dialogue.

However, learning content should never be taken for granted. Analysing it in the light of the social context of participants is important not only to ensure that it is relevant for young people, but also that it does not strengthen stereotypes and prejudices nor promote one-sided perspectives. Activities need to be prepared by taking into account the diversity of learners and using locally available examples. Here are some suggestions for aspects to take into account in various situations.

**B. Methods** The methods that are best suited to reaching the goals of intercultural learning involve an experiential learning approach. When selecting methods, facilitators need to take into account participants' needs and the learning objectives, as well as their personal preferences and skills as facilitators. Using a method that the facilitator is not comfortable with or does not fully understand can lead to poor facilitation, which in turn leaves participants wondering how or why they have to do the activity.

**Method selection** - The following questions – considered with care – may help facilitate your work in putting together a particular programme element. The list of questions is not closed – you may well find others more important.

## a. Aims and objectives

- What actually do we want to achieve with this particular method, in this particular part of the programme?
- Did we define our objectives clearly and is this method suitable?
- Is this method in line with reaching the overall aims of our activity?
- Will this method be effective in helping us to advance?
- Does this method fit with the principles of our defined methodology?
- Is this method appropriate in the present dynamic of this particular intercultural learning situation?
- Are all requirements for using this method (the group or learning atmosphere, relations, knowledge, information or experiences, for example) provided by previous processes?
- What is the topic we are talking about?
- Which different aspects (and conflicts) can arise using this method, and how far can we preempt (deal with) them?
- Is the method able to meet the complexity and linkages of different aspects? How can the method contribute to open new perspectives and perceptions?

# b. Target group

- For and with whom do we develop and use this method?
- What is the precondition of the group and the individuals in the group?
- What consequences could the method have for their interactions, mutual perceptions and relations? Does the method meet the expectations of the group (individuals)?
- How can we arouse their interest?
- What will they need (individually and as group) and contribute to this particular part of the learning process? Does the method give sufficient space for it?
- Is the method contributing to releasing their potential?
- Does the method allow enough individual expression?
- How can the method cater for the similarities and diversities of the group?
- Does the group have any particular characteristics that need our attention (age, gender, language skills, (dis)abilities, etc.) and how can the method cater for them in a positive way?
- Has the group or some individuals within it shown specific resistance or sensitivities towards the subject (minorities, gender, religion, for example) or have extreme differences (in experience or age, for example) that could impact on the dynamic?
- Where is the group at in terms of the intercultural learning process?
- Is the method suitable for the group size?

# c. Environment, space and time

- What is the (cultural, social, political, personal) environment in which we use this method?
- What impact does the method have on this environment, and the environment on the method?
- Is the space "safe" for all participants to fully take part in the activity and trust the facilitators?
- Which environment (elements, patterns) is dominant in the group and why?
- Is the group atmosphere and level of communication suitable for the method?
- Does the context of this particular intercultural learning experience especially promote or hinder certain elements?
- What is the common (and individual) perception of space? Is the "common territory" of the group large enough for using the method?
- Does the method contribute to a positive environment (in which to stretch everybody's comfort zones)?
- Did we allocate enough time to the method and its proper evaluation?
- Is the debriefing process adequate and meaningful?
- Does it fit within the timing of our programme?
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• How does the method deal with the (different) time perception of participants?

### d. Resources/framework

- How does the method match with the resources we have at our disposal (time, room, people, materials, media, etc.)?
- Is the method using them efficiently?
- What organizational aspects do we need to take into account?
- Do we need to simplify? How can we share the responsibilities of running the method?
- To what extent do we have the relevant skills to facilitate the interactions among participants?
- In which (institutional, organizational) framework will the method be used?
- What impacts do we have to consider or foresee (on the organizational culture or preferences or on institutional aims, for example)?
- What outside actors (institutional partners or other people in the building, for instance) might interfere with what interests?

## e. Previous evaluation

- Did we use this (or a similar) method before?
- What did we notice or learn from the experience?
- Are there any other experiences where we learned about the use of methods? What can they tell us now?
- Is the method and its impact to be evaluated, and how can the achievement of our objectives be measured?
- How can we secure its results for what comes next?
- What elements should we integrate into our method as part of the evaluation of our activity so far?

### f. Transfer

- To what extent is our method based on (or related to) the experience of every participant and on the learning experiences encountered so far? Is the method useful for the reality of the participants or in what regard might it need to be adapted? Is the method oriented towards transfer/integration into the daily life of the participants?
- How will we provide a space for participants to integrate what they have learned into their own realities? Can a discussion or dynamic after the method help the transfer?
- What elements might facilitate a good follow-up by the participants?
- How can we use what participants learned for the next activities?

### g. The role of the facilitators or trainers

- What do we think our role should be with this group, for this method?
- Have we tried to "play a film in our heads" about how everything should work?
- Did we consider our personal disposition and how it could impact on the running of the method? How are we prepared to react to outcomes that are not what we expected?
- Are we prepared for more intensive debriefing (also individually) if needed?

https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-4-intercultural-learning

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