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IAIE International Conference 2025
Budapest, Hungary
11-13 June, 2025

CURRENTS IN EDUCATION:

NAVIGATING CHANGE IN LANGUAGES,
CULTURES, AND COMMUNITIES

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Editors:
Gabriella Jenei
Ildikó Lázár

International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE)
Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences (ELTE):
Department of English Language Pedagogy (DELP)

2025



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Conference information

Organizers

International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE)
Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences (ELTE):
Department of English Language Pedagogy (DELP)

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About the conference:

Currents in Education:

Navigating Change in Languages, Cultures, and Communities

Language learning, multilingualism, translation and intercultural competence are foundational for equitable and inclusive schools and teacher education. Educators must adopt innovative teaching methods to cater to diverse learners, including minorities and disadvantaged students. Media literacy and technology play pivotal roles in navigating the digital landscape, while addressing global issues like sustainability and peace empowers learners to effect positive change. The conference aims to facilitate collaboration among researchers and practitioners, fostering dialogue on these critical topics to advance equitable and inclusive education worldwide. Through collaborative inquiry and knowledge exchange, participants will learn about research results and explore innovative approaches to education that promote social justice, democracy, equity, and belonging for all.

Book of Abstracts information

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Keynote 1 | Prue M. Holmes: Facilitating intercultural dialogue among refugee/asylum-seeking youths and students in higher education

Professor, former Director of Postgraduate Research in the School of Education, Durham University

Our communities and classrooms are increasingly characterised by migration. Conditions of conflict and other forms of forced migration have resulted in many young migrants being marginalised from education and lacking opportunities to engage with local young people. I present a study¹ that aims to engage migrant/asylum-seeking youths with students in higher education to build intercultural dialogue and empathy among one another.

Through arts-based inquiry, I illustrate how young people—who would not normally encounter one another—can explore ideas about themselves and others across differences in language, culture, and background. The creative arts approach, delivered through four workshops, gave young people voice, power, and place to enable them to own and co-construct locally generated intercultural knowledge that resists a singular narrative, and that develops intercultural understanding, dialogue, and empathy. Through knowledge exchange they might engage in a process of “conscientisation” (Freire, 1970, p. 82), that is, “the deepening of the attitude of awareness” of their own and others’ realities to critically unveil and confront hegemonies and structural violence, and intervene in them. This critical intercultural pedagogy, grounded in new materialism (Toohey, 2019) and the creative arts (Badwan et al., 2024; Harvey et al., 2019) links theory with doing, as praxis, understood as thought-reflection-action, in order to “unsettle and disobey—not reproduce—the reign of theory over praxis” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 9).

A further aim of the research is to reimagine higher education as a space to produce citizens who are critical, self-reflective, capable of making moral judgements and acting in socially responsible ways (Giroux, 2020)—a space where young people listen and learn alongside one another. For students in higher education, such understanding is crucial in shaping their futures as critical, participating and responsible citizens; for young refugees/asylum seekers, the opportunity to meet local groups in higher education provides spaces for shared learning and opportunities for communication that would not naturally occur. Thus, critical intercultural education—in this format—invokes a form of “soft power” that sensitises both groups to the possibilities of shared futures and aspirations, and where local students realise their potential as social actors who can advocate for young people escaping war and other global crises.

¹ The study is funded by the Economic and Social Science Research Council (United Kingdom) International Impact Accelerator Fund (ESRC IAA).

Keynote 2 | Szilvia Szénási: Dialogue between Roma and Non-Roma in education: Challenges and opportunities in Hungary

Managing director, Uccu Roma Informal Educational Foundation, Budapest

This presentation explores the topic of Roma and non-Roma dialogue in the Hungarian education system, focusing on the current state of affairs regarding exclusion and underrepresentation, and highlighting opportunities for intercultural dialogue and inclusion. The talk will touch upon the situation of a variety of Roma communities living in Hungary as well as the lack of Roma-related content in school curricula. Against this backdrop, the presentation will also introduce the work of the Uccu Roma Informal Educational Foundation, which uses youth-led school workshops to foster dialogue and challenge prejudice. Through a description of the work of this organization, the presentation highlights the importance of inclusive education and the power of personal stories and sustained dialogue in building understanding between communities.

Keynote 3 | Darla K. Deardorff: Intercultural competence as a compass toward our shared humanity

UNESCO Chair on Intercultural Competence, Stellenbosch University, Research Scholar, Duke University

In a world marked by unprecedented interconnectedness, rising polarization, and global crises—from conflict and climate to migration and misinformation—intercultural competence has never been more urgently needed. Drawing on decades of research and practice across continents, Darla K. Deardorff, founding president of the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence and UNESCO Chair on Intercultural Competence at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, explores how intercultural competence serves as a humanizing compass for navigating the complex terrain of today's global challenges.

This keynote will highlight how intercultural competence intersects with media literacy, multilingualism, and the arts as powerful pathways toward inclusive and sustainable development. Special attention will be given to how intercultural understanding is fostered not only through formal education, but also through storytelling, technology, and creative expression. Drawing on her work with UNESCO Story Circles, Dr. Deardorff will illuminate this practical, hope-filled approach to cultivating empathy, ethical engagement, and transformative dialogue across difference.

Participants will be invited to reflect on their own roles as intercultural actors as well as to commit to concrete strategies for integrating intercultural development in their own contexts as together, we embrace our shared humanity.

STRAND 1 | Intercultural competence and linguistic diversity

About the strand

This strand focuses on the role and status of intercultural competence and multilingualism in teaching, teacher education, translation and translator training as well as good practices connected to these fields. It is widely accepted today that we need to develop students' intercultural competence to help them communicate appropriately and effectively and cooperate with people from diverse social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds to co-create innovative and inclusive shared spaces, teams, and organizations. Many teachers do not have the time, the energy and the resources to develop intercultural competence, while others feel unqualified to develop the necessary attitudes, skills, knowledge and values in their students or might be unprepared for multilingual contexts. Translators and translator training also face challenges relating to multilingualism and linguistic/cultural/epistemic diversity or monoculture, as a result of the dominance of the English language in intercultural communication. The strand welcomes presentations of research results, discussion panels, and workshops on good practices relating to developing intercultural competence and dealing with multilingualism in teaching, teacher education and translator training.

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Building inclusive educational environments for foreign students: Insights and strategies from primary to secondary school in Hungary

WORKSHOP

Lili Berger-Balogh

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Melinda Anikó Ottucsák

Dr. Mező Ferenc Primary School

This workshop explores effective strategies and practical approaches for integrating foreign students into Hungarian schools, from primary to high school levels. Although the foreign students often face a non-inclusive attitude within the Hungarian education system, Lili Balogh-Berger and Melinda A. Ottucsák will highlight successful strategies for fostering a multicultural, inclusive school environment drawing on original integration models. Thanks to their extensive experience, the presenters can approach integration from multiple perspectives, addressing the roles of teachers, students, parents, the institution, and even the educational system as interconnected elements.

The presenters will share insights from their experiences managing school integration programs, focusing on cultural awareness, intercultural classroom management, and practical, hands-on techniques. During the workshop participants will work in small groups and engage in role plays to get a deeper understanding of certain situations and practices.

By exploring both classroom and institutional-level practices, attendees will leave with enhanced cultural awareness and a deeper understanding of effective intercultural classroom management techniques.

Through small group discussions and role-play activities, participants will build empathy and insight into the challenges foreign students face, while also understanding the complexity of the situation by exploring more sides' perspectives. During the workshop the group will identify actionable steps to foster inclusivity and multicultural understanding within their own school environments.

Participants will leave with actionable ideas and adaptable practices to support foreign students' educational journeys.

Keywords:

integration models for education system, intercultural classroom management, good practices, integration strategies, inclusive education

Accommodating linguistic diversity in early childhood and primary education: A systematic review of the literature

PRESENTATION

Rosienne Camilleri, Charmaine Bonello, Josephine Deguara, Tania Muscat & Josephine Milton
University of Malta

This paper presents a systematic review of recent research on classroom pedagogies addressing linguistic diversity in early and primary education. Schools, as reflections of the societies in which they operate, are experiencing significant demographic shifts in response to global mobility trends in recent years. This inevitably leads to the emergence of a linguistically diverse student population and a sharper awareness of the complexities surrounding bilingual, multilingual and plurilingual contexts (Correia Ibrahim, 2022; Council of Europe, 2018). Malta exemplifies the significant demographic shifts seen in many countries due to a steady influx of economic and other migrants, leading to rapid changes in the nation's social fabric. This shift highlights the need to assess the impact on schools. In the European Union (EU), 9.2% of the population is non-European (European Commission, 2024), while in Malta, more than 20% of the population is non-Maltese (NSO, 2024).

A systematic review of peer-reviewed literature was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines. By examining national and international studies from 2019 to 2024, the review sought to identify current pedagogical practices and trends that support multilingualism in young learners—a preliminary task forming part of a larger research project entitled Addressing linguistic diversity in

Malta: Teacher education and classroom pedagogy in Early and Primary Education. The following research question guided the review: “What does the local and international literature say about current pedagogical practices and trends in addressing multilingualism in early and primary education?” Using keywords such as “multilingualism,” “classroom pedagogy,” and “early and primary education,” an initial pool of 806 studies was narrowed down to 46, all specifically focused on strategies and practices in early and primary educational contexts.

The findings reveal a range of innovative approaches and emerging trends designed to foster inclusive, multilingual learning environments. These insights are valuable for educators in diverse settings, such as Malta, where shifts in classroom demographics due to migration are creating new linguistic dynamics. By providing a comprehensive overview of effective practices, this review offers actionable guidance for educators and policymakers aiming to improve educational outcomes in multilingual settings. This synthesis enhances our understanding of how education systems can respond to and leverage linguistic diversity to benefit young learners in increasingly multicultural and multilingual classrooms.

Keywords: systematic literature review, classroom pedagogy, linguistic diversity, early childhood, primary education, multilingualism

Intercultural communication in EFL textbooks: Views of Portuguese EFL teachers

PRESENTATION

Silene Cardoso

University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (ULICES)

English has been widely used around the globe as a lingua franca by people from a huge diversity of cultures and linguistic backgrounds (Seidlhofer, 2011; Baker, 2015; Mauranen, 2018). Despite this vast cultural diversity, cultural practices and elements related to the UK and the US, along with their respective standard varieties of English, continue to be the most prominently represented in EFL textbooks (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2018; Guerra & Cavaleiro, 2019). In recent years, linguistic and cultural diversity in classrooms worldwide has increased, and Portugal is no exception. The country has experienced a rise in students from diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds (Oliveira, 2023). Consequently, these multicultural/multilingual classes are the ideal setting to promote intercultural communication (IC) and intercultural awareness (ICA; Baker & Ishikawa, 2021). Considering that textbooks are central to EFL teaching, investigating how IC is addressed in these materials is crucial. Although some studies have investigated IC and ICA from an ELF perspective in EFL textbooks within the Portuguese context (e.g., Guerra & Cavaleiro, 2019; Guerra et al., 2022; Cardoso, 2023), further research is necessary. In this study, I present and discuss the perceptions of a group of Portuguese EFL teachers regarding cultural and linguistic representations and the approach to IC in EFL textbooks. The methodology involved collecting data through a closed-ended questionnaire shared online. The questionnaire included demographic questions to establish the profile of the participant teachers and content-related questions. These focused on teachers' perceptions of a) the most represented cultural groups and language varieties, b) the IC skills, and c) the IC elements they consider essential in EFL textbooks. The questions were prepared considering previous studies on ELF, IC, and ICA and frameworks for analyzing IC in materials (e.g., Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2013; Mishan & Kiss, 2024). Based on previous studies and preliminary data analysis, it is expected that the necessity of expanding students' awareness of different English varieties and cultural references will be emphasized, alongside the importance of enhancing intercultural communication skills in these materials. Based on the concepts of IC/ICA and teachers' responses, I shall provide two adaptations of EFL textbook exercises to address IC skills. This discussion aims to offer valuable insights for other EFL teachers in developing and adjusting their materials to address IC/ICA among their EFL students.

Keywords: intercultural communication, intercultural awareness, English as a Lingua Franca, EFL textbooks, EFL teachers

Looking for an agreed-upon definition of teachers' intercultural competence in a divided society

PRESENTATION

Janan Faraj Falah

The Western Galilee college and Haifa University

Miri Shonfeld

Kibbutzim College and The Mofet Institute

In a multicultural society, conflicts can easily arise. Thus, support for developing intercultural competence (IC) can build tolerance, and foster a harmonious, multicultural society. Intercultural competence (CC) combines the knowledge of one's own culture, with an awareness of the cultural differences of others (Özişik et al., 2019), and reflected in the behavior toward the rest (Rangsarittikun, 2024).

Teaching IC is hard without a clear understanding of it. Defining intercultural competence requires broad input and consensus. This research focuses on constructing a common definition of teachers' cultural competence in a divided society like Israel.

Israel is a heterogeneous society (Ismail et al., 2022). The cultural division reflected everywhere: the Israeli educational system is divided into several sectors, with separate schools according to religious and ethnical backgrounds (Abu-Saad, 2019; Agbaria, 2018). Teachers deal with classroom heterogeneity which requires them to develop intercultural competence. How can we agree and find a common definition of intercultural competence in a diverse and divided society?

The Delphi Method is a consensus-building technique that gathers data from selected participants through a series of questionnaires. We selected 35 experts (panelists) in the field of multicultural education from the various groups of Israeli society. First, we interviewed 19 experts and used the responses for a questionnaire with items into three categories: Knowledge, Awareness, and Behavior.

We ran three rounds of voting. In Round 1, the voting system was based on a Likert scale from 1 to 4; and in round 2, from 1 to 7. After each round, we refined the questionnaire and removed the items that did not achieve a consensus. In Round 3 the items were sent back for final review until a consensus was reached among 34 panelists. The panelists chose the top 21 items they considered relevant: Knowledge (3 statements), Awareness (6 statements), and Behavior (12 statements).

Culturally competent teachers know their students' cultural backgrounds and embody the principles of multiculturalism through knowledge, skills, and values. This involves acknowledging oppression of groups and injustice. Culturally competent teachers are cognizant of the challenges in Israeli society, self-reflect about their perceptions and limitations of other cultures.

Culturally competent teachers model through behavior: navigating controversial subjects with sensitivity to the diverse perspectives; exemplifying respectful interactions among students; fostering an inclusive environment that encourages minority to be heard. Teachers are dedicated to reinforcing equality among groups, embracing many cultures within the classroom without neglect.

Keywords: intercultural competence, Delphi method, teachers, concept definition

Language ideologies of Chinese PhD students at a UK university: a Bourdieusian perspective

PRESENTATION

Ziyou Fang

University of Sheffield, School of Languages, Arts and Societies, PhD candidate

The global spread of English has made the area of English as a Lingua Franca (hereinafter ELF) has grown, and more recently, there has been a growing body of studies that have focused on international students in ELF settings (e.g., Björkman, 2017; Jenkins & Mauranten, 2019). Since language ideologies are concerned with the relationship of languages with particular individuals and social groups, they can be politically interested and represent the perceptions of language that are constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group (Kroskrity, 2004). However, less is known about Chinese students', especially PhD students' construction of language ideologies in an international higher education setting.

This study intends to bridge this gap by using Bourdieu's (1977, 1991, 1993) language production and circulation model. Bourdieu's notion of "linguistic habitus" (ibid.) was employed to envision students' incorporated language ideologies, which play out in discourse. This study discussed how the students' language ideologies are situated in their lived experiences as a result of their participation in the different linguistic markets of family and school in China, and UK higher education. Preliminary findings from semi-structured interviews of 32 participants in a Russell University showed that most participants prefer a specific variety of English. Due to long-term exposure to the mixture of British English and American English, they tend to consider British English and American English "Standard," but not all of them tell the differences until they prepare for English language tests (such as IELTS). Participants still insist on the importance of language accuracy, especially in academic English writings and formal events, such as supervision meetings and academic conferences; most of them thought other languages (such as Mandarin Chinese, their L1) could only be accepted/used in informal chats. Sometimes L1 was regarded as problematic as its logic may interfere with the participants' English use. On the other hand, they admitted the presence of linguistic diversity in English(es) and highlighted content and intelligibility in successful and effective communication; Mandarin Chinese created a sense of belonging and uniqueness and strengthened cultural ties. The findings revealed the ideological tensions over the norms of English use in the Anglophone university context and the closely intertwined relationship between the participants' language ideologies and their lived experiences. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the diversity inherent in international students' language ideologies in EMI and have significant implications for the internationalisation of multilingual environments in higher education.

Keywords: language ideologies, linguistic diversity, Chinese international students, higher education, Bourdieu

Intercultural competences beyond the school: A research study that explores managers' training needs in Italian companies

PRESENTATION

Elena Guerra

University of Verona

Today, the world of work is called the challenge of innovation. At the same time, it has to deal with the many diversities that have been driving Italian society since the beginning of the first two decades of the 21st century, which are characterized by radical changes (Portera, 2020; Beck, 2010; Bauman, 2007). Working systems are generally more complex as they are less linear in organizations, they are constantly changing to achieve greater efficiency in terms of performance (Balloi, 2021). In the Italian economic system, the structure of a stratified and hierarchical labor market, organized primarily on the division between nationals and foreigners, men and women, and individual nationalities, remains unchanged (Idos, 2024). This research aims to investigate if and how intercultural competencies (Portera, 2013) are used in the workplace by workers, in small to medium-sized companies in Northern Italy, who hold roles as coordinators, department managers, team leaders, and their educational background. The research will consider not only cultural or religious differences, but also those of gender and age. The aim is to understand what competencies might help improve the working environment with a view to proactive Diversity management (Mor Barak, 2000; Cox, 2001).

This paper presents the preliminary results of quantitative-qualitative research regarding the managers' educational background their training needs, and the role of managers in Diversity Management in companies. The objectives of the research were to analyse the characteristics of specific diversity categories such as religion, citizenship, gender and age in work environments, especially regarding inclusion, discrimination, and stereotypes; to analyse the educational background and the training needs of Managers.

The qualitative research involved 20 Managers who work in 100-to-1000 employee's companies in the north of Italy. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups are used to gather the data. In the semi-structured interviews, the main technique used was the critical incident technique (Damini, Surian, 2012). The data was analysed with the Content Analysis approach (Basil, 2010; Krippendorff, 2004).

The ultimate goal is to implement good practices of inclusion and promote intercultural competencies and their consolidation in school curricula in adult education and young manager training, aligning with the European Union's directives on the Charter of Diversity and Inclusion policies.

Keywords: intercultural competence, inclusive workplace, diversity management

Teacher as performer: Empowering students or reinforcing power dynamics in ELF classrooms

PRESENTATION

Avy Hemy

Ben Gurion University

This paper examines the role of teacher performance in ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) classrooms, with a focus on how performative and theatrical techniques can create a space for the expression of diverse student identities.

In the face of globalization and the growing prevalence of English as a medium of instruction, educational systems worldwide are grappling with the challenges of maintaining cultural diversity and equity. For students from non-native English-speaking backgrounds, ELF classrooms can inadvertently become sites of cultural homogenization.

Drawing on Goffman's theory of performance (1959) and Bakhtin's dialogic pedagogy (1986), this paper explores how such methods empower students by reducing linguistic barriers and enabling them to express their individual and cultural selves. At the same time, the study critically examines the unintended consequences of these techniques, which may inadvertently reinforce classroom hierarchies and power relations. Teachers must navigate these dynamics carefully to ensure an inclusive learning environment.

Utilizing multimodal discourse analysis, this paper is based on systematic observations of classroom interactions in an ELF setting, involving students from various post-Soviet countries studying in Israel. The study employs the metaphor of "self as text" (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998), which conceptualizes the teacher's identity as a dynamic narrative, constructed and interpreted through interaction with students. This framing allows us to analyse how the teacher's performative choices—such as body language, gestures, and interactive play—serve not only as pedagogical tools but also as expressions of the teacher's evolving identity in response to the classroom environment. By considering both verbal and non-verbal elements of classroom discourse, this study examines how these performative strategies shape student interactions, promote identity expression, and impact the hierarchical dynamics within the classroom.

The findings indicate that when used thoughtfully, performative techniques create an inclusive space where students can express their identities despite linguistic and cultural barriers. By transcending traditional language instruction limitations, students were able to share their cultural narratives and engage in meaningful dialogue. This approach not only enhanced individual expression but also fostered a sense of community and mutual respect among diverse learners.

However, the study also highlights a potential negative outcome: these same techniques may unintentionally reinforce hierarchical structures within the classroom, thereby undermining the inclusive intent. Teachers need to remain aware of the subtle power dynamics that can emerge and actively work to prevent the solidification of power relations through performance.

Keywords: ELF, teacher performance, identity expression, intercultural competence, classroom hierarchy

First steps in a new culture: Indonesian EFL teachers experiences during study abroad and their journey to intercultural communicative competence

PRESENTATION

Arini Nurul Hidayati

University of Galway

Amid growing emphasis on intercultural competence and linguistic diversity in today's interconnected world, this presentation delves into how Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers build Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) through immersive study abroad experiences. The study highlights how participants' expectations compared to their real-life experiences abroad, and how these shaped their intercultural learning and professional growth. Using a narrative inquiry approach, the research focuses on twenty Indonesian English language teachers pursuing Master's degrees in different universities: eight in the UK, eight in Australia, one in Ireland, Finland, Netherland, and the US (Connelly & Clandinin, 2012). Their personal stories offer a detailed view of how they prepared for and navigated their initial cultural encounters. Data collection involved in-depth interviews combined with photovoice, conducted at three stages: before departure, during their study abroad, and after completion. However, this presentation focuses only on findings from the first stage. Each interview lasted between one to two hours, with the data analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2017). Participants were actively involved in the validation process to ensure trustworthiness and consistency in their narratives. Initial findings indicate that the participants proactively prepared for intercultural interactions through previous experiences engaging with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds across boundaries, as well as through reading, watching media, and engaging in discussions on cultural differences. While some expressed anxiety about their new environments, their eagerness to enhance their teaching skills and intercultural competence was the overriding factor. The narratives provide key insights into their processes of identity negotiation, cultural adaptation, and the role of prior experiences in their ability to communicate across cultures. This research offers a deeper understanding of the emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of ICC development in the context of EFL teaching abroad (Byram & Wagner, 2018). Contributing to the growing body of research on intercultural education, this study underscores the importance of equipping teachers not only with linguistic skills but also with the intercultural competence necessary to thrive in an increasingly globalized educational landscape.

Keywords: EFL teachers, intercultural communicative competence (ICC), narrative inquiry, study abroad

Teaching international and intercultural classes at university – rewards, challenges and tasks

PRESENTATION

Dorottya Holló

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While working with culturally diverse classes at university offers rewards and intercultural learning opportunities for students and teachers alike, challenges also arise. This paper starts out from the results of a questionnaire survey about teaching international students at BA, MA and PhD levels at a major university in Hungary as well as discussions with teachers involved in the teaching of English major programmes for students speaking English as a foreign language at the same institution. The study has revealed that the problems teachers identify regarding the students are the inadequacy of language proficiency, professional honesty (mostly relating to plagiarism), and discipline in the classroom. The differences of learning cultures between the host and the guest contexts resulting in cultural clashes and frustration for all parties involved are also to be considered, and this brings with it the discussion of who needs to adapt and how: How should teaching methodologies and curricula be adapted to the needs of international students? How can international students learn to cope? What support do they need to learn new study skills, critical thinking, academic writing and presentation in English? What professional development do teachers need? The paper discusses the concepts of culturally diverse classes, of appropriate teaching processes, of culturally responsive teaching and of teacher education in order to find answers and meet the challenges.

Keywords: diverse classes, interculturality, tertiary teaching, responsive teaching, English major programmes

Case studies as a vector of intercultural, pluricultural and plurilingual competencies in the teaching of languages

PRESENTATION

Catherine Jaeger

Language Center Humboldt University Berlin

Intercultural, pluricultural and plurilingual competencies have become an important key qualification at universities because they are necessary for internationalizing study, research and professional life. This raises both material and structural questions regarding their development, such as what is going to be taught, how and where. As a result, language centers in higher education have been asked to offer courses including their development. This means that, apart from the communicative competencies (linguistic, socio-linguistic, pragmatic dimensions), according to the philosophy of the CEFR and the Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), language courses have to integrate general, intercultural, pluricultural and plurilingual competencies in order to prepare the students for a multilingual and multicultural society. But how can this be done?

This research project presents the development of a didactic device, termed Case Studies for the Intercultural (Jaeger, 2017) ensuring the double realisation of teaching objectives—teaching and learning by tasks (task-based learning) or by the resolution of problems (problem-based learning) and developing intercultural, pluricultural competences also including plurilingual aspects—and their implementation on the ground, throughout the course of four years of experimentation in higher learning. The didactic tool thereby integrates the double paradigmatic shift of the teaching of languages and of the teaching of the intercultural by drawing respectively on the action-based approach and the hermeneutic approach. Using a process of “trial and error”, this research leads us to the creation of a new approach, the so-called Co-actional Interpretative Perspective (Jaeger, 2017), uniting the paradigmatic advances in the two fields. It necessitates starting from a “revamped” notion of the intercultural (Dervin, 2011) put forward by critical researchers of diversity such as Abdallah-Preteille (2003, 2012) and Dervin (2012, 2021), who propose the giving up of so-called solid categories derived from cultural analysis in order to turn towards dynamic and process-driven approaches anchored in an anthropological understanding, and conceptualise intercultural competencies using liquid models (Baumann, 2001).

The empirical part of this research looks at how the didactic apparatus of Case Studies for the Intercultural—rooted in the action-based perspective and expanded upon in the vein of Puren (2002) in the Co-actional Interpretative Perspective—lends itself to the development of linguistic and intercultural, pluricultural communicative competencies including linguistic diversity, and how, for the intercultural component, it permits the progression from one paradigm to another; in other words, from “solid” to “liquid” approaches.

Keywords: plurilingual and intercultural competencies, action-based approach, hermeneutic

Academic multilingualism and translation for epistemic diversity: the role of epistemic competence in conceptualizing academic translation competence

PRESENTATION

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Different cultures nurture distinct conceptions of knowledge and ways of generating and communicating knowledge. Therefore, multilingualism in academia has been shown to be instrumental in preserving the various systems of knowledge, equality of opportunity in science, and enhancing the competitiveness of scholars whose native language is not the lingua franca (Bennett, 2007; D'hulst & Gambier, 2018; Gobbo & Russo, 2019; Robinson, 2017). The strategies (domestication, foreignization) of actors of translation (trained translators, scholars) play a unique role in this, as their decisions may foster or hinder linguistic and epistemic diversity (Bennett, 2024). Despite their significance, little is known about the stereotypical competences required for academic translation. As translation in science is not merely a philological issue, this conceptual study aims to propose a holistic, theory-based, multicomponential model of academic translation competence (ATC) that is capable of capturing the construct in its complexity and the role of epistemic competence in it.

The conceptualization of ATC as macrocompetence starts out from the PACTE (2003) translation competence model and is also inspired by the PACTE (2018) competence levels in the acquisition of translation competence. The modelling attempt follows a consilient approach (Chesterman, 2007), with a multi- and interdisciplinary orientation, integrating the outcomes of research from several disciplines (Science and Technology Studies, Philosophy, Linguistics, Translation Studies) and research perspectives (epistemology, applied linguistics, competence research), in which the sociological point of view is central. This orientation does not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the stereotypical features of this translation domain, but it also reveals the role of agents and researchers of translation in scholarly communication, preserving epistemic diversity, and the evolution of science generally.

ATC is conceptualized as a socially regulated macrocompetence, involving linguistic, non-linguistic, translation, disciplinary and epistemic competences. Based on the ATC model, the construct and its constituent elements are defined, the role of epistemic competence among them is explained, and preliminary hypotheses regarding its nature are generated. However, as the model is essentially theory-based (even if it has been informed by empirical research too), it needs empirical validation, and the hypotheses require empirical testing. The study has implications for Theory, practice and training of academic translation, the disciplinary training of scholars, and the preservation of epistemic diversity.

Keywords: multilingualism, epistemic diversity, academic translation competence, epistemic competence, model

Intercultural communicative competence in multicultural vs. monocultural contexts

PRESENTATION

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Ngee Derk Tiong

University of Nottingham Malaysia

This paper investigates the perceived intercultural communicative competence (ICC) of university students from a monocultural and a multicultural context, challenging the assumption that those from a multicultural context would have higher levels of ICC. An online intercultural learning project was designed to facilitate Hungarian and Malaysian university students' ICC development whose intercultural competence was measured by a self-reporting instrument, adapted from Fantini (2019), at the beginning and at the end of the project. The instrument consisted of 30 statements addressing four domains of ICC: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness. The findings show that although there was a statistically significant difference between learners' ICC in the different cultural settings at the beginning of the project, both groups showed improvement in all domains of ICC and their overall perceived competence. They reported similar levels of ICC when the project concluded, with the highest improvement in the knowledge domain. The initial difference between the groups can be explained by the characteristics of the respective cultural contexts of the learners, indicating that intercultural education in monocultural settings should focus on different aspects of learning than those in multicultural ones. This has implications for the development of materials and the design of learning experiences.

Keywords: monocultural, multicultural, intercultural communicative competence, virtual exchange

Empowering multilingual immigrant communities through collaborative digital story writing

PRESENTATION

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Lee Hyunjeong Oh
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The dominance of the community language overpowers socially minoritized languages, often heritage languages of immigrant children. For instance, despite the linguistic and cultural diversity, the U.S. has been ideologically monolingual, as manifested in English-only practices in mainstream schooling and educational policies (García & Li, 2015; Nuñez, 2021). Simultaneously, in a traditionally monolingual and cultural society, South Korea has recently undergone a significant demographic change due to the influx of immigrants as well as inter-racial and -ethnic marriages (Jang, 2024). Our research is driven by the pressing need for proper support for developing multilingual knowledge among immigrant children. Without this support, these children often become dominant in the higher-status language, not adequately acquiring their parents' heritage language and customs.

Hence, our grant-funded research project aims to foster, highlight, and celebrate multilingualism in immigration populations in Atlanta, U.S.A. and multiple cities in South Korea. By collaborating with the Georgia Association of Multilingual, Multicultural Education (GAOME), affiliated with the National Association of Bilingual Education, we investigate the interactions of multilingual university students (from Atlanta, U.S.A.) with multilingual children (upper elementary and middle-secondary students (from Atlanta, U.S.A and multiple cities, South Korea) in all their shared languages. We will qualitatively analyse virtual linguistic and cultural exchanges and digital stories pertaining to immigration and identity created by each of the bilingual pairs (i.e., a university student, who is also a heritage language user will be connected with a Korean student who is from the matching heritage background). Data will also include interviews of the participants.

This community-based research where bilingual youths created digital stories pertaining to immigration and identity is expected to have significant impacts on local and international communities. The opportunity for the university students and youths in different locales to utilize and reflect upon all of their linguistic and cultural assets, in a mentor-mentee relationship can be empowering and liberating for them. The research team—university faculty members—will gain valuable insights into translingual and transcultural pedagogy, enriching their teaching practices and research. The impact on community partners is clear as this project can contribute to a more multilingual and multicultural local environment.

Keywords: multilingualism, immigrants, minoritized languages, digital stories, virtual exchanges

Advancing Intercultural Competence via Preparation and Debriefing Modules in Student Mobility: the PADMICA project

PRESENTATION

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Lotte Laenen & Thibault Hoogstoel
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Student mobility is valued for enhancing academic knowledge, language skills, and employability. However, research shows it does not automatically lead to intercultural competence or reduced biases. Simply being in a different culture doesn't ensure meaningful understanding. Structured support before, during, and after mobility is essential, as intercultural learning often requires reflection and guidance (Goldstein, 2022; Vande Berg et al., 2012). True intercultural growth comes from reflecting on experiences, not just having them (Bathurst & La Brack, 2012). The Erasmus+ cooperation partnership project, PADMICA, was developed to address this need. Our presentation introduces the development and first experiences of this 3-years joint project launched in November 2023, created by six European higher education institutions.

The PADMICA project develops scalable, low-resource blended modules for intercultural preparation and post-mobility debriefing, aimed at fostering intercultural competencies among outgoing international students. It also includes a train-the-trainer module to build in-house expertise. These three modules are grounded in an extensive literature review conducted by the project's expert team, covering key studies on international student adaptation (e.g., Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Geeraert et al., 2022) and intercultural competence (e.g., Deardorff & Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017). The team also mapped existing intercultural intervention measures across various European universities for students before, during, and after mobility, identifying effective practices and common challenges. Based on this review and analysis, the project offers recommendations for designing and implementing intercultural interventions, with planning and implementation integrated as key components of the project's objectives.

The literature review provides recommendations for the preparation and debriefing modules, addressing key aspects of the "what" (content and methods), "who" (students, trainers, and facilitators), and "how" (process and know-how). Mapping existing intercultural interventions at universities revealed significant questions and insights from surveyed staff and students, as well as a clear need for both pre-mobility and post-mobility modules.

The first version of both an online and in-person branch of the preparation module has been completed and is ready for testing across all partner institutions. Development of the post-mobility debriefing and train-the-trainer modules is planned as the next phase.

Keywords higher education, intercultural competence development, international students, mobility

Intercultural communication in health contexts: A guideline for healthcare professionals

PRESENTATION

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Interculturality plays a crucial role in promoting effective communication in healthcare settings (Taylan, 2022), particularly when interacting with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. This study examines the influence of cultural differences between users and professionals in medical consultations, with a focus on the challenges interpreters face in bridging cultural divides that impact patient care. Although intercultural communication is a relatively recent field of study, various academic disciplines—including anthropology, linguistics, psychology, sociology, and communication—offer valuable insights into how cultural backgrounds shape communication styles and behaviors. In healthcare, these insights are critical, as misunderstandings rooted in cultural differences can significantly affect patient outcomes.

This research conducted in Hospital la Paz in Madrid (from 2023 to 2027) investigates the importance of intercultural education of healthcare workers specially with women, an area that has traditionally been underrepresented in training programs. Through surveys of both participants in communication, the research aims to explore professional attitudes and patients' actual experiences of cultural differences that may arise in consultations—such as behaviors, non-verbal communication, beliefs—highlighting the complexities interpreters encounter in managing cultural conflicts. Misalignments in these cultural dimensions can lead to misunderstandings that disrupt Therapeutic relationship, highlighting the need for both interpreters and healthcare providers to be trained in intercultural communication.

Through a framework grounded in key interculturality concepts—including health imaginary, behavioral norms between patient and professional, and culturally shaped emotional responses (Rice, 2023)—a specific tool to measure the intercultural sensitivity, consciousness and behaviour (Chen & Starosta, 2000) has been developed. The ultimate aim of this study is to advocate for culturally informed practices and protocols in healthcare, especially in consultations involving migrant patients, where cultural differences are most pronounced, keeping in mind the limitations of current healthcare education, which often adopts an ethnocentric approach.

To support this goal, we propose practical strategies and training recommendations for healthcare professionals to improve communication and reduce cultural barriers by implementing an intercultural course for professionals to mitigate cultural clashes during healthcare consultations. By highlighting the essential role of intercultural broader education in healthcare, this study provides insights that could contribute to the development of more inclusive and culturally competent healthcare practices. In conclusion, the research demonstrates that addressing cultural and above all linguistic conflicts through culturally skilled healthcare professionals is vital for achieving high-quality patient care.

Keywords: language ideologies, linguistic diversity, Chinese international students, higher education

A learner journey toward intercultural competence in the Japanese university context

PRESENTATION

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There has been a strong push towards internationalization in Japanese universities by focusing on both learners' English proficiency and intercultural competence. For effective intercultural competence acquisition, Deardorff (2020) describes the importance of two learning styles: formal and informal. As a supplement to traditional class instruction, informal learning: "occurs through daily lived experience in interacting with those who differ in age, gender, religion, ethnicity and socio-economic status" (p. 6). Deardorff explains both approaches develop intercultural competence. The Japanese education system utilizes student English test scores predominantly as a gauge for university admission (Morita, 2013), and there is an emphasis on language over cultural understanding (Takeshita, 2016). Therefore, there is limited analysis of intercultural competence development that encompasses learners' English studies beyond the classroom. This presentation aims to fill the gap by detailing the journey of a university student majoring in English who successfully developed intercultural competence in an informal workplace context.

Narrative Analysis is employed as an analytical framework to analyse stories involving English language and cultural enrichment beyond the typical Japanese schooling trajectory. There were eleven participants, and one selected evidencing regular interactions with non-Japanese in the workplace. The stories were compiled from four research tools, a survey, a journal, interviews and English test scores, as a mixed-method approach. The tools comprise one dataset, collected three times over two years of the BA program. The student responded to the survey and journal items, emphasizing activities outside the classroom. They then answered questions in a semi-structured interview and provided English test scores completed as part of university requirements. The responses were analysed using the survey categories to highlight aspects of the participant's engagement, enjoyment, and confidence involving interactions with culturally diverse interlocutors. Based on the longitudinal dataset, the results identify the learners' incremental linguistic and cultural competence on a continuum.

The findings provide an overview of a learner journey, and identify key practices to cultivate intercultural competence, aiding well-established language assessments to enhance English interactions. The results indicate intercultural competence development occurs in informal settings: during diverse workplace and host national interactions on a sojourn. The results show benefit from utilizing existing language skills to engage with culturally diverse counterparts. This enables both English progression and intercultural competence development. Insight into this Japanese student's account could potentially enhance national efforts towards internationalization at the tertiary level, and beyond.

Keywords: intercultural competence, English, university, Japan

Developing intercultural competences and English language skills for enhanced medical communication

POSTER PRESENTATION

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In today's globalized world, the development of intercultural competences and English language proficiency is crucial for effective patient care, teamwork, and international medical collaborations. However, many students miss opportunities such as Study Abroad programs due to financial constraints, academic demands, or insufficient language skills. This action research examines the impact of a multilingual and multicultural classroom environment, designed to simulate a quasi-Study Abroad experience, on the development of Hungarian medical students' perceived English language proficiency and intercultural competence.

Two qualitative action research studies were conducted between 2021 and 2023. Semi-structured focus group interviews were held with a total of 77 Hungarian medical students. In the first study, 35 students participated between April and November 2021, and in the second, 42 students were interviewed at the end of the spring and autumn semesters in the 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 academic years. Thematic analysis was applied to evaluate the transcripts of the digitally recorded interviews.

Four key themes emerged: 1) the benefits of studying with international peers, 2) increased cultural awareness, 3) the development of an open mindset, and 4) the long-term benefits of intercultural competence on future medical practice. Students highlighted the positive impact of studying in a multilingual and multicultural environment, reporting significant improvements in their willingness to communicate in English. This was accompanied by increased self-confidence and enhanced perceived proficiency in English communication skills by the end of the term. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of cultural diversity in the classroom for fostering both linguistic and intercultural growth.

The findings suggest that creating a linguistically and culturally diverse learning environment, combined with multicultural project-based learning, can successfully simulate Study Abroad experiences. Such courses enhance language skills and promote intercultural competence, equipping future doctors for global medical practice. These frameworks could serve as effective models for course development in medical education.

Keywords: multicultural classroom, multilingual class, medical students, international students, English language proficiency, intercultural competence, Study Abroad

Plurilingual pedagogies of Icelandic and migrant teachers in compulsory schools: Building intercultural, plurilingual, and socially just spaces

PRESENTATION

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University of Iceland

Hermína Gunnþórsdóttir

University of Akureyri

Plurilingualism in Icelandic schools is becoming a norm, and this trend is similar in all Nordic countries. Shared ideas of social justice (Cleave, 2020) in education are reflected in Nordic policies and research (Peskova et al., 2023). About 15% of students in Icelandic compulsory schools have other mother tongues than Icelandic (Statistics Iceland, 2024) yet the teacher demography does not reflect this trend. However, the presence of migrant teachers in schools can enrich and enhance students' learning and wellbeing in many ways. For example, teachers' linguistic repertoires (Council of Europe, 2007) and intercultural competence (Fantini, 2020) help build bridges in communication and learning of immigrant students.

The aim of the ongoing research is to explore plurilingual pedagogies used by Icelandic and migrant teachers that enable them to build upon the linguistic repertoire of their plurilingual students and their own. The second aim is to identify learning strategies of plurilingual students that they use to draw on their own linguistic repertoires. In this presentation, we focus on how plurilingual pedagogies of Icelandic and immigrant teachers contribute to the creation of intercultural, plurilingual, and socially just spaces in schools, as described by sixteen teachers from six municipalities in Iceland. The research design is a multiple-case study. Semi-structured interviews with immigrant and Icelandic teachers are analysed with thematic analysis.

Preliminary findings show that all teachers were aware of and utilized students' and their own linguistic resources, albeit unconsciously at times. These plurilingual pedagogies made links to students' previous knowledge, normalized plurilingualism in the classroom, and empowered students to regard their linguistic repertoires as assets. However, migrant teachers also expressed uncertainty about their own skills in Icelandic and reflected on parents' and Icelandic colleagues' concerns for their children to learn Icelandic well. Plurilingualism was not directly linked to social justice in teachers' narratives.

This research is an important contribution to the research field of plurilingual pedagogies, in that it explores immigrant teachers' plurilingual approaches in teaching, and it links plurilingual pedagogies, intercultural competence, and principles of social justice. Additionally, it shows that the Nordic educational landscape faces similar challenges to those of the rest of Europe, as to educating plurilingual students equitably, and that the Nordic research is aligned with European streams as well.

Keywords: plurilingual pedagogies, intercultural competence, migrant teachers, social justice

Opportunities and challenges of transnational families in Iceland

PRESENTATION

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The paper aims to explore the opportunities and challenges which migrant and multilingual families in Iceland experience in a) maintaining relationships with their extended families despite geographical distances, b) maintaining and supporting heritage languages in small communities where resources are limited, c) negotiating cultural and linguistic identities. Furthermore, the aim is to explore the use of the concept of “transnational families” and explore whether it can deepen understanding of how the families cultivate their children’s identities, and families well-being as transnationals who have chosen to live in Iceland. The theoretical framework builds on the concept of a transnational perspective on migration, as discussed by Glick Schiller and colleagues (1995), and research with transnational families, such as Reynolds and Zontini’s (2014). Research in the field of family language policy will also be used as a lens, including Spolsky’s (2004) three components of family language policy: 1) language practices, 2) language beliefs or ideology, and 3) language management.

This paper derives from a three-year (2021–2024) research on diverse immigrant families’ language policies and practices and their educational implications. The project is a qualitative research study. Data was collected from 16 immigrant families in four different municipalities in Iceland who have diverse languages, educational and socio-economic backgrounds. This paper focuses on the experiences and opinions of three families that have called Iceland their permanent home for a decade or more. The semi-structured interviews followed an interview framework. In preparation, the researchers reflected on the participants’ cultural backgrounds and how to value every opinion and experience (Berryman et al., 2013).

The findings indicate that they were satisfied with their jobs, and their children were doing well in school. The daily lives of these families in Iceland are quite diverse, but one could trace a red thread that goes back to their homelands through migration and leads to their prospects for the future. The families raised their children in rich transitional social capital environments where Icelandic and their heritage languages and cultures were fluid in their lives, and they had the freedom and opportunities at hand to navigate in between.

Keywords: transnational families, language policies, multilingualism, heritage language

Language of instruction and intercultural education: Latin dance courses for adults in Hungary

PRESENTATION

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Numerous studies emphasize the impact of dance on the development of soft skills and its role as a therapeutic resource in neurology and psychology (Foster, 2023; Lakes, 2016; Novikova, 2019). Additionally, the transformative effects of dances on multicultural community well-being represent an emerging topic within the educational spectrum (Mathews, 2017).

This study explores the linguistic and intercultural educational potential of Latin Dance courses in Hungary. As a subculture, the Latin Dance community exhibits unique linguistic, social, and psychological characteristics previously examined in international studies but remains under-researched in the Hungarian context (Hrytseniuk, 2020; Marzuki, 2018).

The research addresses the gap in theoretical and empirical studies on the language of instruction and intercultural aspects of education in non-formal educational settings such as adult dance schools in Hungary. The objectives include: (1) examining the influence of instructional language on the learning process, (2) assessing incidental language acquisition that occurs during dance classes, (3) investigating the impact of instructional language and cooperative learning on participants' everyday communication, and (4) exploring the effect of multilingual dynamics on individual and social transformation.

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews with three Latin Dance instructors, each with over five years of teaching experience. These interviews focused on the role of differentiated instruction in dance pedagogy. Additionally, implementing a Likert Scale semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 participants to explore how multilingual dynamics in dance classes can affect individual and social transformation.

Quantitative data were gathered through surveys administered to 45 dancers who had participated in the community for periods ranging from one month to five years, utilizing a Survey on Incidental Language Learning in a Multilingual and Intercultural Context. Preliminary findings suggest that while participants primarily attend these classes to learn dance, incidental language acquisition occurs naturally as part of the process. This unintentional language learning supports communication, promotes a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, and fosters individual transformation. Educators often incorporate translanguaging practices, leveraging the multilingual dynamics to enhance the learning experience and create an inclusive environment, using Hungarian as the main instructional language, English as a second, and Spanish as terminology. Interestingly, non-Hungarian speakers demonstrate improvement in Hungarian language comprehension while both Hungarian and non-Hungarian speakers frequently use Spanish terminology during practice, without fully comprehending their meanings. Furthermore, the dance community facilitates personal and social transformation, transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries to create an intercultural learning environment.

Keywords: language of instruction, incidental language acquisition, terminology, multilingual context, dance pedagogy

The Italian juvenile justice system and the challenge of diversity: practitioners' intercultural competence

PRESENTATION

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The research project examines the Italian juvenile justice system (Juvenile Court) and its ability to embrace and manage cultural differences. The study investigated the intercultural competencies utilized by juvenile justice practitioners (judges, honorary judges, lawyers, etc.) in their professional relationships with minors from migrant backgrounds. This includes not only minors who have committed offenses but also those who encounter the Juvenile Court due to protective, foster care, or adoption pathways, among others. These children and adolescents are present in classrooms of all grades, along with their families.

Given the focus on diversity, this research is grounded in the epistemological paradigm of intercultural education (Cohen-Emerique, 2017; Portera, 2013), intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009; Barrett, 2012), and a rights-based approach (UN, 1989; Premoli, 2012). The research methodology is based on the principles of naturalistic inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1985), in which the researcher is also a tool of exploration and knowledge (Sorzio, 2015). Recursiveness is central to this type of research, which is designed with flexibility and does not require decisions to be considered final (Benozzo & Priola, 2022). A qualitative research design was defined to enable multiple perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation, incorporating a quantitative tool. The main tools included semi-structured interviews, a survey, and focus groups.

The research findings include a classification of intercultural competencies among juvenile justice practitioners, key themes regarding intercultural approaches in juvenile justice settings, a profile of the intercultural juvenile justice practitioner, and the “push-pull model of intercultural competencies”.

These findings can be used to identify strategies and tools helpful in managing interactions with minors who bring identity and cultural differences into a pluralistic system. They can thus also serve as a reference for schools. Specifically, the intercultural competencies of juvenile justice practitioners are applicable and relevant to teachers, given the similarity of goals and dynamics in both fields. Both types of professionals work with minors from diverse cultural backgrounds in multicultural settings, albeit different ones; they must foster an environment where minors feel accepted and supported, and they share objectives of promoting inclusion and social integration for minors.

In this sense, the results can also be considered a bridge between the juvenile justice system and the educational system.

Keywords: intercultural competence, Italian juvenile justice system, cultural and identity differences

The need for connecting with their backgrounds: interview with descendants of refugees from Vietnam

PRESENTATION

Anh-Dao Tran & Atli Harðarson

University of Iceland

In April 1975, the Communists of Vietnam in the north seized the South, resulting in the South Vietnamese refugee exodus. In 1979, the Icelandic Red Cross resettled 34 Vietnamese refugees in Reykjavik. During these 45 years, this ethnic group has expanded into three generations living in Iceland. According to Sam and Berry (2010), acculturation is a cultural transformation refugees encounter when resettling in another country as their culture comes into contact with other cultures in the host country and reciprocally influences each other. We are shaped by the cultural value system, organisation and relations we grow up in (Parekh, 2006). Nevertheless, Alba and Nee (2003) argue that the institutional and cultural core of the host country remains non-negotiable to refugees (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). This paper seeks to answer the research question: Why is the knowledge of the language and culture of their ancestors of great value to the refugees' descendants?

This article includes participants, six males and five females. They were selected because they were descendants of families with a continuous history in Iceland since 1979. Some came to the country as children, but most were born in Iceland and attended Icelandic schools. They were given common Icelandic pseudonyms.

The interviews were conducted in Icelandic and Vietnamese. One of the researchers has knowledge of Vietnamese culture, and her experience of growing up in Vietnam helped interpret various nuances in the data but also had the risk of being overly subjective (Couture et al., 2012). The other author was acquainted with the participants through the data. Thus, the analysis of the interviews was approached from two very different perspectives. The authors read and coded the interviews separately and then repeatedly discussed what seemed to be recurring themes following thematic analysis methods as described by Lichtman (2013).

The participants reflected on their parents and grandparents' assimilation into the Icelandic language and culture in the research. Icelandic was spoken in their households, and little was done to pass on Vietnamese culture to the next generation. They expressed a sense of loss and regret for lacking knowledge of the language and culture that was a part of their identity. The participants' need to acquire knowledge of their Vietnamese ancestors' language and culture is similar to our universal need for self-awareness and freedom. The loss of language and culture of one generation affects their descendants for many generations to come.

Keywords: Vietnamese, refugees' descendants, assimilation, connection with ancestors' language and culture, Iceland

Multilingualism as a resource in (pre-)primary education in Brussels: good practices from teacher education

WORKSHOP

Anouk Vanherf & Els Plessers

Erasmus Brussels University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Situated in the superdiverse city of Brussels, Erasmus Brussels University of Applied Sciences and Arts (EhB) prepares its students to teach in multilingual and socio-economically diverse classrooms. Also in its own student population this linguistic diversity is reflected. The teacher education programmes “pre-primary education” and “primary education” consider it vital to acknowledge the linguistic repertoires of both children and (student-)teachers. Therefore, students of the teacher training are involved in (research) projects on promoting and integrating linguistic diversity as a resource for learning.

Research has shown the benefits of valorising linguistic diversity in education (Agirdag & Kambel, 2018; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Van Avermaet & Sierens, 2010). Paradoxically, these scientific insights have difficulty finding their way to classroom practices. Even in urban settings, a monoglossic ideology still prevails (Van Avermaet, 2016). In changing representations about multilingualism and rethinking pedagogical practices lay important challenges for teacher education (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

This workshop focuses on good practices from the teacher education programmes of EhB. We will discuss competencies pre-primary teachers need to deal with linguistic diversity in the classroom and to communicate and collaborate with a linguistically diverse parent group, with a view to supporting language development at home (van der Pluijm, 2022).

We will also present concrete cases of an action-research project conducted in primary schools in Brussels. The aim of this project is to make the transfer between scientific research on functional multilingual learning and the concrete translation to classroom practice. A pedagogical model is developed to provide teachers with a practical tool to gradually integrate the home languages of the children as a scaffold (Vanherf, 2022). Participants in the workshop will be invited to critically reflect on concrete multilingual learning activities and their functionality for learning, opportunities for inclusion and the requirements for teachers.

In this workshop we present good practices of teacher education in a challenging urban context. First, we would like to critically reflect on the implementation of multilingual practices in concrete classroom settings. Second, we want to reflect on the role of teacher education in preparing student teachers to teach in diverse multilingual education contexts: didactical resources for language stimulation, competencies teachers need to stimulate the linguistic development of all children, including knowledge, skills and an open attitude towards linguistic diversity of both children and families.

Keywords: language ideologies, linguistic diversity, Chinese international students, higher education, Bourdieu

The missing link? - families as an overlooked entity in supporting multilingual students: a participatory research project

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Mari Varsanyi

University of Amsterdam

Multilingualism is both a reality and a goal within the Dutch education system. In Amsterdam as many as 60% of primary school students have a migration background (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2023). Despite this, multilingual students often perform worse academically than their monolingual Dutch peers. This disparity points to a significant issue of inequity within the Dutch education system (Onderwijsraad, 2024). To help alleviate this achievement and opportunity gap, in January 2023 Amsterdam's city council made a legislative decision to introduce a 'language-friendly' policy in Amsterdam's schools. This policy has been followed by an action plan, which forms the background for the current study.

Among the various strategies aimed at addressing educational inequity, one approach that has received little attention for multilingual students is school-family partnership. This oversight is notable, given that effective collaboration between schools and parents has been shown to enhance student participation and progress, potentially reducing inequity (Baquedano-López et al., 2013). The study therefore aims to explore the role that families can play in supporting multilingual students' cognitive and social-emotional development. In order to counteract the artificial divide that schools as an institution create between students and their parents (and the wider family), the study will be focusing on families as an entity.

The project will involve a co-creation process with schools and families—including students—guided by families' and schools' identified needs. Following this, the co-created program will be implemented and evaluated using qualitative methods assessing students' perceived academic and social-emotional development, families' sense of belonging and teachers' self-efficacy. Based on the findings, practical recommendations will be drafted for schools and policy makers on fostering equitable partnerships with families in the context of multilingualism.

During the roundtable discussion, the main theoretical underpinnings, empirical foundations and the (preliminary) research design of the project will be discussed, alongside practical examples of family-school partnership from other projects. This roundtable discussion invites (multilingual) parents, teachers, school leaders, researchers and policy makers from the fields of multilingualism and family-school partnership and other conference attendees to comment on the research project, and to share related research, policies and practices from their own contexts. Doing so, we hope to bring about a fruitful conversation and engage in shared knowledge construction on the cross-section of multilingualism and parental engagement.

Keywords: multilingualism, families, parental engagement, co-creation, equity, belonging

A comparative study on spontaneous expressions of emotion during simulation-based learning: native language (L1) vs. foreign language (FL)

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Achva Academic College

In today's world, where the highly developed media allows remote cooperation between linguistically diverse populations, thereby encouraging the co-creation of innovative and inclusive shared spaces, teams, and organizations, it is crucial to develop students' intercultural competence, to provide them with appropriate and effective communication skills. The use of a nonnative language attenuates emotions and disengages people from culturally learned norms, providing greater cognitive and emotional distance compared to a native tongue (Hadjichristidis et al., 2019; Keysar et al., 2012). Our research explores the dynamics of emotional expression in non-native languages, particularly through simulation-based teacher training methodologies. Simulation is a teaching-training technique that creates the conditions of the professional arena and then uses this artificial environment for learning and skill development (Chernikova et al., 2020; Sauvé et al., 2007). This study focuses on understanding whether, and in what way, using an additional language, impacts the ability to express emotions and empathy. We conducted a case study involving six students from an academic retraining program, analyzing their performance during classroom management courses in two simulation workshops. A qualitative methodology was selected. The data were collected via workshop transcripts, semi-structured phone interviews, and open questionnaires that were analysed using linguistic and content analyses. Our findings suggest that the primary barriers lie not in comprehension or desire to express emotions but in accessing appropriate linguistic resources under pressure. Rather, it reflects diverse cultural and linguistic strategies for conveying empathy. Notably, in high-pressure scenarios, participants often resorted to simplified language use, whereas in relaxed settings, they demonstrated fuller emotional expression capabilities. The findings emphasize the importance of developing automatic and intuitive access to emotional expression skills in additional languages, particularly when remote communication in non-native languages serves as a channel of inter-linguistic interactions in our global world. This study contributes to raising awareness among simulation facilitators, pedagogical instructors, actors, scenario writers, and educators about the nature of emotional expression challenges in additional languages. By highlighting these aspects, our research advocates for enhanced training methods that incorporate cultural and linguistic nuances into simulation-based education. This approach can better prepare educators and professionals for real-world scenarios where effective communication in non-native languages is essential.

Keywords: simulation-based learning, teacher education, intercultural competence, linguistic diversity

Exploring the application and effectiveness of industry-coupled problem-based learning (IC-PBL) for intercultural education in universities

PRESENTATION

Jeonga Yang & Youngmi Park
Hanyang University ERICA

Effective intercultural education centers on the process of ‘recognition’ through ‘communication’, which requires creative problem-solving skills and intercultural sensitivity. This study proposed Industry-Coupled Problem-Based Learning (IC-PBL) as a practical methodology for intercultural education and analyzed the effectiveness of the educational model based on actual industrial problems. Unlike traditional problem-based learning (PBL) methods (Barrows, 2000; Kang et al., 2005), IC-PBL emphasizes the problem-solving process including expert feedback centered on real-world industrial tasks (Song & Kang, 2020).

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the global IC-PBL program implemented at H University in 2023–2024. A total of 62 students were organized into 16 teams. In the first stage, they explored global IC-PBL topics, proposed solutions, and went through a document evaluation. In the second stage, the selected teams refined their plans through presentations that reflected expert feedback and carried out the process of solving actual problems in overseas fields.

The key research objective is to analyze whether students develop creative problem-solving skills and intercultural sensitivity through IC-PBL. Creative problem-solving refers to the ability to recognize problems in unstructured situations, develop and apply solutions, and share the outcomes (Osborn, 1953; Treffinger et al., 2000). Intercultural sensitivity is defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and respond appropriately to cultural differences (Hammer, 2011).

For quantitative research, pre- and post-surveys were conducted using tools from Lee, Pyo, and Choi (2014) for creative problem-solving skills and Chang (2021) for intercultural sensitivity. Qualitative analysis was conducted through the analysis of student reports, feedback, and reflection sheets. The educational effectiveness of IC-PBL was examined using mixed research methodology.

The research results showed significant improvements in both creative problem-solving skills and intercultural sensitivity from pre- to post-assessment. Participants also reported increased confidence in team-based communication, cross-cultural interaction, and practical problem-solving. IC-PBL is a practical, intercultural education model that demonstrates the educational potential to foster student engagement, cross-cultural collaboration, and practical problem-solving skills. This study provides empirical evidence supporting the potential of IC-PBL as an effective strategy for enhancing intercultural competence in higher education.

Keywords: Intercultural education, Industry-Coupled Problem-Based Learning (IC-PBL), multicultural problem-solving, intercultural competence, global program implementation

Fostering intercultural competence: Engagement of exchange students with Polish language and culture

PRESENTATION

Nana Akofyani

PhD Candidate

International educational exchange and mobility programmes, migration, and current globalisation trends play a key role in population movement. The aforementioned factors open doors to language learning and experiencing new cultures, yet students often face challenges in adapting to and integrating into host communities. Therefore, this paper presentation aims to explore the nature of Erasmus+ international exchange students' engagement with the Polish language and culture.

High proficiency in a foreign language does not guarantee effective intercultural communication. Hence, drawing on Byram's (1997) ICC Model and Kramsch's (1993) concept of the Third Space, the research focuses on the role of several skills that should be introduced and developed within language teaching in order to support international exchange students in intercultural communication.

To provide a comprehensive review of the linguistic and cultural integration of exchange students, a qualitative research approach was adopted. It combines 15 hours of observation in Polish as a foreign language classes with Corporate Social Responsibility course. To enrich these observations, Erasmus+ international exchange students were given semi-structured questionnaires to assess their attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness about the Polish language and culture. This paper underscores the importance of introducing and developing culture-related content in the classroom, as it not only serves as a supporting skill for intercultural communication but also improves the engagement level in the classroom.

Keywords: intercultural competence, multilingualism, language learning, exchange students, Polish language and culture

Language matters: Realizing the promise of Complex Instruction for multilingual learners

PRESENTATION

George Bunch

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Access to core subject-area curriculum for students from immigrant backgrounds who are learning the dominant language of instruction has long been a barrier to equitable education around the world, especially in secondary schools. Complex Instruction (CI) was developed in the United States as a means to disrupt inequitable within-the-classroom participation patterns stemming from status differentials among students from different socially-constructed groups, especially those marked by race, ethnicity, and gender (Cohen & Lotan, 1997). It quickly became apparent that CI could offer important affordances for both the academic learning and language development of students in the process of learning the language of instruction (Bunch et al., 2001; Lotan, 2008). This article explores the promise of Complex Instruction (CI) to address barriers to access for such multilingual learners and reflects on what teachers may need to understand about language and literacy in order to realize this promise.

I draw on examples from 7th Grade (ages 12-13) CI social studies classrooms in one middle school in California. The majority of students were from families with low incomes, identified as Latino/a, were from immigrant backgrounds, and had typically not performed well on standardized tests. The classrooms were part of a school-university partnership where students at the upper-intermediate level of English language proficiency were placed in mainstream classrooms where classrooms were redesigned to include four two-week long CI units throughout the year. The student examples come from audio-recorded and transcribed student talk during 15 groupwork sessions and classroom presentations across six classrooms during a unit on the European Reformation (Bunch, 2004), and a textual analysis of 40 students' final unit essays (Bunch & Willett, 2013). I consider these data in light of more recent work on preparing teachers for working with multilingual learners in content-area settings (Bunch, 2022).

It is clear that the structures of CI classrooms facilitated multilingual learners' engagement with challenging content-area texts and ideas. However, it is not sufficient to look at CI structures alone, because teachers' beliefs and ideologies about language mediate their understandings of what multilingual learners can do with language in the midst of those structures. Students' own words and work can be the most compelling argument for the powerful array of principles and practices that CI offers to facilitate this kind of student talk, writing, and development—but only if teachers are able to see and hear students' contributions.

Keywords: multilingual learners, complex instruction, language, literacy, curriculum, equity

“I didn’t know that that was something that might happen”: Perceived transformations of a pre-service teacher amidst the socio-economic impact of a short-term study abroad program

PRESENTATION

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Duke Kunshan University

Rebecca Borden

The University of Oklahoma

Short-term study abroad programs (STSAs) have been a popular mode of international education (Open Doors, 2023), yet the majority of pre-service teacher candidates engaging in these experiences are not reflective of the diversity seen in their classrooms. In the U.S., where the teaching workforce remains predominantly white, female, and middle class (NCES, 2021), individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are often underrepresented, illuminating a critical gap in the design of pre-teacher field experiences mirroring diverse classrooms. This presentation explores the transformative potential of STSAs for pre-service teachers, focusing on a case study of one student from a low socio-economic background who participated in a STSA program in Italy. Conducted at a satellite branch campus of a Southwestern U.S. university, this qualitative case study uses transformative learning as a framework to investigate the perceived changes in the teacher identity of one pre-service teacher following her STSA experience. Data were gathered through a pre-departure survey, reflective student essays, researcher observation field notes, and an in-depth semi-structured interview conducted one month after her return. These data were analysed inductively to capture the participant’s evolving self-perceptions, attitudes towards linguistic and cultural diversity, and teaching philosophy.

The findings reveal the depth and breadth of changes (Hoggan, 2016) in the participant’s teacher identity, notably in areas related to cultural empathy and curiosity, and adaptability, despite a limited (inter)cultural learning (Briscoe & Robino, 2022; Huang et al., 2023; Jones et al., 2023; Marx & Pray, 2011; Palmer & Menard-Warwick, 2012; Shiveley & Misco, 2015). The participant’s narratives suggest a marked shift in her understanding of multicultural awareness and socio-economic sensitivity, informing her future approach to creating inclusive and responsive learning environments. This study contributes to the body of research by drawing attention to how socio-economic background impacts experiences and perceived transformation during STSAs, emphasizing the potential of these programs to enrich the cultural competencies of pre-service teachers from diverse backgrounds.

Furthermore, this research adds valuable insights into how STSAs can support the development of teacher identity, enhancing the capacity of future educators to understand the complexities of multicultural and multilingual classrooms. The presentation concludes with actionable recommendations for faculty leading study abroad programs and for other stakeholders involved in international education.

Keywords: transformative learning, pre-service teachers, short-term study abroad, teacher identity, teacher education

We all gaze the same stars! An experimental study on teaching Italian in multilingual classrooms

PRESENTATION

Valerio Ferrero, Manuela Roccia & Silvia Sordella

University of Turin

This paper focuses on language teaching in heterogeneous and multilingual contexts (Byram & Wagner, 2018; Hummel, 2021). Students with plural and diverse linguistic repertoires pose a challenge for educational policy, curriculum development and teaching (Han et al., 2023). Strategies for teaching the majority language must be implemented in order to find a balance between L2 and L1 learning. We focus on the Italian school system: here, the presence of immigrant students in classrooms is structural, although it is at the centre of an alarmist public discourse (Catarci, 2018). However, strategies for teaching Italian as L2 often prove ineffective (Biasutti et al., 2020). It is crucial to support teachers in acquiring pedagogical skills that promote a multilingual approach to language teaching in order to make majority language teaching effective and broaden students' repertoire. The intertwining of pedagogical practice and language knowledge is also framed as an epistemological issue (Hudson, 2004).

We sought answers to three research questions: (1) what training needs do teachers express about teaching in multilingual classes? (2) What are students' linguistic needs? (3) How can teachers' professional practice be changed to better meet the diverse and complex needs? We conducted a mixed-methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017): the research design is complementary with parallel phases. The quantitative experiment aims to test the effectiveness of a teaching project for text comprehension based on real language use: national standardised tests were used as initial and final tests, making these materials useful also for educational purposes. These results were statistically analysed. Seven experimental groups and three control groups (fifth grade primary school classes) were involved. The voice of teachers in terms of their expectations, ideals, students' linguistic needs, practices and implemented activities was collected through low-structured focus groups, that were thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The data show that using active, non-frontal approaches, focusing on real language use and encouraging a metalinguistic attitude improves learning for all students: in fact, the results obtained in the final test show a clear improvement compared to the initial situation resulting from the first test. Furthermore, the study enabled the teachers involved to consider both linguistic and pedagogical aspects of language teaching in multilingual contexts. Although we focus on the Italian school system, our study can offer an original perspective on language teaching in similar contexts.

Keywords: language education, intercultural education, plurilingualism, teacher education, Italian school

International student integration at a technological university in Hungary: The Student Career Path Program

PRESENTATION

Ildikó Furka

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Hungary launched the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship in 2013 to internationalize its higher education. However, it challenges existing communication and management processes (Zou et al., 2023), student complaints and student-staff conflicts increase (Mittelmeier et al., 2023) with a general feeling of dissatisfaction for everyone (Kercher, 2018). An increased workload, reduced resources (Winfield & Paris, 2024) and the different behaviour of students (Ahmed, Hamed, & Gocheva, 2020) lead to a high attrition rate of employees (Mullen et al., 2018) and low retention rates for international students (Nieuwoudt & Pedler, 2023). The English knowledge of students and their academic qualities are questioned (Mittelmeier, Lomer, & Carmichael-Murphy, 2023). The literature recommends supported integration to reduce drop-out rates (De Wit, 2013), both for the psychological well-being of students (Tight, 2019), and institutional quality purposes (Knight, 2013). To tackle these challenges, the Budapest University of Technology and Economics established the Student Career Path Program (SCPP).

The presentation aims to showcase how the SCPP's setup and activities target student experience improvement and the establishment of a sense of belonging and community identity, with a special focus on communication among stakeholders with different cultural backgrounds. SCPP involves horizontal working groups for the fields of recruiting and alumni, PR and marketing, intercultural communication, common language and understanding, career support, community building, and skills development, which carried out systematic data collection for present and target needs assessments (Dudley-Evans, 1998). With the method of procedural participant action research approach (Cunningham, 1976), I carried out an online survey on international student satisfaction ($n = 224$) and another one on the features of communication in English among students and administrative and academic staff ($n = 292$) to identify gaps and cultural differences in communication and information flow in international student integration. For data analysis I employed descriptive and comparative statistics to arrive at the results.

The results suggest issues with international students are due to unmatched expectations of behavioral and information flow patterns, students' unsatisfactory scientific linguistic knowledge and staff's insufficient academic university terminology, and single culture organizational communication. Simplifying administrative processes, developing linguistic and intercultural competence, upgrading support system mechanisms through English-speaking mediators, and a searchable university terminology bank to unify university documents in English. Limitations include respondents' lack of skills at identifying deeper levels of cultural issues hindering data production. Further research should adopt focus group interviews to supplement the survey data described here and arrive at a more nuanced interpretation.

Keywords: internationalization of higher education, student integration, intercultural communication, sense of belonging and identity establishment, organizational culture

“Teachers need to be taught about racism too”: Exploring the powerful mechanism of “othering” in schools

PRESENTATION

Kerri Garrard
Deakin University

“Othering” is not a new term. Current research shows the concept continues to make a sense of belonging most difficult and often unattainable for students from marginalised cultures in our schools. “Othering” is a powerful mechanism of racial and cultural discrimination that negatively impacts students from marginalised cultures in schools. Although this paper draws on a study of the experiences of racism by students of African heritage in five schools, in a State of Australia, it focuses on discourses of “othering” and “intercultural education” relevant to international forums. Based on a review of extant resources conducted as part of the study to develop culturally safe resources, I argue here, that a one-size-fits-all approach is inadequate to address the urgent and growing problem of racism and cultural discrimination in schools. This paper uses evidence from the analysis of the transcripts of focus groups with students and teachers, to identify three key factors through which “othering” is explored: 1) racial competence, 2) intercultural understanding, and 3) belonging. It contributes some new perspectives to the field of critical thinking for teacher education and teacher professional development, by using the discourse of student-centred stories to illuminate the power of “othering” to create hierarchical marginalisation. The presentation will include an example of newly developed culturally safe resources for use by school leaders and their teachers.

Keywords: teacher education, racism in schools, racial competency, culturally responsible leadership, diversity, interculturality

Relational uncertainty in teacher education: Resisting racism and cultural discrimination in classrooms

PRESENTATION

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Deakin University

Navigating the intricate web of social, racial and cultural dynamics within the classroom demands dedicated investment in teachers' understanding of relationalities and relational pedagogy as a form of resistance to racism and cultural discrimination in schools. Recognising a lack of direct engagement with these issues in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs in Australia, we argue that relational uncertainty is a complicit contributor to racism in schools. Located within a period of reform to ITE programs in Australia, this paper positions "uncertainty" as a long-time companion to teaching that is rapidly increasing under mistrust and fear related to race and culture. Stemming from an initial literature review and our research, we conceptualise three strategies of resistance to support effective development of relational pedagogy in ITE—pedagogy of discomfort, confronting whiteness, and racial literacy—as a way in to better prepare teachers for specific relational challenges.

Keywords: racism in schools, cultural discrimination, relational uncertainty, pedagogical uncertainty, relational pedagogies

“In Other Words,” A free online resource to promote intercultural education and challenge discriminatory language

PRESENTATION

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University of Torino

How can an online dictionary become a resource to favour intercultural education? And how can it develop a critical awareness on how words are mobilised to engender discrimination?

“In Other Words,” a Contextualized Dictionary to Problematize Otherness (www.iowdictionary.org) (IOW), is a critical, collective, creative, and transdisciplinary project structured as an open, collaborative online resource. The dictionary analyses keywords that, in different contexts and countries, (re)produce different forms of Otherness. IOW dictionary promotes critical intercultural awareness and cross-cultural dialogue able to challenge the reification, stigmatization, stereotyping, or folklorization of the Other.

Theoretical backgrounds of the online dictionary are mainly in Critical Intercultural Studies (Nakayama & Halualani, 2012; Palaiologou, 2014), Critical Pedagogies (Hook, 1994; Anyon & Dumas, 2009), Critical Language Education (Dasli & Diaz, 2017; Giorgis, 2018; Giacosa forthcoming), and CDA (Wodak, 2015).

IOW dictionary involves directly students in participatory activities for the co-construction of new entries that dismantle and subvert stereotypes and discriminatory discourses. Therefore, its ethos and its praxis are intercultural in its widest sense: IOW tackles contemporary socio-cultural issues, suggesting new methodologies and approaches; it proposes an innovative and interdisciplinary collaboration between academics, practitioners, and activists; it reaches different audiences in real-life contexts; it combines teaching, research, and dissemination in different environments; it is a tool to promote new methods and practices for language teaching and learning; it is a free, user-friendly online resource that can be used on different devices in different social and educational contexts.

While reporting and reflecting on our field experience with high school students, we will address a main research question: to what extent did the contribution to IOW dictionary impact students' awareness of Otherness? To this end, we will first introduce the ethos and the structure of the IOW dictionary and then discuss an activity conducted in a high school class in Italy. Our data collected through class observations and a student questionnaire show how they critically reflect on discriminating language by engaging in the discussion and writing of a new entry, thus sharpening their critical skills and socio-cultural awareness. We will finally expound on how the same activity can be replicated in different educational contexts.

Keywords: intercultural education, critical language awareness, participatory class activity, free online resource, In Other Words dictionary

Mexican EFL pre-service teachers: assessment of their intercultural competence

PRESENTATION

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Intercultural Competence (IC) is an essential skill in a globalized world, where individuals increasingly interact across cultural boundaries in education, work, and social contexts (Cancino & Nuñez, 2023; Guillén-Yparrea & Ramírez-Montoya, 2023). Higher Education (HE) institutions play a pivotal role in fostering IC, preparing students not only to meet workforce demands but also to embrace diverse perspectives, promote peace, and build equitable, inclusive societies (Öztürk & Ekşi, 2022; Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean [2030 Agenda], n.d). This is particularly critical in teacher education, as language teachers act as cultural intermediaries (Suryani et al., 2020).

Therefore, given the increased need to train language teachers to become not only linguistic experts but also intercultural mediators of the target language (Boudouaia et al., 2022; Echcharfy, 2019; Esteban-Núñez, 2021), there has been heightened interest in documenting pre-service English teachers' IC worldwide. Correspondingly, learning to communicate in English in non-English-speaking developing countries has become a growing demand (Boudouaia et al., 2022; Suryani et al., 2020).

On this basis, this study investigated the IC development of Mexican pre-service English language teachers, assessing five dimensions: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. Using a comprehensive IC framework, the study employed a self-report questionnaire to collect data from 137 participants across 11 Mexican public universities (Hernández López et al., 2024). The results highlight attitudes as the most developed dimension, reflecting openness and curiosity toward cultural differences, while knowledge emerged as the least developed, underscoring the need for targeted educational interventions. Additionally, it examined the impact of studying abroad, revealing it as significant but not essential for IC development, demonstrating the potential of locally grounded programs.

This study significantly contributes to the field of intercultural competence (IC) by challenging Eurocentric perspectives, incorporating insights from Global-South contexts, and linking IC to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, it advances Latin American IC research by adopting a quantitative approach, offering new perspectives in English language teaching and global citizenship education. Finally, this research underscores the urgency of embedding IC as a transversal competence across all disciplines in HE, particularly in language education, to address the growing need for equity, diversity, and inclusion in education.

Keywords: intercultural competence, assessment, EFL, Mexican pre-service teachers, teacher education, SDGs

Complex Instruction

WORKSHOP

Rachel Lotan

Stanford University

I propose to conduct a workshop by which I and our team from Stanford University demonstrate Complex Instruction (CI) – the topic of the special edition of the IAIE journal. We invite participants as well as local educators interested in CI to participate.

We expect that given the interest in CI in Hungary there will be many educators wanting to participate.

In this workshop I will present CI as a pedagogical strategy that focuses on the definition of the classroom as a system rather than a collection of individuals. I argue that groupwork is an effective pedagogical approach for achieving several kinds of intellectual and social learning goals: conceptual learning, creative problem solving, and academic language development. Socially it will improve intergroup relations by increasing trust and friendliness.

Keywords: building, equitable, excellent, democratic, classrooms

Multicultural approaches in Hungarian “tanodas”

PRESENTATION

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The aim of our research was to explore the operation of Hungarian tanodas¹ from a multicultural perspective, to examine the multicultural attitudes of tanodas workers, the appearance of multicultural education in tanodas.

In Hungary, the after-school system known as tanodas provides a safe environment for disadvantaged students. Tanodas provide complex services aimed at personal development (Fejes & Szűcs, 2016). The tanodas aim is to enhance students' abilities, increase opportunities, support social integration (Németh, 2009). According to Banks (2016), multicultural education strives to ensure equal, if possible, fair access to education for all (Banks, 2016). Multicultural education does not only mean sensitivity towards different cultures and social groups, but also a paradigm shift that accepts different ways of thinking (Torgyik, 2004). However, in Hungary, multicultural education lacks a standardized form (Göbölös & Endrődy, 2020).

The purpose of this research was to understand how tanodas operate from a multicultural perspective. Two main research questions guided the study:

1. What kind of multicultural approaches do the tanoda staff members hold? We processed this based on four aspects, by assessing the multicultural knowledge of the tanodas' staff, examining their adaptation of this knowledge in their everyday work, the multicultural aspects appearing in staff members concepts of their professional self, and staff members perception on the vocation of the of the tanodas.

2. How do the basic principles of multicultural education appear in the tanodas' activities? To answer the second question, we examined how staff members react to challenging work situations and what multicultural aspects they consider important when talking about their work. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 employees from tanodas across Hungary. The interviews were conducted both online and offline, and the data were analysed using thematic analysis. The results indicate that multicultural practices vary between tanodas, with approaches tailored to local needs. The research outlined two major trends regarding the multicultural awareness of tanodas staff: 1) those who knew what multicultural education was, knew its principles and dimensions, and applied them, and 2) those who did not know what multicultural education was. This duality was evident throughout the study, influencing staff responses to situations and shaping their ideas about the development of a multicultural vision. The three main types of approaches outlined in the literature appear in Hungarian tanodas. These approaches, shaped by the institution, the situation, and staff personalities, often intersect and adapt in both teaching practices and individual staff members' methods.

(¹*Editors' note. A tanoda is a non-formal educational institution in Hungary that supports disadvantaged or marginalized students by providing after-school tutoring and/or mentoring.*)

Keywords: multicultural education, Hungarian tanodas, multicultural attitudes

Are future teachers ready for diversity? Assessing intercultural sensitivity of preservice primary school teachers

PRESENTATION

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Georg Krammer

Johannes Kepler University
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Basic School Medvode

Teachers play a crucial role in making multicultural schools inclusive places where diversity is valued. This underscores the need for (future) teachers to develop intercultural communication competence (ICC), especially its affective component, i.e. intercultural sensitivity (InS) (Drandić, 2016; European Commission, 2017). InS reflects the active motivation and ability to develop positive feelings of acknowledgment, recognition, respect, and acceptance of cultural differences in intercultural relations (Chen & Starosta, 2000), which is essential particularly in societies characterised by interethnic conflict and discrimination (Mlinar & Peček, 2023).

This study aimed to fill gaps in understanding the InS of preservice primary school teachers by assessing the levels of InS across its various dimensions. Additionally, building on previous studies, we identified factors related to the development of InS, specifically family socioeconomic status (SES), plurilingualism, interethnic friendship, and degree programme (Bachelor's or Master's). We assessed these factors for each of the dimensions of InS.

The study was carried out in Slovenia, where we sampled the 1st and 2nd study cycle students from all faculties of education in Slovenia, resulting in 215 preservice primary school teachers (211~98.14% female). They answered socio-demographic questions, indicated the languages spoken fluently (i.e., their plurilingualism) and interethnic friendships, and then completed the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS: Chen & Starosta, 2000), which was translated into Slovenian and adapted for preservice primary school teachers.

In order to determine the construct validity of the Slovenian ISS, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. The result was a Slovenian version of the ISS (ISS-S), which measures four dimensions of InS, namely interaction engagement ($\alpha=.676$), respect for cultural differences ($\alpha=.743$), interaction confidence ($\alpha=.778$) and interaction enjoyment ($\alpha=.649$). Linear regression analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between the factors we identified as potentially associated with the development of InS and the above four dimensions.

Results indicate high levels of interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences and interaction enjoyment, but lower interaction confidence. Interethnic friendship emerged in linear regression analyses as an antecedent of all four dimensions; SES of interaction enjoyment; plurilingualism of interaction confidence and—when not considering interethnic friendship—of interaction engagement. Our findings underscore the need to improve ITE programmes to strengthen the different dimensions of InS to better prepare preservice teachers for the challenges that intercultural interactions in pluralistic classrooms entail, for example by promoting interethnic friendships, opportunities for intercultural communication and language learning, and offering social and emotional skills training.

Keywords: intercultural sensitivity, preservice primary school teachers, interethnic friendship, plurilingualism, socioeconomic status

Exploring interculturality: The role of study abroad programmes in shaping cosmopolitan teachers in Mexico

PRESENTATION

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The proposal aims to explore the role of international mobility in developing cosmopolitan teachers within the context of Mexican teacher education. While traditional objectives of study abroad programs focused on enhancing global competencies, recent priorities have shifted towards understanding how these experiences contribute to teachers' understanding and teaching in and for interculturality. With Mexico's diverse educational landscape, the study investigates how preservice teachers' international experiences influence their ability to navigate and respond to heightened classroom interculturality once they enter the teaching profession. The conceptual framework is grounded in the idea of the cosmopolitan teacher (Tarc & Budrow, 2022), emphasizing intercultural capacities and global orientation rooted on cosmopolitan learning (Rizvi, 2009), and incorporates Walsh's categorization of interculturality—relational, functional, and critical (Walsh, 2010). The project also explores how mobility in the Global South and North can influence teachers' perspectives of interculturality.

This qualitative study reports on an ongoing data analysis coming from interviews with internationally experienced Mexican in-service teachers. It utilizes a matched-comparison strategy for purposeful sampling and snowballing recruiting 40 participants (20 with experience in the Global South and 20 participants with experience in the Global north). Themes emerging from the analysis are followed by a matrix comparison of cases.

The study is expected to provide insights into how study abroad experiences influence Mexican preservice teachers' intercultural competence and their development into cosmopolitan educators. The findings could guide stakeholders in teacher education and internationalization bodies in making informed decisions regarding the implementation and cost-effectiveness of preservice teacher mobility programs.

Keywords: cosmopolitan teacher, interculturality, study abroad, teacher education, global south

**Is intercultural mediation a skill that all inservice teachers should have nowadays?
A new professional role emerges? The lens on the refugee field in Greece -**

POSTER PRESENTATION

Nektaria Palaiologou, Victoria Prekate, Alexandra De Natale & Eleni Tsekourlouki

School of Humanities Hellenic Open University

Intercultural mediation is an important service towards the social inclusion of refugee/migrant populations and the prevention of prejudice and discrimination in host societies. Is this a new skill that all in-service teachers should have nowadays? Or is this a newly emerging professional role?

In Greece, the Unit of Social Inclusion of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in partnership with specialized NGOs—in response to the widespread need for intercultural mediators in health, education, social and legal services—has trained, certified and employed a large number of professionals across the country, through.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the multifaceted role of intercultural mediation in education, how it facilitates access of refugee /migrant populations to educational services, how it encourages interaction and understanding between parents and teachers and how it assists students in integrating into the multicultural reality nowadays. Through interviews ($N = 20$) with experienced teachers and education personnel, the study aims to expole the needs for intercultural mediators in schools and suggestions regarding their multifaceted and significant role.

According to the first results of the study, the teachers assert that in multicultural multilingual schools today there is need for intercultural mediation services, specially trained teachers or a teacher-expert trained exclusively in the role of intercultural mediator.

Keywords: intercultural mediators, intercultural mediation, inclusive policies

New needs, new educational policies in the vocational training for young refugees: The case of Greece

PRESENTATION

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This study focuses on the vocational training offered to young refugees in Greece. Young refugees have limited access to Vocational training. It is mostly offered by NGOs and organizations of the private sector.

It is an original study addressed to 15 teachers (N) who follow post-graduate studies at a Public University in Greece, exploring new needs as well as new educational policies to support the vocational training addressed to young refugees.

The first results of the study show that all teachers acknowledged the urgent needs for developing new policies for the vocational training of young refugees, aiming at their inclusion at the labor force. Especially, for young refugees, 15 years plus, there is a need for a new scheme at the vocational schools in Greece.

A few teachers pointed out that vocational training provisions addressed to young refugees in central and Northern Europe could be adapted by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in Greece. Young refugees' employment is of great importance for them in order to survive, feel accepted and be active citizens.

The Ministry should support their integration and reinforce the Vocational Training and relevant services in the public sector. Communication and language lessons must be enriched with teaching practices that enhance language learning in the host country, aiming at the communication. Language and communication will help them have social contact and interaction with locals which is considered a stepping-stone in vocational training and integration. Moreover, ensuring vocational training and apprenticeship will facilitate refugees' integration and will keep them in Greece.

Moreover, teachers alleged that the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum should offer vocational training centers and social services to young refugees promoting in this way their integration in the Greek society and in the labor market.

Future research is needed to shed more light on how local communities and municipalities are involved in vocational training, to explore future measures and radical changes in this very important domain, in Greece.

Keywords: vocational training, refugees and immigrants, labour force

Fostering democratic citizenship through intercultural exchange: Integrating international mobility into civic education in Italian schools

PRESENTATION

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The “Competence Framework for a Culture of Democracy” (Council of Europe, 2018) by the Council of Europe reconceptualized civic education as a vehicle for fostering democratic citizenship, social justice, and global awareness. In alignment with these principles, the project presented here, designed by the Lab of School and Democratic Citizenship of the Milan-Bicocca University in collaboration with the “For Democratic School” Association, promoted and funded by Fondazione Intercultura for Intercultural Dialogue and International Youth Exchanges, integrates international secondary student mobility into democratic citizenship education. The program aims to enhance the learning experience for all students by intertwining civic education with the unique insights gained from student mobility.

Key objectives of the program include linking international mobility with authentic democratic and intercultural practices; encouraging constructive dialogues through different points of view; fostering a broad, critical perspective on students’ own social contexts as well as valuing and integrating the experiences of students with diverse cultural backgrounds. The program also aims to raise awareness of global social issues, deepen understanding of democratic institutions, and stimulate interest in active participation within the school and community.

Implemented from 2024 in 17 schools across Italy within a Training Research methodology (Asquini, 2018; Pastori, 2017), the program is designed as a flexible, adaptable model aligned with local school projects and responsive to students’ interests. Over its three-year structure, the program unfolds in three stages. In the first year, students engage in activities that promote curiosity about cultural perspectives and experiences, including migration and international mobility. The second year (currently in progress) focuses on debates and collaborative research projects that foster civic engagement and responsibility. The final year emphasizes public speaking, with students sharing their mobility experiences and presenting proposals for democratic improvement within their communities.

By integrating intercultural and democratic citizenship competence, this curriculum equips students and educators to navigate an interconnected world and actively contribute to social justice and democratic values. The innovative approach of the programme not only enriches civic education, but it also empowers students to become globally aware, inclusive citizens. This paper discusses early findings from the first year, reflecting on the challenges and opportunities in promoting a civic education that integrates democratic, international, and intercultural dimensions.

Keywords: intercultural education, student mobility, secondary education

When does cultural sensitivity become excessive sensitivity?

PRESENTATION

Ilana Paul-Binyamin & Vered Heruti

Beit Berl College

Key components of multicultural policies include “intercultural competence” and “intercultural sensitivity,” which entail effective interaction across cultures through awareness, cultural knowledge, respect, and behavior adaptation (Campinha-Bacote, 2002). Intercultural sensitivity, a subset of competence, emphasizes awareness of cultural differences, avoiding stereotyping and ethnocentrism, fostering empathy, and ensuring inclusion (Lustig & Koester, 2010; Hwang & Matsumoto, 2017).

Teacher educators teaching diverse students must develop this skill progressively, from basic respect and curiosity to functioning effectively in intercultural contexts, addressing verbal and non-verbal communication (Deardorff, 2006; Lustig & Koester, 2006). However, the boundary between sensitivity and excessive sensitivity, which may hinder teaching and learning, is unclear.

This study explores educators’ experiences and perceptions, focusing on how excessive sensitivity impacts teaching quality and learning outcomes for both minority and majority students—in this case, Arab and Jewish students.

The study adopts a qualitative methodology based on semi-structured interviews. The interviews focus on perceptions of working in a multicultural organization, experiences teaching diverse classrooms, instructional strategies addressing diversity in courses, and challenges of intercultural sensitivity, particularly in linguistic and visual-artistic contexts.

The research field is a teacher training college for Jewish and Arab educators. The study population includes 20 Jewish lecturers (from the majority group) and their approach to heterogeneous classrooms comprising both Jewish and Arab students. Data analysis will be conducted using thematic analysis, following Clarke and Braun (2017).

As we begin conducting interviews, we anticipate findings that explore lecturers’ perspectives in a multicultural college and illuminate the challenges of teaching in diverse classrooms, with a focus on fostering culturally sensitive pedagogy that supports minority students. This study is expected to contribute in two key areas:

Theoretical Contribution: While multiculturalism, intercultural competence, and sensitivity are widely studied globally, this research offers a nuanced perspective, critically examining the fine balance between cultural sensitivity and excessive sensitivity, particularly in its impact on minority students’ learning experiences.

Practical Contribution: Many institutions adopt multicultural policies to create inclusive and supportive spaces. This research seeks to enhance awareness and refine practices to ensure that cultural sensitivity is applied effectively, without inadvertently disadvantaging minority students. Such insights are critical for higher education.

Keywords: intercultural sensitivity, multicultural education, teacher education, minority students

Gen Z's conceptualization of culture: Implications for the EFL classroom

PRESENTATION

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University of Debrecen

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This paper investigates how Generation Z university students in Malaysia and Hungary conceptualize culture by analyzing short, 2–3-minute videos in which students introduce their cultures to each other. The videos were produced in the framework of a virtual exchange program which aimed to develop participants' intercultural communicative competence. Using multimodal content analysis, we found that how Gen Z students view culture is shared across the research contexts to a certain extent, due to this generation's unique characteristics. They are both collectivist and individualistic, and they are also globally connected as a result of being the first truly digital native generation.

Our findings also highlight another important discrepancy between how literature defines culture and how students conceptualize it. The participants of this study seem to be oblivious of the role power plays in culture (Causadias, 2020). This is surprising given the strong public-political activism of this generation, but it can be explained by the fact that the videos which provided our data were created in the framework of an educational task, and in an institutional setting that in both Hungary and Malaysia (and in many other countries, for that matter) has been encouraged to be apolitical. Discussing power and politics would be considered a sensitive issue, therefore these are usually avoided; materials are self-censored by teachers and classroom discussions are interrupted and cut short when they venture into political topics or other socially sensitive issues. This results in a lack of critical skills that would enable learners to differentiate ideas and ideologies and realize how cultural practices can be used to maintain power in a particular context. The fact that our research participants interpret politics and power to be concepts disconnected from culture calls for a more critical orientation in English as a Foreign Language teaching.

However, our data also indicate that there are additional significant differences between what participants consider to be part of culture in monocultural Hungary and multicultural Malaysia. While certain elements of culture are “invisible” in a monocultural context, these often index cultural identity for students in a multicultural context. This calls for a different approach to teaching intercultural communication in the EFL classroom and the paper concludes with five guiding principles for practitioners based on the empirical findings of the paper.

Keywords: conceptualization of culture, Generation Z, intercultural communication, multimodality, telecollaboration

Lessons learned from empowering language learners and teacher candidates to embrace their plurilingual repertoires: A duoethnography

PRESENTATION

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Taha Ertuğrul Kuzu

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In a duoethnography, two researchers document and discuss their experiences of adopting critical plurilingual pedagogies (Galante et al., 2022) in higher education by mutually unpacking their context-specific perspectives on plurilingualism in Canada and Germany. Robust ethnographic writing was co-authored based on multiple video-recorded sessions, e-mails, classroom reflections, and instant messaging conversations, among other data (Lowe & Lawrence, 2020).

In Canada, linguistically and culturally diverse teacher candidates (TCs) challenged their understandings of how English grammar should be taught through various course assignments, which allowed them to question pervasive ideologies such as adopting a monolingual native speaker model for learning. In a similar vein, research conducted in Southern Germany provides strong evidence of how TCs benefit when seeing examples of plurilingual students using their plurilingualism (Turkish and German) as a resource for understanding mathematical concepts. This allowed them to see newcomer languages as an asset rather than a limitation. Data analysis indicates that experiences from different contexts can be used to help sensitize pre-service teachers to country- and context-specific facets of plurilingualism, plurilingual identities and their own positionalities.

The similarities in both contexts acknowledge a diversity of concepts across languages, and among school children and TCs, which allows them to capitalize on their plurilingual repertoires (Cummins, 2024). A series of examples and ideas on how to engage with critical plurilingual pedagogies, as well as how these practices could benefit school children and student teachers, will be shared with the audience with the intention to take the conversation beyond the two co-authors.

Keywords: plurilingual education, multilingualism, linguistic diversity, language learners, teacher education

Cultural differences in the proficiency levels in the PISA exams in science and mathematics: The case of Arabs and Jewish students in Israel

POSTER PRESENTATION

Ghada Wattad

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In the context of modern society, education plays a pivotal role in the development of human capital and the realization of individual potential. One of its primary objectives is to bridge societal disparities by providing equal opportunities for all students. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) study, initiated by the OECD in 2000, assesses the performance of education systems worldwide, emphasizing reading, mathematics, and science (PISA, 2018). This research examines proficiency levels among 15-year-old Israeli students, focusing on the distribution of achievements, comparing Hebrew and Arabic-speaking students, and exploring international comparisons. An education policy that acknowledges the need to invest in disadvantaged populations and reduce disparities in society can lead to far-reaching social and economic changes: economic prosperity, improved quality of life, high levels of well-being, and the strengthening of social solidarity. Conversely, inadequate planning and underinvestment in disadvantaged populations and gap reduction could undermine the chances of entire groups to integrate into an equitable society and maintain their disadvantaged position (Ben Simon et al., 2023; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2012). The methodology of the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 2018 research involved the participation of 79 countries, including 35 OECD member countries, and approximately 29 million 15-year-old students from these countries and participating economic entities. The research protocol for PISA requires a sample of at least 150 schools in each country, with 6,300 participating students taking the computer-based exam. These sample sizes are consistent across all participating countries, regardless of whether the country is large, like the United States, or small, like Israel. In Israel, 174 schools participated, and approximately 7,545 students were sample (PISA, 2018). The findings from PISA 2018 reveal significant disparities in proficiency levels between Israel and high-achieving countries. In mathematics and science, over 60% of Israeli students fall into the lower proficiency levels (1 and 2), whereas successful countries have less than 27% in these levels. Conversely, only 6% of Israeli students reach the highest proficiency levels (5 and 6), compared to over 20% in successful countries (Chen & Wattad, 2023). When comparing Hebrew-speaking and Arabic-speaking students, Hebrew-speaking students perform at a level similar to the OECD average. In contrast, Arabic-speaking students lag significantly behind, with over two-thirds falling below proficiency level 2. The percentage of top performers (proficiency levels 5 and 6) among Hebrew-speaking students is 11%, while it is only 1% among Arabic-speaking students.

Keywords: education, PISA, achievement, differences, proficiency, culture

STRAND 2 | Language education: teaching methods, differentiated instruction, and individual differences

About the strand

This strand invites presentations and papers focused on aspects of language teaching and learning that involve differentiated instruction strategies catering to learners with varying proficiency levels, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds. Research on the impact of catering for individual learner's needs reflected in a variety of teaching methods and the development of intercultural competence among language learners is pertinent to this strand. Presentations may explore how language educators can effectively accommodate individual differences among students, including those related to cognitive abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and linguistic diversity. Furthermore, presentations may explore strategies for addressing specific learning challenges, such as language learning disabilities, and promoting the inclusion of marginalized or underrepresented student populations in language education settings. Overall, contributions to this strand aim to enhance language education practices to foster inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments.

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Greek language education in China: Greek teachers' embracing cross-cultural orientations

PRESENTATION

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In recent years, there has been a growing interest in learning Modern Greek (henceforth Greek) in China. Approximately 10 universities now offer Greek language programs for undergraduate studies. However, existing literature has largely overlooked the experiences of Greek language instructors within the Chinese context. To address this gap, our study, grounded in the Theory of translinguaging and translinguaging space (Li, 2011), explores how Greek teachers navigate the diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes that they encounter in Chinese higher education. Additionally, we examine how this dynamic process shapes their evolving multicultural epistemologies and pedagogical practices. Our research involved collecting narrative and multisemiotic data from six teachers of Greek origin working in various Greek language programs across four Chinese universities. Our analysis focuses on how these teachers utilize translinguaging as a generative space of simultaneity (Phyak, 2023). This concept encompasses the perceived, conceived, and lived dimensions, allowing instructors to develop their transcultural orientations and pedagogical practices. The data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2022). The findings reveal that teachers strategically harness diverse translinguaging spaces to navigate across multiple languages—Chinese, Greek, and English—and their associated cultures throughout their professional journeys. This dynamic engagement not only enhances their effectiveness in teaching Greek as a foreign language but also shapes their transcultural orientations. By exploring the unique teaching practices and transcultural orientations of instructors in less-widely taught language programs, our study aims to inform the design of tailored training initiatives to better support language teachers in transcultural contexts.

Keywords: Greek language, foreign language teaching, China, Chinese higher education, translinguaging, cross-cultural orientations

Walking on a tightrope: The role of motivation, autonomy and positive emotions in shaping anxiety (presentation)

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Since researching the role of anxiety in language learning has been around for almost half a century (Chastain, 1975; Scovel, 1978), considerable knowledge has accumulated about the ways anxiety is likely to influence the language learning process and its outcomes (Botes et al., 2020; Horwitz, 2011; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Teimouri et al., 2019). However, much less is known about how anxiety is related to other factors influencing language learning success like motivation, autonomy, or positive emotions, which might account for the complexity of individual characteristics instead of merely describing linear tendencies (see e.g., Zhou et al., 2024). Hence, the aim of our study is to analyse how unique combinations in learners' motivation, autonomy and positive emotions contribute to their anxiety scores by offering complex learner profiles and subsequent impact analysis on anxiety.

The participants of our study were 1152 secondary school language learners (467 males, 682 females, 3 missing) in Hungary, who studied in 11 secondary schools in different parts of the country. Their age ranged between 14 and 20 ($M = 16$, $SD = 1.22$, 3 missing), and Hungarian was their first language. They had all been learning English as a first or second foreign language at the time of the data collection, and their level of English ranged between A2 and C1. Their motivation, autonomy, and their various emotions reported in connection with their English classes were measured with the help of a validated questionnaire. Then, cluster analysis was employed to create profiles based on our learners' motivation, autonomy and positive emotions, forming three or four groups representing each dimension. The resulting groupings were then entered into a univariate GLM to predict the anxiety levels of the learners.

The results of the three-way ANOVA showed significant main effects for the motivation-, autonomy-, and positive emotion-profiles on the anxiety scores, two significant second-order interactions between motivation and autonomy and motivation and positive emotions, and a significant third-order interaction between motivation, autonomy and learners' positive emotions. It appears that learners' position on the motivation, autonomy, and positive emotion profiles jointly determined the level of anxiety experienced by them. These findings draw attention to the fact that simple linear relationship cannot always be used to faithfully describe the relationships between ID variables, but a more nuanced approach is needed to capture the complexity of their interconnections.

Keywords: anxiety, language learning motivation, learner autonomy, positive emotions

Catering for individual differences through alternative assessment in language education (presentation)

Márta Barbarics

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The advancements of the 21st century necessitate a paradigm shift in education (Trilling & Fadel, 2009), which has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic that spotlighted several problems education systems have been struggling with. For example in Hungary, “most teachers identified assessment and grading as the most problematic issue during remote education” (Monostori, 2021, p. 11). Despite the fact that countries theoretically aim for putting students at the centre by taking into consideration individual differences and applying differentiated instruction, assessment practices remain mainly standardized and summative (OECD, 2013). Alternative assessment has long been trying to address this discrepancy (Hamayan, 1995) through different approaches from educational assessment (Gipps, 1994) to assessment for learning (Earl, 2006) through classroom-based evaluation (Genesee & Upshur, 1996) and many more. This paper presents an alternative assessment method based on gamification (Deterding et al., 2011), which was researched in secondary language education (Barbarics, 2023) then applied in a university context. The aim of the paper is to see students’ perceptions of alternative assessment in an intercultural university context with special attention to students’ individual differences.

The author adapted the gamification-based assessment system to tertiary language education as part of an exploratory action research (Burns, 1999) in a Hungarian university. Following each semester, students ($n = 135$) filled in anonymous questionnaires inquiring about what they liked or disliked, which elements they found useful, what they would have changed, and so on. The qualitative content analysis for this paper applies the constant comparative method with some preset codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in order to focus on students’ individual differences. In addition, a further anonymous questionnaire is going to be administered among the international students of the courses to include the aspect of individual differences from an intercultural point of view.

Results so far prove that the applied gamification-based assessment system is capable of catering for students’ individual differences in both secondary and tertiary language education. In addition, it provides teachers with more flexibility for differentiated instruction that are in line with students’ needs. Answers to the last questionnaire for international students are expected to shed light on possible cultural differences and how the aforementioned assessment system caters for students’ needs from an intercultural point of view as well.

Keywords: alternative assessment, gamification, individual differences, language education

Improvisation as a tool of enhancing cooperation and communication skills in the EFL classroom: A case study (presentation)

Erika Bertók & Andrea Puskás

J. Selye University, Faculty of Education

Modern language teaching is constantly looking for creative and innovative approaches and methods that help to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Several research findings have confirmed the positive effects of drama techniques in EFL classes (see e.g., Maley & Duff, 1982; Swale, 2009; van de Water et al., 2015). The technique of improvisation in educational drama is an efficient tool of enhancing cooperation and communication skills, two of the key competences of successful learners. Life-like situations, where learners need to use their own word choices and form sentences alone, without any previous written text, encourage learners to communicate creatively and confidently. It encourages learners to pay attention to each other, they need to cooperate and interact with peers in order to fulfill a specific task. Learners are also engaged emotionally and physically during language production and in their own language learning process. Practicing improvisation requires a supportive environment, where all learners feel safe. The paper investigates the role of improvisation in the EFL classroom in the higher level of primary school in Slovakia in schools with Hungarian language of instruction. The main aim is to find out both teachers' and learners' attitude on whether incorporating improvisation in the EFL classroom helps to improve cooperation and communication skills as well as learners' confidence. The paper presents the findings of a case study and highlights the most significant implications for teaching EFL in the higher level of primary school.

Keywords: improvisation, educational drama, vocabulary, communication skills, English as a foreign language, case study

Creating together for navigating social change: Collaborative writing for and by students from different socio-cultural backgrounds

PRESENTATION

Csanád Bodó, Anikó Fehérvári, Gergely Szabó & Krisztián Széll

Eötvös Loránd University

Current research has shown that systematic and regular individual writing activities have positive effects that can influence a range of literacy-related competencies, including writing skills and reading comprehension (Jouhar & Rouphey, 2021). However, there is little research on whether these effects can be induced in less literate learners (Lee & Shallert, 2016) and whether these effects are present when students do writing exercises together rather than individually (cf. Svenlin & Sørhaug, 2023). In our study, supported by the Research Programme for Public Education Development by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, we focus on the significant differences in the literacy skills of Hungarian secondary school students in relation to social inequalities and on the possibilities of implementing new pedagogical methods navigating social change. In this talk, we present our first findings of a mixed-methods investigation of a collaborative writing intervention.

During our project, we are developing a 12-week-long programme revolving around collaborative writing activities, in which student pairs were created from different socio-cultural backgrounds based on the class or the school participants attend to. During the so-called “reciprocal” collaborative writing (Sharples, 1999, p. 170–172), students interact with each other and make joint decisions while producing a written text for which they share responsibility and authorship (Storch, 2013; 2019). To test our programme, we conducted an intervention in the 2023/2024 academic year in collaboration with 5 high schools, involving over 100 students. The quasi-experimental set up was based on delayed design with an intervention and a control group. The pre- and post-measurements included student background questionnaires, reading comprehension tests, and individual writing exercises. Students’ attitudes were also examined through post-writing questionnaires. In a sub-group, ethnographic observations and student interactions were also recorded during the intervention.

Based on repeated ANOVA analysis, according to our assumption, the intervention increases students’ acceptance of each other and their ability to cooperate, it reduces their prejudices, and positively affects their reading comprehension skills and creative writing skills. Our analyses will reveal results, stratified by gender and socio-economic background, that identify key factors, processes, and dimensions, contributing to the effectiveness of the intervention. These findings could serve as a basis for wider dissemination and application of the intervention.

Keywords: collaborative writing, literacy, mixed-methods, reciprocal collaborative writing, socio-cultural differences

“Bella” and terrible Italia: How to deconstruct stereotypes through an intercultural perspective

PRESENTATION

Caterina Calicchio

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Intercultural language education is a relatively new field of study emerging from the intersection of critical pedagogy, cultural studies, and intercultural communication. It posits diversity as the primary driving force behind intercultural language learning, acknowledging that each individual carries a unique cultural background that profoundly influences how they learn and use a foreign language.

This concept needs to be contextualized within various fields. For example, one could consider the cultural diversity of community members and the different types of culture to be taught in second or foreign language courses. For a long time, foreign language teaching has focused on the transmission of a single type of culture, implicitly assuming it to be representative of a “national” culture. However, in an increasingly globalized world, this monocultural perspective is becoming less tenable. There is a growing need to adopt an intercultural perspective, even in second language acquisition (SLA), which broadens our horizons and is grounded in the individual learner’s identity. In the field of second language teaching, particularly Italian, the intercultural perspective has yet to become the primary focus, as evidenced by the image of culture presented in most textbooks.

This research seeks to examine how a specific teaching activity can promote intercultural competence among language learners, focusing on enhancing their awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills. The study analyses a teaching unit that employed positive and negative publicity of Italy and Italians abroad. The study was carried out within an Italian L2 class of B1 level at the University for Foreigners in Perugia, composed by nine students of various nationalities. The students took part in interactive activities, individually and in pairs, and at the conclusion of the study they received a logbook in which to provide feedback. The classroom activity was accompanied by a questionnaire and an interview (based on some Discourse Completion Tasks) in which only a few students participated. Through the observation of the course of the teaching unit and the logbooks, the study investigates how the students dealt with the issue of cultural stereotypes.

The results obtained highlight how, thanks to a critical approach and intercultural comparison, students were able to deconstruct the most common stereotypes and develop a more nuanced and complex understanding of Italian culture. This research represents a first step towards a broader project aimed at designing further teaching activities, always oriented towards developing the intercultural competence of L2 Italian learners.

Keywords: intercultural education, second language acquisition, cultural identity, Italian L2

Education in minority contexts: Language death through inclusion?

PRESENTATION

Andrea Carlà & Mattia Zeba

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South Tyrol, an Italian province with a significant German and Ladin-speaking population has recently risen as a prime example of the complexities of implementing mother-tongue education in an increasingly linguistically diverse environment. South Tyrol's education system is divided into Italian-language, German-language, and trilingual schools for Ladin speakers, a structure designed to safeguard linguistic diversity and promote bilingual proficiency. However, recent socio-demographic changes, including a rise in mixed-language families and an influx of foreign students, are putting pressure on this system, particularly within German-language schools. Italian-speaking parents increasingly enroll their children in German-speaking schools due to the high socioeconomic value of the German language, while demographic shifts have increased linguistic diversity within the student body. These changes have sparked public debate and political polarization, raising concerns among German-speaking groups about potential erosion of their linguistic and cultural identity.

This year the issue has found a new apex when a German elementary school in South Tyrol's capital city Bolzano/Bozen created a "special" class for students from foreign and Italian-speaking families. The decision has raised several criticisms, from accusations of racism to experts' comments that such classes are counterproductive; the initiative has been eventually rejected by the Provincial Government. However, debates continue, revealing a deeper conflict between a traditional nationalist conception of language, where a community's identity is tied to a single language, and a more inclusive approach that values multilingualism and cultural integration.

In this light this paper pursues a twofold goal. First, it aims at tracing a genealogy of the evolution of the South Tyrolean education system in regards to multilingual education and of various measures and initiatives taken by schools to deal with the presence of an increasing diverse student body. Second, focusing on the most recent debate on the creation of special classes, it will reflect on how to resolve the situation and adjust South Tyrolean school system to the challenges of today's global society while continuing to guarantee an adequate level of minority protection. Overall, we argue that it is necessary to recognize that the issue is extremely complex, and any solution must be shared, carefully considered, and long-term, integrating the interests and needs arising from various levels and stakeholders, ultimately rejecting the simplicity of binaries: yes versus *no*, right versus wrong.

Keywords: South Tyrol, bilingual education, minority, segregation, inclusion

Towards inclusive education in Italy: Addressing systemic barriers and enhancing teacher preparedness for special educational needs

PRESENTATION

Maria Concetta Carruba and Alessandro Barca

Pegaso University

The Italian school system is internationally recognized for its commitment to inclusive education, primarily due to comprehensive legislation supporting the rights of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) (Ianes & Bellacicco, 2020). This legislative framework aligns with global standards, like those in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), emphasizing inclusion as essential to educational equity. Despite this, significant implementation challenges remain. These challenges mirror global issues in translating inclusive education policies into effective practices, as noted by Florian (2014) and Ainscow and Sandill (2010).

This study addresses these gaps by identifying systemic and cultural barriers to inclusion within Italian schools. Theoretical framework builds on research advocating for a paradigm shift in school organization and teacher attitudes toward inclusive pedagogy (De Santis & Marconi, 2021; Aiello & Giaconi, 2024). Drawing on Ainscow's (2020) inclusive education model, it suggests that schools should integrate SEN as a core component rather than an add-on, an approach supported by Booth and Ainscow (2002), who argue that successful inclusion requires creating environments that meet diverse needs.

An exploratory mixed-methods study was conducted with 4,512 teachers enrolled in the 30-CFU qualification program, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to capture teachers' perspectives on inclusion. A qualitative-quantitative questionnaire enabled participants to report both statistical and experiential data on the challenges they faced. Key themes included structural obstacles like insufficient SEN teacher allocation, lack of inclusive institutional practices, and limited support from school leadership. These align with findings by Rouse and Florian (2012), who emphasize that effective inclusion requires both school-wide commitment and continuous professional development.

Preliminary findings reveal that Italian teachers experience substantial barriers, particularly in training and resource allocation. Respondents highlighted the need for improved training on specific disabilities, active learning methodologies, and behavior management. They also emphasized the importance of collaborative alliances among schools, families, and communities to support SEN students holistically, echoing Slee's (2011) call for community collaboration in inclusive systems.

The findings highlight the urgent need for cultural and structural changes in Italian schools. Teachers must adopt a transformative "habitus mentalis," viewing inclusion as integral to teaching. As Booth et al. (2016) argue, inclusive education succeeds when ingrained in school culture with a shared commitment to diversity. Thus, the study advocates reforms that emphasize continuous professional development, SEN resources, and stronger collaboration among school stakeholders, aligning with international standards (Ainscow, 2020; Florian, 2014).

Keywords: special educational needs, teacher training, school-family-community alliances

Intercultural competence and L2 Motivation: bridging two constructs in foreign language teaching (FLT) in migration contexts

PRESENTATION

Bruno Costa, Jorge Pinto & Nélia Alexandre School of Arts and Humanities, Centre of Linguistics, University of Lisbon

Can an intercultural approach predict higher motivation and, in tandem, higher intercultural competence amongst migrant learners? Are there any correlations between these two measures? What aspects of learners' motivation are more salient in their L2 learning process embedded in an intercultural teaching strategy? These are some of the questions the field of L2 teaching and learning is confronted with in contemporary societies and that this study attempts to answer. Since the "intercultural turn" in foreign language teaching (FLT) in the 1990s, there has been increasing concern for teaching not only formal and functional knowledge of the L2 added by its associated culture, but mainly for combining linguistic competence with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness required for learners to act between cultures (Byram, 1997; 2021). Simultaneously, a shift towards a more situated analysis of L2 motivation has been proposed, as illustrated by the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) (Dörnyei, 2005).

By adopting an experimental design with pre- and post-test self-report questionnaires and an intervention based on an intercultural communicative teaching strategy designed by adapting Borghetti's (2013) integrated methodological model, our study seeks to delve into the intricacies of the intercultural contact–L2 motivation relationship. It also aims to help fill the existing gap in studies focusing on languages other than English (LOTE) and to contribute to the understanding of the L2MSS in classrooms with multilingual/multicultural learners, notably migrants, which, in the present study, are mostly from the South-Asian subcontinent and hosted in the Portuguese society. The context under investigation is a group of 20 adult learners registered in a 150-hour Portuguese-as-a-host-language (PHL) course in a non-profitable migrant association in the Lisbon area. Participants are at a beginner level (A1/A2) and are being instructed in a non-formal setting under the program Português Língua de Acolhimento (PHL).

The analysis of the quantitative data confirms the link between higher self-reported intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 2021) and higher self-reported L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2005), stressing, in particular, the prominence of the L2 learning experience (L2LE) in this relationship when compared to the two self-guides (ideal L2 self/ought-to L2 self). An additional outcome of this study is its contribution to a better understanding of the L2LE, whose need has been denounced as urgent by several scholars (Al-Hoorie, 2018; Csizér, 2019; Dörnyei, 2019; Li, 2023). Implications for classroom practice are discussed in the end.

Keywords: intercultural communicative competence, migration, motivation, L2 teaching and learning, Portuguese-as-a-host-language

Teaching Italian L2 and non-formal education: First results to build an individualised tutoring model

PRESENTATION

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University of Milano-Bicocca

This study fits into the ecological perspective of human development, by which is meant a dynamic learning process that takes place in the environment. In this framework, the intervention of the experienced adult can facilitate the learning process, performing a function known as “scaffolding,” i.e., providing support to enable learners to participate meaningfully and to be guided towards skill acquisition. The tutor has the role of guiding reasoning and modelling solution strategies, encouraging progressive internalisation and appropriate imitation. The role of communication for cognitive development is decisive: the literature shows that dialogic communication, modulated to systematically adapt to the contingencies of the student’s tasks, needs, skills, and potential, is a favourable condition for conceptual development. Individualised tutoring interventions could prove to be central to L2 acquisition, a process triggered by the communicative needs of the speaker who encounters several critical issues of meaningful and procedural learning.

The contribution presents an exploratory pilot study in a non-formal education context aimed at laying the foundations for an educational tutoring model for children and youths who have not yet fully acquired Italian L2. The context is that of “L’ABC del quartiere,” an extracurricular study support service in the San Siro area (a multicultural district of Milan) that welcomes students, mainly Arabic-speaking, aged between 8 and 13. The study presents a focus on one case in particular, chosen as paradigmatic of certain characteristics of students with migrant backgrounds in school (low or no Italian language levels, generalised developmental disorders, first generation) following an assessment of the socio-linguistic abilities of the children enrolled in the service. The aim is to investigate the most effective tutoring process for improving intercultural communicative competence. The grounded analysis of the evidence gathered over an 8-month period (s.y. 2024/2025) through qualitative tools (operators’ diaries, audio-recordings of activities) are triangulated with the results of the assessment of acquired linguistic-communicative competence.

The results will make it possible to outline a hypothesis of an individual tutoring model, the effectiveness of which will have to be tested by designing interventions for other children in both formal and non-formal educational contexts. The analysis of the data will show the characteristics of the adult’s intervention (in terms of both teaching design and scaffolding) in relation to the language-communicative acquisition process, highlighting strengths and weaknesses and pointing out whether particular tutoring modes correspond to an evolution of the interlanguage stages towards post-basic varieties.

Keywords: tutoring, Italian L2, non-formal education, students with a migrant background, exploratory pilot study

Using differentiated instruction for EFL learners with disabilities

PRESENTATION

Daniela DiGregorio

Wilson College

Students who are learning English as a foreign language (EFL) might experience a delay with second language acquisition due to their disabilities. This presentation is a literature review with focus on what types of obstacles students with disabilities face and how EFL teachers can provide instructional accommodations for students with auditory, visual, physical and cognitive disabilities. Participants will become familiar with various devices of Assistive Technology (AT) and its integration into practice. The presenter will discuss differentiated instruction, which is conducted by varying the content, process, assessment and learning environment (Drew, 2023).

In regard to learning obstacles, English learners (ELs) with auditory impairments may not hear every day sounds and full conversations and as a result will have a hard time following directions, acquiring new English grammar, pronouncing new words correctly and writing class notes (Gupta, 2022). It is important that teachers use microphones and text-to-read computer programs to assist students. The next example is an English learner with visual impairment who may take longer to read and complete assignments in EFL classes (Resilient Educator, 2023). EFL teachers should provide audio-recorded materials and audio feedback as well as extended time to complete assignments. Students with visual impairments will also benefit from large print and electronic materials that can be read by a computer program such as Text to Speech Reader Online. Students with physical disability may not be able to stand, walk or sit in a certain chair, so teachers should implement flexible seating arrangements and eliminate any barriers in their EFL classrooms (Covey, 2024). English learners with cognitive disabilities will respond well to routine, a consistent teaching style and EFL learning tasks that are divided into small steps, so they are not overwhelming. EFL teachers should also embed visuals, graphic organizers, diagrams, and realia to make their instruction more comprehensible. If EFL teachers have ELs with emotional disorders, it is beneficial to have a quiet place where a student is able to calm down. EFL teachers can use journaling activities in which ELs can express their emotions (We Are Teachers, 2024).

Overall, EFL teachers should differentiate not only their lesson content and teaching process but also assessment which needs to be modified based on students' English skills. Such EFL assessments can include sentence starters, word banks, graphic organizers, simplified English and less multiple-choice answers (Wright, 2015). Providing appropriate accommodations for ELs with disabilities is an important part of classroom inclusion.

Keywords: English learners, cognitive and physical disabilities, differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications, second language acquisition

Characteristics of English learners

POSTER PRESENTATION

Daniela DiGregorio

Wilson College

This is a literature review about different types of English learners (ELs) who are acquiring English as their foreign language. The first type of students is refugee ELs who fled their country due to war, violence or a lack of freedom. These students cannot return to their native country. Refugee ELs experience many challenges in new educational settings due to limited schooling, poor living conditions, war trauma or post-traumatic stress. Their acculturation and acquisition process will be slower. The second type is immigrant ELs whose parents voluntarily decided to leave their country in search of a better life. Some immigrants may bring with them a wealth of knowledge and easily transfer their literacy from previous schools. This is called positive transfer. Other students find learning English challenging, especially if their native language is distant from English. Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Arabic are considered more distant from English than Romance languages (Spanish or French). Teachers might notice negative transfer when ELs transfer their native writing style, syntax, and grammar into English (Wright, 2019). The third type is migrant ELs whose parents work in agricultural industries. Migrant students usually get little help from their parents who have a low educational background. Frequent moves during the school year and many socioeconomic disadvantages have a negative impact on children's academics. As a result, these students have the highest rate of school dropouts. The fourth type is internationally adopted ELs who relocate to be with new English-speaking parents. Commonly, internationally adopted children acquire English faster because of full English immersion and support from adoptive parents; however, some international adoptees might have physical disabilities or learning delays due to poor nutrition and inadequate living conditions in the orphanages. The fifth type is Generation 1.5 ELs. These students were born in an English-speaking country (e.g., USA, Canada, UK, etc.) but their dominant language is not English because of their bilingual home environment. The name of Generation 1.5 is connected to students' cultural feelings of being between first and second generation of immigrants (Fleischer, 2017). ELs who are 1.5 generation students face challenges such as less knowledge of grammar rules, limited phonemic awareness, or weak exposure to reading in English which has a negative influence on their writing skills (Fleisher, 2017). By knowing their cultural identity, socioeconomic background, linguistic challenges, and former educational systems, English teachers will be able to develop better strategies for effective instruction and provide appropriate accommodations.

Keywords: refugee English learners, immigrant English learners, migrant English learners, internationally adopted English learners, generation 1.5 English learners, English teaching strategies and accommodations, second language acquisition

Deserving!? Using photovoice to document a first generation of academic education as a social category

PRESENTATION

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Sapir Academic College

Meny Malka

Ben-Gurion University

In Israel, the category of first-generation students has historically received limited attention in both public debates and academic studies. However, over the last decade, several initiatives have emerged with the goal of raising awareness of this issue within both the public and academic spheres. As part of these ongoing efforts, the current research project was initiated. The research aims to:

1. establish a group-dialogue framework to document the experiences of participants as first-generation academic students;
2. identify barriers, challenges, strengths, and resources encountered by participants in their academic journey;
3. use photovoice and the category of first generation students as a methodology and social category.

The research employed the photovoice project as a community-based participatory research methodology. Eleven graduate students, originating from marginalized ethnic communities and being the first in their families to pursue higher education, participated in the project. The study consisted of 16 recorded and transcribed meetings, during which 115 photovoices were collected. Data analysis encompassed categorical and polytextual content analysis methods.

The participants' lived-experiences yielded five key themes: 1) The compensatory time; Feelings of threat that fade over time; 2) Reducing gaps 24/7: a constant feeling of gaps that need to be reduced; 3) To feel like a guest - a sense of foreignness in the academy; 4) Family and tradition: a reflection on the house where we grew up; 5) Compensatory spaces: to be ambassadors of the family.

The findings highlight the challenges and structural barriers encountered by first-generation academic students, alongside the coping mechanisms and practices they employ in their journey towards becoming academics. Throughout this process, identity formation occurs through the interplay of past experiences and future aspirations, as well as feelings of belonging and foreignness. The results underscore the importance of establishing reflective environments where the psychological and social experiences of first-generation students are acknowledged and validated. Additionally, normalizing their emotions and extracting valuable insights are crucial steps in supporting their continued progression within academia. The findings also reveal the challenges faced by first-generation academic students, alongside their coping strategies. Identity formation occurs through past experiences and future aspirations, highlighting the need for supportive environments that validate their experiences and extract valuable insights to aid their academic journey.

Keywords: photovoice, diversity, intersectionality, first in family, first generation of higher education

Promoting individualized optimal learning and collaborative learning in English education: Students' perceptions of the use of digital English textbooks

PRESENTATION

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The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) in Japan promotes the “GIGA School Concept” to foster “individualized optimal learning” and “collaborative learning” by integrating ICT across schools—an essential shift for students in the Society 5.0 era. This initiative aims to provide one digital device per student in elementary and junior high schools, enhancing independent, interactive, and deep learning while supporting students with special needs. A 2022 MEXT survey on education informatization found that digital textbooks for instructors are used in 95.1% of junior high schools and 94.3% of elementary schools, with 99.1% of schools using digital textbooks for learners at both levels. However, research on their impact remains limited. This study aims to explore students' perceptions of using English digital textbooks and to examine ways to support optimal, collaborative learning tailored to individual abilities, along with enhancing intercultural understanding through digital tools.

A survey (via Google Forms) on attitudes toward the use of digital textbooks was conducted from late April to early May 2024, shortly after the start of the new school year, among fifth and sixth graders of elementary schools and junior high school students who have been receiving English education at schools affiliated with Hokkaido University of Education, Hakodate. The number of respondents was 130 elementary school students and 287 junior high school students (417 in total). English teachers' perceptions of digital textbooks were also investigated. The same questionnaire will be conducted at the end of the school year, from January to February 2025, to compare the results with those at the beginning of the school year, and to examine the relationship between students' perceptions and classroom practices. Additionally, qualitative data was collected through class observations and interviews to explore the contextual meanings behind these perceptions.

Although digital textbooks are provided, students still prefer paper textbooks for most English learning activities. However, they show positive attitudes toward “looking up the meanings of words and texts,” “listening to the pronunciation of English words and sentences,” and “practicing reading aloud English words and sentences.” The students were categorized into three groups: those preferring paper, those interested in digital resources, and those who wanted a blend of both. This study will explore how to ensure individualized optimal learning in classrooms, considering students' interests and abilities, providing practical classroom examples, and offering strategies to promote intercultural understanding.

Keywords: English education, digital textbooks, individualized optimal learning, collaborative learning, intercultural understanding

Supporting English as a foreign language learners on the autism spectrum

PRESENTATION

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Recently, teachers and teacher trainees have been experiencing that there are more learners with autism spectrum “disorder” (ASD) than diagnosed, and there are diagnosed ASD students who can be and are therefore integrated into a school community. Nevertheless, teachers often do not receive support concerning the difficulties these learners experience and/or ways to accommodate these learners. This workshop has a more practical than theoretical orientation, as it aims to provide an opportunity to discuss the challenges that teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) may experience when teaching learners on the autism spectrum. Without aiming to provide a comprehensive overview of autism, this interactive session is designed to create a space for educators to share experiences and ideas to create a more inclusive classroom environment when working with students on the spectrum. The session will start by discussing some of the most common misconceptions about autism, and then some information relevant to teachers will be highlighted. The second part of the workshop provides a background for discussing the meanings of concepts often used concerning ASD (e.g., meltdown, masking, stimming, and so on). Then, practical teaching strategies will be proposed based on the presenter’s experiences from teaching and a variety of teacher training sessions focusing on teaching learners with ASD in an inclusive secondary school. These strategies have been discussed with several school psychologists and pedagogical assistants focussing on ASD. The session offers takeaways to deal with real-life difficulties teachers might face to create a classroom atmosphere where students on the spectrum may feel a bit safer and better understood.

Keywords: autism spectrum disorder, teaching English as a foreign language, inclusion, differentiated instruction

Task engagement in the language learning classroom: The importance of students' self-efficacy and collective-efficacy

PRESENTATION

Justin Harris

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In recent years, engagement has begun to be seen as an important variable in the language learning classroom (Hiver et. al., 2024). Although motivation indicates a learner's desire to complete a task, engagement can show how a learner behaved during a task (Hiver & Wu, 2023). Self-efficacy (SE) is a personal belief in one's own ability to successfully complete a task, and it has been shown to be a powerful predictor of learning behavior (Bandura, 1997). However, most tasks in the language classroom are not completed individually, but in groups. Therefore, along with SE, collective efficacy (CE), an individual's perception of the ability of their group to complete a task (Bandura, 2000), becomes an important consideration for teachers. Despite its potential importance, it has received little attention in language learning research.

This paper reports on a study conducted in compulsory English classes with first-year science majors ($n = 78$) in a Japanese university. The students were assigned to small groups of four that were fixed for a single semester and who completed a series of discussion tasks. Perceptions of SE and CE were measured throughout the semester, and tasks were recorded, transcribed, and analysed at the middle and end of semester. Rasch analysis was used to establish that SE and CE were distinct constructs in the minds of participants. Following this, tasks were analysed to establish the level of learner engagement. Speaking time was used to represent behavioral engagement, and follow-up questions were used to show cognitive engagement in tasks. Finally, regression models were constructed to investigate the relationship between SE, CE and behavioral and cognitive engagement in tasks. Results showed that SE and CE clearly loaded onto two different dimensions, suggesting that they were distinct constructs in the minds of the participants. Regression analyses showed that SE was a significant predictor of behavioral engagement in both the mid-term and final discussion tasks, and it also predicted cognitive engagement in the final task. The results suggest that it is SE rather than CE that predicts student engagement in discussion tasks. Teachers should therefore focus on approaches that will maximize student SE. For example, it is important for teachers to provide students with tasks that they can successfully complete and to positively emphasize their progress. Although this study is a useful first step towards understanding SE, CE, and task engagement, future studies should consider how task type may influence this relationship.

Keywords: engagement, self-efficacy, collective efficacy, tasks, language learning

Exploring post-COVID willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among English majors: An interview study in Hungarian tertiary education

PRESENTATION

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Previous research demonstrates that willingness to communicate (WTC) significantly influences second language (L2) use, with higher WTC associated with increased language use and improved learning outcomes (Yashima, 2002). Initially developed in first language (L1) studies, WTC gained attention in L2 acquisition research in the 1990s. MacIntyre et al. (1998) defined L2 WTC as the “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” and emphasized that L2 WTC should be “the ultimate goal of the learning process.” Extensive research has examined WTC in Western contexts (MacIntyre & Wang, 2021) and non-Western regions such as Japan (Yashima, 2002), China (Chen et al., 2022), Saudi Arabia and Morocco (Bensalem et al., 2023), and Vietnam (Bui et al., 2022). However, limited research has explored EFL learners’ WTC in Hungarian higher education, particularly among English majors. This study aims to investigate the factors influencing Hungarian English majors’ WTC in academic and informal settings to inform supportive educational strategies.

This study employed a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews with 11 English major students at a Hungarian university, including both Hungarian and international participants. This diversity offered insights into varied perspectives on willingness to communicate (WTC) in English within the Hungarian context. The 30–45-minute interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent to ensure accuracy. Designed to explore WTC both inside and outside the classroom, the interviews also examined factors influencing students’ communication behaviours. Thematic data analysis followed Creswell’s (2009) guidelines for systematic coding and theme development, identifying recurring patterns and unique viewpoints. This qualitative method provided a nuanced understanding of students’ communicative attitudes and behaviors, enriching the findings on factors shaping WTC in Hungarian higher education.

The study indicates that English majors’ willingness to communicate (WTC) in Hungarian higher education is shaped by various factors, including classroom atmosphere, topic familiarity, interpersonal ease, confidence, interlocutors, motivation, emotions, and personality. WTC is higher in structured academic settings, especially with supportive peers or teachers, where judgment is minimal, but it declines in large classrooms due to anxiety and perceived proficiency differences. Career aspirations enhance WTC, particularly outside academic contexts. Additionally, students favor face-to-face interactions over online communication, as they enable more natural and confident self-expression, fostering better engagement and participation in discussions.

Keywords: EFL, willingness to communicate (WTC), post-covid English majors, interview study, Hungarian tertiary education

Harnessing the potential of technology for differentiated instruction: A qualitative study in the Hungarian K-12 TEFL context

PRESENTATION

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The potential of technology to support differentiated instruction (DI) has gained increased interest in recent years, with the concept of technology-enhanced differentiated instruction (TEDI) now recognised as part of the professional discourse (Haymon & Wilson, 2020). To date, however, its implementation in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) is not yet widely studied. This qualitative research seeks to explore common practices among innovative users of TEDI in the Hungarian K-12 TEFL context. More specifically, using Tomlinson's (2014) model of DI as its theoretical framework, it examines how technology can be used to differentiate the content, process, product, and learning environment, while also identifying features of technology that help teachers “work ‘smarter’... rather than trying to work harder” (Stanford et al., 2010, p. 2) in addressing individual learner needs. The research draws on data collected through in-depth qualitative interviews with five Hungarian EFL teachers and semi-structured observations of their 45-minute lessons. These data were analysed concurrently using template analysis (King, 2012), a specific form of thematic analysis. The findings reveal that digital tools, such as tiered reading applications (e.g., BOOKR), interactive learning platforms (e.g., Nearpod), vocabulary applications (e.g., Quizlet, Educandy), and content creation tools (e.g., Canva, Pixton), offer multiple opportunities to cater to varying proficiency levels, interests, and learning styles. Additionally, gamification platforms (e.g., Classcraft, ClassDojo) can assist teachers in providing formative feedback and fostering collaborative learning environments conducive to differentiated teaching. The most notable affordances of technology for differentiation include self-paced learning—often supported by adaptive technologies that provide personalised practice (Kerr, 2016)—as well as opportunities for self-differentiation (Tennant, 2017), both of which are integral to responsive teaching. These findings highlight the role of TEDI in enhancing student-centred teaching and offer strategies for EFL teachers seeking to harness the potential of technology to meet the diverse needs of their learners.

Keywords: technology-enhanced differentiated instruction, language education, teaching English as a foreign language, learner diversity, responsive teaching

Cultural literacy in Türkiye's education (Maarif) model: An analysis of policy and curriculum frameworks

PRESENTATION

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Züleyha Ünlü Carlık

Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University

The Maarif Model, introduced in Türkiye as part of the Century of Türkiye educational reform, aims to foster cultural literacy and a strong national identity while embracing global perspectives. This model has been gradually implemented starting from the 2024-2025 academic year in preschool, the first grade of primary school, the fifth grade of middle school, and the ninth grade of high school.

This research focuses on how the Türkiye's Maarif Model promotes cultural literacy across educational levels. Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of cultural literacy (Hirsch, 1983) and intercultural competence (Byram, 2021), as well as the revised model of cultural literacy for the 21st century (Shliakhovchuk, 2019), this study investigates how the Maarif Model envisions cultivating students' awareness of their own cultural heritage and equipping them to navigate diverse (inter)cultural contexts.

The study employs a qualitative document analysis approach (Bowen, 2009), focusing on policy documents, curricula, guidelines, and other resources provided by the Ministry of National Education in Türkiye. These materials will be examined to assess the cultural literacy components and educational goals embedded within the Maarif Model, particularly regarding language education. Document analysis enables a comprehensive understanding of the Ministry's vision for cultural literacy, and it follows a thematic coding approach to identify key concepts, recurring themes, goals and educational priorities. This method allows insights into the strategies proposed to develop students' cultural literacy as it is regarded as one of the three cross-programme components included in the curricula to ensure that the teaching process proceeds in a dynamic structure.

The research is expected to reveal the extent to which the Maarif Model provides a structured approach to cultural literacy by promoting awareness of both Turkish cultural heritage and global cultural dynamics. Given that the Maarif Model is a newly introduced framework, there is currently limited research on its cultural literacy components. Findings will likely emphasize the model's strategic incorporation of cultural themes within its curriculum guidelines and policy frameworks, aiming to prepare students to engage meaningfully in intercultural settings. The study anticipates offering recommendations for how policymakers and teachers could further support these goals, ensuring that students acquire language skills and develop as culturally literate individuals prepared for an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: cultural literacy, curriculum, intercultural competence, language education, Türkiye Maarif Model

Self-determination theory and motivation in Japanese universities: A one-year study of change

PRESENTATION

Paul Leeming

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Self-determination theory (SDT) is increasingly used as a framework to understand motivation in educational contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2017). It posits that humans have three basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence that lead to psychological health and well-being. Within SDT, Organismic Integration theory (OIT), describes motivation as existing on a scale from external motivation, where the pressure comes from external sources, through more internalized forms, and ultimately to intrinsic motivation, where people engage in a task for its enjoyment. Mastering a second language is a challenge, and motivation is one of the key individual difference variables determining success (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). It is not surprising therefore that SDT has recently garnered interest with second language acquisition research.

This paper reports on a study conducted in a tertiary educational context in Japan that adopted an SDT framework to understand the motivational changes of university students taking compulsory English classes over one year. Student motivation was measured at the start of the academic year, in the middle, and at the end. Participants ($N = 550$) took a test of English proficiency at the end of the year which was used as the outcome variable. First, Rasch analysis was employed to assess the validity of the questionnaires (Leeming & Harris, 2022). Growth curve modelling was then used to measure growth in motivational variables, while structural equation modelling was used to investigate the relationship between motivational change and English proficiency. Results showed that there was significant growth in competence, relatedness, integrated motivation, and external motivation. Although there were significant differences between initial levels of motivation for the participants, there were no differences in growth trajectories. Initial feelings of competence and intrinsic motivation were predictors of English proficiency. The increase in external motivation suggests that students do see the potential rewards from studying and become more motivated to do so.

There are a number of practical implications that stem from this study. Students need to experience success in language learning, as this will lead to extended effort and engagement. This means teachers need to develop tasks that are challenging and yet achievable for their students. It also suggests that teachers need to focus as much as possible on making classes interesting for students to increase their intrinsic motivation. By fostering an interest in English, we can encourage students to continue studying outside of the classroom, which is essential for language growth.

Keywords: motivation, language learning, Self-determination theory, longitudinal, growth

Optimizing training strategies for adult education in organization contexts: A theoretical exploration in Hungary

PRESENTATION

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University of Pécs

This paper examines the theoretical foundations of training strategies in adult education, with a focus on Knowles' Andragogy and transformative learning theory. The goal is to close the gap between theoretical approaches and practical applications in organizational training, particularly in Hungary. Adult learners are self-directed, goal-oriented, and bring past experiences to the learning process, according to Knowles' andragogy theory. Transformative learning theory, on the other hand, emphasizes the value of introspection and firsthand experience in promoting greater comprehension and transformation. This study seeks to optimize training strategies in organizational contexts, guided by these frameworks.

With the growing presence of multinational corporations in Hungary, ongoing staff development has become critical to maintaining a competitive edge. Adult learners who must balance personal and professional responsibilities face difficulties in traditional workplace training programs. Many organizations struggle to align their programs with adult learning principles, particularly those related to flexibility and self-directed learning. The pandemic-accelerated shift to digital training has highlighted the importance of blended learning models that accommodate different learning styles and consider Hungary's cultural context.

In order to evaluate the efficacy of training initiatives in Hungarian organizations, this study uses a quantitative research design with structured questionnaires. Five to seven of the survey's questions center on the applicability, accessibility, and effect of training on workers' job performance and professional development. Adult learners from a range of industries make up the target sample, guaranteeing a diverse viewpoint on organizational training procedures. The gathered data will be statistically analysed, with inferential analysis to find relationships between training approaches and employee satisfaction and descriptive statistics to summarize responses. In order to support more successful professional development in the workplace, the findings are intended to offer practical insights for maximizing training tactics in accordance with adult learning principles.

The expected outcomes include determining the best training strategies for increasing employee engagement and professional development. The study intends to analyse survey data in order to:

1. Identify the specific needs and preferences of adult learners in Hungarian organizations.
2. Emphasize the training techniques that are associated with increased employee retention and satisfaction.
3. Make useful suggestions for improving training initiatives so they complement company objectives and employees' aspirations for lifelong learning.

We anticipate that this research will provide valuable insights into the application of adult education theories in organizational settings, particularly in Hungary, and will help to develop more effective workplace training programs.

Keywords: adult education, Hungary, organizational development, training strategies, transformative learning

Teacher agency enactment during continuous professional development in the multilingual classroom

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Teacher agency is increasingly acknowledged as an important quality for teachers who make changes in their professional development (Cong-Lem, 2021). A worldwide review of educational reforms found that continuous professional development influences teacher agency. Teachers require the capacity to experience themselves as life-long learners through constant questioning and critical reflection on their professional lifestyle (Niemi, 2012). The aim of this case study was to explore how a mainstream teacher enacted her agency during a continuous professional development project and modified her language education policy and practices by implementing linguistically and culturally responsive teaching in the classroom curriculum. This ethnographic study followed the teacher's progress in implementing changes in her classroom during a year-long. The study was conducted in one multilingual, multicultural city in Israel where more than 50% of residents are immigrants; furthermore, it is a mixed-population city with Jews and Arabs living together. The research questions focused on dilemmatic aspects arising from high linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom, the impact of continuous professional development on the teacher's policy and practices, and the children's experience of these changes. The teacher participated in a 12-session linguistic and cultural diversity workshop and received seven months of individual coaching. Triangulation of data sources—teacher's interviews, classroom observations, researcher's journal, and conversations with the participating Arabic-speaking and Russian-speaking children—was applied. The study shows that the teacher continuously modified her language education policy and practices based on critically reflecting on the experience and theoretical knowledge acquired during the professional development project. Following her changes in attitude toward languages and cultures in the classroom, the children showed an increased willingness to learn about each other and to engage in intergroup communication. On the methodological level, the results were reinforced by two types of triangulation: data sources and participant triangulation. The teacher's reflections gave a better understanding of the observed language-supportive strategies and communication practices. Together with the children's reports, they added a significant body of data about how the teacher shaped her agency. On the theoretical level, the study showed that to enact their agency in meeting linguistic and cultural diversity in modern classrooms, teachers need to critically rethink their past experiences. In addition, teachers must accumulate personal and professional knowledge. This practical wisdom puts teacher agency on the map "as it is about the ability to judge what is to be done in a given situation" (Biesta, 2015, p. 10).

Keywords: teacher agency, continuous professional development, early childhood education and care, language education policy, linguistically and culturally diverse children, linguistically and culturally responsive teaching

Multilingual pedagogies in transition: Educator insights from early and primary settings in Malta

PRESENTATION

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Global mobility has led to a rise in linguistic diversity within schools, presenting challenges and opportunities for teachers and students alike (Banks & McGee Banks, 2020; Piccardo, 2016). This trend is especially pronounced in the European Union, where migration has brought new complexities to language and literacy acquisition in bilingual, multilingual, and plurilingual contexts (Vertovec, 2007; 2023). In Malta, for instance over 20% of its population is non-Maltese (NSO, 2021), reflecting similar European patterns with 8.4% of the EU population consisting of non-Europeans (European Commission, 2021). Using affordance Theory (Gibson, 1977) as a theoretical foundation, this study examines how school-provided social language affordances enhance individual language acquisition. Specifically, in a linguistically rich environment, children are more likely to use multiple languages, benefitting from the unique affordances of a multilingual setting (Aronin & Singleton, 2012). This demographic shift intensifies the need for effective, inclusive pedagogical strategies that support foundational language and literacy acquisition across multiple languages, especially in early and primary education

This paper draws on survey data from pre-service and in-service educators working with children aged 3 to 11 in Malta. The pre-service respondents are student teachers of the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta and undertake field placements in early and primary years. The study was approved by the University Ethics Board and conducted ethically. The questionnaire is composed of close- and open-ended items to understand how educators perceive, acknowledge and implement multilingual pedagogical practices to cater for an ecologically diverse classroom that hosts Maltese, foreign and newly arrived foreign students who may or may not speak one or both of the official languages. An online survey was employed to encourage efficient participation without additional financial and time constraints.

Findings illuminate the current landscape of multilingual pedagogy, highlighting both innovative practices and challenges in fostering inclusive learning environments. This research contributes critical insights and recommendations for policy development and curricular reform, to equip in-service teachers with strategies for linguistic diversity. It also underscores the importance of initial teacher programs that cultivate respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, enabling pre-service teachers to navigate the use of multiple languages. Further research aimed at strengthening multilingual education to reflect the needs of increasingly diverse classrooms in Malta and across Europe is necessary.

Keywords: quantitative survey research, multilingual education, early and primary education, pedagogy, inclusive learning environments

Project-based learning in the English classroom

PRESENTATION

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Today's secondary school students (Gen-Z and Gen Alpha) were already born into a world of advanced technology, smartphones and the Internet have become a natural part of their lives. They are constantly exposed to information overload and are used to a speedy way of life. Traditional teaching methods often do not work with them, they require new sources of motivation and therefore new teaching methods (Szabó, 2019). Another reason why we need new methodology to teach gen-zers and gen alphas is the changing work environment and the fact that teachers must prepare their students for jobs that do not even exist today (Kirschner & Stoyanov, 2020). Developing 21st century skills is one of the answers to these needs and project-based learning is suitable for all the challenges of the 21st century (Bell, 2010). It is often applied in science subjects, however, it is rarely used systematically in teaching languages.

The aim of this research is to find out if project-based learning can be used successfully in the English classroom. The participants of the project are secondary school students in a mixed ability group in their year of intensive language learning. Some of the students have learning difficulties and/or social or behaviour problems. Various projects are going to be carried out during the school year in order to maintain the students' interest: individual and group projects, within the group and together with other groups as well as on international scene. Several data collection methods will be applied: student portfolios, questionnaires, pre-tests and post-tests. The results of the experimental group will be compared with the results of the control group.

During the school year many project plans, questionnaires and tests will be piloted and an enormous amount of material will be collected for analysis. On the basis of the accumulated material, the question whether this methodology is suitable for developing students' language skills as well as 21st century skills (digital literacy, creativity and collaboration being in the focus) can be answered.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, 21st century skills, language skills, mixed ability group, learning difficulties

The implicit motivating role of EFL teachers in secondary schools in Hungary: A comparative study

PRESENTATION

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The primary aim of the proposed research is to delve into the unexplored realm of implicit motivational aspects in EFL learners, which is a niche area in the field of L2 motivation (Kálmán, 2023). This study is unique in its focus on the implicit motivating agency of EFL teachers in terms of their behaviors, attitudes, and interactions and their impact on EFL learners' motivation. The theoretical foundation of the study is Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). This study investigates the EFL teacher as part of the third component (the Language Learning Experience) of the L2MSS from both the learners' and the teachers' perspectives.

The proposed research adopts a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Two interview studies were conducted with twelve EFL learners and twelve EFL teachers attending and teaching in secondary education in Hungary. The interviews, conducted between Spring 2022 and Autumn 2024, were guided by two semi-structured interview guides designed to explore the motivating aspects of EFL teachers as perceived by the learners and EFL teachers (the learners' interview guide was adapted to EFL teachers). Participants shared their perceptions, views, and opinions on the implicit role of EFL teachers in terms of their behaviors, attitudes, and interactions, as well as their influential role in motivating EFL learners. The qualitative data was transcribed, coded, and analysed using thematic content analysis to identify the emerging themes related to the research questions and the aims of the studies. The emerging themes of the EFL learners and EFL teachers' interviews were compared and analysed.

The findings from the thematic content analysis indicated that both EFL learners and EFL teachers recognized and were able to identify the motivating qualities of teachers. Key motivating aspects included the encouragement provided by teachers and their ability to strengthen learners' Ideal L2 Selves through positive interactions. Additionally, the teachers' qualities, such as empathy, friendliness, kindness, supportiveness, patience, joyfulness, and enthusiasm, were also found to be motivating. Various stakeholders could benefit from these findings, including EFL teachers, teacher trainers and trainees, and school directors. The research highlights the importance of implicit motivational aspects of EFL teachers in motivating learners. It suggests that specific types of interactions, as well as certain attitudinal and behavioral patterns, can significantly enhance learners' motivation, which will ultimately benefit them in the long run.

Keywords: EFL motivation, implicit motivating aspects, secondary education, Hungary

The motivating power of achievement emotions in foreign language learning

PRESENTATION

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Pekrun's (2024) control-value theory (CVT) suggests that emotions are closely linked to motivation. In the educational context, completing learning activities will prompt so called achievement emotions, which will in turn influence learners' motivation (Pekrun et al., 2023). For example, positive achievement emotions that are labelled as activating (e.g., enjoyment, hope, pride) can lead to enhancing cognitive and motivational processes. Conversely, deactivating negative emotions (e.g., boredom, hopelessness), will hinder motivation. Nonetheless, the motivational outcomes of negative activating (e.g., anxiety, shame) emotions remain less straightforward. The motivational influence of emotions has also been acknowledged in foreign language learning research (MacIntyre et al., 2019), and a few scholars have begun to utilize CVT in their studies (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Shao et al., 2020). The current study intends to expand this line of research by investigating the motivational power of achievement emotions in the Hungarian instructed English as a foreign language setting.

Our sample included 1,152 secondary school students aged between 14 and 20. All of our participants were L1 speakers of Hungarian, and all of them were learning English at school at the time of the data collection. We collected self-reported data on their level of English, which was between A1 and C1 with an average starting age of 9.2 years. Participation in our study was anonymous and voluntary. We used a standardized questionnaire to measure different emotions, both activating and deactivating, and student motivated learning behavior, that is, their intended effort to learn English. In the analysis, we used multivariate statistical analysis to find out the relative strength of impact of the various activating and deactivating emotions and the possible role negative but activating emotions can play in shaping student motivation.

Looking at linear relationships in the whole sample, we can corroborate what previous studies found: positive activating emotions have the strongest impact on student motivation ($R^2 = 48\%$), while deactivating negative emotions ($R^2 = 13\%$) and activating negative emotions ($R^2 = 6\%$) have considerably weaker but significant role in shaping motivation. However, the results change when we look at the individual schools, calling our attention to the fact that school-level influences cannot be neglected when researching emotions and motivation. Therefore, only context-sensitive conclusions could be offered by how to increase and maintain student motivation.

Keywords: language learners' emotions, motivation, control-value theory

Modelling language education in an online setting

PRESENTATION

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In academic writing (AW) education, understanding both the “what” and the “how” of writing is essential for students (Ramadhanti et al., 2019). It is, thus, essential to construct an approach capable of combining elements of process- and product-oriented approaches to create an effective teaching model. To teach AW effectively, it is necessary to understand its sub-competencies: disciplinary knowledge, writing processes, communicative understanding, media literacy, genre knowledge, and linguistic skills (Kruse, 2013). Effective online teaching requires careful course design, with teachers acting as designers, facilitators (Castrillo, 2014), and researchers to build structure and interaction into the course, establish their presence, and create a supportive environment that enhances student satisfaction and achievement (Dagarin & Bercnik, 2023).

Therefore, the project seeks to create a practical and efficient method for teaching language fully online, focusing on developing AW skills among students with different levels of English and from diverse disciplines.

The study focuses on the academic writing development of PhD students in a fully online setting by integrating structured theoretical instruction with writing tasks. This approach ensures a more coherent development of AW skills (Karaś, 2019). The course consists of five online lectures. Each session contains theoretical content (focused on the process and the product), vocabulary, and grammar practice. Throughout the course, students engage in quizzes and structured writing tasks that build on theoretical knowledge in practical applications. Based on the learning design principles and frameworks, the research investigates the impact of embedding theory-based assessments within practical writing tasks.

Writing assignments are to be subjected to lexicometric analysis to monitor students' progress in vocabulary sophistication, lexical density, and syntactic complexity. Student interactions and performance data gathered via such alternative instruments as Google Forms or Qualtrics will foster tailored feedback and evaluation and inform improvements in course design by tracking patterns of student engagement, development, and outcomes in an online environment.

The course model aims to show that a combined theory-integrated approach with overall formative assessments and practical tasks significantly enhances AW skills. Expected findings include a positive correlation between theoretical learning achievements and writing task outcomes. Therefore, our goal is to design a replicable framework that promotes inclusive and adjustable teaching strategies to address diverse learner needs and to provide instructors with actionable methodologies for designing effective AW programs.

Keywords: academic writing instruction, course design, formative assessment, online learning

Glocalization in foreign language education: The case of culture teaching in Belgian Confucius Institutes' teaching Chinese as a foreign language

PRESENTATION

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In recent decades, the enhanced globalisation (Badwan, 2021) has increased the complexity in foreign language classrooms in multilingual contexts (Bonnet & Siemund, 2018), generating challenges that institutions might not be prepared for in either awareness or methodology (Kramsch, 2014). Situating this issue in the context of Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) education at Confucius Institutes (CIs) in Belgium, this research aims to explore the interactions and tensions among CIs' globalization policy regarding the teaching of culture in CFL courses on the one hand and, on the other hand, local Belgian approaches.

Employing a theoretical framework combining the theory of intercultural language education (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) and the concept of glocalization acknowledging the negotiation between the global and local (Roudometof, 2016), this research aims to study Belgian CIs' cultural content teaching in CFL classes in terms of its adaptation to the diverse demands and sociocultural backgrounds of local Belgian learners, and to provide stakeholders with insights to help them think globally and act locally (Radjuni, 2021).

The empirical research is conducted via an abductive qualitative approach, revolving around the relevant managerial and educational practices and perceptions of three stakeholder groups, namely learners, teachers and administrators at 3 Belgian CIs. The sampling of teachers and administrators is exerted with an inclusive principle, incorporating 10 respondents in total (estimated), while the selection of learners is based on representativeness, involving approximately 15 respondents. In-depth interviews, incorporating also vignettes that ask respondents to comment on specific globalization and glocalization situations, are used to gather specific information about respondents' perceptions and reflections on cultural content teaching in CFL classes at CIs in Belgium. Classroom observations gather contextual data of in-class interactions among teachers and learners concerning cultural content teaching.

The findings of this research are expected to report on the teaching methods and adaptation strategies of cultural content teaching at Belgian CIs, and analyse the interactions and tensions between CIs' initiatives and local learners' varying demands. During the presentation, results stemming from an analysis of interviews and classroom observations will be shared and discussed in the light of the theoretical framework, pointing out instances of globalization and localization.

Keywords: foreign language education, Chinese as a foreign language, cultural content, glocalization, intercultural competence

Exploring the role of rurality and socio-economic background in language learning motivation among Hungarian adults

PRESENTATION

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The proposed paper presentation explores the effects of rurality and socio-economic status on foreign language learning motivation among the Hungarian adult population, as a part of a larger research project. This empirical study aims to address a population gap in the field of language learning motivation, as highlighted by several meta-analyses (Boo et al., 2015; Al-Hoorie, 2018; Vonkova et al., 2021), where diverse contexts remain underrepresented. To fulfil this aim, a semi-structured interview format was used to qualitatively analyse the language learning motivation, attitudes, and aspirations for future generations of rural Hungarian adults in a low socio-economic area of Hungary.

The semi-structured interview guide was developed using Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). Participants were selected on a volunteer basis and through convenience and snowball sampling (Dörnyei, 2007), while also aiming to ensure a diverse representation of life stages, family structures, economic backgrounds, and minority groups. The interviews were voice-recorded with informed consent, transcribed, and thematically analysed. Further data collection is currently underway to further refine the findings.

Preliminary results show that while participants themselves lack motivation to learn languages, they stress the importance of language learning for younger generations. While they struggle to vocalize the reasons behind said importance of language learning, they seem to associate English proficiency with upward and outward mobility. As an additional result, minority participants seem to prioritize English over heritage languages for their children, reflecting the complexities of language and identity in this context. This research highlights how rurality and socio-economic background influence language learning motivation, offering valuable insights for policymakers and teacher education.

Keywords: language learning motivation, rurality, L2 motivational self-system, socio-economic status

Effects of learning method on pronunciation in the case of Hungarian learners of Spanish

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Zoltán Kristóf Gaál

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In this pilot project, we aim to find efficient methods for enhancing Spanish L2 pronunciation in secondary education by carrying out a longitudinal experiment in a Hungarian high school. In Hungary, traditionally, teachers tend to focus on the morphosyntactic and lexical aspects of Spanish, while pronunciation teaching and L2 communication are normally of secondary importance only (Baditzné Pálvölgyi, 2015). This tendency is strengthened by the contents of Colores (Nagy & Seres, 2006), the only officially eligible coursebook series in Hungarian high schools, which lacks systematic pronunciation training. On the other hand, in the international literature we find various pieces of research which emphasize the importance of developing L2 pronunciation and suggest possible methods for teaching it, such as improving its elements separately or integrating them into other skills like communication, or acquiring pronunciation based on imitation or explicit teaching (Kirkova-Naskova, 2019).

Two groups of Hungarian A1-A2 CEFR level learners of Spanish (seventeen students altogether) participate in this investigation. Throughout an academic semester, the informants receive classroom formation on different phonetic and phonological phenomena of Spanish on several occasions. All the informants are going to learn about each phenomenon, via frontal presentation. However, the two groups are going to be differentiated based on the method(s) by which they practice the acquired pronunciation elements: either by perception or production. Prior to the beginning of the training, the participants' attitudes and consciousness towards pronunciation (cf. Elliott, 1995) have been measured with the help of an online questionnaire, and preferred learning styles (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018) will be explored as a possible variable, as well. The improvement of the participants' pronunciation will be tested based on the acoustic comparison of speech production of the informants before (pretest) and after instruction, i.e. training (posttest).

As possible outcomes, we expect that practice based on perception will turn out to be more efficient, since it has been demonstrated that perception is needed before production (Ellis, 1994). Nevertheless, we suppose that metalinguistic consciousness and positive attitude towards pronunciation also contribute to the improvement of pronunciation. Based on future outcomes and experiences, we plan to repeat the project with a higher number of informants. Furthermore, we believe that the results will hold the opportunity to adapt the methods according to learners' learning styles, which may contribute to the success of the future follow-up investigation.

Keywords: pronunciation teaching, Spanish pronunciation, longitudinal study, language learning, attitude

English language learner anxiety: Learner-focused educational strategies

POSTER PRESENTATION

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As a practitioner English language teacher, I frequently face challenges of my students' foreign language learning anxiety. However, recent research lacks the exploration of English Language Anxiety (ELA) via questionnaires equally focusing on listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. Therefore, my research seeks to address (1) the latest trend in measuring English Language Anxiety including certain causes and coping strategies, akin to (2) the progress on language exams. This inquiry asks why the number of English language exams taken has been sharply decreasing despite the greater degree of English language skill sets, especially amongst younger generations. The methodology is based on exploratory and causal research. The applied mixed methods are document and content analyses supported by case studies. The findings show that ELA proves to be playing a key role in the steadily declining number of language exams taken. This study offers some successful learner-focused teaching strategies for language teachers.

Keywords: EFL (English as a Foreign Language), ELA (English Language Anxiety), generations' (dis)similarities,

A quantitative study to determine the relationship between adult EFL learners' foreign language pronunciation anxiety and reconceptualized L2 motivational self system in the context of a higher education institution in Turkey

PRESENTATION

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Individual differences in language acquisition have been a matter of investigation in second language acquisition research. Motivation is an aspect of individual differences (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019) and Second Language Motivational Self System (L2MSS) proposed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009) discussed the image that learners bear in mind about themselves. Dörnyei conceptualized motivation by defining an Ideal L2 Self, an Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experience. Peker (2016) reconceptualized L2 Motivational Self System and contributed to it by suggesting an additional L2 Self, namely Feared L2 Self. Another individual difference in language acquisition is personality (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Personality involves extraversion, neuroticism and anxiety, tolerance of ambiguity, empathy and field independence (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). Baran-Lucarz (2014, 2016) identified foreign language pronunciation anxiety (FLPA) as a subcategory of anxiety under personality. Both L2MSS (Shafiee Rad & Alipour, 2023; Ye & Hu, 2025) and FLPA (Baran-Lucarz & Lee, 2021; Erdel, 2023; Lacabex & Roothoof, 2023; Yilmaz, 2019) have been studied separately before; however, Reconceptualized L2 Motivational Self System (RL2MSS) and FLPA have not been studied together. Determining a relationship between the two deserves attention because by enhancing the Ideal L2 Motivational Self, it might be possible to overcome pronunciation anxiety, which, in the end, creates more confident and proficient learners. This study aimed to examine FLPA in learners of English within the scope of RL2MSS. The participants of this cross-sectional quantitative study were 596 students learning English at different levels before starting their departments adopting EMI at a state university in Turkey. A questionnaire was distributed online to collect data in March 2020. The items of the questionnaire were taken and modified from Kralova et al. (2017), Peker (2016), and Baran-Lucarz (2016). One-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation were performed to examine the data via SPSS v.25. The findings demonstrated that L2 pronunciation selves were influenced by FLPA. Learners with higher FLPA levels had a less apparent Ideal L2 Pronunciation Self. Moreover, there was a negative correlation between Feared L2 Pronunciation Self and Ideal L2 Pronunciation Self, while Feared L2 Pronunciation Self correlated positively with Ought-to L2 Pronunciation Self. Finally, female learners, less proficient learners, learners who had never been abroad and learners who had been learning English for a shorter period of time reported to have experienced greater levels of FLPA. Practical pedagogical implications and further research opportunities on the matter are discussed.

Keywords: pronunciation, anxiety, motivation, self, language

Exploring technophobia, psychological traits, and demographic differences among teachers in regular, special education, and integration settings

PRESENTATION

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This study explored 429 teachers from regular, special education, and integration settings to examine relationships between technophobia, teaching motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, social anxiety, and support systems. It also assessed differences across these educational contexts. Findings showed that age and tenure were positively associated with technophobia, though older teachers exhibited better emotional stability with higher self-esteem and lower social anxiety. Female teachers reported higher social anxiety and lower self-esteem, despite receiving stronger social support. Teachers with advanced education (master's degree) experienced lower technophobia, lower social anxiety, and higher teaching motivation and self-efficacy compared to those with a bachelor's degree. Regular education teachers demonstrated the highest self-efficacy, while special education teachers struggled with greater social anxiety and lower self-esteem. Self-efficacy emerged as the strongest predictor of technophobia, highlighting the importance of confidence-building interventions to enhance teachers' adaptability to technology and bolster social support.

The research employed a cross-sectional design, collecting data through self-report questionnaires that measured key psychological traits alongside demographic variables like age, gender, tenure, and education level. Statistical methods, including correlation and regression analyses, identified relationships and predictors of technophobia and explored group differences in psychological and demographic factors.

Overall, the findings suggest that improving self-efficacy could effectively reduce technophobia, especially among special education and older teachers. The results also point to the need for targeted support for female teachers, who face more social anxiety yet benefit from stronger social networks. Encouraging higher education could further decrease technophobia and enhance teaching motivation. The critical role of self-efficacy emphasizes focusing on psychological factors rather than purely technical skills to foster better adaptation to technological changes.

Keywords: technophobia, teaching motivation, self-efficacy, social anxiety, special education, integration

Language teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in the Hungarian context

PRESENTATION

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Taking students' individual differences into account is a non-negligible aspect of studies in the fields of applied linguistics and language pedagogy in the 21st century. Although investigations abound when it comes to individual differences that contribute to the successful acquisition of languages, few of these studies emphasised explicitly how teachers can address these differences. The study of differentiated instruction (DI) deals with catering for these individual differences in order to maximise individuals' learning opportunities. However, teachers' practices are highly determined by their own perceptions of DI in general. The DI-Quest instrument (Coubergs et al., 2017) is a validated tool for measuring teachers' perceptions of DI, and since such an instrument does not exist in the Hungarian context, it seems to be imperative to adapt this tool and create its Hungarian version. Thus, the aims of the present study are to discover teachers' perceptions regarding the concept of DI and using gamification as a DI tool, and besides establishing whether the Hungarian version of the DI-Quest (HU-DI-Quest) is reliable, to examine what influences teachers' DI practice. To this end, a mixed-methods study was conducted with 33 language teachers; the qualitative data was analysed with the constant-comparative method, and the quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Based on the teachers' perceptions, the practice of DI is important for the success of language learning and teaching, but it is also challenging, time-consuming, and they feel unprepared to implement DI. Therefore, this study adds to the call arising from recent studies that professional development would be indispensable. Exploiting the potential of gamification as a DI tool seems to be a promising option to alleviate the challenges of DI. The HU-DI-Quest seems to be a reliable tool, and the teachers' practice of DI is explained by their growth mindset, flexible grouping, and ethical compass.

Keywords: differentiated instruction, inclusive education, DI-Quest instrument, Hungarian context, mixed-methods study

Illiteracy, second language and immigration: Adult migrants' language education pathways to empowerment

PRESENTATION

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Language educational pathways in second language (SL) learning for adult migrants present various levels of complexity—multilingual, multicultural and multilevel classes—which intertwine and strongly influence the design of these pathways. The multiple identity dimensions of individuals in educational settings highlight specific needs that are not only formative but also social and educational. These needs are closely connected to the motivations (Deci & Ryan, 1985) that drive language learning in adulthood. During a doctoral research project conducted between October 2021 and September 2022 in the city of Rome, illiteracy—or, more broadly, limited proficiency in one's mother tongue—emerged as one of the most influential factors affecting access to language education and, consequently, social inclusion in the host country. This qualitative research was carried out using semi-structured interviews. A total of 60 interviews were conducted in eight different schools across Rome. Among the participants, 25 were teachers (including volunteers, operators and tenured teachers), and 35 were students, whose language proficiency ranged from A0 to B1 according to the CEFR criteria (Council of Europe, 2020).

Two interview grids were developed based on the respondents' roles—one for teachers and one for students—both structured around the same thematic areas: (1) biographical background; (2) school and language courses; (3) SL learning during the COVID-19 pandemic; (4) SL and inclusion. The interviews were analysed through data triangulation and after transcription, the relationships between various excerpts were examined within each identified theme.

The research aimed to gather insights into the experience of SL courses and language learning in adulthood. Illiteracy emerged as an additional vulnerability factor affecting both SL acquisition and the overall integration process. The condition of illiterate adult migrants is intersectionally complex (Hill Collins, 2019) and has tangible repercussions on their possibility of remaining in the host country. For this reason, beyond outlining the challenges faced by illiterate adult migrants, this study also examines the educational strategies implemented to ensure an inclusive learning process that fosters meaningful social integration.

Keywords: second language, language education, adult migrants, illiterate adults, intersectionality

Investigating individual differences in AI literacy among university learners

PRESENTATION

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The aim of this study was to explore individual differences in artificial intelligence (AI) literacy among European university students by identifying key literacy components and how these varied across demographics, such as gender, age, and discipline of study. Based on Csizér and Fekete's (2024) model of students' autonomous use of technology, the study focused on dimensions like Self-efficacy, Study-use attitude, and Conceptual knowledge. This analysis contributes to the growing body of research on the role of individual differences in language education and how they shape learners' attitudes towards integrating AI in their academic practices (Csizér & Fekete, 2024; Schmidt & Strasser, 2022). Data was collected via an online questionnaire administered to 226 students from various European universities, including Hungary and Austria. The questionnaire consisted of 15 validated scales measuring AI literacy components such as Experience, Reliability, and Ethics. Independent t-tests and one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine individual differences based on gender, age, academic discipline, and level of study. The study followed strict ethical guidelines, ensuring anonymity and voluntary participation. Results revealed significant individual differences in learners' AI literacy, for example participants identifying as males and business-related disciplines scored higher in AI experience, while younger students demonstrated stronger conceptual knowledge (cf. Fekete, 2023; Pokrivcakova, 2023; Yurt & Kasarci, 2024). Older and part-time students, however, showed greater willingness to develop AI skills. These findings suggest that tailored, differentiated instruction is necessary to address these diverse needs and promote AI literacy in educational contexts.

Keywords: AI literacy, individual differences, language education, student attitudes, educational technology

Not just succeeding, but feeling successful: How sources of academic self-efficacy can support the integration of students with ADHD traits

PRESENTATION

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In recent years, inclusion and integration programmes have been implemented in educational systems around the world. Their goal is to allow students to realize their full potential and succeed in their studies. Advokat et al. (2011), Weyandt & DuPaul (2008) reviewed the integration program via comparison between students with/without ADHD. They noticed that students with ADHD faced barriers and difficulties that were not prevalent with those without ADHD.

In addition, a major factor influencing academic success for students is academic self-efficacy. It refers to an individual's belief that in future situations, they will have the ability to plan and execute actions that lead to desired outcomes successfully. High academic self-efficacy has been found to predict academic achievements, effectiveness, perseverance, better problem-solving, task selection, effort invested, persistence, and striving for success (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Usher & Pajares, 2008; Zimmerman et al., 1992). Students with ADHD symptoms often experience lower academic self-efficacy (Michael et al., 2024; Sarid & Lipka, 2023). According to Bandura's social learning theory, four sources of self-efficacy: Mastery Experience (the student's overall performance), Vicarious Experience (social comparison through role models), Social Persuasion (external information that convinces the individual of their abilities) and Physiological State (the individual's interpretation of their physiological symptoms) contribute to the development of self-efficacy (Usher & Pajares, 2008).

Purpose: To examine the mediating role of Bandura's four main sources of self-efficacy in the relationship between ADHD symptoms and sense of academic self-efficacy among students of education, then to review inclusive practices that can enhance the self-efficacy of students with high ADHD traits, thereby promoting their academic integration and success.

Research Methods: A quantitative study consisting of 109 female B.Ed. students studying Special Education at two women's colleges of education. The students were asked to answer an anonymous self-report questionnaire including questions regarding their level of ADHD, self-efficacy and sources of self-efficacy.

Findings: The research findings indicate that, although previous studies suggest a decline in self-efficacy among students with attention-related traits, there is no direct link between ADHD symptoms and academic self-efficacy. Mastery Experience and Physiological State were found to be direct mediators between ADHD symptoms and academic self-efficacy. The Vicarious Experience source was identified as a secondary mediator through Mastery Experience in the relationship between ADHD symptoms and academic self-efficacy.

Implications: To suggest insights and tools for higher education institutions to promote a sense of academic self-efficacy and integration among students with high ADHD symptoms.

Keywords: integration, academic self-efficacy, sources of academic self-efficacy, ADHD symptoms, special education students

Tapping into the creative potential of the group

WORKSHOP

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A group is more than the sum of its individual members. When channels of communication are open and there is trust and openness within a group, a facilitator-teacher can guide the flow of communication towards creative outcomes. When this happens, members can enter into a state of 'group flow'. Drawing on Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory and Daniel Goleman's framework of social intelligence (self-awareness – self-management – social awareness – managing relationships), the aim of this workshop is to highlight the key elements of group flow. We will watch some short videos of group flow in action, as well as get a taste of it by trying out some creative communication activities.

Workshop description:

1. We will watch a short video of one of my university seminar groups engaged in a variety of interaction formats. In pairs, participants discuss the benefits of each work mode and what was driving the activity forward in each case.
2. Participants will have the opportunity to experience the way different question types can drive a conversation, and how images can put our minds onto a more creative track.
3. Daniel Goleman's framework of social intelligence will be highlighted, and the various micro-skills of conversation will be related to this framework (self-awareness – self-management – social awareness – managing relationships). We will also discuss the way "individual flow" is different from "group flow".
4. What is your take-away from the workshop? (Individual reflection) Share your key take-away, or a question that you want to think more about. (Mingle activity if space allows, or groupwork.) Any final questions or comments? (plenary mode).

Participants will leave having observed and experienced different ways of tapping into the creative potential of a learning group. In addition, we will also identify the key factors to think about when our aim as a facilitator-teacher is to bring about group flow experiences.

Keywords: group creativity, the teacher as facilitator, interactive work modes

English language teachers' implicit motivating agency: An interview study with tertiary EFL learners in the Hungarian higher education context

PRESENTATION

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Language teachers play a vital role in their students' motivation to learn a foreign language (L2). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) state that almost every action a language teacher does in the classroom has an impact on learners' motivation, making the behaviour of the teacher a highly effective motivational tool. Lamb (2017) claims that "some individual teachers do express more agency than others in developing their learners' motivation, despite working in similar contexts" (p. 311). In relation to this, Kálmán (2023) asserts in his study that the motivational impact of a language teacher predominantly comes from the teacher's personality and behaviour, rather than from the direct use of explicit motivational strategies. This points out the importance of teachers' implicit role in motivating their learners, and research on the implicit role of English language teachers in EFL motivation has not been conducted extensively in general, and not at all in the Hungarian higher education context. Therefore, this pilot study aims to explore tertiary EFL learners' perceptions regarding their EFL teachers' implicit motivating agency (i.e., the effect of teacher's personality, behaviour, and appearance on their L2 motivation). In order to investigate the research niche and broaden the understanding of how EFL teachers' personality, behaviour, and appearance implicitly influence EFL learners' motivation, and which aspects of EFL teachers' implicit motivating agency are perceived to be the most motivating for EFL learners, this pilot study adopts a qualitative research design with a semi-structured interview. The results based on data collected from 12 tertiary EFL learners, learning English in different universities in Hungary, suggest that the teacher's personality traits such as niceness, softness, friendliness, hard work, joy, cheerfulness and leniency can motivate the learners implicitly. Regarding the behaviour of the teacher, creating a warm atmosphere, asking students about their feelings, not behaving in a strict manner, and telling jokes can have a motivational impact on the learners. In connection with tertiary EFL teachers' appearance, students highlight the importance of the first impression by appearance, dressing nicely and professionally, and having a friendly face. The findings of this pilot study raise awareness of the importance of the EFL teacher's personality, behaviour as well as appearance in higher education contexts.

Keywords: teacher's role in L2, implicit motivating agency, higher education, Hungary

International collaboration and virtual exchange: A teacher education project

PRESENTATION

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Virtual exchange (VE) is often recommended for fostering language, intercultural and transversal skills, but if future teachers lack experience as participants in VE, it can be difficult for them to imagine implementing VE in their own classes. For that reason, we developed and implemented VEs for preservice primary EFL teachers at University of León, Spain ($n = 18$), and Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany ($n = 16$). In this case study, we would like to present the exchanges in which our students participated during the winter semesters of 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. The VEs were embedded in required seminars and work from the exchange counted toward the seminar grade.

The exchanges had a duration of 6 weeks in 2023 and 9 weeks in 2024. Students worked in international teams to complete three tasks which were developed following the Progressive Exchange Model (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2019; O'Dowd & Waire, 2009) in the following sequence: (1) getting to know you, (2) cultural comparison (comparing and contrasting teacher education programs or English curricula in the two countries), and (3) collaborative lesson planning (developing and teaching a primary EFL lesson).

In this presentation, the focus will be twofold. First, the university teachers' collaboration in planning and implementing the virtual exchange will be presented. Second, results of the student participants' collaboration will be shared and students' feedback on the virtual exchange project will be discussed. Student feedback was collected in a 7-question online questionnaire. The 25 responses received were analysed qualitatively using deductive coding (Mayring, 2015). Students from both groups evaluated the project positively, citing the structure, collaborative tasks and opportunity to use the English language as positive aspects. Challenging aspects named included the length of the project, workload and scheduling issues. We hope to stimulate a discussion about virtual exchange in teacher education and foreign language education.

Keywords: virtual exchange, telecollaboration, collaboration, teacher education, foreign language teaching, intercultural competence, transversal skills

Understanding instructional power to expand educator efficacy and agency

PRESENTATION

Tanji Reed Marshall

Liaison Educational Partners

In the complex dynamics of classroom instruction, teachers wield significant power as autonomous decision-makers. Power, as Tatum (1997) suggests, is “the smog in the air” (p. 6), influencing all relationships, particularly within the school environment. While substantial literature exists on teacher autonomy and power as individual constructs, there is limited exploration of how these intersect to shape instructional decision-making. The prevailing research often focuses on teachers’ use of power to control student behavior, neglecting the nuanced ways teachers use their power to exercise autonomy in crafting instructional practices. This gap is particularly evident in addressing how teachers’ beliefs, informed by culture, bias, and systemic inequities, influence their use of autonomy and power in ways that impact student learning and the broader classroom environment.

This interactive workshop situates teacher autonomy and power within the context of critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning. Participants will explore the 4 Domains of the Power Principle—Empowering, Agentive, Protective, and Disenfranchising—and their profound implications for instructional decision-making. These domains illuminate the intersectionality of factors, including culturally responsive pedagogy, critical literacy, classroom management, and systemic power structures, that govern educators’ choices and their outcomes on classroom culture and student learning and engagement.

Grounded in foundational research by Aboud (2008), Anderson (1987), Apple (1982), Au (2016), Freire (1985), Richmond & McCrosky (1992), and others, this session examines how teachers can critically reflect on the discriminatory and hierarchical power dynamics that shape their practice. By engaging in hands-on activities, participants will identify how their instructional decisions either foster or inhibit inclusive, agentic, and cooperative learning environments. They will develop strategies to ensure that every student, particularly those historically marginalized, is empowered to take ownership of their learning, advocate for themselves, and thrive in the classroom.

As teacher agency is vital to fostering systemic change, this workshop equips educators with the tools to critically examine their beliefs, decision-making processes, and the power dynamics within their classrooms. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to create participatory and transformative learning environments that prioritize critical thinking, equitable inclusion, and authentic cooperation. This session ensures educators are prepared to navigate the complexities of contemporary classrooms while fostering a future in which every student has equitable access to and receive the excellent education they DESERVE.

Keywords: instructional power, educator autonomy, educator efficacy, educator agency

Learning for life or learning for school: A study on motivation, learning preferences, and educational practices in a high school

PRESENTATION

Éva Sáfár

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This study examines student motivation and learning preferences based on a survey conducted in a high school in Budapest. While initially designed to explore students' opinions, habits, and experiences in and outside school, our findings highlighted shifts in learning attitudes and instructional preferences, warranting further analysis.

Our data reveal a decline in enthusiasm for learning school subjects, though the desire to explore new things remains steady. Our findings also indicate that students initially prefer active, interactive and cooperative learning but begin favouring passive forms, such as teacher presentations, by 10th grade, while the importance of independent opinion formation is undervalued. Alongside this trend, certain active forms are often viewed as less serious alternatives to learning. We also observed a limited—and even declining—variety of active, creative, and cooperative methods. Additionally, the evaluation methods appear ineffective at countering the drop in learning attitudes and the growing preference for passivity.

These shifts and trends raise critical questions: What is the relationship between student motivation structure, teaching methods, and learning attitudes? Do school teaching methods and organizational structures prevent students from becoming independent, self-regulating learners and instead foster passivity?

The survey involved 327 male students from grades 7–12 and included 389 open- and closed-ended questions, incorporating Likert-scale, nominal, and ordinal items. We applied statistical methods such as Pearson correlation, Chi-Square tests, and Mutual Information Analysis to investigate the relationships between students' motivational factors, instructional methods, and classroom organization. By identifying patterns in learning preferences and engagement, we aimed to understand the extent to which teaching strategies influence student motivation and how existing school structures contribute to the observed shift in attitude.

The data analysis provided valuable insights into students' motivational structure and learning attitudes. It helped us understand students' views on their needs, what motivates them, and how they perceive the teaching methods and organizational forms used in the school. As a result, we identified distinct groups based on their learning attitude and level of self-regulation, each with specific learning preferences and motivation. We also managed to identify reasons for the shift in preferences over time. These insights enabled us to formulate recommendations for teaching practices. This study has the potential to be further enriched by incorporating additional survey data.

Keywords: active/passive/cooperative learning, motivation, self-regulation, learning attitude, teaching practices

Furthering Hungarian pre-service English teacher' academic language skills development using Academic Reading Circles and asynchronous interactive learning materials

PRESENTATION

Krisztián Simon

University of Pécs

A mastery of academic language skills represents a significant challenge for English majors. As Creme and Lea (2008, p. 134) address, key differences between academic and nonacademic texts concern purpose, vocabulary, author, sources and evidence. What follows is that these differences result in more complex and demanding texts (Bailey, 2022, p. 42). Thus, in order to successfully process and produce academic texts, language learners need specific training to advance from and transfer their nonacademic language skills to academic contexts. Focal points in such a training can include reading strategies (see McMillan & Weyers, 2014, pp. 73-74), paragraph types (see Tankó, 2020, p. 32), critical reading (see Deane, 2010, p. 32) and coding (see Shon, 2015) to complement text production. However, it is also important for learners to work with authentic texts for which Seburn's (2015) Academic Reading Circles (ARC) provides a frame that integrates cooperative learning and constructivism.

The presentation discusses the findings of the second phase of an ongoing study concerned with the targeted academic language skills development of Hungarian pre-service English teacher majors ($N = 30$) in an academic language skills development course. The phase one feedback questionnaire, administered in the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year, revealed that ARC is suitable for the listed target group and for scaffolding academic language skills development, however, further developments are needed regarding guiding material, ARC role clarity and text relevance (see Simon, 2024). The second phase of data collection started at the end June 2024 in the form of a focus group discussion with students reviewing redesigned ARC handouts. Based on the positive results, further adjustments were implemented and integrated into the course design. The second phase extended the mixed-method data collection instruments to pre- and post-treatment goal setting and reflection, targeted writing, ARC roles and course feedback questionnaires.

As the course will end in January 2025, only preliminary and expected results can be reported at this stage. Students successfully completed the goal setting and targeted writing task at the start of the course, could reflect on their three ARC roles and provide meaningful feedback to their peers who were going to take on the same roles and were active in their discussions of academic texts. Based on the reworked scaffolding materials in terms of ARC handouts and the newly integrated asynchronous materials on Moodle, expected results are the increased understanding of ARC roles and improved academic language use.

Keywords: academic language skills, teacher training, longitudinal study, interactive materials

Intercultural competence in English teacher education and professional teacher competence for internationalisation

ROUNDTABLE

Timea Tiboldi & Nora Tartsay Nemeth

Eötvös Loránd University

The objective of the roundtable is to provide participants with practical ideas and activities regarding intercultural teacher competence in the framework of the TEFE A+project (Teachers of English for Future Europe). This relatively new initiative started in 2020 and the School of English and American Studies (SEAS) of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) Hungary joined the project in 2023. Other participating institutions of the Consortium include 1. Comenius University Bratislava (Slovakia), 2. University of Passau (Germany), Public University of Navarre (Spain), 4. University of South Bohemia in Cseke Budejovice (Czech Republic) and Aston University Birmingham (UK) as a consultant.

The TEFE Framework for the Internationalisation of Teaching Practice and Employability is the final publication of the previous project (2020-2023). It provides a comprehensive project methodology consisting of four key intellectual outputs:

1. TEFE Internationalisation of Teaching Practice (ITP)
2. TEFE Framework for Internationalisation of Teaching Practice and Employability
3. TEFE Toolkit of Diagnostic and Evaluation Tools: Resources for continuous improvement
4. TEFE Communications Strategy and COIL Platform

The vision of Teachers of English for Future Europe (TEFE) is to internationalise teaching practice and make it an integral part of teacher education programmes. Therefore, this new project focuses on building professional teaching skills and the development of intercultural and global citizenship competences of future teachers.

In the roundtable discussion, we will give a brief overview of the TEFE A+ project, the annual TEFE BIP (Blended Intensive Program) and discuss the International Teaching Practice (ITP), which enables short- and long-term mobility for student teachers. In the roundtable, we will present the internationalization process created and developed by the project team and the good practices that contribute to the development of intercultural competences needed for an international and transnational teaching practice. In the second half of the roundtable, we provide participants with practical examples on Professional Teacher Competence for Internationalisation (PTCI) and its integration into teacher training in methodology classes that we have already tried in transnational groups during the project both online and in person. We hope to conclude with an interactive discussion based on the experience of participants. Audience: teachers and trainee teachers of English or any foreign language. The experience level is not crucial since the discussion might be useful for practicing teachers, mentors and teacher trainees.

Keywords: Professional Teacher Competence, internationalisation, intercultural communication, teacher training, cooperative learning

STRAND 3 | Teacher education for critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning

About the strand

Navigating between languages and cultures plays a key role in the school environment. In the discourse of intercultural education, approaches that place the issues of power relations at the of necessary personal, interpersonal, school, and systemic changes have gained significant importance. But for any sort of change to take place the agency of teachers is vital. This strand will address three key issues in the context of teacher education. The concept of critical thinking has gained increasing importance in the last decades, not only as it pertains to the depth of academic knowledge acquisition and its real-life applicability, but also as it manifests in the critical pedagogy of nonviolence discourse through the self-critical development of emotional intelligence. This approach expands the conceptual horizon of critical thinking beyond thinking and emotional awareness by expecting a critical examination of discriminatory and hierarchical power relations and structures at the level of schools, classrooms, interpersonal relationships, and broader social relations, fostering the development of the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

In the critical discourse of intercultural education, the emphasis on the participatory, emancipatory, and transformative role of education is prominently present. One pioneering venture in this context is the discourse of cooperative learning, which is closely intertwined with constructivist and post-structuralist educational approaches. These approaches aim to provide principles and models for creating structures that can be successfully applied beyond the classroom and school level, in the spaces of social cooperation or even within an entire educational system. In an era of rapid change, it is increasingly pressing to reconsider the function of schools and the role of teachers together, to ensure that inclusive, critical, and cooperative approaches gain ground in the everyday practice of educators entering the field, as well as those already working in pedagogy, and in the school environments they operate. To that end, this strand welcomes both theoretical papers and studies presenting the results of practical investigations, as well as studies describing models, focusing on the development of critical thinking, the broader application of inclusion, or the cooperative paradigm.

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Rethinking the role of cooperative learning in promoting critical thinking among EFL learners

PRESENTATION

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In the past several decades, constructivism, a philosophical theory that informs pedagogical practices, has dominated the educational practice. At its base, this theory has suggested that meaning making and learning occurred through an active engagement with knowledge and social interaction. Critical Thinking (CT), as one of the main aspects of learners' active engagement, is a necessary and even essential skill that every individual needs to function effectively in the changing world of the 21st century. For instance, researchers argue that it is only a conscious Cooperative Learning (CL), a constructivist strategy, together with an adequately active teaching with an emphasis on CT skills might help learners to achieve better results in any field including foreign language learning. In an era of rapid change, language teaching and learning as a field of study would do well to take advantage of the current constructivist and post-structuralist educational approaches and challenge long-standing paradigms. For this reason, the present paper purports to address the concept of CT, the role of cooperative learning as a constructivist approach in the development of CT skills, the theoretical foundation for teaching CT, and the teacher role in the process. By shifting to a learner-centered approach, using cooperative base groups, and guiding students' work throughout classroom activities, the teacher can play a crucial role in the effective development of learners' CT skills through CL strategies.

This paper will focus on Paul and Elder's (2006) CT model and Bloom's taxonomy to further understand the CT concept and its role in the teaching-learning process. It will also shed light on the relationship between CT and CL, how CT can emerge from the exposure to CL, and how Collaborative Processes (CP) can be a catalyst for the development of learners' CT skills. Additionally, the paper will report a number of significant empirical research's findings on the impact of CL on students' improvement with regard to CT skills.

Keywords: critical thinking, cooperative learning, EFL learners, teaching CT skills, learning CT skills

Next level of AI supported learning: The need for collaborative paradigms of human-based knowledge construction in the era of AI

PRESENTATION

Ferenc Arató

University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute of Educational Sciences

In this paper presentation, I aim to explore the impact of the conquest of artificial intelligence on school learning. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) for educational purposes is already widespread, even if we only consider its application in higher education. (Bond et al., 2024; Zawacki-Richter, 2019) The uncontrollability of authorship in texts, coupled with exponentially greater access to digitally recorded knowledge, poses challenges and excellent opportunities for the genuine democratization of access to knowledge. The scientific achievements of the past decades in knowledge construction emphasize the importance of collaborative paradigms in social interactions, such as the cooperative learning paradigm or the paradigmatically new approach of educational constructivism to knowledge, learning, and cognitive development (Arató, 2023b). The presentation illustrates how these paradigms could signify the next level of artificial intelligence-supported learning. Expanding on how collaborative paradigms more efficiently support synchronous or asynchronous online, distance, or emergency education situations beyond traditional in-person or embedded teaching (Arató, 2023a).

Beyond the theoretical approach, I present how the different levels of AI application appear in practice based on the insights from two case studies. First, I showcase the results of exploratory investigations conducted within our AI and Teaching research group, in which we tested levels of AI applicability with student teachers in their teaching practices. Secondly, I highlight the importance and necessity of the next phase outlined in the theoretical section through an online, plurilingual course—launched and conducted in collaboration with one of our university partners—that aims to develop students' cognitive and learning abilities with the help of AI, along with the reflections received on it.

The predicted phases of AI application, outlined by thirty years of research and practical experience in the theoretical background, indicate that moving beyond teacher-centered text and task generation, a formative phase that supports self-regulative AI-supported learning will be the next major area, fundamentally altering the role of teachers. Teachers will predominantly act as facilitators and formative assessors in supporting learning processes. The most significant insight, however, is the emerging necessity for a third phase of AI application, where human-based knowledge construction based on social interactions gains new and strengthened importance. This phase can equip students, teachers, and schools with the skills necessary to adapt to societal changes.

Keywords: AI supported learning, constructivism, cooperative learning, self-regulative learning, human-based knowledge construction

Teachers' diversity experiences and attitudes toward multiculturalism, integration, and migration in Hungary

PRESENTATION

Ágnes Boreczky & Nora Tartsay Nemeth
Eötvös Loránd University

Multiethnic societies—a global reality by now—are multicultural at a descriptive level, nevertheless they become multicultural only in case the political community makes it possible for its members “[...] to develop a sense of belonging to it [...] if it equally values and cherishes them in all their diversity, and reflects this in its structure, policies, conduct of public affairs, self-understanding and self-definition” (Parekh, 2000, p. 342).

According to the findings of Pew Research (2021) increasing diversity is perceived as a positive social change. On the other hand, many see racism and ethnic discrimination existing problems in their society. To change this anomaly, it is education, and of course, the teachers, who have a distinguished role.

In Hungary it is the contrast between the increasing diversity of students, the growing need for multiculturalism versus the policy of segregation and the rejection of multiculturalism, which turned our attention to the duality of political and social realities.

In 2016-2017 and 2021 we carried out an exploratory research study to find out if the discrepancy mentioned before was represented in in-service and pre-service teachers' constructs of, and attitudes towards national, multicultural, migration issues, and their views on inclusion versus segregation; in addition, whether these constructs and attitudes had been influenced by teachers' personal experiences of ethnic diversity.

Our study had a sample of 368 participants in 2016-2017 and 412 in 2021. The key theoretical concepts and the items of the questionnaire were informed by the different forms of national identity, multicultural ideology (Verkuyten, 2005), transformative multiculturalism (Banks, 1989; Vavrus, 2002) and multicultural attitudes (Ponterotto et al., 1998), perceived benefits and threats of migration (Tartakovsky-Walsh, 2016). In line with Allport's contact hypothesis (1954), we also created a separate category called the 'diversity experience' of the participants.

We presumed that all of these are strongly interrelated, yet are hardly ever included in, and studied within a single theoretical framework

The findings of the research supported the hypothesis: multicultural ideology and multicultural attitudes can be predicted by the diversity experiences of teachers. Moreover, multiculturalism strongly correlates both with the perception of threat and benefit of migration and teachers' views on inclusion and segregation. However, the majority of Hungarian in-service and pre-service teachers do not seem to think in terms of transformative multiculturalism.

Keywords: multiculturalism, attitudes towards migration and migrants, integration, diversity experiences

The social educator as a key professional figure in contemporary multicultural schools: A formative approach from Spanish universities

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Societies are increasingly complex, multiethnic, and multicultural. This new reality has generated crises and opportunities in all areas of social welfare, especially in education. In particular, the school context needs an inclusive and intercultural education that combats problems of coexistence in classrooms, absenteeism, and school failure (Portera & Milani, 2021). It is here where social education professionals, who are known in Europe with different nomenclatures (Calderón & Gotor, 2013), play a fundamental role as agents of social change through various educational strategies, contributing to sociability, intercultural competence, and sociocultural promotion of citizenship (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación, [ANECA], 2005). This research, which is part of a doctoral thesis project funded by the Spanish Government (FPU19/05258), aims to determine to what extent the school context constitutes a formative and professional area in the curricula of the Degree in Social Education in Spanish universities.

A qualitative documentary analysis was performed, which is a systematic activity useful for obtaining information through the examination of written documents, considering the quality criteria of a qualitative research and the methodological phases for a rigorous documentary analysis (Massot et al., 2019). First, the Degree in Social Education was searched for in the Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos (RUCT) (Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, 2008), with an update date of 2024, to find out the higher education centers that provide this training in Spain, in this case, 32 public universities and 8 private universities. Subsequently, the curricula were accessed through the web pages, the descriptors for consultation were selected, the subjects and career opportunities were established as categories for analysis, and content sheets were prepared based on them. Finally, a cross and comparative reading was carried out, recording the data extracted and categorized in the elaborated content sheets.

The results show a scarce presence of the school environment in the curricula of Social Education in Spanish universities, since less than 25 include this as a career opportunity and only 16 have a specific compulsory subject. These findings are of concern considering the increase in research from intercultural approaches that recognize the importance of incorporating this professional into schools to promote inclusion, participation, and openness to the community (see Díez-Gutiérrez & Muñoz-Cortijo, 2022; Frigola, 2021; García & Conde, 2021). Implications for universities and schools are highlighted, proposing to continue this study from a comparative perspective with other European regions.

Keywords: initial training, social education, educational centers, diversity, intercultural education

Supporting the training of school-based teacher educators as a means of redefining positions of power

PRESENTATION

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Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Education and Psychology

Global changes in teacher education have resulted in a proliferation of alternative learning pathways and a widening range of teacher educators (White, 2019). As teacher shortages increase, policymakers seek to alleviate the pressure by accelerating training in the school context, increasingly identifying teachers who are not yet involved in teacher education as trainers. This phenomenon creates a new expectation for teachers newly connected to teacher education: to be 'dual professionals', as they need to support the learning of both students and teacher candidates (White & Berry, 2022).

The collaboration of teacher educators in the broad sense is a crucial element for the success of any practice. A significant challenge, however, is how to unlock the position of commissioning power often asserted by universities. In this process of constant boundary crossing, new actors in teacher education have to reposition themselves and interpret their roles constantly (Dengerink et al., 2015; Kaasila et al., 2023), as they are, in a sense “moving from expert to novice” (Kaasila et al., 2023).

Our research focuses on designing and testing a collaborative system model for supporting the development of a teacher-educator community in the context of a specific training development project in collaboration with the actors involved. We aim to explore: 1) how school teachers position themselves among teacher educators in the broad sense; 2) how they judge and experience their agency; 3) who they are, how they interpret their role; 4) what knowledge base and competences they have/should have; 5) what expectations they have to meet; and 6) what identity problems can be identified (Dengerink, 2015; Beijgaard et al., 2023).

Our research is design-research because it can provide a framework to support efforts to address complex problems in education/training practice (design, development, implementation) and to link the opportunities provided by research. Its cyclical operating principle, which involves a continuous design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement process, offers opportunities to link theory and practice and generate new theories and practices (Kelly, 2008).

The design research will support the process of becoming a training community, a teacher training community, by developing a collaborative research-based system model. It includes 1) the design of a training programme to support collaborative student learning, 2) the creation of a theoretical model to understand the dynamics of becoming a trainer, 3) the identification of the characteristics of the learning environment to support teacher learning community and the development of a common platform.

Keywords: school-based teacher educators, educator identity, educator collaboration, boundary crossing

Beyond words: Inclusive inquiry and participatory research for non-verbal student engagement

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Università degli Studi di Torino

Participatory research fosters collaboration in inclusive school practices. In Italy, full school inclusion policies ensure that all students, regardless of abilities, share the same classrooms. However, individualized educational plans and support teachers may unintentionally reinforce marginalization (Dell'Anna et al., 2023). This research investigates, through participatory practices, how all students—particularly those with non-verbal communication—can find a place in schools and contribute to improving inclusion.

A systematic review, following the PRISMA framework, identified 47 studies on Student Voice practices involving students with disabilities. Its preliminary results will be presented at the conference. The review applied strict inclusion criteria, selecting studies that engaged students with disabilities in decision-making while excluding those treating them as data sources (Cook-Sather, 2006; Fielding, 2011). Findings highlight a reliance on speech-centric methodologies, particularly those rooted in formal academic discourse, which limits the inclusivity of decision-making processes. Few studies employ multimodal strategies like visual or tactile methods, which restricts the engagement of students with complex communication needs, underscoring the need for alternative approaches (Lewis-Dagnell et al., 2023).

Building on these insights, this study applies Inclusive Inquiry (Messiou & Ainscow, 2020) in secondary schools to develop participatory methods fostering collaboration among students and teachers, addressing biases and power dynamics (Brasof & Levitan, 2022). The study aims to implement strategies identified as promising in the systematic review, testing how multimodal communication and co-designed participatory methods can create more inclusive classroom environments.

Preliminary results show that dominant Student Voice practices privilege verbal expression, limiting participation. By integrating multimodal communication and involving non-verbal students in shaping educational practices, this study expands participatory methodologies and promotes a more inclusive research framework (de Haas et al., 2022). Moreover, engaging non-verbal students in participatory research is not only an inclusion strategy but also a means of challenging dominant logocentric paradigms and contributing to the decolonization of participatory research, emphasizing the need for methodologies that move beyond Western linguistic norms (Thomson, 2013). Amplifying excluded voices benefits non-verbal individuals and those from diverse backgrounds.

The expected outcomes include a rethinking of Student Voice as a tool for decolonizing participatory research and enhancing educational inclusivity by addressing structural barriers that limit meaningful engagement. This project rethinks teacher education, helping educators counter exclusionary practices. It aims to equip teachers to take a clear stance and propose inclusive teaching practices. This contribution will present the systematic review of results to refine the experimental phase.

Keywords: participatory research, inclusive education, non-verbal communication, teacher education

“No Hogs or Logs” - equity and inclusion for students in Collaborative Problem Solving in the primary maths classroom

PRESENTATION

Kate Ferguson-Patrick

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Navigating changes in language, culture and communities is required in our increasingly globalised world. Globalization in education has also been associated with fostering citizens dedicated to social justice, emphasising intercultural competence, education for sustainability, collaborative skills, and the cultivation of attitudes and dispositions that require our students to connect rather than compete with others (Ferguson-Patrick & Jolliffe, 2018; Jolliffe & Ferguson-Patrick, 2020; Reynolds et al., 2017). These can be referred to as non-academic outcomes of schooling, encompassing beliefs, norms, values, motivation, and behaviours (Ladwig, 2010).

OECD reports and PISA testing (PISA, 2015) have also highlighted the importance of collaborative skills and argue that both collaboration and problem solving are crucial 21st century skills in our diverse classrooms. This study explores Cooperative Learning (CL) as one type of pedagogy that helps to develop collaboration (Ferguson-Patrick & Jolliffe, 2018). CL is a well-established educational approach known for its ability to promote equity in diverse classrooms. It is an effective method for transforming traditional classroom dialogue and encouraging more inclusive communication. This study focuses on one of these essential 21st century skills- Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) in maths classrooms.

This small-scale qualitative study examines how Complex Instruction (Cohen & Lotan, 1995), as a theoretical framework, can be used to show how to support equitable interactions, to create equitable learning opportunities and outcomes for all students in diverse classrooms. It is a useful lens to examine CPS.

One small group of teachers in Australia explore the introduction of this CPS into their classrooms during maths lessons, at the same time supporting each other as a teacher team. The presentation explores the teachers' perceived impact of CPS on students' collaborative skills as well as their equal status interactions (Cohen & Lotan, 2004; Lotan & Holthuis, 2021).

For this presentation the researcher qualitatively analysed teacher reflection and interview data using reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In total, between 8 and 10 reflections were received from five teachers over a two-month period and final interviews probed their perceived views and evidence about their students' equal status interaction (Lotan & Holthuis, 2021) after involvement in CPS. Analysis, using a qualitative and deductive approach to coding the data in relation to complex instruction was undertaken to elucidate teachers' perspectives on CPS. Results showed how teachers developed multidimensional classrooms, assigned roles and competence to their students and encouraged respect, responsibility and inclusion in their primary mathematics classrooms.

Keywords: cooperative learning, collaborative problem solving, complex instruction, equity, inclusion

Challenges, barriers, and successes in promoting inclusion processes from the viewpoint of coordinators and principals of elementary and middle schools

PRESENTATION

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Anat Kali

Efrata College

The inclusion of students has occupied educators for several decades. As part of this trend, Israel enacted in 2018 an amendment to the Special Education Law, which promotes the inclusion of students with unique needs within mainstream schools. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education defined the actions that the school's principal must carry out to promote inclusion and to train the educational staff to respond to the needs of all the students in the heterogeneous class. For that purpose, a new position was defined - Inclusion and Integration Coordinator (IAIC), whose role is to lead pedagogical processes that increase the sense of the school staff's competence for inclusion and promote the students' inclusion. Since this is a new role and a long-term change process that has not yet been completed, the study examines how the IAIC and school principals perceive the challenges, successes, and barriers in promoting and implementing inclusion.

This qualitative research was based on 22 semi-structured interviews of ten principals and twelve IAICs from elementary and middle schools. The interviews focused on understanding how participants perceive the role of the IAIC in promoting the pedagogical inclusion processes, the process they went through from entering the position, and identifying the challenges, barriers, and successes in their work and their ways of dealing with them. Contacting the interviewees and collecting and analyzing the data were done according to the accepted rules of ethics and with the approval of the College ethics committee. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data analysis was based on grounded theory and thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

Findings indicate that the role of the IAIC still evolves. It is unclear who the target population and service users of the IAIC are. There is a lack of clarity and consistency on this issue across all the schools in the study. There is confusion in understanding the role's scope, time commitment, and authority. While IAICs possess the requisite knowledge to facilitate inclusive practices, they often lack the time, resources, and authority to collaborate effectively with teachers. Challenges arise from working with colleagues who lack the necessary understanding and commitment to inclusive education. We also found contradictions in most participants' inclusion perceptions. IAIC role perceptions differed between IAICs and principals and between primary and middle schools. Implications for teacher training and inclusion implementation are discussed.

Keywords: inclusion, special education needs coordinators, educational policy, teacher training, inclusive school culture

Learning from challenges – promoting the inclusion of learners with learning disorders through online lessons: Elementary-school teachers share the strategies they used during the COVID-19 pandemic

POSTER PRESENTATION

Heidi Flavian

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Oranim College of Education

Inclusion of learners with Learning Disorders (LD) has existed for decades, mainly through the implementation of various teaching strategies (Flavian & Uziely, 2022). Accordingly, educators and scholars continually search for innovative ways to enhance inclusion (Ainscow, 2020; Tremblay & Belley, 2016). Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic added new academic and social challenges to the task, given the need to teach fully online (Flores & Swennen, 2020; Kaur, 2020). While inclusion involves personalized responses enabling full participation of all students, changing the learning environment from face-to-face to on-line classes, placed a great burden on teachers who had to learn how to teach on-line and develop new methods that promote inclusion, solving technical and other problems, and adapting learning methods differentially for all learners (Tas et. al. 2021). This study aims to learn from 45 teachers about the strategies they used to promote inclusion in their online lessons.

Two main questions guided this study: 1) What teaching strategies did elementary-school teachers use during the COVID-19 pandemic, while aiming to promote inclusion of learners with LD in online lessons. 2) In what ways do these teaching strategies differ from those they used during face-to-face lessons?

Following the qualitative approach for on-line interviewing (Salmon, 2014), 45 individual interviews of elementary-school teachers were conducted and recorded via Zoom and professionally transcribed. Data analysis proceeded in two stages: first, the two researchers and a research assistant analysed the transcripts separately, seeking common themes and ideas, along with formulating descriptive and conceptual categories (Shkedi, 2019). Then their results were compared and any minor differences found were discussed to attain consensus.

Data revealed significantly important information. While the first data analysis indicated that teachers' strategies in online lessons were similar to those used during face-to-face lessons, deeper examination exposed something else. Apparently, teachers' knowledge about learning with LD together with their belief in continuing inclusion efficiently led to the development of updated teaching strategies. For example, while maintaining the core principles of strategies for learners with LD, teachers used updated technology that they did not use during face-to-face lessons, while keeping in minds learners' needs for adjustments of assignments, interactive learning, demonstrations of abstract knowledge, and clearly defined lesson structure.

Keywords: inclusion, learning-disorders, on-line learning, teaching strategies, teacher-education

The intercultural school director: Shaping management and leadership in education for critical thinking, inclusion, and global cooperation

PRESENTATION

Zdravka Grđan

European school of Varese

Katarina Grgec

Ministry of Science, Education and Youth of Republic of Croatia

This study aims to explore the critical role of the school director in fostering intercultural education, leadership, and global competencies in modern educational systems. Theoretical framework draws on key concepts from intercultural pedagogy, critical thinking, cooperative learning, and educational globalization. By examining the school director's role in navigating power dynamics, emotional intelligence, and critical pedagogy, this study highlights how these elements contribute to school management and the development of inclusive, cooperative learning school environments. The background information focuses on the intersection of educational leadership and interculturalism, emphasizing how school directors can influence and transform schools into spaces of respect, collaboration, and cultural understanding. The research builds on theories in intercultural education educational management, the role of school directors in shaping school culture, and the implementation of global educational policies, particularly in the context of European educational systems, which are multicultural, intercultural and multilingual.

The research methodology employs a qualitative and descriptive approach, combining theoretical analysis with practical case studies of school directors in educational environments. The data was collected through an online questionnaire (Google Form) as an anonymous survey for school directors of secondary schools in the Republic of Croatia as well as in the following countries: Finland, Iceland, Bulgaria, and Scotland. The study provides a detailed analysis of key areas of school directors' work and also includes a review of relevant literature on intercultural pedagogy, educational management, leadership styles, and the impact of interculturalism and globalization on educational practices. To ensure the applicability of findings, a comparative analysis of schools across different European countries is conducted, focusing on how school directors implement intercultural strategies in their leadership roles and their school practice. This methodology enables an exploration of the practical challenges and successes school directors encounter in fostering inclusive, globally aware learning environments.

The study's findings indicate that school directors play an important role in promoting intercultural education by integrating global competencies into school curricula and fostering an inclusive school culture. Key outcomes include the identification of successful strategies for intercultural communication, the incorporation of diverse learning methodologies, and the promotion of emotional intelligence among teachers and students. School directors who embrace a participatory approach to leadership are more effective in addressing power imbalances and supporting critical thinking in their schools. The research highlights the importance of the school director's intercultural role in shaping school community.

Keywords: school directors, intercultural education, educational management and leadership, global competencies, educational globalization, critical thinking, cooperative learning, inclusive learning environments

Building teacher agency through Lego Serious Play®: A collaborative approach to global learning in schools

POSTER PRESENTATION

Daniela Gröschke, Claudia Heinrich & Laura Malik

Friedrich Schiller University Jena

The integration of Global Learning (GL) into school curricula presents a number of challenges. While the project is investigating how schools can be supported to develop a curriculum for GL, there is little knowledge about teachers' perspectives on this process. This study aims to explore how teachers understand global learning and how they can collaboratively develop a shared understanding of GL within their schools. Drawing on social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2000), the research addresses the importance of both individual and collective teacher agency (Donohoo et al., 2018) by facilitating collaborative learning practices. In line with complex constructivist principles (Doolittle, 2014), the study uses LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) as a structured method for individual reflection and collective exchange. LSP fosters a collaborative learning environment that encourages metacognitive reflection and reduces hierarchical power dynamics in team discussions (Wheeler et al., 2020).

LSP workshops in five schools in Germany were facilitated by a certified LSP® trainer, observed by researchers and audio recorded. 38 teachers participated in the LSP workshops; the group size for the LSP setup ranged from 4 to 6 teachers. In addition, a survey was used to assess teachers' collective and individual efficacy in teaching global learning. Two weeks after the workshops, feedback sessions (interviews) were held to reflect on the results and further evaluate the LSP methodology. Quantitative and qualitative data were then triangulated.

The findings show that GL is understood as a process of change influenced by a number of factors, including curriculum design, student focus, teacher role, learning environment, structures and structural barriers, cultural complexity, and internal/external collaboration. Understanding of GL is fragmented within schools, but the desire for community and connection (between people and people/nature) are shared values within and across schools. Overall, through the LSP® workshops, teachers were able to co-create a basis for a shared understanding of GL and increase their motivation to integrate global perspectives into classroom activities and school projects. The limitations of the study and future directions for the use of LSP as a research methodology will be discussed.

Keywords: Lego Serious Play®, global learning, efficacy, collaborative learning

Exploring multicultural attitudes in Turkish teacher training: Perspectives of pre-service teachers on diversity and inclusion

PRESENTATION

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Eötvös Loránd University

This study aims to examine multicultural attitudes among pre-service teachers from Kurdish, Syrian, and Turkish backgrounds within Turkish teacher training programs. Prompted by the Syrian refugee influx, classrooms in Turkey have become increasingly diverse, presenting both challenges and opportunities for educators. This research is guided by Banks' (2016) multicultural education framework, Sleeter's (2013) concept of critical multiculturalism, which emphasizes the need to address power dynamics and social justice in education, and Gay's (2018) theory of culturally responsive pedagogy, which advocates for teaching approaches that reflect students' cultural backgrounds. By combining these perspectives, the study seeks to understand how teacher candidates perceive diversity and their preparedness to support ethnically diverse student populations. This research aims to inform the development of teacher training programs that prioritize inclusivity, ensuring educators are equipped to navigate the multicultural realities of Turkey's evolving educational landscape.

The study starts with a demographic questionnaire to capture participants' age, gender, ethnicity, and educational background, providing essential context for analyzing multicultural attitudes among pre-service teachers. Following this, the Teachers' Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS), developed by Ponterotto et al. (1998) and validated in Turkish by Yazıcı et al. (2009), along with the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE) by Munroe and Pearson (2006) and adapted into Turkish by Akcaoğlu and Arsal (2018), are administered to assess attitudes toward diversity among Kurdish, Syrian, and Turkish participants within Turkish teacher training faculties. Data collection occurs via an anonymous online Qualtrics survey, ensuring confidentiality and accessibility. Using purposive sampling, the study reflects Turkey's ethnic and cultural diversity in teacher education programs. Statistical analysis will explore patterns in attitudes toward multiculturalism, examining key demographic and cultural factors. This quantitative approach provides insights for fostering inclusivity and preparedness for diverse classrooms, guiding the development of responsive educational practices.

The study anticipates uncovering variations in multicultural attitudes among pre-service teachers, influenced by demographic factors such as ethnicity and cultural background. Expected findings will reveal how these diverse perspectives shape approaches to classroom inclusivity, emphasizing the importance of equipping future educators to manage culturally diverse environments effectively. Results are expected to contribute insights into instructional planning, classroom management, and practices suited for multicultural classrooms. These findings will inform pre-and in-service teacher training programs, ensuring educators are better prepared to address and support the needs of diverse student populations.

Keywords: multicultural attitudes, teacher training, inclusivity

Fostering critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning in teacher education

WORKSHOP

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This workshop is designed to equip educators with strategies for fostering critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning in multicultural classrooms. With growing diversity due to global events like the Syrian and Ukrainian crises, it is increasingly essential for educators to create inclusive spaces. Drawing on Sleeter's Critical Multiculturalism and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, the workshop provides practical tools to address power dynamics, privilege, and systemic inequities, helping educators build equitable environments where all students feel respected and included.

Through activities such as group discussions, case studies, and role-playing, participants will reflect on teaching practices and explore ways to incorporate students' cultural backgrounds to support diverse learners. Grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, this workshop follows a transformative cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, helping educators understand how power dynamics and cultural identities intersect in classrooms.

Aims and theoretical framework: The workshop aims to empower educators to enhance critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning in multicultural settings. Guided by Sleeter's Critical Multiculturalism (2017) and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay, 2018), it also draws from Freire's transformative vision (1970). Freire's emphasis on addressing "entrenched inequalities" is particularly relevant as migration increases, and educators play a vital role in supporting marginalized students. Sleeter's framework encourages participants to address biases and power dynamics, while Culturally Responsive Pedagogy focuses on integrating students' cultural identities to foster belonging and engagement.

Workshop description: This interactive session encourages participants to apply Sleeter's Critical Multiculturalism through experiential learning, following Kolb's model. Activities such as role-playing and case studies help participants see how cultural identities and systemic inequities impact educational spaces. Inspired by Freire's and hooks' ideas of education as tools for social transformation, the session promotes a reflective approach to culturally responsive teaching, preparing educators to create inclusive classrooms.

Expected outcomes: By the end of the workshop, participants will understand how to integrate critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning in multicultural classrooms. Equipped with strategies from Sleeter's Critical Multiculturalism to address power imbalances, privilege, and bias, and with tools from Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, they will be ready to incorporate students' cultural identities into their teaching. These skills will empower them to design collaborative, inclusive learning experiences that build resilience and engagement across diverse student populations.

Keywords: responsive pedagogy, multiculturalism, intercultural learning

Teaching for social justice in diversity context: Valuing the voices for schoolchildren and future teachers

PRESENTATION

Maria João Hortas

Polytechnic Institute of Lisbon, Escola Superior de Educação

The school as a meeting place for different cultural influences, challenges us in the field of human rights and social justice. However, the classroom practices are still far from value and enhance cultural diversity as an opportunity for everyone. Aiming to identify the paths to follow in educating teachers to a culturally diverse classroom, we intend to discuss education strategies committed to diversity and social justice, put in dialogue the representations and experiences from different actors of the curriculum. Theoretically the analysis is based on a socio-critical and emancipatory paradigms, in line with Freire (1975, 1977), Giroux (2003, 1990), Carr (1990), May and Sleeter (2010) and Ross (2018, 2004), appealing to a democratic teacher culture, with a student centrality and a commitment attitude to social justice and equity.

Using a qualitative methodology, with different data collecting techniques, the participants are teachers and students from initial teacher training (SITT) and primary school teachers and students (PS) (6-12 years old, in Lisbon Metropolitan Area: 6 social sciences teachers are interview, 70 SITT answered an open questionnaire, 14 SITT participated in 2 focus group, 15 SITT participated in a world cafe, 89 PS solved a problem situation.

The content analysis and triangulation of the data from the different actors, inform us that there are five dimensions what are important to consider in the strategies of teacher training curricula: (i) more permeable training curricula; (ii) student centrality; (iii) methodologies focused on relevant social issues, valuing questioning and critical thinking; (iv) different tools for reading and analyzing socio-educational contexts; and, (v) development of skills within the framework of global citizenship and a democratic culture.

Keywords: cultural diversity, schools, social justice, students, future teachers

Mentoring activities for critical thinking, inclusion, and cooperative learning

ROUNDTABLE

Katalin Hubai & Anna Szegedy-Maszák

Eötvös Loránd University, Apáczai Csere János Secondary Practice School and Department of English Language Pedagogy

In education systems where teacher preparation is expected to keep seeking solutions for increasing teacher shortages (Varga, 2023), and teacher candidates have varying career ambitions and levels of readiness to teach (Chrappán et al., 2020), it is of paramount importance to explore strategies for supporting a diverse range of teacher candidates in transitioning into in-service teaching. This roundtable aims to explore the social-emotional collaborative learning potential within teacher mentoring and coaching. It will focus on activities that promote candidates' professional growth while building on their own identity and values, strengthening their ability to raise critical thinkers, incorporating intercultural encounters, and fostering more equitable learning environments (Aguilar, 2020). Drawing on findings and implications of two ongoing research projects focused on preparing Hungarian EFL teacher candidates, this roundtable seeks to stimulate discussion about supporting teachers' professional development, collaborative learning routines, well-being, and retention. We hope to provide valuable insights for university-based teacher trainers, school-based mentor teachers, school leaders, and all stakeholders invested in teacher preparation.

Keywords: teacher preparation, mentoring, identity, critical thinking, cooperation

Challenges mentors face in a changing teacher education context

PRESENTATION

Katalin Hubai

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Ildikó Lázár

Eötvös Loránd University, Department of English Language Pedagogy

The current restructuring of pre-service teacher education in Hungary comes at a time when the field is grappling with the demands of 21st-century education such as the need to develop critical thinking and skills of cooperation in inclusive classrooms (Cochran-Smith, 2021) alongside a significant shortage of teachers. This situation highlights the necessity to evaluate various aspects of initial teacher training and the practices associated with it. Successful teacher education relies on the integration of theory and practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Tarone & Allwright, 2005), with the teaching practicum supervised by school-based mentor teachers being a crucial element in this integration (Malderez, 2009; Snoeck et al., 2010). In the Hungarian context, mentors have multiple roles in supporting teacher candidates' transitioning into in-service teaching, such as helping navigate in a real-life school environment, modeling good instruction and collaborative learning, fostering professional development, and sharing strategies to sustain teacher well-being (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999; Dreer-Goethe, 2023).

This study investigates EFL mentor teachers' views on critical thinking, cooperation and inclusion in the process of supporting and evaluating trainee teachers' work. It aims to gain an insight into the complexity of the work these mentor teachers do through document analysis, observations, and interviews. In the first stage of the research, twenty mentor teachers' written reflections were analysed to collect data on challenges beginner mentors face (Lázár, 2024). In the next stages, post-lesson discussions about teacher candidates' lessons will be observed and followed by mentor teacher interviews in spring 2025, to further explore such challenges and their impact on the mentoring process.

Initiating a dialogue around the challenges of mentoring will enable a clearer communication about key priorities of the teaching practicum experiences among university trainers, school-based mentors, and other stakeholders in teacher preparation. In the meantime, examining the views that define the mentors' actions during the mentoring process will support a more comprehensive take on supporting teacher candidates' ongoing professional development, while informing the larger professional community.

Keywords: teacher education, mentoring, evaluation, critical thinking, cooperation

Navigating identity formation: Intercultural challenges and support structures for early-career English language teachers in Cambodia

PRESENTATION

Meyly Kheng & Fruzsina Szabo

University of Debrecen

This study investigates the identity formation of eight early-career English language teachers in Cambodia, a country that experienced significant educational reforms. It explores these teachers' intercultural dynamics during the teaching practicum and how they transition from their undergraduate self to their first official year of teaching. By examining these teachers' experiences, the study digs deeper into the cultural and contextual challenges these teachers faced as they adapted to local Cambodian education systems and broader global demands of English language teaching. This study uses a qualitative multiple-case study approach which includes in-depth interviews and maintained reflective journals. These maintained reflective journals included the collection of journals they wrote during the practicum period and the collection they wrote after they started their official teaching journey. These journal entries captured the how these eight early-career teachers developed their identities as they interacted with students, colleagues, and general educational culture. The findings reveal these teachers' challenges, including the gap between theoretical learning and practical realities in the classroom in a culturally diverse context, conflicting expectations from students and their workplace, and the lack of sufficient mentorship and professional support. It has turned out that critical factors that facilitate professional identity development are reflection and mentorship. The implications point out that it is important to align teacher training programs with practical realities, particularly intercultural settings, and enhance support structures for early-career teachers. The insights from this study contribute to future research in teacher identity formation and particularly, Cambodia's intercultural contexts.

Keywords: identity formation, intercultural communication, support structures, English language teachers

Educational ecosystem and interorganisational cooperation

POSTER PRESENTATION

Anika Knuhr

Friedrich Schiller University Jena

The poster outlines the conceptual framework of a PhD project exploring how the economic concepts of ecosystems can be applied to the educational context. German education faces challenges like teacher shortages (Dohmen, 2024), impacting teacher well-being and student performance (STARK-Verlag, 2020), alongside increasing speed and perceived complexity of demands (Buhren & Rolff, 2018), policy reforms and competition (Fend, 2008).

Research in economics has shown that regional networks, cluster formation and interorganisational cooperation are proposed solutions, promoting resource utilisation (Kaminski, 2009) and innovation (Hagedoorn & Duysters, 2002). Ecosystems consist of interdependent elements with a common purpose (Erk & Müller, 2021), which can drive educational change (Sliwka, 2003; Caldwell, 2008). While Austrian clusters show positive results (Brauckmann et al., 2019), their German applicability needs further investigation. The research question is: “How can interorganizational cooperation in transformative regional clusters in the education ecosystem succeed?”.

In a first step, a literature analysis has been conducted. The construct of the educational ecosystem is an emerging field that has not yet been sufficiently explored theoretically. Therefore, this study brings together strands of research from organisational psychology, education science and management science that have dealt with educational ecosystems (Niemi, 2016), inter-organisational cooperation in regional innovation systems (Asheim & Isaksen, 2002), organisational learning (Senge, 2021) and cluster formation (Porter, 1998). On this basis, an educational ecosystem is conceptualised by identifying education-specific components.

A conceptual model has been derived from the literature analysis. The resulting model outlines key factors for developing an education ecosystem. The model consists of prerequisites/requirements (e.g., components of actor groups) (Baedeker, 2012) and drivers (e.g., appropriate forms of cooperation, shared common goal and change readiness) (Intriligator, 1992) for the formation and development of a regional education ecosystem in Germany. It also identifies overlaps, additions and contradictions between the theories used in the study. Finally, implications for the empirical research design will be outlined and discussed.

Keywords: school development, school clusters, educational ecosystem, interorganizational cooperation, regional networks

Using community ethnographic research (CER) in intercultural learning

ROUNDTABLE

Martha Montero-Sieburth

Member of IAIE

Isabella Tosovic

Amsterdam University College

This interactive roundtable is intended for schoolteachers, administrators, NGO leaders, and students who want to learn about the use of community ethnographic research (CER) for their classrooms or organizations. CER's long-standing history in anthropology, sociology, and participatory action research (PAR) presents an alternative perspective to conduct classroom research that is collaborative in nature. Instead of being guided by the researchers' questions, it is formulated by the burning issues educators, students, community members or NGO leaders have (Pelto, 2013, Van der AA & Blommaert, 2011). Teams consisting of researchers and engaged school and NGO participants co-construct knowledge as they collect data for analysis and attempt to find realistic answers that can be implemented. Some knowledge of qualitative research is useful in helping workshop participants discuss how to modify, alter, or change the situation faced by the group in finding shared and acceptable solutions.

After a brief introduction to CER's stages of development and methodology we will explain how contextualization, reflexivity and positionality are critical in such research. This is followed by asking paired workshop participants to identify a burning issue worth exploring through CER and by mapping, to the extent possible in 20 minutes, the research process they would like to carry out in their schools or organizations using techniques of observation, interviews, focus groups, or drawings. Guiding questions will be provided to facilitate effective brainstorming. The aim is to hypothesize their analysis and findings in relation to intercultural learning which can be presented at the end. Of particular significance will be the paradigmatic shifts they believe can take place by using CER and the potential they foresee. As a thank you, a checklist for doing CER in schools/organizations will be handed out.

The overall aims are to gain an understanding of 1) how the positionality of researchers is related to power relationships, 2) how reflexivity, in examining feelings, reactions and motives, takes place before, during, and after the research process, and 3) how contexts matter in being adaptive to constant changes. Such learning can shed light on what may be missed in schools with under analysed assumptions and can help educators, organizational leaders and students negotiate different paradigmatic shifts towards the construction of new knowledge that becomes experientially transformed into intercultural learning.

Keywords: community ethnographic research, participant perspective, context, reflexivity, positionality

Complex Instruction in Hungary

PRESENTATION

Emese K. Nagy

University of Miskolc

The primary aim of the presentation is to show how Complex Instruction (CI) (Cohen & Lotan, 1997) has become a prominent educational approach in Hungary (K. Nagy, 2023). We outline brief history of CI, its dissemination facilitated by the University of Miskolc to other parts of the country, and the steps and challenges encountered. It also touches upon the opinions and practices of teachers and students during implementation of CI.

Given that this study incorporates interpretation and meaning, a mixed methods (Qualitatively driven mixed method) research technique will be acceptable (Smith, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2017). We present data about the implementation of CI in Hungary in three areas: the territorial and institutional distribution of CI, the experiences and opinions of teachers' implementing it, and students' perspectives on learning opportunities in CI classrooms.

Through the concept of the double-loop circle we explain the success of CI at schools. The model assumes that mere changes at the individual level are insufficient; there is a clear necessity to transform the organizational culture as well. And it is also obvious that merely altering behavior is inadequate, a comprehensive shift in motivational systems and collective cognitive frameworks is also necessary.

The significance of the project is showing how quality teacher and student learning is related to systemic innovations in both universities and schools. Furthermore, knowledge development and practice are needed for teacher learning, pointing out to teachers that equity and strong academic outcomes should be basic elements in all classrooms.

The success of the method is undeniable, given that over 200 schools (almost 6% of all schools in Hungary) now integrate CI into their curriculum, due to its beneficial effects such as improving communication, creating a democratic classroom climate, and promoting motivation and academic achievement. The presentation concludes with a discussion of challenges and successes in the widespread implementation of CI in Hungary.

Keywords: complex, instruction, education, method, Hungary

Parent-teacher relationship throughout the placement process in special education: Two different perspectives

PRESENTATION

Bilha Paryente

Achva Academic College

Yael Barak-Levy

Achva Academic College

The aim of this study was to investigate the characteristics of the complex process (Paryente & Barak-Levy, 2023) that kindergarten teachers and mothers of children with disabilities undergo when making placement in special education decisions, based on the Epstein's model (1987, 2001) of family-school connections. Epstein (2001) investigated the dynamics of mother-teacher relationships in special education placements and noted the multifaceted nature of family-school interactions and the need for schools to engage parents in various aspects of their child's education.

This was a comparative qualitative study. Participants included 41 kindergarten teachers and 40 mothers of children diagnosed by developmental neurologists as having autism spectrum disorder (ASD), intellectual or developmental disability (IDD), or both. The two groups had no professional connections with each other.

A three-stage comparative content analysis revealed four main themes discussed by the groups of mothers and kindergarten teachers, aligned along the axes of being and doing: (a) personal and professional self-efficacy; (b) emotions; (c) difficulties and desired changes; and (d) professional role perceptions. Two main differences emerged between the two groups. First, the mothers regarded the main difficulties and challenges as stemming from bureaucratic circumstances and from inadequate professional functioning, manifesting mainly in the kindergarten teachers' actions. By contrast, the kindergarten teachers saw the main sources of the challenges as stemming from the mothers themselves because of their denial of the child's diverging from neurotypicals and lack of cooperation with the main figures in the placement process. Second, the mothers perceived the main professional role as practical and active, whereas the kindergarten teachers described the role as actively providing emotionally sensitive support. These differences may stem from the different perspectives of the partners regarding maternal needs throughout this process. Understanding these different perspectives may help teachers' educators design and implement systemic interventions for both sides of the partnership, based on the current findings and critical thinking.

Keywords: kindergarten teachers, teacher education, coping with placement in special education, self-efficacy, qualitative research methods

Thinking through dialogue: Promoting critical, creative and caring practices in higher education

PRESENTATION

Isabella Pescarmona & Valerio Ferrero

University of Turin

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is essential to an equitable and quality school experience for all students (Cochran-Smith & Keefe, 2022), especially in today's multicultural educational contexts. An intercultural education is required that goes beyond the "rhetoric of diversity" and cultivate in future teachers a professional attitude that is geared towards responding to new challenges and asking questions rather than providing once-and-for-all answers (Ogay & Edelmann, 2016).

ITE at University can play a key role in fostering the development of an intercultural habitus, understood both in terms of the acquisition of specific knowledge and in terms of attitudes and skills (Pöllmann, 2016). By making university teaching more student-centered through participatory and dialogical methods (Wright, 2011), future teachers will have the opportunities to deconstruct their own ideals, perspectives and beliefs regarding diversity and develop new interpretative approaches to relationships and dynamics of power and learning processes in the classroom.

Our study proposes Philosophy for Community (P4C) by Lipman (2003; 2008) as a possible approach for the intercultural training of future teachers. It explores the following research questions:

- How can P4C be adopted and developed in ITE?
- To what extent and how does it contribute to future teachers' critical, creative and caring thinking?
- How can it contribute to cultivate an intercultural habitus?

A multiple case study with a qualitative approach was carried out in a Master teaching course in Intercultural Education to train future teachers during the academic years 2023/24 and 2024/25. Some sessions of P4C, based on specifically written texts on diversity and social justice, were developed each year, engaging about 23 students from different Bachelor's degrees in the Humanities. The dialogues were recorded and accompanied by participant observation. Finally, the students were given a qualitative questionnaire about their experience. The data was thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

P4C represented an opportunity to rethink university teaching and the academic classroom as a "space of possibility" (Bell Hooks, 1994). The application of this approach in intercultural teacher education has supported future teachers' ability to value diversity of thought and learn how to manage a dialogue in class through critical, creative and caring thinking, nourished both by intercultural knowledge and an attitude focused on asking questions rather than providing answers. The necessity of embedding P4C in a subject-specific framework remains an issue to be explored.

Keywords: intercultural education, initial teacher education, academic teaching, philosophy for community, critical creative and caring thinking

Navigating change with complex instruction: Towards equitable, excellent, democratic classrooms

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Session organizers:

Isabella Pescarmona
University of Turin

George C. Bunch
University of California Santa Cruz

Simone Plöger
University of Mainz

Rachel A. Lotan
Stanford University

Other Participants:

Gerald K. LeTendre
Pennsylvania State University

Ana Torres
Bishop O'Dowd High School

Emese K. Nagy
University of Miskolc

Christine Schmalenbach
Hamburg University

Lisa M. Jilk & Jennifer Ruef
University of Oregon

Daniela Niesta Kayser
Free University of Berlin

Drawing from the recent Special Issue of *Intercultural Education* on “Building Equitable, Excellent, Democratic Classrooms Around the World: Complex Instruction and Beyond,” this roundtable explores the growing international interest in Complex Instruction (CI). CI principles will be presented as a “compass” to guide educational transformation within increasingly complex, diverse, and multicultural contexts. The session opens with remarks from the editors of the special issue, who will discuss the aims of the 2023 “Complex Instruction Research and Practice” conference in Hamburg, which brought scholars together from Europe, South America, and the United States and which served as a foundation for this publication. Authors will then present highlights from their papers, focusing on the potential of CI to enhance teacher education and foster equitable, high-quality, and democratic classrooms worldwide. Rachel Lotan & Gerald LeTendre will then provide insights on the broader implications of CI for global education reform and the creation of equitable and democratic learning environments, especially during challenging times. The session will conclude with opportunities for audience discussion.

Keywords: Complex Instruction, multicultural and multilingual classrooms, curriculum development, democracy, social justice

Navigating the potential of complex instruction: interdisciplinary insights from German teacher education

PRESENTATION

Simone Plöger
Mainz University

Christine Schmalenbach
Hamburg University

Lisa M. Jilk
University of Oregon

As part of a teaching project funded by Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU), an interdisciplinary seminar was conducted in the Winter Semester of 2024 to explore the potential of Complex Instruction (CI) for teacher education in Germany. The seminar, titled “Fostering Equitable Classrooms through Complex Instruction,” introduced Bachelor of Education students to the CI approach, bridging theoretical foundations with practical experiences and applications (Lotan, 2006). Through CI, students were encouraged to critically examine power relations, student participation, and the effectiveness of cooperative learning structures (Featherstone, 2011). Grounded in theories of sociology (Cohen & Lotan, 1997), cooperative learning (Niesta et al., 2024), social-emotional development, and inclusive education (Plöger, 2023), this seminar provided a multi-faceted exploration of CI’s relevance and applicability in German teacher education.

Throughout the seminar, ethnographic observations focused on classroom dynamics, capturing a multi-perspective view of CI in practice. Alongside these field observations, we utilized reflective essays from student teachers to trace their evolving understanding and experience of CI. Both sets of data, paired with insights from the seminar leaders, create an exploratory but comprehensive analysis of CI’s potential impact on teacher training. Our three distinct disciplinary backgrounds informed the development of the course and the analysis of the data: Lisa Jilk’s extensive experience in CI as a mathematics teacher, researcher and trainer, Christine Schmalenbach’s specialization in social-emotional learning and cooperative learning, and Simone Plöger’s expertise in inclusive and intercultural education. Together, this interdisciplinary and international approach offers a holistic perspective on CI’s potential role within German teacher education.

Preliminary findings suggest that CI holds transformative potential for German teacher education by fostering inclusive, cooperative learning environments. Students report heightened awareness of equitable teaching practices and the critical importance of addressing power dynamics in diverse classrooms. The interdisciplinary seminar format underscores CI’s promise for reshaping teacher education by promoting inclusivity, critical thinking, and cooperative structures. Our findings offer practical recommendations for embedding CI into broader teacher education programs in Germany.

Keywords: complex instruction, inclusive education, cooperative learning, teacher education, interdisciplinary approaches

Helping trainee teachers develop a classroom presence: Why and how?

WORKSHOP

Uwe Pohl

Eötvös Loránd university, Department of English Language Pedagogy

As teacher trainers and university-based mentors, the workshop leader has always been as much interested in the way teachers ARE in the classroom as in what they DO. This is because classroom presence underpins much of the success (or otherwise) of a language lesson. But, referring to an in-the-moment phenomenon, presence is a somewhat elusive concept, i.e. not easy to define and highly individualised. Perhaps this is why it is rarely dealt with explicitly, especially in the initial training of teachers.

This professional interest sparked off a small project aimed at helping beginning teachers find their own classroom presence. First, a video-based investigation into manifestations of presence in six EFL teacher trainees provided some interesting insights. Eventually, this led to the design and first iteration of a pre-service course on developing teacher presence.

The proposed workshop is set in this context and, therefore, primarily addressed at mentors and other colleagues involved in the training of language teachers. Its main objectives are to

- explore and clarify the notion of teacher presence and some of its main components
- demonstrate examples of training activities intended to increase teacher trainee awareness and skills related to key features of presence
- share some of the most interesting project outcomes and questions it raised
- receive feedback from workshop participants on how these insights and experiences resonate with them

Keywords: teacher education, learning to teach, presence, expertise, improvisation

Student teachers and teacher educators exploring cultural pluriformity together: outline of a collaborative qualitative content analysis

PRESENTATION

Andreas Pöllmann

Paderborn University

If intercultural education wants to be critical, it cannot rely on problematic competence-postulates. All too often, intercultural competence is seen as a kind of recipe book with a ready-made list of recommendations for action, with the tendency to overlook the empowering potential of joint research activities. Most alarmingly, however, concentrating on pedagogical “remedies” for the alleged deficits of structurally disadvantaged individuals or groups constitutes an act of symbolic violence, which ultimately reinforces systematic power asymmetries and inequities. This paper promotes the collaborative exploration of cultural pluriformity (Pöllmann, 2021) as an opportunity for (self)critical intercultural learning and thus a viable alternative to pre-established prescriptions of what it supposedly means to be “interculturally competent”. “Working side by side can lead to shared understanding” (Dervin, 2020, p. 274). It can “provide the conditions for students to learn and narrate themselves and for teachers to be learners attentive to the histories, knowledge, and experiences that students bring to the classroom and any other sphere of learning” (Giroux, 2021, p. 12). Inclusive collaboration involves critical reflections of power asymmetries between different academic actors (Dusdal & Powell, 2021; Millora et al., 2020)—also and especially in the field of intercultural education (Aman, 2018; Lloyd, 2024). The path to shared understanding may be more or less uncomfortable. However, not in spite of feelings of discomfort, but precisely because of them, valuable opportunities are provided for students and teachers to experience a “greater sense of connection, a fuller sense of meaning, and in the end a greater sense of ‘comfort’ with” (Boler, 1999, p. 197) themselves and with others. Thus, the collaborative exploration of cultural pluriformity does not only focus on individually embodied (inter)cultural resources, but also on the contextual circumstances which render their realisation more or less likely. The research-related outline is intended to guide the collaborative exploration of cultural pluriformity. It primarily draws on Kuckartz and Rädiker’s (2023) approach to qualitative content analysis, whilst considering important elements of Mayring’s (2015) methodological groundwork and Schreier’s (2012) critical-constructive reception and adaptation. In contrast to the frequently encountered separation of researchers and researched on one-off occasions, the present approach emphasises the heuristic and pedagogical potential of inclusive research collaborations over a longer period of time.

Keywords: collaboration, cultural pluriformity, qualitative content analysis, inclusion, student teachers, teacher educators

Teachers as catalysts: Fostering social agency through intercultural teacher education in Israel

PRESENTATION

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In an era marked by global democratic crises, teachers' agency as catalysts for social change is increasingly vital (Manalu et al., 2004). Israel faces unique challenges, including social divides and intercultural tensions, which demand that educators redefine their roles to incorporate social agency with critical thinking skills and intercultural awareness (Shapira et al., 2023). While research has often discussed teacher agency in pedagogical contexts (Lockton & Fargason, 2019; Vähäsantanen, 2015), its development for intercultural understanding and social action remains understudied.

This study addresses this gap by exploring how pre-service teachers develop their social agency identity through participation in a collaborative intercultural program. The program combines theoretical learning, intercultural encounters, and joint initiatives, providing participants with practical tools to foster social agency.

We examine an innovative teacher education program, "Designing Future: The Education System as a Field for Social Agency and Change," operating across four teacher education institutes in Israel, serving both Jewish and Arab communities. Launched in 2023-2024, the program integrates theoretical learning, intercultural dialogue, and project-based implementation to cultivate social agency in future teachers.

The program is built on four pillars: (1) Theoretical Learning introduces key concepts in social-educational agency. (2) Intercultural Engagement brings together Jewish and Arab students and fosters cross-cultural dialogue to build social awareness and leadership skills. (3) Implementation focuses on hands-on projects, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges. (4) Reflection helps students critically analyse their role within educational contexts. The study uses a mixed-methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010), including questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observations, student reflections, and project materials analysis, to assess participants' development in agency.

Initial findings from 57 student teachers across 13 Israeli institutions demonstrate the program's effectiveness in promoting pre-service teachers' social agency. Participants reported significant growth in three key areas: understanding their role as social agents, appreciating intercultural learning, and developing leadership motivation. They also indicated that exposure to inter-group dialogue, inequality, and multiple perspectives strengthened their competence for social action. These results suggest that the program successfully fosters social agency, preparing students to address complex social challenges as educators. Comprehensive data collection for 2024-2025 will further examine these outcomes and their implications for teacher education.

Keywords: teacher social agency, social responsibility, intercultural education, pre-service teacher education, critical thinking

Fostering intercultural understanding through innovative teaching practices: A study of the TEC multi-collaboration project

PRESENTATION

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The TEC Multi-Collaboration Project 2023-2024 aims to promote intercultural dialogue and collaboration among diverse students in Israeli society. Grounded in the principles of Project-Based Learning (PBL), Online Collaborative Learning (OCL), and Game-Based Learning (GBL), this study investigates how the project's integrated teaching practices foster intercultural understanding and the development of 21st-century skills. Unlike previous TEC projects, this initiative expands its scope to include a wider range of participants, creating a unique multi-generational and multi-sectoral collaborative network. The study draws on the theoretical frameworks of multicultural education in digital contexts (Shonfeld & Gibson, 2019; Kramsch, 2014) and the transformative potential of innovative teaching practices in fostering intercultural understanding (Walther et al., 2015).

The research employs a qualitative methodology, conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 15 participants representing various roles and cultural backgrounds within the project. Participants include students, teachers, student-teachers, and project supervisors from diverse cultural backgrounds in Israeli society. The interviews explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and reflections on the project's impact on intercultural understanding and skills development. Through thematic analysis, the study identifies key themes and patterns, including the synergistic interplay between PBL, OCL, and GBL; the project's impact on intercultural understanding; the development of essential 21st century skills; and the role of technology in supporting intercultural learning. The study also examines the unique features of the TEC Multi-Collaboration Project, such as its expanded scope and multi-stakeholder collaborations, and their contribution to promoting intercultural understanding and social change. The study emphasizes the collaborative relationship between researchers and project implementers, detailing their roles and influence on outcomes. The thematic analysis process is rigorously explained, showcasing how it leads to conclusions. Additionally, triangulation of findings enhances the credibility of results. This approach ensures a robust understanding of how the TEC-Multi-Collaboration Project contributes to fostering intercultural understanding and promoting social change.

The study found that the project's integrated pedagogical approaches create a holistic and immersive learning experience that promotes active participation, collaboration, and cultural exchange. Participants reported increased empathy, openness, and appreciation for cultural diversity, as well as a deeper understanding of their own cultural identity. The virtual environment, particularly the multicultural social network "Nir," served as a platform for meaningful dialogue and relationship-building across physical and cultural boundaries, enabling authentic intercultural interactions (Shonfeld & Hoter, 2023). The findings highlight the transformative potential of innovative teaching practices in fostering intercultural understanding, breaking down stereotypes, and preparing students for an interconnected world.

Keywords: intercultural understanding, innovative teaching practices project-based learning online collaborative learning, game-based learning

Promoting inclusive statistics education: Understanding anxiety and attitudes among students with learning disabilities and ADHD to inform teacher preparation

PRESENTATION

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The present study examined the relationship between statistics anxiety, attitudes toward statistics, and statistical literacy among students with learning disabilities (LD) and/or attention deficit disorder (ADHD) compared to students without LD/ADHD in higher education in Israel. In today's data-driven world, statistical literacy has emerged as a critical competency (Ben Zvi & Garfield, 2004), essential for navigating the complexities of our data-driven society (Gal, 2019). This interdisciplinary skill, crucial for interpreting and critically evaluating quantitative information, plays a vital role in professional decision-making, academic success, and everyday life (Terry & Field, 2024). Many students, particularly those with LD and/or ADHD, face substantial barriers in acquiring these essential statistical skills. Exploring barriers to statistics education (i.e. anxiety and attitudes towards statistics) may support developing evidence-based recommendations for inclusive teaching practices.

A total of 405 students, 94 of them with self-reported LD/ADHD (50 with self-reported ADHD, 44 with LD and/or ADHD) and 311 without LD/ADHD, responded to the Hebrew version of the statistical anxiety rating scale (H-STARS), and a statistical literacy assessment.

1. The Hebrew version of Statistical Anxiety Rating Scale includes 35 items rated on Likert-scale classified into 3 subscales of anxiety (i.e. test and class anxiety, anxiety of asking for help, interpretation anxiety), and 3 subscales of attitudes towards statistics (i.e. fear from statistic teachers, perceiving worth of statistics, computational self-concept).

2. A statistical literacy assessment evaluating critical thinking in statistics through comprehension of descriptive statistics, graphs, and statistical concepts.

3. Demographic questionnaire including academic status and LD/ADHD self-reporting.

The findings revealed that students with LD/ADHD, particularly those with LD+ADHD comorbidity, experience significantly higher statistics anxiety and less favorable attitudes compared to peers without LD/ADHD. Students with LD/ADHD exhibited lower statistical literacy than students without LD/ADHD. Computational self-concept emerged as a crucial mediator between test and class anxiety and statistical literacy.

These findings highlight the importance of addressing both cognitive (attitudinal) and affective (anxiety-related) factors in statistics education for students with LD/ADHD. Results emphasize the need for pedagogical approaches supporting the development of inclusive statistics education (Schreiter et al., 2024). Practical implications point to the need for implementing targeted interventions that foster statistical literacy and developing teacher education programs that address elevated statistics anxiety and less favorable attitudes among students with LD/ADHD, particularly in test anxiety and computational self-concept. These insights provide evidence-based recommendations for developing inclusive teaching practices through anxiety-reducing techniques and confidence-building approaches.

Keywords: inclusive education, teacher education, statistics anxiety, learning disabilities, pedagogical strategies, statistics education

The influence of gender bias on Algerian teacher-student classroom interaction

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Gender bias, the unequal treatment based on gender, remains a significant barrier to equitable classroom interactions and learning experiences, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Despite growing awareness of gender equity in education, little research has explored how gender bias manifests in Algerian EFL classrooms and its impact on student participation and teacher practices. This study addresses this gap by examining the perceptions and experiences of gender bias among second-year EFL students and their teachers at Saida University in western Algeria. It also investigates the role of teachers in mitigating gender bias and promoting inclusive learning environments.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the study collected data through questionnaires administered to 60 students, semi-structured interviews with 8 teachers, and classroom observations. Quantitative data were analysed using Excel, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data to identify recurring patterns and themes. The findings reveal that gender bias significantly influences classroom dynamics. Students reported experiencing gender stereotypes, which hindered their comfort and participation, with male pronouns frequently dominating teacher examples. Teachers acknowledged unconscious biases in their interactions and classroom management, though their strategies for addressing bias varied. While some efforts to promote inclusivity were observed, challenges remained in implementing consistent and effective practices.

The study highlights the urgent need for gender-responsive pedagogy and inclusive language practices in the Algerian EFL classrooms and calls for increased awareness among educators and policymakers to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students. By providing insights from an underexplored EFL context, this research contributes to the broader discourse on gender equity in education and offers practical implications for creating inclusive learning environments in diverse educational settings globally.

Keywords: classroom interaction, EFL, gender bias, gender- responsive pedagogy, Saida's University

Cooperative engineering and lesson study approach in teaching from an intercultural and transnational perspective

PRESENTATION

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DISCO+ (Dropout and Inclusion at SChOol) project is a European consortium, whose members wish to develop expertise in transnational engineering implementation in order to produce tools to better implement school inclusion as a means of securing educational pathways and preventing school drop-out. Cooperative engineering is mobilised as a cultural tool by the project: the participating partner institutions (Regione Autonoma Valle D'Aosta and Università Della Valle D'Aosta, Italy; L'INSPE de Caen and L'INSPE de Bretagne, France; Vytauto Didziojo Universitetas, Lithuania; Universidad de Córdoba, Spain; Colegiul National A. T. Laurian Botosani, Romania; Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Petőfi Sándor Katolikus Általános Iskola és Óvoda, Hungary) design intercultural and plurilingual resources in mathematics and science subjects that can be implemented in different European educational contexts. The main objective of the project is to contribute to the professional development of (future) teachers and trainers by involving them in the production of inclusive teaching-learning sequences in transnational groups.

DISCO+ develops specific STEM sessions working in four transnational groups (of three nationalities) (Group 1 and 2: Sciences and Mathematics in national language; Group 3 and 4: Sciences and Mathematics in CLIL modality) of a given sequence following the Lesson Study approach. Each transnational group has created an eTwinning platform so that they analyse and comment on the produced mathematics and science lessons in online seminars. The observations have led to improvements regarding inclusion (disability or gender gap) in a second implementation. Reflexive analysis on cooperative work in an intercultural and transnational perspective is conducted this way.

Each cooperative engineering team analyses its experimentation process and produces an enriched video highlighting the positive effects observed in the classroom and those requiring further reflection. Each national team is to identify two relevant observable elements in their recorded implementations: one observable element should be relevant from a disciplinary point of view, while the other element should be noticeable from the point of view of inclusion. These resources will be an open access collection of good practice examples and integrated into a 5-hour MOOC. They will highlight cross-curricular themes (inclusion, gender equality, development of critical thinking), contribute to an increased awareness of aspects influencing the educational-didactic approach in terms of inclusion (especially of women in STEM), language learning methodologies (CLIL) and a better knowledge of the platforms available at European level to facilitate the exchange of learning materials and good practices.

Keywords: cooperative engineering, lesson study, CLIL learning situation, STEM education

Critical examination of social relations through reflection and dialogical learning in Collaborative Online International Learning projects

POSTER PRESENTATION

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In higher education in Florida, current state legislation limits the discussion on power relations in society. To ensure that future teachers master critical thinking, collaborative communication and reflective skills, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects were implemented. In seven week-long projects, teacher candidates from Florida and Italy analysed and negotiated meaning about societal issues to explore the link between culture, power and education (Darder, 2012). This presentation will report on the study in which we analysed two COIL projects for meaning making about power relations and discriminatory practices in education and society. The study was situated in the theoretical framework of Freire's dialogical learning (Freire, 2012), Deardorff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence (2017), and Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory (2018).

This collective case study (Schoepf & Klimov, 2022) included the COIL projects of 23 students (Italy: ($N = 10$); Florida, USA: ($N = 13$). Each student selected and critically analysed a social issue to present it to an international partner in a digital format, keeping in mind their different cultural, experiential and linguistic contexts. Teacher candidates examined topics, such as inequalities related to race, ethnicity, and gender, hierarchical power relations related to immigrants, and refugees, and women rights. Then, the COIL partners came together on a virtual platform to engage in a cooperative meaning making process. Self-examination and reflection were embedded throughout the projects which concluded with a final reflection on their learning in this virtual cross-cultural environment.

To answer the study questions related to the nature and depth of examination of critical social issues, we, the instructors and researchers, utilized multiple data sources: digital presentation, audiorecording of the dialogues, and reflections. We used descriptive and thematic analyses (Creswell & Poth, 2018) to identify themes with codes related to critical topics, such as quality education, gender equality, equality vs. inequality (United Nation The 17 goals, n.d.). Findings indicated that in their critical comparative analysis of the issues, students used theories, self-reflection, and objective evidence, such as statistics and research to give an in-depth overview. They captured the complexity of these issues and proposed avenues toward possible solutions which demonstrated their emerging knowledge, skills and attitudes as future critical pedagogists. Findings also indicated that the participants recognized that the reflections on these critical issues and the virtual dialogues for negotiating meaning across cultures deepened their consciousness, intercultural competence, and conceptualization of the link between culture and power, and social justice.

Keywords: Collaborative Online International Learning, teacher education, power, meaning-making

Empowering future educators through virtual exchange: A cross-national eTwinning project on cultural heritage

PRESENTATION

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This presentation explores the implementation and outcomes of a Virtual Exchange (VE) seminar conducted in the Winter 2024/25 term, bringing together undergraduate Primary History Education students from the University of Ioannina, Greece, and Master's-level Secondary English Education students from the University of Education Karlsruhe, Germany. The seminar utilized the eTwinning platform to foster cross-national collaboration, aiming to prepare future educators for inclusive, intercultural, and cooperative teaching practices.

Based on Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL), the course focused on the overarching theme of Cultural Heritage, with participants developing telecollaborative lesson units (eTwinning project kits) as their final outputs. The seminar aimed to enhance students' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and critical awareness of power dynamics and systemic structures in education, while promoting the development of 21st-century digital pedagogical skills. In addition, the course served as a pilot run for eTACCHE, an Erasmus+ project launched in October 2024, which aims to further enhance collaborative heritage education through VE.

Using synchronous and asynchronous interactions, the seminar integrated a variety of collaborative tools, such as Padlet, Google Docs, and other digital resources. Weekly sessions included intercultural dialogue, scaffolded collaborative tasks, and reflective activities, with both mid-course and final evaluations. Participants were encouraged to critically engage with power relations embedded in cultural narratives and teaching practices, while fostering cooperative learning and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Drawing from the data collected from the collaborative tools used and the findings of both evaluations, this paper examines: a) to what extent the participants cultivated ICC, b) how their perspectives of the world have been affected, c) whether their cultural awareness and tolerance have been enhanced, and d) to what extent the project contributed to their pedagogical flexibility and cooperative skills. Students' reflections, interactions and responses to the questionnaires distributed were analysed based on the qualitative and quantitative research paradigm. The findings indicate that such VE formats not only enrich participants' pedagogical repertoire but also contribute to their self-critical and emancipatory professional development. Students suggested larger duration of the seminar, more cultural exchange gestures between participants while they underlined their engagement with new ideas, the expansion of their cultural perspectives and language acquisition.

Finally, this session aims to provide a replicable model for integrating VE into teacher education programs. It highlights the transformative potential of cooperative, intercultural education to equip future teachers with the critical knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for inclusive and reflective teaching in diverse classrooms.

Keywords: eTwinning, Virtual Exchange, COIL, project-based learning, online intercultural exchange, teacher education, future teachers

Active engagement through cooperative learning

WORKSHOP

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In recent decades, educational research has been influenced by theories that view learning as an active mental process and indicate that active engagement helps students establish connections to their world and focus their attention on meaning, which leads to better understanding and improved retention (Conley, 2010; McMillen et al., 2016; Sousa, 2022).

The paradigm shift from receptive to active learning and the focus on communication as an integral part of the diverse classroom where students of many cultures learn together has increased the demand for specific research-supported practical applications. The more teachers know about how learning occurs, the more instructional options become available.

The interactive hands-on workshop introduces the recent structural approach to cooperative learning (Kagan, 2015) where students work together on a structured activity with individual accountability. The session provides a research-based rationale for implementing cooperative learning instructional strategies. Several cooperative learning structures modeled by the presenter can be used as part of almost any lesson, without special planning or changes in the curriculum. In addition, important factors utilized by the approach, such as diverse language backgrounds and learning styles are discussed. Time for questions and answers concludes the session. The workshop is conducted in English and is intended for the audience of teachers at any level, any subject and experience, as well as teacher educators. No special preparation is needed.

The participants will:

- learn the key principles of cooperative learning
- be able to differentiate between cooperative learning and group work
- experience first-hand several cooperative learning structures
- discuss ideas for implementing cooperative learning structures in their content areas

Keywords: cooperative learning, interactive strategies, active engagement

Supporting teacher candidates' professional identity construction with Video Interaction Guidance (VIG): Relativising support roles, partnership, and positions of power

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Rapos Nóra

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The complex dynamic approaches to teacher professional development emphasise the interaction between the person and his/her environment (Rapos et al., 2020, 2022); professional development is understood as a process of learning and identity construction (Boylan, 2017; Kaplan & Garner, 2018; Tókos, 2024). But what concrete methods can be used in training to support the learning and identity construction of teacher candidates embedded in school and workplace learning processes, and to support a more holistic understanding of teacher agency, in which the interpretations, emotions of the actors and the relativization of the roles can also appear? In our case study, we will show the potential of using the Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) method in this respect. The method shares many similarities with the technique of VSR (Video Stimulated Recall), which has been investigated in studies of reflective thinking, in relation to teacher candidates' reflective practice, classroom behaviour, professional development or mentoring (MacCallum, 2013; Mena et al., 2016). The aim of our research is to explore how the VIG method can be used to help teacher candidates understand individual, concrete learning situations, to interpret them as a system? What suggestions can be made for teacher training in relation to a personalised support system for teacher candidates based on closer cooperation between support persons? As an instructor and VIG-instructor, I followed the professional development and learning of a final year teacher trainee in his/her final year of individual practice during the spring semester of the 2022/2023 school year, with the help of VIG. A supporting seminar was also linked to the internship. The participants of the course also provided feedback in the form of written reflections on the lessons. I also kept a reflective diary of the process as a trainer. Based on our results, the VIG methodology can contribute to supporting the professional development and learning of teacher candidates, through repeated observation and reflective analysis of relevant learning situations and personal functioning, by highlighting the emotional side of one's own learning, the development of a realistic self-image and self-regulated learning can be effectively helped. Furthermore, we can move from an approach of the novice teacher with gaps and his/her support to a support that is agentic in his/her own learning, in which the partnership-based cooperation of school and university mentors and trainers, realizing multiple border crossings, the relativization of roles appears as a key element (Edwards & Mutton, 2007).

Keywords: teacher candidates, professional development and learning, professional identity, Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)

Promoting cohesion as a preparation for cooperation: A case study in Primary Education

POSTER PRESENTATION

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UPV/EHU

The future of inclusive education is a challenge since its approaches are located in a framework in which exclusion continues to be part of the nature of the school. Inclusion is an educational process that guarantees the human right of boys and girls and young people to be educated, regardless of their individual sociocultural, identity, religious and educational differences. Cooperative Learning (CL) is a pedagogical practice that contributes to the learning and socialization of all students and constitutes a response to inclusive education in schools.

This work is part of a broader investigation on the contributions of AC to educational inclusion in Primary Education in the Basque Country (Northern Spain) perceived by teachers and considering its role in the school Curriculum and the teacher training system. Its objective is to analyse the initial phase of the “Cooperate to learn, learn to cooperate” program that promotes cohesion to develop mutual knowledge and help, the participation of all students and respect for differences, the willingness to work in team and solidarity

Its methodological approach of a qualitative nature and interpretive nature tries to approach the meanings constructed in the social life of human beings, in this case Primary teachers, and more than generalization, it seeks the understanding of the analysed phenomena. This case study focuses on a school that has been working with CA for the last ten years. The instruments used to collect data were in-depth interview with the school director: semi-structured interviews with three teachers and a Focus Group of five teachers.

The results obtained indicate that the dynamics for cohesion are perceived as necessary and valuable as preparation for cooperation, since they progressively develop several social competencies: knowledge and mutual acceptance; participation of all students and learning to facilitate participation; feeling of belonging to the group and cohesion; mutual help, respect for differences and solidarity and willingness to work as a team.

With respect to teachers, it is important that teachers: prepare the dynamics in advance; give feedback to students and reflect with the group and teachers share practices and are part of cohesive teaching teams.

Keywords: cooperative learning, cohesion, primary education, inclusion

Nicco*, a narrative method to develop a shared language in co-creation and coaching processes in education

POSTER PRESENTATION

Bert Wastijn & Kaat Verhaeghe

Erasmus Brussels University of Applied Sciences and Arts

This presentation focuses on “NICCO,” a narrative and collaborative method, as method how a shared language can be developed through co-creation and coaching processes. NICCO demonstrates how collaborative efforts fostered the creation of a common language, enabling students, educators, and coaches to engage meaningfully and equitably in the co-creation of learning experiences. By exploring the steps and methodologies involved, this presentation highlights how a shared story was built to support open communication, mutual understanding, and a stronger sense of belonging.

Within NICCO, the development of a shared story became a central part of coaching interactions, where participants were encouraged to articulate values, define shared language, and create elements that reflected the diverse perspectives in the group. This approach allowed for deeper engagement in the process, as each participant felt more connected to the collaboration and their role in contributing to collective outcomes.

The presentation will outline the practical strategies and systemic tools used within NICCO to support this language-building process, emphasizing the importance of iterative reflection, feedback, and inclusive dialogue. The presentation wants to reflect on how developing a shared story can encourage or foster social justice in education. By lowering barriers to participation and ensuring that every voice is heard, a common story that wants to support equity and empowerment within the group, allowing diverse viewpoints to shape the learning environment actively. Through this case study, the presentation wants to show how building a shared story within co-creation processes can promote inclusivity, respect, and social cohesion, ultimately contributing to a more socially just and collaborative experience.

This case example of NICCO underscores that developing a shared story is not only a tool for effective communication but also a powerful means to create inclusive educational practices that prioritize social equity. By using NICCO as a model, the presentation aims to discuss insights into establishing a common story to enhance co-creation, cooperative learning, and social justice.

Keywords: narratives, shared story, shared language, team coaching, collaborative learning, voices, multivocality

Wonderlab in Brussels: Playful science education for all young children

POSTER PRESENTATION

Bert Wastijn, Annick Biesmans & Bram Malisse

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The Wonderlab at Erasmus Brussels University of Applied Sciences and Arts provides a dynamic space for playful science education tailored to young children, combining creativity with inquiry-based learning. This innovative initiative, part of the Innoviris project, welcomed multiple preschool classes, allowing educators to conduct action research on its effectiveness. Using the STEAM model, the Wonderlab introduces children to scientific exploration through activities like material experimentation and constructing tall or sturdy structures, engaging them in hands-on, structured learning that nurtures curiosity and critical thinking.

Within Brussels' multilingual and diverse setting, the Wonderlab emphasizes active vocabulary development alongside creative design tasks, promoting language acquisition and scientific inquiry. This structured yet playful approach supports inclusivity by creating an environment where children from diverse backgrounds can thrive. To inspire young girls in STEAM fields, female architects from various backgrounds actively participate as role models, further promoting diversity and representation.

The research within the Wonderlab is led by lecturers from the Early Childhood Education program, who continuously adapt lesson content during activities to address the specific needs of each child and teacher. The upcoming poster presentation will showcase this lab's approach to STEAM inclusivity, documenting how third-year students use research tools to assess science and technology concepts, identify project-specific insights, and develop targeted interventions. Grounded in findings from the H2020 Communities 4 Sciences project, the Wonderlab emphasizes the need for high-quality, art-inspired interventions in science education.

Action research in the Wonderlab highlights the critical role of active vocabulary and structured guidance during activities, helping children shift from open-ended play to focused investigations. By engaging in both divergent and convergent thinking phases, children develop a foundational inquiry process, facilitated by teachers and student teachers who provide tailored support, ensuring an inclusive learning experience.

This project underscores the importance of pedagogical documentation and the involvement of both students and educators in inquiry-based science education, equipping them to integrate these principles into broader educational contexts.

Keywords: steam, inclusion, play, education, early childhood education, urban education, art, cooperative learning

The simulation influence on Arab teachers' self-efficacy and empathy

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Simulations is a new strategy that allow educators to experience realistic classroom scenarios. It fosters skills through experiential learning by engaging teachers in realistic classroom scenarios facilitated by professional actors, and followed by reflective discussions. Hence, simulation aims to replicate real-world challenges and provide a safe environment for developing social-emotional skills, such as self-efficacy and empathy. Self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capability to execute tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997). Empathy, key component of emotional intelligence, is often described as the capacity to feel the emotions of another individual (Preston & de Waal, 2002).

In light of shortage in research that examined simulation effect on teachers' self-efficacy and empathy among Arab teachers, the current study sought to address this gap by exploring the simulation contribution to development of these skills among elementary and middle school teachers, and thus, contributing to a deeper understanding of social-emotional learning among Arab teachers. For this goal, the theoretical framework integrates Bandura's model of self-efficacy (1997) with Noddings' ethic of care (2003).

The study employed a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population included 120 Arab teachers, divided into research and control groups. Quantitative data were collected through self-efficacy and empathy questionnaires, adapted for school contexts, and analysed using SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistics. The qualitative tools involved focus groups, exploring participants' experiences during simulation workshops.

Findings of the study revealed significant improvements in self-efficacy and empathy among teachers who participated in simulation workshops in comparison to the control group. Elementary school teachers exhibited higher empathy levels, while middle school teachers showed more variability in self-efficacy. A strong positive correlation between self-efficacy and empathy was observed, particularly in the research group. Qualitative findings highlighted participants' increased confidence, emotional awareness, and ability to handle classroom challenges effectively. These results underscore the value of simulations in fostering social-emotional learning and professional growth, suggesting their potential as a transformative tool in teacher education programs, particularly within culturally diverse contexts.

Keywords: simulation in education, self-efficacy, empathy, emotional intelligence, Arab teachers

Introduction of the methodology and experiences of student-powered and challenge-based impact lab network for the development of transformative competencies and inclusive mindset

WORKSHOP

Barbara Hegyi

Eötvös Loránd University

The aim of the workshop is to introduce the methodology and experiences of the interconnected education that an international community has developed through projects and activities to level up their joint innovation and entrepreneurship education.

Although there is a widely known practice of challenge-based education, a cross-disciplinary and at the same time inclusive approach is not typical, as faculties' or schools' entrepreneurship education's scope is determined by their scientific domain.

Impact labs embrace elements of Skills Infusion Program, as a career readiness program (Hua et al., 2022) that focuses on the development of competencies, such critical thinking, problem-solving; communications; teamwork, collaboration; digital literacy; leadership; work ethic; career management; and global-intercultural fluency, are relevant to all academic disciplines. Methods from WBL (work-based learning) help students cultivate essential 4C soft skills (collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication (Mohamed, 2024). The interconnected impact lab system (REDINEST) as an interdisciplinary initiative to leverage positive psychological effects of challenge-based and intercultural learning, opening doors towards positive psychology (Horokoshi, 2023). This concept will apply the principles of the Challenge-Based Reflective Learning (CBRL) framework focusing on context-driven, challenge-based experiential learning process to support the cross-boundary interactions and learning to overcome the limitations of traditional, discipline-bounded models involving inter- and transdisciplinarity (Sung et al., 2024).

The session has two missions:

- 1) It aims to share the methodological experiences of the internationally interconnected interdisciplinary entrepreneurship education, across projects and institutions, by introducing vibrant examples, student and teachers-side motives and the challenges of value-oriented and impact-based education programs.
- 2) As the session leader has the opportunity to coordinate the REDINEST consortium which aims to design and implement a new impact lab network, expecting a highly interactive contribution of participants with different disciplinary backgrounds to introduce their similar or entirely different conclusions.

The discussion can nurture the methodological improvement processes of REDINEST mission which desires to empower students with not only inter-cultural thought-exchange experience but also boost their employability through improving their responsiveness and critical thinking in such important fields like green and digital transformation, social responsibility and analytical skills in an international context.

The main motivation for the two different directions is to provoke a discussion in a professional audience that can provide an invaluable source for all attendants for further development of their international, diverse-sensitive, or interdisciplinary courses in each possible domain.

Keywords: internationally interconnected education, impact labs, transformative skills development, education for better employability, innovation and entrepreneurship

Whose knowledge, issues, and practices? Marginalized students' civic experiences inside and outside of Israeli schools

PRESENTATION

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While youth's alienation from official politics has been sufficiently documented, marginalized young people's informal political involvement has been only scarcely researched. Such research challenges mainstream conceptions of what counts as political and raises important questions about the nature of democratic education and civic learning. Young people's complex civic realities have been captured through the critical pedagogical framework of funds of knowledge, which traces educational inequalities as rooted in broader schooling practices and structures (Moll et al., 1992), and Biesta's (2011) conceptions of citizenship learning as socialization, a process that seeks to conform learners to an existing political order, and subjectification which emerges from the engagement with democratic politics (Biesta, 2011). Drawing on these theoretical frameworks, our study sought to examine how marginalized young people engage in civic learning in Israel and possible tensions between civic learning at school and in informal contexts.

Our qualitative participatory study investigated, (1) how young people engage in civic learning inside and outside of school, and (2) which tensions emerge between their civic learning in official and informal contexts. The study focused on the diverse communities from the south of Tel Aviv and Jaffa, where we recruited a sample of 26 high school students (ages 15–18) and five civic teachers from three high schools. The research methods with students included observations of civic lessons and extracurricular activities, individual interviews with students and teachers, photovoice, focus groups, and a participatory data analysis workshop. We used a multi-stage process to conduct a thematic analysis of the transcripts, field notes, and photographs (Braun & Clarke, 2019). We discussed initial findings in a data analysis workshop with high school students to create a richer analysis that is also informed by youth's interpretations (Malone & Hartung, 2010).

Our preliminary findings highlight the contrasts between inside and outside-of-school educational experiences and the perspectives of students and civic educators. The findings illustrate that civic teachers focus more on students' socialization into formal civic learning whereas students criticized formal education. Still, they were not politically disinterested but described their civic learning through organized activities, daily routines, and personal or family histories. Our study specifies the tension between formal and informal democratic education and how students' political subjectivities are formed through their mundane experiences, highlighting the need to acknowledge these rich learning resources and civic spaces within formal civic learning.

Keywords: civic learning, political engagement, minorities, Israel, high school students

Lessons from the Arab Spring and Black Lives Matter: Towards the decolonization of knowledge and dignity/human centered education

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Rockland Community College

Miseducation and the control of knowledge and narratives have long been powerful weapons wielded by colonial and imperialist powers to suppress revolutionary movements and marginalize alternative forms of knowledge that threaten the status quo. Education has often been designed to perpetuate social hierarchies, teaching that inequality can be natural, and even justifiable. Speaking about the African American community, Carter G. Woodson (1933, 2010) underscored that schooling in the U.S. was originally developed to immerse marginalized groups into Western ideologies, promoting the acceptance of inequities as unquestionable truths, all to fit the needs of a narrow, privileged social group.

In developing countries, where authoritarianism is often more entrenched, educational systems have similarly been shaped to reinforce regime stability and prevent revolutionary thinking. Communities have been subject to rigid models of education that limit critical thought and discourage any challenge to power. However, as global changes unfold, youth movements like the Arab Spring and Black Lives Matter have demonstrated the urgent need for education systems to move beyond reproducing existing power structures. Instead, they call for teaching democracy, social justice, and citizenship values that encourage human agency and equity.

As this research seeks to demonstrate, both the Arab Spring and Black Lives Matter movements are not only protests against political oppression but also against centuries of miseducation. These movements call for a reimagining of knowledge and education that prioritizes human dignity and agency, challenging systems that have long suppressed marginalized voices. They illustrate how education can no longer serve the narrow interests of a particular group but must instead be a tool for empowerment and inclusion.

Nevertheless, this process of liberating education systems from their historical constraints is not an easy task. In its early stages, it can lead to societal disruptions like the “democracy shock” experienced in many post-Arab Spring societies. This educational reform and pedagogical transformation is equally challenging to implement even in established democracies like the United States, which faces its own democratic backslide and increasing control over narratives and knowledge. Building on the above, this presentation will explore the challenges and opportunities arising from these two revolutionary movements..

Keywords: The Arab Spring, Black Lives Matter, education, the United States, the Middle East, youth, democracy, authoritarianism

STRAND 4 | Intersectionality studies: minorities, migrants, inequality, gender

About the strand

This strand invites presentations and papers that delve into the complexities of intersectionality within educational contexts, focusing on how overlapping identities and social categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and migration status influence educational experiences and outcomes. Research exploring the multidimensional nature of inequality and how it impacts marginalized and minority groups within educational settings is central to this strand. Presentations may examine the intersectional challenges faced by students from diverse backgrounds, highlighting how systemic inequities, cultural biases, and discriminatory practices manifest in educational environments. Additionally, contributions could explore innovative pedagogical strategies and institutional policies designed to foster equity and inclusivity, ensuring that educational systems can better serve students from intersecting minority identities. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the educational experiences of migrant and refugee students, gender disparities in educational access and achievement, and the role of socioeconomic status in shaping educational opportunities. Furthermore, discussions on how educators and policymakers can address and dismantle structural barriers to education for marginalized groups are highly encouraged. Overall, this strand aims to deepen our understanding of how intersectionality shapes educational experiences and to promote practices that advance equity and social justice within educational institutions. By exploring these critical issues, we seek to contribute to the development of more inclusive, supportive, and responsive educational environments for all students.

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Belonging matters: how school type and location affect Indonesian students' achievement - A study using the PISA 2022 dataset

PRESENTATION

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This study examines disparities in Indonesian students' performance in reading, science, and mathematics literacy using the PISA 2022 dataset. Bourdieu (1973) argued that educational institutions often reinforce social hierarchies and inequalities, a concept evident in Indonesia's educational landscape where disparities arise primarily from two factors: school type, based on provider (funding and operation), and geographical location. Additionally, family socio-economic background strongly influences student performance (OECD, 2023; Stull, 2013; Thien, 2016). Indonesia has a remarkably high number of private schools, which outnumber public institutions. However, unlike in many other countries where private schools are associated with higher quality, many Indonesian private schools serve low-income communities and face severe funding shortages, leading to lower standards (Muttaqin, 2018; Stern & Smith, 2016). These issues are exacerbated by Indonesia's vast geographic and economic disparities, particularly between urban and rural regions, significantly impacting students' educational access and quality. This study investigates how school type and location affect student learning outcomes in Indonesia. Analyzing the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) dataset from OECD, focusing on the Indonesian sample ($n = 13,439$), employed Factorial ANCOVA, with ESCS (an index of student economic, social, and cultural status) as covariates. For this study, only one plausible value was used. Thus, the imputation error was not estimated. However, with a large dataset (e.g. Indonesia), the imputation error is relatively small (OECD, 2009). Plausible values of mathematics, reading, and science, respectively, acted as dependent variables, while school type (private independent, private government-dependent, public) and school's location (village, small town, town, city, large city, megacity) as fixed factors in the analysis. Further analyses were conducted to examine the differences in reading literacy, science literacy, mathematics literacy and ESCS index based on school type for every school location using ANOVA. The results show significant disparities in all three literacy learning outcomes by school type and location. Public schools generally outperform private schools across nearly all geographic areas. In rural areas, public schools primarily serve students with low ESCS, while students with high ESCS attend private independent schools. Conversely, in urban areas, affluent families prefer public schools, suggesting these schools, especially in large cities, play a role in maintaining and reproducing the parents' social status. This trend indicates a social hierarchy where urban public schools, often perceived as superior, become settings where wealthier families reinforce their socio-economic position.

Keywords: PISA, school type, school location, SES, student achievement

An ethics of care in migration research and intercultural education

WORKSHOP

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International Association for Intercultural Education

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Martha Montero-Sieburth

University of Massachusetts-Boston

Domiziana Turcatti

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This workshop shares our learnings as migration researchers, educators and practitioners who have collaborated with families, young people and children over several decades. We explore the ethical, epistemological, and methodological theory and practices of care that have emerged from and underpinned our research, which can be useful for intercultural education. As an intergenerational and interdisciplinary group, we take our commitment to “care” seriously, which is informed by reflexivity, intersectionality, decolonization, and educator/practitioner knowledge which we view as a process that is purposeful, relational, contextual, and transformative over time (Dahinden et al., 2021; Amelina & Lutz, 2019; Hobart & Kneese, 2020; Noddings, 1984: 2013). Of importance to intercultural educators, are the ways in which migration researchers and practitioners, in some cases migrants themselves, are shaped by the theory and practices of care and how the transformational potential of care centres reciprocal human relationships and reflexivity in teaching.

The workshop is structured in three parts. Drawing from our perspectives in the UK, the Netherlands, and Slovenia, we will first deliver short presentations addressing areas useful to intercultural educators, focusing particularly on the production of knowledge with migrant families, young people and children that emanates from an ethics of care (Tronto, 1994), with a special focus on the tools that we use and which can be adopted by intercultural educators; and how such knowledge can be used in educational settings to foster interculturalism and address the inequalities migrants confront as a practice of care. Second, following the presentations, participants will be split into small groups to discuss their take on the tools and concepts presented. Third, we will then reconvene as a group to generate discussion over how such tools, concepts, and practices of care can be adopted and adapted by participants in their own educational or practice settings.

We hope to engage participants in a dialogical process that opens a space for exchange and reflection on some of the critical notions of “care” (Noddings, 1984, 2013) we shared through the refractive lens of researchers, educators and practitioners, and by discussing a commitment to acting with care with migrant families, young people and children. We conclude by highlighting the ways we can collaborate with others around shared interests and bring our particular skills, differing emotional responses and experiences of “care” within and across intercultural contexts, especially in these difficult times.

Keywords: caring relationships, reflexivity, migration, family/childhood, educational integration

Bridging Indigenous and Western worlds: Methodological innovations in exploring the EFL learning experience among Zenú indigenous teachers

PRESENTATION

Ximena Paola Buendía Arias

Eötvös Loránd University

This presentation examines the intersections of Indigenous and Western research paradigms when exploring the EFL learning Experience (LE) of Zenú Indigenous pre- and in-service English teachers. A Zenú Indigenous EFL teacher and a non-Indigenous EFL teacher educator from a Colombian public university conducted this exploratory case study. The investigation utilized Indigenous research paradigms, Indigenous knowledge systems, and Indigenous relationality (Wilson, 2008; Rosado-May et al., 2020). Considering that Indigenous literature acknowledges some intersections with some mainstream theoretical constructs, this study integrated constructivist and interpretive research paradigms, complex dynamic system theory, symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1982), social network analysis (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2019), and thematic analysis. Although Indigenous relationality was the primary data analysis method, social network analysis added some key features of relationships within complex dynamic systems. Symbolic interactionism has already been used by Zenú researchers (e.g., Martínez-Luna, 2024) as it aligns with the feeling and thinking worldview of Zenú people. It addresses how humans assign meaning to symbols and how these meanings shape their social interactions and comprehension of their reality. The thematic analysis helped in coding and theme identification. Since orality for Indigenous people follows spiral thinking, is made of stories, and is permeated by symbolism, we created a multimodal narrative interview divided into four phases. Findings revealed that in the Zenú Indigenous pre- and in-service English teachers' EFL-LE, the University represents a territory of socialization with power that is not inclusive of their Indigenous culture and identity. Thus, although Zenú participants found benefits in their EFL-LE, they displayed several adaptations and resistances that took different forms, such as acculturation. Another prominent theme related to the interaction between Indigenous ways of learning and teaching methods used in their EFL classes at the University. Conflicts and alignments between these two learning systems were identified. Zenú Indigenous participants also mentioned the significance of finding purposes for their EFL-LE that served and supported their Zenú community and culture. Ultimately, this study highlights that a fruitful conceptualization and operationalization of EFL-LE among Indigenous students can only be developed if Indigenous perspectives are placed at the center of research studies. Therefore, a dialogic approach is needed when integrating mainstream theoretical constructs.

Keywords: EFL learning experience, indigenous research paradigms, intercultural education

Centres for children and families: Promoting practices that advance equity and social justice

PRESENTATION

Lucia Balduzzi & Emanuela Pettinari

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This presentation aims to illustrate the results of a participatory research for professional development carried out in the Centres for Children and Families (CCFs) of Modena (Italy). CCFs are spaces for adults with their children in the presence of an educator: they are part of the Italian integrative services with the aim of creating a network among adults and promoting equity in education.

They are now seen as an opportunity for vulnerable families to empower themselves and advocate for their needs, thanks to trained and qualified educators who are able to welcome everyone (Derman-Sparks, 2010).

They were born in Italy at the end of the 1980s to support the needs expressed by new parents and to propose different solutions of education and care in order to attract all families.

Through the lens of the ecological multidimensional approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), we believe that CCFs are spaces where social policies could be embodied, because they focus on the person, the relationships with the environment and institutions to improve the whole of society.

In the CCFs of Modena, we decided to use a qualitative methodology such as the participatory research (Balduzzi & Lazzari, 2018), involving practitioners and stakeholders, to implement their practices towards families through an intercultural lens. The design was developed in six phases, starting with study and research on inclusive services such as CCFs, and then moving into the field. This included systematic observations, in-depth interviews with all professionals involved and focus groups to negotiate any micro-experiments to be undertaken.

The results highlighted aspects of values, professional and training, which we decided to analyse with the educators, the coordinators and the educational manager in order to promote these ECEC services, their accessibility and equity. We also decided to involve families in order to listen to their needs and expectations.

The data collected were presented in a plenary session in order to remodulate the path, which participatory research sees as recursive, always remodulated on the basis of what emerged during the journey.

From an international perspective, the reality of the CCFs could be an interesting example of social justice and equity in education, starting from the practitioners and their practices.

Keywords: Centers for Children and Families, anti-bias education, ecological approach, practitioners

I was able to change his way of thinking a little bit: Doctoral students' professional socialization in Hungary

PRESENTATION

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Hanis Kakaba Habila

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The professional socialization of doctoral students studying in Hungary is a complex process, discrete factors of which have been investigated in previous research, such as doctoral students' academic development and teaching-research integration (Dorner, 2020) and young researchers' perspectives on the labor market (Csehó, 2009; Fábri, 2010; Ligeti, 2022). The concept of the present research is based on these approaches and on the international literature that has examined the socialization of graduate students as a fluid phenomenon (Weidman, 2020; Twale, Weidman & Bethea, 2016). The aim of the research is to explore the position and function of each scene within the doctoral journey, and to understand the dynamics of the relationships between different scenes that local and international students experience in the Hungarian context. Our theoretical model takes a complex approach to the process of professional socialization of doctoral students, examining the development of professional identity (Sweitzer, 2009), the role of doctoral subject supervisors and mentors (Barnes & Austin, 2009; Griffin et al., 2021), doctoral students' experiences of doctoral programs (Gardner, 2008; Guo et al., 2021), and the process of learning professional roles (Austin & McDaniels, 2006; Baker, 2020; Gardner & Doore, 2021).

The goal of this research is to understand the factors impacting the success of the doctoral journey, to be able to sufficiently respond to the dropout and lengthened career paths of students who are first generation in the higher education, belong to minorities or have a migration background.

The first data collection phase of the research took place in 2023-2024; 30 semi-structured interviews with Hungarian and international students and recent doctoral graduates have been conducted about their doctoral socialization process. Using public data from the doktori.hu database, information available on the websites of the doctoral schools of Hungarian universities, and open access social media groups we contacted our participants (expert sampling). We have used content analysis on the data and applied the MaxQDA software.

The research revealed that some segments have an overarching role in doctoral students' professional socialization from before entering the doctoral program to well after graduation. Such are the role of the parental family, the communication strategy with partners and friends, the relationship with the advisor, the role of an unofficial mentor, the process of finding the research topic, and the involvement in—or exclusion from—scientific units at the university, such as department work, research labs and excellence s.

Keywords: doctoral students' professional socialization, dropout prevention, lengthened career path, first generation students in doctoral programs

Validation of the impostor profile scale

PRESENTATION

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The validation of the Hungarian version of the Impostor Profile (IPP30) (Ibrahim, Münscher and Herzberg, 2022) among higher education students of all levels, with a special focus on students in teacher education and education sciences is an important contribution to the research on the well-being of university students and young researchers.

There have been several studies on how young researchers in teacher education are impacted by the impostor phenomenon, Sims and Cassidy (2018) focused on music teacher education, while Chakraverty (2022) investigated it in the field of science education. Young academics working in both fields are intensely affected by the impostor phenomenon. The phenomenon has also been identified among health professionals who are becoming professional educators (Freeman et al., 2021) at all levels of health professional education, i.e., vocational, undergraduate, and continuing education, while Rudenga and Garvett (2020) identified imposter phenomena in 96% of education development professionals.

Translation of the IPP30 scale has been made in January-February 2024, and the translated items have been tested with a pilot group of 15 university students. In 2024 March a data collection has been administered, which was to learn the internal coherence of the Hungarian version of the Impostor Profile, designed for higher education students. With EPA and CPA our team has created a 15 item scale of the IPP original items that kept the 6 factor structure if the inventory.

Our ongoing research is aiming at the validation of the 6 factor structure of the IPP in Hungarian among higher education students, with a data collection from November 2024 to February 2025, and our presentation will share the validated scale in June 2025.

The research contributes to a better understanding of the impostor phenomenon, and raises awareness of the maladaptive actions associated with this phenomenon in higher education, and teacher education in particular. Our results will allow the development of interventions supporting university students and their professors to consciously avoid the losses associated with the impostor phenomenon, such as self-doubt, rejection of success, fear of exposure, perfectionism and procrastination. In the longer term, this may also help your professional's job integration and finding a suitable position and career path. The research also contributes to equal opportunities, as our results show a correlation between social mobility and exposure to the impostor phenomenon, especially for first generation tertiary students where the mother did not complete secondary education.

Keywords: impostor phenomenon, scale validation, higher education students, first generation students, teacher education, well-being, equal opportunities

A qualitative study of Kahramanmaraş earthquake experience of Turkish students living in Hungary

POSTER PRESENTATION

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This study explores the collective trauma experiences of Turkish students in Hungary following the Kahramanmaraş Earthquake. It examines how various factors—including coping strategies, support from Turkish, Hungarian and international communities, use of media, and perceived adaptation to Hungarian society—shape their trauma experiences. The earthquake on February 6, 2023, had devastating effects on both Turkey and Syria (Dal Zilio & Ampuero, 2023). Given the limited research on collective trauma among immigrants, particularly within higher education settings (Shivakoti, 2019; Sewordor et al., 2018), this study also considers how intersecting identities—such as sojourner status, gender, and socioeconomic background—shape Turkish students' trauma and adaptation experiences.

Turkish students over the age of 18 residing in Hungary will be recruited for the study. Participants will be selected through online recruitment, with short demographic data collected via a Qualtrics survey. This data will be analysed to assess participants' socioeconomic status, duration of residence in Hungary, and whether they or their loved ones have experienced earthquakes. Following the survey, participants will be invited to a one-hour semi-structured interview, conducted either via MS Teams or in person, depending on their preference.

The interviews will examine participants' experiences of the Kahramanmaraş earthquake, with a focus on their immediate emotional reactions, including their feelings about being far from home. The study will also explore community support dynamics, assessing responses from the Turkish diaspora, the international community, and Hungarian society, as well as participants' media engagement in the aftermath of the disaster. Broader themes such as trust in institutions, and contributions to disaster relief will also be explored. Participants will discuss the long-term effects of the earthquake on mental health, and changes within the Turkish diaspora. All interviews will be recorded with participant consent and analysed using thematic analysis. Ethical protocols will be in place to safeguard participant well-being, and all participants will receive information about mental health resources available in Hungary.

This research aims to deepen the understanding of trauma's impact on Turkish international students. As an exploratory qualitative study, it will capture participants' lived experiences, providing insights into emotional responses, and the influence of intersecting identities such as sojourner status and gender. Additionally, the findings will shed light on community support structures within the Turkish diaspora, the Hungarian community, and international networks. Ultimately, this study seeks to inform policy recommendations for more inclusive practices that address the unique challenges faced by international students in post-disaster contexts.

Keywords: collective trauma, adaptation, higher education, international students, coping

Exploring the practices of values-based leadership in Jinka Town public high schools

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Wolaita Sodo University

This study explores the implementation of value-based leadership in public secondary schools in Jinka City administration, Ethiopia. The main objective of the study was to explore challenges that encounters the implementation of value-based school leadership in the study area. values of school leadership which such as integrity, vision, trust, listing, respect, clear thinking and inclusion were used to collect and analyse data. The social constructivist paradigm, in which qualitative research approach was utilized. Interview and document analysis were used to gather perceptions of participants on the implementation of value-based leadership indicators. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants based on their knowledge and experiences. Thus, two school principals, five students, four teachers, and two officials were participated. The study reviewed comprehensive literature on value-based school leadership to explore pertinent experiences and knowledge. The result of the study provides a significant understanding on school leadership practices of Jinka City administration particularly, lack of devotion, vague plan, ignoring opinions, and concern for others. The study advised all concerned bodies particularly the government to test and to give substantive attention for schools to implementing values-based leadership.

Keywords: education system, leadership, public high school, value

The impact of racially diverse educators on schools, curriculum, teachers, and youth

PRESENTATION

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Increasing a diverse teacher workforce is crucial for providing more inclusive and effective educational environments (Will, 2022). A diverse teacher workforce benefits not only schools, curriculum development, and educators but also youth and communities. To find more information about current experiences with racially diverse educators, I distributed an online survey with ten open ended questions to current college faculty as well as K-12 teachers. The responses of 27 participants were analysed and coded based on reoccurring patterns.

Data analysis showed correlation between the study findings and current research (Dari, 2023; Will, 2022, Will and Najarro, 2022). Majority of participants agree that racially diverse educators are important for our education system because they enrich the school curriculum, share their lived experiences, inspire students of color, and educate our children and youth to respect other cultures, races, and ethnicities. Teachers of color provide necessary support to students of color by creating a positive classroom environment where students feel understood and less isolated.

Many educators explained they aim to have professional relationships with diverse students. They make strong efforts to be culturally sensitive and open-minded in order to understand their students' perspectives. One comment stood out and summarized the issue very well, "Connecting with racially and culturally diverse students serves as a bridge to fight common misconceptions and assumptions that come from ignorance." This supports other statements that we need our youth to be well prepared for a global world (Ku, 2020; Townsend, 2023).

Participants' responses were well aligned with research about diverse educator's hire and retention (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Tielkemeier, 2023; Ross, 2023). Survey results demonstrated that the factor number one was teachers' competitive pay, second was respect and recognition of racially diverse educators, the third factor was support, mentorship, acceptance and professional development. In order to have a larger pool of BIPOC educators, pre-service teachers should be provided with scholarships, grants and mentorship during their journey of becoming a teacher. Additionally, educational policies need to be revised based on the changing society (eliminating biases) and reflect the cultural shift. Implementing effective strategies to achieve a diverse workforce should be a priority for educational policymakers and institutions because it benefits schools, curriculum, teachers, students, and communities.

Keywords: diverse workforce, influence of racially diverse educators, inclusive curriculum, bias free school environment, diverse teacher student relationships, retention of racially diverse teachers

The impact of COVID-19 on Jewish and Arab Israeli undergraduate education students: Stress, resilience, and coping

PRESENTATION

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The COVID-19 pandemic generated mental difficulty and caused a sharp rise in anxiety levels and depression among the Israeli population. It fundamentally changed society and the individual's lifestyles and evoked existential anxiety due to uncertainty about the future and a sense of a survival threat. The exceptional circumstances provided a platform for a traumatic experience and a feeling of deep fracture that gave rise to an impaired sense of resilience and anxiety symptoms among various population sectors. The study explores the COVID-19 impact on Jewish and Arab undergraduate students' feelings of danger, stress, well-being, resilience, and coping mechanisms. It examines intersectionality by exploring how different social groups faced differentiated risks and coped differently with the various consequences of the pandemic.

The research is a multicultural study conducted among Jewish and Arab (primarily Muslim) Israeli students. A convenience sample was obtained during the Summer of 2020 from three faculties of education in three public academic higher education institutes in Israel. One hundred sixty-two students attending multicultural education and community courses agreed to participate in an online survey combining two pre-existing self-reported questionnaires: The extended version of the Conjoint Community Resiliency Assessment Measure (CCRAM) and the Coping Orientation of Problems Experienced (COPE) questionnaire. The data were analysed using SPSS software version 25. The study used descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, and ranges) for continuous variables and frequencies and rates for discrete variables.

The findings indicate that the Jewish population trusts state institutions and the Israeli society's resilience. A sense of belonging, solidarity, and cohesion fosters security and faith among them. The Arab population, which is a minority in Israel, shows less trust and confidence in the public and political sectors. They feel discriminated against, deprived, and alienated in most areas of life (housing, transportation, education, employment), and the health sector is no exception (poor information, lack of doctors and clinics).

The study's results increase our understanding of cross-cultural differences in the degree of personal sensitivity/vulnerability of Israeli students to the COVID-19 pandemic. Identifying these differences assists in seeking ways to support students in times of similar crises in the future, increasing their resilience.

Keywords: stress, resilience, coping, cross-cultural differences

A qualitative study on the presence of foreign students in special education and vocational training in the border area of the Strait of Gibraltar

PRESENTATION

Cristina Goenechea, Alevtina Ivanova, Manuel De Besa & Macarena Machín
Universidad de Cadiz

Internationally, there is a large body of research addressing the issue of the disproportionate representation of people from ethnic or cultural minorities in Special Education and Vocational education programs. It was already stated in the 1960s that the vast majority of students placed in diversity and inclusion educational programs came from humble backgrounds “such as African Americans, American Indians, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans; children from non-standard, broken, disorganized, or inadequate English-speaking homes” (Dunn, 1968, p.5). Numerous scientific contributions have focused on this issue (Guzmán & Fernández, 2014; Cohen et al., 2015; Morgan et al, 2018; Artiles, 2019; Waitoller, 2020), seeking to explain this phenomenon and to decipher the way it happens. In 2017, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, denounced that “children with a migrant background have sometimes tended to be overrepresented in special education”.

The main objective of this project was to explore the possible existence of this disproportionate representation of foreign students in special education, vocational training and other inclusion programs, and its possible causes in the border space of the Strait of Gibraltar. Special education centers serve children with special educational needs from ages 3 to 21, grouping them by age and requirements. Basic Vocational Training Programs support the development of secondary education skills through applied, career-oriented learning, starting at age 15.

With this purpose, and based on a qualitative methodology, 32 interviews have been carried out during 2023 with different agents: the professionals who diagnose students, as well as the management team, teachers and counselors of the special education centers. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis, with coding initially based on the interview guide and refined as needed. Transcribed interviews were coded and processed using Nvivo 12.0.

International studies relate the disproportionate presence of ethnic minorities in special education and vocational training with prejudices in the professionals who make the diagnosis or difficulties related to the instruments used. In this research, the lack of educational care for children with disabilities in their country of origin (Morocco) clearly appears as a cause of migration, and largely explains the over-representation found. The results of this study have contributed to a deeper understanding of the issue and have paved the way for a broader and more comprehensive study of this phenomenon, which began in 2024 and includes other regions of Spain.

Keywords: foreign students, vocational education, special education, exclusion

Challenging social constructions in intercultural education: An intersectional perspective

PRESENTATION

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Educational research categorizes, differentiates, and analyzes aspects of human existence, experience, perception, and behavior, allowing scholars to better understand educational contexts and society. However, it also risks reinforcing historically embedded and socially constructed categories (Gross & Portera, 2025). For instance, international comparative studies reveal differences between learners with and without migration experiences, which can lead to a deficit view, generalizations and oversimplifications—leading to processes of essentialization and culturalization.

A critical view of single social categories is not new to intercultural education and research. Researchers recognize the risks of simplistic approaches and acknowledge the importance of considering multiple identities and diversity dimensions to avoid reductionist perspectives (Sibbett, 2020). This shift aims to foster a holistic understanding of human existence, the interplay of diversity dimensions (Gross, 2025), and the multifaceted nature of diverse experiences, including migration. It examines their effects on individuals, attitudes, behavior, outcomes, and educational institutions. Yet, despite growing references to intersectionality, there remains a tendency to use the concept as a buzzword (Davis, 2008) rather than fully integrating it into research frameworks and methodologies (Collins, 2019; Collins & Chepp, 2013; Crenshaw, 1989; Winker & Degele, 2011).

This presentation seeks to address that gap by applying intersectionality both as a theoretical lens and a methodological approach within the field of intercultural education. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted in primary and secondary schools in Eastern Germany, the presentation explores how intersectionality can illuminate latent mechanisms of othering in educational contexts.

The findings reveal how various diversity dimensions—such as ethnicity, migration background, socioeconomic status, and language competence—interact in shaping individuals' experiences and identities. By uncovering these interwoven dynamics, the research highlights the multifaceted nature of social relations in schools.

Keywords: intersectionality, othering, diversity, educational contexts, identity construction

Intersecting challenges: Supporting Hungarian-speaking Roma refugees in educational contexts

WORKSHOP

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Eastern European education, with a focus on the integration of Hungarian-speaking Roma children displaced from Ukraine to Hungary due to the Russia-Ukraine war. Based on the workshop leader's research and professional experience as an educational officer for an international NGO (Terre des Hommes foundation), the session integrates the perspectives of social psychology, child rights, and multicultural education, meanwhile the interactive part is using a problem-solving approach. Through the insights to the workshop holder's research, participants will analyse together how factors such as cultural identity, gender norms, refugee status, trauma, and socio-economic disadvantage shape educational trajectories of the above mentioned group. By engaging in guided discussions and case-based exercises, attendees will develop strategies to address systemic inequities in educational institutions and foster the rights for education for every child. This workshop contributes to intersectionality studies by highlighting participatory approaches, and by fostering practical insights useful for broader minority education contexts.

Participants will get insights from case studies of the workshop holder's, Gyarmati's (2023) work and also from Eredics (2022)'s work to examine challenges, map issues, detect their reactions and analyse how implicit biases might influence the perceptions. They will try to argue from an alternative perspective (e.g., a teacher advocating against an inclusive policy) to challenge the general assumptions and map how different identity factors (race, gender, refugee status, disability, socioeconomic class, etc) intersect to build systemic disadvantages. Through small-group activities, they will develop inclusion strategies, such as anti-discrimination policies, culturally responsive pedagogy, and teacher training. We will use Miro for brainstorming, collaborative mapping and to record the results of the joint work. The participatory approach ensures that attendees gain both theoretical understanding and concrete strategies to support minority students in diverse educational contexts

Participants will develop practical and sensitive approaches for addressing intersectional challenges in education, mainly regarding cultural adaptation, socio-economic status, gender, and refugee status. Through the interactive case-study analysis and problem-solving, attendees will jointly identify practices and know-hows for inclusive education, bridging theory (Gyarmati, 2023) with practical application. The workshop will also strengthen participants' ability to identify and counteract implicit biases (Devine et al., 2002) and apply intersectionality theory (Kern et al., 2020) in their professional settings. By fostering dialogue and co-creation between participants, this workshop ensures that insights extend beyond Roma refugee children to broader educational equity challenges brought to discussion by professionals from different fields.

Keywords: Roma refugees, intersectionality, education, cultural adaptation, trauma

“We are done with gender”: Challenging or reproducing gender stereotypes in early childhood education

PRESENTATION

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The foundation for a gender-sensitive approach and for promoting equality and equity begins in early childhood education and care (ECEC). In Finland, educators in ECEC are required to “encourage the children to make choices without gender-related role models,” develop a learning environment enabling “breaking away from traditional gender stereotypes” and be gender sensitive when recognizing and responding to children’s play initiatives (National core curriculum for ECEC, 2022, p. 29, p. 31, p. 38).

Our aim is to examine critically how educators understand and implement a gender-sensitive nonbinary pedagogy in ECEC in Finland. The study is based on a large multi-sited ethnographic study of inclusion and exclusion in ECEC centers. Our theoretical framework is a norm-critical and gender-diversity approach to ECEC. Such an approach to research in ECEC is still scarce in Finland. Traditionally research has focused on gender-neutral and gender-compensatory education in ECEC examining gender-neutral toys and play areas (Eidevald & Taguchi, 2011; Huuki, 2016).

We used ethnographic methods for our data collection. We conducted participatory observations of interactions between educators and children as well as between children in 17 ECEC centers (one month/center). We did 74 semi-structured open-ended interviews directors, teachers, and childcare workers. Both observation notes and transcribed interviews were anonymized and coded in Atlas.ti. A thematic analysis (Brown & Clarke, 2022). was conducted from an intersectional perspective focusing on gender, social class, language, and racialization (see Kubant, 2024; Collins, 2019). Consent was obtained from educators and parents as well as continuous assent from the children.

Only a few educators acknowledged a gender-sensitive approach and, if they did, they had a superficial view of gender-sensitive ECEC. The educators experienced having worked enough with gender development issues. They occasionally mentioned a gender neutral or gender compensatory action, but despite policies and in-service training, the implementation had stagnated on being gender neutral and far from a gender-sensitive and norm-critical approach to ECEC. Educators had a binary view on gender and did not question their role in fostering children’s stereotypical gender identifications. Despite occasionally challenging the status quo, educators mostly confirmed and reproduced stereotypical gender divisions. Our intersectional analysis showed that gender was the overriding theme in the interviews with the personnel and in the observations of their interactions with the children.

Keywords: gender, gender-sensitive, early childhood education, gender-neutral, curriculum

Biculturalism in mentoring: University students' perceptions of being bicultural mentors

PRESENTATION

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The presentation focuses on university students as mentors of a Hungarian mentor programme, who help primary school pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or Roma pupils. In Hungary, Roma students' situation on all levels of education is challenging; they are more likely to drop out and be exposed to segregated education (Kende, 2021). Most Roma pupils face obstacles due to their socioeconomic status, and/or racial prejudices, they are attributed by intersectionality (Varga et al., 2023). As the primary socialization of students from low SES and/or Roma differs from the institutional secondary socialization sphere; they go through bicultural socialization (Stogianni et al., 2021). Research highlights the role of bicultural mentors who are of similar ethnic and demographic backgrounds to their mentees (Coner, 2024). We consider their Roma cultural capital and cultural competence as essential, following a non-deficit-centred perspective (Durst & Bereményi, 2021). Bicultural students, working as mentors, are assumed to go through individual and community empowerment (Travis & Bowman, 2015). The presented research is based on two empirical data collections. Firstly, an online questionnaire was applied, involving mentors at a university participating in the programme between Autumn 2019 and Spring 2022 ($P = 180$; $S = 50$). Based on the respondents' socioeconomic status (SES) and/or belonging to Roma minority two groups were created: 1) bicultural mentors ($n = 15$) and 2) mentors ($n = 35$). When presenting the data, this independent variable is analysed. In this presentation, we focus on qualitative items of the research tool, which were analysed by content analysis. Secondly, mentors participating in the programme were invited for semi-structured interviews. Contents of the interviews were coded and analysed by content analysis. In this presentation, data from two bicultural and two monocultural mentors are introduced. Bicultural mentors were overrepresented in the sample and possibly in the programme. Bicultural mentors set higher goals than their monocultural peers. This may be linked to (societal) expectations towards Roma to serve as role models when returning to their perceived or real communities. Bicultural mentors focused more on helping social groups (like their own), while monocultural mentors have found personal benefits and development more important. The interviews illustrate the importance of biculturalism, support and explain results of the findings of the questionnaire. Findings of the research highlight that considering mentors' bicultural identity in training mentors and scaffolding mentoring is essential.

Keywords: Roma students, biculturalism, intersectionality, mentoring, empowerment

Reflecting gender: A comparative study of gender representations in Hungarian and Moroccan EFL textbooks

PRESENTATION

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This study examines the impact of gender representations in English language textbooks for high school students in Hungary and Morocco, exploring the influence of depicted gender roles, stereotypes, and perspectives on students' gender perceptions, cross-cultural understanding, and educational outcomes. Previous research reveals that educational materials, especially language textbooks, often reinforce traditional gender roles that may hinder gender equality efforts. Using Feminist Theory and Gender Studies as frameworks, this study aims to uncover how gender representations shape students' learning environments and perceptions. Building on intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989), the research acknowledges how gender interacts with other social categories, such as culture and socio-economic context, to create unique student experiences. It also incorporates Intercultural Communication theory to address how cultural context affects students' interpretation of gender roles, considering both Hungary's European setting and Morocco's North African context.

Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative content analysis, student questionnaires, and qualitative data from teacher interviews. Quantitative analysis will examine students' perceptions of how textbooks portray gender roles, using coding categories: role distribution, character activities, and descriptive language their potential impact. Meanwhile, qualitative data from teacher interviews will provide insights into how these portrayals affect student outcomes and gender perception. This comparative approach, informed by an intersectional lens, highlights cross-cultural similarities and differences by revealing how cultural and structural influences shape perceptions of gender in educational materials.

Anticipated results suggest that traditional gender portrayals may negatively affect students' academic engagement and self-perception, while inclusive representations could enhance student outcomes and cross-cultural understanding. Furthermore, applying intersectionality allows the study to examine how overlapping identities influence students' academic outcomes and how they relate to educational materials.

Limitations must be considered. The scope of textbooks reviewed may be limited by regional availability and curriculum standards, narrowing the analysis to a sample that may not represent all educational contexts within Hungary and Morocco. Student responses may vary due to personal background, teacher influence, and cultural norms, making it difficult to generalize findings across both countries. Teacher biases could further influence the data, as teachers may unconsciously reinforce stereotypes.

This study bridges gaps in research on gender representation in educational resources, offering insights for creating inclusive materials that support equitable learning. By comparing perspectives from a high-income country and a middle-income country, this research sheds light on how gender portrayals in textbooks influence students across different cultural settings.

Keywords: gender representations, equality, education, EFL textbooks, students, teachers, intersectionality

MAMI programme at the kindergartens of Józsefváros

ROUNDTABLE

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Budapest has always been affected by migration: the number of foreign citizens currently living in Hungary is around 250,000 (HCSO). According to the Act CXC of 2011. on national public education every child over 3 years should attend kindergarten education when staying more than 3 months in the country. These children can be found in many institutions especially in the big cities and their presence raises challenges everywhere (Schmidt & Nagyházi, 2020). As a response, in the 11 kindergartens of Józsefváros a complex multicultural and Hungarian as a foreign language programme called MAMI was set out in the education year of 2023/2024 and introduced in 2024/2025.

With the highest number of migrant citizens (Tenczer & Bakró-Nagy, 2023), in the 8th district of Budapest more than 120 children need special education including systematic learning of Hungarian as L2 (or L3). Since October 2024 playful Hungarian as a foreign language lessons are offered to these children in small groups every week in all the 11 kindergartens conducted by speech therapists, kindergarten teachers or special education teachers who had received language teaching methodological training and had prepared lesson plans covering the whole year. Although the essence of this programme is the Hungarian as L2 lessons, the MAMI programme covers more territories of the kindergarten life, for example, workshops on developing intercultural competence in each institution, methodological workshops on how to recognise intersectionality and solve cultural based conflicts, translated works (e.g., of kindergarten policy), creation of multicultural environment, writing of background materials (e.g., guide to multicultural issues).

Being a fresh and ongoing programme, the first results can be expected by May 2025. In May a qualitative survey will be conducted by interviewing kindergarten professionals and parents with both closed-ended and open-ended questions not only about the Hungarian language development of the children but also about their social interactions, the communication between the parents and the institution, and so on. For the quantitative analyses of the children's knowledge of Hungarian a vocabulary test—including both the active and passive knowledge of 80 words around 10 topics—was carried out in October with all the children who take part in the MAMI programme and this test will be repeated in May. As this is the first time that a whole district is committed to the integration of migrant kindergarten children, the participants of the programme are eager to exchange experience and learn about other good practice from different countries.

Keywords: multicultural education, kindergarten, Hungarian as a foreign language

Co-designing a sense of belonging: Practical strategies for the transformation of the schoolscape in primary school

PRESENTATION

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Although intimately linked to the concept of place, context and location, belonging encompasses cultural and social aspects that connect people, creating a sense of common bonding that is not purely physical (Vallentin, 2017). This view conceives belonging as a place characterized by relationships and emotions, where multiple and complex belongings are developed, negotiated in each person's daily life. Public places, such as schools, are catalysts of multiple and diverse belongings, places that welcome both children with varied linguistic repertoires and their families. However, even though today's schools are characterized by a constant increase of pupils with a migratory background (Iannaccaro, Fiorentini, 2021), in Italy an increase of 4.9% of children with a diverse linguistic background is observed, the school linguistic space and representation, the so-called schoolscape (Brown, 2012), does not reflect this diversity, or is limited to the display of welcome posters in different languages, but without involving the community itself.

Set within a transformative paradigm (Kawulich, 2012), which draws on the pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire, 1970) and Social Justice, the research aims to present some best practices of schoolscape transformation through teacher training and the development of reflective thinking (Dewey, 1910), which involves the intertwining of pragmatic experience with critical thinking. Specifically, the qualitative study (Creswell, 2003) adopted a Professional Development Action Research methodology (Zecca, 2018), was conducted in the San Siro neighbourhood of Milan, an area marked by 38% of families with a migrant background, and involved 13 teachers of one Primary School and their classes. The teachers were involved in a 6-month training course on translanguaging, during which they took part in 7 training meetings and two focus groups (pre-intervention and post-intervention) and kept track of their classroom experiments through the practitioners' diary and visual documentation (photos and videos).

Through the thematic analysis, it is possible to observe two levels of schoolscape change due to the change in teachers' perspectives. A first level is marked by the Physical Change of the context through the multilingual bulletin boards, which present didactical experiences in the languages of the classroom. The second level is Relational Change, which has seen the involvement of migrant families indirectly through the sharing of multilingual documentation and directly through classroom invitations to teach about their own culture and language. In conclusion, the themes provide not only a theoretical understanding of language and cultural representation, but offer practical input for effective schoolscape transformation.

Keywords: schoolscape, ethnolinguistic, translanguaging, primary school, teacher training

Cultural adaptation of international students at Russian medical universities: A narrative case study

PRESENTATION

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Cultural adaptation and cultural sensitivity of international students at Russian medical universities were investigated in order to shed light on the major challenges these students face during their study years in Russia. 200 foreign students from 49 countries, speaking 35 native languages were surveyed enabling respondents to elaborate on their intercultural experiences in Russia.

Within a dual methodology, firstly, narratives were identified based on respondents replies to open-ended questions and this qualitative data was scrutinized applying Polkinghorne's concept of narrative analysis. Subsequently, an additional, second research method was applied—based on the same qualitative dataset—to determine the respondents' cultural adaptation stage based on the 6-stage Bennett scale of intercultural sensitivity.

International students' major challenges at Russian medical universities were identified as being rooted in the following areas: language, cultural differences, weather, infrastructure, unpleasant events, racism, discrimination, and bureaucracy.

50.5% of respondents were parts of an intercultural misunderstanding or conflict, mostly due to the language barrier, discrimination, bad behavior of locals, lack of cultural knowledge, and racism. Perceived discrimination and racism could be connected to the intersection of race, nationality, gender, and language.

The majority of students were identified as pursuing the ethnorelative stages of the Bennett scale with 69% belonging to either the Acceptance or the Adaptation phase. The outcome of the research is essential in the identification, description, and future prevention of intercultural misunderstandings and conflicts as well as to educate international students as well as faculty members about the intersecting aspects of discrimination.

Keywords: cultural adaptation, cultural sensitivity, Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, narrative analysis, university students, Russia, intercultural misunderstandings and conflicts

Home-work conflict in special education kindergarten teachers: A self-determination theory perspective on needs, well-being, and motivation

PRESENTATION

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This study, grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2017), examines how special education kindergarten teachers (SEKT) who are mothers navigate home-work conflict, shaped by gendered expectations and the intersectionality of professional and caregiving roles (Yucel & Chung, 2023). As a predominantly female profession, teaching often reinforces systemic inequalities in work-life balance. SDT highlights the importance of psychological need satisfaction—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—for well-being and effective functioning. Satisfied mothers demonstrate greater mental flexibility, vitality, and proactive tendencies (Arden et al., 2023), suggesting better management of career and home demands (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Prior research links work-home conflict to diminished need satisfaction and well-being (Uwannah et al., 2020).

This study focuses on how need-satisfied mothers balance professional and personal roles, potentially reducing work-home conflict, fostering autonomous teaching motivation, and enhancing well-being. By exploring these dynamics, we seek to illuminate the professional experiences and psychological strategies employed by SEKT mothers in managing work-life balance within a mainly female field as education.

A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed, surveying 94 SEKT who are mothers. Participants completed validated measures assessing need-based experiences (satisfaction and frustration), home-work conflict, well-being indicators, teaching motivation, and psychological distress levels. Mediation analyses using PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2012) examined the indirect effects of need-based experiences on outcomes through home-work conflict.

Findings indicate that SEKT mothers who experienced need satisfaction reported lower home-work conflict, which in turn was associated with higher well-being (Indirect effect = .12, 95% CI [.001, .23]), greater autonomous teaching motivation (Indirect effect = .21, 95% CI [.01, .42]), and lower distress (Indirect effect = -.08, 95% CI [.001, .16]). However, home-work conflict did not mediate the association between need frustration and outcome variables. These results highlight the intersectionality of gender, work demands, and psychological need satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of addressing structural barriers to well-being in the teaching profession.

Keywords: teaching and motherhood, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), women's home-work conflict, need satisfaction, special education kindergarten teachers

Understanding antiracism in schools: Finnish pupils' views, actions and recommendations

PRESENTATION

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This paper explores how pupils in Finnish lower secondary schools perceive, engage with, and propose actions against racism and normative whiteness. Despite the previous research acknowledging pupils' experiences of racism throughout their educational path in Finnish schools (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2018), research on the ways pupils themselves aim to tackle racism remains scarce. This ethnographic study is rooted in critical theories of antiracism and whiteness. We specify youth's antiracist acts aiming to 1) interpersonal, 2) communal, and 3) political change (Aldana et al., 2019), and we add to this 4) individual antiracism, (Toraif et al., 2021) including examinations of privilege, power, and positionality. Since negotiating agency is dialogical (Lanas & Corbett, 2011), the impacts of pupils' intersectional positions and relations are also examined. Analysis is in the Nordic context, infused with ideas of colour-evasiveness, innocence and exceptionalism, that also shape the ways for resisting racism.

Our data is based in critical school ethnography conducted in six Finnish lower secondary schools. It includes observations (124 days) and interviews with 14–15-year-old pupils ($N = 178$). Pupils are with diverse backgrounds. This is crucial since previous research (Peltola, 2024; Peltola & Phoenix, 2022), argues that pupils' actions are shaped by their intersecting positions including, for example, race, gender, and place in the classroom hierarchy. In addition, data includes photographs ($N = 291$) produced by pupils about their understanding of racism and antiracism. A photographic image can signal what participants finds meaningful (Holm, 2014) and elaborate on sensitive and silent aspects that are not always accessible verbally, such as race (Croghan et al., 2008). We analyse interviews, field notes and photos through content analysis. Our research questions are: 1) how different pupils understand and utilise acts against racism in school? 2) what kind of ideas or recommendations pupils have for antiracist education?

Expected results are that pupils' intersectionally shaped positions impacts the strategies available for resisting racism, varying from subtle to direct. Individual level includes self-reflection and recognising one's privileges. Communal and interpersonal level includes peer support, allyship and solidarity in actions and in an affective level. The antiracist recommendations broader than school level manifest as constructing counternarratives, such as ridiculing stereotypical assumptions of white Finnishness, or as criticism towards "adults in power". Identifying the plural strategies youth use to resist racism and racialisation contributes to under researched topic in educational and youth research, and helps to reinforce antiracism in education.

Keywords: education, antiracism, racism, youth

Intersectionality among children of the mountainous border areas of Northern Thailand: Interactive collaborative study of Japanese and Thai researchers

PRESENTATION

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Northern Thailand, recognized for its ethnic diversity, has experienced a demographic shift due to an influx of migrants from Myanmar and Laos driven by political and economic instability (Nawarat et al., 2019). This shift has created significant challenges for schools in border and mountainous areas, requiring them to address diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic needs. However, research on how schools adapt to these changes remains limited. This study examines how various school types in Northern Thailand respond to these challenges using Collins and Bilge's (2020) intersectionality framework. A qualitative methodology was employed, involving interviews with eight school directors and 12 teachers across four school types: Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Interior (Mol), Border Patrol Police (BPP), and Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs). Observations and document reviews supplemented the analysis. The findings reveal that migrant children face disciplinary domain of power issues (Collins & Bilge, 2020), such as linguistic barriers and parental noninvolvement, alongside structural domain of power challenges, including low wages and long working hours in agriculture and construction. School administrators and teachers often overlook how the intersection of ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic status shapes migrant children's educational experiences. Additionally, schools, particularly those under the MoE, Mol, and BPP, tend to see their roles as constrained by bureaucratic limitations and rural education disparities. This reflects broader hierarchical social norms in Thai society that tolerate educational inequality (Holmes et al., 1995). While NGOs and other organizations play a crucial role in supporting migrant learning centres by providing alternative education, formal schools lack systematic measures to ensure access to higher education, such as General Educational Development (GED) programs and Thai language instruction. The study highlights the intersection of disciplinary and structural power in shaping migrant children's education, exposing gaps in inclusive policies. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4's commitment to equitable and quality education. Targeted interventions are essential to ensuring inclusive and equitable education for migrant children in Thailand.

Keywords: intersectionality, diversity, migrant children, educational inequality, border schools

Navigating masculinity across borders: How international Muslim male students redefine identity in a cross-cultural landscape while studying in Hungary

PRESENTATION

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Our research examines the ways in which international Muslim male students in Hungary construct masculinity and negotiate their identity through a blending of traditional values and contemporary cultural values. Using the intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989), we detail how experiences of intersecting identities, or the interplay between (gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture, and nationality), inform the students' constructions of masculinity. Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic masculinity informs this analysis of how students negotiate inherited responsibilities and changing ideas of masculinity, informed by migration and globalization. Our objective is to explore how cultural responsibilities (e.g., social norms, values and beliefs of masculinity) drive individuals to behave, express themselves, and fulfill gender roles; and how these expectations respect an individual's understanding of masculinity, and how an individual negotiates their gender identity in their home and host cultures. This research aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on masculinity, identity, and cross-cultural adaptation in higher education, while emphasizing the importance of inclusive support systems that effectively acknowledge and respond to the intersectional identities of international students.

We used semi-structured interviews to investigate masculinity constructions with 30 Muslim male students from a variety of backgrounds studying in different cities in Hungary. Participants were recruited through social media groups targeting international Muslim male students, with snowball sampling expanding outreach as initial participants recommended peers who met study criteria. All interviews were conducted over an eight-month period using Google Meet in either Turkish or English, and they were typically, or lasted 50-60 minutes, to elicit qualitative insights about participants' lived experiences. A reflexive approach was used to ensure credibility and rigor, highlighting researcher self-understanding, examining bias, and confirming objectivity (Jamieson et al., 2023).

Thematic analysis revealed ten key themes, such as maintaining cultural and religious identity abroad and viewing economic independence as essential for autonomy and self-actualization. The majority of students blended traditional conceptualizations of masculinity with a western egalitarian approach, influenced by personal beliefs, social networks, and different gender expectations. They demonstrate individual and social responsibility, community engagement, and leadership through group cohesion and peer safety initiatives (e.g., Simpson & Bailey, 2020). Emphasis is placed on autonomy, financial independence, and ethical conduct (e.g., Alghafli et al., 2015) in host country. Embracing emotionality and new coping mechanisms allows these men to recreate their masculinity in transnational context.

Keywords: masculinity constructs, intersectionality, manhood, cross-cultural adaptation, higher education inclusivity

Assessing educational public policies: An intercultural proposal for minority inclusion

PRESENTATION

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Interculturality in Europe aims primarily to prevent socioeconomic exclusion rather than merely address diversity. This interculturalism aligns with the EU's need to forge a European identity (Council of Europe, 2008). The Eurydice report (2019) highlights lower academic performance among migrant students compared to native-born students, necessitating integration-focused policies. Thus, it leads us to reflect on how to review policies from an intercultural perspective, where interculturality fosters inclusion to counteract exclusion based on migrant status, gender, or low income (Zapata-Barrero, 2017).

Intersectionality, as defined by McCall (2005) and Yuval-Davis (2013), reveals how multiple forms of oppression and privilege interact, shaping lived experiences beyond additive models. This framework is essential for analyzing policies that impact marginalized groups. Consequently, intervention proposals must be rooted in a critical, decolonial, participatory, transformative, and intercultural approach, establishing a foundation for deep reflection and effective educational policy action in Europe.

This study presents a framework for analyzing educational public policies from an intercultural perspective. It develops an evaluation protocol based on “actors, their resources and strategies, the decision content, interaction methods, and decision-making context” (Subirats & Dente, 2014, p. 272). The framework integrates policy document analysis and ethnographic insights to understand how policies address minority inclusion.

The methodology follows a qualitative, naturalistic, and bottom-up approach (AEVAL, 2010; Harguindéguy, [2020], 2022). Policy documents from Latin America, published in English and Spanish between 2019 and 2024, are examined to identify key themes and policy orientations. Additionally, ethnographic research explores the lived experiences of affected communities through interviews and participatory observations. By combining document analysis with field perspectives, the framework enables a comprehensive evaluation of policy effectiveness in fostering intercultural inclusion.

This approach provides a critical and contextualized foundation for assessing public policies, ensuring they address structural inequalities and promote meaningful social transformation.

The findings reveal that intercultural policies primarily aim to prevent socioeconomic exclusion but often overlook the intersectionality of inequalities (McCall, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2013). Ethnographic insights highlight gaps between policy design and implementation, showing that exclusion is shaped by multiple factors, such as migration status, gender, and socioeconomic background. Policies promoting a “culture of diversity” rather than mere “cultural diversity” are more effective. Freire’s ([1970], 2019) concept of “epocal unit” helps contextualize these results, emphasizing the need for a holistic, intersectional, and intercultural approach to achieving meaningful educational inclusion.

Keywords: interculturality, intersectionality, public policies, minorities, culture of diversity

Facets of intersectionality in a refugee education setting in Greece

PRESENTATION

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This paper will focus on the value of assuming an intersectional approach in refugee education research, by presenting different instances of intersectionality when conducting research in a refugee education setting in Greece. The presentation will draw from the author's doctoral research, which explored the use of feminist pedagogy in a school for refugee children on the border-island of Leros, Greece, where the author worked as a teacher of English for eight months and conducted fieldwork. The aim of the study was to explore the value that feminist pedagogy, a pedagogy which is grounded in feminist thought (Bostow et al., 2015; Crabtree et al., 2009; Weiler, 1991) and based on the principle of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) might have in refugee education, in order to provide an education that is more culturally and linguistically responsive to refugee learners.

The study followed a feminist qualitative research methodology, and the data collection was conducted through interviews with educators working in refugee education, classroom discussions with refugee students, and the keeping of a researcher diary. The data was analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2021) model of reflexive thematic analysis.

This paper will present excerpts from my researcher diary, the educator interviews, as well as the classroom discussions with the students, which all pointed to the importance of assuming the lens of intersectionality in my role as a teacher and researcher in the particular context. While initially setting out to explore gender in the refugee classroom, the data analysis pointed to the necessity of considering gender in relation to other intersecting factors, such as religion, and culture, which came up as major themes in the educator interviews and student discussions. Furthermore, I will explore how intersectionality helped me understand the relationship between different groups of students, and certain "cultural conflicts" that occurred between them. Finally, I will discuss how intersectionality proved to be a critical tool in assisting me to become more aware of my own positionality in my two-fold role as teacher and researcher as I was practicing feminist pedagogy in the classroom.

Keywords: feminist pedagogy, refugee education, intersectionality, positionality, cultural conflict

Persistent inequalities: Intersectional challenges of stateless university students in Thailand's education for all era

PRESENTATION

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While Thailand has made significant progress in educational access through policies like the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All and subsequent legislation, including the 1999 National Education Act and various Ministry of Education regulations between 2005-2020, persistent inequalities continue. These policies theoretically guarantee access to basic education for all children within Thailand's borders, including those without Thai nationality or any formal citizenship documentation. However, the implementation and long-term effectiveness of these policies, particularly for vulnerable groups like stateless students, remain challenging. This study examines the intersectional challenges faced by stateless university students in Thailand, particularly focusing on their experiences across nine universities in the Northern region. The research highlights the complex interplay between educational opportunities and persistent structural barriers that continue to shape these students' academic journeys and life prospects. Despite the provision of basic education rights, stateless students face significant restrictions in areas such as travel, higher education enrollment, access to educational scholarships, and post-graduation employment opportunities. The research investigates two key aspects: first, it analyses how education serves as a crucial factor in building social, cultural, and economic capital for stateless youth, leading to increased educational access and self-funded pursuit of higher education as a pathway to potential Thai citizenship. This includes examining how students navigate the educational system despite their legal status limitations and how they view education as an investment in their future citizenship prospects. Second, it explores the intersectional challenges these students face, including economic constraints, discrimination based on statelessness, ethnic minority status or migrant worker heritage, and complex legal status development processes that often lack transparency and efficiency. Using Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality framework, this qualitative study employs document analysis, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with stateless university students, legal scholars, NGO representatives working with migrant youth and laborers, and legal clinic staff from educational institutions. This article, part of the research project 'Current Stateless Situation in Chiang Mai Province and Northern Region,' conducted between October 2023 and September 2024, contributes to understanding how persistent inequalities continue despite educational access policies. It demonstrates that while Thailand's educational policies have expanded access, the intersection of legal status, ethnicity, and socioeconomic factors continues to create significant barriers for stateless students in achieving educational success and social mobility. The findings emphasize the need for more comprehensive policy approaches that address both educational access and the broader structural barriers facing stateless youth in Thailand's higher education system.

Keywords: stateless students, Thai universities, intersectional challenges, educational opportunities, social inequality

Various coping strategies regarding children education of women in inter-marriage Jewish-Arab families in Israel

PRESENTATION

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Zefat Academic College

The number of mixed couples has increased in recent years in Israel, with several thousands of them being Jewish-Muslim inter-marriage families (Finkelstein et al., 2022). Studies which examined how Muslim-Non-Muslim couples cope with their shared life, talked mostly about their difficulties (Fogiel-Bijaoui, 2017, 2020). The studies found that the non-Muslim women display, both at the interpersonal and in the raising children aspects, full assimilation into the Arab culture, or maintain a mutual acculturation pattern (Gaya, 2022; Meler & Oryan, 2024; Sabbah-Karkabi, 2022).

Following these findings, the present study examines the coping strategies regarding the educational practices used by Jewish Israeli middle class women married to Muslim Arab Israeli men. The findings were collected through snowball sampling, and in-depth interviews with 13 women who have been raising their children together with their spouse for five years or more. Dealing with these women through an intersectional lens, the present study emphasizes the diversity inherent within this group. The “intersectionality” aspect enables to present the reciprocal establishment and the different directions which the different sociological variables impact (ethnicity, education, employment, and residential location), shaping women’s negotiation regarding their children’s identity.

The findings (Meler & Oryan, 2024; Oryan & Meler, 2024) differ from previous studies, show that the interviewees have a wide range of coping strategies: on the one end, there are families who display full assimilation into Muslim culture. On the other end, there are families in which a complete assimilation of Jewish culture is done by the partners. In between, there are families in which mutual acculturation of both spouses occurs either through daily confrontations or through respectful, democratic negotiations based on acceptance and tolerance towards the other culture.

These findings imply that the existence of these inter-marriage families, and the ongoing negotiations that occur within them, reveal cracks in the rigid ethno-national-religious boundaries which prevail among the social groups in Israel. In addition, they teach how daily tensions can be resolved through trust and a willingness to mutual transformation on the part of both partners.

Keywords: intermarriage, intercultural Israeli families, Jewish-Muslim families, children education, women coping strategies

The implications of principal leadership styles on teachers' organizational commitment in the Israeli Arab educational minority

PRESENTATION

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Bar-Ilan University

Principals play a critical role in promoting a positive school environment and facilitating teachers' professional advancement and commitment. In an era in which the world is becoming a "global village" in which individuals and groups move around frequently and religious and cultural minority groups are increasingly empowered, cultural sensitivity is becoming a social duty. The employee's cultural socialization influences the level of their commitment to their workplace. Teachers with a strong commitment to their schools create a better social, psychological, and physical environment for their students, which in turn improves the school's achievement level. Accordingly, the present study focuses on teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and its influence on teachers' organizational commitment among the Arab ethno-cultural minority in Israel. Schools in the Arab sector in Israel are generally managed in a hierarchical, authoritarian manner, with principals' policies often shaped by sociocultural considerations.

The current study purpose is to present a picture of the extent to and frequency at which Israeli Arab principals are perceived at displaying the leadership styles of participative leadership vs directive leadership and transformation vs transactional leadership and then to investigate the relationship of these leadership style on teachers' organizational commitment.

Data was collected from two sources: senior management team members and teachers to avoid same source and common method bias: 426 participants overall from 71 high schools in the Israeli Arab educational system, answered valid questionnaires on the subject. Unianova analysis and hierarchical regression analyses were used to test the proposed relationships.

The results of the overall model indicated, although principals in the Arab society in Israel are perceived mostly as directive leaders, participative leadership was positively associated to teacher organizational commitment beyond the specific influence of directive leadership. However, the findings show that neither transformational nor transactional leadership was associated to teachers' organizational commitment. Changes in teacher perceptions, towards freedom of self-expression and career advancement, seem to be reflected in the influence of principals' leadership styles on teachers' organizational commitment that are derived in part from cultural features of the school environment.

These results are essential because it is highly desirable in Israeli Arab educational organizations that the principal create a climate and pedagogical learning environment that emphasizes participative leadership style, allowing each teacher to feel like a partner in the educational endeavor that can contribute as needed.

Keywords: Israeli Arab minority, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, participative leadership, directive leadership, organizational commitment

Language and language in education policy in Sarawak: Advocating for minority language inclusion in Malaysian education

PRESENTATION

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Universiti Malaya

This study investigates the representation of minority languages in Sarawak's Language and Language in Education Policy, focusing on its implications for equitable access to education among indigenous communities in the state. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on Fairclough's model, this research explores how these policies reflect and reinforce ideologies and power structures, impacting indigenous languages (Fairclough, 2003). This research advocates for policy reform to support the linguistic and cultural rights of marginalized communities, aligning with calls for multilingualism and intercultural competence in education (May, 2014; Shohamy, 2006). By examining policy discourse, the study highlights the potential of multilingual policies to reduce educational inequities and preserve linguistic diversity, fostering a more inclusive, democratic society (Spolsky, 2004). This study employs CDA to examine policy documents and State Legislative Assembly Hansards from Sarawak, focusing on the portrayal of minority languages in the context of education policy. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, the analysis examines text, discursive practices, and social practices to uncover the ideologies shaping language policy (Fairclough, 2003). Additionally, qualitative data from community interviews provides insights into how these policies are perceived in indigenous communities, revealing the impact on identity, cultural belonging, and language use. This approach offers a nuanced perspective on the socio-political dynamics affecting indigenous language rights in education, contributing to discussions on linguistic equity and inclusion. Preliminary findings indicate a disconnect between policy representation and the educational needs of minority language communities. Current policies may marginalize indigenous languages, restricting students' access to culturally relevant education and affecting their sense of belonging. The research calls for reforms that move beyond mere policy representation to actively support linguistic diversity and indigenous rights within educational frameworks (Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004). Findings will contribute to broader discussions on how multilingual, interculturally competent educational policies can promote social justice and inclusion in multicultural societies.

Keywords: minority languages, language policy, critical discourse analysis, indigenous education, social justice

Challenging inequality through alternative education: A case study of Mumtaz school in the Naqab

PRESENTATION

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This case study examines Mumtaz, an alternative high school established to serve the indigenous Palestinian Bedouin community in the Naqab (Negev, Southern Israel), aiming to illuminate the intricate, intersectional motivations underlying its founding—a topic previously unexplored in Palestinian communities within this region. Employing an instrumental case study methodology within a qualitative framework, this research involved 15 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a diverse cohort of founders, administrators, and educators (comprising seven women and eight men), alongside observational data and primary document analysis.

Thematic analysis disclosed that Mumtaz was founded to address multifaceted issues of social marginalization, educational inequity, and systemic exclusion affecting the Palestinian Bedouin community, particularly by offering rigorous, scientifically oriented curricula intended to mitigate entrenched disparities and foster upward social mobility.

Emergent themes regarding the establishment of Mumtaz encompassed ambitions to elevate the community's socio-educational standing, promote access to higher education, facilitate integration within globalized spheres, and foster a sense of community empowerment and contribution. Pedagogical practices at Mumtaz reflect a deliberate engagement with gender equity and empowerment, challenging prevailing gender norms and advocating for student autonomy, leadership, and critical re-evaluation of traditional social and familial paradigms.

This model of alternative education diverges substantively from other Palestinian alternative schools across Israel, which typically emphasize reinforcing Palestinian historical and cultural identity. In contrast, Mumtaz arose from the distinctive confluence of historical, geographical, and socio-political contexts specific to the Naqab, encapsulating a transformative educational model attuned to the intersecting challenges of minority status, migration heritage, gendered social structures, and systemic inequality. This study contributes to a nuanced understanding of how alternative educational frameworks, responsive to intersectional dynamics, can be tailored to meet the needs of culturally and politically marginalized communities in complex socio-political landscapes.

Keywords: Palestinian Bedouin community, alternative education, intersectionality, community empowerment, qualitative case study

Multicultural education in Northern Thailand: Navigating local initiatives amid the absence of a national policy

PRESENTATION

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Thailand is home to diverse ethnic and language groups. It also has three million migrants from neighboring countries, a number which is expected to rise dramatically over the coming years. However, unlike nations such as Canada, Singapore and South Korea, Thailand has no national multicultural policies. In the absence of such, regional authorities are compelled to implement policies to manage diverse student populations. For example, in Northern Thailand, a state-based local authority called “educational service area office” oversees 153 schools, and has implemented a multicultural education project. The project chose 15 schools for a school-based multicultural curriculum. This paper examines the experiences of 3 pilot schools by using the interest convergence theory of Derrick Bell. The study interviewed one educational supervision from the educational service area office, three school principals, and four school teachers. The study also analysed the three pilot schools’ multicultural curriculum and the local curriculum framework and ethnic knowledge books by the educational service area office. The data indicates that this initiative exhibited progress in multicultural education at the local level. The contents of ethnic minority groups in the communities, previously disregarded, were included in the curricula. However, such contents treated cultures as fixed and embraced a “feel-good” attitude to diverse cultures rather than exploring issues related to inequity and social justice. The multicultural initiative led by the educational service area office demonstrates how local authorities can advance multicultural education despite the absence of a national policy. However, from the lens of interest convergence, the study argues that this initiative responds to institutional motivations such as increasing the office performance and school reputation. Superficially promoting inclusion sidesteps deeper issues of equity, power, and social justice, and hence limits the ability of multicultural initiatives to promote greater equality and educational opportunity in diverse classrooms.

Keywords: multicultural education, interest convergence, curriculum

Protected but not included: Migrant minors in Italy. A study on educational system inequalities and community organization strategies for creating inclusion and resilience

PRESENTATION

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This research explores the reception system for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFM) in Italy, highlighting the discrepancies between rights established by legislation and their actual implementation (Salerno, 2024). The study examines how gaps in the system can hinder the integration process for UFM (Bhabha, 2014), often leaving them suspended in a state of denied rights and lack of institutional accountability. The investigation focuses on the experiences of an educational team and UFM in an Italian reception community, examining the challenges, opportunities, and strategies the community employs to compensate for system shortcomings. Through self-organization, the community develops tools to ensure ongoing support for minors and foster greater social inclusion, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in the face of institutional limitations.

This research adopted a qualitative approach based on Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014) to examine the reception of UFM in Italy.

The Desk Research included an analysis of regulations and guidelines, outlining the legal and political context regarding the rights and duties of UFM. In parallel, the Field Research deepened these insights through interviews and direct observations in reception facilities.

The data sources included:

- Narrative interviews with 25 educators from 3 communities;
- 8 focus groups, each with 8-12 professional educators;
- 9 Collective Biography Writing exercises to explore shared experiences;
- Ethnographic documents (minutes, reports, visual and digital materials);
- Direct and indirect field observations.

The thematic analysis of these sources highlighted patterns and discrepancies between stated policies and daily practices. Comparison with other reception communities allowed for validation of the findings, strengthening the understanding of challenges and resources needed to improve the reception system.

The research aims to identify the discrepancies between the rights granted to UFM and their actual implementation. By analyzing the barriers that hinder access to education, healthcare, and other essential services, the study seeks to assess the educational impact of system shortcomings that generate intersectional discrimination against UFM and educators, including feelings of insecurity and identity instability, and that threaten intersectionality and mutual identity expectations (Varsik & Gorochovskij, 2023). Finally, the research will formulate practical recommendations to improve UFM reception policies and practices, promoting a more effective and equitable educational integration.

Keywords: UFM (Unaccompanied Foreign Minors), reception, integration, grounded theory, unfulfilled rights

Educational shock and resilience: Support strategies for educators in intercultural contexts

POSTER PRESENTATION

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The research analyses the emotional challenges faced by educators working with unaccompanied foreign minors (UFM), introducing the category of “educational shock” resulting from intercultural encounters and complex educational dynamics (Salerno, 2024a). In Italy, this shock is amplified by the lack of emotional support and a fragile educational system, which often prioritizes the rights of UFM while neglecting the needs of educators, highlighting the necessity of policies that support their well-being and resilience (Salerno, 2024b; Grossen, 2010). Based on a dialogic and transformative pedagogy, the research demonstrates that dialogue and shared team planning help educators process difficult emotions, reduce isolation, and create shared meanings and practices (Marková, 2016). Through a case study, the strategies adopted by the educational team of an Italian UFM community are analysed, offering practical solutions for the formation of a dialogic and resilient educational team.

The research, conducted in a reception community in Northern Italy hosting 88 UFM (approximately ten times the regional average), was developed in two phases:

- Phase 1 (2021-2022): Explored the emotional and professional challenges of educators, introducing the concept of educational shock and the need to analyse the role of the team in addressing these difficulties. The Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014) allowed for the development of theory based on the collected data.
- Phase 2 (2022-2024): Investigated how teamwork influences the management of challenges through:
 - Narrative interviews (20 educators, 1 coordinator, 3 area managers, 3 administrative staff, 1 social worker);
 - 9 sessions of Collective Biography Writing (Davies & Gannon, 2006) to reconstruct the community's history and the evolution of educational practices;
 - Ethnographic analysis, examining work documents, regulations, and operational practices;
 - Direct observations and memoing (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Data analysis was conducted using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The validation of results was achieved by comparing them with teams from five other Italian reception communities for UFM.

The research confirms the value of cooperative teamwork in reducing stress, sharing strategies and beliefs, and improving educational responsiveness and resilience. It proposes a training and organizational model called the dialogic and resilient educational team. Useful for all education professionals working in contexts of vulnerability and cultural diversity, such as teachers and social workers, this model aligns with the field of educator training for critical thinking and cooperative learning (Shonfeld & Gibson, 2019).

Keywords: educators, Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFM), emotions, resilience, grounded theory

Creative thinking development for minority student teachers: Impact on relationships and social mobility

PRESENTATION

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This study explores the impact of creative thinking training on fostering positive personal relationships between Arabic-speaking student teachers (a minority group in Israel) and their students during teaching practicums. The research focuses on second-year student teachers at the Sakhnin Academic College, who will participate in an intervention program designed to develop creative thinking skills and bridge pedagogical and educational dimensions.

Using Kaufman and Beghetto's Four-C Model of creativity (2009), which describes creativity as a spectrum from personal (Mini-C) to societal (Big-C) levels, the study examines how fostering creativity influences teacher-student relationships. By integrating tasks from the PISA framework, the intervention emphasizes creativity as a tool for enhancing teacher empathy, improving communication, and addressing students' unique needs. The research aims to demonstrate how creative thinking fosters meaningful teacher-student connections and supports students' sense of belonging and motivation to succeed.

The study employs a qualitative descriptive-exploratory methodology, gathering data through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and reflective journals. Data analysis will focus on identifying patterns that connect creative thinking development to stronger teacher-student relationships and better educational outcomes.

Expected outcomes include enhanced teacher-student relationships, improved student engagement, and potential for positive social mobility, particularly in the context of Israel's socio-economic disparities. This research highlights the importance of equipping minority student teachers with innovative skills to address diverse educational challenges and contribute to equitable education.

Keywords: creative thinking, minority education, teacher-student relationships, social mobility, pedagogical innovation, Arab society in Israel, education equity

Bridging neurodiversity and feminist language pedagogy: A meta-analysis of inclusive practices

PRESENTATION

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The roundtable discussion focuses on the intersection of neurodevelopmental disorders, inclusive pedagogy, and feminist language pedagogy (FLP) within the context of ELT and EFL. It aims to explore how inclusive practices can support and empower neurodivergent language learners, investigating the effectiveness of specific pedagogical strategies that foster inclusive learning environments.

The meta-analysis was conducted by systematically reviewing empirical studies collected through the keywords “neurodevelopmental disorders,” “inclusive pedagogy,” and “feminist language pedagogy” in ELT and EFL articles from ResearchGate and Google Scholar. This approach led to a comprehensive synthesis of existing research to examine the challenges faced by students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, and specific learning disabilities, particularly in relation to executive function deficits and social communication impairments, which can adversely impact academic performance and social-emotional well-being (Happé et al., 2006; Arifin et al., 2022).

The discussion advocates for a transition from traditional, teacher-centric models to learner-centered classrooms that embrace diversity (Gerlach, 2024). By critiquing deficit-based approaches that pathologize differences, the conversation seeks to emphasize a strengths-based perspective that recognizes the unique abilities of all learners. This framework guides the examination of how FLP can be utilized to promote educational equity for neurodivergent language learners.

Key topics will include differentiated instruction, which tailors learning experiences to individual needs by providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression (Machů, 2015); scaffolding, which involves techniques that offer temporary support to help learners bridge the gap between their current abilities and desired outcomes (Dijk & Lazonder, 2016); and social-emotional learning, which integrates studies that promote self-awareness, self-regulation, and social skills within language instruction (Zerzová, 2024). The discussion will also address challenges in implementing FLP within neoliberal education systems that prioritize standardized testing and economic productivity over student well-being.

Hence, by synthesizing existing research on neurodiversity and FLP, the roundtable aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on inclusive practices (Ramos & Roberts, 2024), offering implications for ELT, curriculum development, and classroom management, ultimately fostering more equitable and supportive learning environments for diverse learners.

Keywords: neurodiversity, feminist language pedagogy, inclusive practices, educational equity, supportive learning environment

Transition of Roma children from preschool to primary school in the Republic of Croatia

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Matea Varga

Primary school Podturen, Croatia

The continuity of the Croatian education policy towards Roma national minority has been going on for more than two decades (more precisely, since the adoption of the first National Program for Roma (2003)). In the aforementioned period, numerous advances have certainly been made, of which for the purpose of the paper only the increase in the participation of Roma children in both early and preschool education as well as preschool program should be mentioned (Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Plan for the Inclusion of Roma, 2024). However, these numbers are still very low, and the challenges remain numerous, which is why educational staff continuously recognize belonging to the Roma national minority as one of the primary characteristic of a disadvantaged position and/or a form of educational inequality (e.g. Bouillet & Brajković, 2023; Družić Ljubotina et al., 2023). This paper will focus on the preschool as an extremely important segment of every national education system (Seabra-Santos et al., 2021; Salmi & Kumpulainen, 2019), i.e. the transition of Roma children from preschool to primary school which in the national context represents a fairly unexplored research topic (Tonković, 2017).

Qualitative research was conducted in 2023 in the part of the Republic of Croatia with the highest non-inclusion of Roma children in kindergarten and preschool, the Međimurje region (Potočnik et al., 2020), which to a good extent reflects the intersectionality of minority status, educational status, place of residence, age and child (non)participation (Laforge i sur., 2022). A semi-structured interview was conducted with seven intentionally selected participants of different profiles of educational staff involved in the implementation of the aforementioned preschool program as well as in the transition from preschool to primary school (two pedagogues, two teachers and three Roma assistants). The results of the thematic analysis (Braun i Clarke, 2013) indicated significant benefits (structured testing of language skills, early identification of necessary support and preparation for primary school, targeted support from teachers and Roma assistants), but also a number of perceived shortcomings of the preschool program designed in this way (duration, interruption during the summer months, irregular attendance, different levels of parental involvement, need for more specific interventions etc). Guidelines are provided for further targeted interventions and continued support in the implementation of preschool programs, which we see as crucial for further educational progress of Roma children.

Keywords: Croatian education policy, educational inequalities, Roma children, preschool program, transition to primary school

Educators' views of racism in international education and exchange at Japanese Universities

POSTER PRESENTATION

Hanae Tsukada

Hitotsubashi University

Yuki Watabe

Tohoku University

Since the 1980s, Japanese universities have promoted international education and exchange (IEE) through developing study abroad programs and promoting interactions between international and domestic students. While intended to foster intercultural understanding, studies in and outside Japan reveal issues of racism in students' experiences in IEE (Jon, 2012; Ritter, 2016; Liu & Ishiguro, 2022). However, racism tends to be seen as irrelevant in the country. Japan's identity-building process has developed a widespread and persistent imagination of a raceless and ethnically homogeneous country (Kawai, 2015). This imagination has masked the long existence of racial and ethnic minorities and racism. As Japan increasingly depends on foreign labor, including international students, to supplement its shrinking population, addressing issues of racism is arguably a crucial task of IEE. This poster presentation presents preliminary findings of a study that explores how educators involved in IEE view the relationship between IEE and racism.

The study has conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 educators who are involved in IEE as part of internationalization efforts at their universities in Japan. More specifically, participants in the study include, but are not limited to, those who teach courses relating to study abroad (e.g., study tours, elective or mandatory preparatory courses for study abroad, such as intercultural communications courses), courses that facilitate collaborative learning between international and domestic students, and courses that engage students in diversity in Japanese society. The interviews covered the following areas: participants' views of racism and its relationship to IEE, their educational engagement with racism, and their thoughts on integrating anti-racism into IEE. This poster presentation focuses on how participants see the relevance of race and racism to IEE.

Data indicate that racism has not been a major focus in IEE in Japan. Participants report few significant incidents in their experiences in IEE and limited teaching on the topic. While they recognize the importance of addressing social justice issues like prejudice and discrimination, opinions on directly discussing race vary. This raises concerns about the risk of overlooking racism while also highlighting the need and opportunity for open discussions on how IEE can foster a more inclusive and equitable society—both within and beyond Japan—and how issues of racism fit into this effort.

Keywords: racism, international education, educators, Japan

Urban walking tours as teaching tools of social inequality in an international context

PRESENTATION

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Thematic walking tours have gained increasing popularity. My presentation shows how they can be used as pedagogical tools in higher education about intersectional social inequalities. As learning takes place through practice (Biggs and Tang 2011), walking tours as multisensorial personal experiences (Borucka 2019) help students develop a new eye towards the environment, fostering critical thinking. In education, they have been used mostly in architecture (Klaniczay 2024) and history (White 2012), and less in gender studies. In an exception (van Hoven et al. 2009), students of a feminist geography course organised tours themselves, reflecting women's history and disparities in how public space is gendered. I expanded on this model to have a general focus on intersecting social inequalities, including class, disability, ethnic and national minorities. I also applied an informal education task developed by a human rights NGO, which traced multiculturalism in a city (Brander et al. 2016).

Combining all these insights, I developed my assignment for international BA students of international relations at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. Building upon other awareness-raising tasks, students are presented with options to choose a thematic focus (gender, ethnic minorities, physical accessibility, economic accessibility) and to organise the walks in small groups as project work. In the next class, students share and discuss their experiences through presenting multimedia sources they created during their tour. Intersectionality informs the assignment not only through the proposed topics of social inequalities with which the students encounter in the same urban space, seeing how they strengthen or get in conflict with each other. The task also brings together both Hungarian and (linguistically and often ethnically marked) foreign students who all familiarise with the city with new eyes, while organically reflecting on their own local experiences and intersecting identities.

My presentation shows the assignment details, what the students did and how it facilitated their learning. I argue that student-led walking tours are effective tools for learning about social inequalities in a culturally diverse group. By being physically present in the urban space, and interpreting their environment through specific lenses, students approach social hierarchies with a new eye. The development of cooperation and presentation skills is less emphasised in the literature on walking tours, though it is also essential to the task. I finally discuss some challenges and limitations of the assignment, regarding students' choice, group dynamics, and evaluation.

Keywords: disability, minorities, feminism, project-based assignment, walking tour

School culture and students' resistance to human rights and citizenship norms and values – A Foucauldian account

PRESENTATION

Dorijan Vahtar
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In order to study the development of students' civic and citizenship competence from the students' perspective in a real, relational and fluid educational context, I conducted a year-long ethnographic research in a graduating class of a Zagreb elementary school. The main finding of the fieldwork was that in the formal educational process, students resist the norms and values of human rights and citizenship by producing discriminatory meanings and practices towards national minorities, immigrants and LGBT groups. Students conceptualize national minorities through the discourse of historical conflict, immigrants through the discourse of social threat, and LGBT groups through the discourse of biological deviance. Using the dialectic of surprise between fieldwork experience and theory (Willis & Trondman, 2000), I constructed a theoretical framework for understanding students' cultural resistance to the norms and values of human rights and citizenship based on Foucault's "theory of power" (Lynch, 2016). Following Lynch, I conceptualize power as a multiplicity of force relations throughout the social body (including the school) that are always accompanied by resistance. I argue that students' discriminatory cultural production can be explained to some degree by institutional power relations. As students are subjected to the forces of surveillance, normalization, and regulation in school, they exercise resistance by producing discriminatory meanings and practices. I conclude that the prevailing disciplinary power relations in school fail to produce a school culture in which students can develop dispositions for critical reflexivity and transformative social action based on principles of equity and social justice.

Keywords: school culture, power relations, Michel Foucault, resistance

Intersectionality and mobility: Roma student societies as communities to enhance social mobility in higher education

PRESENTATION

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University of Pécs

Anna Orsós

Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Fanni Trendl

University of Pécs

Students of the Roma minority are estimated to be underrepresented at Hungarian universities (Lukács et al., 2023). This paper regards the role of Roma student societies in Hungary. These organizations help university students in proceeding with their education. They are not exclusively for Roma students but those of the majority and from disadvantaged backgrounds are invited (Varga et al., 2024), besides territorial disadvantages are also characteristic of its members. In the context of intersectionality of Roma. Howard and Vajda (2017) argue that the most persistent forms of group-based disadvantage are linked to identities of origin (minority), with one form of inequality promoting or deepening another. Roma student society members are considered resilient as they can overcome their risk factors and engage in the education system (Rayman & Varga, 2015). Resilience as a psychological notion refers to individuals being tolerant of challenging circumstances (Goodchild et al., 2023). Resilience is driven by internal forces and external support. Research on Roma shows that Roma community capital (Boros et al., 2021) is supportive and strong, yet resilience does not come without sacrifices: research shows that mobility has several hidden costs (Durst & Bereményi, 2021). The research questions focused on Roma and/or disadvantaged students' perceptions of their upward social mobility, their university life, and future aspirations. This presentation is based on research that applied a questionnaire that consisted of closed-, and open-ended items. Data collection was carried out online, and participation in the research was voluntary. All institutes ($N = 10$) of the Hungarian Roma Student Society Network were included in the research ($P = 300$), the sampling was access-based ($n = 182$). The sample was broken down into subsamples based on independent variables connected to the demographic backgrounds of the research participants. The data procedure is based on descriptive and mathematical statistics. Open-ended items of the research tool were coded by two independent coders. In the findings of the research demographic data on students are addressed, highlighting the effects of intersectionality. The findings of the research further nuance the understanding of underrepresented student groups' participation in higher education. Results of the research present students' perceptions of their upward social mobility highlighting the functions of Roma student societies. Data of the research stresses that it essential to carry out research following an intersectional perspective. Results confirm that student of the Roma student societies pay hidden costs for their mobility, which can be reduced by Roma student societies.

Keywords: Roma Student Society, intersectionality, resilience, mobility, higher education

The power of reading and writing: A narrative inquiry

POSTER PRESENTATION

Sara Vicas

PhD student, United States

Analyzing historical perspectives of literacy necessitates an understanding of its value across diverse cultural contexts. As democratic institutions, schools are expected to address the inequities exacerbated by market-driven philosophies, including systemic disparities in literacy access that disproportionately affect marginalized groups. This study acknowledges the intersectional barriers marginalized racial and socioeconomic groups face in terms of K-12 literacy acquisition: segregation, inadequate funding and resources, lack of identity-affirming pedagogy, biases in assessments, and disparities in access to early literacy opportunities. Perhaps it is time for schools to reclaim the role of literacy in enhancing democracy. This narrative inquiry aimed to explore how literacy acquisition experiences impacted the understanding of the value of literacy in the lives of doctoral students from marginalized groups. The conceptual framework for this narrative inquiry was developed through a synthesis of Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformative learning, Brandt's (2009) seminal research on sponsorship, and literacy's relationship to identity.

Embodying Haydon and van der Riet's (2017) view that narrative stories have the capacity to explore individuals' identities, I used participants' vignettes and focus group dialogues to explore literacy acquisition experiences and participants' understanding of their literacy identity, as well as their perception of the value of literacy. Purposive criteria sampling was used to select seven participants from a doctoral degree program at a university in southern Florida. To participate in this study, individuals needed to meet the following criteria: they needed to be currently enrolled in the Doctor of Education program at this particular institution in southern Florida, they needed to be from a marginalized and/or minority group, and they needed to have stories to tell about their lived experiences with literacy. I collected and analysed a text database for this narrative inquiry using constant comparative thematic data analysis.

This study explored the research question: How do literacy acquisition experiences impact understanding of the value of literacy in the lives of doctoral students from marginalized racial and socioeconomic groups? The following themes emerged: Early memories and sponsorship, literacy's transformational power, and literacy's role in strengthening democracy. The narratives highlighted significant racial and socioeconomic disparities in access to literacy, reinforcing Brandt's (2009) view of literacy as a tool for democracy. Participants' stories revealed how systemic inequities in literacy sponsorship perpetuate power imbalances, limiting opportunities for marginalized racial and social groups to engage fully in democratic discourse.

Keywords: literacy sponsorship, literary identity, social mobility, hegemony, neoliberalism

STRAND 5 | Media literacy in education

About the strand

Media literacy education is part of the curriculum as a separate school subject in some countries, as a cross-curricular subject in others, and is less prominently or not at all present in others. Provided teachers develop the necessary competences to include media literacy in their work, effective media literacy education can begin in early childhood. A pedagogy is needed that places emphasis on raising awareness about the media's influence, media routines, the pervasiveness of misinformation and disinformation, as well as the promotion of critical thinking and analysis of images and texts that appear in the media. Becoming more media literate is critical on today's media rich landscape, with all its opportunities and threats. Much disinformation, hate speech and cyberbullying targets disadvantaged communities. Hence the importance to enhance access, analyse, evaluate and (co-) create media messages that promote mutual understanding and respect for diversity. We invite colleagues to propose discussion panels, workshops, talks and poster presentations, especially related to empirical research in the field of media literacy.

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Enhancing equity and inclusion through AI tools in pre-service teacher education

PRESENTATION

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The study at hand examines how AI tools, such as ChatGPT and Magic School, can assist Arabic-speaking pre-service teachers of English throughout their practice teaching course. These pre-service teachers often face certain challenges with regards to English proficiency, lesson planning and executing lessons adequately. Building on concepts from Freire's Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1970), we aim to explore how AI tools can play a scaffolding role and help pre-service teachers in accessing both personal and professional competences more equitably. In addition, the study uses an adapted version of the TPACK model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) to help explore how AI tools contribute to the development of technological, pedagogical and content knowledge among the aforementioned pre-service teachers.

The study draws upon a case study design (Yin, 2018), focusing on 10 Arabic-speaking pre-service English teachers in their final year of practice teaching. The participants have been enrolled in tutorial sessions for effective and ethical use of AI tools. Data collection involved pre- and post-intervention lesson plans, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews to evaluate how AI tools contributed to their teaching practices. To gain deeper insight into their learning process, we also collected weekly reflective blogs in which participants documented their experiences using AI throughout their practice teaching. Qualitative data will be analysed through thematic coding, and quantitative data will be used to assess improvements in the quality of lesson plans and classroom activities.

The study is expected to offer valuable insights into the role of AI tools in enhancing practice teaching experience and performance for pre-service teachers, particularly those facing language proficiency challenges. In this context, AI tools such as ChatGPT and Magic School may provide practical advantages—offering personalized scaffolding that supports lesson planning, encourages creative activity design, and boosts overall teaching confidence. It is worth mentioning that AI in this study is seen as a supplementary support system—one that helps bridge gaps and empowers struggling pre-service teachers to meet professional expectations—rather than a means to replace pedagogical thinking.

Keywords: AI in teacher education, equity in education, pre-service teachers, language proficiency, Critical Pedagogy

Exploring structural and ideological dimensions in news discourse dynamics: A pilot study of English and Arabic newspaper articles in Jordan

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Eötvös Loránd University

This pilot study investigates the event structure, ideological framing, and discourse practices within English and Arabic newspaper reporting in Jordan, with a specific focus on the topic of the COVID-19 pandemic. It intends to reveal how news articles in newspapers within a bilingual environment affect and shape News Discourse Dynamics. It does so by proposing and applying the so-called Multidimensional Discourse Analytical Framework (MDAF)—which integrates Bell's (1998) Event Structure Model, van Dijk's (2011) Ideological Discourse Analysis Model, and Fairclough's (1992, 1995) 3D Model—to facilitate a comparative analysis of structural and ideological elements in news reporting, emphasizing the impact of socio-cultural factors on newspaper language. Data comprise a corpus of paired articles from one English language and several Arabic Jordanian newspapers, selected based on thematic alignment and matched by publication date and topic. Analysis using MDAF focuses on event structural components (e.g., headlines, actors, and actions), ideological framing (e.g., topics, actor descriptions), and the production, distribution, and reception processes of news articles. This pilot study is also aimed at testing the validity and the reliability of the framework as well as its suitability for larger-scale studies and suggest possible refinements in the MDAF. Preliminary findings are expected to offer insights into linguistic and structural choices as well as ideological framing across different language contexts. Results are hoped to provide initial validity data for the framework, demonstrate its applicability to bilingual (or multilingual) media research, offer a new approach to the study of news discourse, and provide implications for the training of journalists working in a multilingual environment.

Keywords: news discourse dynamics, news articles, bilingual media, ideological analysis, COVID-19, coronavirus, pandemic, Jordanian media

Media literacy fostering intercultural education in teacher education in a global course

PRESENTATION

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Intercultural education is essential in today's globalized world, where learning environments bring together students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Lustig et al., 2017). This paper explores the intercultural experiences of students during a hybrid course on Media Literacy co-organized by lecturers from universities in Finland, Brazil, South Korea, Italy, Japan and Hong Kong. The study investigates how intercultural understanding can be fostered by international hybrid Media Literacy course, on which the topics were Media Literacy around the Globe and Intercultural Communication in the Digital Age. Central to this exploration is the recognition that the right to communication is a fundamental human right, becoming increasingly relevant in a world rife with misinformation (Korte et al., 2023).

The Media Literacy course was offered to 24 international students from 8 countries in a university in Finland. The course lectures (20h) were held in hybrid format, since most of the lecturers were not in Finland. Students were also given the option to participate online, should they not feel well enough to participate in person. The four-hour lectures were delivered once each week, and after each lecture day the students were to make reflective videos of their learning journey. The students were to use in their videos one new Generative Artificial Intelligence tool of their own choice each week, such as voice narration, sound effects, animated images or text. A content analysis of students' video learning diaries was performed to analyse the students learning experiences. The findings emphasize how intercultural communication supports this right by promoting critical media literacy and empowering students to navigate and counter misinformation effectively.

The findings highlight the natural development of intercultural sensitivity and proficiency in an international learning environment, which is in line with a study by Korte et al. (2024). The findings address the challenges as well as the opportunities of intercultural interaction in digital settings. The study contributes to the development of an intercultural pedagogy, supporting the goals of inclusive and sustainable learning as outlined in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7.

Keywords: digital competence, intercultural dialogue, human rights, media education, online pedagogy, teacher education

Mediascapes and visual literacy as pathways for talking about social justice

WORKSHOP

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Iowa State University

Language and intercultural learning are embedded in social, cultural, and historical practices. Indeed, many educators/scholars have drawn attention to inextricable links among language, race, gender, culture, class, discrimination, colonization, and so on (Kubota, 2021; Motha, 2014). Language and culture do not exist in a vacuum. Similarly, our educational practices must be open to pedagogical approaches that embrace broader interdisciplinary perspectives.

In this workshop, we propose the integration of visual and media literacy into language learning classrooms as a pathway to developing both language and social and cultural awareness. We will show how media encountered daily in our local environments are semiotically rich resources that tell stories, directly and indirectly, about people, places, events, and ideas. Visual media are not new resources for teaching, but the framework we use to incorporate visual media into lessons about social justice is based on recent critical perspectives from media literacy, media ecology, visual arts, and photojournalism (Baylen & D’Alba, 2015; Gutiérrez Martín, 2023; Mihailidis, 2019; Strate, 2022).

Media literacy, like language learning, is a process of interpreting messages that draws on multiple modalities and semiotic resources (Kress, 2010). Using “process” as a guiding principle, we present a flexible model that asks students to observe, interrogate, interpret, reflect, and respond to language, modalities, semiotic elements, and mediated stories (Chamberlin, 2025). From media ecology and photojournalism perspectives, we question how media formats impact messages and how these messages shape how we see the world.

Using analog and digital media samples that represent diverse language varieties, modalities, and topics (i.e., race, gender, ethnicity, language discrimination, and human rights), We will lead the audience through activities that range from short tasks to longer group projects. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to practice and discuss sample assignments and their learning outcomes.

Keywords: critical media literacy, language learning, intercultural education

Virtual simulation in multicultural environment

PRESENTATION

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Miri Shonfeld

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University of Kassel

This pilot study examines how prospective teachers from Israel, Germany, and Hungary engaged with AI in education through a Virtual Simulation-Based Learning (SBL) model called “Virtual Sim(HU)lation” (VSH), emphasizing human-centered interactions (Frei-Landau & Levin, 2022). The exchange is part of the CoGIH-cooperation that builds bridges across languages and cultures. The project aims to bring together diverse groups of prospective teachers to collaborate in an online learning environment that transcends time, space, and institutional and national boundaries.

The online learning environment of the CoGIH-project was based on the principles of language and cultural awareness, and international online cooperation. As exemplified in the Learner-Moderator-Researcher plus (LMR plus) Model (Finkbeiner et al., 2023) all participants adopted interchangeable roles of learners, moderators, and researchers. The interaction was based on the TEC (Technology, Education, and Cultural diversity) model (Ganayem et. al., 2020), where communication happens gradually, starting from texting, moving onto speaking, then to virtual face-to-face exchange (Shonfeld et. al., 2013), enabling students to collaboratively explore and evaluate AI applications in education within highly diverse groups.

A key highlight was a VSH workshop, simulating a student-teacher conversation about using AI in academic assignments. The session featured professional actors and student volunteers as participants. VSH enabled reflective learning experiences enhanced by facilitator-led debriefing and real-time feedback. In addition to fostering professional development, VSH promotes personal growth by increasing awareness of values, behavior, thinking patterns, and decision-making (Landler-Pardo et al., 2022). Participants’ reflections highlighted key insights from this innovative pedagogy.

The categories that emerged from the analysis were:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Website design and navigation | 4. Content organization |
| 2. Multilingual aspects | 5. Educational value task design |
| 3. The effective implementation of multiple languages | 6. User experience with AI |

Cultural differences were seen in the questionnaire results. Israeli students showed more concern about practical implementation, German students focused on ethical considerations, and Hungarian students were mainly interested in efficiency and utility. The overall sentiment was positive, with criticism on minor organizational aspects rather than substantial issues with the content or functionality. Cultural issues were observed by the moderators and the students in relation to their Zoom meetings. Research has indicated that different cultures would have different attitudes and behavioral intentions towards AI, and thus affect the inter-group dynamics when engaging via AI-based platforms (Ma et al., 2024), which was also confirmed by the current study. These differences were related to age differences between the groups.

Keywords: AI in higher education, virtual simulation-based learning, multicultural environment, online collaborative learning

Social reproduction through technological education: Digital capital and socio-economic class in vocational and arts education

PRESENTATION

Micah Sapir

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Technological education is often heralded as a catalyst for social mobility. In technological subject disciplines, however, in which technological expertise is itself a central curricular focus, educators risk perpetuating “variaged social reproduction,” according to which globalized neoliberalism entrenches socio-economic and cultural silos, albeit unevenly across different local structures (Bakker & Gil, 2019). In this study, I examine five artistic and five vocational disciplines, each created or substantially reshaped as a result of technological-educational policy reforms in Israel’s Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor. These reforms are expressly intended to disrupt educational tracking that has sent students from socio-economically stronger families, often with lighter skin, to artistic tracks whose elevated cultural habitus prioritizes self-expression and aesthetic appreciation, while directing students from socio-economically disadvantaged families, often with darker skin, to vocational tracks that offer blue-collar professional certification (Barak & Shoshana, 2020). Focusing on the structural similarities between technologized vocational and arts education, I ask: how do educators’ technological discourses reify socio-economic divisions between vocational and arts education despite stated intentions to challenge social reproduction?

Drawing on 27 qualitative interviews with secondary school teachers, principals, and policymakers, as well as critical analysis of classroom technologies-in-use, I identify two key discursive patterns. First, within techno-vocational education, growing emphasis on creative expression draws on progressive educational discourse. Second, within techno-arts education, increasing focus on technical skills vocationalizes fine arts education by prioritizing professional preparedness. While these shifts could suggest a blurring of traditional class distinctions, significant disparities remain between the cultural and economic capital transmitted within these tracks.

To explain these enduring disparities, I argue that technological education prioritizes neoliberal educational logics that reinforce rather than disrupt socio-economic hierarchies. The cultivation of “digital capital”—where technological skills function as both cultural capital and a key to employability in a globalized economy (Pitzalis & Porcu, 2024)—reflects a utilitarian curricular ideology, reshaping fine arts education into a tool for digital economic advancement (McGarr & Engen, 2024). Meanwhile, vocational education undergoes “scholarization,” where children’s labor is reclassified as “learning” even as its value is expressed in terms of future earning potential (Newberry & Rosen, 2020). Technological promises of socio-economic mobility serve as justification for low-wage training and extended credentialization periods, further entrenching students’ working-class status. Neoliberal economic educational goals prevent technological education from disrupting social reproduction, as local policy and pedagogical structures limit opportunities for interchange and mobility (Jørgensen et al. 2022).

Keywords: technological education, social reproduction, digital capital, vocational education, arts education

Using films to promote intercultural sensitivity in a university English-Speaking Cultures seminar

PRESENTATION

Francis Prescott-Pickup

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This paper will present the findings of a case study aiming to find how films can be used to promote increased intercultural sensitivity in students in a BA seminar course focusing on contemporary English culture. The case study follows on from a previous study (Prescott-Pickup, in press) based on the same course examining the construct of cultural awareness (Byram, 1989; Byram & Fleming, 1998; Shemshadsara, 2012). The seminar will include students from a range of different cultures (in the year immediately preceding this, the seminar had 15 students from 11 different countries) and will focus on films portraying mostly contemporary English culture. By examining a number of films and television productions using a film studies (Buckland, 2015; Monaco, 2009) and critical thinking skills approach (Dummett & Hughes, 2019), the students will be asked to make comparisons and connections between their own cultures and the topics that emerge as a result of analysing the film texts. The students will also be required to give short presentations in the second half of the course comparing a film about England with a media text from their own country. Data will be gathered using pre- and post-course questionnaires, as well as the teacher's observation notes taken during and after each lesson and the reflective feedback of the students. It is hoped that the findings and the techniques used may be of interest to other teachers of similar courses where groups with diverse cultural backgrounds create the opportunity for cross cultural comparisons and awareness raising.

Keywords: film and television, intercultural sensitivity, cross cultural comparison, critical thinking

Developing critical and intercultural literacy skills through digital museum narratives

PRESENTATION

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Preparing university students to effectively address a wide range of social issues has become a vital aspect of higher education. A powerful way of tackling this challenge is with authentic stories inspired by real-life experiences. Digital narratives created by museums offer powerful and easy-access resources to address social challenges. Such narratives engage readers in digital multimodal storytelling and offer the cultural and historical insights of a carefully curated exhibition. Some museums invest in the artistic design of digital narratives to accompany their exhibitions with the purpose of creating a lasting artefact which tells a story to global audiences. In my qualitative case study, I will demonstrate how multimodal discourse analysis can inform the pedagogic use of two digital museum narratives in university coursework.

In my research, I approach digital museum narratives from the perspectives of multimodal discourse analysis, digital museum studies (Sylaiou & Dafiotis, 2020; Hidalgo Urbaneja, 2024) and multimodal pedagogy in museums (Fitzgerald & Blunden, 2019; Insulander & Selander, 2009). The museum resources under investigation represent two distant yet equally significant cultural issues: immigration in New York through The Stories of 103 Orchard Street digital narrative created by the Tenement Museum in New York, and Aboriginal communities through the Sydney Elders digital narrative created by the State Library of New South Wales.

To fully grasp the meaning potential of such exhibitions, they need to be explored as complex multimodal texts (Ravelli, 2006) which combine multimedia assets to represent the exhibition content in an online format. In the first stage of this exploration, social semiotic multimodal discourse analysis (Kress & Bezemer, 2023) gives guidance to understand how meaning-making resources such as images, text, video, voice recordings, music, soundscapes are combined with online features such as website structure (Djonov & Knox, 2014), scrolling, hyperlinks and website interactivity (Adami, 2015; Djonov et al., 2015) to reflect cultural meanings and artistic expression.

In the second stage, I will demonstrate how such digital narratives can contribute to the students' critical and intercultural understanding and digital literacy awareness in university courses. Such a pedagogical approach is dialogic, inquiry-based, and highlights the role of multimodality and genres in cultural practices. In this process, I will describe the sub-skills and knowledge areas necessary for students to meaningfully interact with and critically interpret such stories for their own development and for academic purposes.

Keywords: digital storytelling, museum learning, intercultural learning, multimodal literacy pedagogy, multimodal discourse analysis

STRAND 6 | Information and communication technology (ICT) in intercultural education

About the strand

Two decades into the 21st century with the global impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on foreign language teaching methodologies and intercultural education and the free access to generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) for the general public, the need emerges to look back and take stock of what was achieved to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in education. How can ICT be a useful aid in exploring intercultural communicative competence development and addressing increased diversity in the classroom? How can pedagogically motivated ICT use in education foster positive feelings in a world where intercultural conflicts are increasingly common? What possibilities does ICT provide for enhancing collaboration within learning groups and across different countries? What are the gains and the potential challenges of ICT integration that educators need to be aware of when aiming to offer quality intercultural learning experiences? How did the intensive use of ICT during the Covid-19 pandemic shape intercultural learning? And how can GenAI contribute to improving inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments? These are some of the questions presentations, workshops or poster presentations are invited to address within this strand. Research papers and papers reporting on classroom experience are equally welcome. The ultimate goal is to gain deeper insights into a variety of approaches and practices in today's intercultural education landscape.

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The relationship between EFL learners' academic locus of control and motivation in the technological era

POSTER PRESENTATION

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This study will investigate the relationship between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' academic locus of control and their motivation to learn English, focusing on how technology use may influence this relationship. Academic locus of control, or students' beliefs about their ability to impact learning outcomes, has been linked to language success in previous studies. Grounded in self-determination theory, this correlational study will examine whether learners with an internal locus of control are more motivated, particularly in connection with technology use distinguishing between users of traditional Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. Data from 150 EFL students in Hungarian universities will be collected via an online questionnaire. Analysis using SPSS 22 will include Pearson's correlation and mediation analysis to test whether technology use explains the effect of internal locus of control on motivation. It is expected that technology use will enhance the link between academic locus of control and motivation, as engaging digital tools are anticipated to strengthen students' sense of control over learning outcomes, thereby boosting motivation.

Keywords: academic locus of control, motivation, technology use, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Enhancing intercultural education through digital innovations: Sharing the experiences of an international non-formal education organization

ROUNDTABLE

Ana Carolina Cassiano

AFS Intercultural Programs

The role of digital technology in intercultural education is increasingly significant, offering learners new ways to connect across differences, acquire skills, and engage in changemaking. This session will explore how digital innovations can enhance intercultural education practices by presenting experiences of AFS Intercultural Programs, an international non-formal education organisation with over 75 years of experience in intercultural education.

Grounded in theories of intercultural (Deardorff, 2006), experiential (Kolb, 1984), and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), the AFS approach emphasises holistic learner development, integrating socio-emotional, cognitive, and ethical dimensions of a person's development, with the goal of empowering learners to contribute purposefully to the relevant issues of our time. Over the last decade, AFS has progressively integrated digital tools into curriculum design and delivery, exploring opportunities and challenges associated with digital innovations, including virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI), in fostering inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments.

Research shows that students who go on international exchanges benefit greatly from intentional learning interventions and guided reflection with skilled facilitators (Vande Berg et al., 2009). AFS uses Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) to connect students participating in mobility programs worldwide through an online platform and facilitated live sessions. Additionally, AFS offers fully virtual exchanges that combine different types of learning methods, such as animated videos for theory and case studies, reflection exercises, quizzes, forum discussions, and facilitated dialogue sessions. While AFS's use of digital innovations illustrates their potential for enriching intercultural education, it also brings to light challenges like digital divides, internet access limitations, and ensuring quality online learning. To ensure digital learning is equitable and human-centred, we must rethink technology's role in reducing access barriers and providing broad accessibility (Facer & Selwyn, 2021).

Participants in this session will gain practical insights into how digital innovations can boost intercultural education. Expected outcomes include a deeper understanding of how digital tools can support in-person exchange programs and offer meaningful virtual exchange experiences. Discussions will cover strategies for integrating digital tools into intercultural education practices to overcome participation barriers, foster belonging, and maintain continuous relevance in these learning environments. Findings will underscore the potential of digital innovations in making intercultural education accessible to diverse populations. At the same time, recommendations will address current challenges and future possibilities for digitally supported intercultural education practices.

Keywords: intercultural education, digital education, non-formal education, experiential learning, virtual exchange

Engaging with otherness in intercultural distance learning: case studies from primary education

PRESENTATION

Lamprini Chartofylaka

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This communication explores the relational dynamics of collaborative distance learning, focusing on elementary school students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. In digital learning environments, a positive and inclusive atmosphere relies on social presence—the sense of being connected and engaged with others (Wysocka-Narewska, 2022). Fostering meaningful interactions is essential to sustaining learner motivation and promoting intercultural understanding. How do young students connect and collaborate with peers from different communities in a computer-mediated context? What forms of interpersonal engagement emerge as they navigate this virtual intercultural space?

This study investigates how students interact and co-construct meaning in digital environments through the lens of intercultural competencies. It highlights the importance of learners' ability to interpret, respond to, and acknowledge difference in online collaborations. To explore these questions, we draw on data from two research projects conducted in a Francophone context—TEEC and Formalink—both of which implement a pedagogical model based on context-effects-based learning (Anjou et al., 2022; Forissier, 2019). Case 1 (C1), conducted in 2018, linked students from Guadeloupe and Quebec at a time when distance education was still rare in primary schools. Case 2 (C2), carried out in 2022, connected students from Guadeloupe and Saint-Barthélemy in a post-pandemic context. Using a deductive content analysis framework (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), informed by the work of Byram (2009) and Dervin (2004), we examined qualitative data from two data collection instruments. A key principle emerging from both case studies is “openness to otherness”, with one particularly salient category of responses reflecting this disposition: “empathy and recognition towards the Other”.

Keywords: distance learning, intercultural competence, social presence, primary education, virtual interaction

The potential of digitalization for intercultural education: From specific case studies to broader reflections

PRESENTATION

Luisa Conti

University of Jena

In today's postdigital, globalized society, the digital and analog realms are seamlessly integrated, becoming a natural extension of our everyday lives. This dynamic reflects Negroponte's insight that "like air and drinking water, the digital will be noticed just by its absence and not its presence" (Negroponte, 1998). This pervasive digitalization has transformed how we perceive and engage in learning, creating a need for new approaches to educational design. The push for educational transformation is also connected to the "time of complexity" (Ceruti, 2018) in which we currently live, requiring individuals who can cope with diverse challenges and contribute to the creation of sustainable, inclusive cultures. In this context, education takes on a vital, transformative role, offering experiences that go beyond simply delivering knowledge, instead shaping individuals who can actively transform their realities (UN, 2015).

This talk aims to present two innovative learning environments that leverage digital tools to foster intercultural, dialogic learning, centering on the diversity, rights, and lifeworlds of learners. The first is a multilingual platform designed to encourage peer learning through a buddy system and experiential learning. The second is a simulation game that connects students from different countries, fostering collaboration. Both concepts have already been piloted, and key findings from the extensive mixed-methods empirical research will be presented.

Drawing on prior experiences, this presentation will highlight how each of these formats successfully transforms education into an intercultural, transformative experience.

Keywords: intercultural education, digitalization, transformative education, cooperative learning, peer learning, intercultural competence

Student autonomy in the digital age

PRESENTATION

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Ágnes Albert

Eötvös Loránd University

Imre Fekete

Budapest Business University

It has been a longstanding research idea that students taking responsibility for their own learning enhances engagement, motivation, and academic success (Benson, 2011; Illés, 2012; Little et al., 2017). By synthesizing research on the technological aspect of student autonomy, we aim to contribute to the current discourse on the reasons for Hungarians' lower proficiency in foreign languages. In addition to modernization efforts within the Hungarian education system (Öveges & Csizér, 2018), another approach to addressing this issue may involve enhancing 21st-century language teaching methods. This presentation, therefore, introduces a theoretical framework for examining students' independent use of technology in foreign language learning, both within and outside the classroom (Fekete, 2023). Previous studies on students' autonomous technology use have been limited, primarily focusing on classroom settings, often without theory-driven approaches.

This is a theoretical study; therefore, our presentation follows an argumentative structure organized around the problem of how to conceptualize and measure students' autonomous use of technology when learning English in Hungary. Our critical overview of the Douglas Fir Model (2013) presents a possible framework for our study by collating relevant theoretical and empirical findings at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels. We organize our arguments around two significant interactions: the interaction between policies and values, and the interaction between teachers and students. We argue that these interactions drive not only language teaching but also language use.

Our framework proposes several approaches to enhance the understanding and measurement of autonomous technology use through interactions between policies and values as well as between teachers and students. Key examples from our analysis include: (1) how cultural values prioritize the use of technology in education, promoting adaptability and digital literacy; (2) students' awareness of available technological resources and their self-directed use of technology outside of school; (3) teachers' ability and knowledge to mentor students on technology use, fostering engagement in school projects; and (4) the extent to which students are motivated and able to use technology autonomously, engaging in both classroom learning and self-exploration. The presentation concludes by discussing the theoretical and pedagogical implications of the framework. This comprehensive approach aims to shed light on the complexities of autonomous technology use in language learning and to provide insights for enhancing teaching strategies.

Keywords: autonomy, technology, values, policies

Perceptions of an EFL tutor on the flipped classroom model for developing listening skills: Insights for teacher education in Indonesia

PRESENTATION

Ritueli Daeli

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In recent years, the flipped classroom model (FCM) has gained traction as an innovative approach to language teaching, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. This model reverses traditional learning by requiring students to engage with instructional materials before class, allowing in-class time to focus on active, student-centered activities that reinforce comprehension and practical application (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Lage et al., 2000). While research highlights its potential to enhance engagement and comprehension, limited studies address its specific impact on listening skills. This study investigates an EFL tutor's perceptions at an Indonesian university regarding the effectiveness of the FCM in developing students' listening skills, aiming to provide insights into how this approach may address listening comprehension gaps. Additionally, it examines how this tutor's experiences can inform teacher education programs, equipping future instructors with effective methods for fostering listening skills through innovative, learner-centered strategies in EFL contexts.

This study investigates the perceptions of an EFL tutor in Indonesia after implementing the FCM for the first time in a listening development course over a ten-week period. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research aims to understand how this innovative teaching model from the perspective of the instructor. Data were gathered through a comprehensive, in-depth interview to capture the tutor's reflections and observations on the model's effectiveness (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Patton, 2014). Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was applied to interpret the interview data, identifying key themes related to the flipped classroom's impact on student preparation, participation, and comprehension in listening tasks. This analysis not only offers valuable insights into the flipped classroom's potential in EFL contexts but also provides practical implications for future teacher training programs, equipping educators with effective strategies for enhancing listening skills through active, student-centered learning methods.

Findings:

1. The EFL tutor perceives the FCM as effective for enhancing student engagement and preparedness. By engaging with materials beforehand, students gain confidence for discussions and role-plays, enhancing deeper learning. The teacher's role shifts to facilitation, allowing focused feedback to improve students' grasp of main ideas. However, student accountability issues, such as time management, can hinder this effectiveness.
2. The tutor's experience highlights effective practices in EFL teacher education, emphasizing student-centered learning. Diverse pre-class materials, interactive in-class activities, mini-quizzes, and peer feedback encourage autonomy, accountability, and critical thinking, providing insights for training EFL instructors in flipped classroom methods.

Keywords: flipped classroom, EFL, listening skills

AI tools in environmental education: Facilitating creative learning about complex interaction in nature

PRESENTATION

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This study investigates how 5th-grade students use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to create a comic strip that portrays the survival struggle between the Myna and the Lesser Kestrel. The research focuses on the development of 21st-century skills, particularly the 4Cs: Creativity, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Communication. Rooted in eco-humanism, the study emphasizes how integrating AI and environmental education can foster environmental citizenship. As we face growing environmental challenges and technological advancements, this project examines how AI can bridge the gap between digital learning and fostering awareness of complex ecological systems. The project aims to equip students with the skills needed to navigate a rapidly changing world while promoting ethical responsibility and holistic environmental understanding (Aktan & Kethüda, 2024; Aloni et al., 2024; Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023).

A case-study approach was employed to assess the advantages and challenges faced by 56 fifth-grade students in Northern Israel. The students were tasked with using AI tools to create comic strips depicting the conflict between the Myna and the Lesser Kestrel. The research utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data were collected through student reflections, analyses of their drawings, and an evaluation of the comic strips they created. In addition, a quantitative questionnaire was used to assess students' attitudes toward the 4Cs. The AI tools enabled the students to engage creatively with the subject matter, reflecting their understanding of the ecological conflict and developing essential problem-solving skills. Teacher and parental support played a crucial role in mediating these processes, ensuring that students maximized the benefits of the AI tools.

The findings highlight both the benefits and challenges of integrating AI into environmental education. Students demonstrated growth in creativity and critical thinking while collaborating to solve ecological challenges. Although students succeeded in developing collaborative and problem-solving skills, communication and creative thinking received lower confidence ratings, suggesting areas for improvement in future projects. The study also emphasizes the role of teacher and parental support in fostering student engagement and success in navigating complex technological tools. Ultimately, the study promotes a deeper understanding of how AI tools can enhance learning in environmental education (Drigas et al., 2023; Goralnik & Nelson, 2015).

Keywords: 21st-century skills, Lesser Kestrel, eco-humanism, artificial intelligence

Developing soft skills with the assistance of artificial intelligence

PRESENTATION

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The lack of soft skills required for jobs poses a global challenge in the labour market (Noah & Abdul Aziz, 2020). While their development is recommended from as early as primary school (Cimatti, 2016), we believe that it is crucial to ensure that soft skills remain an important part of education even at the university level. Though conceptualisations of soft skills vary across the relevant literature (Touloumakos, 2020), there seems to be an agreement on the most essential ones, including emotional intelligence, stress tolerance, problem-solving and critical thinking, creativity and innovation skills, communication and teamwork, conflict resolution, decision-making, flexibility and adaptability, result orientation, time management and organization, information acquisition and processing, the ability to transfer acquired knowledge, as well as argumentation and negotiation techniques—all required in today's multicultural societies as well as in diverse educational and work contexts (OECD, 2015; Scheerens et al., 2020).

The research project “Developing Soft Skills with the Assistance of Artificial Intelligence” focuses on enhancing soft skills among university students, specifically third-year or higher, through AI-based tools. Conducted by faculty members from ELTE's Centre of Methodology and supported by the OTP Fáy Foundation, this project will run from December 2024 to September 2025.

The project identifies key soft skills such as emotional intelligence, problem-solving, adaptability, and communication. In the planning phase, appropriate AI tools and measurement instruments will be selected to support the development of two specific skills. Students will have access to freemium AI applications selected for the purpose of the research.

The research consists of six phases: planning, pre-testing, intervention, post-testing, data analysis, and recommendations. First, the selected soft skills and their corresponding AI tools will be evaluated for effectiveness. Pre-tests will assess students' baseline competences via surveys. After that, an eight-week training will focus on improving the selected skills using AI applications. The effectiveness of these tools will then be evaluated through surveys and semi-structured interviews. Data from both qualitative and quantitative analyses will guide the final phase, during which practical recommendations will be formulated for educational institutions.

The research emphasizes the potential of AI to bridge the gap between education and job market demands by equipping students with essential interpersonal skills as well as by fostering an open mindset among them. The research aims to provide a transferable model for skills development in higher education with a view to promoting innovation and practical solutions.

Keywords: soft skills, artificial intelligence, skills development, higher education

Changing attitudes among Arab and Jewish students in the TEC online environment

PRESENTATION

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The TEC Model presents an innovative approach that effectively integrates advanced technology into educational experiences within multicultural settings, rooted in principles derived from contact theory and related frameworks (Ganayem et al., 2024). The TEC Center for Technology emphasizes bridging gaps between learners from diverse cultural backgrounds through collaborative and gradual methodologies, enabling participants to work in small multicultural groups. This model utilizes a range of advanced information technologies, including virtual reality platforms like Second Life, collaborative tools such as mind maps and electronic boards, and synchronous tools like Blackboard, Unicko, and Zoom, all tailored to align with the participants' curriculum content (Hoter & Nagar, 2019). The strategic integration of technology with intercultural education is central to achieving the program's multifaceted objectives, which aim to cultivate a multicultural society through innovative teaching practices (Ganayem et al., 2024; Cameron et al., 2007).

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative component includes semi-structured interviews with ten participants representing diverse cultural backgrounds, such as Arab and Jewish students, to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding the project's impact on changing attitudes among students from different cultures within Israeli society. Additionally, the study investigates the role of technology in facilitating intercultural learning, emphasizing how it enhances engagement and understanding among individuals from varied cultural contexts. The research demonstrated that the integrated educational approaches developed within the project contribute to creating a comprehensive and engaging learning experience, fostering active participation, collaboration, and meaningful cultural exchanges (Shonfeld, 2022). Participants reported greater openness toward multiculturalism and a deeper understanding of their own cultural identity. The "Eureka" platform, the virtual environment used in the study, served as a foundation for quality dialogue and the development of interpersonal connections across physical and cultural boundaries, creating opportunities for meaningful interactions. The findings underscore the significant potential of these approaches in promoting multicultural learning and bridging diverse communities within Israeli society (Walther et al., 2015).

Keywords: intercultural education, online learning, TEC model, Arab-Jewish relations, openness.

Connecting civilizations: A student-led AI initiative for Greek and Chinese educational integration

PRESENTATION

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While AI's integration into education marks a significant shift from traditional methods, offering personalized learning experiences, the growing presence of diverse backgrounds in educational settings underscores the importance of an AI-driven intercultural education based on sensitivity, solidarity, and cooperation. Given the increasing number of Chinese students in Greek schools, an urgent need for tools that bridge linguistic and cultural gaps has occurred, fostering empathy, cultural respect, and mutual understanding. Therefore, this project aims to address these needs through the student-led design and development of an AI bot application that leverages AI and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to facilitate cross-cultural communication between Greek and Chinese students and teachers. By utilizing AI's capabilities, this initiative seeks not only to enhance linguistic communication but also increase cultural awareness, ultimately creating a more inclusive and dynamic educational environment that prepares students for the challenges of a globalized world (Walter, 2024; Chiu et al., 2023; Steele, 2023). In this project we will utilize a design-based research methodology, emphasizing iterative development and testing of the AI bot within a school environment. The result will be a web-based application that will facilitate linguistic communication between Greek and Chinese students by incorporating automatic written translation and learning modules for basic daily communication terms and expressions. Additionally, it will offer guidance on cultural norms in various communicative contexts (e.g., introductions, dinners, and events), supplying trivia and advice on culturally appropriate behaviors, gestures, and expressions. The app will also deliver reminders about national anniversaries, holidays, and significant historical events for both Greek and Chinese cultures, displaying relevant educational content. Finally, the project will include GPS-based suggestions for entertainment, visits, and museums in the country. Data will be gathered through user feedback, surveys, and pilot testing to refine the bot's functionality. The expected outcomes include enhanced linguistic communication between Greek and Chinese students, improved integration of Chinese students into the Greek school environment and increased cultural awareness among diverse student groups as well as between teachers and foreign students. The project aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of AI in supporting intercultural education and fostering a more inclusive and empathetic school community. Furthermore, the development of complex digital skills, increased student initiative and self-directed learning are anticipated. The findings will contribute to the broader discourse on the role of technology in promoting intercultural understanding in education but also encourage the implementation of theoretical principles in real-life challenges.

Keywords: intercultural education, linguistic and cultural integration, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Natural Language Processing (NLP), educational technology

Playing with English language and culture: Strategies and technological tools to afford challenges from specific learning disorders and other neurodevelopmental disorders

PRESENTATION

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Students facing challenges posed by specific learning disabilities (SpLD), but also by other neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD), are increasing in incidence and comorbidity (Celentin & Daloiso, 2017). Each student has specific learning characteristics as well as some transversal trends, such as fatigue in executive functions (memory, attention, planning), lexical recovery. The graphic and orthographic aspects of a not very transparent language like English pose difficulties for students who come from a transparent language like Italian, which tends to bring greater compensation in terms of correctness, if not speed, for those who experience a SpLD (Lampugnani & De Toma, 2008). Certainly there are students who may have their strengths in memory and the reproduction of sounds. Awareness of the grammatical dimension is the other aspect that causes difficulty even in the first language (Palladino, 2020).

During specialist pedagogical strengthening work, support strategies were tested with 35 boys and girls ($9 < < 17$) with specific learning disorders and other neurodevelopmental disorders that could allow learning but, above all, overcome fear and negative emotional experiences compared to the discipline of Foreign Language starting from nursery school (Celentin & Daloiso, 2018).

The following strategies were used and integrated: a playful approach; the use of total physical response and theatre in English Language (Lampugnani & De Toma, 2008); the use of video with image-supported text editors; grammatical support schemes co-produced in digital format; workbooks and games in digital format; learning processes that start from oral comprehension and expression to arrive only subsequently at written forms; the use of board games; maps, diagrams and presentations to support the study of literature or texts and study contents; visual glossaries of self-produced vocabulary; and the choice of appropriate fonts and graphic spacing.

Students changed their approach to language and listening, experimenting the possibility of learning. They began to independently identify which strategies to apply to new tasks/learning contents. The support of technologies and visual aids, as in the study of other disciplines, has made learning more accessible.

Keywords: Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD), English Language, learning strategies, assistive tools, learning

Linguistic education and learning technologies: Synergies for inclusion

PRESENTATION

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This study addresses the promotion of accessible, comprehensible educational content in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), which identifies accessibility and inclusion as essential rights. This study explores the synergy developed within the University of Turin's University Course for Professional Development (CUAP) "Expert in the Processes of Inclusive Education" for the training of trainers who will in turn teach future support teachers in the Specialisation Course for Support Activities. The aim is to equip trainers with advanced theoretical knowledge and practical tools to teach methods for creating accessible, linguistically comprehensible content. Guided by the principles of Universal Design for Learning and sociolinguistic frameworks, CUAP emphasises the importance of a school environment in which all students have the right to comprehend and learn. The programme includes training in controlled writing and AI-assisted text simplification, allowing university trainers to prepare educators capable of reducing cognitive load and overcoming language barriers in diverse learning contexts.

This study combines sociolinguistic theory with practical applications, allowing CUAP participants—the future trainers of support teachers—to develop skills in creating accessible educational materials. The methodology includes Easy-to-Read techniques, controlled writing and digital tools to assess and simplify text complexity. In the CUAP lab experiments, AI was used to create personalised learning materials, including customised texts and AI-generated images tailored to individual student needs. Techniques such as AI-assisted storytelling and interactive visuals were effective in improving accessibility and engagement, although limitations were evident in tasks requiring deep theoretical understanding. These findings highlight the essential role of human expertise in guiding AI-driven tools to ensure they align with inclusive educational goals. Data from internships in which CUAP-trained instructors use these strategies alongside teachers contribute to the evaluation of the programme's effectiveness. Key sources include Lumbelli (2014) on cognitive accessibility and De Mauro (1980) on the principles of language comprehension.

The results show that the combination of linguistic and technological approaches improves the accessibility of educational content and inclusivity, demonstrating how CUAP-trained instructors can collaborate with future support teachers to create multimodal, personalised materials that accommodate students with disabilities. Although AI helps in the creation of accessible materials, CUAP research confirms that human pedagogical expertise remains irreplaceable in the full implementation of inclusive education. This study contributes to ongoing research in accessible education and demonstrates that technology, when guided by human insight, improves equity and engagement in learning environments.

Keywords: inclusion, linguistic accessibility, artificial intelligence, text simplification, teacher training

The complexity of technology, collaboration, ethnicity, and gender at the TEC model

PRESENTATION

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Online collaborative learning (OCL) enables the learning community to extend beyond the confines of the educational institution, thus enabling students to study with both instructors and peers from other institutions (Finkbeiner et al., 2024). This study focused on the impact of an intercollegiate online course in a multicultural virtual environment on the collaboration between students from different cultures participating in an online project in the M.Teach program in two colleges of education in Israel. Online teaching and collaborative learning can be challenging to implement. The process of adopting and implementing online cooperative learning in the education system requires that teachers undergo continuous and meaningful professional training, including experience with the principles of the approach. Experience is particularly important in teaching colleges, as it may affect teaching and cooperative learning in schools during and after training (Weinberger & Shonfeld, 2020; Shonfeld et al., 2013). The purpose of the course in which this study was conducted to address these challenges, and therefore the difficulties and learning styles were examined. Based on the students' feedback, we find that they gained significant knowledge, particularly in the areas of learning from mistakes, time management, research skills, and general learning skills. The course was particularly beneficial because it included students from diverse cultures, allowing for the acceptance of different viewpoints and mutual learning. According to the findings, it appears that cooperative learning is not suitable for everyone, and that there are differences between men and women, and between different cultures. Therefore, in this study, the differences between different groups in the course were examined in terms of gender and ethnicity. In variance analyses done for each factor separately, a significant difference was found (** $p < .01$) only in the contribution factor, where the average among the Arab students was higher (3.7) than the average contribution factor among the Jewish students (3.22). No significant difference was found in the other indices such as style and difficulty.

Keywords: online learning, collaborative learning, multicultural education

Educational strategies for equity: The role of career guidance in the university transition of migrant students in Italy

PRESENTATION

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This contribution aims to present the main findings of a study conducted at two Italian universities (Yin, 2005; Stake, 2006), with the goal of exploring how schools and universities can support the access and academic success of students from migratory backgrounds (MI, 2022). The phenomenon of transition to tertiary education among the youths of migrants is relatively recent in Italy, closely linked to migration flows of recent decades, and represents a crucial challenge for promoting quality, inclusion, and equity within educational systems (Marmolejo et al., 2008; Morgan & Houghton, 2011; Tarozzi, 2015; OECD, 2022). The study, based on a digital survey and semi-structured interviews (Trinchero, 2004), analysed the diverse biographical and educational trajectories of students from migratory backgrounds, using the concepts of intersectionality and super-diversity as interpretive frameworks (McCall, 2005; Vertovec, 2007). The investigation delved into their experiences in educational pathways, guidance and tutoring services, the use of new technologies, strategies for information analysis, and future aspirations. Furthermore, it gathered directly from the main actors their expressed needs and the strategies adopted by the guidance services of the two universities involved. The results highlight strengths, specific needs, and effective practices already in place, providing an empirical basis for developing an innovative model of educational guidance and tutoring that integrates new technologies and e-learning environments (Rivoltella, 2020; Cocquyt et al., 2017; Moekotte et al., 2017). In this proposal, the educational guidance and tutoring framework is positioned as a key strategy not only to foster upward social mobility and contribute to building a more equitable and inclusive society but also to leverage the transformative potential of migration for the benefit of society as a whole. This study seeks to enrich the international debate by demonstrating how professional and academic guidance (Savickas et al., 2009; Domenici, 2009; Hooley et al., 2018; Biagioli, 2023) can harness migration as a resource to promote democratic processes and support collective growth.

Keywords: higher education, career guidance, migrant students, equity

Virtual simulation to promote intercultural competence

PRESENTATION

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The research focuses on the intercultural competence (IC) among students, and the role of virtual simulation (VS) in developing it. IC includes awareness of one's own cultural conditioning and demonstrating sensitivity to other cultures. Like any skill, IC can be acquired. Traditional educational approaches include exchange and study abroad programs, or formal trainings and courses. However, those are expensive, limiting their reach (Anis, 2023).

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) overcomes that. Digital trainings immerse individuals in a culturally diverse environment to work closely together (Akdere et al., 2021; de Hei et al., 2020), reducing prejudice while improving attitudes (Walther et al., 2015).

Virtual simulations (VS) are an advanced methodology for developing IC. Simulations encourage in-group collaborations in a real-life scenario with consideration for the "other" culture (Lee et al., 2022). VS strengthen empathy, confidence and understanding in students' interaction with other cultures (Foronda et al., 2020).

This quantitative study used a survey designed to assess differences in cultural competence among students in course activities via a virtual world (VW) platform compared to those participating through the Video Conference via Zoom (VC-Zoom).

The study's participants consisted of pre-service education students from six colleges across Israel. The VW course had 25 groups, and the VC-Zoom course had 20 groups.

The methodology employed 2 instruments designed to measure cultural competence, willingness to engage with other cultures, and intercultural sensitivity.

1. CCD-Cultural Competence: Drawing from Deardorff's Delphi-model-based definition of cultural competence. It consists of 18 items reflecting various aspects of cultural competence, achieving a high reliability score ($\alpha = .95$).

2. ISS-15: Intercultural Sensitivity: this 15-item measure assesses the degree of Cultural Sensitivity.

Both groups reported moderate increase in their cultural competence in comparison with the beginning of the course. Interviews analysis found some differences in students' empathy to the others. Previous research indicates that the virtual space can be defining for the learning experience (Anis, 2023), which was not confirmed as the results did not show any difference in the efficacy of either instructional method on participants' cultural competence. Other factors like religious affiliation did not influence either.

The research highlights the effectiveness of VS as a successful methodology to improve IC. However, it fails to identify the statistic results' difference between the training environments.

Keywords: virtual, simulation, intercultural competence

Using intercultural communication principles to guide the ethical use of AI in higher education

PRESENTATION

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Using AI in higher education has become common practice, and even more frequently the issues of intercultural communication and the ethical use of AI are talked about by lecturers at Hungarian universities, where a large number of students come from different cultural backgrounds, especially at the MA level. The present workshop focuses on three general ethical considerations of intercultural communication principles of using AI in higher education. First, there is a risk of AI systems amplifying existing societal biases related to gender, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, language, and ability (Klimova & Chen, 2024). If training data for AI models overrepresents certain demographics or cultural perspectives, the resulting AI systems may produce biased outputs, reinforcing stereotypes and discriminating against underrepresented groups. This raises significant intercultural issues, as AI systems developed in one cultural context may not be suitable or fair when applied to others (Fengchun & Shiohira, 2024). Second, the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity in AI development and use will be discussed. AI systems should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Sarwari et al., 2024). This requires careful consideration of cultural sensitivities when designing AI systems, ensuring that they are respectful of different cultural values and norms (Fengchun & Shiohira, 2024). Furthermore, AI-generated content should strive for cultural representation, avoiding the erasure or misrepresentation of diverse cultural perspectives. Third, the importance of inclusive access to AI and AI competencies will be emphasized. The existing digital divide, where certain communities lack access to technology and digital literacy, might result in “digital exclusion” (Krumsvik, 2024). This can create further inequalities between different cultural groups, particularly in education, where access to AI-powered learning tools may not be evenly distributed. This can disproportionately disadvantage students from marginalized communities, further widening the gap in educational opportunities.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, intercultural communication, digital exclusion, diversity, higher education

Personalization in a personal digital professional space (PDPS) for pre-service teachers in an academic program in a multicultural college

PRESENTATION

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This study examines the development of personal digital professional spaces (DPSs) as part of an undergraduate teacher education program in a multicultural college serving both Jewish and Arab students (Durmuş & Korkmaz, 2023). Through the program, students are equipped with tools and knowledge to create an individualized online platform that reflects their professional growth throughout their studies. By the end of the three-year program, each student has developed a unique DPS containing a personal profile, educational vision, core values, and a portfolio that showcases their learning journey through projects and lesson plans. These DPSs, grounded in principles of personalization (Avidov-Ungar, 2024), allow each student to tailor the content to their needs, aspirations, and unique aspects they wish to present (Khor & Mutthulakshmi, 2023). The research explores students' perceptions of their DPS and its utility, focusing on comparing Jewish and Arab students' views and analyzing multicultural challenges in teacher training.

This study employed a qualitative methodology based on Grounded Theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), which extracts insights from participants' narratives. Both Jewish and Arab students received a reflective questionnaire (Lim et al., 2016) with six open-ended questions about their use of their digital professional spaces. They were asked to share the advantages they perceive in using this space and how it supports their professional self-presentation. A total of 154 Arabic-speaking and 385 Hebrew-speaking students (representing 70% of those exposed to the process) completed the questionnaire, reflecting a broad sample of students in the undergraduate education program preparing to become teachers in primary and secondary schools. Data analysis was conducted using a narrative approach (Bell, 2003), allowing for in-depth insights into students' personal and professional perspectives on using this digital tool.

Findings show that the DPS highlights relevant competencies and skills such as:

- Creativity and Innovation: Creative materials presentation via digital tools to make content accessible and engaging.
- Organization: Students organize lesson plans and resources, showing ability to maintain a structured digital portfolio.
- Personalized Learning: Students display content tailored to their needs and aspirations as educators.
- Innovative Technologies: Highlighting readiness to lead digital innovation in education.
- Professional Development: The DPS can supports growth and commitment to ongoing improvement.

The presentation will also explore differences between Jewish and Arab students' responses and multicultural challenges in their training.

Keywords: pre-service teachers, professional space (PDPS), multiculturalism, personalization, teacher education

Teachers' interaction with Generative Artificial Intelligence in adult migrant education

PRESENTATION

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Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is integrated into many tools and platforms intended for general purposes and those explicitly designed for teachers. As this technology is available on any device with an Internet connection and for free, teachers and students can use GenAI to get support at home and, sometimes, in class. Teachers can leverage GenAI to create learning materials and adapt them for personalization according to the student's needs and levels. Since GenAI is based on LLMs, which perform well in natural language manipulation, including translating, GenAI gives incredible opportunities for teachers who work with adult migrant learners to create learning resources in multiple languages, or for students to interact with a multilingual chatbot. In such artificial communication, where human users are invested with major responsibilities of sense-making, contextualization, and ethical evaluation of the AI-generated content, it is important to consider the way teachers interact with GenAI tools.

As a part of a research project on teachers' professional development in AI literacy in Provincial Adult Education Centers (Centro Provinciale per l'Instruzione degli Adulti - CPIAs) in Italy, this contribution collects and discusses data from the questionnaires focusing on the processes by which teachers use GenAI to prepare and personalize their learning materials for adult migrants. Three considerations have guided the generation of the questionnaire: AI literacy must be considered in conversational practices with artificial agents; this conversation is part of an artificial communication situated in culturally complex educational contexts, which require particular attention from the human users to avoid cultural biases; this situation requires specific competencies related to AI and online interaction. Therefore, teachers are asked whether they are aware of and can detect cultural biases in AI-generated content and what strategies they use to mitigate such biases when interacting with GenAI.

The questionnaire is expected to provide a starting point for subsequent participatory action research sessions to engage teachers in discussion about their competence and literacy of GenAI. From their answers, it is likely to gain an initial and partial understanding of what GenAI tools teachers in CPIAs use, what kind of training they have received in AI, and if such training resulted in an actual use of GenAI in the context of migrant adult education, considering teachers' awareness of possible cultural biases and their mitigation strategies.

Keywords: teachers' continuous professional development, AI literacy, artificial communication, superdiversity, adult learning and education

Multicultural lens: A journey to cultural competence in the digital space

PRESENTATION

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In Israel's culturally diverse and socially heterogeneous educational landscape, teachers must develop cultural competence as an integral part of their training. Cultural competence—the ability to understand, respect, and appropriately respond to cultural differences in educational settings—is essential for training high-quality teachers in the 21st century. Studies indicate that fostering cultural competence enhances teachers' abilities to create meaningful learning experiences for all students while valuing their diverse backgrounds (Deardorff, 2016; Gay, 2018; Banks, 2019). Additionally, Ferguson et al. (2020) emphasize that cultural competence training within teacher education promotes positive attitudes toward cultural diversity, better equipping teachers to navigate complex social dynamics in the classroom.

Recently, the PhotoVoice method has gained recognition as a powerful tool for cultivating cultural competence among educators. This approach prompts self-reflection and deeper understanding through visual storytelling. Research shows that PhotoVoice encourages individuals to share narratives about their cultural identities, offering valuable insights into the cultural dynamics educators might encounter (Farrugia, 2022; Wang & Burris, 1997).

The proposed study aims to examine the development of cultural competence among pre-service teachers by integrating PhotoVoice and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in an upcoming academic course titled "Multiculturalism in Israel and the Diaspora via PhotoVoice." The research will assess cultural competence levels among teacher trainees before and after the course, comparing these findings with a control group. Additionally, it will explore how PhotoVoice and AI can enable diverse groups in Israeli society to convey experiences and emotions during wartime.

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach. Quantitatively, changes in participants' cultural competence levels will be measured through structured questionnaires administered at the start and end of the course. Qualitatively analysis will be performed on materials the students will submit. Course participants will document cultural experiences using PhotoVoice, allowing for personal expression through photography and narrative. AI will facilitate language and communication bridging among participants from varied backgrounds. The study population will include undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds (including religious, secular, Muslim and Jewish etc.), and multiple colleges in Israel and abroad.

The findings are expected to enhance understanding of cultural competence among pre-service teachers, inform effective multicultural education training programs, highlight the role of visual tools and AI in fostering multicultural dialogue during crises, and raise awareness among policymakers and educators about the importance of cultural competence.

Keywords: cultural competence, PhotoVoice, Artificial Intelligence, teacher training, multicultural education

The role of MOOCs in shaping multicultural education: Knowledge gains and attitudinal development in pre-service teachers

PRESENTATION

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This study examines the impact of a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on promoting multicultural education (ME) among Arabic-speaking pre-service teachers in Israel. Given the social and educational segregation within Israeli society, there is limited interaction among cultural groups, which affects educators' ability to foster inclusive classrooms (Abu-Saad, 2019). The MOOC, titled Introduction to Multiculturalism (IM), was designed to bridge these divides by enhancing cultural sensitivity, empathy, and tolerance through virtual learning. The course's theoretical foundation combines constructivist and social learning theories, aiming to build participants' cultural competence by engaging them in experiential activities within a collaborative virtual world. This approach supports ME principles by creating inclusive spaces for dialogue and understanding, crucial for preparing teachers to work in diverse environments.

The study involved 90 pre-service teachers from three Arabic teacher training colleges in Israel, selected to represent Arabic-speaking educators with limited prior exposure to multicultural contexts. Participants were primarily female (92%), aged 19–30 (93%), and identified mostly as Muslim (92%), with smaller proportions identifying as Christian or Druze. Varying levels of religiosity were reported, reflecting the participants' diverse cultural backgrounds.

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative data. The Multicultural Knowledge Questionnaire (MKQ) assessed participants' ME knowledge pre- and post-course, measuring comprehension of key topics such as identity, multiculturalism, empathy, and tolerance on a 1–5 scale. An open-ended question explored the course's impact on participants' perspectives, providing insights into cognitive and affective transformations. Additionally, an Attitudinal Learning Outcomes Questionnaire adapted from Watson et al. (2016) measured general, cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes, examining shifts in confidence, empathy, and willingness to embrace diverse perspectives.

The results indicated significant improvements in participants' ME knowledge and a positive shift in attitudes toward cultural diversity. Previous research on ME MOOCs supports these expectations, indicating that online learning fosters empathy and understanding through experiential activities (Nordin & Norman, 2018; Shahini et al., 2019). Findings also indicated increased cultural competence, with participants demonstrating a higher degree of empathy, tolerance, and social awareness. Qualitative feedback highlighted personal growth, with participants reporting stronger connections to ME concepts and a heightened ability to engage in culturally responsive teaching. This study underscores MOOCs' potential as transformative tools in ME, bridging social divides and enhancing pre-service teachers' readiness for diverse classrooms.

Keywords: cultural competence, empathy, MOOCs, multicultural education, virtual learning

New intercultural skills for the digital native generation: Re-envisioning the model for cross-cultural exchange and international study and development of educational programs in the digital age

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Shihwei Sun

Aoyama Gakuin University

Today, we live in a worldwide information society based on new Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and its development and adoption are rapidly growing. In particular, Generation Z, often cited as anyone born from 1997 to 2012, consists of youths who have had access to the internet, connected technologies, and social media their entire lives. As a result, they can be classified as “Digital Natives” (Prensky, 2001). In comparison, prior generations may be termed “Digital Immigrants” to distinguish their less frequent and adept use of these new technologies as temporary visitors in a foreign environment. Linne (2014) notes that digital natives heavily use new ICTs for socialization among digital native peers, allowing them to communicate and explore freely without any dependency or supervision from adults. While first-hand experience and interactions were the traditional means of obtaining intercultural experience, with modern ICT’s development, new options warrant exploration.

This presentation examines this contemporary digital native generation, how they incorporate social media and networks into their learning processes, what further skills modern students need, and how we can construct an educational program by actively incorporating digital skills to nourish intercultural competency. This research draws from survey data from 123 Japanese undergraduate and 25 international students spanning all tertiary grade levels. We asked how they view social media and its role in their learning processes, engage with these platforms, and view the concept of technological capital.

Our findings will discuss the information and technological skills needed to use social media for personal development effectively. This discussion will include the relevance of social media to stimulating students’ global aspirations and interests and how they perceive this information in their learning settings. Unlike social and cultural capital, technological capital presents new means for students to excel by drawing information from digital platforms, largely independent of external dependencies. In the current digital era, such information-gathering skills and information capital are increasingly valuable, and we believe they can contribute to a new framework for developing global and intercultural competencies in university education.

Keywords: digital native, new digital information capital, ICT skills

A study on the design and development of a global IC-PBL online platform for enhancing intercultural education

PRESENTATION

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The Fourth Industrial Revolution has created an urgent demand for practical knowledge and highly skilled talent, which is driving the adoption of problem-based learning (PBL) in engineering education. Industry-Coupled Problem-Based Learning (IC-PBL) is a model based on PBL principles, emphasizing applying theoretical knowledge to solve real-world industrial problems and encouraging learners to engage in active, experience-based learning (Song & Kang, 2020). However, IC-PBL faces several challenges when it comes to engaging learners from culturally diverse backgrounds in learning activities. Limited interaction with instructors and peers and restricted access to essential resources such as learning materials or guidance provided by instructors present obstacles to effective self-directed learning for international students. The platform aims to improve accessibility and inclusion for international learners while facilitating instructors' roles in class planning, operation, and evaluation. By removing these barriers, we hope to facilitate the meaningful participation of international students in IC-PBL programs, ultimately contributing to educational equity and improved outcomes.

This study systematically developed and verified a global IC-PBL online education system by adopting a design and development research procedure that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research followed the Rapid Prototyping methodology, which is recognized for its effectiveness in online education system development (Richey & Klein, 2007; Ryu, 2018). The research was conducted through an iterative process of four stages: analysis, design, prototyping, and development. Initial prototype focused on establishing the direction of the system and integrating essential components for an online environment. At each subsequent stage, it was repeatedly revised to meet analytical, design, and development requirements, ultimately resulting in a system suitable for university education. It was developed through a systematic method to evaluate the validity of instructional design, user experience, and system performance based on the framework of Jones and Richey (2000).

IC-PBL is an effective way to promote intercultural education, helping learners develop intercultural sensitivity and problem-solving skills. However, especially in cultures with a hierarchical social structure, interaction between instructors and learners can be hindered, making it difficult to access learning materials and engage in self-directed learning. The IC-PBL Global Online Platform is designed to address these cultural barriers, empowering instructors to better guide learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and engage them in class. This study is a basic study for the introduction and spread of IC-PBL in higher education and aims to contribute to enabling inclusive participation of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in higher education.

Keywords: (IC-PBL), Global IC-PBL Online education platform, design and development research, rapid prototyping ISD model

STRAND 7 | Global issues: sustainability and environmental protection

About the strand

This strand focuses on the integration of sustainability related global issues into education. As the world faces unprecedented environmental challenges, fostering global competence becomes crucial in promoting awareness and cooperation for sustainable development. The strand will explore how language educators can incorporate these critical themes into their teaching practices, enabling students to understand and address environmental issues through a culturally sensitive lens.

We welcome presentations, discussions, and workshops that address the following: best practices for the successful integration of sustainability themes in diverse educational settings; the role of intercultural communication in addressing specific environmental challenges, fostering global citizenship and environmental awareness among students; the development of intercultural communication skills for environmental advocacy and action; and collaborative projects and initiatives that promote sustainable practices through intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

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Population growth as the “elephant in the room”: Teachers’ perspectives and willingness to incorporate a controversial environmental sustainability issue in their teaching

PRESENTATION

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Although population growth (PG) is acknowledged as a major factor that drives the global environmental crisis, and despite the reflection of PG-related challenges in several SDGs, this issue is rarely included in environmental and sustainability education (ESE) because of its controversiality.

This study compared the perspectives regarding PG as an environmental risk between teachers with an academic background in ESE and teachers without such background. It also investigated the teachers’ willingness to include PG in their teaching and identified what predicts this inclusion. In this mixed-methods research study, data were collected using questionnaires and interviews.

The findings portray a complex picture concerning the debate around PG as a major factor driving the global environmental crisis in the Israeli context. Consistent with other countries, we found that the deep-rooted pronatalist culture characterizing the Israeli society, and that the robust national pronatalist agenda and policies have a tremendous impact on the education system. An academic background in ESE had limited impact on teachers’ perceptions concerning PG as a problem and their willingness to discuss its controversiality. Teachers’ PG-related attitudes demonstrated social, cultural and politically oriented disavowal justification regarding the negative impacts of rapid PG, identified in the literature as population-skepticism and population-fatalism. Specifically, factors such as the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Jewish anxiety of destruction and the religious command to “be fruitful and multiply” influenced the perceptions of both ESE and non-ESE teachers.

In accordance with the pronatalist policy, we also found that the absence of PG from both school curricula and the Israeli public discourse was reported by all teachers as major reasons for their disregarding PG in their teaching.

Under such circumstances, the role of the education system to bring the population question to the front stage, in Israel and elsewhere, is more challenging. To encourage teachers to incorporate the controversial issue of PG in their teaching, and successfully confront dominant pronatalist cultures, they need strong and ongoing scaffolding.

In accordance with scientists’ agreement regarding the role of PG as a major factor that drives the global environmental crisis, we call on stakeholders and policymakers in the education system to bring the population debate into schools’ curricula, the sooner the better. And not only as part of human efforts to mitigate environmental degradation, but also to use this controversial topic as a platform for shaping critical learners and responsible and active citizens who are tolerant of different people’s opinions.

Keywords: population growth, environmental and sustainability education controversial environmental issue, pronatalism

New educational practices for environmental challenges: Educational Community Pacts

PRESENTATION

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The emerging environmental challenges present educational institutions with a novel, paradigm-shifting dilemma: how to convey to younger generations the imperative of environmental stewardship?

In Italy, a mechanism for co-designing educational interventions is gradually gaining traction: the Educational Community Pacts. In the aftermath of the Sars-Covid19 pandemic crisis, the Italian Ministry of Education advocated for the utilization of this mechanism to enhance collaboration between schools and local communities in the School Plan 2020-21 document. The Educational Community Pact is a flexible co-designing instrument predicated on the concept of fostering co-design between schools and local services to implement specific educational pathways for students. This instrument enables schools to engage with local associations and provide students with meaningful educational experiences.

This phenomenon is exemplified in the V. Bottego school in Milan, a case study analysed in my research work, where the educators, in collaboration with local organizations, developed a redevelopment project for the square in front of the school, which had been repurposed as a parking area, thus losing its original function. Among the various redevelopment initiatives, the students were engaged in planting and maintaining public green spaces. As part of the agreement, students were able to gain practical experience with an environmental protection association, focusing on the maintenance of public green spaces and waste management. The students were so significantly impacted by the workshops that, upon completion of the activities, there were instances of children advising their parents to adopt more environmentally responsible behaviors.

This empirical evidence demonstrates that the collaboration between educational institutions, which possess knowledge of the pedagogical requirements of youth, and local organizations, which can provide specialized expertise, can constitute an efficacious alliance capable of reinforcing the principles of social coexistence among younger generations, with respect to environmental conservation, historical memory, and local traditions. Furthermore, the Community Educational Pact serves as a forum for democratic engagement for adults as well, who must conceptualize themselves as a collective entity in planning and identifying the primary educational objectives they aim to achieve, while also directing their attention to environmental concerns.

Keywords: Educational Community Pacts, sustainability, care, common goods, environmental

Intercultural teaching practices and sustainability – A case study from Norway

PRESENTATION

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The article explores how to integrate anthropogenic challenges into intercultural teaching practice. We discuss the need to expand the field of intercultural education in times of climate change (Brossard Børhaug 2021, 2023; Portera, 2020) and integrate the theoretical perspectives of biocultural diversity (Maffi, 2018) and convivialism (Wallenhorst, 2023) to demonstrate the necessity for bringing the Anthropocene into intercultural studies. Through a case study at VID Specialised University in Stavanger, Norway, we examine potentialities and challenges in teaching intercultural issues and sustainability, bringing in student voices to deepen understanding. Our research question is: What lessons can we take away from implementing the topic of anthropogenic climate challenges into intercultural teaching? While including some evaluative elements from more traditional understandings of monitoring and course evaluation (teacher reports, online surveys, administrative reports), our central emphasis is on student voice, specifically short written reflections, 53 written exams, and Mentimeter evaluations performed in class in 2023, and 2024. Student learning was significant, including both new knowledge and emotional investment in social and climate justice and transformation on both individual and systemic levels. The data indicates that the traditional understanding of cultural diversity was expanded. Students also included some reflections on democratic political action (their responsibilities as social actors, civil disobedience, youth activism), but at the same time acknowledged the insufficient personal and collective action (denial, indifference, New Public Management). Lastly, students raised the topic of emotional burden, how to face negative emotions in aggravating life conditions on Earth, and how to build hope and faith in the future through dialog and action. However, as educators, we see that more work needs to be done to address the complexities of the Anthropocene and its impact on our multicultural global society. New topics include lectures on Sami indigenous knowledge, Convivialist education, and non-Western epistemologies. Nonetheless, we need to explore more in-depth uncomfortable questions of the White Anthropocene, the huge responsibility of privileged countries/social classes for reducing unsustainable lifestyles.

Keywords: intercultural education, Anthropocene climate justice, student voice, cultural diversity

“They go in the house because it is raining”: Young children’s understanding of their community through their drawings – nature, urbanisation and sustainability

PRESENTATION

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From an early age, children engage as citizens of a global and ecological community, developing awareness and critical views on environmental and sustainable issues (Davis, 2015; Sageidet et al., 2019). Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 11 (United Nations, 2023), aiming to foster environmental awareness and creating inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities, and amid Malta’s rapid urbanisation (UN Habitat, 2021), marked by increased housing, traffic, and scarce open spaces, this study explores young children’s perceptions of their environment and its impact on their lives. Conducted in a multicultural school, the study invites 5-year-olds, to communicate their perspectives about the environment through drawing. Building on prior research (Coates & Coates, 2006; Hashim et al., 2018) it uses social semiotics (Kress, 2010) as the underpinning theoretical framework, to interpret children’s understandings using drawing as a communicative tool to express thoughts, knowledge and emotions supported by verbal and non-verbal communication styles.

The data collection process involved eight, 5-year-old children who were invited to draw two drawings each expressing their understanding and emotions about the environment. The data collection took place over two months, resulting in 16 drawings. The drawing sessions and accompanying narratives were video-recorded to capture both visual and verbal expressions. Ethical consent was obtained from the children’s educator and parents, while informed assent was carefully discussed with each child, allowing them to withdraw at any stage of the process. The combination of drawings and narratives provided a rich, multimodal data set for analysis of young children’s perspectives on environmental issues. Data was analysed using a reflexive thematic analysis.

The findings reveal three main themes in children’s communication about the environment: appreciation of nature and ecological processes; understanding of their urban community; and perspectives on sustainable living in harmony with the world and others. Children addressed environmental issues through a cultural lens, reflecting different priorities, relationships with nature, and context-specific solutions.

This research amplifies children’s voices in advocating for sustainability and provides professionals and policymakers valuable insights into young children’s environmental perspectives, supporting the importance of culturally inclusive outdoor experiences. Additionally, it highlights drawing as an essential communicative tool that supports language, communication and meaning-making for all children.

Keywords: children’s drawings, community, nature, urbanisation, sustainability, early childhood

Preparing for difficult dialogues: EFL students' views on discussing controversial issues

PRESENTATION

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In this era of global interconnectedness and unpredictability, education must equip students to become engaged, globally competent citizens, who can navigate complex controversial problems, with particular emphasis on environmental sustainability, climate change, resource management, and related social issues such as migration and environmental justice (OECD, 2018). As the global lingua franca, English is increasingly used to address topics of a contentious nature (British Council, 2008), especially in international dialogue about sustainable development and environmental challenges. English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers have a unique opportunity and responsibility to create a safe environment to effectively nurture their students' social-emotional and critical thinking skills (Pereszlényi & Divéki, 2024), while fostering environmental awareness and intercultural understanding (Alter, 2014; Stein, 2024). By incorporating debates and discussions on controversial topics in their classes, teachers can enable their students to develop their language, citizenship, and social-emotional skills simultaneously. The paper investigates English as a foreign language students and teacher trainees' views on controversial discussions in their university classes at a prestigious Hungarian university and reveals the factors which help them express their views on contentious topics. Using semi-structured interviews, 20 students attending the author's language development courses centred around controversial issues were asked about their experiences, their willingness to participate in discussions on controversial issues, and the aspects influencing their contribution. The findings reveal that while participants unanimously value discussing controversial topics, their engagement and willingness to express their views varies based on four key factors: topic relevance, background knowledge, classroom relationships, and instructional design. The results suggest specific strategies for both pre-service teacher training programmes and in-service professional development, particularly in developing safe discussion frameworks and selecting appropriate pedagogical approaches for controversial topics for addressing sustainability and other controversial topics in culturally sensitive ways.

Keywords: global citizenship education, social and emotional learning, controversial issues, interview study, teacher education

Teaching for tomorrow: Engaging students in sustainability and global citizenship through language learning

WORKSHOP

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This workshop aims to equip language educators with effective, interactive strategies for integrating sustainability and global citizenship themes into language learning. By fostering both linguistic and intercultural competence, language educators can help students become more aware and engaged global citizens, prepared to address pressing environmental issues. This approach is grounded in communicative language teaching (CLT) and the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) framework, which emphasize the role of language learning in promoting empathy, awareness, and action on global issues. Research highlights that learning about sustainability in the target language encourages students to engage with the subject matter more deeply, promoting not only language acquisition but also critical thinking and global competence. Through a hands-on exploration, participants will discover how language lessons can be tailored to address environmental themes, making language learning both relevant and transformative.

This 20-minute interactive workshop will immerse participants in a series of activities designed to demonstrate sustainability-focused language teaching techniques. First, participants will engage in a “Global Issue Word Cloud” exercise, contributing words or phrases related to sustainability via an interactive digital tool. This exercise serves as a thematic warm-up, allowing participants to reflect on diverse environmental issues from their contexts. The workshop then transitions into a sample mini-lesson where participants experience vocabulary-building and role-play debate activities that address global environmental challenges in the target language. This lesson models how teachers can use context-based vocabulary and role-playing to enhance language skills and intercultural empathy. Finally, participants will join a reflection and group discussion on how such activities impact understanding and engagement in both language and sustainability topics. The workshop concludes with a Q&A session and a brief resource share, equipping educators to apply these methods in their classrooms.

Participants will leave the workshop with a clear understanding of how sustainability themes can be woven into language learning to build both language and global citizenship skills. They will gain practical insights into designing interactive, sustainability-focused lessons that engage students in meaningful ways, helping them develop intercultural awareness and empathy. By experiencing activities firsthand, educators will feel empowered to adapt these strategies in their own classrooms, fostering a generation of students who are linguistically proficient and environmentally conscious. Additionally, participants will receive resources and digital tool recommendations for further exploration and implementation.

Keywords: sustainability, global citizenship, language learning, intercultural competence, environment

Integrating Multiple Intelligences and 21st-century skills in environmental education: A case study on the Lesser Kestrel

PRESENTATION

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The aim of this study is to explore how fifth-grade students perceive an environmental curriculum centered around the conservation of the endangered Lesser Kestrel and its role in fostering 21st-century skills using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 2000). In a world characterized by rapid technological advancements and environmental crises, there is a growing demand for educational approaches that extend beyond traditional frameworks. By integrating 21st-century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration with a multiple intelligences framework, this research seeks to uncover how environmental education can promote both cognitive and emotional development. The study focuses on experiential learning, which connects students' understanding of local biodiversity with global environmental issues, providing a comprehensive perspective on how education can prepare students for complex, real-world challenges (Aktan & Kethüda, 2024; Monroe et al., 2007; Rehman et al., 2023).

The study employed a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Laverty, 2003), with data collected from 57 fifth-grade students. The research utilized three main tools: analysis of comics, reflection analysis, and focus groups. Students were tasked with creating comics that illustrated the relationship between the Lesser Kestrel and the Myna, using artificial intelligence tools to enhance creativity. Additionally, students were asked to reflect on their experiences through written reflections and group discussions. The data collection occurred at the end of the school year, after the students participated in "Lesser Kestrel Day," where they guided adults through their research on the bird species. The research aimed to triangulate students' creative outputs, personal reflections, and group discussions to understand how the curriculum impacted their development of 21st-century skills and their environmental awareness.

The findings reveal three primary themes: creativity and innovation in environmental learning, the integration of technology to promote social connections, and the challenges and rewards of learning about the Lesser Kestrel. Students demonstrated significant growth in critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. The use of artificial intelligence and creative projects helped bridge the gap between scientific knowledge and personal engagement, fostering a deeper understanding of biodiversity conservation. The program also facilitated social connections, enhancing teamwork and communication among students. Overall, the study suggests that integrating 21st-century skills into environmental education can positively influence students' attitudes and behaviors toward conservation (Aktan & Kethüda, 2024; Monroe et al., 2007; Rehman et al., 2023).

Keywords: Lesser Kestrel, 21st-century skills, multiple intelligences, environmental education, biodiversity conservation

NIRIS project: Online collaboration between student teachers from Israel and Northern Ireland on ecological issues

ROUNDTABLE

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Adiv Gal & Gili Joseph
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Naim Najami
The Academic Arab College for Education in
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Miri Shonfeld
Kibbutzim College and The Mofet Institute

Recent research has shown parallels between Israel and Northern Ireland regarding the segregation of schools along ethnic, religious, and cultural lines, particularly within teacher preparation institutes. While efforts to bridge these divides exist in both countries, the potential of technology to enhance intercultural understanding in teacher education is enormous (Ganayem et al., 2020; McCormick et al. 2024, Shonfeld, 2024).

We present findings from an innovative international collaboration project that leverages technology to promote intercultural understanding while addressing global ecological challenges. The choice of an environmental goal was made based on the principles of contact theory, suggesting that a shared and significant superordinate goal can bring together members of rival groups, fostering a foundation for cooperation that may lead to positive attitude change (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008).

The project involves 8 instructors and researchers conducting a pilot study of virtual exchange activities between 100 student teachers from different cultural and religious backgrounds (Catholic, Protestant, Arab, and Jewish).

The pilot project includes both synchronous meeting and asynchronous small group work, with 7-8 students per culturally blended group. Groups are tasked with comparing hydrosphere systems from both countries, creating collaborative presentations that explore ecological aspects of these systems. The project utilizes digital platforms including Padlet for cultural exchange and environmental documentation.

Data collection includes post-project questionnaires measuring attitudes toward other cultures, technology anxiety, collaborative experiences, and project satisfaction. Additionally, in-depth interviews with 10 students from different cultural groups and participant reflections will be analysed to assess the impact on teachers' intercultural competence development.

This presentation will share preliminary findings and discuss implications for designing technology-enhanced intercultural learning experiences in teacher education programs. Special attention will be given to the role of environmental education as a bridge for cross-cultural understanding.

Keywords: online collaboration, ecology, teacher education, intercultural education, virtual exchange

Climate action and the burden of tree planting among youth in Tanzania

PRESENTATION

Maria Njau

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The aim of this paper is to contribute towards climate justice within intercultural studies. Due to the ongoing climate crisis, tree planting initiatives have become a key climate mitigation measure, aimed at reducing global emissions. Tanzania is already experiencing changing weather patterns, droughts and the melting of Kilimanjaro's glaciers. In an attempt to 'bend the climate curve,' young people are being mobilized to plant trees through schools as climate action. In my paper, I argue that these initiatives are a burden both to the young people of Tanzania and to the global south where the majority of tree planting projects are being implemented. The increased focus on planting large numbers of trees, often disregards the attention needed towards ensuring that these trees survive. The young people I engaged with through environmental school clubs in Northern Tanzania, expressed the importance of tree planting, but also highlighted the challenges around ensuring that the seedlings received enough water, weeding and overall attention. In order for tree planting to be a successful climate action measure, the complexities of this activity need to be taken seriously. Using a critical climate justice lens can help us to examine some of these complexities and contribute towards a broader understanding of social justice within Intercultural Education.

Keywords: climate justice, tree planting, intercultural education, climate coloniality

Service Learning: An educational approach for sustainability and environmental protection

PRESENTATION

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INDIRE (National Institute of Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research)

This article presents Service Learning (SL): an educational approach that merges academic learning with civic engagement, promoting skills and social awareness. Applicable at all education level, SL fosters students' understanding of community needs and the complexities of politics and ethics. By integrating real-life activities into formal education, it facilitates the 'leapfrogging' for developing 21st century skills (Istance & Paniagua, 2019). For instance, SL provides a concrete framework to address global issues such as climate change and sustainable development. Through targeted projects, students collaborate with local or global communities to tackle real-world challenges, demonstrating how local actions can influence global outcomes. Eyler and Giles (1999) highlight that SL promotes civic responsibility and critical thinking. Furthermore, it supports intercultural dialogue by immersing students in experiences that enhance their understanding of cultural diversity. In the context of global citizenship, SL connects global knowledge with social challenges (Aramburuzabala et al., 2020).

In relation to its identity characteristics (Orlandini et al., 2021), SL plays a vital role in helping students understand and internalize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. It fosters skills in civic engagement and systems thinking, which are essential for tackling sustainability and climate change challenges while promoting intercultural dialogue and building an equitable and inclusive society (Aramburuzabala & Cerrillo, 2023; Martín-Sánchez et al., 2022). In Italy, some schools have initiated SL pathways aligned with the SDGs as part of the Avanguardie Educative Movement, which has promoted innovative teaching and learning practices since 2014. These pathways have been analysed using narrative data collection methods (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to identify their contributions to sustainable development. The finding highlights how this experiential approach enhances global citizenship and environmental awareness through intercultural dialogue and cooperation, demonstrating the transformative potential of Service Learning in education.

The service research underlines the dialogue between the research group and schools. In this context, the documentation of school practices informs the development of guidelines and toolkits (Mortari, 2017), focus on environmental and sustainability issues and highlights the transformative impact of SL on students, teachers, and the community. This approach emphasizes the potential for meaningful change and enriched collective learning experiences. By connecting schools and communities, SL treats the external environment as both content and learning space (Orlandini, 2021). It fosters educational communities rooted in horizontal solidarity, aiming to transform the social contract of education (May & Tapia, 2024) while cultivating a culture of collaboration and responsibility.

Keywords: Service Learning, sustainable development, intercultural dialogue

Positive psychology-based tasks in the tertiary EFL classroom

PRESENTATION

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Global wellbeing is one of the Sustainable Development goals that the UN published in 2016, meaning to draw attention to certain issues that need to be dealt with to ensure a sustainable future globally. Wellbeing, according to Dodge and their colleagues (2012), is “the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced” (p. 230), which means that it is not a constant but can be described as a see-saw, needing to be balanced. As Hungarian EFL majors face a lot of challenges, especially because at the end of their first year, they have to pass a proficiency exam to be able to continue their studies, aiding students in building their resource pool not only by providing practice for the exam in language practice seminars but also by using tasks to alleviate debilitating anxiety (Horwitz & Young, 1991) and help them focus on their strengths presents a niche. In this project, positive psychology-based tasks are used to help students along their preparation work, paired with the exam tasks used for practising. Positive psychology is a shift in perspective in psychology from what can go wrong to what and how can function properly in one’s psyche (Seligman & Csíkszentmihályi, 2000), which, having had its influence on education, brought about the birth of positive education, which, according to Bott (2017) “brings together the science of positive psychology with best-practice teaching, encouraging and supporting individuals and communities to flourish” (p.16.). This research, using a collection of positive psychology-based tasks in EFL language practice classes, focusing on building English majors’ resources, explores the following: (1) what English majors at a Hungarian university think about EFL tasks aiming at enhancing their wellbeing, (2) how they think tasks of this kind should be integrated into EFL classes, (3) how these students think their exam preparation is affected by doing these tasks. To answer these questions, textual data will be gathered from two groups of first-year English majors via online forms throughout their spring semester, and data will undergo qualitative data analysis. The expected outcomes are as follows: a deeper understanding of the students’ views on ways to enhance their wellbeing, and the possible connection between EFL classes traditionally aiming at practicing foreign language communication and building resources through those communication tasks.

Keywords: wellbeing, tertiary education, positive psychology, positive education, exam preparation

A global view of sustainable investments: An American college students' perspective

PRESENTATION

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Jade Verbeek
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This presentation assesses the learning impact of two consecutive COIL activities involving American, Japanese, European, and South African college students on the topic of global sustainable stock investments. Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is a pedagogy that supports curriculum internationalization in an inexpensive, accessible, highly collaborative, and engaging manner. COIL activities can also provide a “safe space” for students to experience real life global citizenship challenges, increase awareness of their true capabilities, and learn ways to tackle those challenges.

Using the BEVI survey and students' reflections we aim to show that students' growth in global citizenship and global environment awareness took place as a result of both COIL activities. However, the direction and amplitude of changes in students' beliefs and values will differ from one COIL experience to the second. We will relate the observed changes to the Dunning-Kruger Effect.

A group of twenty US college students were first involved in an eight-week long COIL (a) collaboration with Japanese and European partners. The activity's final learning outcome called for a professionally designed and documented prospectus for a sustainable investment fund. A subsequent six-week long COIL (b) activity with South African partners aimed at delivering a sales pitch for the aforementioned sustainable investment fund. COIL (a) and COIL (b) took place three months apart.

We propose to interpret observed changes in the BEVI survey profiles from pre COIL(a) to post COIL(a) and post COIL(b). Students' reflections will be used as qualitative assessments to document how BEVI changes were experienced and expressed in the student's own words.

We expect to highlight significant changes in BEVI scales from pre/post surveys, supported by relevant feedback in students' pre/post reflections. Those observations will be discussed in the framework of a Dunning-Kruger Effect, e.g., participants with lower competence might not recognize gaps in their knowledge, leading to overconfidence and reduced motivation to improve.

By addressing the biases revealed by the Dunning-Kruger effect, educators can create more effective learning environments that foster competence, humility, and a stronger desire to learn.

Keywords: global learning, coil assessment, sustainable stock investment, internationalization of the curriculum, BEVI

Sustainability from local to global using the COIL pedagogy

ROUNDTABLE

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Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is a pedagogy that supports curriculum internationalization in inexpensive, accessible, and highly collaborative manners. By acknowledging the power of COIL as a high impact experiential learning activity, the COIL Faculty Fellows Program-Africa was established at Michigan State University (MSU) in 2023 to support sustainable COIL partnerships between faculty at MSU and at institutions part of MSU's Alliance for African Partnership.

This roundtable will showcase how COIL not only supports MSU's mission of developing globally engaged citizen leaders but can also promote meaningful intercultural discussions about global sustainability. Two COIL activities developed as part of the MSU COIL fellowship program will be presented and assessed using the BEVI survey. Changes in BEVI scales associated with global awareness, multi-cultural communications, and environmental concerns will be discussed. Pedagogical improvements for future COIL activities will be proposed to enhance students' acquired skills needed for global environmental advocacy and action.

After introducing the COIL methodology and its potential for promoting global citizenship and intercultural discussions about global issues, we will present two COIL projects involving groups composed of U.S. and African students who collaborated on a project on A)

sustainable stock investments (SDG# 12) and B) clean water and sanitation (SDG# 6). The two COIL activities have similar structures, inter-cultural partnership, and sustainability related content. Statistical assessment of COIL's impact will be supported by the BEVI survey while a qualitative assessment is based on students' reflections. Our aim is to show how BEVI results may highlight significant changes in participants' global awareness and sense of advocacy and action. We will also illustrate how those changes may be acknowledged and expressed in the students' own words. These case studies will exemplify how high impact experiential learning activities (such as COIL) can be used to enhance students' environmental awareness and global citizenship.

We will highlight significant changes in BEVI scales from pre/post surveys, supported by students pre/post reflections. The most intriguing findings may come from the BEVI scales related to global awareness (Global Resonance) and environmental awareness (Ecological Resonance) as well as the BEVI scales related to advocacy and action (Needs Fulfillment and Self Certitude).

Assessment results may lead to guidelines on how to better prepare students prior to COIL, maintain engagement, and provide support during COIL, and how to intentionally design COIL to promote intercultural dialogue, and cooperation in relation to global sustainability.

Keywords: Global learning, COIL assessment, Environmental advocacy, Internationalization of the curriculum, BEVI

Ecopedagogy and cultural diversity starting from school canteens

PRESENTATION

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The school canteen represents a place where the dimensions of health, education and socialization are intertwined in a multidisciplinary perspective that increasingly needs pedagogical approaches capable of involving teachers, children, parents and canteen staff. An educational project is capable of taking into account the multiple aspects and implications of the processes of food production, processing and consumption. The school canteen is in fact an arena in which cultures, languages, and ideas of naturalness, health, and the social and ecological sustainability of the food we eat are confronted in the school. In this sense, it is a place of conflict but also a place where it is possible to translate a pedagogy of agroecological sustainability into social practices in collaboration with adults and children, school institution and families.

The PNRR ONFOODS project uses this framework, promoted by the Italian Ministry of University and Research. It also includes the SUSFOODEDU research group, set up by the Department of Educational Sciences of the University of Bologna, which aims to investigate how food practices, cultures, and knowledge are enacted in school canteens, as a privileged context for the observation of meaningful pedagogical experiences. The methodology adopted is “training research” or “participatory research” (Asquini, 2018) to work jointly with all the professional figures involved. The data collected is analysed starting from the identification of the main thematic cores (Clarke & Braun, 2017), the elements of transversality, and those peculiar to each context. The reflections presented here are the outcome of ethnographic observation work that involved interactive workshops with children before and during mealtime in four schools characterized by high cultural diversity in the Bologna area in Italy.

Initial results show that for children, school lunchtime is characterized by an intense ‘collective effervescence’ made up of peer alliances and strategies. Lunch is experienced as a time of intense socialization and free discussion, knowledge and manifestation of their own subjectivities expressed through likes, dislikes and ways of organizing the meal itself. Children’s voices allow us to investigate their relationship with nature “in situation” Their knowledge of its productive cycles, their understanding of the biological diversity may help reduce situation of alienation, deprivation and estrangement from nature that children from more disadvantaged backgrounds experience in cities.

Children’s voices allow us an interface with a previously unseen dimension of the lunchtime phenomenon, which allow teachers to co-construct an eco-pedagogy capable of increasing children’s agency in food consumption processes.

Keywords: ecopedagogy, cultural diversity, school canteen, the new sociology of childhood, research training

A content analysis of three advanced level EFL coursebooks concerning environmental education

PRESENTATION

Eszter Veszelinov

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The paper presentation aims to draw language educators' attention to the necessity of critical evaluation of coursebook content in terms of environmental education, in order to meet the guidelines issued by the United Nations (UNESCO, 2021) as well as by the Hungarian Educational Authority (2019, 2020). The presentation discusses the findings of research conducted to examine three EFL coursebooks widely used in Hungarian secondary schools, regarding their suitability for environmental education. The coursebooks analysed were the advanced level student's books of English File (Latham-Koenig et al., 2015), Pioneer (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2017) and Solutions (Falla et al., 2017). One of the aims of the research presented was to examine the range and frequency of environmental issues occurring in the coursebooks. The other aim was to investigate the portrayal of environmentally high-stakes behaviours, in order to explore what behavioural models they provide for students. Among these behaviours, the topics of mobility and eating out were selected for analysis, due to their salience in the coursebooks and for their heavy environmental impact. Content analytical methods, as described by Krippendorff (2004), were employed in this quantitative study. The environmentally relevant content of the coursebooks was assessed with a checklist developed for the study, derived from the targets specified in UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, n.d.). The results demonstrate large differences in the environmentally relevant content of EFL coursebooks, in terms of their extent as well as their range. As regards mobility and eating out, there are also characteristic differences in the portrayal of environmentally deleterious behaviours. The findings underline language educators' responsibility in selecting teaching materials in order to ensure adequate environmental education within EFL contexts.

Keywords: environmental education, ecolinguistics, EFL coursebook, content analysis, textbook analysis

Art educators' perspectives on the use of art in raising awareness of the United Nation's 17 sustainability goals among Chinese college students

POSTER PRESENTATION

Xiaofeng Zhu

University of Pennsylvania

This research delved into the intersection of art and the United Nations' 17 Sustainability Goals (THE 17 GOALS or SDGs) in education, investigating its applications and impacts from the perspective of art educators on college students. It aimed to fill a void in existing scholarship by examining the nuanced impact of integrating artistic elements into education focused on THE 17 GOALS within the unique socio-cultural context of China. The research explored how art-based initiatives could influence students' perceptions and awareness of THE 17 GOALS. It gathered gathered insights from 12 art educators and professionals at various Chinese universities, using semi-structured, phenomenological interviews, thus enriching the academic and practical discourse on this subject. These interviews, conducted in Chinese, explored Curatorial Approaches to Sustainability, everyday Sustainability practices in Student Life through use of art, Corporate Partnerships in Sustainability Education through art, and Prospective Strategies for Future Exhibitions. The results demonstrated that art effectively serves as an educational medium, engaging students in a manner that facilitates unobtrusive and immersive learning, fostering deeper connections and offering a unique, subtle learning experience. By exploring the potential of art as a transformative tool in education concerning THE 17 GOALS, this research contributed to the development of innovative and effective educational strategies. These strategies were designed to engage and enlighten China's younger generations, fostering a globally aware, fully developed, and multifaceted personality within this demographic.

Keywords: education for sustainable development, sustainable artistic pedagogy, education reform in China

STRAND 8 | Intercultural education and/at war

“[...] *all war is a symptom of man's failure as a thinking animal* [...]”
— John Steinbeck, *Once There Was a War* (1943)

About the strand

War shows both the need for and the limitations of intercultural education. In the wake of the deadliest military conflict in history, the fledgling United Nations declared that “Everyone has the right to education” (Article 26, 1948), but today 57 million children remain out of school. Initiatives such as Sustainable Development Goal 4/Education For All (2015) are morally incontestable but apparently toothless; and while 119 states have endorsed the “Safe Schools Declaration” (2015), several (including Russia, the U.S.A., Israel, and Hungary) have yet to do so. Education has itself become something of a battleground, for example in countries such as Nigeria and Afghanistan (neither of which is currently “at war”), or in states such as Florida and Texas (with “culture wars” conducted via anti-DEI legislation). Karma Nabulsi’s concept of “scholasticide” (2009) is moving into the mainstream.

Building on the recent IAIE conference *Children as Peacemakers in Divided Societies: Educational Approaches* (October 2023), we welcome proposals for presentations on any aspect of war and education, including best practices for enhancing teachers’ and students’ intercultural competence and fostering psychological rehabilitation and reconciliation, conducting age-appropriate conversations about justice and ethics to promote peacebuilding, the role of criticality in addressing bias and encouraging empathy, practical challenges and ways of overcoming them (e.g., access and assessment), and intercultural education itself as a form of (contestable) “soft power”.

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Personal narrative perspectives in an intercollegiate course in a conflicted society

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Generating personal narratives allow us to learn, inter-subjectively and reflexively, of another's perspective, and our own, and shared, vulnerable humanity, even in a time of war. It can help build bridges and hope (Bainbridge et al., 2021). Our research seeks to create safe, good enough transitional space (Winnicott, 1971) for the play of storytelling, alongside reflexivity, across difference. Space to feel recognised, understood, and encouraged in refining and analyzing our lives. This qualitative narrative research is grounded in what we call the auto/biographical imagination: straddling the micro, meso and macro dynamics of stories. It encompasses the challenging idea that appreciating another's biography and vulnerability—even a potential enemy—can facilitate dialogue, mutual recognition and peace.

In this paper, two college instructors of English within the State of Israel - one Jewish, one Palestinian - contemplate processes of identity building, reactions to conflict, and negotiating differences in the classroom and beyond in the stories they tell. They draw upon their developing narrative interviews over more than a year, including the period following October 7, working with an experienced narrative researcher. The process illuminates what is shared, unique, common, different and potentially conflictual; what can be talked about or not.

The two instructors teach an intercollegiate course exploring cultures through the prism of literature. The course focuses on students' own diversity and is designed to bring them closer together as a tentative antidote to divisions that might prevent understanding of one another. The work hones in on processes of negotiating individual perspectives and defended selves, in a context of profound questions about the capacity of education—however dialogically, imaginatively designed—to build intercultural understanding, empathy, and some shared humanity in such a context.

In the interviews, in Zoom, the instructors tell stories of roots, biographical trajectories, personal and professional identities, hopes and desires, and what led them to teaching a course on intercultural awareness, as well as of the complex, lived experience of teaching and collaboration. Themes, categories and reflections on process are generated, following a well-established, psychosocial protocol (Merrill & West, 2009). This, in turn, shapes narrative interviews with diverse students in the course. The two instructors and narrative researcher constitute a collaborative research inquiry into the possibilities, frustrations and weaknesses of using auto/biographical narrative methods for building mutual understanding and dialogue at a time of war. A book will be a central outcome, connecting experiences.

Keywords: personal narrative, war, intercultural education, empathy, shared humanity

Current landscape of legislative changes in Floridan public education

ROUNDTABLE

Hasan Aydin & Tunde Szecsi

Florida Gulf Coast University

Flavia Stara

University of Macerata

Recently, Florida enacted legislative measures that have significantly affected the educational landscape, particularly concerning academic freedom, curriculum development, and equity in education. These policies and legislation address discussion regarding the critical race theory (CRT) in public education including higher education (Reed et al., 2022). In addition, the legislation changes limit discussions on race, gender identity, and LGBTQ+ issues. These legislation and policy changes are aligned with restrictive measures like book bans, limitations on student clubs, and regulations on teaching content, creating a challenging environment for educators and students alike (Odzer, 2023; Vissing & Juchniewicz, 2023). Researchers highlight such policies' impacts on marginalized communities, emphasizing the resulting censorship and self-censorship among educators (Dailey, 2023). In addition, researchers and educators argue that these restrictions infringe on First Amendment protections for faculty and students and suggest the need for a judicial approach that upholds academic integrity and autonomy (Hutchens & Miller, 2023; Quesada, 2023).

We reviewed articles and reports addressing legislation and policy changes in Florida between 2019 and 2024 using electronic databases, including PsychInfo, PsychArticles, MedLine, ERIC, the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, the Professional Development Collection, SocIndex with Full Text, Expanded Academic Index ASAP, and Science Direct. Utilizing content analysis, in this roundtable, we will discuss the nature and content of these legislatures and explore their implications for curriculum inclusivity and the broader educational framework in Florida, aiming to provide insights and recommendations for educators and policymakers.

We will discuss how recent legislative measures, such as House Bill 999 and Senate Bill 266 in Florida, have led to increased censorship and impacted academic freedom. Restrictions on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives mainly impact marginalized communities, reducing opportunities for inclusive education. The analysis highlights how book bans and regulations against discussing critical race theory (CRT) and LGBTQ+ topics change educational content and marginalize specific groups. In this roundtable, we will also discuss the broader implications of these policies, suggesting that they might contribute to a less equitable and less intellectually open environment. In addition, the roundtable discussion will offer recommendations for supporting educators and developing strategies to uphold academic freedom while ensuring a more inclusive curriculum.

Keywords: academic freedom, curriculum, equity, legislation, diversity, Florida

Anatomy of an abusive teacher

Zoltán Balogh

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The purpose of my research is to investigate the motivations, goals, and characteristics of teacher abuse from the perspective of the perpetrators. Building on Johan Galtung's (1969) framework of structural and personal violence, my study explores how systemic factors might contribute to or rationalize abusive behaviors in educational settings. The novelty of my research lies in the fact that I will be conducting interviews with abusive teachers, a method that is not widely used in international literature. In Hungary, research mainly focuses on bullying between students (Eszter et al., 2024; Nagy et al., 2012; Siegler, 2020). This paper presents the first phase of my research, in which I conducted a systematic literature review using the PRISMA methodology (Paget et al., 2021) in both international and Hungarian educational discourse. As a result of this literature review, I developed the questions and investigative lenses for the semi-structured interview method. I interpreted the first interview as a case study using transgradual triangulation with my research colleagues to prepare for the subsequent interviews in the next phase of the research. It appears that the dimensions revealed during the systematic review are applicable in identifying the characteristics of abusive teachers, potentially aligning with Galtung's structural and personal violence dimensions. Additionally, the results of the pilot interview show that the characteristics identified in the literature were reflected in the interviewee's responses. Thus, the semi-structured interview questions can be effectively used in further data collection. In the second phase of my research, I will involve additional interview subjects to examine whether there are unique traits or background factors specific to Hungarian perpetrators, beyond those identified in international studies. In the third phase, I plan to develop a questionnaire, which will allow for the articulation of the specific characteristics and underlying factors of teacher abuse in Hungary by surveying a critical mass of participants.

Keywords: abusive teacher, personal violence, PRISMA, systematic literature review, perpetrator traits

Exploring the presence of the international discourse of peace education within the discourse of educational sciences in Hungary: Opportunities for adaptation

PRESENTATION

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The international discourse on Peace Education (PE) emerged in the 1970s, aiming to create a sustainable, peaceful, democratic, and just world (Arató & Bodnár, 2024; Pineda et al., 2019). It can be characterized as a transdisciplinary discourse (Reardon, 1999) supported by a robust theoretical foundation in its systemic and critical approach (Freire, 1970; Galtung, 1969, 1976; Bajaj, 2015). Cooperative Learning is closely linked to PE's practical applications (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). In Hungary, the Peace Pedagogy discourse of the 1970s-80s responded to Cold War challenges, striving for a peaceful society through education, though socialist ideology restricted its focus to Eastern Bloc peace and promoted internationalism (Széchy, 1986). This study explores to what extent Hungary's educational discourse and practice reflect systemic approaches found in international PE. I conducted a scoping review, manually examining studies published in five Hungarian journals from 2000 to 2024 ($n = 114$), analyzing a sample ($n = 18$) through PRISMA-guided content analysis. The search included the keywords "Peace Pedagogy," "Peace Education," "Environmental Education," "Education for Democracy," "Multicultural Education," "Human Rights Education," and "Conflict Resolution Education." The content analysis of the corpus ($n = 18$) outlined three categories related to the Hungarian educational discourse: education for democracy and democratic citizenship (1), environmental education and the pedagogy of sustainability (2), and approaches to school violence, bullying, and conflict resolution (3). All three categories highlighted the absence of a systemic approach in the Hungarian discourse and pedagogical practice. Based on a theoretical framework developed earlier in the international discourse (Bajaj, 2015) and the cooperative paradigm (Arató, 2014), I developed an observational framework that could help integrate the international goals of Peace Education into Hungarian discourse and pedagogical practice. This model, built on the cooperative paradigm (Arató, 2014) and the chosen theoretical PE framework (Bajaj, 2015), aims to transform education to counteract oppressive structures and promote democracy and justice, supporting peacebuilding through education (Galtung, 1969, 1976). Future research will analyse Hungary's National Curriculum and assess the degree to which civil organizations and non-formal education reflect the systemic, international perspective on PE.

Keywords: scoping review, Peace Education, Hungarian discourse of Educational Sciences, systemic approach, peacebuilding

Bridging present and future selves: A longitudinal study of transformative learning for international students at a sino-foreign joint-venture university in China

PRESENTATION

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China's growing interest in international higher education has led to an increase in Sino-foreign joint-venture universities (JVUs) using English as the medium of instruction, attracting diverse domestic and international student populations. While research has explored international students' motivations for studying in China (Dervin et al., 2018; Wen & Hu, 2019; Wu et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2022; Yasmin et al., 2022), there is a lack of research on the experiences of students attending JVUs specifically. Using future self-guides (Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Dörnyei, 2019) and transformative learning (Ensign, 2019; Hoggan, 2016; Pang et al., 2023) as frameworks, this longitudinal study investigates the motivations, expected changes, and perceived transformations of international students at a JUV in China, aiming to deepen our understanding of the transformative potential of such intercultural settings.

Using a pre-, during-, and post-matriculation design over the students' entire undergraduate journey, this qualitative study incorporates a survey and three in-depth semi-structured interviews at three key points: before enrollment, after the first academic year, and shortly before graduation. Data were analysed inductively to reveal themes and patterns in students' transformative journeys. This presentation highlights two detailed case studies, illustrating the ways students' initial motivations, their expected changes, and their perceived agency over personal growth and transformation interact to shape their academic and intercultural experiences.

The findings highlight the importance of understanding individual differences and the complex perceived interplay of factors that influence student experiences and trajectories. By identifying the key drivers of transformative learning, this research offers valuable insights for universities seeking to optimize support for international students, enhancing the potential benefits of international education.

Keywords: international students, transformative learning, intercultural experiences, future self-guides, Sino-foreign joint-venture universities

A facilitator or a barrier? Lecturers' perceptions of the efficacy of CEFR implementation in times of instability

POSTER PRESENTATION

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Ira Slabodar

Ashkelon Academic College

In times of uncertainty, such as a worldwide pandemic or a breakout of war, humans seek support and connectivity. In the last five years, students and teachers in Israel have experienced Covid 19, followed by a regional war. These crises have coincided with the move from EAP to EPIC using CEFR in the instruction of English in Higher Education Institutions in Israel. Previous research dealing with teaching languages during war and other turbulent times has focused on teachers' coping strategies and resilience (e.g., Brody & Baum, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 2020; see also Sharifian & Kennedy, 2019 for a review). This research aims to find out the lecturers' perceptions of the transition from EAP to EPIC and their experience of the CEFR-aligned program as a facilitator or a barrier for teaching a foreign language at turbulent times.

Sixteen lecturers from two academic institutions teaching the two upper CEFR levels (B1 and B2) were interviewed using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The questions addressed the teachers' general attitude to the transition to the CEFR-aligned program as well as their perceptions of their role in EPIC instruction during crises and the challenges and benefits of CEFR implementation at times of instability.

It was found that the lecturers favored the transition from EAP to EPIC as the new program was more authentic, addressed a variety of language skills, ensured the versatility of the lessons, and enabled students to experience progress across the different skills. Although lecturers reported difficulties in CEFR-aligned program during the pandemic and the war, such as the challenges of teaching online and dealing with students' emotional turmoil, the communicative essence of the EPIC program allowed for students' interaction and served as a safe and supportive learning environment in the context of uncertainty, fear, and grief. Teachers reported that the interaction-oriented program enabled them to accommodate the social and emotional needs of their learners, which translated into the students' higher levels of engagement, motivation, and self-confidence.

Thus, the CEFR-aligned program was found to pose as a facilitator in turbulent times. This may be explained by the Communication Well-being Theory (Rachmad, 2022), according to which healthy communication fosters emotional and psychological health and creates environments that support the productive functioning of individuals.

Keywords: EAP (English for Academic Purposes), EPIC (English for Purposes of International Communication), CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference), teaching in turbulent times, Communication Well-being Theory

Harmonizing voices: A trilingual songwriting project for intercultural understanding during a time of war

WORKSHOP

Howie Gordon
David Yellin College

This workshop presents an innovative approach to intercultural education in the context of ongoing conflict, utilizing the Tec for Schools digital platform to facilitate creative collaboration among students from diverse backgrounds in Israel. In response to the challenging circumstances of war, students were guided to collectively compose a song about the current situation in three languages: Hebrew, English, and Arabic.

The project aimed to foster dialogue, empathy, and mutual understanding among youth from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds during a time of heightened tension. By engaging in collaborative artistic expression, students were encouraged to explore multiple perspectives on the conflict, share their experiences, and find common ground through music.

The workshop will explore the methodology of implementing such a project in a digital learning environment, addressing the unique challenges and opportunities presented by online collaboration during times of conflict. We will discuss how the digital platform facilitated safe and meaningful interactions between students who might otherwise have limited contact due to geographical or social barriers.

Key aspects of the workshop include:

- The process of guiding students to express complex emotions and experiences related to war through collaborative songwriting.
- Strategies for navigating sensitive topics and potential conflicts arising from diverse perspectives.
- The role of multilingual creation in promoting language learning and cultural appreciation.
- The impact of the project on students' attitudes towards peers from different backgrounds and their understanding of the conflict.
- Challenges and solutions in facilitating intercultural dialogue in a digital space during times of tension.
- The potential of creative arts as a tool for conflict transformation and peace education.

Participants will gain insights into designing digital intercultural education initiatives that promote peace and understanding in conflict-affected regions. The workshop will include a presentation of the project methodology, examples of student work, and interactive discussions on adapting this approach to various educational contexts.

By showcasing how technology and creativity can bridge divides, even in the most challenging circumstances, this workshop aims to inspire educators to implement similar initiatives in their own conflict-affected or multicultural settings. The project demonstrates the power of arts-based approaches in fostering empathy, promoting multiple perspectives, and building connections across cultural and linguistic boundaries during times of war.

Keywords: music, digital, dialogue, collaboration, war, multicultural

Role perception and resilience of homeroom teachers participating in professional learning communities in wartime

PRESENTATION

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Hila Vaitzman Ben David & Chen Shechter

Bar Ilan University

Homeroom teachers (HRTs) in Israel are at the forefront of educational activity and are primarily responsible for student learning process and welfare. Comparison with international counterparts, the Israeli HRTs is expected to be familiar with both the academic and personal characteristics of the student, both within and outside the school (Gutman, 2021). According to the Ministry of Education (2024), the HRT has a central educational-value-based and administrative–organizational role in the education system. They serve as a mediating factor coordinating between the needs of students as individuals and as a group with the broader educational system, while simultaneously acting as a connecting link between the school, family, and community.

The literature on teacher resilience, particularly for HRTs, is emerging. HRTs' resilience is crucial for both their classroom functioning and developing student resilience, especially during prolonged war that strains national resilience resources. Resilience emerges from the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors, enabling adaptation through exposure to risk and protective factors (Masten, 2021, Kaveri et al., 2024). This study examined the relationship between HRTs' role perception, wartime resilience, and professional learning community (PLC) participation.

This mixed-method study employed a validated quantitative questionnaire measuring teachers' resilience (social, professional, emotional, and motivational) alongside qualitative questions examining role perceptions and resilience-building practices.

Quantitative research participants were 38 HRTs, who completed the multiple-choice section of the questionnaire both at that start and end of the school year. Of these, 68.5% work in elementary schools, 23.5% work in middle schools, and 8% work in high schools. Qualitative research participants were 27 HRTs, who completed the open-ended section of the questionnaire both at that start and end of the school year. Of these, 63% work in elementary schools, 29.5% work in middle schools, and 7.5% in high schools.

Qualitative data revealed HRTs' resilience-building practices during wartime. Statistical analysis showed significant resilience increases among PLC participants, while non-participants showed no significant change. These findings indicate the protective potential of participation in a PLC and expand knowledge of the contribution of teacher resilience to classroom resilience. In addition, the HRTs in this study are from Israel's geographical, social and economic periphery, teaching a diverse student population across a broad socio-economic cross-section. The research focus on their resilience and their students' resilience may contribute to creating equal opportunities, especially during wartime when educational, economic and emotional resources are more limited.

Keywords: role concept, homeroom-teacher, resilience, professional-development, professional learning community

Connecting voices from both sides in times of conflict

PRESENTATION

Rawia Hayik

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Shiri Rosenberg

Levinsky-Wingate College

Jewish and Arab youth in Israel often live in separate areas and have limited connection with each other. The aim of this project is to challenge this reality by connecting the two groups together through engagement in a project that encourages them to voice and share their concerns while practicing their English writing and oral presentation skills. Two groups of Jewish and Arab college students preparing to become English teachers engage in PhotoVoice projects (Wang & Burris, 1997; Krumer-Nevo & Reuven, 2019; Hayik, 2023, 2024) where they capture photos of concerning issues in their communities, describe the problems in writing, and later share the photos and written accounts with each other. Especially at the current sensitive time of conflict in Israel, bringing these young people together to voice what is bothering them is particularly important. The question remains: How have students' engagement in the project affected them, if at all?

The first step was getting 30 students from the English departments at an Arab college from the north of Israel and a Jewish college in Tel Aviv acquainted with the PhotoVoice tool. The two groups simultaneously worked on their projects, taking photos of issues they found concerning and writing a coherent and accurate paragraph in English describing each photo. They were encouraged to collaborate throughout the writing process via a distance-learning platform and revise each other's written pieces to be ready for presentation. At the end of the process, students visited each other's college to attend the walk-in exhibition of the PhotoVoices. Following the presentations, students were asked to reflect on their engagement in the project through a survey regarding their experience. Content analysis of the survey responses shed light on its possible impact on them. The findings highlighted how exposure to different cultures gave students another perspective and some understanding of the other. The experience of communicating with those on the other side rather than their colleagues in a meaningful context not only improved their language communication skills, but also opened their eyes to each other's life challenges and brought them closer on a personal level. Such exchanges have inspired implementation of similar activities in their communities in order to promote coexistence. As student-teachers trained in the transformative methodology using PhotoVoice, they got empowered to act as social change agents in their future classrooms.

Keywords: PhotoVoice, intercultural communication, social justice, language education, conflict resolution

Exploring intercultural empathy in contexts of constrained movement

Dalya Saleh

Durham University

This study investigates how Palestinian undergraduate students with restricted mobility develop intercultural empathy despite severe constraints on physical movement and cultural exchange due to the ongoing occupation. Grounded in the broader discourse on critical intercultural education (Adams et al., 2007; Freire, 1970), the research addresses the need to understand empathy within marginalised and conflict-affected contexts. Specifically, the study poses two central research questions: (1) How do students with severely restricted mobility in the West Bank understand intercultural empathy? and (2) In what ways can intercultural empathy be enhanced in contexts of constrained movements? The study adopts Paulo Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy as its theoretical framework, emphasizing dialogue, reflection, and co-construction of knowledge. These principles offer insights into how empathy may be cultivated in the absence of direct cultural interaction, particularly within oppressed or isolated environments.

This research employed a small-scale, in-depth qualitative study grounded in an interpretivist paradigm to explore how Palestinian undergraduate students with restricted mobility understand and develop intercultural empathy. Data was collected through individual semi-structured interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012), allowing participants to share rich personal narratives. The interview design drew on best practices for intercultural inquiry (Bryman, 2016), with questions such as: *In what ways have you participated in an intercultural experience?* and *When have you responded empathically to someone from a different background?* Participants were recruited through purposive sampling using the researcher's academic network (Palinkas et al., 2015). Four students who had never travelled abroad but engaged in at least one virtual cultural exchange were selected. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and Freire's pedagogy guided data interpretation, emphasizing the importance of context and empowerment in educational research.

The study found that Palestinian students developed intercultural empathy through digital media, reflective learning, and personal storytelling. Empathy was understood not only as emotional resonance but as a critical awareness of others' sociopolitical and historical realities. Participants emphasized the role of education in combating stereotypes and deepening understanding. Virtual exchanges and shared experiences of marginalization fostered mutual recognition, while participants also expressed frustration over being misrepresented. The findings affirm the transformative potential of Freirean pedagogy in digitally mediated, conflict-affected learning spaces.

Keywords: Intercultural empathy, critical pedagogy

Interculturality amidst geopolitical tensions: implications of hegemonic narratives for educational orientations

PRESENTATION

Leslie Bash

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This paper is shaped theoretically, historically and by our understanding of recent events in considering how intercultural education might seek to challenge hegemonic narratives that promote a contradictory combination of collective victimhood, superiority, power, and self-proclaimed righteousness. Such narratives typically shape both interstate and intrastate conflicts, influencing formal and non-formal learning contexts. The study falls into two parts.

First, there is a brief consideration of examples of such narratives, including the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere. We judge that these events underscore an urgent need for intercultural education to address the resurgence of age-old stereotypes in the West. This paper explores how historical narratives influence perceptions of sovereignty, identity, and territory across Europe, the United States and Asia, particularly as these regions face complex geopolitical challenges. Accordingly, the paper critiques how cultural narratives perpetuate “otherness” amid conflicts and mass displacement. The analysis deconstructs biases fuelling ethnic nationalism and tensions by focusing on the current territorial, sovereignty, and identity crises.

Secondly, we utilise the above examples to provide the backcloth for an outline of an educational orientation that goes beyond criticality in seeking to develop an understanding of their enduring power and influence. Here, insights are garnered from the world of analytical psychology, where early childhood is characterised by tensions between bodily, parental, and social pressures. In this respect, the work of Erich Fromm and others is salient. It follows that intercultural education must attend to states of mind that have deep foundations in terms of egotistical demands that persist into adulthood, frequently eclipsing rationality and empathy.

Keywords: interculturality, intercultural education, geopolitics, ethnic nationalism, otherness, early childhood

Play and learning hubs for supporting Roma Refugees from Ukraine: A case study on activities held in two refugee shelters in Hungary

PRESENTATION

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Éva Deák

Partners Hungary Foundation

Partners Hungary Foundation has launched a Mobile Playhub service in Hungary, a mobile version of the Play and Learning Hubs using the TOY for Inclusion method developed by International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI, 2020). It regularly visits Transcarpathian Hungarian-speaking Roma refugee children and their parents living in refugee shelters. These children face many challenges in the Hungarian educational system due to various factors, including different and lower quality educational backgrounds, linguistic and cultural differences, emotional stress, having experienced traumas (Csernicskó & Gazdag, 2023; Édua Project, 2023; Romaversitas, 2023). The Playhubs are safe, informal, inclusive spaces where high-quality early childhood activities occur, and young children from different backgrounds can spend time with their families. Children in vulnerable situations receive support in skill development; they enjoy facilitated and quality free play. Playhubs strengthen cooperation between ECD sectors and develop local community cohesion, especially in smaller communities (Urban et al., 2020).

The qualitative research explores how the Mobile Playhub can implement the TOY for Inclusion method and what type and level of support it can provide to vulnerable refugee children and their families. Data collection was carried out via interviews and participatory observations. Three sets of questions were prepared for the interviews, with partly different questions for the families, the professionals involved, and the heads of institutions. In two refugee shelters, 23 semi-structured interviews were recorded with respondents familiar with the Playhub service: Hungarian-speaking Roma mothers and children who fled from Ukraine, social workers, the Playhub coordinator, and the shelters' principals. Five participatory observations were conducted during the play sessions.

According to research data, the Mobile Playhub implements a significant part of the principles of the Playhubs. Play sessions help children to develop their skills and heal from their traumas. Playing with their peers and volunteers from the host community encourages cooperation and develops communication skills, language use, and emotional intelligence. The new experiences broaden their horizons, deepen self-awareness, and stimulate new social and relational skills. Learning about the host society in a safe environment strengthens their intercultural competencies and makes their integration process smoother. Professional collaboration, shared planning, and decision-making are considered valuable by all professionals fostering professional development.

Keywords: Mobile Playhub, early childhood development, refugee children, social inclusion, TOY for Inclusion method

Intercultural education in times of war: The experience of an elite international school with Russian and Ukrainian students

PRESENTATION

Macarena Machín & Cristina Goenechea

Universidad de Cadiz

Study at an elite international school is to put the spotlight in a social group that defines—through its discourses, actions, and omissions—an important part of the laws, programmes, and forms of organisation that shape and transform our societies in terms of peace, equity, justice (Villalobos & Quaresma, 2023). Understanding the role elite educational institutions play in shaping and promoting intercultural coexistence as a relevant aspect in the construction of a democratic, peaceful, and plural citizenship (Ascorra et al., 2022). According to Barrera et al. (2021), international schools generate a strong spirit of belonging, community or membership that results in the construction of an “us” as a practice of identification with “the others” who do not attend private schools. Curren (2023), on the other hand, believe that the experience of schooling in this type of school increases the development of broader positive attitudes towards interculturality by extending this attitude to the group represented by the classmate. Roiha and Somier (2021), on this line, claim that the international schools curriculum promotes an international mindedness while Bolay and Rey (2020) speak of corporate cosmopolitanism, criticizing the ambiguities of this model that claims to foster a cosmopolitan worldview by drawing on the ideal of the richness of diversified societies focused on the members of the transnational upper classes. For all that, we thought that elite schools pose an academic challenge that present an intentional and unique scenarios in which diverse needs converge and seek to be satisfied through specific practices (Uitto et al., 2020), which is the focus of this research.

In a context marked by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, we present an atypical case study to show how an international school on the Costa del Sol (Spain), with students of different nationalities—including Russia (9%) and Ukraine (3%)—deals with intercultural coexistence.

The research methodology is qualitative and the technique used is the in-depth interview with management and teaching staff ($N = 5$). The results show that in this case this war conflict has touched them so deeply that it has made it necessary to develop a series of strategies to sustain intercultural coexistence. We have classified these practices into three groups: reactive or behavioural control practices; proactive practices aimed at promoting values of respect and tolerance; and restorative practices based on psycho-emotional support for the students and families affected.

Keywords: interculturality, coexistence, conflict, education

Participant perceptions and relationships in an online teacher training course: A comparison between Jewish and Arab students against the backdrop of the October 7th war

PRESENTATION

Rimah Khalifa & Ronit Ben Simon

The Mofet Institute

This study explores the perceptions and interactions between Jewish and Arab students in an online teacher training course titled “Assistive Technologies in Special Education,” conducted during the 2023-2024 academic year. The course is part of the TEC program of multicultural collaboration learning platform (Hoter et al., 2015; Ahmad, & Hoter, 2019). Conducted during the 2023-2024 academic year, the study coincided with the October 7th war, significantly impacting course dynamics.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative pre- and post-test surveys with qualitative interviews. It examines attitudes and behaviors across four areas: spontaneous social contact, emotions, willingness for contact, and stereotypes. The qualitative module employs in-depth interviews analysis reflective exploring four main categories: fears and anxieties in encountering the other, challenges in meeting others, familiarization with the other’s culture and avoiding prejudices, and technology as a pedagogical tool for communication and intercultural understanding.

The study coincided with the October 7th war, significantly influencing course dynamics. Findings reveal positive effects among Arab students on social contact, willingness for contact, and stereotypes, while Jewish students showed significant emotional changes. Willingness for contact emerged as the strongest predictor of interaction quality. Despite initial apprehensions due to the war and cultural differences, many students reported positive outcomes in intercultural understanding and professional development.

Challenges such as language barriers for Arab students and time management difficulties for both groups were noted. Additionally, few Arab students felt a sense of discrimination or perceived superiority from Jewish students. The ongoing conflict further complicated group dynamics, as students were reluctant to discuss political issues, leading to tension.

Nevertheless, both Jewish and Arab students valued the course for promoting intercultural exposure. The study underscores the potential of online platforms in fostering intercultural dialogue, while acknowledging the challenges of authentic communication during conflict.

This research contributes to understanding intercultural education dynamics in conflict-affected contexts, offering insights for developing more effective online multicultural learning environments.

Keywords: multicultural education, collaborative online learning, Arab-Jewish student relations, conflict-affected education

Blended learning and the contact hypothesis: Insights from Israel and Northern Ireland

PRESENTATION

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Miri Shonfeld
Kibbutzim College and The Mofet Institute

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Queen's University Belfast)

Elaine Hoter
Talpiot

This proposal explores the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) as a framework for technology-enhanced teacher education towards collaborative peacebuilding between young people. The contact hypothesis informs our work in blended learning where teachers use face-to-face and online learning to extend the collaborative period (Austin & Turner, 2020; Shonfeld & Hoter, 2023). We present two case studies on the potential of technology to support the contact hypothesis-based interventions.

The first case study examines blended learning in intercultural education in Israel and Northern Ireland. Through a comparative analysis of teacher experiences, we investigate the factors that enable successful partnerships between teachers from different cultural backgrounds and the role of technology. The second case study explores the role of LEGO bricks in supporting community cohesion in the context of Shared Education in Northern Ireland. By analysing a pilot project where 11-year-old pupils from two schools built their town of the future, we examine how technology can be leveraged to facilitate contact.

Teachers who had participated in a course of how to include online work in their partnership were invited to respond to the same online survey in 2023. Using a Likert scale, they were asked to assess the importance of factors could be potentially important in partnerships. 86 respondents completed the survey. The sample included teachers who were new to this type of work, but the majority had several years of experience. The schools in the sample catered for a wide range of children, aged from 10 to 13 years old from a socio-economic perspective. In addition, qualitative data collected through observer reflections during the LEGO project supported the researchers' claims that factors linked to the contact hypothesis were indeed fundamental to the success of trust building during the programme.

We reached three broad conclusions. First, the contact hypothesis continues to be a valuable framework for intercultural work. However, its use in a blended learning context, was markedly different in Israel and Northern Ireland between online and face-to-face engagement. Second, a fusion of online and face to face activities is more likely to be sustainable. If contact goes beyond individual friendships towards seeing children as members of a different community, visits to schools can be important. Third, teacher professional development in contexts where historical and cultural complexities persist, creating open dialogue around sensitive topics is crucial.

Keywords: blended learning, teacher training, technology-facilitated education, peacebuilding, collaboration

Educational initiatives on the web: Fostering multicultural collaboration and digital literacy

PRESENTATION

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Givat Washington College

Abeer Wattad

Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education

Educational Initiatives on the Web is an innovative course supporting collaboration between Jewish and Arab students in higher education. The course aims to enhance understanding of educational initiatives, develop digital literacy skills, and promote multicultural dialogue. Grounded in theories of collaborative learning and digital pedagogy, it addresses the growing need for culturally competent educators skilled in technology integration. The course draws on Vygotsky's social constructivism, emphasizing the importance of social interaction in cognitive development, and Siemens' connectivism, highlighting the role of digital networks in learning. The course brings together students from diverse backgrounds, creating a unique environment for cultural exchange and mutual understanding to prepare future educators for the increasingly diverse and digitally-driven classrooms of the 21st century.

The course employs a project-based learning approach, where multicultural groups of students collaboratively develop and implement an educational initiative. The methodology involves three key components:

1. Theoretical exploration: Students engage with current literature on educational initiatives, analyzing their purposes and potential impacts.
2. Practical application: Participants learn implementation strategies for diverse school settings, considering cultural and technological factors.
3. Digital skills development: Students acquire web design and content creation skills through hands-on workshops and tutorials.

Throughout the semester, groups work on their chosen educational initiative, culminating in the creation of a website that showcases their project. This process is facilitated through regular group meetings, peer feedback sessions, and instructor guidance. The project evaluation considers both the quality of the educational initiative and the effectiveness of its digital presentation to integrate pedagogical knowledge with technological skills.

The course yields several significant outcomes:

1. enhanced multicultural competence among participants, as evidenced by improved cross-cultural communication and collaboration skills;
2. increased digital literacy, with students demonstrating proficiency in website creation and online content management;
3. the development of innovative educational initiatives that address real-world learning challenges;
4. the creation of a repository of student-designed websites, serving as resources for other educators; and
5. shared educational goals to strengthen bonds between Jewish and Arab communities

These outcomes contribute to preparing culturally sensitive, technologically adept educators capable of thriving in diverse, modern educational environments.

Keywords: multicultural education, digital literacy, collaborative learning, educational technology, teacher preparation

Mentoring novice teachers in the Shadow of Wars

PRESENTATION

Orna Schatz Oppenheimer & Choci Farjun

Hacademit Hemdat

This presentation focuses on mentors of induction workshops during wartime. In Israel, all beginning teachers are required to participate in induction workshops designed to support new teachers as they face the challenges of teaching profession (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2017). The October War in Israel introduced challenges for mentors, simultaneously supporting beginning teachers facing similar challenges.

In this research we examined the role of mentors operating in a combat zone, where they faced direct threats. Both the mentors and their mentees, the majority of whom (7 out of 10) reside near the Gaza border, had to navigate stressful context.

The research is based on two interwoven theoretical frameworks. First, on concept of the 'shared traumatic situation' (Cohen et al., 2014), which refers to scenarios where both caregivers and recipients are exposed to similar risks. Secondly, on Situational Awareness theory (Walshe et al., 2019), which examines threats to organizations and individuals operating within them. This framework involves three components: the initial encounter with threats, how those threats interact with an individual's professional capacities, and the sequence of actions taken to mitigate risks and threats.

This qualitative study was conducted through in-depth interviews with 10 mentors (8 women, 2 men) residing in the war zone were interviewed. The aim was to explore their perceptions of their role as facilitators for novice teachers during wartime. The interviews began with an open-ended question: *Tell me about your experience of mentoring in an induction workshop during wartime?* Both researchers independently analysed the raw data (100 pages of transcribed text) using a content analysis methodology (Lieblich et al., 1998). This revealed independently identifying significant themes.

The findings, extracted from the interviews, focused on four main themes:

1. War meets people – The personal aspects of living and working in a war zone.
2. War meets mentors – The professional challenges of mentoring during a crisis.
3. To convene or to enlist – The tension between mentors' personal responsibilities to their families and their professional obligations to their mentees.
4. The encounter with mentees – The dynamics of induction workshops

Mentoring induction workshops during wartime represents an extreme case that sheds light on mentors' roles during routine professional conditions. The experiences of "shared trauma" (Freedman & Mashiach, 2018) and "situational awareness" revealed a breakdown of traditional boundaries—referred to here as "fallen walls"—between personal and professional aspects for both mentors and mentees.

Keywords: mentoring novice teachers, war and chaos, shared trauma, professional threat

Sustainable multicultural education in wartime: A faculty of education dean's autoethnography

PRESENTATION

Ilana Paul-Binyamin

Beit Berl College

This autoethnographic study (Chang, 2016) explores the experiences of a Faculty of Education dean in a multicultural Israeli college during the October 7, 2023, war with Hamas. It examines whether established theoretical and pedagogical models for fostering Jewish-Arab relations, mutual tolerance, and egalitarian citizenship remain relevant in such crises. Reflecting on decades of work in multicultural education and as founder of the Center for the Promotion of a Common Society, the author analyses the impact of heightened tensions among faculty and students. The study combines personal introspection with academic inquiry, questioning the sustainability of these models in wartime. This research aims to identify critical factors for sustaining multicultural education during severe crises, offering insights into managing educational frameworks in polarized and conflict-ridden environments.

In the lecture I will talk about the following topics:

- war with Hamas on October 7, 2023—a personal perspective;
- the socio-political context: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its reflection in Israeli society by way of tensions between Jews and Arabs in the context of this war;
- my academic work on the topic of promoting a multicultural and egalitarian common society: research, teaching and social-educational work (Ganayem et al., 2020; Lev Ari & Husisi-Sabek, 2020; Shonfeld et al., 2021);
- methodology: the trigger for an autoethnographic study and the research question, the research process, validity and reliability of autoethnography;
- challenges in managing a faculty of multicultural education during an external war that affects mutual relations;
- mutual hostility between Jews and Arabs on campus during wartime;
- what I learned during the war and how I integrated this with the agenda I have led, so far.

Summary: the educational challenges for me as a researcher to develop a multicultural joint society program in the reality of war and trauma.

Keywords: education for complexity, Auto-ethnographic, multicultural education during war, Palestinian–Israeli citizens, teacher training

Evaluating interventions to strengthen Jewish-Arab relations in academia in Israel following the October 7th events

PRESENTATION

Rolly Rosen

GISHA - The Program for the Advancement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Academia

The war which broke out in October 2023 presented new and complex challenges to academic institutions in Israel. With 18% of students in academic institutions in Israel being Arabs with Israeli citizenship, the relations among the groups, difficult in “normal times,” became even more challenging (Accord, 2023; Accord, 2024; Friedman, 2018). What can academic institutions do to enable their students—both Jews and Arabs—to continue their studies? How can even basic relations between students from both groups be maintained and not fall prey to the general atmosphere of suspicion and hatred?

The Program for the Advancement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Academia is an integrative inter-institutional program, focusing on developing infrastructure for addressing and promoting DEI-related issues in academic institutions. In order to assist the Israeli academia in this hour of need, the program partnered with the New York Jewish Federation and approved emergency grants to 16 academic institutions. The grants were intended to help address Jewish-Arab tensions on campuses and support efforts to maintain the fabric of shared life. The paper will present the findings of an evaluation report which was written to summarize the various projects, aiming to understand what strategies were used, what were the results of the interventions, and what can be learnt for the future of dealing with such extreme situations.

This report draws on multiple methodological tools, including: (1) interviews with 16 diversity officers from academic institutions; (2) observations of event participants in four institutions; (3) interviews with facilitators of various interventions; (4) feedback questionnaires completed by participants in student groups and faculty training sessions; (5) questionnaires filled out by project coordinators responsible for implementation; and (6) written summaries provided by project leaders at the institutions.

The various projects carried out by the awarded institutions can be divided into four main strategies:

- leadership and dialogue programs for students;
- assistance programs dedicated mainly to Arab students;
- staff capacity building and enhancing abilities to deal with conflictual situations in class;
- cultivating shared campus spaces and building diversity and inclusion infrastructures.

The long term results can only be measured in the future, but the report recommends continuing the investment in the building the infrastructure for living with diversity in such difficult times.

Keywords: intercultural education in Academia in Israel, intervention in war time with students and faculty, prevention of escalating

Teaching during crisis: The relationship between teachers' perceived support, background characteristics, anxiety level and burnout

PRESENTATION

Miri Sarid

Western Galilee College, Acco

Orly Lipka & Tal Ben-Ari

University of Haifa

This study aimed to understand how internal and external resources predicted teacher burnout during the October 7th war in Israel. Teaching is the profession that reports the highest burnout levels in the labor market (Alves, 2021), which arises from prolonged exposure to chronic work stressors, including high job demands, limited resources, and a lack of autonomy or recognition (Anderson, 2020). According to the Job Demands-Resources model, teachers' burnout results from an imbalance between job demands and available external (such as support) and internal (such as personal characteristics, anxiety) resources (Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001). During a war, teachers face dual stressors of being expected to maintain their role as stable support figures for students (Baker, 2020) while managing their own psychological responses, including anxiety disorders and potential trauma (Penne, 2012).

Our research question examined the contribution of internal characteristics (i.e., gender, teaching experience, school population; and general-, and religious and special education teaching-related anxiety) and external characteristics (i.e., peer and principal support) to teacher burnout.

The study sample consisted of 300 elementary school teachers (mean age of 42 years, teaching experience 13.8 years). Eighteen percent of the teachers were male. The sample comprised 56.5% from the general education system in Israel, 32% from the religious educational system, and 11% from special education. The teachers completed an online questionnaire during December 2023. Measures included: demographic characteristics, Perceived Peer Support Scale (Karasek, 1958), Perceived Supervisory (Principal) Support Scale (SPSS), Friedman's Burnout Scale (1999), and General Anxiety Disorder Scale (Spitzer et al., 2006).

Results showed that religious and special education school teachers perceived higher peer support than teachers in the general population. Teaching experience was negatively correlated with burnout, while principal support predicted lower burnout, and anxiety positively related to burnout. The model accounted for 37% of the burnout variance.

The findings suggest that during an extreme crisis, such as war, teachers from all population groups are affected severely with minimal differentiation in their anxiety and burnout levels. Unique populations, such as religious and special education schools, may utilize more peer support than the general population. Developing support systems for less experienced teachers and those with higher anxiety levels, as well as teachers in the general school population, while strengthening principal leadership during war, could help reduce teacher burnout in emergency situations. These findings highlight the crucial role of understanding the relationship between internal and external resources for developing effective interventions for teachers during war.

Keywords: teacher burnout, principal support, teachers (peer) support, anxiety

Civic education and conflict resolution: Perspectives of Hungarian students

PRESENTATION

Peter Szabados

University of Pécs

Civic education is crucially important in secondary schools with the aim of preparing students for active citizenship in their adult life. It should be understood as an active process where students may immerse into direct actions and become involved in social and political activities shaping their communities. Student activism may include playing roles in student self-governments, student organizations or participating in different social activities. Student movements may forge communities where members of ethnically or socially diverse groups have opportunities to engage in various civil actions focusing on promoting peaceful co-operation, promoting peace, social justice and human rights. Schools should provide equal access and chances for their students to facilitate the building of their civic competences (Hurtado, 2012). The quality of civic education is paramount as a means of building skills for conflict resolution and peace as students should obtain adequate strategies of information-seeking, combating bias and understanding different motives of action.

The presentation aims to present a qualitative study that aims to scrutinize the perspectives of Hungarian secondary students on the potentials of civic education in terms of social change, intercultural relations and conflict resolution. Focus group interviews ($N = 40$) carried out in 7 different types of Hungarian secondary schools in various locations and individual interviews ($N = 20$) with active participants—student activists of the Hungarian student movements in 2022 and 2023—provide insight into students' views on civic education, conflict analysis and skill-building for conflict resolution. There is particular emphasis on mapping students' patterns of information-seeking behaviour (for example, about the ongoing armed conflicts such as the war in Ukraine) and strategies of dealing with bias, prejudice, confirmation bias and manipulation. Reflections on armed conflicts and possible ways of civic action and civil disobedience against war are also dealt with.

The investigation presumes that the quality of civic education may be in connection with the school type. Tracking students into various educational institutions at the end of their primary schools may determine their access to the skill-building opportunities provided by civic education in the various secondary schools (Nieuwelink, 2019). The socio-economic status of the learners may play an important role in shaping their educational opportunities and lead to inequalities in their preparation for conflict resolution as well (Varga, 2015). Lack of inclusion and equal chances may seriously undermine the positive potential of civic education.

Keywords: civic education, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, bias, student activism

Bridging cultures, unifying challenges: A collaborative approach to supporting and building resilience in novice teachers in multicultural settings

POSTER PRESENTATION

Wafa Zidan

The Arab Academic College for Education in
Haifa, TEC Center: The Mofet Institute

Huwaida Alatawna

Kay College

Ariel Freundlitch

Achva Academic College

Osheret Bouhnik

Tel-Hai Academic College

Galia Ran

Kibbutzim College

In an increasingly diverse educational landscape, teacher education programs face the complex task of preparing novice teachers for the multifaceted challenges of multicultural classrooms (Ihab et al., 2024). This study examines a year-long collaborative workshop involving five instructors in a teacher education college, focusing on supporting novice teachers working on curriculum development and teaching strategies in varied multicultural school settings, with a particular emphasis on promoting teacher resilience. In this study we will explore whether the surface-level differences, novice teachers will share similar core challenges, and that whether fostering resilience is a key to their success and retention (Khansaa et al., 2024; Francesca et al., 2024).

The workshop participants, novice teachers, represented a rich tapestry of cultural backgrounds, demographics, languages, and subject matter expertise. Despite this diversity, our research revealed a striking commonality in the challenges these teachers encountered, transcending cultural and disciplinary boundaries. This finding underscores the universal nature of certain pedagogical challenges and the potential for collaborative, cross-cultural approaches in teacher education.

Our collaborative model will be carried out by regular workshops where instructors shared insights, developed integrated approaches, and created supportive strategies for novice teachers. The workshops will focus on three key areas: 1) Adaptive curriculum development for diverse learners, 2) Culturally responsive teaching strategies, 3) Building resilience in the face of multicultural teaching challenges.

A mixed method research will be administered for this study. Data collection will include reflective journals from the novice teachers, an online questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. Our analysis will employ a grounded theory approach, allowing themes to emerge organically from the data.

This study will contribute to the field of teacher education by demonstrating the value of collaborative instructor approaches in multicultural settings, with a specific focus on building teacher resilience.

Keywords: resilience, novice teachers, multiculturalism

Changing attitudes within cultures in conflict

PRESENTATION

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The Arab Academic College for Education

Miri Shonfeld

Kibbutzim College and The Mofet Institute

Eli Zaady

The Kaye Academic College of Education

Considering the increasing cultural diversity in schools, there is a need for educational interventions to reduce prejudices and conflict. This study aimed to verify whether educational efforts can help change students' attitudes towards other cultures. The research is inspired by the "Contact theory" by Allport (1954), according to which prejudices can be reduced by contact between people from different groups. Although research confirms that education reduces cross-cultural intergroup conflict in schools (Fahoum et al., 2023), including in online groups (Walther et al., 2015), information lacks about the forms of communication that affect desired changes. This study explores the effectiveness of online collaborative learning (OCL) where students are encouraged to work together to create an outcome (Harasim, 2012).

The study took place in the Technology, Education and Cultural diversity (TEC) Center online courses whose objectives were to enable students to experience online collaborative learning with populations with whom they do not meet in other environments. We applied the TEC model, which offers progressive development in the student relationship: starting as textual, then vocal, and finally a face-to-face meeting (Shonfeld et al., 2013). This study uses an Implicit Association Test (IAT) measuring attitudes towards different groups based on the response times of items that represent a different group versus their affiliation group combined with positive words as opposed to negative. 88 Arab and Jewish students took the three tests at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The study uses descriptive statistics to present the findings. In addition, ANOVA statistical analysis compared the students' attitudes early in the year and after the course.

This study found that there was an effect of the TEC course attendance on attitude changes towards the "other" culture, independent of age, gender or profession. The effect was viewed among students whose participation was active. Interaction was found between the students' participation and over time. That is, between the first and second test, a substantial change in attitudes was viewed only for the active participants. However, when analyzing the interaction between nationality and participation and over time, it was found that the differences come from a change of attitudes among the Jewish students. This research pointed out the issue of technologies that opened new channels of communication between cultures which is essential for a multicultural society where tensions prevent cross-cultural meetings and joint activities (Anav, 2020).

Keywords: intercultural education, online collaborative learning, online education, digital pedagogies

STRAND 9 | Intercultural education through literature and the arts

About the strand

This strand invites presentations, papers and workshops that discuss intercultural education through literature and the arts focusing on the possibilities that literary texts and artwork entail. Research investigating intercultural competence development through literature and the arts and how these mediums may contribute to its growth is the main focus of interest in this strand. This strand also welcomes presentations and workshops that reflect on good practices, practical examples and elaborate on how teachers can use literary texts and artwork in their classes to promote an inclusive environment. Overall, we intend to further the discussion on the use of literature and the arts in the classroom and explore various answers to how these mediums can contribute to the creation of more supportive, reflective and responsive educational environments.

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Embodied learning: Navigating change in languages, cultures, and communities

WORKSHOP

Hana Alhadi

International Association for Intercultural Education

Marija Bartulović

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

This workshop is grounded in theories that posit all physical experiences are encoded in the body, serving as a repository from which we draw knowledge and practical tools for navigating everyday situations. These experiences shape the ongoing practice navigating change across diverse cultural, linguistic, and community contexts. Building on the concept of kinaesthetic empathy (Reynolds & Reason, 2012; Varela et al., 1993), the workshop integrates principles of authentic movement, contact improvisation, and somatic practices to explore the potential of embodied and somatic approaches to learning (Matthews, 1998; Miller, 2020).

The workshop offers a distinctive perspective on non-verbal experiential learning as an educational approach that importantly complement cognitive learning in intercultural context. This co-learning process encourages participants to examine the dialectical relationships inherent in educational practice, such as structure and improvisation, giving and receiving, supporting and being supported, and following and leading. Additionally, the workshop facilitates exploration of interpersonal relationships and group dynamics. By engaging in active tension release, fostering assertiveness, and encouraging individual free expression, participants gain empirical insights into creating cooperative, supportive, and inclusive environment of diversity. At the group level, trust-building exercises further enhance understanding of collaborative dynamics, promoting a sense of community and shared learning.

Keywords: experiential learning, kinaesthetic empathy, somatic praxis, community building, movement pedagogy

Intercultural competences to promote the enhancement of Cultural and Historical Arts Heritage of a territory respecting diversity and inclusion

POSTER PRESENTATION

Nicoletta Apolito

University of Verona

In recent decades, world is witnessing the compression of distance and time and accelerating the movement of people, goods, and ideas between nations. The tourism field made a cultural bridge between nations by fostering dialogue and comparison with different civilizations; it encouraged a process of “universalization of culture”. This research wants to analyse what are the actions to develop and valorise the Cultural and Historical Arts Heritage of Verona and its province. The theoretical frameworks are intercultural education and arts education, such as the “teaching experiential”. The main goal of this research is to investigate the consistency of those actions with the European Union’s guidelines on cultural diversity and inclusive coexistence between people who live in the territory and people who visit it. The research has three steps: the first one regards the data collection and analysis of the web and social media communication of arts and culture of Verona. In this phase it is important the aim of digital tools. The informations collected will be important for the second step: research in actions. Thanks to mixed methods, the research will continue with quantitative questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, until a focus group for the validation of the data. The third step regards the seeding of the results and the elaboration of a model of art communication capable of including intercultural competences in a pedagogical framework of inclusivity aimed at the cultural heritage promotion of Verona and its province. The final goal consists of the ability to profile figures with intercultural competences that can promote the enhancement and valorisation of Cultural and Historical Arts Heritage of Verona and its province. The research wants also to find out if there are any intercultural competences implicated in the process of management of cultural tourists in Verona and if not, how they could be included.

Keywords: Arts education, naturalistic research, intercultural communication, globalization, artificial intelligence

Fostering cultural literacy in formal and non-formal education through performing arts. Challenges and opportunities in European projects

PRESENTATION

Cristina Balloj, Marta Milani, Elisa Maria Francesca Salvadori & Licia Lombardo

University of Verona

In our societies, Cultural Literacy (CL) has a crucial role to improve social cohesion. CL is «an ability to encounter, communicate, learn, co-create knowledge, and to live together through empathic, tolerant, and inclusive interaction with others who may be different from ourselves» (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022, p. 144). CL includes the key role of dialogue as a dynamic approach to understanding and interacting with different cultural viewpoints. This approach transforms cultural literacy from being a fixed collection of facts into an ongoing process of creating meaning and fostering communication (Maine et al., 2019). Formal and non-formal educational contexts are natural environments to improve the CL of citizens. Teachers, educators, social workers can enhance CL through a variety of approaches, strategies, and tools. Performing arts offer one of most useful approaches to promote the development of CL competences (UNESCO, 2013). Performing arts can be considered a complex “learning environment” where all elements of CL can be promoted and enhanced: dialogue, empathy, meaning negotiation, mutual respect, understanding (Joseph & Trinick, 2016). Furthermore, performing arts allow to use many different communication languages, such as body, voice, rhythm, and they allow to express emotions and feelings, reducing the impact of judgment, prejudice and stereotypes (Blood et al., 2016; Cheng & Cheng, 2024). The construction of a natural “third space” facilitates the relations among people and creates common horizons, to reduce the impact of inequalities and to recognize that everyone is “diverse” and unique.

This paper aims at presenting an ongoing research financed by the Horizon Project that concerns the development of an Individual Portfolio of CL competences through the use of performing arts (music, theater/drama, and dance). The research will involve 4 countries and at least 60 people (pilot target groups). Each person will develop an individual portfolio while performing the activities included in the project. The pilot target groups will attend performing arts activities in their villages/cities for about 1 year, with 3 intensive periods of 3 weeks each. On-site artists and community managers will support activities and research. The data collection will be carried out next summer using different tools: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, critical incidents, scales to measure specific items (as stereotypes). The project, research structure, and research procedure will be presented in the conference in order to share and discuss main methodological aspects.

Keywords: cultural literacy, performing arts, portfolio of competences, formal education, non-formal education

Participatory theatre for dialogue across cultures

WORKSHOP

Francesco Argenio Benaroio

PPLG - Play Perform Learn Grow / ANAMUH - Arts for Dialogue

We propose to offer the participants of the IAIE conference the opportunity to experience Participatory Theatre as a tool for educational and psychosocial support with communities across cultures.

During the workshop we will experience how drama and theatre can encourage participation, inclusion and dialogue, working with multilingual/multicultural groups using non-verbal theatrical and embodied techniques to create safe spaces for genuine human encounters, dialogue and co-creation, honouring the individual stories, languages and cultures, and creating the conditions for new ones to emerge.

We will experience Participatory Theatre through an introduction to a combination of practices: image theatre, forum theatre, playback theatre, embodied storytelling and dramatherapy. We will share our ongoing experience of participatory theatre community processes with integrated groups of locals together with refugees/asylum seekers on the island of Lesbos, Greece. The aim of this workshop is to give the participants the opportunity to have a short experience with participatory theatre activities as tools for work with communities across languages and cultures.

Keywords: participatory theatre, inclusion, dialogue, non-verbal work, human encounter, co-creation

Celtic Kaleidoscope: An international course for English teachers

POSTER PRESENTATION

Michaela Čaňková

Free Lancer, Prague

I would like to present and share the interest in Celtic culture in general and in the Celtic Kaleidoscope course in particular. I have been organizing and teaching this annual event for twenty years. We are two teachers involved in the course and every summer we welcome between 30 and 40 teachers, all Celtic enthusiasts from different European countries. My topics are mostly literature, arts, history and films while my Irish colleague, being Irish, deals with a broader scope of topics tackling politics, economy or daily life in Ireland. The course has a friendly, informal atmosphere and includes not only workshops and lectures but also singing, Irish folk dancing and walking trips. In the poster presentation I would like to point out some of the Celtic writers and their work we have been dealing with over the years and explain the methods used to discuss their writings and to touch upon the political, social and cultural contexts and see how they have been accepted among the intercultural audience in the countries the course participants come from.

Keywords: Celtic, writers, Irish

“For the improvement, knowledge and information of all persons”: Teaching inclusivity with museums

PRESENTATION

Dora Janczer Csikós
Eötvös Loránd University

The British Museum is widely regarded as the world's first free public museum. Although Hans Sloane, on whose collection the BM was established, explicitly stated that the museum is to be “for the improvement, knowledge and information of all persons” (Codicil to Hans Sloane's Will, 26 December 1751; emphasis added), when the museum finally opened its doors in 1759, the trustees applied a set of criteria to define who actually belongs to “all persons”. Admittance was based on education, appearance and behaviour. Even if over the next decades (and centuries) the regulations allowed for ever more inclusiveness, museums continued to be privileged places for a white educated audience, leaving masses of people invisible and unrepresented in what was meant to be the universal repository of values.

The paper will explore the Mendoza Review's Action Plan for Museums (2017), focusing on two of its priorities: delivering cultural education and diversifying audiences. Museums today are not only re-assessing their legacy (Hew Locke: What have we here, British Museum 2024/25; These things matter, Bodleian Library 2022/23, Hicks 2021) but proactively engage in reaching out to wider audiences (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; Marcus & Stoddard, 2012; Kidd, 2014). The paper will show that by representing the lived experiences and “all persons,” irrespective of, or rather, especially focusing on people of diverse ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, health or social standing, (post-)museums have become an integral part of (inter)cultural education. Besides visual literacy, museums may teach alternative perspectives, help develop skills in critical thinking and disrupt existing assumptions (Boddington & Boys, 2016).

Case studies will be based on

V&A, London (Thomas J. Price's sculptures in dialogue with the historic collections, 2024)

Wellcome Collection, London (The Cult of Beauty 2023-24)

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (A Nice Cup of Tea?, 2019-; Rebellious Bodies, 2022-; Our Museum: Our Voices project 2020-)

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (Juxtapositions 2020-; Re-Consider project 2020-; The Black Atlantic: People, Power, Resistance, 2023; Real Families: Stories of Change, 2023)

Keywords: museums, inclusiveness, diversity, intercultural education, decolonise

Art, education, and interculturalism in childhood: An innovative course for social integration

PRESENTATION

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Hungarian teacher training aims to make teachers' work more creative. However, the lack of equipment in schools creates a challenging situation. Interestingly, this stimulates creativity. The aim is to explore methods and tools that any teacher can quickly reproduce with a minimum or no financial investment.

Therefore, methods for teachers to use their talents may be feasible. In my pedagogical work in teacher training, I often incorporate walks and movement-based activities that do not require any tools, such as observing sculptures together and how they can facilitate a relationship with the environment or between people. By recognizing the need to create such methods, we launched a new course at the Faculty of Education and Psychology aimed at showing possible applicable methods to future teachers, psychologists, and intercultural councillors.

The experiences of two previous projects, STROLL and EXCIITE, are the primary inspiration for this Art, Education, and Interculturalism in Childhood course, which launches in the spring of 2025.

The course aims for students to understand the many possible approaches to childhood as a social construction and the differences and the interrelationships between children and diversity through art. The course examines the possibilities of non-judgemental attitudes toward accepting children from different cultural, social, educational, family and religious backgrounds in childhood. The course explores possible narratives of childhood from a sociological, visual, and historical perspective. The course also gives students insights into the theoretical frameworks and foundations of intercultural and comparative pedagogy, focusing on the child in all areas.

By experiencing and discussing films, literary works, paintings and other works of art, photography and music, students can gain insights into social and cultural realities beyond their world, and by understanding them, they will also be able to recognize the relationships that shape the lives and careers of some of their current or future students. Since artworks are representations of human experience and experience (including specific gender, ethnic and class experiences), the inclusion of art in education provides an opportunity for a complex exploration of the historical-social contexts of the works under discussion to get closer to world views, children's views, perspectives, ways of thinking and life situations embedded in a variety of social and cultural contexts.

The presentation focuses on the methods used during the course, its structural elements, and the success of the first attempt.

Keywords: art, interculturalism, education, childhood, course

Art as a catalyst for campus inclusivity: Fostering belonging and empathy through community-engaged project

PRESENTATION

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In the current climate of social disconnection and political polarization, fostering an inclusive campus environment is essential. The aim of this study is to explore how a community-engaged, art-based project can influence students' perceptions of campus diversity and inclusiveness, enhance their sense of belonging and empathy, and deepen their understanding of the importance of languages, cultures, and intercultural skills. Art-based approaches have been effectively utilized in intercultural education (see e.g., Burnard et al., 2016; Holmes & Peña Dix, 2022; Porto et al., 2023). Studies show that art can serve as both a catalyst for positive change and a method for developing critical self-reflection and empathy (e.g., Jokela et al., 2015; Härkönen & Stöckell, 2019). This paper argues that an art-based approach can effectively address issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

In this project, students were engaged as both participants and co-researchers. Participatory research eliminates the traditional separation between "researcher" and "researched," involving students actively in the research process. This approach is particularly relevant for exploring campus inclusiveness and sense of belonging, as it provides deeper insights and fosters students' agency, empowering them to take ownership of their campus experiences.

The study was designed as a mixed-method research. In addition to sharing feedback and writing self-reflections, the students completed pre- and post-project surveys, along with a self-report empathy assessment: the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) (Spreng et al., 2009). Quantitative data were tested for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test. As no measures were normally distributed, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was applied to pre- and post- test results. Statistical analysis was performed using STATA/MP 17.

Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data from 66 students at a US minority-serving university revealed improvements in all investigated areas. Findings indicate that students demonstrated improved perceptions of campus diversity and inclusiveness, an enhanced sense of belonging, greater empathy, and a greater appreciation for languages, cultures, and intercultural skills. A key accomplishment was unveiling "insider community perspectives," which contributed to the relevance and impact of the research (McKenna & Main, 2013, p. 213). While the mixed-method design provided robust evidence, further empirical investigation is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this art-based, community-engaged approach in intercultural education.

Keywords: community-engaged project, art-based approach, belonging, empathy, intercultural

Using literary texts to improve intercultural competence in the EFL classroom in the higher level of primary schools

PRESENTATION

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The interconnection between culture and literature has become a central topic in enhancing cultural diversity in primary classrooms. The incorporation of intercultural competencies into educational frameworks is of paramount importance, and literature is becoming increasingly recognised as a valuable and beneficial source of material for educational purposes. The usage of literary texts and their multifaceted audio-visual adaptations in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) environments has been confirmed to develop language skills, reading proficiency, logical reasoning, cultural sensitivity and awareness among learners. The aim of this paper is to investigate the potential of using literary texts in teaching EFL, exploring how such texts can be integrated with various forms of media in order to enhance not only learners' language skills but also their intercultural competence, motivation, and critical thinking. The paper will present lesson plans and practical examples based on traditional and contemporary literary works, which were implemented in a Slovakian primary school with Hungarian as the language of instruction. The main goal is to show how literary texts can be effectively used as a means of unconventional and intercultural education in a traditional language-learning setting.

Keywords: English as a foreign language classroom, EFL, intercultural competencies, teaching-learning process, literary texts, culture, audio-visual adaptations

Integrating interculturality, global issues and contemporary novels for meaningful classroom practices

WORKSHOP

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This workshop centers on using contemporary and post-colonial fiction for adults in English to implement intercultural communicative competence and citizenship education by relating them to some of today's most pressing global issues. We will initially focus on adult and young adult characters taken from contemporary literatures in English, intentionally set in different contexts and time frames as well as presenting varying degrees of literary complexity, varied narrative strategies and styles. The four chosen novels, all prized or widely renowned, include: the Booker prize winning novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) by Bernardine Evaristo, set in contemporary London; *Afterlives* (2022) by the Nobel prize winner Abdulrazak Gurnah, set in colonial-time Tanzania; *James* (2024) by this year's Booker shortlistee Percival Everett, set in the 19th century U.S. and finally *Birnam Wood* (2024) by the multi-prize winning author Eleanor Catton, set in present-day New Zealand.

The themes these four novels present are manifold yet similarly urgent, including in the order of the above- mentioned novels , women's intersections of identities and female conditions, the tragedy of oppression and war, the brutality of past black slavery and present racism and the climate change ecological issues, coupled with the human strife for its own survival.

The main theoretical framework for the study of these works as well as for the workshop includes the following: the integration of literature and intercultural studies (Matos & Melo-Pfeifer, 2020); the connection between literature, media and cultural studies within language education (Corbett, 2022), the cultural understanding of literary texts and the affective dimensions of reading (Porto & Byram, 2017) and intersectionality as an analytical tool (Collins & Bilge, 2020).

During the workshop we will first intersect relevant theoretical approaches with meaningful extracts taken from the four presented novels, highlighting different literary strategies and multi-layered meanings and engaging the audience in a critical discussion of the issues raised by them. By drawing on their own pedagogical beliefs and practices, the experienced as well as less experienced attendees will be subsequently invited to question the proposed student-aimed activities and approaches, which aim at implementing the students' greater critical cultural awareness and social-emotional intelligence, the desire "to promote social justice, democracy, equity and belonging for all" and also to co-create "a more supportive, reflective and responsive educational environment" (quote from the present IAIE call for proposals).

Keywords: contemporary literature, interculturality, global issues, critical cultural awareness, classroom practice

Integrating children's literature into peace pedagogy: Empathy, resilience, and shared humanity in diversity literature and language education classes

PRESENTATION

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Larisa Kasumagić-Kafedžić

University of Sarajevo

The study in this paper focuses on the potential of integrating children's literature into a diversity framework and peace education curricula to investigate the various peace pedagogies around themes such as cultural diversity, peace and conflict, empathy, place, identity, belonging, and social justice. The advantages and disadvantages of specific approaches to using children's literature to address sensitive topics and complex issues raise questions about the most effective teaching strategies in politically divisive environments and conflict-affected societies. The study will concentrate on analyzing several children's books to show how college students can use them in various educational contexts and within particular frameworks (such as the American Diversity Framework and the Bosnian Peace Education Program), where students are exposed to a variety of challenging topics to develop a deeper comprehension of the human condition in our rapidly changing world. The paper will demonstrate how student teachers can be encouraged to use children's literature to develop strategies, approaches, and techniques to teach language and culture from the perspective of peace education by emphasizing the value of children's literature in promoting a culture of peace.

Keywords: children's literature, peace education, diversity

Innovative methods to “give voice” to children in multicultural suburbs: Examples from three participatory research projects in Milan

PRESENTATION

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The suburbs of contemporary cities, increasingly characterized by “superdiversity” (Vertovec, 2007), are seeing exacerbated the process of “insularity” (Hengst, 2017) that marginalizes not only their neighbourhoods but also the inhabitants. Youth and children with migratory background living in these areas are at risk of being exposed to “neighbourhood effects” (Wilson, 2012) and processes of “double invisibility” (Sayad, 2002), which complexify the framework of inequalities that marks their life trajectory and educational experiences - whether informal, nonformal or formal.

The presentation provides selected methodological insights from three research projects grounded on the assumption that fostering participation of children and youth through innovative pedagogical approaches and languages is conducive for both reinforcing teachers and students’ intercultural competences and promoting social justice and equity.

The examples will be drawn from three research projects that took place in different areas of the suburbs of Milan (Italy): “M.O.S.T. of Pioltello - Migration Over the Satellite Town of Pioltello. Experimenting innovative integration policies for immigrant children between home and school, play and work: a pilot project for the metropolitan suburb of Pioltello” (Polisocial Award 2017), “Living together” (AMIF 3477) and “Reinventing citizenship. Empowering networks and social groups in San Siro neighborhood” (AMIF 3867). These projects aimed to give voice to young people with migratory background by involving them as co-researchers and protagonists of innovative interventions based on visual and body languages (Barone, & Eisner, 2006; Wang, 2006). Within a framework of participatory research to enhance reflexivity and transformative practices, the involvement of local schools, the use of innovative methods (e.g. photovoice, visual, art-based methods) and the co-designing of pilot interventions with teachers were considered fundamental premises.

Findings from the three projects provide some interesting methodological hints to tackle inequalities by working with students with migratory background, in particular with those living in conditions of economic precariousness and socio-cultural disadvantage, including: co-construction of “innovative spaces” for dialogue inside school; increasing minors’ protagonism; focusing on children’s resources and abilities rather than vulnerabilities; emphasis on intercultural learning through art-based methods and active participation; reduction of barriers between school and out-of-school spaces, with schools acting as mediators between the family and external community.

Findings also highlight the potentialities of participatory research to promote intercultural competences in both teachers and students.

Keywords: young generations with migratory background, city suburbs, intercultural education, schools/educational contexts, art-based methods

Novice teachers acting out in intercultural conflicts

PRESENTATION

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Hacademit Hemdat

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Beit Berl

Teaching is a profession that is based on leadership as an ethical-social act. Teachers may on occasion avoid conflicts regarding civic-democratic issues or political conflicts (Hoffman, 2020a). For novice teachers this is even more difficult. The study focusses on controversial teaching and learning between novice teachers and students regarding tension of civic-democratic and political conflict in Israeli society. How novice teachers educate human values in conditions of political conflict, wars, human suffering and existential threat.

The methodology of narrative research was used to examine two authentic narratives - stories of novice teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). The assumption was that narrative is an identity of teller (McAdams, 2018). The stories were collected in competition of writing stories of novice teachers. The two stories describe two emotionally fraught learning encounters which bring out the teachers' and students' differing ethical-social perceptions about war, refugees and civic-democratic education. The analyzing process of the stories was based on the hermeneutic interpretive approach and thematic-holistic content analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998).

The findings are presented through three themes: a. novice teachers present a didactic challenge to their students to evoke them to be aware of critical thinking; b. how to deal with students' unexpected responses that are exposed; c. how novice teachers handle ethically fraught situations in conflict environment. The findings indicate that there novice teachers are highly motivated to educate toward an ethical, civic-democratic reality, and they are acting out of sense of mission. But they do not always possess the relevant tools for dealing with controversial and tensions issues. The study implications emphasize the importance of enlarging novice teachers' tools for identifying students' cultural contexts in a tension situation. The contribution of the research is important for teacher education in terms of educating values in a conflict environment. Professional support should be provided to encourage novice teachers to explore their professional identity, especially in conflicts situation as well as when they shape civic-democratic future.

Keywords: novice teachers, civic-democratic, political conflicts, narrative identity

Intercultural innovative approaches in visual art and media literacy education in times of war

PRESENTATION

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Visual art and media literacy education have become crucial in addressing social challenges during times of conflict, particularly in Israel following the October 7th, 2023 terrorist attack and subsequent war (Karniel & Lavie-Dinur, 2024). As a result, the education system faces unique challenges that require innovative pedagogical approaches to promote social justice, democratic values, and inclusive belonging. As learned during the pandemic about developing digital resilience through media literacy, (Eri et al., 2021) educators are applying similar principles to help students navigate the current crisis. Social-emotional learning (SEL) through art education has proven especially valuable during wartime, processing complex emotions and experiences. The various pedagogical channels are agents of socialization and culture (Rosenberg, & Asterhan, 2018). Therefore, Visual art education and use of creation as a necessary practice is vital for multicultural education (Alt, 2023) more so during a national crisis such as a war. (SEL in Art education Position Paper, 2024).

This methodological framework employs different-methods approach to investigate the intersection of visual arts education and media literacy during times of national crisis. The research design facilitates qualitative data collection, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how artistic practice and media literacy can support the resilience of both students and teachers, as well as foster multicultural civic engagement during conflict. (SEL in Art education, 2024; Frogel & Barchana, 2017; Hobbs et al., 2022) The methodological approach is grounded in participatory action research, acknowledging the dynamic relationship between educational practice and social context. By incorporating multiple data collection instruments and drawing from established theoretical frameworks in SEL, media literacy, and art education, the study addresses immediate pedagogical needs.

The multi-layered analysis of student responses, educator experiences, and artistic outputs provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of integrated art and media literacy education in promoting democratic values and social justice during times of war. using Intercultural Innovative Approaches in Visual Art and Media Literacy Education in Times of war indicate significant positive impacts in three key areas:

Enhanced Digital Resilience by Improving critical analysis of conflict-related media content and Better identification of misinformation and bias and Increased digital citizenship awareness

Social-Emotional Development: Stronger emotional processing capabilities and reduced anxiety levels through artistic expression and enhanced peer support networks

Civic Engagement: Deeper understanding of democratic values, Increased empathy and cultural sensitivity and Stronger sense of community belonging. these maintain critical and creative thinking skills during crisis periods to process trauma.

Keywords: media literacy, visual arts education, crisis pedagogy, digital resilience, social-emotional learning

Narratives of diversity: Instilling intercultural competence through diverse peer group work in an EFL teacher education course

PRESENTATION

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David Yellin Academic College of Education

Weinberger Peri Efrat

Achva Academic College

Manal Yazbak Abu Ahmad

Sakhnin Academic College & TEC Center

This qualitative research explores the impact of group learning environments, personal narrative writing and reflection, and the reading and interpretation of literary texts amongst diverse students. The research offers a model for increasing empathy and building intercultural competence.

The year-long course involves 80 pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) in an intercollegiate program that brings together students from diverse backgrounds in Israeli society. The Israeli educational system is divided according to community, religion, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Only some higher educational settings integrate diverse populations. This course, with participants from three colleges, examines ideas of culture through the study of literature in English.

This paper examines how collaborative literary analysis can promote intercultural competence, empathy, and understanding of the other. Students build intercultural competence through their own reflections as readers, shared insights, experience, and knowledge of their diverse peers, and critical comparison of literary texts from their respective cultural communities. This process puts into practice Hoff's three levels of communication for the "intercultural reader": 1. experiencing multiple voices within the literary text, 2. encountering different readers, and 3. making connections with other texts (Hoff, 2016, p. 62).

In their collaborative learning groups, intentionally structured for cultural diversity, participants read pieces of literature drawn from their diverse communities, share insights and develop literary analysis, and complete writing tasks that reflect on their own lived experiences.

The data collection methods will include pre and post-surveys assessing students' perceived intercultural competence and learning experience, and written responses from the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE). It will also contain content analysis of students' reflections, literary analysis, and peer feedback.

Guided reflective writings, personal narrative assignments, and work with the AIE encourage participants' awareness of their own cultural attitudes and facilitate intercultural awareness (Barrett & Byram, 2022). Students accordingly use this intercultural awareness in interpreting the literature (Mete, 2018). Reflection on the learning process and peer feedback similarly support the participants' intercultural awareness.

Keywords: intercultural competence, collaborative learning, Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE), empathy, teacher education

Lyrical conflict dialectics: Women poetry in time of political struggle

PRESENTATION

Anat Ziff

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This paper explores how the lyrical journeys of Israeli and Palestinian women poets reflect their differing struggles and the changes within the socio-political discourse in Israel. Although both groups of women poets write in the same physical time and place and share the empowered feminism of Israeli society, this paper demonstrates that each has nonetheless developed discrete, distinct and often opposing expressions regarding identification with cultural roles, homeland, and respective national struggles.

While an overview of Israeli and Palestinian women poets' creative lyrics expressing deconstruction of patriarchy in personal and political societal experiences, this work also demonstrates how even as they share this feminist outlook, and a pool of common symbols reflecting their shared artistic environment, each group of poets creates very discrete modalities of poetry that construct and deconstruct respective national narratives.

Poems are important ethnographic tools, conveying perceptions and sentiments, unearthing and revealing unique traditions, memories, experiences and desires. As in "Veiled Sentiments," Lila Abu-Lughod's study of Bedouin women's experiences in their recited poetry, this paper reviewed poems written by Palestinian, Israeli Arab, and Israeli Jewish women in Israel uncovering their experiences with the rapid changes in that dynamic and conflicted society.

Empowered by the currents of new feminism, women poets in Israel are preoccupied primarily with patriarchy and a national homeland. In addressing the patriarchy, both Palestinian and Israeli poets attempt to locate and legitimize themselves as women are women in their respective societies, exploring issues related to sexuality, aging, and domestic role designation in social life. These creative works, reflecting lived experience, are where Israeli and Palestinian women poets find more common ground to challenge traditional canonic male poetry in both cultures, and are groundbreaking acts of cultural defiance.

"The personal is political" wrote Carol Hanisch (1969), a prominent feminist leader, who viewed patriarchy and political narratives as inseparable. The poems analysed here reveal that Israeli and Palestinian poets take opposite tacks in deconstructing Israel's patriarchal political context. Israeli poets question the legitimacy of a patriarchal homeland through poems challenging the importance of nationalism, separating themselves as individuals from the dominant collective male political project. Palestinian poets' poems embrace an opposite contention that undermine patriarchal governance while empowering them to discard their confined, domestic roles and insist wholeheartedly in sharing equally, publicly in the collective, male-dominated Palestinian national project.

Keywords: women lyrical resistance, poetry de(re)constructing national narrative, poems in times of political

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